

GENDER THEORY
Sociology 572
Fall 2017
Tuesday 2:00pm – 4:40pm
Davison Hall, Room 128

Professor Kristen W. Springer
Department of Sociology
Davison Hall, Room 101A
E-mail: kspringe@sociology.rutgers.edu
Phone: 848-932-7516

Office Hours: Wednesday 1-1:30pm and by appointment.

Website: sakai.rutgers.edu (course designation: “Gender Theory (Soc 572)”)

Course Description: This gender theory class is focused on four broad areas, each with two parts. The first broad area provides the foundation that I think any gender scholar in sociology needs to begin work in this area. We will start with briefly discussing why we should be theorizing about gender, then we will discuss the “origins” of theorizing about gender in sociology, and finally we will move into modern relational perspectives on gender. The latter three areas focus on the real complexity and nuance of gender – problematizing the false solitary focus on “gender.” These three areas are intersectionality, bio/social interface, and intersex/trans/non-binary gender. We will spend more time on intersectionality than the other areas.

Each of these four areas will also be broken down into two parts. The first part of each section will emphasize providing the theoretical foundation for that topic – often using classic and older pieces. The second part of each section will focus on very recent research on these topics. This is critical because good theory informs research and practice – we therefore need to see “theory in action.” I’ve gone through the last several years of relevant sociological journals (AJS, ASR, Gender and Society, and SIGNS), as well as examined the recent book releases of academic presses, to identify the most recent research on these topics. I’ve done this so we all become familiar with cutting edge research and to examine how well (or not) these recent pieces do in terms of engaging with theoretical foundations they derive from. In my mind this approach has the potential to be very fruitful – for the reasons I’ve already discussed – but, in full-disclosure, has some potential pitfalls. Specifically, I will not have read all of these most recent works before I assign them and they might not be the best at illuminating the theoretical principles we wish to discuss. However, I hope that even in these cases, this will prove an opportunity for us to examine what could have been done better while also noting the strengths of the piece (see Choo & Ferree 2010 below for a beautiful example of this).

In addition to these four areas, we will have one week near the end of the semester that will serve as a “hodge podge” gender theory class. This class provides an opportunity for each person to work with

another student in class to choose a gender theory topic they want covered. Together they will determine one reading and develop a mini-lecture on a topic of gender theory that we weren't able to cover.

Learning Goals:

1. Trace the history of sex/gender inclusion in sociological scholarship.
2. Explore a range of theoretical/conceptual frames for analyzing sex/gender.
3. Understand, identify, and learn to apply relational, intersectional, and biosocial approaches to gender.
4. Critically analyze the conceptual and empirical underpinnings of research on sex/gender.
5. Identify significant new research questions and approaches to the study of sex/gender.

Several methods will be used in to measure achievement of these objectives:

1. Participating in in-depth weekly discussions of assigned readings
2. Leading the discussion for one or more seminars
3. Writing synthetic critical reports on assigned readings
4. Writing a final research paper or research proposal

Diversity Statement: The Rutgers Sociology Department strives to create an environment that supports and affirms diversity in all manifestations, including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, social class, disability status, region/country of origin, and political orientation. We also celebrate diversity of theoretical and methodological perspectives among our faculty and students and seek to create an atmosphere of respect and mutual dialogue. We have zero tolerance for violations of these principles and have instituted clear and respectful procedures for responding to such.

Academic Misconduct: Academic honesty is a subject that I take very seriously. I encourage all students to familiarize themselves with the Rutgers University policies and procedures on academic honesty, available at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at-rutgers>. All violations of academic integrity, for example, copying or plagiarizing others' work for your written assignments, will be referred to the appropriate authorities and sanctioned accordingly.

Students With Disabilities: In accordance with University policy, if you have a documented disability and require accommodations to obtain equal access in this course, please contact me at the beginning of the semester. Students with disabilities must be registered with the Office of Student Disability Services and must provide verification of their eligibility for such accommodations.

Overview of Course Requirements and Grading: Course grades will be based on four requirements: participation/class facilitation, memos, two article selections/analyses and a final paper.

Incompletes will only be given for serious extenuating circumstances and with advance permission.

(1) Participation in weekly discussion and class facilitation (10 percent of grade).

I expect everyone to be fully prepared and participatory. This means reading all of the assignment material *before* class as well as reading all of the memos *before* class.

In addition, during the semester each student is required to lead discussion in one or two classes. On the day(s) you facilitate, come prepared with questions and discussion topics to facilitate conversation. Further, make sure you read all student memos/reflections in planning your discussion. Summarizing the reading in a way that presumes others in class have not read them is not facilitating the class discussion.

