

## SC 520 – Gender & Society

Fall 2007

Professor: Dr. C. Shawn McGuffey  
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Office Hours: T, Th 9-10 a.m.  
and by appointment

Classroom and Time: McGuinn Hall 415, T 4:30 – 7:00

This course will examine gender in a societal context, and will be highly attuned to differences based on race and class. Although biological and psychological approaches will be considered, this reading and participation intensive course will examine gender primarily as a social and structural construct. The course will begin with central debates in gender studies and sociology (e.g., the merits of biological explanations of gender) and how feminisms - mainstream, Black, and others - have shaped theoretical and empirical studies of gender. We will then move into specific topics, such as families and sex work. This course will center on the following guiding questions: **Is gender shaped by nature, nurture, or both? How have feminists influenced the study of gender? Is gender inequality inevitable? What do race, class, and sexuality tell us about gender? Can gender be “undone”?**

To help tackle these questions this reading and participation intensive seminar will assess differences between and within genders, and will analyze gender dynamics from a critical race feminist perspective. Four central themes of critical race feminism (CRF) are:

- 1) Social identities are historically and culturally specific and change over time.
- 2) Race, class, gender, and sexuality are not separate identities that are easily distinguishable from one another. These social identities intersect and reinforce each other. For example, one cannot talk about race without examining its implications for gender and vice versa.
- 3) CRF acknowledges the importance of laws, policies, and institutions in the perpetuation of inequalities.
- 4) Finally, CRF is skeptical of concepts such as objectivity, neutrality, and meritocracy. Therefore, ideas of equality must be critically examined.

### **Course Expectations and Evaluation:**

- 1) This is a *reading* and *participation* intensive course. Readings are due *on the date they are listed*. Come to class ready to discuss them.
- 2) If you miss class, you are responsible for getting notes from a classmate. Missing three classes will constitute failing the course. A doctor, school administrator, or other certified official must verify an absence in order for it to be excused. Notes from parents or legal guardians will not be accepted.
- 3) You will be evaluated in the following four areas:

**a. Class Participation (15%):** This includes contributing to class discussions, respecting the views of others, and a presentation of your final paper at the end of the semester (which will be discussed more below). I have found that students often have a tendency to over generalize their own personal experiences to the overall population. This tendency is especially striking in courses that address gender, race, and social dynamics. These topics seem to elicit statements such as: “Well, where I’m from it’s not like that” or “That’s not how I was raised.” This course is positioned firmly in C. Wright Mills’ “sociological imagination” which highlights the connections between history, social structure, and personal biography. The organization of this course nurtures the sociological imagination through its emphasis on multiple perspectives and how history and social structure converge to impinge on the life chances of different types of people. Class participation should do so as well.

To help us achieve this goal, discussions will focus on the readings and pertinent current events. Personal anecdotes should be kept to a minimum. Personal experience should only be used to illuminate theoretical points. Relying too heavily on your own experience or straying too far from the topic of conversation will negatively impact your participation grade. Students are encouraged to critique all the assigned readings and to dissect the debates within them. Also, the guiding questions posed in the first paragraph of this syllabus should be addressed, in one form or another, in every class discussion.

**b. Class Presentation (25%):** You will also lead a class presentation based on a particular day’s assigned readings. You are encouraged to include outside material, but this is not required. Class presentations can take a variety of forms and can incorporate a range of presentation aids (e.g., film, interpretive dance, lecture, poetry, posters, etc.) Leave approximately 20 minutes at the end of class to allow the professor to highlight key points. Your presentation will be carefully evaluated based on the following rubric:

**Class Presentation Rubric**

**Is the class session well organized?**

Relates material to previous readings	1	2	3	4	5
Provides internal summaries and transitions	1	2	3	4	5
Maintains continuity in the discussion/presentation	1	2	3	4	5
Summarizes main points at end of presentation	1	2	3	4	5
Paces class session appropriately	1	2	3	4	5

**How is the content presented?**

Presentation aids are useful	1	2	3	4	5
Presents background information for ideas	1	2	3	4	5
Explains difficult terms and concepts	1	2	3	4	5
Integrates readings and discussion/presentation	1	2	3	4	5
Helps clarify material	1	2	3	4	5

**Is the presenter credible?**

Appears well-prepared	1	2	3	4	5
Understands the material	1	2	3	4	5
Is able to admit insufficient knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
Speaks audibly and clearly	1	2	3	4	5
Communicates enthusiasm	1	2	3	4	5

**How is the presenter's rapport with the other class members?**

Encourages participation	1	2	3	4	5
Responds constructively to class members	1	2	3	4	5
Treats members equitably	1	2	3	4	5
Recognizes when others are confused	1	2	3	4	5
Shows respect for other's view points	1	2	3	4	5

NOTE: I recognize that some class sessions require a heavier reading load and/or involve more complex ideas and concepts. I will take this into consideration when evaluating class presentations.

