

Women & Men in Contemporary Society
SOC 223/WMST 223, Section 301
Intersession 2006

Class Information:

Faner 1326
M-F: 9:50-11:50 a.m.
Office hours: M, T: 1-4 p.m.,
or by appointment

Instructor Information:

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Required Text:

Kramer, Laura. 2005. The Sociology of Gender: A Brief Introduction, 2nd Edition. Los Angeles, CA: Roxbury.

Required Electronic Readings (all from Disch, Estelle. 2006. Reconstructing Gender: A Multicultural Anthology, 4th edition. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Company.). These are available through the Morris Library home page: <http://www.lib.siu.edu/>:

1. Arditti, Rita. "Women's Human Rights: It's about Time!"
2. Crittenden, Ann. "Sixty Cents to a Man's Dollar."
3. Graff, E.J. "What is Marriage For?"
4. Kaye/Kantrowitz, Melanie. "Women, Violence and Resistance."
5. Lorber, Judith. "The Social Construction of Gender."
6. McIntosh, Peggy. "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack."
7. Messner, Michael A. "Boyhood, Organized Sports, and the Construction of Masculinities."
8. Sabo, Don. "Masculinities and Men's Health: Moving toward Post-Superman Era Prevention."
9. Sadker, Myra and David. "Missing in Interaction."

Additional Readings as assigned throughout the semester.

Course Description:

This course is designed to familiarize you with an overview of men's and women's roles in society, particularly focusing on their roles in the economy and the family. Explanations for and the outcomes of our gendered society will be discussed in some detail, including the politicization of gendered concerns and gendered violence.

Course Objectives:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of such concepts as gender, discrimination, feminism, and patriarchy.
2. Display basic knowledge of gender's significance in U.S. history, culture, and social structure.
3. Demonstrate critical thinking about the dialogue emerging from different theories and perspectives pertaining to gender, race, class, and sexuality.

4. Apply concepts from personal and/or family experience to analyze gender as a form of human mutuality that must be understood to enhance the common good.

Course Outline: The course is loosely divided into three substantive areas.

Part I: Why are men and women different?

The title for this section of the class presupposes that men and women are different and that we can explain those differences using biology, psychology, or sociology. We will discuss some presumed differences between men and women and test the various theories for their accuracy and appropriateness.

Part II: How are men and women different?

We begin the second part of the class by asking IF men and women lead different lives. To do this, we will contrast women's and men's experiences in three important social institutions: the family, the economy, and the educational system. By the end of this section we should have a clear understanding of the sociological differences between men and women.

Part III: What is the outcome of gender differentiation?

In the final section of the course we will delve more deeply into the implications of gender differentiation by focusing on some of its violent and nonviolent outcomes: sexual assault, domestic violence, compulsory heterosexuality, and interpersonal relations. Finally, we will discuss strategies for addressing these outcomes of sexism.

Course Requirements:

Exams: There will be 2 exams in this class designed to evaluate your understanding of material from each of the sections of the class. Each exam will contain a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and long answer essay questions. Exams will not be comprehensives, but may contain information from earlier sections of the class. Each exam will be worth 100 points.

Group Presentation: You will work in groups to prepare a 15-20 minute research presentation on a designated topic. You must incorporate class materials and *additional scholarly resources* into your presentation. The presentation should include all of the following: a) recent research on both men and women on the identified topic; b) an explanation (using theory) about why the topic is gendered; c) at least one proposal on how to change or improve the current situation for men and/or women; d) 2-3 discussion questions which you will use to generate class discussion following your presentation. Creativity is strongly encouraged.

Your grade for the presentation will be a group grade; if you believe members of your group did not participate fully in the preparation or delivery of the presentation you should talk to the instructor BEFORE the presentation. Each presentation is worth 50 points. **To receive credit you must turn in ONE complete GROUP bibliography, a DETAILED presentation outline, and the discussion questions on the day of the presentation.** The group presentation topics are:

- Group 1: Historical and Cross-cultural variations of gender*
- Group 2: Media images of gender*
- Group 3: Sex Differences (Testing and Abilities)*
- Group 4: Dating and commitment*
- Group 5: Gendered children's play*
- Group 6: Gendering and degendering language*
- Group 7: Women and Men in Non-traditional careers*
- Group 8: Violence on college campuses*

Class Assignments: You will be given the opportunity to participate in 4 assignments during the course of the semester; you must complete TWO. Some of these projects may involve an out-of-class activity. You will write up your experiences with these projects in 2-3 pages, using materials from the course in your discussion. Each assignment is worth 25 points.

