

GENDER IN CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

Monmouth College - Anthropology 362
Tuesday/Thursday 12:30-1:45
Spring 2008

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Office Hours: Tu/Th 11-noon, Mo 3-5pm / and by appointment

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The difference between women and men seems too obvious, yet a closer view lines are more blurred. Looking at gender lines in more depth and detail, questions emerge as to what/who is male or female? Other than physical differences, are we born gendered, or are we socialized into gendered roles and practices? This course explores the construction of differences between genders in their social, historical and cultural contexts, and examines gendered lives and experiences in different historical, political and cultural contexts.

We will investigate questions such as how do women and men in different cultures perceive of their genders and how does this affect the division of labor, the making of marriages and families, and communal relationships? How do men and women construct lives (for themselves and their children) in differently gendered contexts? A very important theme in this course will be the social and cultural construction of gender, i.e. how are gender roles, perspectives and practices defined and constructed in different societies and how are children and youths socialized into the appropriate gender roles. Examining the lives of diverse individuals and groups, such as adolescent US girls, US high school football players, a Zuni Man/Woman, nannies, maids and sex workers in globalized contexts, Moroccan migrant workers and their families, Chinese immigrant mothers and daughters, we will explore some of the following questions.

- (1) How are their gendered lives and experiences shaped by their cultural contexts? What does it mean to grow up female or male?
- (2) Do these social contexts allow for a diversity of gendered practices? Can individuals transgress gender role/boundaries?
- (3) What role does gender play in larger political, historical and economic contexts?
- (4) How do aspects of gender, class, ethnicity and race intersect for individuals and in society at large?
- (5) Why have masculinity and violence been so closely associated in many historical and cultural contexts?

This course introduces central concepts, themes and concerns of recent debates about gender. Using different materials such as ethnographies, novels, life histories and films, this course intends to provide an exciting new and analytical perspective of what might seem all too familiar. The aim of the course is to provide students with sharper concepts and tools to analyze their own and other contexts of gendered lives and societies.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Brumberg, Joan J. (1997) The Body Project. New York: Vintage Books

David Mc Murray (2000) In and Out of Morocco. University of Minnesota Press

Ehrenreich, Barbara and Arlie Russell Hochschild (2004) Global Woman: Nannies, Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy. Holt Paperbacks (2nd Rep. Edition)

Lefkowitz, Bernard (1997) Our Guys. New York: Vintage Books

Roscoe, Will (1991) The Zuni Man-Woman. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press

Tan, Amy (1990) Joy Luck Club. New York: Ivy Books

REQUIREMENTS

The grade for the course will be based on:

40% Two Essays

20% One Research Assignment

20% Quizzes, Reading Response Papers, Short Assignments (in class and take home)

20% Participation (including one class presentation)

ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to attend classes and keep up with the readings. Students should come to class prepared, i.e. should have read the assigned texts as classes will be based on the texts, while at the same time discussing and expanding them further.

NO UNEXCUSED ABSENCES. And, no more than three excused absences in the semester. Excused absences are: (1) medical problems - need doctor's note! (2) family emergencies - need note from Dean of Students Office! (3) college related/sponsored events such as a trip with a class or sports activity - need note in advance from class or Physical Education Department.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Academic honesty is fundamental to any intellectual endeavor. Representing others' work in any form is **PLAGIARISM**. Using other students' work in any manner, or incorrectly using internet and other resources is academic dishonesty!! Every sources, idea or quote needs to be properly noted and cited in your work. Cheating and plagiarism are **VERY GRAVE AND SERIOUS OFFENSES** and will result in **FAILURE** of the course. Papers need to include in-text citation and a work cited page.

CLASSROOM CULTURE

The success of a class depends on many aspects. A few things are obvious and basic.

1. Students need to be prepared, i.e. have read the assigned texts.
2. Students need to bring texts/books to class
3. Students need to take notes.

4. Students need to be ready to discuss the assigned texts and answer questions regarding the text.
5. I reserve the right to call on students and ask specific questions. Students in turn have the right to occasionally answer my questions with “pass”. This, however, should not happen too often.
6. Students have the right, indeed are obliged, to ask any question, interrupt at any time, challenge texts, lectures and the instructor at any time, and freely speak their minds so long as it is relevant to the topic/class. Students have the right to, occasionally, detour the class by, for example, starting a discussion that is only tangentially relevant to the topic but seems to be of interest to many students.
7. Class participation and discussion are fundamentally important to the learning experience. Learning is an active process and not an act of consumption. Only sitting in class can not do the job.
8. Class discussions can be heated and controversial but need to stay polite.
9. Impolite behavior in class is unacceptable. This includes sleeping in class, entertaining private conversations, doing homework for other classes, reading books, newspapers or other materials during class, coming late to class repeatedly.
10. Students have the right to critically challenge every aspects of the course.

DEADLINES

Assignments and papers need to be turned in at the beginning of class on their due date. Late papers will be penalized (points will be taken off). **I DO NOT ACCEPT ELECTRONIC PAPERS.** All assignments, paper and response need to be turned in in class and as hard copies!

CLASS PRESENTATIONS

Each student will make one class presentation about texts/session of their choice. A presentation should take about 15 minutes and needs to include the following:

1. Brief summary of text
2. Background information about the text (e.g. about historical, cultural contexts)
3. Identify central problems/issues/questions that the text addresses
4. Additional materials (pictures, short newspaper articles etc.)
5. **HAND-OUT** for class with eight to ten relevant discussion questions.

