

SOC 211 • SOCIOLOGY OF GENDER

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2015 Spring semester • Tuesday & Thursday 11:00am – 12:15pm • Room D107
Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 2:30 – 4:00 & by appointment • Room D205W

Labeling someone a man or a woman is a social decision. We may use scientific knowledge to help us make the decision, but only our beliefs about gender--not science--can define our sex. Furthermore, our beliefs about gender affect what kinds of knowledge scientists produce about sex in the first place." Anne Fausto-Sterling

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The phenomenon of gender and the role it plays in the structure of society is one of the central interests of sociology. Much of what we understand as "natural" for women/girls and men/boys is based on minor biological differences, yet the social meaning of those differences are immense. In this course, we will examine the sociological perspective as it relates to gender and how gender is related to race and class in the U.S. We will look at the social processes that influence our gendered identities and the connections between gender, power, and inequality. And we will explore the ongoing cultural expectations and assumptions that help to perpetuate gender in our social institutions.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After successfully completing this course, a student should have the following skills and abilities:

- the ability to utilize critical thinking skills for analysis of society and human group behavior
- an understanding of how to use sociological concepts to understand and analyze cultures and societies
- the ability to utilize systematic inquiry for analyzing the social world
- an understanding of our role as individuals in making, maintaining, and changing society.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Kimmel, Michael S. 2008. *The Gendered Society*, 5th edition. New York: Oxford University Press, Inc.

Bornstein, Kate and S. Bear Bergman. 2010. *Gender Outlaws: The Next Generation*. Berkeley, CA: Seal Press.

CLASS ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION 15% OF COURSE GRADE

Participation in class discussion is essential. It is a graded element of this course and is fundamental to effective learning. The exams will be based in part on in-class discussions and activities, so your presence at every class is extremely important to your grade, as is your active and involved participation. Participation will be assessed each class meeting and your presence/absence will be noted. More than three absences may have a significant effect on your final grade. It is your responsibility to be sure that your presence in class is accounted for by signing in each class meeting.

I will use the following criteria to evaluate your participation:

- Are you making an effort to contribute to class discussion? Is it evident that you have prepared for class?
- Knowledge of the reading material and your ability to grasp its central themes. How carefully and critically did you read?
- Your ability to take an independent and reflective stance toward ideas under discussion. Are you willing to think creatively?
- The overall development of your power of verbal expression during the course of the semester. Do you demonstrate increased willingness and ability to contribute to class discussion as the course progresses?

While not all students will be as interested in all of the topics we cover, I expect everyone to be very, very attentive and engaged. Please use your computers **only** to take notes. I will deduct points from your attendance and participation grade if I notice that you are browsing the Internet.

READING ASSIGNMENTS & REFLECTIONS 20% OF COURSE GRADE

Readings for each class are listed in the course outline to follow and are also posted on the Blackboard page for this class. Readings must be completed before class on the day it is listed. They are designed to prepare you for the upcoming lecture. You will complete the readings on your own so that you are familiar with the topics to be discussed during class. You are responsible for all assigned reading, whether or not it is discussed in class.

In order to facilitate class discussion, you will have on hand for each class your written reflections on the reading for that date. These reflections will be handed in to me at the end of each class period and must include your name and the due date for the assignment. I require **at least two** reflections on each section or article read.

Do NOT submit your notes on the reading. Do NOT merely summarize the reading.

Reading Reflections must be thought provoking, analytical, and should address the material in an academic way. I want to see that you've read and thought about each assignment; I do not want a summary of or your notes on what the reading was about. Your comments should show what your thinking is on the concepts you found most important or intriguing. This requires a close and careful reading along with reflection on and interpretation of the author's intent. Supporting evidence from the texts, handouts, and lectures will enhance your reflections. One reflection may be as short as one sentence or as long as a paragraph—it's up to you.

