

# Sociology 133: Sociology of Gender

## Spring 2023

### INSTRUCTOR

Jill Bakehorn, Ph.D.

**E-mail:** [jabakehorn@berkeley.edu](mailto:jabakehorn@berkeley.edu)

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 10:30-11:30am;

Wednesdays 9:00-10:00am; Thursdays, 4:00-5:00pm

**Sign-up:** <https://calendly.com/bakehorn/office-hours>

### CLASS MEETING

Tuesdays + Thursdays 8:00-9:29am

101 Morgan

## Course Description

Gender is arguably the most salient characteristic determining one's place in any society. Gender is often the first thing you notice about another person and your assessment of a person's gender shapes your expectations of that person. These expectations (which are often requirements) place very real constraints and limitations on individuals.

The sociology of gender focuses on the **social construction of gender**. Other theories of gender such as biological explanations will be discussed in comparison to the social constructionist approach. The course will begin with an examination of key theoretical approaches to the study of gender. Special attention will be paid to how gender is constructed at the level of society as well as how we engage in the re-creation and construction of gender in our everyday lives.

Gender will be explored as an institution and a system as well as how it influences individuals. Because it does not exist in a vacuum, gender will be discussed in relation to its intersection with other social locations such as race, class, sexuality, age, and ethnicity. Throughout the course we will examine current events that highlight the importance of gender, using these examples to illustrate key concepts and theories.

We will be paying particular attention to the structural and micro-interactional processes by which we were made into gendered beings in childhood. What gendered expectations do parents bring to the raising of their children and what are the structural forces that influence how parents raise their kids? We will examine the modern context of raising children and how the gender system works to reproduce normative ideas about gender even in the context of advocating for trans kids. Is there a way to break out of the binary system?

Some questions about gender that will be addressed in this course are:

- ❖ What is gender and why do we need it?
- ❖ What are the forces that shape gender?
- ❖ How is gender raced, classed, and sexualized?
- ❖ What happens when we don't live up to gender expectations?

Keep in mind this is a sociology course. Sociology is the study of human social activity, organization, and interaction. Sociology is about the search for patterned behavior and social, rather than individual, explanations for this behavior. Sociology is built upon empirical data, not opinions. Sociologists look beyond the taken-for-granted notions of our social environment to examine the many layers of social meaning in the human experience. (If this doesn't sound familiar to you, or if you are unclear about the *sociological perspective*, please refer to an introductory sociology text for a refresher.)

Thus, the sociology of gender avoids essentialist, reductionist explanations of gender and recognizes the complex nature of gender issues and gender relationships. As my sociology of gender professor taught me, there is a difference between speaking about gender sociologically and speaking about gender as “members of the culture.” When speaking as “members of the culture” we don't have to worry about whether what we say is actually representative or accurate. In this class, you will be expected to discuss, analyze, and write about gender *sociologically*.

This class will be **challenging** on a number of levels:

- ❖ You will be expected to keep up with a number of readings for each class meeting.
- ❖ These readings will be challenging not only in terms of their length and number, but also in terms of the subject matter presented and the complex theories proposed.
- ❖ We will be speaking frankly about issues of gender, race, class and sexuality. Some topics may be challenging in the sense that you may find the subject matter embarrassing, graphic, controversial, or difficult to discuss. Frank discussions and presentation of material may include things that some find offensive.

This course challenges many taken-for-granted assumptions about gender and the social world. Keep in mind that your personal experiences may not match the general sociological insights discussed in the course. This does not negate the insights. Ask yourself why this might be the case. You may not agree with everything we read and discuss, but I expect you to have an open mind and demonstrate your knowledge of the sociological perspective. Disagreements and debates are expected and welcome in this class; however, I will not tolerate personal attacks.

## Course Goals

- ❖ Learn the fundamental concepts of social construction theory
- ❖ Gain a better understanding of gender and its effects
- ❖ Examine how gender pervades all parts of our culture and lives
- ❖ Question the assumptions, expectations, and requirements of gender
- ❖ Utilize an intersectional understanding of gender

## Learning Outcomes

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

- ❖ Explain how both gender and sex are socially constructed
- ❖ Demonstrate how the social structure of gender is constructed and reinforced through micro-social interactions
- ❖ Connect sociological theories to the social world and your experiences
- ❖ Use an intersectional approach to discussing social phenomena
- ❖ Write succinct papers that effectively synthesize course materials and apply theory

## Required Texts

Kane, Emily. 2012. *The Gender Trap: Parents and the Pitfalls of Raising Boys and Girls*. New York: New York University Press. (Available as a PDF on bCourses and [online via library](#))

Meadow, Tey. 2018. *Trans Kids: Being Gendered in the Twenty-First Century*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press. (Available as a PDF on bCourses and [online via library](#))

**Course Reader:** Individual files are available digitally on bCourses and a bound or digital reader is available from [Copy Central](#).

