

**GENDER INEQUALITY TODAY**  
**SOC493H1F**  
**FALL 2017**

Professor Bonnie Fox  
725 Spadina Ave., room 382  
  
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Class Time: Thurs. 2:00-4:00  
Class Location: Sociology Dept., rm. 41  
(basement)  
Office Hours: Thurs. 12:00-1:00

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Course Website: [www.chass.utoronto.ca/~bfox/soc493](http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/~bfox/soc493)

**Important:** This course is restricted to 4<sup>th</sup>-year sociology specialists and majors; 1.0 SOC at the 300 or higher level is the pre-requisite to the course. Students without this requirement will be removed and without notice.

**Course Description:** 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 questions this course addresses are: How have gender and gender relations changed since the second wave of the Women’s Liberation Movement? What is the relative position of women today? More generally, how have gender and gender relations changed, considering the diversity of people’s experiences – with respect to social class, race and sexuality, as well as gender?

Considering individuals, do girls and women in Canada and the U.S. have similar opportunities and degrees of choice, power and privilege as boys and men? The course looks at research examining questions about the relative position of girls and women today, and gender relations generally, and does so while also considering class and racial/ethnic differences, and the LGBT community as well as cisgender individuals. From the perspective of society, how much of life is still organized around the gender divide, and what are the social implications of that?

We begin by reading several feminist sociologists’ research-based answers to the broad question of change (or lack of change) with respect to gender. Following that introduction, each week’s readings explore different personal experiences and social phenomena at the heart of the social creation of gender differences and inequalities. We consider the sex binary and gender divide – how they have been and continue to be created, and their implications for individuals (transgender people as well as young and older cisgender folks). Looking next at the experiences of teens, we consider the complexities and troubles that girls and boys deal with because of the prominence of gender in their lives – with a focus

on bullying. Then we look at young adulthood – the troubles that girls especially have in dating and with respect to sexuality, as well as the different ‘choices’ made by young-adult women and men. We also look at commercial media images of, and messages about, femininity and women’s bodies. Then we turn to adulthood. We consider ongoing inequalities in the labour force, examining the nature of the inequalities and their causes. And we consider how neoliberalism has changed both employment and state policies that impact gender. Next, we examine family life. We explore what marriage and weddings signify and symbolize today, and then examine the way parenthood pushes heterosexual couples towards more conventional relationships. Finally, we look at couples’ negotiations of the doing of housework and childcare, as well as how they juggle this work and employment. We consider all of these life experiences to learn more about the social processes and interpersonal negotiations that create gender differences and inequalities.

**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:**

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 two texts can be purchased at the University of Toronto Bookstore.

### **Grading:**

The assignments will be weighted as follows: Due dates:

Participation	15%	weekly comment essays
Test 1	30%	Oct. 19
Essay	30%	Nov. 16
Test 2	25%	Nov. 30

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- or two-page) summary of one of the main arguments made in one of that week's readings, as well as a short comment on the argument. This comment should be analytical: It should evaluate the argument (i.e., assess whether it is strong or weak in terms of the evidence supporting the argument, or explain how it adds to your understanding of gender, or indicate what questions it raises or ignores, etc.) These weekly comment essays are required for 6 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 the tests. The dates of the tests are on the course outline (and above).

**Missed 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 a possible make-up test. Make-up tests will only be given to students who have documentation from a doctor or college registrar explaining why they missed the test: For illness, you must supply a duly completed Verification of Student Illness or Injury form (available at [www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca](http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca)). A doctor's note is not acceptable. For other problems, you need a letter from your college registrar, emailed by them to Professor Fox 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, and their format will be the same as those of the regularly-scheduled tests – part multiple-choice, part essay.

**Essay:** Students will write an essay addressing questions (given out in class) on one of three books of their choice – *When Couples Become Parents: The Creation of Gender in the Transition to Parenthood*, by Bonnie Fox, or *Opting Out? Why Women Really Quit Careers and Head Home*, by Pamela Stone, or *Negotiating Citizenship: Migrant Women in Canada and the Global System*, by Daiva Stasiulis and Abigail Bakan. The maximum length of the essays is 12 pages. And the essay should be handed in in class, at the start of the class, on the day it is due. **Note:** you must sign and attach the Academic Integrity Checklist. [See course website for this form.]

