

Gender & Society
Socio933, #24320
Kansas State University
Wed 2:30 - 5:00
WA350/201-A

L. Susan Williams, Ph.D.
254 Waters Hall
532-4971/lswilli@ksu.edu
Office hrs: MW 10:30-11:30
& by appointment

GENDER & SOCIETY

a graduate seminar

SYLLABUS



Course Description:

Gender and Society explores gender relations as constructing and maintaining social institutions and the resulting experiences for gendered individuals. The course acquaints graduate students with gender theory, as it has developed through feminist epistemology, and with recent gender scholarship. The focus is on gender-as-interaction and gender-as-structure. The seminar is organized around four modules: reconceptualizing gender, gender as process, gender as structure, and gender as an analytical approach.

Course Materials:

- Connell, R.W. 1994. *Gender and Power: Society, the person, and sexual politics*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Ferguson, Ann Arnett. 2001. *Bad Boys: Public schools in the making of black masculinity*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Ferree, Myra Marx, Judith Lorber, and Beth B. Hess (Eds.). 1999. *Revisioning Gender*. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publications.
- Kingston, Anne. 2006. *The Meaning of Wife: A provocative look at women and marriage in the twenty-first century*. Holtzbrinck Publishers.
- Myers, Kristen, Cynthia D. Anderson, and Barbara J. Risman (Eds.) 1998. *Feminist Foundations*. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publications.*
- Pitts, Victoria. 2004. *In the Flesh: The cultural politics of body modification*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Siemsen, Cynthia. 2004. *Emotional Trials: The moral dilemmas of women criminal defense attorneys*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.

Course Readings Packet (availability tba). This will also include current events/issues. I invite seminar participants to bring articles or other media that help us stay current, interested, and alert to possibilities of gender theory application.

Course Objectives:

- ♀♂ Acquaint graduate students with the new gender paradigm as developed through feminist epistemology
- ♀♂ Familiarize students with recent gender scholarship, including methodologies
- ♀♂ Develop an awareness of gender as an organizing principle of life
- ♀♂ Equip students to critically analyze society as organized around gender and other socially constructed dimensions such as race, class, and sexual orientation

Class Format

Full class attendance and participation are essential. All seminar participants are expected to prepare and participate with appropriate comments and questions in the discussion of the readings. The course will be conducted in true seminar format. That is, I restrict lecturing, typically laying a base for the discussion topic, offering direction, and guiding topical transitions and synthesis. Each assignment is designed to optimize contributions from each seminar participant, but on a rotational basis so that you can best manage your time. Your interests and investment in this process will guide the direction of the seminar. You will be asked to assume leadership responsibilities in the seminar for at least one week.

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Course Assignments:

Course evaluation is based on a 1000-point distribution and focuses on participation, a series of experiential and writing exercises, and four essays based on the four class modules.

Discussion papers and participation	200 points
Gender analysis projects (2@100)	200 points
Essay exams (4@150)	600 points

Please note that all assignments, discussion, and participation exercises may be subject to oral defense. This is an important component in the process of becoming a scholar.

Discussion papers and participation. (50 points for leadership roles, 25 points each for 4 discussion papers). The purpose of this assignment is to engage you in the readings and with the process of discussing and analyzing gender. Doing this early in the course enables me to give you feedback and gives you time for adjustments in preparation for the essay exams. For the discussion paper assignments, you are asked to prepare four discussion papers during the semester of approximately 800-1000 words, which is approximately 3-4 pages double-spaced. ***Each discussion paper must be prepared and submitted during a different module*** (see course outline below), and the final discussion paper should be submitted no later than **April 25**. A discussion paper should be a thoughtful and considered comment on the full set of readings for any given week and should make at least some brief assessment of how the monograph (and/or major theoretical readings) included in that particular module fits into the general theoretical lessons for the readings set. In addition to the four discussion papers, you will prepare a presentation and lead the seminar in a full discussion (which goes beyond simple summary) for one class session and share in another as discussant for one of the monographs. For your seminar leadership role, you are required to prepare a detailed outline and a (briefer) handout for class members. I ask that you meet with me on **Monday** prior to the seminar, followed by a final outline, which is due to me by noon **Tuesday** (the day before class). All other papers are to be submitted electronically (via K-State Online) by **9:00pm on Tuesday**, the day prior to class meetings. ***See handout "Suggested Formats."***

The remaining portion of this component (**50 points**) is my subjective evaluation of your contributions to the seminar, based on your attendance, participation, and class discussion. To better guide you and me through this evaluation, I suggest you submit at least one full-bodied discussion question/paragraph to the Message Board by **Tuesday noon**, the day before each class. Alternatively, you may email me and/or the discussant (this may be especially important with sensitive issues), but please observe the same time deadline in order to give the discussant ample preparation time.