**c. Weekly Statements (25%):** A weekly statement will be due every Monday by 11:59 p.m. via email to the professor and/or class presenter. These statements should be focused on the assigned readings and address one or more of the guiding questions in the first paragraph of the syllabus. Although it is not imperative to directly mention each reading, statements should at least tackle the ideas presented in all of them.

Statements will be evaluated based on the following criteria: (a) an introduction that distinctly states your topic and why it is important; (b) responses should have a logical flow with supporting evidence from the readings and lecture; (c) a succinct critique of the pertinent issues; (d) and all papers should be typed, double spaced, and NO MORE than two pages. Your final evaluation of your weekly statements will come at the end of the semester and will be based on improvement over time. At the end of the semester you will neatly organize and hand-in a portfolio including each of your statements and a final paper (which will be discussed more below) in a portfolio.

**d. Final Paper (35%):** The last fraction of your final grade will consist of an 18-25 page paper (12 point font, double spaced, one-inch margins). The page limits include text, end/footnotes, charts and graphs, and references. The paper should focus on a particular aspect of gender and society, incorporate outside sources, and should draw from the course readings. Sample topics include, but are not limited to: gender, race and class differences in parenting strategies; how race, class, and sexuality shape gender representations in popular culture; how sexuality impacts the performance of gender; gender and social policy; and inter-racial dating and marriage patterns. The last two days of the course will be dedicated to presenting your final papers to the other class members. Plan to spend about 10-15 minutes on these presentations.

Although the topic of the paper is of your own choosing, **the paper must address two or more of the course's guiding questions and must include ample material from the course.** You can also incorporate your weekly statements into the final paper. In fact, once you've decided on your topic you should start to craft your weekly statements with your final paper in mind. This will greatly assist in completing the final paper. Topics, a rough outline, and a tentative reading list must be submitted to the professor by October 16<sup>th</sup>. These materials should also be included in your final portfolio. **The final paper is due December 4<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 p.m.** Late papers **will not** be accepted.

### **Grading Scale:**

94-100= A	70-73= C
90-93= A-	66-69= C-
86-89= B+	62-65= D+
82-85= B	58-61= D
78-81= B-	54-57= D-
74-77= C+	53-00= F

### **Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is a standard of utmost importance in this course. Guidelines for academic integrity in written work are posted on the Boston College website at:

[www.bc.edu/integrity](http://www.bc.edu/integrity)

If you have any questions pertaining to the academic integrity guidelines, please come and talk with me for more clarification. If you are caught violating Boston College's policies on academic integrity, you will receive a failing grade for the assignment and the appropriate Dean will be notified in accordance to the rules set forth by Boston College.

### **Required Readings:**

Collins, Patricia Hill. 2006. *From Black Power to Hip Hop: Racism, Nationalism, and Feminism*. Temple University Press.

Edin, Katherine and Maria Kefalas. 2005. *Promises I Can Keep: Why Poor Women Put Motherhood Before Marriage*. University of California Press.

*Ereserve Readings:* To access e-reserve readings (a) go to the libraries home page; (b) click on "more catalog search options;" (c) click on "Course/On-line Reserves;" and (d) Search by my last name, McGuffey.

*The professor reserves the right to incorporate additional readings throughout the course.*

### **Reading Schedule:**

#### **Feminist Consciousness, Feminists Conversations: Feminisms in Sociology**

**Sept. 4:** First Day of Class – Introductory Concepts. No Assigned Readings.

**Sept. 11:** Stacey, Judith and Barrie Thorne. 1985. "The Missing Feminist Revolution in Sociology." *Social Problems* 32(4): 301-316.

Acker, Joan. 2006. "Introduction: 'The Missing Feminist Revolution' Symposium." *Social Problems* 53(4): 444-447.

Lorber, Judith. 2006. "Shifting Paradigms and Challenging Categories." *Social Problems* 53(4): 448-453.

Williams, Christine. 2006. "Still Missing? Comments on the Twentieth Anniversary of 'The Missing Feminist Revolution in Sociology.'" *Social Problems* 53(4): 454-458.

Ray, Raka. 2006. "Is the Revolution Missing or Are We Looking in the Wrong Places?" *Social Problems* 53(4): 459-465.