(2) Weekly memos (7 weeks * 5 percent = 35 percent)

In order to best understand with the material, students must submit (to Sakai) a short (~2 page) memo engaging with the readings by **the Sunday before class**. Memos are due for eight classes of your choice, but not including the week(s) you facilitate, the first week, or the weeks when the intersectionality write-up is due. These memos should integrate the readings (not summarize or analyze individual articles) in a way that shows you've read all of the work and are thinking through some of the issues in the material. The memos should also include questions and/or observations that you would like to discuss in the class.

(3) Article selection and analyses for intersectional approaches (5 percent)

One critical aspect of this course is to understand, identify, and learn to apply multi-layered intersectional approaches to gender. As such, one of the assignments will be for everyone to work with a partner to identify a paper that either 1) actually applies intersectionality at two or more levels (see Choo & Ferree) or 2) that does NOT use a multi-layer approach to intersectionality, but would benefit from it. Each person in the pair will write up a separate short paper (2-3 pages) describing how (and how successfully) the paper used a multi-level intersectionality approach (in case #1 above) or how the paper would be different/better if a multi-level approach was used (in case #2 above). The whole class will be reading the articles chosen and therefore the articles need uploaded by 10/17.

(4) Special Topic Choice and Presentation (5 percent)

A gender theory class can be so many things and it is not possible for me to design the class to cover all topics of most importance to everyone. Therefore, we will have one class dedicated to highlighting what you (and your classmate/partner) feel like we should know about gender theory. Each of you will join with a partner and choose a short article/chapter on a gender theory topic that you think is essential, but not covered in depth in the current class. We will use some of the first class to discuss possible topics and choose a partner. You will need to consult with me about your topics by 10/10, and assign the reading for everyone to read by 11/7. During this class on 11/14 each pair will do a mini lecture on the topic of their choosing. This is also a week where you can choose to write a short memo – if you do so, please focus on drawing connections between the topics/readings of the week.

(5) Final paper (45 percent of grade)

The culminating project for this class will be a research-focused paper. I would very much like this paper to be useful for your school career, in that it will be something like a draft of a QP, dissertation proposal, a research outline of a project you are considering, a draft of a manuscript you are submitting for publication, or a synthetic review of the literature on a topic you are interested in learning more about. It is therefore difficult to set exact parameters of length and scope, because it will vary dramatically dependent on what you want to do. As a guidepost, I'll say that if you are starting something from scratch for this paper, I'd expect it to be about 15-20 pages plus references. However, if you are reworking something you've already begun, I'd expect it to be more fleshed out and the appropriate length for what you are working on.

Please begin thinking about this project very early in the semester and discuss your thoughts with me early and often.

Completion of the proposal/paper will proceed in four steps.

1. Discuss your project ideas with me at least once prior to October 15th.
2. Submit a brief (3-5 pages) proposal **by the start of class on November 7th.**
3. Short (~10-15 minutes) presentations to the class on **December 12.**
4. The final project will be due during finals week – exact date TBA.
- 5.

Schedule and Readings: All readings, with the exception of the following books, will be on our Sakai website.

Shim, Janet K. 2014. *Heart-Sick: The Politics of Risk, Inequality, and Heart Disease*. New York: New York University Press.

Davis, Georgiann. 2015. *Contesting Intersex: The Dubious Diagnosis*. New York: New York University Press.

The reading will be updated throughout the class and are subject to change. Further, the schedule may change as needed. Students will be given ample warning of all changes.

READINGS

9/5 Week 1. Introduction and Foundation

Acker, Joan. 1992. "From Sex Roles to Gendered Institutions." *Contemporary Sociology* 21(5):265-69.

hooks, bell. 1991. "Theory as Liberatory Practice." *Yale Journal of Law and Feminism* 4(1):1-12.

9/12 Week 2. Origin of Gender/Sex in Social Research

Lopata, Helena Z., and Barrie Thorne. 1978. "On the Term 'Sex Roles.'" *Signs* 3(3):718-21.

Hartmann, Heidi. 1979. "The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism." *Capitalism and Class* 3(2):1-33.

Sprague, Joey. 1997. "Holy Men and Big Guns: The Can[n]on in Social Theory." *Gender and Society* 11(1):88-107.

Stacey, Judith, and Barrie Thorne. 1985. "The Missing Feminist Revolution in Sociology." *Social Problems* 32(4):301-16.

