

University of Pennsylvania

**Sociology of Gender**  
Sociology 122/Gender Studies 122  
Spring 2010

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**Overview:** Gender is an organizing principle of society, shaping social structures, cultural understandings, processes of interaction, and identities in ways that have profound consequences. It affects every aspect of people's lives, from their intimate relationships to their participation in work, family, government, and other social institutions and their place in the stratification system. Yet gender is such a taken-for-granted basis for differences among people that it can be hard to see the underlying social structures and cultural forces that reinforce or weaken the social boundaries that define gender. Differences in behavior, power, and experience are often seen as the result of biological imperatives or of individual choice. A sociological view of gender, in contrast, emphasizes how gender is socially constructed and how structural constraints limit choice. This course examines how differences based on gender are created and sustained, with particular attention to how other important bases of personal identity and social inequality--race and class—interact with patterns of gender relations. We will also seek to understand how social change happens and how gender inequality might be reduced.

**Readings:** There are three required books, which are (or will be) available at House of Our Own bookstore (3920 Spruce Street, 215 222-1576).

R.W. Connell, *Gender*, 2nd edition, 2009.

Estelle Freedman, *No Turning Back: The History of Feminism and the Future of Women*, 2002.

Judith Lorber, *Breaking the Bowls: Degendering and Feminist Change*, 2005.

Additional readings, marked with an asterisk on the syllabus, will be available on Blackboard.

**Requirements:**

- 1) Show up for class on time, do the reading, and be ready to participate in class discussions. No texting, internet browsing, or other distractions, please.
- 2) Frequent very short (from a few lines to a page) writing tasks. I will sometimes ask you to bring these to class and sometimes ask you to spend a few minutes writing at the beginning of class. These writings will not receive grades; I will simply note credit/no credit.

3) Two short papers (approximately 5-6 double-spaced pages) on assigned topics, details forthcoming. The due dates are **February 18th** and **April 8th**. You must both turn in a printed copy of your paper and submit an electronic version through Blackboard.

4) A midterm (**March 24th**) and a final (**May 5<sup>th</sup>**).

Grades will be determined as follows:

Participation and short writing assignments: 15%

Paper #1: 20%

Midterm: 15%

Paper #2: 20%

Final: 30%

Be sure to familiarize yourself with the University's Code of Academic Integrity:  
<http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/osl/acadint.html>

### **Schedule:**

January 14: **Introduction**

Week of 1/18: **Gender as a social construction**

Freedman, Chap. 1

\* Evelyn Nakano Glenn, "The Social Construction and Institutionalization of Gender and Race." In Myra Marx Ferree, Judith Lorber, and Beth B. Hess, eds., *Revisioning Gender*, 1999.

Week of 1/25: **Beyond dichotomy – thinking about difference**

Connell, Chaps. 1, 2, and 4

\* Sharon Preeves, "Sexing the Intersexed: An Analysis of Sociocultural Responses to Intersexuality." *Signs* 27: 2, 2001.

\* Walter L. Williams, "The Berdache Tradition." Excerpt from *The Spirit and the Flesh*, 1992.

Week of 2/1: **Gender as process, gender and identity**

\* Candace West and Don H. Zimmerman, "Doing Gender." *Gender & Society* 1, 1987.

\* Raine Dozier, "Beards, Breasts, and Bodies: Doing Sex in a Gendered World." *Gender & Society* 19:3, 2005.

\* Betsy Lucal, "What It Means to Be Gendered Me: Life on the Boundaries of a Dichotomous Gender System." *Gender and Society* 13: 6, 1999.

\* Francine M. Deutsch, "Undoing Gender." *Gender & Society* 21:1, 2007.

Week of 2/8: **Theorizing gender**

Freedman, Chaps. 2-5

Connell, Chaps. 3 and 5

Week of 2/15: **The power of cultural frames**

**First paper, Thursday, February 18.**

- \* Michael A. Messner, "Barbie Girls versus Sea Monsters: Children Constructing Gender." *Gender & Society* 14:6, 2000.
- \* Karen Walker, "Men, Women, and Friendship: What They Say, What They Do." *Gender & Society* 8:2, 1994.
- \* Beth A. Eck, "Men Are Much Harder: Gendered Viewing of Nude Images." *Gender & Society* 17: 5, 2003.
- \* Laura M. Carpenter, "Gender and the Meaning and Experience of Virginity Loss in the Contemporary United States." *Gender & Society* 16:3, 2002.
- \* Robin Leidner, "Serving Hamburgers and Selling Insurance: Gender, Work, and Identity in Interactive Service Jobs." *Gender & Society* 5:2, 1991.

