Title: Sex, Gender and Society

Course Code: SY37G

Lecturer: Ms. June Castello

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Administrative Coordinator: Ms. Erika Ellis

Lecture Times and Venue:

Tutorial Times and Venue: To be announced

Office Hours: To be announced

Course Office: Mona Unit, Centre for Gender and Development Studies
Sir Alister McIntyre Building

Telephone: 876-977-7365, or ext. 2644 (on campus)

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Evaluation:
One Course Work Essay - 30%
One Tutorial Presentation - 10%
Total Course Work - 40%
Written two hour examination - 60%

Course Content:
*Sex, Gender and Society* is a level three course which explores and examines the development of the concepts and ideas pertaining to sex and gender through the growth of the feminist movement, its challenge to the construction of androcentric knowledge, and its intersection with the areas of philosophy, history, sociology, economics and politics. The course exposes students to the theoretical and methodological analysis of the concepts of sex and gender in society and prepares students to examine social phenomena from a gender perspective. The course further exposes students to the way in which the development of gender, especially the feminist critique, has had an impact upon social theory in the Caribbean, as well as on the international stage.

Please take the time to read the information contained in this document; it is all-encompassing and very important. Historically, there has been a strong positive correlation between students’ attention to this outline and their enjoyment of this course.

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Course Objectives:
By the end of the sessions, the students should be able to:
- understand and appreciate the conceptual and political difference between ‘sex’ and ‘gender’
- understand the ways in which gender shapes and gives meaning to our lives
- understand and appreciate the implications of the multiple dimensions of the social relations of gender as these relations intersect with social theory
- understand the pervasiveness of sex and sexuality in our societies
- undertake an analysis of social phenomena using gender as a category of analysis

Course Guidelines:
The course uses a combination of lectures, tutorials and participatory classroom workshops and encourages participation and experiential learning. Students are expected to come fully prepared to take an active role in both tutorials as well as lectures. **All students are expected to read prior to lectures and tutorials and to both raise issues and answer questions. The presence of a body on its own, is, therefore, not indicative of participation.** Tutorials are held for the benefit of the students. It is at this time that any questions which emerge from your readings should be addressed by your tutor. Attendance at the two hour weekly lecture is essential and the one hour tutorial time is **compulsory.** A register of attendance will be taken at each tutorial. Students with clashes **must report** and discuss these with the lecturer.

Course work:
Course work comprises two aspects: one course work essay and one tutorial presentation. **Both assignments are compulsory.**

A list of essays covering the first section of the course is to be found on pages 12-13 of the course outline, and from that list, student will select one topic. The assignment must be submitted on the date specified. A receipt will, at that time, be issued as proof of submission. **Late assignments will not be accepted unless accompanied by a certified letter from the University Medical Health Centre.**

Course work assignments are due no later than the first lecture in the week of **2009, June 15** and should be submitted during the lecture. However, should the student so desire, assignments that are ready before the deadline should be handed in at the Mona Unit, Centre for Gender and Development Studies and students should obtain a receipt from the office. Coursework assignments will be returned during the last lecture in July, 2009.

Guidelines for Course Work Assignments
The coursework essay accounts for 30% of the final grade and, like any other academic written assignment, needs to satisfy basic academic requirements. It will be assessed based on the following criteria:
- **Content** – the presentation and development of good and relevant ideas; the grasp, understanding and explanation of the key concepts.
- **Argumentation** – the support of the ideas and key concepts by accurate referencing, the logical and coherent development of the points/position being advanced. **Students must show evidence, therefore, of wide reading going beyond the recommended literature in the course outline.**
- **Use of appropriate writing techniques** that include good grammar and proper referencing. Please note that footnotes and the bibliography are used to inform the
Kindly note that at the university level, students are expected to follow specific writing guidelines, especially as these relate to footnotes/endnotes and bibliographies. Ensure that you follow and maintain the consistency of a particular style which you select. Guides for writings styles are available in the Main Library. Proper referencing of material is an imperative in academic work. Should you feel uncertain as to how to do this, you should consult A Manual for the Writing of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations by Kate Turabian in 1987 and published in Chicago by the University of Chicago Press, 1987. Proper referencing will be one of the areas to which grades will be assigned in your assignments.

Students are advised that tutorial presentations are designed to both provide an adequate response to the question as well as to invite the active participation of the group. They will, then, be assessed along these lines.

**Academic Conduct**
You will be expected to present your work in a scholarly manner. Academic dishonesty and misconduct will not be tolerated. This includes (but is not limited to) cheating on assignments or examinations, submitting the same paper to meet requirements of more than one course without the consent of all the lecturers concerned, re-submitting previous academic work as a new product, disrupting or interfering with other students’ work or plagiarising (submitting someone else’s work as your own).