Acker, Joan. 2006. "Introduction: 'The Missing Feminist Revolution' Symposium." *Social Problems* 53(4):444-47.

Ray, Raka. 2006. "Is the Revolution Missing or Are We Looking in the Wrong Places?" *Social Problems* 53(4):459-65.

9/19 Week 3. Gender Relations Theory (Jess/Ashley)

Scott, Joan W. 1986. "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis." *The American Historical Review* 91(5):1053-75.

West, Candace, and Don H. Zimmerman. 1987. "Doing Gender." *Gender & Society* 1(2):125-51.

Acker, Joan. 1990. "Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A Theory of Gendered Organizations." *Gender & Society* 4(2):139-58.

Martin, Patricia Yancey. 2004. "Gender as a Social Institution." *Social Forces* 82(4):1249-73.

Ridgeway, Cecilia L. 2009. "Framed Before We Know It: How Gender Shapes Social Relations." *Gender & Society* 23(2):145-60.

9/26 Week 4. Gender Relations Theory Applied in Progress (Allegra/Christine)

Connell, R.W., and James W. Messerschmidt. 2005. "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept." *Gender & Society* 19(6):829-59.

Munsch, Christin L. 2015. "Her Support, His Support: Money, Masculinity, and Marital Infidelity." *American Sociological Review* 80(3):469-95.

Frank, Elena. 2014. "Groomers and consumers: The meaning of male body depilation to a modern masculinity body project." *Men and Masculinities* 17. 278-298.

Martin, Molly A., and Adam M. Lippert. 2012. "Feeding her children, but risking her health: The intersection of gender, household food insecurity and obesity." *Social science & medicine* 74. 1754-1764.

Berko, Anat, and Edna Erez. 2007. "Gender, Palestinian women, and terrorism: Women's liberation or oppression?." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 30. 493-519.

Additional/Optional readings:

Doering, Laura, and Sarah Thébaud. 2017. "The Effects of Gendered Occupational Roles and Men's and Women's Workplace Authority: Evidence from Microfinance." *American Sociological Review* 82(3):542-67.

England, Paula. 2010. "The Gender Revolution: Uneven and Stalled." *Gender & Society* 24(2):149-66.

Killewald, Alexandra. 2016. "Money, Work, and Marital stability: Assessing Change in the Gendered Determinants of Divorce." *American Sociological Review* 81(4):696-719.

Thébaud, Sarah, and David S. Pedulla. 2016. "Masculinity and the Stalled Revolution: How Gender Ideologies and Norms Shape Young Men's Responses to Work-Family Policies." *Gender & Society* 30(4):590-17.

10/3 Week 5. Intersectionality (Endia/Armani)

McCall, Leslie. 2005. "The Complexity of Intersectionality." *Signs* 30(3):1771-800.

Choo, Hae Yeon, and Myra Marx Ferree. 2010. "Practicing Intersectionality in Sociological Research: A Critical Analysis of Inclusions, Interactions and Institutions in the Study of Inequalities." *Sociological Theory* 28(2):129-49.

Collins, Patricia Hill. 2015. "Intersectionality's Definitional Dilemmas." *Annual Review of Sociology* 41:1-20.

England, Paula. 2016. "Sometimes the Social Becomes Personal: Gender, Class, and Sexualities."

American Sociological Review 81(1):4-28.

Optional:

Crenshaw, Kimberle. 1989. "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist

Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics." *The University of Chicago Legal Forum* 140(1):139-67.

Davis, Kathy. 2008. "Intersectionality as Buzzword: A Sociology of Science Perspective on What Makes a Feminist Theory Successful." *Feminist Theory* 9(1):67-85.

10/10 Week 6. Intersectionality & Globalization (Ashley/Endia)

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. 2003. "'Under Western Eyes' Revisited: Feminist Solidarity Through Anticapitalist Struggles." *Signs* 28(2):499-535.

Freeman, Carla. 2001. "Is Local: Global as Feminine: Masculine? Rethinking the Gender of Globalization." *Signs: Journal of Women, Culture and Society*, Special Issue on Gender and Globalization 26, 4:1007-1037.

Matlon, J., 2016. "Racial Capitalism and the Crisis of Black Masculinity". *American Sociological Review*, 81(5), pp.1014-1038.

Agustín, Laura María. 2005. "Migrants in the mistress's house: Other voices in the "trafficking" debate." *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society* 12.1 (2005): 96-117.

10/17 Week 7. Intersectionality & Health (Caitlin/Jess)

Shim, Janet K. 2014. *Heart-Sick: The Politics of Risk, Inequality, and Heart Disease*. New York: New York University Press.

