

MAY 24 2000

SOCIOLOGY 3010

SOCIOLOGY OF GENDER

(Intersession 2000)

Grande Prairie Regional College

Course Description:

An inquiry into contemporary and historical concepts, assumptions, and expressions of gender, and their political, personal, cultural, and social implications.

Instructor: Alan Segal

Office: C410, 539-2011

Office Hours: After each class

Course Prerequisite: SOCIOLOGY 1000

Required Reading:

Gender in Canada - E. D. Nelson & Barrie Robinson

Masculinity goes to school - Rob and Pam Gilbert

A feminist I: Reflections from academia - Christine Overall

Dreams of trespass - Fatima Mernissi

Assignments:

Presentations:

- Each group's presentation must be 50 minutes, including time allowed for questions and comments from the rest of the class.
- Each group will consist of 4 or 5 people.
- Presentations will be analyses of one of the sessions of the Gender and Sexuality Institute Conference, to be held June 2 - 4. Each group will respond to a different session. You will explain the substance of the session and outline a few important questions you consider central to the topic discussed.
- This is a senior course. As such, just telling me about the sessions is insufficient. You must offer a critical and challenging analysis of your topic. This does not have to be comprehensive, but it must include at least a couple of observations.
- Style, tone, comportment during presentation, and how you interact with others in the course, are not the most important features of the presentation, but they should count for a portion of your grade.
- All presentations will be marked on a 1-9 system. Group members will receive the same grade.
- Other students in the course will also evaluate each presentation, on a 1-4 basis.
- All presentations will occur on June 8.

One Journal:

- The journal is to be one typewritten page or two handwritten pages.
- Anything pertaining to gender, ideas introduced in class discussions or lectures, class interaction, etc., is suitable. Observations about, and suggestions for, the course are also suitable.
- No research is necessary or expected. It is an informal type of communication with me.
- **The journal will be marked out of a maximum of 2, but the benchmark will be 1.**
- The Journal is due June 5.

Discussion Bonus:

- Because class discussion is a vital aspect of this course, you may (but not necessarily will) receive a bonus mark for the QUALITY of your class discussion, based on a combination of the frequency and quality of the participation.
- You will be eligible only if you display commitment to the course by doing your reading and completing the required assignments.
- The bonus mark will have a range of 1-3.

Tabulation of Marks

- The total of all stanine marks available for assignments is 17.
- Your marks will be totaled out of 15, a percentage will be obtained, and the percentage will be re-converted to a final stanine grade according to the following table.

Stanine Grade	Percentage Equivalent
9	90 - 100
8	80 - 89
7	72 - 79
6	65 - 71
5	57 - 64
4	50 - 56
3	45 - 49
2	26 - 44
1	0 - 25

NOTE: No class averaging will be done.

DISCUSSION SEQUENCE

1. Gender in Canada: Chapter 1

- What is social construction? Are you convinced of its logic? Are the authors justified in applying it to sex, gender, and sexuality?
- Have you imagined yourselves/could you imagine yourselves a different gender?
- How do you assess the list of gender stereotypes on page 19?

2. Gender in Canada: Chapters 2 - 5

- Explain the differences or similarities of the biological, feminist, psychological, and social psychological perspectives.
- Did your parents monitor your behaviour differently when you children, so that you knew how to behave as males or females?
- How early in your lives were you aware of masculinity and femininity? Can you recall what these words meant to you then?
- Why call chapter 5 "symbolic representations of gender?"
- What representations are cited in the chapter?
- Can you think of representations other than those mentioned?

3. Gender in Canada: Chapter 4; Masculinity goes to school: Chapters 1 & 2

- We assume social institutions in fact socialize. Is that assumption reliable? Might we be more accurate about some aspects of socialization but not others?
- Why concentrate on boys, masculinity, and school experience?
- What theories of masculinity are discussed?

4. Masculinity goes to school: Chapters 3 - 6

- What social practises make up the contemporary culture observed by the Gilberts?
- Do you share the authors' analysis that in our society, men's sports helps to create and solidify masculinity?
- Can you suggest any challenges to the authors' interpretation of masculinity and schooling?
- When you were students of elementary and high school age, would you have answered the questions stated in the book, comparably to what was said by the boys who were interviewed?
- What is meant by masculinity at the margins?

5. Masculinity goes to school: Chapters 7-9

- What is the significance of naming a chapter "Bad Boys?"
- What relationship is drawn between bad boys and masculinity?
- Do the authors persuade you of their analysis of bodily aggression?
- Why mention literacy in a book on masculinity and schooling?
- If you were asked to develop a program of change, would you utilize anything mentioned by Pam and Rob Gilbert?

6. Gender in Canada: Chapters 6 & 10; A feminist I: Chapter 1

- In what ways are work and gender intertwined?
- How would you explain sexual harassment? Does it match the explanation[s] provided in the book? Do you support the idea of a sexual harassment policy?
- Explain Overall's feminist odyssey.
- What is a social movement? In what sense can we say that gender is at the centre of some social movements?
- Feminism is one of the movements referred to in the book. Prepare to discuss the different branches of feminism and their political idea[l]s.

7. A feminist I: Chapters 2 - 8

- How does Overall define oppression?
- Explain her critique of co-education.

- How has/might teaching become a vehicle for changing gender-biased ideas, attitudes, and behaviour?
- Overall writes about feeling fraudulent. What does she mean by this?
- What is authenticity? Does Overall provide some understanding of the contrast between authenticity and fraudulence?
- Have you ever sensed you were, in some way, living fraudulently?

8. Gender in Canada: Chapters 7 & 8

- The authors suggest males and females experience friendship differently, desire different types of friendship, and have varying expectations of friendship. Do you agree with this assessment? Does it echo your own relations with other people?
- In what ways might you agree with, challenge, hope to change, etc., the authors' conclusions about intimacy?
- What prominence, if any, does power have in your relationships with other people?
- Does your language of sexuality operate parallel to, or divergent from, what is described in the book, beginning on page 335?
- What are scripts? Can you say whether scripts assisted you in your own sexual development?

9. Dreams of trespass: Chapters 1-12

- Describe the harem that Mernissi experienced. How many kinds of harem were there?
- What were the harem's limits, frontiers, and possibilities?
- How did the harem as an idea and a practise, influence men's lives?
- The harem contained different women with a variety of ideas and opinions. Offer an overview of these currents.
- All societies distinguish between commonplace and special occurrences. What distinctions are mentioned in these chapters? Does Princess Budur fit into this distinction?
- What was the boundary between adulthood and childhood in the harem? Were there differences between male and female childhood?
- What was the cultural and gender significance of World War 2 to the people in Mernissi's life?
- What was allegorical about the story of Scheherazade?
- Why was Asmahan important to at least the women of the harem?