**Essential Readings:**
A selected bibliography has been included in this outline as a guide. Please note that this bibliography is by no means exclusive or exhaustive and students are encouraged to seek out additional sources on their own. Many of the texts, journals, articles and papers can be found either in the RBC section of the Main Library or on the Open Shelf. You are also encouraged to make use of the World Wide Web. A course package will also be made available for those wishing to purchase some of the material on the list. The items which are included in the course package are identified in the required readings for the sessions.

**Essential Books:**
We recognise that books can be expensive but for students who are interested in doing well in this course, as well as those who will continue on in this or any related field(s), it is recommended that you purchase at least one of the following essential books.


**Essential Caribbean References**

Press


Work Schedule by Session

Session One (Week beginning June 01)

In House Organisation - final registration and sign up for tutorials

Introduction: Sex, Gender and Society – Broad Strokes and Connective Sinews

By the end of the session you should be able to:

- understand the way in which the course is structured
- understand the meanings of and be able to define key terms – *sex, sexuality, sexual identity, gender, masculinity, femininity, patriarchy, androcentric, biological determinism, essentialism, constructivism and social constructivism.*
- understand the relationship between Sex, Gender and Society
- critically review liberal, radical, socialist, marxist, black and post–modern feminists’ contribution to the discussion of the ‘Woman Question’.

Readings:


Young, Kate. 1999. “The Social Relations of Gender”. In Mohammed, Patricia and Catherine Shepherd (editors) *Gender in Caribbean Development* The Press: Mona, UWI. (reprint)
Sessions Two and Three (Weeks beginning June 01 and June 08, respectively)

Theorising Sexuality: The Construction of Sexuality and Gender

By the end of the two sessions you should be able to:
- explore and understand the processes by which heterosexuality has become the normative sexuality
- understand the mechanics of power that are embedded in sexuality
- recognise sexuality as a defining characteristic of everyday life for men and women.

Readings:
De Beauvoir, Simone. 1949. The Second Sex.


Tutorial Activity for the Week Beginning June 01

How to Interpret Questions and Write Responses.
Clarification of Concepts.
Tutorial Activity for the Week Beginning June 08

EITHER

Select one of the How to Keep Your Man quizzes or articles from a popular magazine e.g. Cosmopolitan, Ebony etc. which relate to female and male sexuality, and discuss the issues of sexuality, power etc which are brought out in the article or quiz.

OR

Identify a list of words used to describe male and female sexuality. For each word you identify, - give its etymology, its popular interpretations and what this says about male and female sexuality.

Session Four (Week beginning June 08)

The Lord of the Rings: Theorising and Understanding the Construction of Masculinity

By the end of the session you should be able to:

- critically evaluate the system of patriarchy as both a benefit and a hindrance in the construction of male identity
- understand how various social, political and economic institutions assist in the development of particular definitions and understandings of masculinities
- distinguish between subordinate and hegemonic masculinities
- understand how these definitions of masculinity impact on relationships between the sexes.

Readings:


Sessions Five and Six (Week beginning June, 15.)
Bodies: Grammars and Cartographies

By the end of the session you should be able to:
- understand how our ideas about the male body and the female body are heavily influenced by the societies in which we live
- identify and explore the factors that control and reproduce interpretations and expectations of human bodies
- analyse how these expectations are reinforced and/or challenged in contemporary popular culture

Readings:


Tutorial Activity for Week beginning 2009, June 15
Watch any television show/movie which confronts issues affecting men e.g. Philadelphia, Braveheart, The Lord of the Rings, Saving Private Ryan, Brokeback Mountain, and critically assess and evaluate the definitions and expressions of masculinity which are portrayed, situating your answer within the relevant theoretical framework.

Session Six (Week beginning June 22)
The Family and Social Ordering
By the end of the session you should be able to:
- define what is meant by the term ‘family’ and identify the different types of family structures
- explore and identify ways in which the family is organised to reproduce unequal social relations of gender
- explore and analyse popular understandings of the family especially those that relate to “the male breadwinner”; “my mother who fathered me” and “marginalisation of the black male”.
- explore the limits of empowerment for men and women.

Readings:

____________. “Liberal Ideology and Contradictions in Caribbean Gender Systems”. In Barrow, Christine (ed) Caribbean Portraits, Kingston: Ian Randle and CGDS.


Tutorial Activity for Week beginning 2009, June 22

Conduct a critical review of any aspect of popular culture and analyse the ways in which the notion of the natural attraction of opposites in gendered relations is played out.

