Sociology of Gender
Soc 367
Winter 2008, Credit Hours: 3
12:05-1:20 p.m., T/TH
3716 HBLL

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Writing Fellows: TBA

Required Materials


Additional readings are available in various locations as indicated in the course calendar and reading assignments. Course reserve password in cor367.

Course Description

The course explores the gendered nature of society, examining how gender expectations constrain the behavior of women and men while at the same time offering opportunities and pathways for action. The course focuses on current thinking in the social science literature about gender, exploring how gender exaggerates natural differences between men and women and either facilitates or limits access to power, privilege, and societal resources. The course examines how gender operates within the family, the workplace, education, religion, politics, and government.

The study of gender is a feminist project. Feminists first began using gender to refer to the socially constructed differences between men and women in the 1970s. They were weary of research that focused only on differences between men and women or on sex roles and the division of labor in society. While many family scholars at the time argued that the allocation of different roles and social functions to men and women was good for society in general, feminists were concerned that the rigidity of established sex roles limited women’s life space. Prior to the development of gender studies, the word "gender” only applied to parts of speech (masculine, feminine, and neuter). Gender scholars borrowed the word and made a distinction between sex (biology) and gender (social).
Because the study of gender is a feminist project, the assigned readings will reflect feminist ideas. The study of gender is fundamentally a critique of assumptions about similarities and differences between the sexes and the origins of gender expectations.

**Course Purpose**

The purpose of the course is to give students from a variety of academic majors the opportunity to examine essentialist assumptions about differences between men and women. The course explores the differences among women as well as among men to consider whether the idea of a universal womanhood or a universal manhood is reflective of the experience of men and women.

**Course Learning Outcomes**

1. Students will learn the major controversies and debates, the developing paradigms, and emerging issues in the sociological analysis of gender.
2. Students will how gender relations undergird inequality, social conflict, and relations of power. More specifically, the intersectionality of gender, race, class, and nation state creates multiple femininities and masculinities.
3. Students will learn how the responsibility for care work in the modern political economy places women and their children at greater risk of poverty than men.
4. Students will learn the dominant theoretical paradigms in the study of gender, including gender difference, gender role, gender ideology, doing gender, gender as structure of relations, and gender logics.
5. Students will learn about the variety of research methodologies (theories and research methods) that inform the study of gender.
6. Students will learn to a) observe social behavior and make sociological arguments regarding the nature of gender based on observing these behaviors, b) synthesize findings from a variety of research projects, articulate a thesis statement, and support the statement based on available social scientific knowledge.

**Participation**

Class attendance will be taken and the instructor will take note of student participation after each class. This information will be used to determine the final course grade. In some cases, participation and attendance can make the difference between a minus grade and a full grade. Participation brings value to the collective experience of the class. As sociologists, each student should demonstrate their value to the collective process by fully participating.

Cell phones must be turned off. If a cell phone rings during class, the student must treat all class members to Krispy Crème donuts.

Computers are welcome in class. However, the instructor will stop the lecture and wait for the full attention of all class members when it becomes apparent that an individual is surfing the net or reading email rather than contributing to the class experience.

**Recommended Study Habits & Tips**
Students are encouraged to stay current with readings and to organize with other students to discuss readings and their implications.

Students should use available resources to improve their performance, such as:

- Meet with class TAs
- Utilize the BYU Writing Center (4026 JKB)
- Utilize the FHSS Writing Lab (1051 JFSB)

I frequently ask students to write a memo making the case for their final grade. I learn from these memos that students believe they should receive a good grade for attending class, being prepared, and participating in the class discussion. Students believe that grades should reflect the amount of effort expended. However, grades are distributed based on performance, not effort. Spending hours writing a paper doesn't justify an A grade. Writing an excellent paper, demonstrating knowledge about the subject of study, and being able to accurately summarize an author’s point of view justifies an A grade.

**Assessment Breakdown**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessments</th>
<th>% of grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender Moments Paper</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>First final draft</td>
<td>(10)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final draft</td>
<td>(15)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Take-Home Mid-Term Exam</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short Paper Assignment</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>First final draft</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final draft</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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**Grading Procedures**

Grades are based on objective standards of quality. Point distributions are given below. I rarely give a grade higher than 95. At the end of the semester, the A grades go to the top scoring students (in a course of this size, A grades will go to 3-4 students maximum).

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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<td>84-86</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>C-</td>
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<td>D+</td>
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The following criteria are applied to papers and exams.
“A” papers (median score=95): Goes beyond the average in demonstrating clear understanding of class readings and lecture materials with no or very minor errors. Students sees the connection between readings (the extent to which authors agree or disagree), and is able to extend ideas by taking a perspective all one's own.