A thought-provoking comment might be something like: *Now that I understand gender socialization, I see my behavior and that of my friends in a whole new way.* Or you may frame your comment as a question, such as: *Why aren't more people aware of the wide variation in the expression of gender across cultures?* Do not ask fact-finding questions like: *What is the definition of hegemony?*

STUDENT-LED DISCUSSION

The second half of Thursday classes will serve as an open discussion forum on the concepts and issues presented in *Gender Outlaws*. All students must sign up to serve on the panel for one Discussion Day. Those on the panel will lead the discussion on the reading from *Gender Outlaws*. Panel members will have with them their written reflections detailing **at least two** specific ways in which the assigned reading from *Gender Outlaws* relates to the week's gender topic and the reading from Kimmel. The reflections for Discussion Day will be handed in and count as a Reading Reflection.

To lead and be a part of Discussion, consider the piece from *Gender Outlaws* in relation to the reading from Kimmel and to class discussion. Is there some aspect of course material for which you gained a deeper understanding through the *Gender Outlaws* reading? In other words, what aspect of the readings was clarified and/or illuminated as a result of the *Gender Outlaws* piece? Alternatively, did the piece from *Gender Outlaws* confuse your understanding rather than help it?

As a discussion leader, you are not expected to know it all; the class is full of students who have read the same assignment that you read. Your job is to share your insights on the *Gender Outlaws* reading in relation to what was said in Kimmel and what has been discussed in class.

Understand that you have an important role to play when you are not one of the students leading discussion. Support your fellow students by doing the reading. Be engaged and attentive and ask for clarification if you do not understand what the discussion leaders are trying to say. Remember, you are also being graded on participation and, furthermore, at some point in the semester, you will be in their place.

GENDER PROJECT 35% OF COURSE GRADE

In this class, we will focus on the processes that contribute to the social construction of gender. You will undertake a semester-long project of your choice that explores one way in which this happens in our society. This project will be

closely monitored, with 5 sections of the paper due over the course of the semester and a poster and final draft of the paper due at the end of the semester. More detailed information about this project is provided in a separate document. **The preliminary papers are worth 10% total; the poster is worth 10%; and the paper is worth 15 % for a combined total of 35% of your course grade.**

EXAMS 30% OF COURSE GRADE

There will be two exams; one during the semester at the Midterm mark, and one during Finals Week at the end of the semester. All exams are open-book and open-notes take-home exams. You must use your **own books** and your **own notes** for the exams. I will provide details about each exam when the exam dates approach.

CLASS CANCELLATION

If the College cancels classes due to adverse weather conditions, the College has a system in place for informing students. The Three Rivers home page also contains that information. If class is canceled by me personally, I will inform you through your **CommNet email address**. I will also inform the administration who will then post a sign on the classroom door.

GRADING

I expect all assigned work to be handed in on the day it is due. I will not grade late work. An alternative due date is acceptable only under extraordinary circumstances and with at least one week's advance notice.

The Gender Project paper and poster will be graded on a 10-point rubric. This grading rubric can be found with the Paper Assignment Instructions.

Exams and your final grade for the course will be evaluated on a conventional A to F scale.

A 95 – 100	B- 80 – 83	D+ 67 – 69
A- 90 – 94	C+ 77 – 79	D 64 – 66
B+ 87 – 89	C 74 – 76	D- 60 – 63
B 84 – 86	C- 70 – 73	F under 60

Reading Reflections will be graded on a 3-point rubric as follows:

	3	2	1	0
CONTENT	The reflection fully addresses the reading and demonstrates creative thought about the ideas of the reading. Summary used only as reference.	The reflection addresses the reading and demonstrates some thought about the ideas of the reading. Summary used mainly as reference.	The reflection addresses the reading, but demonstrates very little thought about the ideas of the reading and often merely summarizes the material.	The reflection does not address the reading and/or demonstrates no thought about the ideas of the reading. All or almost all is summarization.
IDEA DEVELOPMENT	Has supporting details and examples that help make meaningful connections, either drawn from readings, in-class work, or personal experience	Has some supporting details and examples, but are not necessarily well-connected to the reading.	Has few details or examples which are poorly connected to the reading.	Has no details or examples.
COMPREHENSION	Fully addresses the reading and demonstrates creative thought about the ideas of the reading. Summary used only as reference.	Addresses the reading and demonstrates some thought about the ideas of the reading. Summary used mainly as reference.	Addresses the reading, but demonstrates very little thought about the ideas of the reading and often merely summarizes the material.	The reflection does not address the reading and/or demonstrates no thought about the ideas of the reading. All or almost all is summarization.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is essential to a useful education. Academic dishonesty erodes the legitimacy of every degree awarded by the College. I encourage students to discuss course material and study together, but everyone must do their own work. In this class and in the course of your academic career, present only your own best work; clearly document the sources of the material you use from others; and act at all times with honor. If you present someone else's work as your own (including cheating on assignments or exams and/or plagiarizing on assignments or papers), you will **automatically fail** the class.

COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Cellular phones are allowed in class only if they are **turned off** or turned to a **silent mode**. Vibrating mode is not allowed, as it can sometimes be heard. Under no circumstances are you to answer your phone or text message in class. If you must respond, please leave the room. If you answer your phone or text while in class, I will take your phone until the end of class.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Some of the material in this course involves issues, language, and areas that are sensitive in nature. Sociology courses can sometimes bring about unsettling feelings as they address personal matters as well as academic matters. This course will draw on our experiential knowledge as well as our cognitive understandings. It is important for us to be especially aware of the unique learning process in which we are involved and to insure a level of sensitivity for others' needs, feelings, and struggles.

For productive class interaction, I suggest that we all follow certain guidelines:

- Listen attentively to whoever is speaking and do not interrupt.
- Acknowledge that prejudice and discrimination based on social categories exist.
- Understand that we have all learned misinformation about these social categories.
- Agree not to blame ourselves or others for this misinformation while accepting responsibility for not repeating such misinformation after we have learned otherwise.
- Never demean, devalue, or in any way "put down" people for their experiences, backgrounds, or statements. This doesn't mean that you can't disagree, only that you must do so respectfully.

Please note that I run a low-tech classroom. I do not post or hand out my lecture notes, conduct PowerPoint lectures, or expect online discussions/submissions. I do write out my notes as you write yours, pause for your contributions, and expect in-person interaction.

ACCESSIBILITY

I intend for my courses to be as accessible to as many different people as possible. If there is any reason why my standard approach to college classrooms and coursework is difficult for you to accomplish or if you have any special issues that have the potential to interfere with your completion of the course requirements, please come and talk to me about it.

This may include but is not limited to: extreme shyness; difficulty with English; learning disability; physical disability; personal life issues; emotional/psychological challenges; past experiences that make course material anxiety-producing; students whose parents did not attend college and can't help their children understand the system as well as other parents might; and students who have more responsibility than the typical college student (ie: dependent parents, children, especially heavy outside workload). I will work with you to find a suitable arrangement. You must come to see me about this *within the first week of class* or *within one week of an issue's occurrence*.

If you have a disability that may affect your progress in this course, please meet with a Disability Service Provider (DSP) as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations cannot be provided until you submit a written authorization from a DSP. It is your responsibility to alert me about the disability and to make accommodation arrangements. I will do everything I can to help. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes a learning disability, contact the staff in the Counseling and Advising Office.

TRCC Disabilities Service Providers Counseling & Advising Office Room A-119	
Matt Liscum (860) 383-5240	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Disabilities • Sensory Disabilities • Medical Disabilities • Mental Health Disabilities
Chris Scarborough (860) 892-5751	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Disabilities • ADD/ADHD • Autism Spectrum

LEARNING PORTFOLIO

All students are required to maintain an online learning portfolio in Digication that uses the college template. Through this electronic tool students will have the opportunity to monitor their own growth in college-wide learning. The student will keep his/her learning portfolio and may continue to use the Digication account after graduation. A Three Rivers General Education Assessment Team will select and review random works to improve the college experience for all. Student work reviewed for assessment purposes will not include names and all student work will remain private and anonymous for college improvement purposes. Students will have the ability to integrate learning from the classroom, college, and life in general, which will provide additional learning opportunities. If desired, students will have the option to create multiple portfolios.

COURSE OUTLINE

This course outline serves as a general guide for students of SOC 211. It is subject to change based on class discussion, class activities, and current events. You will help shape what we pursue and what we emphasize. If the syllabus needs to be adjusted, changes will be noted in class. If you miss class, you are responsible for finding out about any changes.