Class Participation: This course is set up to provide every student with ample opportunity to discuss topics of their choosing. However, to be an informed participant in class discussion you will need to complete the assigned readings in a timely manner. To reward individuals who contribute in a consistent and cogent manner, students may earn up to 15 extra credit class participation points. This does NOT mean you are expected to dominate every discussion to receive credit. You MUST abide by the class ground rules to receive full credit. *Students who miss more than 3 classes will receive 0 class participation points.*

Course Ground Rules:

Class discussion, at times, may involve controversial issues. Students are expected to listen to the viewpoints expressed by others. If you disagree with what someone has said, you are encouraged to express your disagreement *but you must do so in a civil manner*. Failure to treat other individuals in the course with dignity and respect will result in zero (0) class participation credit and may result in additional course sanctions. This is not an attempt to create an atmosphere of political correctness; rather, the goal is to establish a norm of open dialogue in which opinions may be expressed and mutually discussed respectfully.

Further, as a class we must acknowledge that racism, sexism, classism, ageism and homophobia exist. One of the outcomes of the existence of these oppressions is the potential for learning misinformation about groups that are different from ourselves. We have an obligation, as a class, to learn from each other, to learn about ourselves, and NOT to continue to repeat misinformation after we have learned otherwise.

Finally, there may be occasions during the semester when an individual will make a comment that they will want to keep within the confines of the classroom. Please respect their privacy and do not repeat any personal discussions that may arise in the classroom.

Course Policies:

1. Grades: Final grades are determined by combining all points earned and referring to the following scale:
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| A | = | 268-300 points |
| B | = | 238-267 points |
| C | = | 208-237 points |
| D | = | 178-207 points |
| F | = | fewer than 178 points |

2. Make-ups: In-class activities, including presentations, can not be made up. Make-ups of exams may be allowed if the student provides a written excuse from a qualified professional. Late assignments lose 10% of their worth each day they are late.

3. Cheating/Academic Dishonesty: College and university regulations regarding plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will be upheld in this course. If you are not familiar with the definitions and consequences of cheating or with your rights, refer to your Student Handbook or see an academic advisor.

ANTICIPATED COURSE SCHEDULE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic/Assignment</u>	<u>K=Kramer Required Reading</u>
May 15	Introduction: Defining Sex & Gender; Defining Feminism	K: Ch 1; McIntosh
May 16	The Sociology of Gender	Lorber, Messner
May 17	<i>Group 1: Historical and Cross-cultural variations of gender</i>	
May 18	Popular Culture and Gender; <i>Group 2: Media images of gender</i>	K: Ch 2
May 19	Biology is Destiny; Health and gender	Sabo
	Assignment 1 Due	
May 22	The Psychology of Gender; <i>Group 3: Sex Differences (Testing and Abilities)</i>	K: Ch 3
May 23	The Gendered Family	K: Ch 4; Graff
	Assignment 2 Due	
May 24	<i>Group 4: Dating and commitment</i>	
May 25	Review; EXAM 1	
May 26	The Gendered Classroom	K: Ch 5
May 30	<i>Group 5: Gendered children's play</i>	Sadker
May 31	Gendered Communication; <i>Group 6: Gendering and degendering language</i>	
June 1	The Gendered Workplace	K: Ch 6; Crittenden
	Assignment 3 Due	
June 2	<i>Group 7: Women and Men in Non-traditional careers</i>	
June 5	Gendered violence	Kaye/Kantrowitz
June 6	<i>Group 8: Violence on college campuses</i>	
June 7	Gendered politics	K: Ch 7; Arditti
June 8	Degendering Society: The right goal?	K: Ch 8
	Assignment 4 Due	
June 9	Review; FINAL EXAM	