Gender analysis: Cultural symbols (100 points). This project is designed to help you become aware of the gendered world around us. Select a specific cultural symbol that exemplifies a part of the gender system (can we identify one that is not?) and critically analyze gender (and race, class, sexuality, age, etc...) codes that are being used to convey difference and status. Some examples include various objects (pants, bicycles, shoes, hair, jewelry) or cultural artifacts/practices (cartoons, advertising, the use of space, birth control practices, public rituals...). In a report (ideally about 1250 words; maximum is 5 double-spaced pages), discuss how difference and power (status) are marked, how they are related, what makes them

gendered codes, and how they may support or contest the existing gender order. Relate the socio-political meaning of your project and its focus to gender theory and to specific class readings; be sure to cite and fully document the readings. Prepare a one-page handout for seminar participants, outlining and/or summarizing your project and findings. This project is due in class **February 7**. Be prepared for an oral presentation in class. **See handout "Suggested Formats."**

Gender analysis: Doing gender (100 points). The purpose of this project is to sharpen your observational skills while analyzing the interactional component of gender – how we “do gender.” I suggest that you use a familiar social setting, such as your workplace, family gatherings, informal peer groups, church, social or political organizations, recreational or exercise centers, etc. **[Note: Only behaviors that are publicly observable can be used without violating ethics codes.]** Using one or more of the concepts we cover in class, analyze some specific aspect of doing gender (e.g., exaggerated femininity, “tough guise” masculinity, trying on gender, emotion work, segregation, gender subordination, etc.). Prepare a checklist before you begin actual observation so that you know how you will measure the concept (for e.g., what might constitute “gender subordination”?) This helps you to be explicit about what you observe and to demonstrate how those observations are connected to meanings of the interaction. (This does not mean that you will not find unexpected gender observations.) For this report (also about 1250 words, maximum 5 double-spaced pages), the introductory paragraph should set out the theoretical concept(s) that you are applying, and your analysis should directly connect to that concept(s). Prepare a one-page handout for seminar participants, outlining and/or summarizing your project and findings. This project is due in class **April 18**. Be prepared for an oral presentation in class. **See handout "Suggested Formats."**

Essay Exams. I thought carefully about this option. I am convinced that this four-essay option is the best way to reinforce the theoretical concepts and applications of gender theory, and then to evaluate your performance in the course. Advantages include smaller ‘bites’ of information, early and more frequent feedback, and multiple opportunities for improvement. One limitation is that the course outline is chock-full of due dates, and sometimes you have two papers due in one week. This means you must plan carefully. These limitations are more than offset by the above-mentioned advantages plus the fact that you will not face a 30+ page paper due at semester end. I will give you focused questions one week prior to the due date of each essay exam. I expect that each essay will be approximately 6-10 pages, double-spaced. We will discuss other details of the exam in seminar. I expect that at least one or two of the exams will be timed.

Course Outline

Module I: Reconceptualizing Gender



Week 1: January 17

Organizational meeting, introduction to gender

The Fourth Revolution, Part I (#1, #2, #3), *Feminist Foundations*

Bernard, Jessie. My four revolutions

Acker, Joan. Women and social stratification

Rossi, Alice S. Equality between the sexes

Scott, Joan. Some reflections on gender and politics, *Revisoning Gender*

Additional Readings

Lopata & Thorne, 1978. On the term sex roles. *Signs* 3:718-721.

England, Paula. 1999. The impact of feminist thought on sociology. *Contemporary Sociology* 28:263-268.

Question/comment: *From sex roles to gender - what's the big deal?*

Week 2: January 24

Introduction to gender theory

Selected essays from the mothers:

Bose, Christine. Jobs and the gender gap, *Feminist Foundations*

Huber, Joan. Trends in gender stratification, *Feminist Foundations*

Calasanti, Toni. Using the "master's tools" and beyond, *Feminist Foundations*

Chafetz, Janet Saltzman. From sex/gender roles to gender stratification,
Feminist Foundations

Stacey, Judith & Barrie Thorne. The missing feminist revolution in sociology,
Feminist Foundations

Kanter, Rosabeth Moss. The impact of hierarchical structures on the work behavior of
women and men, *Feminist Foundations*

Marx Ferree, Myra, Beth Hess, & Judith Lorber. Introduction, *Revisoning Gender*

Evolving perspectives

Lever, Sex differences in the games children play, *Feminist Foundations*

Thorne, Gender play (packet)

Seminar Leader #1 _____

Question/comment: "Just the facts, Ma'am" - and what do they mean? What do gender relations have to do with it? Compare and contrast the work of Lever and Thorne in terms of sex roles versus a gender perspective.

Week 3: January 31

Setting the framework for theorizing gender

Connell, R.W.: Chs. 1-3, *Gender and Power*

Walters, Suzanna Danuta: Sex, text, and context in *Revisioning Gender*

Acker, Joan: Rewriting class, race, and gender in *Revisioning Gender*

Glenn, Evelyn Nakano: The social construction and institutionalization of gender and race in *Revisioning Gender*

Essays from *The Gendered Object* (Kirkham): "Bicycles" (Oddy); "Dolls" (Hendershot); "The Suit" (Wright); "Cosmetics" (Kirkham & Weller). (Packet)

Seminar Leader #2 _____

Discuss and prepare for gendered object project

Question/comment: How does gender become an element of power (and vice versa)? How does gendered status become embedded in inanimate objects? What purpose is served?