Week of 2/22: **Engendering individuals: How are children's worlds gendered?**

- \* Karin Martin, "Becoming a Gendered Body: Practices of Preschools." *American Sociological Review* 63:4, 1998.
- \* Karin Martin, "William Wants a Doll. Can He Have One?: Feminists, Child Care Advisors, and Gender-Neutral Child Rearing." *Gender & Society* 19:4, 2005.
- \* Ellen Jordan and Angela Cowan, "Warrior Narratives in the Kindergarten Classroom: Renegotiating the Social Contract?" *Gender & Society* 9:6, 1995.
- \* C. Shawn McGuffey and B. Lindsay Rich, "Playing in the Gender Transgression Zone: Race, Class, and Hegemonic Masculinity in Middle Childhood." *Gender & Society* 13:5, 1999.

Week of 3/1: **Meanings of masculinity and femininity: Racial, ethnic, and class variation in the U.S.**

- \* L. Susan Williams, "Trying on Gender: Gender Regimes and the Process of Becoming Women." *Gender & Society* 16:1, 2002.
- \* C.J. Pascoe, "'Dude, You're a Fag': Adolescent Masculinity and Fag Discourse." *Sexualities* 8:3, 2005.
- \* Julie Bettie, "Women without Class: *Chicas, Cholas*, Trash, and the Presence/Absence of Class Identity." *Signs* 26: 1, 2000.
- \* Karen D. Pyke and Denise L. Johnson, "Asian American Women and Racialized Femininities." *Gender & Society* 17:1, 2003.
- \* Elijah Anderson, "The Black Male in Public." Chap. 6 of *Streetwise: Race, Class, and Change in an Urban Community*, 1990.

Week of 3/8: **Spring break**

Week of 3/15: **Beyond childhood socialization: what explains adult choices and behavior?**

- \* Rosabeth Moss Kanter, "The Impact of Hierarchical Structures on the Work Behavior of Women and Men." *Social Problems* 23, 1976.
- \* Jennifer Pierce, "Rambo Litigators: Emotional Labor in a Male Dominated Job." Chap. 3 of *Gender Trial: Emotional Lives in Contemporary Law Firms*, 1995.
- \* Kathleen Gerson, "Turning Toward Family Involvement," Chap. 6 of *No Man's Land: Men's Changing Commitments to Work and Family*, 1993.
- \* Nazli Kibria, "Power, Patriarchy, and Gender Conflict in the Vietnamese Immigrant Community." *Gender & Society* 4, 1990.

Week of 3/22: **Gendered bodies: agency and control**

**Midterm in class, Tuesday, March 24.**

- \* Joan Jacobs Brumberg, "Introduction: The Body as Evidence," from *The Body Project: An Intimate History of American Girls*, 1997.
  - \* Eugenia Kaw, "Medicalization of Racial Features: Asian-American Women and Cosmetic Surgery." *Medical Anthropology* 7:1, 1993.
- Freedman, Chaps. 9-10

Week of 3/29: **Sexuality: pleasure, power, and identities**

Freedman, Chap. 11

- \* Barbara Sherman Heyl, "Homosexuality: A Social Phenomenon." In Kathleen McKinney and Susan Sprecher, eds., *Human Sexuality: The Societal and Interpersonal Context*, 1989.
  - \* Stephen Valocchi, "Not Yet Queer Enough: The Lessons of Queer Theory for the Sociology of Gender and Sexuality." *Gender & Society* 19:6, 2005.
- Lorber, Intro and Chap. 1

Week of 4/5: **Gender exploitation and violence**

**Second paper due Thursday, April 8.**

- \* Ayana Byrd, "Claiming Jezebel: Black Female Subjectivity and Sexual Expression in Hip-Hop." In Vivien Labaton and Dawn Lundy Martin, eds., *The Fire This Time: Young Activists and the New Feminism*, 2004.
- Freedman, Chap. 12
- \* Tim Beneke, "Men on Rape" 1982. Reprinted in Michael Kimmell and Michael Messner, eds., *Men's Lives*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, 2001.
  - \* Jan Goodwin, "The Ultimate Growth Industry: Trafficking in Women and Girls." *On the Issues*, 1998. Reprinted in Estelle Disch, ed., *Reconstructing Gender* 4<sup>th</sup>

edition, 2006.

**Week of 4/12: Gender, work, and families, I**

Freedman, Chaps. 6-7.

- \* Marjorie DeVault, "Doing Housework: Feeding and Family Life." In Naomi Gerstel and Harriet Gross, eds., *Families and Work*, 1987.
- \* Chisun Lee, "The Heart of the Work: Professionals Navigating a Personal World." *Village Voice*, April 17-23, 2002.
- \* Michele Lamont, "The World in Moral Order." Chap. 1 of *The Dignity of Working Men: Morality and the Boundaries of Race, Class, and Immigration*, 2000.
- \* Kathleen Gerson, "Moral Dilemmas, Moral Strategies, and the Transformation of Gender: Lessons from Two Generations of Work and Family Change." *Gender & Society* 16: 2002.

**Week of 4/19: Gender, work, and families, II**

Connell, Chap. 7

Freedman, Chap. 8

Lorber, Chaps. 2-3.

**Week of 4/26: Gender politics and possible futures**

Connell, Chap. 8

Freedman, Chap. 14

Lorber, Chaps. 5 - Epilogue.

**Final exam: Wednesday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 – 11:00**