**Late essays** will be accepted (extensions given) only if I have given you **permission** beforehand. Contact me if you are ill before the essay is due and unable to meet the deadline. You need to supply proper documentation (the Verification of Student Illness or Injury form) from a doctor. If a personal or family crisis prevents you from meeting a deadline, you must 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.) Both Verification of Student Illness forms and letters from college registrars must be either emailed to Professor Fox or submitted with your work in class or during office hours.

You will lose **2** percentage points for every day an essay is late, beginning the day it is due, unless you have an extension approved by Prof. Fox. Attach the registrar's letter or Verification of Student Illness form to the essay when you hand it in. Also attach the Academic Integrity Checklist. Work handed in outside of class, should be put in the fourth-year dropbox in room 225 in the Sociology Department building (at 725 Spadina Ave., open Monday to Friday, 9 - 5 pm). It must also 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 in a second (or third etc.) course, 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](http://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](http://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. 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 (or closely summarize) 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 “SOC493” 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. 7 Introduction to the course**

**Sept. 14 A Stalled Revolution? Uneven Change?**

Readings:

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.

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

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.

Native Women’s Association of Canada. 2015. *Fact Sheet: Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls*. [https://nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Fact\\_Sheet\\_Missing\\_and\\_Murdered\\_Aboriginal\\_Women\\_and\\_Girls](https://nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Fact_Sheet_Missing_and_Murdered_Aboriginal_Women_and_Girls)

## **Sept. 21 The Sex/Gender/Sexuality 'System': Its Reproduction and Challenges to It**

### 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.

Emily Kane, 2006. 'No way my boys are going to be like that!' Parents' responses to children's gender nonconformity. *Gender & Society* 20, 2: 149-176.

Karin Martin, 2009. Normalizing heterosexuality: Mothers' assumptions, talk, and strategies with young children. *American Sociological Review* 74, 2:

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. OPTIONAL.

## **Sept. 28 Negotiating Gender: Teen Dilemmas**

### Readings:

C.J. Pascoe, 2007. Dude, you're a fag: Adolescent male homophobia. Pp. 52-83 in *Dude, You're a Fag: Masculinity and Sexuality in High School*. Berkeley: University of California Press. In coursepack.

Sarah A. Miller, 2016. 'How you bully a girl': Sexual drama and the negotiation of gendered sexuality in high school. *Gender & Society* 30, 5: 721-744.

## **Oct. 5 Young Adulthood: Sexuality, Dating & Planning for the Future**

### Readings:

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

Amy Wilkins and Cristen Dalessandro, 2013. Monogamy Lite: Cheating, College, and Women. *Gender & Society* 27, 5: 728-751.

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

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

## **Oct. 12 Media Messages and Body Troubles**

Readings:

Susan Bordo, 2003 (1993). Hunger as ideology. Pp. 99-134 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.

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. 19 TEST 1**

## **Oct. 26 Inequalities in the Workplace: “Gendered Organizations” in Neoliberal Times**

Readings:

Joan Acker, 2006. Inequality regimes: Gender, class, and race in organizations. *Gender & Society* 20, 4: 441-464.

Dana Britton, 2017. Beyond the chilly climate: The salience of gender in women’s academic careers. *Gender & Society* 31, 1: 5-28.

Christine Williams, 2013. The glass escalator revisited: Gender inequality in neoliberal times. *Gender & Society* 27, 5: 609-629.

## **Nov. 2 Making Families: Weddings, Marriage, and Parenthood**

Readings:

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 Nov. 16**

## **Nov. 16 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.

Sedef Arat-Koc, 2014. The politics of family and immigration in the subordination of domestic workers in Canada. Pp. 316-341 in *Family Patterns, Gender Relations. Fourth Edition*. In coursepack.

## **Nov. 23 Juggling Paid Work and Family Responsibility**

Reading:

Pamela Stone, 2007. Gilded Cages, Chap. 4 (pp. 80-104). From *Opting Out*. In coursepack.

## **Nov. 30 TEST 2**