

GENDER AND POLITICS – POL 335 and GWS 335 – Fall 2012

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With courtesy appointments in the Department of Gender and Women's Studies, Institute for LGBT Studies, International Studies, and Center for Latin American Studies

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Log in to our D2L coursepage for important materials and updates

Course Description

This course examines **gender** (understood as a hierarchical dichotomy privileging that which is masculinized--ideas, entities, identities, activities--over that which is feminized) and its intersection with **politics** (understood as differential access to and control over material and symbolic resources). This course does *not* focus on 'women and politics' or electoral, governmental practices. Rather, we take a more comprehensive look at how gender is *constructed* ('made' through historical, socio-cultural and structural processes); how it shapes our identities, ways of thinking, and ways of acting; and how gender hierarchy constitutes a complex *system* of differential power that intersects especially with ethnicity/race, class, and sexual orientation.

Course Objectives

The objective of the course is to sensitize students to social constructions of gender and their political implications; in other words, to explore the implications of 'taking gender seriously' in our examination of 'politics.' Politics is understood not narrowly (as electoral or governmental activities) but systemically (as 'how power operates' through symbols, language, thinking, identities, behaviors, activities, and institutionalized practices).

By examining power relations--politics--as gendered, the course illuminates 1) how the personal is political; 2) how we participate individually and collectively (and both intentionally and *unintentionally*) in the production, reproduction, and legitimation of social hierarchies; 3) how social hierarchies (of race, gender, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.) are interrelated; 4) how reflective, critical analyses are essential for achieving nonhierarchical social relations; and 5) how social transformation occurs, is impeded, and promoted. Because gender identities are so fundamental, course topics have particular relevance and implications for our everyday lives.

Course Processes and Priorities

This is an upper-division course and presumes some prior knowledge/coursework regarding gender and analyses of power. If you lack this familiarity be prepared to undertake additional, remedial reading to 'catch up.' (I will happily provide reading suggestions for doing so.) In an upper-division course students are expected not only to be well prepared (as in lower-division courses) but also to show initiative in class participation and in taking up the challenge of critical, intellectual inquiry (as is appropriate for advanced students). I will conduct the course more as a seminar than a lecture, with the expectation of active participation by all members (indeed, participation is part of your grade).

'Politics' is notoriously controversial, and 'gender' is increasingly so. We can expect, therefore, that the topics addressed in this course may at times elicit feelings of discomfort and perhaps frustration or tension. Learning in this class requires a willingness to examine one's own assumptions about gender and power. Because so many of our assumptions about gender and power

are simply taken-for-granted (as ‘natural’ rather than ‘made’), we often resist thinking about them critically. ‘Reflectivity’ is very helpful - this involves paying attention to your emotional and intellectual reactions to the material, and noting especially what prompts ‘resistance’ and exploring why this is so. One key objective of the course is to move beyond simplistic ‘either-or’ positions; whatever your political positioning, it is important to appreciate how complex (and often uncomfortable) analyses of power are - especially when they challenge us to rethink familiar assumptions.

Personal experiences and feelings are relevant and welcome in classroom discussions. Personal opinions, however, cannot substitute for thoughtful contributions and evidence of your understanding of the course materials. An important key to lifelong learning and growth is, first, being open to perspectives that may initially seem unusual or uncomfortable; and second, recognizing that growth often requires moving *through* discomfort to new and deeper understanding. In this course, understanding the material does not mean that you have to agree with it, but it does mean that you must read the material attentively, be aware of its points and argumentation, and be able to discuss it knowledgeably.

Course expectations and evaluation

Your course grade will reflect a combination of: 1) classroom attendance, preparation and participation [10%]; 2) short ‘quizzes’ on assigned readings [20%]; and 3) short writing assignments [30%]; 4) one mid-term essay exam and one final essay exam [20%, 20%]. Extra credit may be earned for attending events relevant to course themes and preparing a short report. Further details and guidelines will be posted on our coursepage and discussed in class. **Any new or revised information will be posted on our D2L webpage, so make sure that you are able to access this site and do so frequently.** If you are having trouble, ask someone in a computer lab to assist you. If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions regarding the course, please share them with me sooner rather than later!