## Classroom Health Protocols

Students must follow county and campus regulations regarding coronavirus safety protocols. Vaccinations are required to attend in-person classes. Even if not required by campus, please consider wearing a face mask that covers both your nose and mouth while indoors to help protect yourself and those most vulnerable to severe illness. These protocols are in place to ensure the safety of everyone. Please do not come to class if you are sick—especially if you are coughing, sneezing, or have a fever—to help protect the health of others. Contact me to get access to the lecture recording.

## Assignments

**Reading Responses:** These reading responses test your comprehension of course readings as well as your ability to explain concepts **in your own words**. Because you will not be able to rely on direct quotations of the material, you must focus on your own understanding and articulation of the texts. You will also be asked to make connections between the course materials and your experience of the social world.

**Essay Exams:** Midterm and final exam. You will be responsible for course readings, lectures, and any media presented in the class. These exams will focus on your ability to apply theories and to synthesize and make connections between various readings.

All work must be original (you cannot recycle work from other courses).

**Weekly Memos:** These assignments are designed to keep you motivated and engaged with the course and to provide opportunities for you to check your comprehension in preparation for the graded assignments. Assignments will be due on Mondays at 11:59pm (exceptions made for Monday holidays-the due date will be Tuesday).

These assignments give you a space to practice the skills you will later be graded on. **You must complete 10 of the 12 assignments in order to get full credit** (the lowest two scores will be dropped).

## Grade Breakdown

Reading Responses (30%)

Midterm (25%)

Final Exam (30%)

Participation Assignments (15%)

Be sure to carefully consider assignment feedback; it is provided to help you improve on future assignments. For in-text feedback, **click on the link “View Feedback.”**

## GRADE SCALE

Grade Range		Grade
100%	97%	A+
96%	93%	A
92%	90%	A-
89%	87%	B+
86%	83%	B
82%	80%	B-
79%	77%	C+
76%	73%	C
72%	70%	C-
69%	67%	D+
66%	63%	D
62%	60%	D-
59%	50%	F

## Course Format and Policies

**Readings:** Readings should be completed prior to class. You must keep up with the readings to participate in class discussions and complete assignments.

**Email:** Clearly indicate to which class you are referring in your emails to me. I endeavor to respond to emails within 24 hours, but this is not always possible; please be patient. Please note that **I will respond to emails during normal business hours.**

**Names and Pronouns:** You have the right to be referred to by the name you prefer and with the correct gender pronouns. Because the name listed in University records may not correspond to your preferred name, please inform me of your name (and pronunciation) and your pronouns so that I can ensure you are properly recognized and respected.

You can refer to me as Prof. Bakehorn, Dr. Bakehorn, or Jill. My pronouns are she/they.

## Grading Policies

**Extensions are provided for those with this accommodation from DSP.**

I will accept late work, but you will receive a **5% penalty for each day the paper is late** (up to 7 days past due date). Please note that bCourses rounds up to the next whole number. For example, if you submit an assignment 1.3 days late, the late penalty will round up to 2 days. **You do not need to contact me to turn in a paper late.**

Life sometimes prevents us from meeting all of our obligations. I don't think that one missed assignment should derail a student's academic progress. If you do not turn in one of the graded assignments, you will receive a grade of 50. This will allow you to recover from this setback rather than tanking your grade for the class and potentially impacting your GPA. Any subsequent missing assignments will receive a 0.

Assignments will be checked by TurnItIn for plagiarism. Keep in mind, this program keeps a database of previously turned in papers as well as searching the internet.

To **request a re-grade** of an assignment: first, wait 24 hours after the assignment was returned and second, write up a statement detailing why you believe you deserve a higher grade. This statement should be about the substance of your work, not about effort. Be sure to make specific reference to your work, don't simply say that you responded to the questions asked. Demonstrate how you did so. **Request a re-grade within 7 days of the assignment being returned.** My assessment and grade of your work will be used, even if that means you get a lower score than originally given for that work.

