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Sociological Gender Theory

COURSE DESCRIPTION

It is impossible to cover the Sociology of Gender within a three-week online course. In order to give you a substantial education within this three-week window, I focus this course on the two main theoretical frameworks that sociologists of gender use to analyze a range of case studies. I am well-versed in these gender theories and have given careful consideration to how to convey the most important concepts within a short amount of time. This course is divided into 6 substantive “modules”—two-day units that are dedicated to different aspects of sociological gender theory. These modules introduce you to foundational concepts that you will need as you move forward as a sociologist, while pushing you to think critically about how dominant gender theory excludes those who are already marginalized—such as people of color and transgender individuals.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By taking this course, you will learn to think critically about how power operates within patriarchy to subordinate all but a select few. You will understand what it means when I say that gender is relational, situational, and subject to negotiation. You will be able to recognize how people “do gender” within a variety of cultural arenas. Contingently, you will develop the ability to identify how people are held accountable to gender norms in their daily lives.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

There is a reason behind everything you are reading and producing in this course. I respect you too much to assign you busy work and I know from my Psychology background that quizzes provide an inaccurate reflection of knowledge retention. I do not want you to focus on memorizing jargon that you will forget within a year—I want you to critically engage with the key concepts that I am teaching you. In order to make sure that you are completing the modules and thinking while you do so, I assign weekly reflections instead of quizzes. Also, instead of a midterm a mere week and a half into learning this material, I simply ask you to synthesize your thoughts about the readings we have done up to that point within a midterm reflection. I ask you to do this again at the end of the three-week course. These reflections needn’t be longer than one page double spaced and, if you write efficiently, you might be able to convey your engagement with the material in as little as half a page. I understand that people have different interests and learning styles. If you have an easier time communicating your thoughts by speaking than writing, you are welcome to submit video clips instead of text. I also provide several options for

the final project besides research papers. If there is a different type of project you would like to do, that is not on the list, consult with me via email.

REQUIRED READINGS

All required readings will be posted to Blackboard under the corresponding segment. You are expected to watch any videos that are included in the module folders as well.

NAVIGATING THE COURSE WEBSITE

The course content can be found under the following links in the right-hand margin:

Syllabus- an updated word document version of the course syllabus

Modules- this link brings you to folders for each of the seven course modules. Within each folder, you will find detailed instructions about what I expect from you, along with summaries and contextualizing information to help you understand the readings. You will also find links to all videos, blogs, and/or articles that I have assigned to you. Each module will take 2-3 hours to complete, with Module 4 taking the longest—please budget your time accordingly. You may work ahead, but you must finish each module within two weekdays at the longest.

Discussion- This link displays “threads” where you will upload each of your assignments (except the final project). They are labeled accordingly—Introduction, Module reflections 1-6, Mid-term check-in, Final project summary, and Final check-in. Please email me your final project—do not upload it to the course website.

Calendar- this link will bring you to a Google calendar that lists all of the course deadlines.

Ask Dr. Darwin- Please post any questions that you have about course expectations, grading, and/or points of clarification under this link. That way if other people have the same question, they can see how I answered you. Similarly, please consult this link if you have a question, to make sure I haven’t already answered it. If your question is personal or specific to your final project, please email me and I will reply within 24 hours.

Student Lounge- Think of this link as a Facebook group for our class. This is where you can chat with each other, post relevant links to news articles or videos that you think others might find interesting, etc.

CLASS MODULES

*****PLEASE READ EACH MODULE’S INSTRUCTIONS*****

I have significantly reduced the amount of reading that I would have liked to assign you, in order to ensure that you read the articles that I have assigned carefully and thoughtfully. I only ask you to read a total of six articles within this three-week course (an average of two per week). I have supplemented these 6 articles with material such as video clips, blogs, and images, in order to round out your education.

You may work ahead and turn assignments in early, but you will lose points if you submit assignments late. Please take note of the deadlines for your introduction, the six reflections, the Midterm Post, and the Final Project.

Module 1- Introduction

1. Read Instructions
2. Post your introduction (5 points)
3. Watch my lecture (56 mins)
4. GenderBread Person
5. Determining Gender blog
6. Post Reflection (5 points)

Module 2- Hegemonic Masculinity

1. Read Instructions
2. Hegemonic Masculinity video (10 mins)
3. Toxic masculinity blog
4. Bridges, T. S., & Pascoe, C. J. 2014. "Hybrid masculinities: New directions in the sociology of men and masculinities." *Sociology Compass* 8(3): 246-258.- read highlighted sections and pages 250-256
5. Post Reflection (5 points)

Module 3- Hegemonic Femininity

1. Read Instructions
2. Budgeon, Shelley. 2014. "The Dynamics of Gender Hegemony: Femininities, Masculinities and Social Change." *Sociology* 48(2): 317–334. read highlighted parts and 320-331
3. The cost of doing femininity: pink tax blog
4. Post Reflection (5 points)

