Course Description

“It’s a girl!!” or “It’s a boy!!” --- these are common exclamations upon the birth of a child. These exclamations not only inform people of the biological sex of the newly born baby, but also conjure up numerous images, ideas, and expectations. What does it mean to be a girl or a boy, or a woman or a man, in various societies and cultures?

Beyond referring to female or male anatomy, gender also implies the social and cultural characteristics that define women and men’s roles and identities. Gender includes all the ways in which societies organize people into female and male categories and attach meanings to those categories. In this course, we will explore how the meanings of gender and gender differences are constructed through specific social, historical economic and cultural processes. We will challenge biologically-based notions of gender difference and analyze how gender develops its meanings in the context of culture and society.

An Important Note

Throughout this course, you will be exposed to ideas which may challenge or question your own beliefs and understandings of gender. You will also encounter readings which may contain explicit language and explore sensitive themes such as violence and sexuality. While it is understood that at times you may feel discomfort, it is expected that you will complete the required reading material and that you will voice your thoughts, opinions, and reactions to this material in a thoughtful, mature, and respectful manner.
Course Requirements

* Two papers (six page minimum)
* Group project/presentation
* Class attendance and participation in discussion are crucial and absolutely essential to the learning process. Your attendance and participation in class discussion contributes to your grade and you are expected to come to class with assigned materials read and prepared.

Course Grade Determinants

Two papers and group project/presentation: **90%  (30% each)**
Class Attendance and Participation: **10%**

* Late Work will be reduced by one-half letter grade for class day that it is late. All assignments for this course are expected to be completed on time. If you have extenuating circumstances and need an extension you must negotiate a new deadline with me before the assignment’s due date.

Required Texts

*All required texts are available at the bookstore and on reserve at O’Neil Library

1. Gender and Society Coursepack


As a part of the **Core Curriculum** this course will include the following:

**Perennial Questions**
Throughout the semester we will be asking ourselves questions about the gendered lives we live. Gender researchers from a variety of disciplines have been asking some of these questions for a large part of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century. Some of these questions are: what is femininity, what is masculinity? What does it mean to be “female” or “male” in various cultures and societies? How do these labels effect our sense of identity, our life choices, and opportunities?

**Cultural Diversity**
Many of the readings in this course address variation of constructions of gender across cultural, racial, and ethnic lines. We will learn about how people experience gender in different ways depending upon their cultural and racial heritages. In addition to cultural and racial variation, the readings in this course will also confront issues of economic inequality.

**Historical Perspective**
The events, structures, institutions, experiences and identities that sociologists study are embedded in social and historical contexts. In this course we will study the phenomenon of gender in relation to its social and historical contexts. In other words we will examine how definitions and understandings of gender are shaped, in large part, by these contexts.

**Writing Component**
Writing will play a key role in this course. The clear formulation, presentation, and communication ideas required in the process of writing is instrumental to developing critical thinking skills. You are encouraged to come talk with me about your writing assignments. I will be happy to provide you with guidance and supportive feedback.

**Creating a Personal Philosophy**
Throughout this course some of your ideas and beliefs on gender may be questioned and/or challenged. Whether or not your own perspective on gender remains the same or changes with the engagement in readings and discussions throughout this course, you will be encouraged to openly access and articulate your own perspective on gender and explain how and why you came to hold this perspective.
Syllabus

PART 1: SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL CONSTRUCTIONS OF GENDER

Tuesday, January 15
General Introduction. Discussion of Course Goals and Expectations.

Gender As Socially Constructed
Thursday, January 17

Cultural, Scientific, and Historical Constructions of Gender
Tuesday, January 22
Inman, Mary. Unpublished Material. “How Different are Men and Women?” Coursepack

Case Studies
Thursday, January 24

Construction of Gender through Socialization
Boyhood: Family, Peer Groups, Society
(Race, Class, and Gendered Identities)

Tuesday, January 29

**SECTION II: Reconstructing Gender.**


Espada, Martin. “The Puerto Rican Dummy and the Merciful Son.” **PART I:** *Reconstructing Gender.*

Rodriguez, Luis J. “Always Running.” *Coursepack.*


**Girlhood: Family, Peer Groups, Society**

(Race, Class, and Gendered Identities)

**Thursday, January 31**

Nelson, Jill. “Who is the Fairest of Them All?” **PART II:** *Reconstructing Gender.*

Harris, Virginia. “Prison of Color.” *Coursepack.*


Freeman, Joan Mendelson. “Parental Influence and Women’s Careers.” *Coursepack*

**School Experiences**

**Tuesday, February 5**


Kimmel, Michael S. “‘What about the Boys?’: What the Current Debates Tell us— and Don’t Tell Us—About Boys in School.” **PART VII:** *Reconstructing Gender.*

Thorne, Barrie. “Girls and Boys Together…but mostly apart: Gender Arrangements in Elementary School.” *Coursepack.*