“B” papers (median score=85): Demonstrates an understanding of class readings and lecture materials, but doesn't see connections between readings. Discussion of readings indicates very little depth of understanding—can summarize only. Is able to accurately reflect the basic idea of readings and lecture material, but does not extend ideas by taking a perspective all one's own.

“C” papers (median score=75): Demonstrates a cursory understanding of class readings and lecture materials. Summarizes the material with no depth of understanding and makes some errors in statement that reflect only a cursory reading of material. Paper draws from the literature review as if it is the perspective of the author rather than being able to identify the specific contribution of a research effort.

“D” papers (median score=65): Does not understand the readings and makes serious errors in conclusions or statement of findings. Student tries to bluff through the assignment with highly generalized statements.

**Working with Writing Fellows and TAs**

Students will get feedback from writing fellows (grammar, referencing, sentence structure, thesis statement, and the general flow of the paper). Students will also get feedback from the sociology TAs who have taken the course. The TAs will help you with the accuracy of your paper, whether you correctly reflect the theories and methodologies used in the papers.

The first and second drafts of the paper will be graded. If student papers do not show improvement from one draft to another, it is possible that they will receive a lower grade on the second draft than on the first draft.

**What if the Writing Fellow and the TA disagrees?**

We will have created a real world experience if you find that you get different feedback from the writing fellow and the TA. When working with the Writing Fellow, it is your responsibility to focus on the technique of writing, to receive feedback, and to be grateful for the input. When working with the TA, it is your responsibility to focus on the substance of the article, to ask the TA about what you don’t understand, to learn about the craft of sociology, and to be grateful for the input.

If, in the end, you are completely confused, feel free to make an appointment with me by emailing me at marie_cornwall@byu.edu and by utilizing office hours or appointments.

**Course Schedule**

Course calendar is posted on the Course Calendar section of Blackboard website.
Course Policies

Assignments are due by 5:00 p.m. on the date specified. All assignments are submitted electronically.

All assignments must be submitted via email to byugender@gmail.com. Please be sure to cc: yourself so that if the electronic version does not arrive in time you can produce a time stamp verifying when you sent your file.

Do not use the digital drop box on Blackboard

You should give your file a unique name. This is important. Otherwise, I get 40 electronic files labeled "Assignment 1".

Be sure to indicate Soc 450-1 in the subject line.

- No late papers accepted.
- One reprieve per semester (use it wisely)

Every student receives one (and only one) reprieve per semester. If you cannot meet the deadline, you may have up to 48 hours after the assignment is due to submit the assignment.

To ask for more time, do the following

- Send an email to byugender@gmail.com stating that the assignment will be late and give a specific time that you plan to submit the assignment. In the subject line of the email, please include "450-1 assignment will be late."
- Submit the assignment electronically by the deadline you specify.

Assignments will not be accepted after the 48 hour deadline, UNLESS

- You provide a doctor's note or a note from one of your ecclesiastical leaders explaining why you were unable to meet the assignment deadline.

Assignments will not be accepted after two weeks. Two weeks after the assignment due date you will be given a “zero” score for the assignment.

Extra Credit

Extra credit points will be given for participating in the online student evaluation process. Students may not achieve an A through extra credit. The maximum grade achieved through extra credit will be an A-.

Why don't we spend more time addressing Church teachings about gender?

While students are encouraged to raise questions in class about Church teachings, the focus of the course will be on the current gender scholarship.

The BYU Mission statement emphasizes that all students at BYU should be taught the truths of the gospel and that "all relationships within the BYU community should reflect devout love of God and a loving, genuine concern for the welfare of our neighbor."

In addition, however, the mission of BYU includes three other aims:
• Because the gospel encourages the pursuit of all truth, students at BYU should receive a broad university education. The arts, letters, and sciences provide the core of such an education, which will help students think clearly, communicate effectively, understand important ideas in their own cultural tradition as well as that of others, and establish clear standards of intellectual integrity.

• In addition to a strong general education, students should also receive instruction in the special fields of their choice. The university cannot provide programs in all possible areas of professional or vocational work, but in those it does provide the preparation must be excellent. Students who graduate from BYU should be capable of competing with the best in their fields.

• Scholarly research and creative endeavor among both faculty and students, including those in selected graduate programs of real consequence, are essential and will be encouraged.

• Students will benefit most from the opportunity to engage in open discussion about difficult and contested issues in modern society.

What do I do if I disagree with others in the classroom, feel offended, or feel my views are not being represented?

• Gender is a difficult subject to discuss because everyone in the class comes to the subject with such different attitudes and beliefs. Take the opportunity to express your views; you will learn from the experience and it will teach you how to communicate with others you do not agree with.

• Don’t be afraid of conflict. We can agree to disagree.

• But the professor gives me such a hard time when I say anything. The purpose of a liberal education is to be challenged about one’s ideas and experience.

• One important rule in the study of gender. We do not challenge the credibility of individual experience. That is, we may disagree with how that experience is interpreted, but we do not challenge the reality of the experience.