Module 4-Un/Re/Doing Gender

1. Read Instructions
2. Watch Doing Gender video (15 mins)
3. Connell, Catherine. 2010. "Doing, undoing, or redoing gender? Learning from the workplace experiences of transpeople." *Gender & Society* 24(1): 31-55.- read 39-53
4. Darwin, H. 2017. "Doing Gender Beyond the Binary: a virtual ethnography." *Symbolic Interaction* 40(3): 317-334.- read the full article
5. Post Reflection (5 points)

Module 5-Doing Racialized Gender

1. Read Instructions
2. Midterm Discussion Board Post (10 points)
3. Pyke, Karen D., and Denise L. Johnson. 2003. "Asian American Women And Racialized Femininities: 'Doing' Gender across Cultural Worlds." *Gender & Society* 17(1): 33-53.
4. Post Reflection (5 points)

Module 6- Doing Racialized Transgender

1. Read Instructions
2. Vries, Kylan Mattias. 2012. "Intersectional Identities and Conceptions of the Self: The Experience of Transgender People." *Symbolic Interaction* 35(1): 49-67.
3. Post Reflection (5 points)

Module 7- Doing Finals

1. Read Instructions
2. Final Projects Due- email to me with subject line "Final Project" (50 points)
3. Post Written Summary or Video for your "Final Presentation" (5 points)
4. Final Discussion Board check-in (5 points)
5. Review Class

GRADING/ASSIGNMENTS*****Please Note-**

I base part of your grade (for module posts, midterm/final discussion posts, final project) on your ability to write at a college-level. But I understand that for some of you, English is your second language, you might have dyslexia, etc. If you need extra help with spelling or grammar, please contact the Writing Center and/or Disability Services to make the necessary arrangements and please notify me via email at the beginning of the semester.

Introduction (5 points)

By 11:59 PM on January 2nd (the first day of class), I would like you to post an introduction on Blackboard, under the Discussion Board link for introductions. These should be at least 3-5 sentences long. Provide your name, your reason for taking this class, whether this is your first online class, your area of study, and any other relevant information that you would like to include.

I would encourage people to clarify their gender pronoun in these posts, since it is sometimes difficult to make assumptions based on people's names. Furthermore, as we will discuss in this class, many non-binary or transgender people do not necessarily identify their gender in a straight-forward manner. To avoid misgendering one another, it is best to clarify.

If you would rather post a video clip of yourself for your introduction, please feel free! It would certainly lend an air of intimacy to the online class environment.

If there is anything else you would like me to know about your identity, life circumstances, or academic interests, feel free to email me!

Discussion Board (10 points)

On January 10th, at the mid-point in the class, I will ask everyone to synthesize their thoughts on hegemonic gender theory and to reflect on what you have learned in the class thus far. This will be worth 5 points. I want to really see evidence that you have been watching the videos, reading the assigned articles, and critically reflecting upon the materials. Tell me what you find most interesting, how the material has changed your perspective on gender, what you now notice that you didn't notice before, and/or what you find frustrating or unclear in the material. By all means feel free to comment on one another's posts! Just remember that it is easy to misinterpret

someone's words in these forums, so please ask for clarification if you don't understand what someone else is saying. See "Classroom Etiquette" at the end of this syllabus for more details about my expectations. Then again, at the end of the class, I will ask everyone to synthesize your thoughts about the "doing gender" framework, and the class material as a whole. This will also be worth 5 points.

These reflections needn't be longer than one page double spaced and, if you write efficiently, you might be able to convey your engagement with the material in as little as half a page. Please follow the formatting instructions included in the Reflections section. I understand that people have different interests and learning styles. If you have an easier time communicating your thoughts by speaking than writing, you are welcome to submit video clips instead of text. Please post these assignments under the appropriately titled thread under the "Discussion" link on Blackboard. These are each worth 5 points, for a total of 10 points.

Reflections (5 points each- 30 points total)

There are only 14 week days in this course, divided into 6 substantive modules and a 7th for wrapping things up. After each of the first 6 modules, you will submit a reflection to Blackboard (up to one page double-spaced), about anything you found interesting. This is my only measure of accountability to make sure you are completing the modules, so convince me. These will be due roughly every other weekday (see the calendar for details) and they are due by midnight. You can earn up to 5 points for each of these reflections, for a total of 30 points.

You can score up to one point for each of the following areas-

1. Grammar/spelling- no typos, correct grammar, easy to read. You can use spell-check in Microsoft Word and many versions will also notify you if your grammar is incorrect.
2. Formatting- I would like these to be typed in 12-point font, Times New Roman, with a one-inch margin. Your name should be in the top right corner and your title should be centered. These should be double-spaced, without additional spaces between paragraphs
3. Organization- Does your reflection follow basic paragraph rules? Do you have a topic sentence with supporting sentences in each paragraph?

