

GENDER INEQUALITY TODAY
SOC494H1F
FALL 2016

Professor Bonnie Fox
725 Spadina Ave., room 382
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Class Time: Tues. 12:00-2:00
Class Location: SS 2114
Office Hours: Tues. 3:00-4:00,
Thurs. 2:30-3:30

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Course Website: www.chass.utoronto.ca/~bfox/soc494

Back in 1989, American sociologist Arlie Hochschild summarized the state of affairs with respect to gender as a “stalled revolution.” She argued that, over several decades, women had changed (in terms of their educational attainment, general aspirations, labour-force involvement, etc.) but men, workplace practices and regulations, and government policies and services had not significantly changed. The question this course addresses is: What is the situation today with respect to relative position of women?

Do girls and women in Canada and the U.S. have similar amounts of opportunity and degrees of choice, power and privilege as boys and men? In answering this question we need to consider diversity involving social class and race, as well as that involving sexual diversity. The course looks at research examining questions about the relative position of girls and women today, and does so while also considering class and racial/ethnic differences, and the LGBT community as well as cisgender folks.

We begin by reading several feminist sociologists’ research-based summary answers to the broad question of change with respect to gender. Then, each week’s readings offer findings and arguments on different aspects of social organization, culture and social relations that involve gender. After considering the sex binary and gender divide, we focus on young adulthood – especially the complexities of both educational decisions made in the transition to adulthood and the experiences of dating and sexuality. We also look at commercial media images of, and messages about, femininity. Then we turn to adulthood, and specifically research on marriage and cohabitation, parenthood, and couples’ negotiations of the doing of housework and childcare. Finally, we consider ongoing inequalities in the labour force, and how neoliberalism has changed both employment and state policies that impact gender.

Important: This course is restricted to 4th-year sociology specialists and majors; a 3rd-year sociology course is a pre-requisite to the course.

Note: This course is not on Blackboard. Instead, see the course website (at the address given above) for overhead slides and other essential information.

Required Texts:

Arlie Hochschild. 1989. *The Second Shift: Working Parents and the Revolution at Home*. New York: Viking.

Bonnie Fox. 2009. *When Couples Become Parents: The Creation of Gender in the Transition to Parenthood*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Coursepack from Canadian Scholars Press.

These three texts can be purchased at the University of Toronto Bookstore.

Grading:

The assignments will be weighted as follows: Due dates:

Participation	15%	weekly comment paragraphs
Test 1	30%	Oct. 25
Essay	30%	Nov. 15
Test 2	25%	Dec. 6

Please note: Test/Assignment dates are fixed and non-negotiable.

Weekly Classes:

Each class will involve approximately an hour-long lecture, followed by a break and then class discussion of the issues raised in the readings and the lecture.

Requirements:

Participation: Students are responsible for attending every class session. I expect that before every class students will do all of the readings assigned for that week *and* write a brief (one-page) summary of one of the main arguments made in one of the week's readings, as well as a short comment on the argument. These weekly comment essays are required for 7 of the 10 weeks of class discussion, and constitute the main component of the 'participation' grade.

Tests: There will be two in-class tests that will include both multiple-choice and essay questions. To do well on the tests, you need to know the specific arguments in each of the readings and lectures, and be able to discuss the main issues covered in both the readings and lectures. The tests are synthetic, so you should think over **main themes and arguments** discussed in the course, and review the **key** arguments in each reading and lecture, to prepare for them. The dates of the tests are on the course outline (and above).

Make-up Tests: In the case of **illness** that prevents you from taking a test, you must inform me during the week the test is given. Messages should be left on my office voice mail or sent as emails, and these should include your name, telephone number and email address so that you can be reached with information about the make-up test. Make-up tests will only be given to students who have certifiable reasons for having missed the test: For illness, you must supply a duly completed Verification of Student Illness or Injury form (available at www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca). A doctor's note is not acceptable. For other problems, you need a letter from your college registrar, emailed by him/her to me or submitted in person before the make-up test. The make-up tests must be taken (and will be given) within two weeks of the missed test.