Jan 22 • Introduction to SOC 211

Jan 27 • Thinking About Gender

Readings

Kimmel Chapter 1 Introduction p.1-17

Due

Reading Reflections

Jan 29 • Thinking About Gender

Readings

Bornstein & Bergman We're All Someone's Freak p.26-30

Feb 3 • Biological Perspectives

Readings

Kimmel Chapter 2 Ordained by Nature p.21-57
Bornstein & Bergman I Am the "I" p.107-111

Due

Reading Reflections (Kimmel only)

Feb 5 • No Classes Held

Feb 10 • Cultural Perspectives

Readings

Kimmel Chapter 3 Spanning the World p.58-85

Due

Reading Reflections

Feb 12 • Cultural Perspectives

Readings

Bornstein & Bergman Why You Don't Have to Choose a White Boy Name p.207-212

Due

Introduction section

Feb 17 • Social Constructionist Perspectives

Readings

Kimmel Chapter 5 The Social Construction of Gender Relations p.112-140

Due

Reading Reflections

Feb 19 • Social Constructionist Perspective

Readings

Bornstein & Bergman A Slacker and Delinquent in Basketball Shoes p.38-46
transcension p.170-181

Feb 24 • Family

Readings

Kimmel Chapter 6 The Gendered Family p.143-188

Due

Reading Reflections

Feb 26 • Family

Readings

Bornstein & Bergman Daddy Gets the Big Piece of Chicken p.136-142
The Manly Art of Pregnancy p.188-194

Mar 3 • Education

Readings

Kimmel Chapter 7 The Gendered Classroom p.189-220

Due

Reading Reflections

Mar 5 • Education

Readings

Bornstein & Bergman The Voice p.247-254

Due

Theoretical Analysis section

Mar 10 • Religion

Readings

Kimmel Chapter 8 Gender and Religion p.221-243

Due

Reading Reflections

Mar 12 • Religion

Readings

Bornstein & Bergman The Role of Culture in Cleansing Gender Outlaws p.255-259
Pilgrimage p. 261-267

Due

Methodology section

Mar 17 & 19 • Spring Break • No Classes Held

Mar 24 • Workplace

Readings

Kimmel Chapter 9 Separate and Unequal p.244-285

Due

Reading Reflections

Mar 26 • Workplace

Readings

Bornstein & Bergman Trans-Corporation p.31-37

Due

Midterm Exam

Mar 31 • Politics

Readings

Kimmel

Chapter 10 The Gender of Politics and the Politics of Gender p.287-316

Due

Reading Reflections

Apr 2 • Politics

Readings

Bornstein & Bergman

Identity, Schmeidenty p.54-59

Performance Piece p.85-88

Apr 7 • Media

Readings

Kimmel

Chapter 11 The Gendered Media p.317-343

Due

Reading Reflections

Apr 9 • Media

Readings

Bornstein & Bergman

Taking Up Space p.122-127

Cisgender Privilege p.268-272

Due

Findings Report section

Apr 14 • Interpersonal Relationships

Readings

Kimmel

Chapter 11 Gendered Intimacies p.347-369

Due

Reading Reflections

Apr 16 • Interpersonal Relationships

Readings

Bornstein & Bergman

The Old Folks at Home p.47-51

In Our Skin p.157-162

Apr 21 • Bodies

Readings

Kimmel

Chapter 12 The Gendered Body p.370-420

Due

Reading Reflections

Apr 23 • Bodies

Readings

Bornstein & Bergman

The Wrong Body p.83-84

Trans-ing Gender p.101-106

Due

Research Analysis

Apr 28 • Violence

Readings

Kimmel Chapter 14 The Gender of Violence p.421-452

Due

Reading Reflections

Apr 30 • Violence

Readings

Bornstein & Bergman Shot, Stabbed, Choked, Strangled, Broken p.239-241
On Living Well and Coming Free p. 143-152

May 5 • Semester Project Poster Session

Due

Gender Project Poster

May 7 • Aftermath

Readings

Bornstein & Bergman Calling for the Recognition of Self-Love p.204-206

Due

Gender Project Paper final draft

May 12 • Looking Ahead

Readings

Kimmel Epilogue "A Degendered Society"? p.453-458

Due

Reading Reflections

May 14 • Looking Ahead

Due

Final Exam