10/24 Week 8. Intersectionality: TBD by students

Some possibilities:

Acker, Joan. 2006. "Inequality Regimes: Gender, Class, and Race in Organizations." *Gender & Society* 20(4):441-64.

Peretz, Tal. 2017. "Engaging Diverse Men: An Intersectional Analysis of Men's Pathways to Antiviolence Activism." *Gender & Society* 31(4):526-48.

Powell, Amber Joy, Heather R. Hlavka, and Sameena Mulla. 2017. "Intersectionality and Credibility in Child Sexual Assault Trials." *Gender & Society* 31(4):457-80.

Strings, Sabrina. 2015. "Obese Black Women as 'Social Dead Weight': Reinventing the 'Diseased Black Woman.'" *Signs* 41(1):107-30.

10/31 Week 9. Biosocial Perspectives (Hannah/Gabrielle)

Lorber, Judith. 1993. "Believing is Seeing: Biology as Ideology." *Gender & Society* 7(4):568-81.

Fausto-Sterling, Anne. 2005. "The Bare Bones of Sex: Part 1 - Sex and Gender." *Signs* 30(2):1491-527.

Martin, Emily. 1991. "The Egg and the Sperm: How Science Has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles." *Signs* 16(3):485-501.

Springer, Kristen W., Jeanne Mager Stellman, and Rebecca Jordan-Young. 2012. "Beyond a Catalogue of Differences: A Theoretical Frame and Good Practice Guidelines for Researching Sex/Gender in Human Health." *Social Science & Medicine* 74(11):1817-24.

Sanz, Veronica. 2017. "No Way Out of the Binary: A Critical History of the Scientific Production of Sex." *Signs* 43(1):1-27. **skim the technical parts if you want

Butler, Judith. 1999, *Gender Trouble*, London: Routledge, 2nd edition. Chapter 1 **skim

Ritz, Stacey A. 2017. "Complexities of Addressing Sex in Cell Culture Research." *Signs* 42(2):307-27. **skim if you want

11/7 Week 10. Biosocial Perspectives Applied (Caitlin/Gabrielle)

Almeling, Rene. 2007. "Selling genes, selling gender: egg agencies, sperm banks, and the medical market in genetic material." *American Sociological Review* 72. 319-340.

Cheslack-Postava, Keely, and Rebecca M. Jordan-Young. 2012. "Autism Spectrum Disorders: Toward a Gendered Embodiment Model." *Social Science & Medicine* 74(11):1667-74.

Perry, Brea L. 2016. "Gendering Genetics: Biological Contingencies in the Protective Effects of Social Integration for Men and Women." *American Journal of Sociology* 121(6):1655-96.

Taylor, Catherine J. 2016. "'Relational by Nature'? Men and Women Do Not Differ in Physiological Response to Social Stressors Faced by Token Women." *American Journal of Sociology* 122(1):49-89.

Kramer, Brandon L., Mary S. Himmelstein, and Kristen W. Springer. 2017. "Getting to the Heart of Masculinity Stressors: Masculinity Threats Induce Pronounced Vagal Withdrawal During a Speaking Task." *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*, 1-10.

11/14 Week 11. Other Gender Theory Topics: TBD by Students

11/21 – off; thanksgiving; switch day

11/28 Week 12. Transgender/Non-Binary Gender (Armani/Allegra)

Schilt, Kristen. 2006. "Just One of the Guys? How Transmen Make Gender Visible at Work." *Gender & Society* 20(4):465-90.

Meadow, Tey. 2010. "'A Rose is a Rose': On Producing Legal Gender Classifications." *Gender & Society* 24(6):814-37.

Rahilly, Elizabeth P. 2015. "The Gender Binary Meets the Gender-Variant Child: Parents' Negotiations with Childhood Gender Variance." *Gender & Society* 29(3):338-61.

Westbrook, Laurel, and Kristen Schilt. 2014. "Doing Gender Determining Gender: Transgender People, Gender Panics, and the Maintenance of the Sex/Gender/Sexuality System." *Gender & Society* 28(1):32-57.

Davis, Georgiann, Jodie M. Dewey, and Erin L. Murphy. 2016. "Giving Sex: Deconstructing Intersex and Trans Medicalization Practices." *Gender & Society* 30(3):413-41.

12/5 Week 13. Intersex (Christine/Hannah)

Davis, Georgiann. 2015. *Contesting Intersex: The Dubious Diagnosis*. New York: New York University Press.

12/12 Week 14. Presentations