Essay: Students will write an essay that summarizes and analyzes interviews they will conduct with two young adults. The nature of interview-based research, the practices and ethics involved in interviewing, and the questions students will ask in their interviews (as well as the specific topic of the interviews) will all be discussed in class (probably on Oct. 4). The essay based on these interviews will both describe the key themes in the narratives told by the young adults who were interviewed and develop some analysis of these narratives in light of the arguments made in course readings and lectures. These essays will be approximately 15 pages in length. They are due at the start of class on Nov. 15.

Late essays should not surprise me! If you cannot make the deadline, tell me well ahead of it. If a personal or family crisis prevents you from meeting a deadline, you need to get a letter from your college registrar (or have them send me an email) and also contact me yourself – both, as soon as possible. (It is a good idea anyway to advise your college registrar if a crisis is interfering with your studies.) The letter should be either emailed to me or submitted with your work in class or during office hours.

If you do not have my permission to hand in your essay late, you will lose **2** percentage points for every day the essay is late. Provided that you have my permission to hand in the work late, attach the registrar's letter or Verification of Student Illness form to the essay when you hand it in. Work handed in outside of class, or late, should be put in the fourth-year mailbox in room 225 in the Sociology Department building (at 725 Spadina Ave., open Monday to Friday, 9 - 5 pm). It must be date stamped using the machine in room 225. Alternatively, it can be slid under my office door (before 5 pm any week day), but first **stamp the date** on it at the date/time machine located in room 225 on the second floor at

725 Spadina Ave. (Students must keep copies of their work, in case assignments are lost. Students are responsible for assignments that are lost.)

Note: Please be aware that turning in an old paper, or large parts thereof, for credit, is considered an academic offense that results in students being referred to the Office of Academic Integrity.

On writing essays: Students who have questions or concerns about how to write an essay should make an appointment to see me during my office hours – for advice and help. Otherwise, I recommend using the very helpful website, “Writing at the University of Toronto,” at www.writing.utoronto.ca. Look under “advice” and then “style and editing.” Writing workshops are also available for students; for information on them go to www.writing.utoronto.ca/news/writing-plus. A helpful guide to writing is: Margot Northey and Margaret Procter, *Writer’s Choice: A Portable Guide for Canadian Writers* (Prentice Hall Cda). And Wm. Strunk and E.B. White’s *The Elements of Style* is the best general summary of the rules of grammar and good writing.

Students are expected to acquaint themselves with the rules concerning **plagiarism**. Cheating and misrepresentation will not be tolerated. Students who commit an academic offence face serious penalties. Avoid plagiarism by citing properly (and what was alright in high school may not be alright in university). The *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* in the Calendar of the Faculty of Arts and Science specifies: “It shall be an offence for a student knowingly: to **represent as one’s own** any idea or expression of an idea or work of another in any academic examination or term test or in connection with any other form of academic work, i.e. to commit plagiarism. Wherever in the Code an offence is described as depending on ‘knowing’, the offence shall likewise be deemed to have been committed if the person ought reasonably to have known.” In short, do not “borrow” passages from books or articles or websites without **citing them**. If you copy the words of other people, put quotation marks around them and cite the reference (that is, put author’s surname, date, & page number in parentheses). If you paraphrase you also need to cite the reference, with the page number. Then, be sure to put all sources that you cite in the “References” at the back of the paper. Plagiarizing can result in a very serious penalty, and any suspected case will be turned over to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Familiarize yourself with the University of Toronto’s *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>). It is the rule book for academic behaviour at the U of T, and you are expected to know the rules.

Accessibility Needs:

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, please visit <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility> as soon as possible.

Contacting Me: I am best reached either by email (if you put "SOC494" in the subject field) or by coming to my office during office hours. I am happy to answer brief, simple questions by email – and will usually do so within 24 hours – but longer questions must be asked in person.

COURSE OUTLINE

Sept. 13 Introduction to the course

Sept. 20 A Stalled Revolution? Uneven Change?

Readings:

Paula England, 2010. The gender revolution: uneven and stalled. *Gender & Society* 24, 2: 149-166. [see website for links to articles in journals.]

Barbara Reskin and Michelle Maroto, 2011. What trends? Whose choices? Comment on England. *Gender & Society* 25,1: 81-87.

Barbara R. Bergmann, 2011. Sex segregation in the blue-collar occupations: women's choices or unremedied discrimination: Comment on England. *Gender & Society* 25, 1: 88-93.

