

St. Francis Xavier University
Sociology of Gender/Women and Gender Studies 203
Soci/Wmgs 203 - Winter 2020

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Office Hours: **Tues 11-12 & Thursday 10-12**

Course Objectives:

From a sociological perspective we will examine the way sex and gender relations influence patterns of behaviour in society. Part of this examination includes questioning the assumptions of sociology and other disciplines that study the social world. We will address recent research and theory that sociologists and feminists have produced.

Gender is one of the most salient characteristics in our society. Gender is the first thing you notice about another person and your assessment of a person's gender shapes your expectations of that person. These expectations place very real constraints and limitations on individuals. The sociology of gender focuses on the social construction of gender. Other theories of gender such as biological explanations will be discussed in comparison to a sociological approach. The course will begin with an examination of key theoretical approaches to the study of gender. Special attention will be paid to how gender is constructed at the level of society as well as how we engage in the re-creation and construction of gender in our everyday lives. This work will also include an examination of the various institutions in our society (e.g. education, work) to explore the ways gender differences and inequalities are perpetuated. We will also consider the effects of our own, and *others*, interactions within these institutions. In addition, since gender does not exist alone, it will be discussed in relation to its intersection with other social locations such as race, ethnicity, class & sexuality.

Throughout the course we will examine current events that highlight the importance of gender, using these examples to illustrate key concepts and theories.

We will address the following questions:

What is gender? What is sex? What are the forces that shape gender? How does gender help us understand issues of race, class, and sexuality? What happens when we don't live up to gender expectations?

One goal of this class is to help you gain a better understanding of gender and its effects, how it pervades all parts of our culture and lives, and also begin to question the assumptions, expectations, and requirements of gender.

Expectations/goals

- Engaged students: You will be expected to be engaged in your own learning. You should come to class prepared having read the assigned readings. (These readings will be challenging not only in terms of their length and number, but also in terms of the subject matter presented and the complex theories proposed.)
- You will be expected to participate in group exercises and class discussions and also to discuss, analyze, and write about gender *sociologically*.
- **Discussion Preparation:** In preparation for class select **key words or phrases** from the articles required to read. The key words or phrases should be ones that stood out to you from the reading as being particularly significant. State why you selected the key phrases and be prepared to discuss or hand them

in, if requested.

- The format of the class will include lectures, seminars and films. Students are required to do **all** of the assigned readings. You will be expected to be familiar with lecture, class discussion, reading material and films in your exams therefore regular attendance at class is advised. (see calendar section 3.7) **Students are responsible for material discussed in class even when they are absent.**
- Be respectful of your classmates and avoid class disruption (leaving class early, late, talking, whispering).
- This class should be free from discrimination and harassment in accord with the StFX Discrimination and Harassment Policy which can be found at <http://www.mystfx.ca/campus/stu-serv/equity/>.
- Feel free to email questions that require brief responses. You may use office hours for issues that may require back and forth conversation.
- Under no circumstances will I provide you with information on what we covered in a class you missed via email. For this information, consult your syllabus or borrow notes* (discuss).
- The dates for the readings are goals. It is likely that we will be extending a topic into the next class. Students are responsible for finding out what was covered in class from a classmate. No excuses please.
- It is expected that students check their St.FX emails at least once per day (weekdays).

Course Readings – all course readings are available electronically: These articles are available and you may get them, electronically, through the St. Francis Xavier University – Angus L. MacDonald Library or on your class Moodle site.

Grade breakdown:

Mid- term Quiz February 11	25%
3 -1pg Reflections on class exercise. (submit on Moodle)	15%
Essay (service learning option)& presentation Due: March 17	25%
Final Exam	35%

Reflections: The goal of the reflections is to critically engage with concepts/class exercises in your course by making connections between your observations, experiences, opinions and the course material. You are required to submit three reflections on Moodle. The reflection topics will be based on in-class exercises and will announced in class. You **must attend class** and participate in a class exercise/discussion to submit and receive a grade for a reflection. What happens if you miss a class exercise due to illness? You will have 5 opportunities to write a reflection. (If you miss more than two class exercises you will not have the opportunity to make up a reflection unless there are extreme/unusual circumstances – e.g., long-term illness).

Essay will be discussed in class.

CLASS SCHEDULE - articles may change – if this occurs you will be notified in advance via email. In the event of a **storm cancellation** - class may be conducted via Moodle discussion.

Week 1- 9 Jan 7 & 9 *

- Sociological Perspective Review
- X: A Fabulous Child Story by L. Gould
- Can you Really raise a genderless child? (google or Copy link: <https://jezebel.com/5804667/can-you-reallyraise-a-child-without-gender>)
- *Doing Gender* by Candace West and Don Zimmerman

Week 2 Jan 14 & 16 *

- Beyond the Binaries: Depolarizing the Categories of Sex, Sexuality, and Gender, by Judith Lorber

- Doing Gender, Doing Heteronormativity: 'Gender Normals,' Transgender People, and the Social Maintenance of Heterosexuality Kristen Schilt University of Chicago Laurel Westbrook Grand
- Coming out and crossing over: Identity Formation and Proclamation in a Transgender Community by Patricia Gagne, Richard Tewksbury, Deanna McGaughey

Week 3 Jan 21 & 23

- Undoing Gender by Francine M. Deutsch
- Becoming a Gendered Body: Practices of Preschools, Karin A. Martin
- The Body and the reproduction of Femininity - Susan Bordo
- Health and the social construction of Masculinities in Men's health magazines by Arran Stibbe

Week 4 Jan 28 & 30

- Protecting Emphasized Femininity and Hegemonic Masculinity in the Hookup Culture by D. Currier
- The "Sassy Woman" and the "Performing Man": Heterosexual casual sex advice and the (re)constitution of gendered subjectivities by P. Farvid and V. Braunc
- It Just Happens: Negotiating Casual Heterosexual Sex Melani Beres

Week 5 Feb 4 & 6 *

- Sexual harassment (podcast on Moodle)
- The rape prone culture of academic contexts by P. Yancy Martin
- Good guys don't rape by: C. J. Pascon

Week 6 Feb 11 & 13

- **Quiz Feb 11**
- A Peculiar Eclipsing: Women's Exclusion from Man's Culture by: D. Smith (1978)
- The F Word: College Students' Definitions of a Feminist by Shannon Houvouras and J. Scott Carter
Source: Sociological Forum, Vol. 23, No. 2 (Jun., 2008), pp. 234-256

FEB BREAK

Week 7 Feb 25 & 27 *

- Intersectionality as buzzword: A sociology of science perspective on what makes a feminist theory successful by Kathy Davis
- Race and Gender in Families at work by R. Glaudier
- The Glass Escalator, Revisited by Christie L. Williams

Week 8 Mar 3 & 5 *

- Gendered Challenge, Gendered Response : Confronting the Ideal Worker Norm in a White-Collar Organization by Erin L. Kelly, S. K. Ammons, K. Chermack & P. Moen

Week 9 Mar 10 & 12

- Film: film Who's counting: M. Waring on Sex, Lies and global economics
- Social Change and the Gendered Division of Household Labor in Canada Neil Guppy, Larissa Sakumoto, and Rima Wilkes

Week 10 Mar 17 & 19

Essay due March 17

- "Unskilled Labour": Canada's Live-in Caregiver Program by Jarrah Hodge
- Migrant female domestic workers: Debating the economic, social, and political impacts in Singapore by: Brenda S.A. Yeoh. Shirlena Huang

Week 11 &12 Mar 24 - Apr. 2

Paper Presentations

Exam period April 7-21

***indicates the topic area for reflection (note the dates will not necessarily match the readings)**