

**Rhodes College**  
**Gender & Society**  
**Anth/Soc 310**  
**TTh 1:00-2:30**  
**Spring 1999**

**Instructor:** Eva Brown

**Office Hours:** MWF 1:00-1:50 & TTh 12:00-1:00

**Phone:** 843-3930 (main office, Anth/Soc/Ms. Benton)  
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**Required text:** Reconstructing Gender  
Estelle Disch

## **I. Course Description:**

This course examines issues raised by gender differentiation from an anthropological and sociological perspective. While biological and psychological differences might exist between the sexes, it is perhaps more important to realize that societies are capable not only recognizing, ignoring, elaborating or creating gender differences, but of attaching value to them as well.

## **II. Course Objectives**

1. Analyzing the effects of gender and how it influences the experiences of people in American culture.
2. Examining how race, class, and gender have overlapping and cumulative effects on people's experience.
3. Discovering the structural patterns that emerge from the societal configurations of gender and the structural consequences of race and class.
4. Showing how these social structural patterns influence the individual consciousness and individual and group interaction.
5. Looking at the consequences of gender as a social category in relation to group access to institutional and group power and privileges.
6. Critically thinking about existing systems of power and privilege and examining a variety of specific hierarchies and systems of domination manifest in fundamental institutions of U.S. society.
7. Using the sociological imagination to examine the place of gender in historical context and in the context of contemporary social conditions.
8. Understanding the dynamics and consequences of gender and gender-related issues on group life and on individual life chances and life choices.

9. Recognizing how gender is socially constructed, especially in terms of processes such as stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination.
10. Analyzing contemporary social issues which are influenced by implicit and explicit assumptions about gender. In addition, the same type of assumptions will be analyzed for race and class as they form the collective configuration with gender which is characteristic of the American lifestyle.
11. Awareness of the crucial importance of gender in determining people's ways of thinking, behaving, and living.
12. Focusing on social change in terms of empowerment, resistance to oppression, and activism (as evidenced by new actions, groups building coalitions with others, new social arrangements, and new meaning systems).
13. Examining historical influences on and changes in gender models, including the institutions, events, societal conditions, and social movements that have impacted on female and male identity and social placement.
14. Analyzing cross-cultural constructions and differences of males and females.
15. Learning to use the social scientific approach to the study of gender and gender issues.
16. Application of fundamental social science theory to the examination of gender.

Ultimately, you should learn to think critically about the human condition by using the sociological and anthropological perspectives to view everyday life and especially to learn to:

- a) not over-generalize from personal experience
- b) distinguish personal troubles from public issues, and the relationship between them
- c) identify social problems in the spheres of living and subsequently how to solve them
- d) analyze "what is" in order to evaluate "what might be" or "ought to be" in society at large
- e) develop a healthy skepticism regarding over-simplified explanations of human behavior (including those in the social sciences)

### **III. Attendance:**

Attendance is a vital factor in class discussion and provides a fundamental means of integrating, synthesizing, and organizing the material presented in text, lecture, and through other sources. Information missed may have direct consequences on performance in the class. It is your responsibility to obtain any information missed as the result of an absence. It is impossible to give you a personal lecture on material missed. Find a colleague who can help you in this area.

### **IV. Examinations:**

There are three (3) exams including the final exam. Each exam is graded on a 100 point scale and covers the sections of the text indicated in the course calendar. In addition, material on exams

includes information from lecture, class discussion, handouts, and any other sources brought to the class. Format for the exams is essay.

**ALL MAKE-UP EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN ON THE LAST DAY OF CLASSES!!!**

**V. Writing Assignment:**

You are also required to write a critical analysis paper on one of the major topics covered in the text. This will be an eight page critical analysis of a specific gender issue or concern. Your analysis should include the following:

- description of the issue, concern, or problem (existing knowledge)
- analysis of the particular issue, concern, or problem
- synthesis of the research materials
- evaluation of findings

As with the exams, this paper is graded on a 100 point scale.

<b>VI. Grading Scale:</b>	90 – 100	A
	80 - 89	B
	70 - 79	C
	60 - 69	D
	Below 60	F

**VI. Calendar for the Course:**

- Feb. 16<sup>th</sup> Test #1  
Parts I-IV in Reconstructing Gender  
  
Articles #1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13,  
14, 15, 17, 20
- Mar. 30<sup>th</sup> Test #2  
Parts IV-VII in Reconstructing Gender  
  
Articles #21, 22, 23, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32,  
34, 37, 38, 41
- May \_\_ Test #3(Final Exam)  
Parts VIII- XI  
  
Articles #43, 45, 48, 50, 51, 56, 57, 58,  
60, 64

The exams listed above will also include readings and handouts provided throughout the semester.