You can score up to two points for-

4. Content- This is the most important part, so it gets two points. I care what you have to say. If you summarize the readings nicely and/or make some good points and ask thought-provoking questions, you will get two points. If it seems like you just went through the motions of completing the assignment, you will only get one point.

Final Project (50 points total)

At the end of the semester, you are expected to email me your final project. I have uploaded detailed instructions under Module 7-"Doing Finals." This can be a 5-8 page double-spaced auto-ethnography, virtual ethnography, content analysis, or research paper on anything that you analyze through one of our theoretical lenses. Alternatively, you may create a blog with an entry (3-paragraph essay format) for each of the 6 modules we've covered. Either way, I expect you to cite your sources. For a blog, this would mean including hyperlinks to other articles, research studies, controversies, etc. that you are referencing.

I invite you to email me with thoughts, questions or concerns as you formulate your final project outline, up until the midterm. I am happy to check in with you as though we are having office hours in person. I want you to succeed. However, I will not provide feedback on your outline after the mid-point in our course. At that point, you should be committing your project to writing. If you are still trying to decide what to write with only a week and a half until the deadline, I will not be convinced that you care very much about your performance in this course. Again—this project is worth half of your grade.

- A Excellent!
 Maximum page limit, no typos, correct grammar, paragraph structure, clear introduction and conclusion, clear and thorough application of gender theory
- B Good!
 Somewhere in the page range, few typos, ok grammar, paragraph structure, ok introduction and conclusion, some application of gender theory
- C Ok...
 You tried, but not hard enough. You did not reach the minimum page limit, poor structure/ writing, very little or inaccurate application of gender theory. The big thing is that you did not take advantage of my electronic “office hours” to consult about your final project before the mid-term, so I am not convinced that you cared about your grade.
- D You turned something in...
 But it was not long enough, poorly written, no application of gender theory
- F You didn’t turn anything in!
 You literally didn’t do it or missed the deadline without asking for an extension (which is only granted for unforeseen debilitating reasons)

Final Project Summary (5 points)

By the last day of class, everyone should post a “final project summary” under the corresponding thread in the Discussion link. This can be a 200-300-word summary/abstract or a 3-5 minute video clip of yourself explaining your project.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

It is easy to misunderstand people when you only interact through online posts. Please assume the best of one another and ask for clarification if you don’t understand what someone is saying. Be respectful of one another and absolutely NO TROLLING. That is, no intentionally provocative posts that escalate tension for the sake of upsetting the other individual. If I witness disrespectful conduct or insults, I will email the individual with a warning. If it continues after the warning, I will decrease the individual’s Discussion Post grade component, which is worth 40/100 total points in total (because this is a participation grade as much as anything)—disruptive behavior that negatively impacts the classroom environment constitutes poor participation. Particularly offensive language/behavior that persists after a warning will result in

0 points for this component, making it difficult for the individual to score higher than a D as a final grade. No space is ever truly a “safe space,” but I am doing my best to foster a “safer space” in this virtual community.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty are required to report any suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. Faculty in the Health Sciences Center (School of Health Technology & Management, Nursing, Social Welfare, Dental Medicine) and School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty, please refer to the academic judiciary website at <http://www.stonybrook.edu/uaa/academicjudiciary/> Please pay attention to the section on avoiding plagiarism.

Additional Information:

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS) STATEMENT

If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Disability Support Services, ECC (Educational Communications Center) Building, room128, (631) 632-6748. They will determine with you what accommodations, if any, are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

Students who require assistance during emergency evacuation are encouraged to discuss their needs with their professors and Disability Support Services. For procedures and information go to the following website: <http://www.stonybrook.edu/ehs/fire/disabilities>

CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of Judicial Affairs any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, or inhibits students' ability to learn. Faculty in the HSC Schools and the School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures.

WELL-BEING

School is important, but so are you. If anything we discuss in class is difficult for you, please reach out to the appropriate resource below:

Counseling and Psychological Services
2nd Floor Student Health Services Building
(631) 632-6720

Sexual Assault Prevention and Outreach

216 Stony Brook Union
(631)-632-1623

Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention and Outreach

Student Health Center
(631)-632-6720

The Wo/Men's Center

Stony Brook Union, Room 216
(631) 632-9666

LGBTQ* Services

222 Student Activities Center
(631) 632-2941

Interfaith Center

Union Bldg. 2nd floor
(631)-632-6565

Multicultural Affairs

222 Student Activities Center
(631)-632-9392

Questions? Feel free to contact me via email. Please allow up to 24 hours for a reply.