Rupp, Leila. 2006. "Is the Feminist Revolution Still Missing? Reflections from Women's History." *Social Problems* 53(4): 466-472.

Thorne, Barrie. 2006. "How Can Feminist Sociology Sustain It's Critical Edge?" *Social Problems* 53(4): 473-478.

Stacey, Judith. 2006. "Feminism and Sociology in 2005: What Are We Missing?" *Social Problems* 53(4): 479-482.

Collins, Patricia Hill. 1989. "The Social Construction of Black Feminist Thought." *Signs* 14(4): 745-773.

Chow, Esther Ngan-Ling. 1987. "The Development of Feminist Consciousness Among Asian American Women." *Gender & Society* 1(3): 284-299.

Garcia, Alma M. 1989. "The Development of Chicana Feminist Discourse." *Gender & Society* 3(2): 217-238.

### **Accounting for Gender**

#### **Part I: Biological and Psychoanalytic/Psychological Theories**

**Sept. 18:** Udry, J. Richard. 2000. "Biological Limits of Gender Construction." *American Sociological Review*. 65: 443-457,

Miller, Eleanor and Carrie Yang Costello. 2001. "The Limits of Biological Determinism." *American Sociological Review* 66(4): 592-598.

Kennelly, Ivy and Sabine N. Merz. 2001. "What is Gender?" *American Sociological Review* 66(4): 598-605.

Risman, Barbara. 2001. "Calling the Bluff of Value-Free Science." *American Sociological Review* 66(4): 605-611.

Chodorow, Nancy. 1976. "Oedipal Asymmetries and Heterosexual Knots." *Social Problems* 23(4): 454-468.

Chodorow, Nancy J. 1995. "Gender as a Personal and Cultural Construction." *Signs* 20(3): 516-544.

## Part II: Sociological Theories of Gender

**Sept. 25:** West, Candace and Don H. Zimmerman. 1987. "Doing Gender." *Gender & Society* 1(2): 125-151.

West, Candace and Sarah Fenstermaker. 1995. "Doing Difference." *Gender & Society* 9(1): 8-37.

Collins, Patricia et. al. 2002. "Symposium on West and Fenstermaker's 'Doing Difference,'" Chapter 5 from *Doing Gender, Doing Difference* edited by Fenstermaker and West. Routledge.

Deutsch, Francine. 2007. "Undoing Gender." *Gender & Society* 21(1): 106-127.

### Masculinities

**Oct. 2:** Pyke, Karen D. 1996. "Class-Based Masculinities: The Interdependence of Gender, Class, and Interpersonal Power." *Gender & Society* 10(5): 527-549.

Chen, Anthony S. 1999. "Lives at the Center of the Periphery, Lives at the Periphery of the Center: Chinese American Masculinities and Bargaining with Hegemony." *Gender & Society* 13(5): 584-607.

Anderson, Eric. 2002. "Openly Gay Athletes: Contesting Hegemonic Masculinity in a Homophobic Environment." *Gender & Society* 16(6): 860-877.

Anderson, Eric. 2005. "Orthodox and Inclusive Masculinity: Competing Masculinities Among Heterosexual Men in a Feminized Terrain." *Sociological Perspectives* 48(3): 337-355.

Connell, R.W. and James W. Messerschmidt. 2005. "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept." *Gender & Society* 19(6): 829-859.

### Femininities

#### **Oct. 9: DUE – Topic, rough outline, and a tentative reading list for Final Paper**

Hanser, Amy. 2005. "The Gendered Rice Bowl: The Sexual Politics of Service Work in Urban China." *Gender & Society* 19(5): 581-600.

Pyke, Karen and Denise L. Johnson. 2003. "Asian American Women and Racialized Femininities: 'Doing' Gender across Cultural Worlds." *Gender & Society* 17(1): 33-53.

Kim, Nadia Y. 2006. "'Patriarchy is so Third World': Korean Immigrant Women and 'Migrating' White Western Masculinity." *Social Problems* 53(4): 519-536.

Moore, Mignon R. 2006. "Lipstick or Timberlands? Meanings of Gender Presentation in Black Lesbian Communities." *Signs* 32(1): 113-139.

Thompson, Maxine S. and Verna M. Ketih. 2001. "The Blacker the Berry: Gender, Skin Tone, Self-Esteem, and Self-Efficacy." *Gender & Society* 15(3): 336-357.

Hunter, Margaret. 2002. “ ‘If You’re Light You’re Alright’: Light Skin Color as Social Capital for Women of Color.” *Gender & Society* 16(2): 175-193.