Your attendance is expected and will be recorded. Arrive for class **on time,** and turn off all cell phones and other noise-making devices during class. Students are expected to be present mentally (neither texting, nor using computers/netbooks etc for anything other than taking notes) and to participate in class discussions on the basis of an engaged and critical reading of each session's assignments *prior* to class. Because this is an upper-division course, lectures will not focus on ‘explaining’ the readings to you; I will expect you to have done the readings; to bring questions you have to class; and to be prepared to *discuss* the readings from the perspectives of analytically engaged, informed students.

“Active and thoughtful participation” does not mean simply providing “correct answers” to questions; rather, it means any participation in discussion that is a sincere attempt to come to terms with the material and/or advance the class’s consideration of the issue at hand. Such attempts may include raising your own questions about the text, pointing out connections that you see, responding to another student’s comments, and so forth. “Listening respectfully” means taking the texts’ and other students’ ideas seriously, and making an honest effort to understand their basis, even when those ideas are not agreeable to you. Listening respectfully also applies to yourself; it means taking your own ideas seriously, and speaking them when appropriate, *while allowing your ideas to develop over time*, and while pursuing an understanding of their basis.

All holidays or special events observed by organized religions will be honored for those students who show affiliation with that particular religion. Absences pre-approved by the UA Dean of Students (or Dean's designee) will be honored. Excused absences (illness with a doctor’s note,

documented family emergency, religious observance, Dean's approval) will not be counted against you. Unexcused absences *will* have a negative effect on your course grade. If you are not in class, for whatever reason, it is **your** responsibility to find out what you missed, including any new assignments.

Information contained in the course syllabus, other than the grade and absence policy, may be subject to change with advance notice. *To remain enrolled you are required to sign the 'agreement'* on the last page of this syllabus and turn it in to me by Sep 4.

University of Arizona rules regarding the syllabus require that I include the following:

Plagiarism: all work submitted must be the student's own. You are responsible for being familiar with the University's policies regarding plagiarism and the UA Student Code of Academic Integrity: <http://studpubs.web.arizona.edu/policies/cacaint.htm>

Threatening behavior by students is not permitted at any time; you are responsible for being familiar with the University's policies in this regard:

<http://policy.web.arizona.edu/~policy/threaten.shtml>

Students with special needs who are registered with the S.A.L.T. Center (<http://www.salt.arizona.edu/>) or the Disability Resource Center (<http://drc.arizona.edu/>) must submit appropriate documentation to the instructor if they are requesting special accommodations.

Confidentiality of Student Records: <http://www.registrar.arizona.edu/ferpa/default.htm>

Required texts and reading assignments

Johnson, Allan G. 2005. *The Gender Knot: Unraveling Our Patriarchal Legacy*. 2nd Edition. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. [Identified as **AJ** in the schedule]

Peterson, V. Spike and Anne Sisson Runyan. 2010. *Global Gender Issues in the New Millennium*. 3rd Edition. Boulder, CO: Westview. [Identified as **GGI** in schedule]

These two books are *required* (available new and used, but make sure that you acquire the *correct edition*). All additional reading assignments are posted on D2L as pdf files or websites. I have selected a number of short essays that appear in the schedule with author's name, title of essay, and page numbers of the anthology from which they are excerpted [identified as 'in Shaw and Lee 2012' etc.]; see the bibliographic file under D2L 'Course Materials' for full citation information regarding the anthologies.

Course Outline and Schedule of Topics/Assignments

You are expected to have read the assignments *prior* to, and be ready to discuss them, on the dates as they appear below.

Aug 21: Introduction to course; orientation and paperwork.

No reading assignment

Aug 23: Gender in General and Socially Constructed

Richardson, Taylor and Whittier. 'Introduction.' [Pp. 1-3 in Richardson, Taylor and Whittier 2007]

Herbert. 2009. 'Women at Risk.' *NYT* 8 August.