Orenstein, Peggy. “Shortchanging Girls: Gender Socialization in Schools.” *Coursepack*


**PART 2: GENDER, FAMILY, AND WORK**

*Shifting Motherhood Identities: Race, Class and Gender*

**Thursday, February 7**


Hoffnung, Michele. “Motherhood: Contemporary Conflict for Women.” *Coursepack.*

Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila, Ernestine. “‘I’m Here but I’m There’: The Meanings of Latina Transnational Motherhood.” *Email (On line)*


Inman, Mary. “Maternity as Social Function.” *Coursepack.*
**Division of Labor Within the Home/Balancing Work and Family/Family In Capitalist Economic System: Race, Class, and Gender**
Tuesday, February 12
Hill Collins, Patricia. “Blood Mothers, Other Mothers and Women-Centered Networks.”

**PART VI: Reconstructing Gender.**
Dougless, Susan J. and Meredith W. Michaels. “The New Momism.” **Part IV: Reconstructing Gender**
Flavin, Jeanne. “Contemporary Challenges to Black Women’s Reproductive Rights.”

**PART VI: Reconstructing Gender**
Steil, Janice. “Supermoms and Second Shifts: Marital Inequality in the 1990s.”

**Coursepack.**
Chafetz, Janet Salzman. “‘I Need a Traditional Wife!’: Employment-Family Conflicts.”

**Coursepack.**
Crittenden, Ann. “Sixty Cents to a Man’s Dollar.” **PART VIII: Reconstructing Gender.**
Marchevsky Alejandra and Jeanne Theoharis. “The End of Welfare as we know it: An Overview of the PRWORA.” **PART VIII: Reconstructing Gender.**

**Recommended Only (Available upon request)**
Albelda, Randy and Tilly, Chris. It’s a Family Affair: Women, Poverty and Welfare. **Coursepack.**

**Shifting Fatherhood Identities: Race, Class, and Gender**
Thursday, February 14
Rubin, Lillian. “The Transformation of Family Life.” **Coursepack**
Gerson, Kathleen. “Dilemmas of Involved Fatherhood.” **SECTION VI: Reconstructing Gender.**
Shelton, Anne, and Daphne John. “Ethnicity, Race, and Difference: A Comparison of White, Black, and Hispanic Men’s Household Labor Time.” **PART 8: Men’s Lives.**
Miller, Brian. “Life Styles of Gay Husbands and Fathers.” **Coursepack.**
Hanchard, Michael C. “On ‘Good’ Black Fathers. **Coursepack.**
Coltrane, Scott. “Fathering: Paradoxes, Contradictions, and Dilemmas.” **PART 8: Men’s Lives.**

**Recommended Only:**

**PART 3: GENDERING OF POLITICS AND ECONOMICS**

**Globalization, Militarization and Technology as Gendered**
Tuesday, February 19
Brodie, Janine. “Shifting the Boundaries and the Politics of Re-Structuring,” in **The Strategic Silence: Gender and Economics. Coursepack.**

Case Studies: India, Vietnam, South Korea, and Mexico.
Thursday, February 21 PAPER OPTION #1 DUE
Orchard, Treena Rae. 2007. “Girl, Woman, Lover, Mother: Towards a New Understanding of Child Prostitution Among Young Devadadis in Rural Karnataka, India.” Coursepack.
Moon, Katherine H.S. “Partners in Prostitution” in Sex Among Allies: Military Prostitution in the U.S. Coursepack.

Recommended:

Tuesday, February 26
Middle Eastern Women’s Empowerment and Oppression in Contemporary Contexts
Moghadam, Valentine M. “Recasting the Middle East, North Africa, and Afghanistan” in Modernizing Women: Gender and Social Change in the Middle East. Handout.
Handout.

*Alex Pittman will be running today’s class and speaking about her own research on the status of women in the middle east, and on feminist movements and ideologies in North African contexts in particular. Please be sure to come to class with the readings prepared (these readings have been selected by Alex) and ready to be thoroughly engaged and informed by Alex’s research presentation!*
Thursday, February 28

Focusing in on Iran, Iraq, and Afghanistan PAPER OPTION #2 DUE

Brault, Brigitte. 2003. Afghanistan Unveiled. (A Documentary Film.)
Maleknasr, Yasmin. 2003. The Lost Truth. (A Documentary Film.)

Selected portions of these two films will be shown in class, followed by discussion.

Recommended:

SPRING VACATION

PART 4: FEMALE/MALE GENDER DYNAMICS

Communication
Tuesday, March 11

Parker, Pat. “For the White Person who Wants to Know How to be My Friend.” PART IV: Reconstructing Gender.