GRADING SCALE

A 94-100	C 74-76
A- 90-93	C- 70-73
B+ 87-89	D+ 67-69
B 84-86	D 64-66
B- 80-83	D- 60-63
C+ 77-79	F 59 and below

INTRODUCTION

Thursday Jan.17 What is gender? What is gendered? Concepts, goals and objectives.

I. GENDER LINES – GENDER CONSTRUCTIONS

Tuesday Jan.22 Preliminary remarks. Reading cultures and ethnographies. Reading the “other”. Situating oneself and the “other”. Arriving in foreign places.

Will Roscoe: The Zuni Man-Woman: Prologue, chs.1/2, pp.1-52

SIGN UP FOR CLASS PRESENTATIONS BY THURSDAY JAN.24

Thursday Jan.24 What is gender? Biology? Culture? Destiny? Gender, sex and sexuality. Theorizing gender.

Text:

Will Roscoe: The Zuni Man-Woman: chs.3/4, pp.53-122

Tuesday Jan.29 Gender diversity/variations. Sexual orientation, trans-gendered experiences, third gender experiences. Theorizing gender. Experiencing gender: The Zuni case.

Text:

Will Roscoe: The Zuni Man-Woman: ch.5 pp.123-146

Thursday Jan.31 Across gender lines.

Film:

Jenny Livingstone: Paris is Burning

Tuesday Feb.5 Gender politics. Politics and gender. The sexual politics of conquest.

Text:

Will Roscoe: The Zuni Man-Woman: chs.7/8 pp.170-214

Thursday Feb.7 Why is this so funny?

Film:

Edouard Molinaro: La Cage aux Folles

Tuesday Feb.12 Why is this so funny? Film and discussion.

Film:

Edouard Molinaro: La Cage aux Folles

(Start reading Lefkowitz)

II. SOCIALIZING GENDERED INDIVIDUALS: THE CASE OF THE US

- Thursday Feb.14 Boys: sports, muscles and violence? What makes boys? How are boys socialized?
Text:
Bernard Lefkowitz: Our Guys: The Basement.Secrets. pp 13-109
- Tuesday Feb.19 Average guys. Or, boys are boys.
Text:
Bernard Lefkowitz: Our Guys: All-American Guys pp.119-209
- Thursday Feb.21 Gender, class and power. Morality of the strong and weak.
Text:
Bernard Lefkowitz: Our Guys: Accusation and Denial pp.211-297
- Tuesday Feb.26 Girls: bodies, beauty and Barbies? What makes girls? How are girls socialized?
Text:
Joan Blumberg: The Body Project chs.1/2 pp.3-56
- Thursday Feb.28 Perfecting girls. Skin and other body projects.
Introduction 1st essay.
Text:
Joan Blumberg: The Body Project chs.3/4 pp.57-138
- ## **III. GENDER, CLASS AND MIGRATION IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT**
- Tuesday March 4 Gender, poverty and crime. A case from India
Film:
Shekhar Kapur: Bandit Queen
- Thursday March 6 Gender, poverty and crime. A case from India. Film and discussion.
Film:
Shekhar Kapur: Bandit Queen
(Read Ehrenreich and Hochschild pp.1-38)
- Tuesday March 11 and Thursday March 13 SPRING BREAK

Tuesday March 18 Gender, class and the global division of labor.
Text:
B. Ehrenreich and A. Hochschild Global Woman: Nannies, Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy pp. 39-84

1ST ESSAY DUE THURSDAY MARCH 20

Thursday March 20 Gender and exploitation.
Text:
B. Ehrenreich and A. Hochschild Global Woman: Nannies, Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy pp. 85-141

Tuesday March 25 Sex, power and money.
Introduction Research Assignment.
Text:
B. Ehrenreich and A. Hochschild Global Woman: Nannies, Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy pp. 142-206

Thursday March 27 Globalized gender inequality.
Text:
B. Ehrenreich and A. Hochschild Global Woman: Nannies, Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy pp. 207-274

Tuesday April 1 Male Migrants. The case of Moroccan workers in Europe.
Text:
David Mc Murray In and Out of Morocco pp. 1-46

Thursday April 3 Absent fathers and changing families.
Text:
David Mc Murray In and Out of Morocco pp. 47-109

Tuesday April 8 Globalized gender relations.
Text:
David Mc Murray In and Out of Morocco pp. 110-158

RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT DUE THURSDAY APRIL 10

Thursday April 10 **IV. GENDER ACROSS GENERATIONS: CHINESE EXPERIENCES**
Introduction to China. Fathers and sons.
Film:
Jianqi Huo: Postmen in the Mountains

Tuesday April 15 Fathers and sons. Film and discussion.
Introduction to mothers and daughters. Across generations and
continents.
Film:
Jianqi Hou: Postmen in the Mountains

Thursday April 17 Debating Gender. Mothers and daughters.
Text:
Amy Tan: Joy Luck Club pp.1-83

Tuesday April 22 FOUNDERS' DAY – no class

Thursday April 24 Gender and ethnicity. Gender and immigration.
Introduction Essay No.2
Text:
Amy Tan: Joy Luck Club pp.87-155

Tuesday April 29 Changing gender roles and perceptions.
Text:
Amy Tan: Joy Luck Club pp.159-236

Thursday May 1 Gendered futures. An outlook.
Text:
Amy Tan: Joy Luck Club pp.239-332

Tuesday May 6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

2ND ESSAY DUE TUESDAY MAY 13 AT 4PM