Last Chance: Module I Discussion Paper

Week 4: February 7

Getting current and making gender visible

Read the 'state of the discipline' section in *Gender & Society*, December 2006.

**Project Gendered Cultural Symbols due
(Be prepared with report and presentation)**

Essay I due

Module II: Gender as Process



Week 5: February 14

Gendering bodies and situations

Connell, R.W.: Chs. 4-7, *Gender and Power*

West, Candace & Don Zimmerman: *Doing Gender, Feminist Foundations*

Williams, L. Susan: *Trying on gender* (packet)

Litewka, Jack: *The socialized penis* (packet)

Porter, Claire T.: *I'm taking back my pussy* (packet)

Seminar Leader #3 _____

Question/comment: "Sex differences" are usually characterized as differences in genitalia and/or learned roles. What is Connell's critique and argument about this way of looking at gender? What is the 'right' question to ask?

Week 6: February 21

Establishing masculinity and femininity

Connell, R.W.: Ch. 8-10, *Gender and Power*

Hoschchild, Arlie Russell: *The managed heart* (packet)

Williams, L. Susan: *My name is not María* (packet)

Seminar Leader #4 _____

Question/comment: How does Masculinity and Femininity become established? How 'many' versions can we count? Or should we 'count'? What's the point?

Week 7: February 28

Diversity in masculinity and femininity

Ferguson, Ann Arnett : *Bad Boys*

Discussants for Bad Boys _____

Question/comment: Does Ferguson make gender visible? How is masculinity portrayed? What purpose (and who) is served? What can we learn from Ferguson's methodology?

***Last Chance: Module II Discussion Paper
Essay 2 due***

Module III: Gender as Structure



Week 8: March 7

Gender, the state, and the global village

Connell, R.W.: Chs. 11-12, *Gender and Power*

Borchorst, Anette: Feminist thinking about the welfare state, *Revisioning Gender*

Moghadam, Valentine M.: Gender and the global economy, *Revisioning Gender*

Nader, Laura: *Women and Islam* (packet)

Seminar Leader #5

Question/comment: Is patriarchy global and stable? Specific and contestable? Is global feminism possible?

Week 9: March 14

Gender and work

Martin, Patricia Yancey & David L. Collinson: Gender and sexuality in organizations, *Revisioning Gender*

Brush, Lisa D.: Gender, work, who cares?!, *Revisioning Gender*

Siemsen: *Emotional Trials*

Discussants for Emotional Trials

Question/comment: How do we observe gendered organizations? Develop empirical measures? Write organizational policy that considers gendering? Train ourselves and our 'daughters' strategies for managing gender at work?

Spring Break: March 21

Week 10: March 28

Gender and crime

Tolman, Deborah L.: *Doing Desire* (packet)

Amir & Biniamin: Abortion approval as a ritual of symbolic control

Dworkin, Shari Lee & Faye Linda Wachs: *Disciplining the body* (packet)

Sagarin, Edward & Donal E.J. MacNamara: *The homosexual as a crime victim* (packet)

Stratton, Jack C.: *The myth of the 'battered husband syndrome'* (packet)

Messerschmidt, James: From patriarchy to gender (packet)

Seminar Leader #6 _____

Question/comment: *Consider the body as a contested terrain in a system of gendered justice: What/who will gain control, and why?*

Week 11: April 4

Gendered families and the future

Kingston: *The Meaning of Wife*

Discussants for Wife _____

Question/comment: *What is the family of the future? What if this is "as good as it gets?"*

Last Chance: Module III Discussion Paper

Essay 3 due

Module IV: Gender as an Analytical Approach



Week 12: April 11

Gender and identity today

Connell, R.A. : Making gendered people, *Revisioning Gender*

Lorber, Judith: Embattled terrain: Gender and sexuality, *Revisioning Gender*

Dworkin and Messner: Just do...what? Sport, bodies, gender, *Revisioning Gender*

Risman, Barbara & Kristen Myers: As the twig is bent (packet)

Seminar Leader #7 _____

Question/comment: Beyond gender? What's next?

Week 13: April 18

Gender and change

Connell, R.W.: Ch. 13, *Gender and Power*

Reskin, Barbara: Bringing the men back in, *Feminist Foundations*

Russo, Ann: We cannot live without our lives (packet)

Kimmel, Michael: Saving the males: VMI and the Citadel (packet)

Benokraitis, Nicole: Working in the ivory basement (packet)

Seminar Leader #8 _____

Question/comment: Everyday gender and tomorrow.

Doing Gender Project due

(Be prepared with report and oral presentation)

Week 14: April 25

Gender theory in action

Pitts: *In the Flesh*

Discussants for In the Flesh _____

Question/comment: A model for analyzing gender identity and the role of the researcher: what can we learn from Pitts?

Last Chance: Module IV Discussion Paper

Essay 4 due

Week 15: May 2

A gendered seminar in action!

Presents, presentations, celebrations, and other gender events!