Nikki Graf and Christine Schwartz, 2011. The uneven pace of change in heterosexual romantic relationships: Comment on England. *Gender & Society* 25, 1: 101-106.

Angela McRobbie, 2009. Post-feminism and popular culture: Bridget Jones and the new gender regime. Pp. 11-23 in *The Aftermath of Feminism: Gender, Culture and Social Change*. LA: Sage Publications. In coursepack.

Sept. 27 The Sex/Gender Binary

Readings:

Judith Lorber, 1994. 'Night to his day' The social construction of gender. Pp. 13-36 in *Paradoxes of Gender*. New Haven: Yale University. In coursepack.

Dean Spade, 2003. Resisting medicine, re/modeling gender. *Berkeley Women's Law Journal* 18: 15-37.

Laurel Westbrook 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.

Oct. 4 Gender Socialization and the 'Choices' of Young Adults

Readings:

Ann Mullen, 2014. Gender, background, and the choice of college major in a liberal arts context. *Gender & Society* 28, 2: 289-313.

Erin Cech, 2016. Mechanism or myth? Family plans and reproduction of occupational gender segregation. *Gender & Society* 30, 2: 265-288.

Brooke C. Bass, 2015. Preparing for parenthood? Gender, aspirations, and the reproduction of labor market inequality. *Gender & Society* 29, 3: 362-385.

Oct. 11 Media Messages and Body Troubles

Readings:

Susan Bordo, 2003 (1993). The body and the reproduction of femininity. Pp. 165-184 in *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body*. Berkeley: University of California Press. In coursepack.

Michelle M. Lazar, 2013. The right to be beautiful: postfeminist identity and consumer beauty advertising. Pp. 37-51 in *New Femininities: Postfeminism, Neoliberalism, and Subjectivity*, edited by Rosalind Gill and Christina Scharff. London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan. In coursepack.

Susan J. Douglas, 2010. Fantasies of power. Pp. 1-22 in *The Rise of Enlightened Sexism: How Pop Culture Took Us from Girl Power to Girls Gone Wild*. NY: St. Martin's Griffin. In coursepack.

Becky Thompson, 1994. Making "a way outa no way" and Hungry and hurting. Pp. 1-26 and 69-95 in *A Hunger So Wide and So Deep: A Multi-Racial View of Women's Eating Problems*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. [skim second chapter] In coursepack.

Oct. 18 Close Encounters: Sexuality & Dating

Readings:

Laura Hamilton and Elizabeth Armstrong, 2009. Gendered sexuality in young adulthood: double binds and flawed options. *Gender & Society* 23, 5: 589-616.

Ellen Lamont, 2014. Negotiating courtship: reconciling egalitarian ideals with traditional gender norms. *Gender & Society* 28, 2: 189-211.

Oct. 25 TEST 1

Nov. 1 Making Families: Weddings, Marriage, and Parenthood

Readings:

Cele Otnes and Elizabeth Pleck, 2003. Romance, magic, memory, and perfection. Pp. 1-24 in *Cinderella Dreams: The Allure of the Lavish Wedding*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. In coursepack.

Bonnie Fox, 2009. Chap. 3, Becoming parents: the challenges of the postpartum period (pp. 77-116) & pp. 143-151 & Chap. 5, Taking care of the baby: reproducing gender differences and divisions? (pp. 154-184). In *When Couples Become Parents: The Creation of Gender in the Transition to Parenthood*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

ESSAY DUE on Nov. 15

Nov. 15 Family Relations

Readings:

Bonnie Fox, 2009. Chap. 6, Home making and making family (pp. 185-219). In *When Couples Become Parents*. Univ. of Toronto Press.

Arlie Hochschild, 1989. Chap. 1, A speed-up in the family, chap. 2, Marriage in the stalled revolution, & chap. 3, The cultural cover-up (pp. 1-32). In *The Second Shift: Working Parents and the Revolution at Home*. NY: Viking.

Nov. 22 Juggling Paid Work and Family Responsibility

Reading:

Arlie Hochschild, 1989. Chapters 4, 5, 6, 12, 13, 14 & 15 in *The Second Shift*. Viking.

Nov. 29 Ongoing Inequality in the Labour Force and the Impact of Restructuring and Neoliberalism

No required readings.

Dec. 6 TEST 2