Lorber. 'Social Construction of Gender.' [Pp. 126-129 in Shaw and Lee 2012]

Douglas. 'Enlightened Sexism.' [Pp. 479-483 in Shaw and Lee 2012]

AJ Chap 1

Aug 28: Gender and Systems of Oppression

Frye. 'Oppression.' [Pp. 194-198 in Rosenblum and Travis 2006]

Pharr. 'Homophobia as a weapon of sexism.' [Pp. 462-471 in Ore 2000]

AJ Chap 2

Aug 30: Gender as a Socially Constructed System

Richardson, Taylor and Whittier. 'Introduction.' [Pp. 95-96 and 191-192 in Richardson, Taylor and Whittier 2007]

AJ Chap 3

Sep 4: Social Constructions of Gender Difference and Hierarchy

Smith, Andrea. 'Dismantling Hierarchy, Queering Society.' [Pp. 205-207 in Shaw and Lee 2012]

Martin, Emily. 'The Egg and the Sperm.' [Pp. 10-15 in Grewal and Kaplan 2006]

Steinem, Gloria. 'If Men Could Menstruate.' Ms. 1978, reprinted in 'The Best of 30 Years.' Ms. Spring 2002.

Bordo, Susan. 'Pills and Power Tools.' [Pp. 149-152 in Ore 2003]

Rosenberg, Debra. '(Rethinking) Gender.' [Pp. 158-162 in Shaw and Lee 2012]

Sep 6: Social Constructions of Gender

Sirota, David. 2011. The legend of the persecuted white guy. *Salon*

http://www.salon.com/2011/04/18/legend_of_persecuted_white_guy/ Accessed 19 Apr 2011

AJ Chap 4

Sep 11: Politics of Denial

AJ Chap 7; AJ Pp. 200-204

In class exam/essay

Sep 13: Symbolic Power: The Politics of Culture and Representations

'Viewing women through the ages'

'Miscellaneous cultural and cartoon messages'

Grewal and Kaplan. 'Representations, cultures, media and markets.' [Pp. 265-268 in Grewal and Kaplan 2006]

Kaplan, Amy. 'Manifest Domesticity.' [Pp. 160-165 in Grewal and Kaplan 2006]

Tempest, Rone. 'Barbie and the World Economy.' [Pp. 363-368 in Grewal and Kaplan 2006]

'How to read ads.' <http://www.ltconline.net/lukas/gender/pages/howto.htm>

Sep 18: Symbolic and Disciplinary Power: It's everywhere and nowhere

Bartky, Sandra Lee. 2010/1990. 'Foucault, femininity, and the modernization of patriarchal power.'

In *Feminist Theory Reader*, ed. Carole R. McCann and Seung-kyung Kim. 2nd Ed. New York: Routledge. Pp. 404-418.

Media Literacy Key Concepts

Scheuer. Media Literacy, and Democratic Citizenship. [Pp. 178-188 in Ford and Ford 2001]

Media politics (additional readings TBA to reflect Fall 2012 campaign politics)

Sep 20: Patriarchal Culture and Embodied Effects

Shaw and Lee. 'Religion and spirituality...' [pp. 516-519 in Shaw and Lee 2004]

Daly, Mary. 'The Church and the Second Sex.' [Pp. 150-155 in Ruth 2001]
Roth, Rachel. 2004. 'How Women Pay for Fetal Rights.' [Pp. 282-285 in Shaw and Lee 2004]
Ginty, Molly M. 2011. 'Treatment Denied.' *Ms.* Spring. Pp. 32-35.