Courtship
Thursday, March 13

Marquardt, Elizabeth. 2001. “College Women find the Non-Dating Game Confusing,” in USA Today, Coursepack.
Kass, Leon. R. “The End of Courtship.” Coursepack

PART 5: GENDER IDENTITIES: MACULINITY, FEMININITY, SEXUALITY

Masculinity
Tuesday, March 18
Petrie, Phil. “Real Men Don’t Cry… And Other ‘Uncool’ Myths.” PART IV: Reconstructing Gender.
Kelley, Robin D. G. “Confessions of a Nice Negro, or Why I Shaved My Head.” Coursepack.

NO CLASS: THURSDAY MARCH 20

Male Sexual Identities: Expression and Repression, Racism and Stereotypes
Tuesday, March 25
Stolenberg, John, “How Men Have (a) Sex.” Coursepack.
McGuffey Shawn C. and B Lindsay Rich. “Playing in the Gender Transgression Zone: Race, Class, and Hegemonic Masculinity in Middle Childhood.” Coursepack.

Recommended Only:
Schultz, Jason. “Getting Off on Feminism.” Coursepack.

Female Sexuality: Expression and Repression, Racism, and Stereotypes
Thursday, March 27
Christian-Smith, Linda, K. “Young Women and Their Dream Lovers. Sexuality in Adolescent Fiction.” Coursepack
**Female Sexuality: Expression and Repression, Racism and Stereotypes Continued**

**Tuesday, April 1**
Frye, Marilyn. “Lesbian ‘Sex.’” **Coursepack**
Koedt, Anne. “Loving Another Woman.” **Coursepack**
Weitz, Rose. What Price Independence? Social Reactions to Lesbians, Spinsters, Widows, and Nuns. **Coursepack.**
Rust, Paula. “The Impact of Multiple Marginalization.” **PART V: Reconstructing Gender.**

**PART 6: MASCULINITY, SEXISM, AND A CULTURE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

**A Culture of Sexism and Sexual Harassment**

**Thursday, April 4**
Hooks, Bell. “Black and Female. Reflections on Graduate School.” **PART VII: Reconstructing Gender**
Fugh-Berman, Adrianne. “Tales Out of Medical School.” **Coursepack.**

**Economic/Cultural/Structural Aspects of Violence Against Women**

**Tuesday, April 8**
Collins, Patricia Hill. The Sexual Politics of Black Womanhood. **Coursepack.**
Hooks, bell. “Selling Hot Pussy: Representations of Black Female Sexuality in the Cultural Marketplace.” **Coursepack**
Jensen, Robert. “Using Pornography.” **Coursepack.**
Sheffield, Carole. “Sexual Terrorism.” **Coursepack.**
Cowan, Gloria. “Pornography: A Conflict Among Feminists.” **Coursepack**

**The Social Construction of Rape Culture: Lived Experiences of Perpetrators and Survivors**

**Thursday, April 10**
Scully, Diana and Marolla, Joseph. “Riding the Bull at Gilley’s: Convicted Rapists Describe the Rewards of Rape.” **Coursepack**
Martin, Patricia Yancey and Robert A. Hummer. “Fraternities and Rape on Campus.” **Coursepack.**
Devlin, Athena. “The Shame of Silence.” **Coursepack**
Fletcher, Pamela. “Whose Body is it Anyway?” **Coursepack**
PART 7: GENDER AND THE BODY: OBJECTIFICATION, MEDICALIZATION AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Female Body Identities
Tuesday, April 15
Lee, Janet. “Menarche and the (Hetero) sexualization of the Female Body.” Coursepack.
Messner, Micheal A. and Dworkin, Shari L. “‘Just do…What?’ Sports, Bodies, and Gender.” Coursepack.

Female Body, Self-Image, and Societal Pressures
Thursday, April 17 PAPER OPTION 3 DUE
Haubegger, Christy. “I’m Not Fat, I’m Latina.” Coursepack.
Saltzburg, Elayne and Chrisler, Joan. “Beauty is the Beast: Psychological Effects of the Pursuit of the Perfect Female Body.” Coursepack.
Kilbourne, Jean. “Killing Us Softly III” to be shown in class time.

Men’s Bodies: Self-Images, Identities, Societal Pressures
Tuesday, April 22
Pope, Harrison et al. “Secrets of Men at the Olympic Gym.” Coursepack.

Women’s Bodies: Cosmetic Surgeries and Technologies
Thursday, April 24
Davis, Kathy. “From Objectified Body to Embodied Subject.” Coursepack.
Davis, Kathy. “‘My Body is My Art:’ Cosmetic Surgery as Feminist Utopia?” Coursepack.
Women and Men’s Bodies: Medicalization, Aesthetics, Industry, and New Technologies
Tuesday, April 29

Recommended:
“The Downside of Viagra: Women’s Experiences and Concerns,” (2003), Annie Potts et al., Coursepack.

Women and Men’s Bodies: Health and Illness (Technology, Industry and Environmental Justice)
Thursday, May 1 PAPER OPTION 4 DUE (LAST DAY OF CLASS)