

The Scientific Study of Sex and Gender

IDIS 391 (The Social Impact of Science: U1)
Women's Studies WOST 391

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Office Hours: Monday 9:00 - 10:00
Tuesday 9:00 - 10:00
Wednesday 9:00 - 10:00
Thursday 9:00 - 10:00
Friday by appointment only.

If none of these times are convenient for you, other times can be arranged by appointment. Please feel free to call me.

Class time: Monday and Wednesday 3rd period

Classroom: 235 PPHAC

Course Description:

This interdisciplinary course focuses on the distinction between and intersections of sex and gender. Students will learn how to evaluate critically the theoretical and methodological assumptions made by psychologists and biologists with respect to sex and gender. We will discuss some important research claims and theoretical models that have both reinforced and challenged the sex/gender binary. We will explore historical and contemporary issues related to concepts of normalcy and the construction of masculinity and femininity. We will consider issues such as determinist theories of women and men's natures; sociobiology and related feminist critiques, and the role played by medical technology in influencing sexuality.

Course Requirements

Gender Identity Analysis:

Gender identity refers to how one thinks of one's own gender: whether one thinks of oneself as a man (masculine) or as a woman (feminine). Society prescribes arbitrary rules or gender roles (how one is supposed to and not supposed to dress, act, think, feel, relate to others, think of oneself, etc.) based on one's sex (biological component).

In this gender identity analysis you are to discuss and describe your own gender identity development with respect to three of the following socializing agents: parents, siblings, peers, education, religion, and the media. This 3-5 page analysis is due on February 4th.

Discussion Leader:

Each individual will share the responsibility for guiding our class discussion on a portion of the assigned reading. Guiding the discussion does not mean that you talk the entire period, although it might mean that you give a brief review or summary of the material or conduct an in-class activity (e.g., a survey, a poll, a small-group exercise, a video clip, etc).

You will be presenting your topic with another student-- it is important to be well coordinated and non-overlapping. Your topic should be well defined and you should read beyond the assigned readings as you prepare for your role as discussion leader.

The Discussion Leader will submit a write-up that includes: (i) a detailed-outline of the portion of the reading you are responsible for, (ii) a one-paragraph (single-spaced) summary of the "take-home" messages of your portion of the reading, and (iii) a list of discussion questions that will be used when you lead the discussion.

Each student will receive an individual grade for their portion of the presentation, as well as written feedback from your classmates. Your grade will also reflect the quality of your written material.

Response Papers:

You are required to submit three response papers this semester. Response papers are your chance to decide whether or not you agree with a particular text and to figure out why. Response papers should be 2 pages typed. Response papers are due on the day we cover the readings to which you are responding. Your response papers should address the following, although not necessarily in this order and not necessarily individually:

1. **Key Premises of the Reading:** What is the main point of the reading? How does the author support the main point? What evidence is offered? What assumptions about sex and gender are being made in the reading?
2. **Context of the Reading:** How does the reading relate to the other readings this week – is it saying the same thing? Something different? How does the reading fit with class discussions? Your own experiences? Material from other courses?
3. **Your Stand on the Reading:** Do you agree with the ideas in this reading? Why? What makes you feel this way – class discussions? Your own experiences? Material from your other courses, reading, or your job/career?

You are not to submit a Response Paper for the topic you lead a discussion on. You must submit your first two Response Papers on or before February 27th.

ACTivism Projects:

All students must complete an ACTivism project. You may complete the "Act" with other students. However, students must write their own papers and reactions.

1. Choose a sex/gender issue that you feel strongly about and would like to study.
2. Read about the issue and identify previous activists.
3. Plan an "action".
4. In a 3-5 page paper summarize the issue and previous ACTivist's approaches to deal with the issue and include an ACTion plan. Plans need to include: time, place, people, the "act" and any possible problems. Due dates will be determined in class.
5. Complete the "ACT"
6. Present your "ACTivism" experience to the class on one of the following two dates (4/14 & 4/16). Design and create a resource page on your topic to give to other students on the day of your presentation. This page can include suggested books, films, web pages, articles, community organizations. You must also submit a reaction paper to me - including your reaction and the reaction of others to your "ACT"

Class Participation:

Because the discussion of readings is a major component of this course, you will be graded on your preparation for and involvement in class. This approach expects that you engage fully with the material and explore your own beliefs about the class material. *Your participation grade is based on the quality of your own original comments and on your ability to listen to others' comments and respond. Participation means listening AND speaking.* Although I set the criteria, you assign your own participation grade daily. As part of your class participation grade, I expect you to complete the readings prior to coming to class.

In this class, we will discuss issues that are highly controversial. These can often be emotional topics about which many people hold strong beliefs and values. We all come from different perspectives on these issues. It is likely that we will disagree with each other. I welcome and encourage lively discussion, as they are necessary for true learning to occur. Indeed, much of this course will center on discussion. However, disagreements should not take the form of personal attack. That is absolutely unacceptable. One of the goals of this course is to challenge you to think deeply and critically about these issues, not to change your mind. All points of view are welcome in this class, but comments made must be respectful of others in the class.

Your participation grade is derived partly from (1) any in-class activities we do (which may include free-writing, pop quizzes, small-group projects, show-and-tell, reactions to film/TV/music clips, etc) and (2) from my own judgment about your commitment to full participation in the course.

Pop Quizzes:

I reserve the right to give "pop-quizzes" if I get the impression that you are not keeping up with the class material on your own.

Course Evaluation

Your course grade will be based upon your performance on the following course requirements:

Response Papers	30
Discussion Leader	15
Gender Identity Analysis	15
ACTivism Project	20
Class Participation	<u>20</u>
	100%

Required Readings

(Preves) Preves, S. E. (2005). *Intersex and Identity: The Contested Self*. Rutgers University Press.