• Students are asked to keep in mind their responsibility to live according to the example of Jesus Christ. All students are asked to "reflect devout love of God and a loving, genuine concern for the welfare of our neighbor [class member]." Students are asked to remember that class members may be dealing with difficult personal issues, such as sexual abuse or concerns about their own sexual identity, or may have a close friend or family member who is dealing with these issues. Comments in class should reflect a concern for other class members and a desire for open discussion which facilitates self understanding.

My door is always open if you feel the need for clarification, further discussion, or to just talk.

Academic Honesty
The first injunction of the BYU Honor Code is the call to be honest. Students come to the university not only to improve their minds, gain knowledge, and develop skills that will assist them in their life’s work, but also to build character. President David O. McKay taught that “character is the highest aim
of education” (The Aims of a BYU Education, p. 6). It is the purpose of the BYU Academic Honesty Policy to assist in fulfilling that aim. BYU students should seek to be totally honest in their dealings with others. They should complete their own work and be evaluated based upon that work. They should avoid academic dishonesty and misconduct in all its forms, including but not limited to plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, cheating, and other academic misconduct.

**Honor Code**

In keeping with the principles of the BYU Honor Code, students are expected to be honest in all of their academic work. Academic honesty means, most fundamentally, that any work you present as your own must in fact be your own work and not that of another. Violations of this principle may result in a failing grade in the course and additional disciplinary action by the university. Students are also expected to adhere to the Dress and Grooming Standards. Adherence demonstrates respect for yourself and others and ensures an effective learning and working environment. It is the university’s expectation, and my own expectation in class, that each student will abide by all Honor Code standards. Please call the Honor Code Office at 422-2847 if you have questions about those standards.

**Plagiarism**

Writing submitted for credit at BYU must consist of the student's own ideas presented in sentences and paragraphs of his or her own construction. The work of other writers or speakers may be included when appropriate (as in a research paper or book review), but such material must support the student's own work (not substitute for it) and must be clearly identified by appropriate introduction and punctuation and by footnoting or other standard referencing.

The substitution of another person's work for the student's own or the inclusion of another person's work without adequate acknowledgment (whether done intentionally or not) is known as plagiarism. It is a violation of academic, ethical, and legal standards and can result in a failing grade not only for the paper but also for the course in which the paper is written. In extreme cases, it can justify expulsion from the University. Because of the seriousness of the possible consequences, students who wonder if their papers are within these guidelines should visit the Writing Lab or consult a faculty member who specializes in the teaching of writing or who specializes in the subject discussed in the paper. Useful books to consult on the topic include the current Harcourt Brace College Handbook, the MLA Handbook, and James D. Lester's Writing Research Papers.

**Plagiarism will not be tolerated**

In this modern world of instant information, many students don't understand the seriousness of intellectual plagiarism. The course work is designed to encourage your intellectual development and to elicit original ideas and thoughts on the subject. Therefore, all assignments must be your original work.

If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, I suggest you:

a) Review Honor Code regarding expectations of academic honesty, as suggested below: "BYU students should seek to be totally honest in their dealings with others. They should complete
their own work and be evaluated based upon that work. They should avoid academic dishonesty and misconduct in all its forms, including plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, cheating, and other academic misconduct."

b) Utilize resources of the Writing Center, particularly how to avoid plagiarism:  [http://english.byu.edu/WritingCenter/writingtips.html](http://english.byu.edu/WritingCenter/writingtips.html)

c) Pick up a copy of *Understanding Plagiarism: A student guide to writing your own work* by Rosemarie Menager

**What happens if a student plagiarizes a paper?**

Each semester at least one student, if not more, is caught plagiarizing their paper. Plagiarism is easily detected in student writing; new internet search engines (thank you, Google) can quickly locate the document you copied when I type in a sentence. In addition, the university has made available to faculty other tools for determining the originality of a paper.

If a paper is plagiarized:

1) You will receive an E on your paper on the first offense. You will receive a failing grade in the class on the second offense.

2) You will also fail the class, if when challenged regarding your plagiarism, you claim you did not understand what you were doing and did not intend to plagiarize.

**Preventing Sexual Harassment**

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education. Title IX covers discrimination in programs, admissions, activities, and student-to-student sexual harassment. BYU’s policy against sexual harassment extends not only to employees of the university, but to students as well. If you encounter unlawful sexual harassment or gender-based discrimination, please talk to your professor; contact the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895 or 367-5689 (24-hours); or contact the Honor Code Office at 422-2847.

**Students with Disabilities**

Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere that reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability which may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (422-2767). Reasonable academic accommodations are reviewed for all students who have qualified, documented disabilities. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the SSD Office. If you need assistance or if you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through established grievance policy and procedures by contacting the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895, D-285 ASB.