Session Seven and Eight (Weeks beginning June 22 and June 29, respectively.)

Looking Back in Time: Sex and Gender in the History of Caribbean Society

By the end of the sessions you should be able to:

- evaluate how colonisation, slavery and indentureship impacted on gender relations in the Caribbean
- identify the agents/institutions/beliefs/ideologies which shaped the development of masculinity and femininity in the history of the Caribbean
- identify the agents/institutions/ beliefs/ideologies which shaped the development of masculinity and femininity in industrial societies
- assess these changes based on race, ethnicity and class

Readings:


Mohammed, Patricia. 1995. “Writing Gender into History: the Negotiation of Gender Relations Among Indian Men and Women in Post-Indenture Trinidad Society, 1917 – 47. Engendering History. 20-47


**Session Eight** (Week beginning June 29)

**Gender, Power and Social Control**

By the end of the session you should be able to:

- assess the impact of post-colonial ideology on theories of social control
- understand how values and perceptions about masculinity, femininity and gender identity have been influenced by post-colonial theories
- understand the ways in which matrices of power produce particular performances and expressions of masculinity and femininity

**Readings:**


Tutorial Activity for Week beginning 2009, June 29
Conduct an examination of the way in which two people from a named Caribbean territory understand and construct their bodies. What are the gender ideologies that influence their understandings of their bodies? The examination must take into account any variations in understandings and constructions across race/ethnic divides. (N.B. This activity requires you to actually interview the persons. They may, however, remain anonymous in the presentation.)

Session Nine (Week beginning July 06)
Gender and Development
Holding Up Half the Sky Without A Forklift
By the end of the session you should be able to:
- understand the various meanings ascribed to development
- analyse the way in which women have been “added and stirred” into development plans.

Readings:


Tutorial Activity for Week beginning 2009, July 06
Write a letter to the editor of a regional daily newspaper and:

i. defend improvements in the social relations of gender in a named Caribbean country in the post-emancipation era

ii. interrogate the popular notion of Caribbean men as being psychically defeated and socially at risk.

Session 10 (Week beginning July 06)
The Cycle Never Ends: Men, Women and Violence
By the end of this session you should be able to:

- understand how violence affects the relationships between men and women
- understand the issues of power and social control which shape gender relations through violent behaviour
- understand how social phenomena influence violent behaviour
- assess the impact of violence on the definitions of masculinity and femininity and the relationship between the sexes.

Readings:

Branche, Clement. “Boys in Conflict: Community, Gender Identity and Sex”. Paper presented at Workshop on Family and Quality of Gender Relations at the University of the West Indies Mona, March 5-6 1997.


Sessions 11 (Week beginning July 13)
Synthesising Exercise

Tutorial Activity for Week beginning 2009, July 13
Either
Conduct interviews with two families from different socio-economic and racial backgrounds. In your interviews in each case you should ascertain:

- how the relations of power are negotiated within the family structure
how the family structure and the ways in which the family carries out its functions conform to or fail to conform to the dominant family ideology
what all of this tells us about the family’s ability to endorse or disrupt social ordering.

Or

Case Studies on Development to be presented.

Coursework Essay Topics.
Write approximately 2,500 words on one of the following:

1. Discuss the ways in which explanations of sexuality and its origins shape understandings and performances of masculinity and femininity in a named Caribbean territory.

2. Illustrate how we take the human body – male and female – and construct it into different forms and shapes, and clothe it in different ways, all of which have different meanings in society for sexuality and gender which change over time. You must not only demonstrate these expressions but explain their derivation, sexual meanings, and the significance they bear for the society to which they relate. You are welcome to use different modes of expression in your answer: an essay, an illustrated letter to someone in another society, write in verse or dub poetry or use photographs or images from magazines etc. as support material as long as the presentation answers the question fully.

3. Foucault’s The History of Sexuality has been acclaimed as a groundbreaking and foundational explanation for the way in which sex and sexuality are socially constructed and intrinsically a part of social institutions and state policy. Provide a critical evaluation of the ideas raised in Volume I of this book and say to what extent these have been useful in the following ways:
   i. providing a basis for subsequent theoretical explanations of sexuality
   ii. understanding the ubiquitous nature of sexuality in a named contemporary society and
   iii. challenging or reinforcing your own conceptual framework of sexuality.

4. It has been argued by some that men are in crisis. Using a named Caribbean territory as your point of reference:
   i. discuss the relevance and accuracy of this argument
   ii. submit three recommendations (with accompanying justification) of strategies that can be adopted to improve the situation of men in the selected territory.