(Course Packet) Will be distributed in class

Additional readings may be distributed in class or placed on reserve in Reeves Library.

Course Schedule

Week 1 (1/14 & 1/16)

Syllabus review and Introductions (1/14)

Introduction to the Scientific Study of Sex and Gender (1/16)
(An overview)

Week 2 (1/21 & 1/23)

Gender Differences: Real or Stereotype? (1/21)
(Stereotype Analysis and Meta-Analysis Findings)

Readings:

Lips, H. (2005). *Masculinity and Femininity: Myths and Stereotypes*. Chapter 1 In *Sex and Gender: An Introduction*, McGraw Hill Press.

Masculinity and Femininity (1/23)
(Definitions, Male/Female Dichotomy, Measurements, and Androgyny)

Readings:

Lippa, R. A. (2005). *Masculinity and Femininity: Gender within Gender*. Chapter 2. In *Gender, Nature and Nurture*. LEA Press.

Week 3 (1/28 & 1/30)

Theories of Gender (1/28)
(Evolutionary and Socio-Biological Approach)

Readings:

Buss, D. (2004). Psychological Sex Differences: Origins through Sexual Selection. In Kimmel, M. & Aronson, A. The Gendered Society Reader, Oxford Press.

* Student Discussion Leaders

Theories of Gender (1/30)
(Psychological Approach)

Readings:

Helgeson, V; S. (2002). Sex-Related Comparisons: Theory In Helgeson's The Psychology of Gender, Prentice Hall. Pages 142 – 185 (start reading on page 152).

Week 4 (2/4 & 2/6)

Gender Identity Analysis Due (2/4)
(Commonalities and Differences)

Biological Variables and Prenatal Development (2/6)
(The Process of Becoming Male or Female)

Readings:

Hyde, J.S. (2004). Biological Influences on Women's Behavior. In Half the Human Experience: The Psychology of Women, 6th Ed. Houghton Mifflin.

Week 5 (2/11 & 2/13)

Disorders of Sexual Development(2/11)
(Inter-sexed, Early Exposure to Hormones; and Sex Reassignment)

Readings:

Preves Chapter 1

Week 5 continued

Sexual Ambiguity (2/13)
(Medical Sex Assignment)

Readings:

Preves Chapter 2

* Student Discussion Leaders

Week 6 (2/18 & 2/20)

Intersex: Life Experiences and Intersex Pride (2/18 & 2/20)

Readings:

Preves Chapters 3, 4, & 5

* Student Discussion Leaders

Week 7 (2/25 & 2/27)

Sexuality: Sexual Lives (2/25)
(Double Standard, the Meaning of Sexuality and Sexual Activity)

Readings:

Lips, H. (2005). Sexual Lives and Orientations. Chapter 7 In Sex and Gender: An Introduction, McGraw Hill Press. Note: Reading for Week 7 – 9.

* Student Discussion Leaders

Differences in Sexuality (2/27)
(The Full Spectrum)

Readings:

Gallo, V. and Robinson, P.R. (2000). Is there a “Homosexual Brain” ?, The Gay and Lesbian Review, 12 – 15.

Lips Chapter 7 continued

Rust, P.C. (2001). Two many and not enough, Journal of Bisexuality, 1(1); 216 – 229.

* Student Discussion Leaders

Week 8 (3/3 & 3/5)

Spring Recess – No class

Week 9 (3/10 & 3/12)

Attitudes Regarding LGBT (3/10)

Readings:

Lips Chapter 7 continued

* Student Discussion Leaders

Sexuality and Power (3/12)
(Pornography and Coercive Sexuality)

Readings:

Barron, M. & Kimmel, M.S. (2004). Sexual Violence in Three
Pornographic Media. Journal of Sex Research. 37 (2). 343 – 354.

Lips Chapter 7 continued

* Student Discussion Leaders

Week 10 (3/17 & 3/19)

Attend one performance of The Laramie Project
Arena Theatre (March 13 – 16)

Attend the TBTN March and Rally (3/19)

Week 11 (3/24 & 3/26)

Violence and Sex and Gender: Processing our Experiences (3/24)

Transsexuals (3/26)
(The Early Years, MTF, and FTM)

Readings:

Gagne, P. Tewksbury, R., & McGaughey, D.(1997).
Coming out and crossing over: Identity formation and proclamation
in a transgender community, *Gender & Society*, 230- 249.

O'Hartigan, M.D. (1993). Changing sex is not
changing gender, *Sound Out*, 20.

Week 12 (3/31 & 4/2)

Transsexuals (3/31)
(Therapy)

Readings:

Brown, M.L. & Rounsley, C.A. (1996). *True Selves*,
Chapters 5 (Therapy)

* Student Discussion Leaders

Transsexuals (4/2)
(Transition and Surgery)

Readings:

Brown, M.L. & Rounsley, C.A. (1996). *True Selves*,
6 (Transition) and 9 (Medical/Surgical Options).

* Student Discussion Leaders

Week 13 (4/7 & 4/9)

Sex and Gender Diversity Panel (4/7)

Reflections on the Panel

Week 14 (4/14 & 4/16)

ACTivism Presentations

Week 15 (4/21 & 4/23)

Panel Reflections and Conclusions (4/21)

Closure and Evaluations (4/23)

Student Discussion Leader Schedule

Date	Reading & Pages	Student
1/28	1. 2.	1. 2.
2/13	1. 2.	1. 2.
2/18	1. 2.	1. 2.
2/20	1. 2.	1. 2.
2/25	1. 2.	1. 2.
2/27	1. 2.	1. 2.
3/10	1. 2.	1. 2.
3/12	1. 2.	1. 2.
3/31	1. 2.	1. 2.
4/2	1. 2.	1. 2.