### **Families, Children, and Youth**

**Oct. 16:** Collins, Patricia Hill. 2006. *From Black Power to Hip Hop: Racism, Nationalism, and Feminism*. Chapter 1.

Edin, Katherine and Maria Kefalas. 2005. *Promises I Can Keep: Why Poor Women Put Motherhood Before Marriage*. Introduction – Chapter 3.

**Oct. 23:** Collins, Patricia Hill. 2006. *From Black Power to Hip Hop: Racism, Nationalism, and Feminism*. Chapter 2.

Edin, Katherine and Maria Kefalas. 2005. *Promises I Can Keep: Why Poor Women Put Motherhood Before Marriage*. Chapter 4 – Conclusion.

**Oct. 30:** McGuffey, C. Shawn. 2005. “Engendering Trauma: Race, Class, and Gender Reaffirmation after Child Sexual Abuse.” *Gender & Society* 19(5): 621-643.

Kane, Emily K. 2006. “ ‘No Way My Boys Are Going to be Like That!’: Parents’ Responses to Children’s Gender Nonconformity.” *Gender & Society* 20(2): 149-176.

Moore, Valerie. 2003. “Race, Risk, and the Emergence of Gender Boundaries: Kids Crossing Boundaries in Summer Camps.” *Qualitative Sociology* 26(2): 173-198.

Bettie, Julie. 2000. “Women without Class: Chicas, Cholas, Trash, and the Presence/Absence of Class Identity.” *Signs* 26(1): 1-35.

Wilkins, Amy. 2004. “ ‘So Full of Myself as a Chick’: Goth Women, Sexual Independence, and Gender Egalitarianism.” *Gender & Society* 18(3): 328-349.

### **Sex Work**

**Nov. 6:** Overall, Christine. 1992. “What’s Wrong with Prostitution? Evaluating Sex Work.” *Signs* 17(4): 705-724.

Trautner, Mary Nell. 2005. “Doing Gender, Doing Class: The Performance of Sexuality in Exotic Dance Clubs.” *Gender & Society* 19(6): 771-788.

Browne, Jan and Victor Minichiello. 1995. “The Social Meanings Behind Male Sex Work: Implications for Sexual Interactions.” *British Journal of Sociology* 46(4): 598-622.

Escoffier, Jeffrey. 2003. “Gay for Pay: Straight Men and the Making of Gay Pornography.” *Qualitative Sociology* 26(4): 531-555.

Eck, Beth A. 2003. “Men are Much Harder: Gendered Viewing of Nude Images.” *Gender & Society* 17(5): 691-710.

### Sexual Violence Against Women

**Nov. 13:** Crenshaw, Kimberle. 1991. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color." *Stanford Law Review* 43: 1241-1299.

White, Aaronette M. 1999. "Talking Feminist, Talking Black: Micromobilization Processes in a Collective Protest against Rape." *Gender & Society* 13(1): 77-100.

Scully, Diana. 1988. "Convicted Rapists' Perceptions of Self and Victim: Role Taking and Emotions." *Gender & Society* 2(2): 200-213.

Arata, Catalina M. 1999. "Coping with Rape: The Roles of Prior Sexual Abuse and Attributions of Blame." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 14(1): 62-78.

Washington, Patricia A. 2001. "Disclosure Patterns of Black Female Sexual Assault Survivors." *Violence Against Women* 7(11): 1254-1283.

### Gender and Popular Culture

**Nov. 20:** Bordo, Susan. 1997. "Braveheart, Babe, and the Contemporary Body. In *Twilight Zones*. University of California Press.

Milkie, Melissa A. 2002. "Contested Images of Femininity: An Analysis of Cultural Gatekeepers' Struggles with the 'Real Girl' Critique." *Gender & Society* 16(6): 839-859.

Kubrin, Charis E. 2005. "Gangstas, Thugs, and Hustlas: Identity and the Code of the Streets in Rap Music." *Social Problems* 52(3): 360-378.

Emerson, Rana. 2002. "'Where My Girls At?': Negotiating Black Womanhood in Music Videos." *Gender & Society* 16(1): 115-135.

Collins, Patricia Hill. 2006. *From Black Power to Hip Hop: Racism, Nationalism, and Feminism*. Chapters 5 and 6.

### Class Presentations

**Nov. 27:** Project Presentations

**Dec. 4:** Project Presentations Continued / **Final Papers Due at 4:30!!! (Last day of regularly scheduled classes)**