Sep 25: The Politics of Sexualities

Steele, Tracey. 'Doing it': the social construction of S-E-X. [Pp. 13-21 in Tracey Steele, ed. *Sex, Self and Society*. Wadsworth. 2005]
Shaw and Lee. 'Learning Gender.' [Pp. 105-11 in Shaw and Lee 2012]
Wilchins, Riki. 'It's Your Gender, Stupid.' [Pp.109-114 in Rosenblum and Travis 2006]
Schaffer, Amanda. 2012. Gender Games. *Slate* 28 July (2 pages)
Shaw and Lee. 'Gender Swapping on the Web.' [Pp. 117 in Shaw and Lee 2012]

Sep 27: Gendered Bodies and/as Commodities

Shaw and Lee. Inscribing Gender on the Body. [Pp. 220, 222-229 in Shaw and Lee 2012]
Eating Disorder Danger Signs [P. 199 in Sapiro 2003]
Cognard-Black cosmetic surgery *Ms* 2007
Shaw and Lee. Reproductive politics [Pp. 300-304 in Shaw and Lee 2012]
Tkarde. 'Whose Body is This?' <http://www.bodybuilding.com/fun/par34.htm>

Oct 2: Gendered Bodies and the Politics of Sports

Nelson. 'Boys will be boys and girls will not.' [Pp. 142-147 in Shaw and Lee 2004]
Messner, Michael. 'Becoming 100% Straight.' [Pp. 327-331 in Richardson, Taylor and Whittier 2004]
Malveaux, Julianne. 2000. Basketball love and loathing... [Pp. 188-193 in Anderson and Collins 2010]

Oct 4: Gendered Identities and Emotional Investments

Kaufman, Michael. The construction of masculinity and the triad of men's violence. [Pp. 484-500 in Ore 2003]

Oct 9: Gendered Identities and Emotional Investments

Wypijewski, JoAnn. 'A boy's life.' *Harper's Magazine* Sep 1999. Pp. 61-74.

Oct 11: Gendered Identities and Emotional Investments

Kimmel, Michael. 2008. Chap 3: 'Bros Before Hos': The Guy Code. *Guyland* (New York: Harper Collins). Pp. 44-69.
Katz, Jackson. 2009. Eminem's Popularity as a Major Setback for Girls and Women. In *Reconstructing Gender*, ed. Estelle Disch (Boston: McGraw-Hill). Pp. 517-529.

Oct 16: Gender-based Violence

Sapiro, Virginia. 2003. 'Consenting Adults? Gender-based Violence and Coercion.' Pp. 385, 388-395 and 402-409 in Sapiro 2003]
Hallett, Stephanie. 2011. 'Rape is Rape.' *Ms.* Spring. Pp. 26-31.
Allen and Kivel. 'Men Changing Men.' [Pp. 426-428 in Richardson, Taylor and Whittier 2007]

Oct 18: Midterm Exam/Paper

Oct 23: Introducing Global Gender Issues
GGI Chap 1, pp. 1-35

Oct 25: Gender as a Lens
GGI Chap 2, pp. 37-65

Oct 30: Gender as a Metalens
GGI Chap 2, pp. 65-102

Nov 1: Gender and Global Governance
Burk, Martha. 2005. Power plays... [Pp. 436-438 in Shaw and Lee 2012]
GGI Chap 3, pp. 103-142

Nov 6: Gender and Politics
Paxton, Pamela, Sheri Kunovich and Melanie M. Hughes. 2007. Gender in Politics. *Annual Review of Sociology* 33: 263-284.

Nov 8: Gender and Politics
In class exam/essay

Nov 13: Gender and Global Security
GGI Chap 4, pp. 143-182

Nov 15: Gendered Work and Global Gender Issues
GGI Chap 5, pp. 183-217
Sweat Behind the Shirt (graphic)
Enloe, Cynthia. 'The Globetrotting Sneaker.' [Pp. 453-457 in Richardson, Taylor and Whittier, 2004]

Nov 20: Gendered Divisions of Resources and Resistance Politics
GGI Chap 5, pp. 217-230
GGI Chap 6, pp. 231-245

Nov 22: No Class Meeting

Nov 27: Gendered Resistances
GGI Chap 6, pp. 245-262
AJ Pp.128-130 and 207-219

Nov 29: Beyond Denial, Moving On
Rosenblum and Travis. 'Bridging Differences.' [Pp. 468-475 in Rosenblum and Travis 2006]

Dec 4: Kimmel, Michael. 'Real men join the movement.' [Pp. 568-572 in Shaw and Lee 2004]

Dec 7: Final Exam/Paper 3:30am - 5:30pm