## Academic Dishonesty

The University defines academic misconduct as “any action or attempted action that may result in creating an unfair academic advantage for oneself or an unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for any other member or members of the academic community” (UC Berkeley Code of Student Conduct).

Academic dishonesty includes cheating and plagiarism. Cheating is collaboration with other students on response papers and exams. Plagiarism includes turning in any work that is not your own as well as improper or missing citations of others' works. As a student of the University of California, you are bound by the Code of Academic Conduct. Any cases of cheating or plagiarism will result in a referral to The Center for Student Conduct and a failing grade for that assignment.

Plagiarism is most likely to occur because students are unaware of how to cite sources or because they feel desperate. If you get to this point in your writing, contact me ASAP rather than doing something you'll very likely regret.

## Office Hours

Please see Page 1 or [this link](#) for information about my office hours. These office hours are specifically for you. We can discuss readings, assignments, post-college plans, existential dread, how to access resources, letters of recommendation, any issues you are having (doesn't have to be related to this class), what is bringing you joy, whatever.

If you are having any difficulties with the material or assignments for the course or if you are having any personal problems that are affecting your ability to complete assignments on time, please take advantage of office hours—I am here to help!

Remember that office hours are an important resource if for no other reason than getting to know your instructors could help you in the future when you may need letters of recommendation. You do not need to be struggling or have course-specific questions to go to office hours.

All office hours will be via Zoom.

## Student Support Services

### Course Accessibility

This course is intended for all UC Berkeley students, including those with mental, emotional, physical, or cognitive disabilities, illnesses, injuries, impairments, or any other condition that can negatively impact equal access to education. If, at any point in the semester, you find yourself not able to fully access the space, content, and experience of this course, you are welcome (but not required) to contact me by email or during office hours to discuss your specific needs.

I also encourage you to contact the [Disabled Students' Program](#). If you have a diagnosis, DSP can help you document your needs and create an accommodation plan. By making a plan through DSP, you can ensure appropriate accommodations without disclosing your condition or diagnosis to course instructors.

### Student Learning Center

“The primary academic support service for students at Berkeley, the [SLC](#) helps students transition to Cal; navigate the academic terrain; create networks of resources; and achieve academic, personal and professional goals.”

### Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Services

To learn more about these issues, how to support survivors, or how to file a report and receive support services, start here: [Survivor Support](#). **Please note that I am not a confidential advocate; I am a mandated reporter.** You can speak to a [Confidential Care Advocate](#) at the Path to Care Center.

### Economic, Food, and Housing Support

If you are in need of economic, food, or housing support, you can find help at [the Basic Needs Center](#). You may be eligible for money to buy groceries via [Calfresh](#) or the [Food Assistance Program](#). If you are in need of food immediately, please contact the UC Berkeley [Food Pantry](#). More information on resources can be found [here](#).

### Mental Health Resources

All students — regardless of background or identity — may experience a range of issues that can become barriers to learning like strained relationships, anxiety, depression, alcohol and other drug problems, difficulties with concentration, sleep, and eating, and/or lack of motivation. UC Berkeley offers many services like [Recalibrate](#) and [Student Mental Health](#) that could help.

## Course Outline

Complete readings by the day listed below. Course schedule is subject to change.

### Week One: Introductions

**Tuesday, 1/17**                      **Welcome + Introductions**

**Thursday, 1/19**                      **Introducing the Sociology of Gender**

### Weeks Two-Three: Social Construction of Gender and Sex

**Tuesday, 1/24**                      **Social Construction of Gender**

Risman, Barbara J. 2004. "Gender as a Social Structure: Theory Wrestling with Activism."  
*Gender & Society* 18 (4):429-450.

Ridgeway, Cecilia L. 2011. "A Primary Frame for Organizing Social Relations." Pp 32-55  
in *Framed by Gender: How Gender Inequality Persists in the Modern World*. New York:  
Oxford University Press.

**Thursday, 1/26**                      **Are Women and Men Essentially Different?**

Fine, Cordelia. 2010. "Backwards and in High Heels." Pp 27-39 in *Delusions of Gender:  
How our Minds, Society, and Neurosexism Create Difference*. New York: W.W. Norton  
& Co.

—"Gender Equality Begins (Or Ends) at Home." Pp 78-89 in *Delusions of Gender:  
How our Minds, Society, and Neurosexism Create Difference*.

—"Gender Equality 2.0?" Pp 90-96 in *Delusions of Gender: How our Minds, Society,  
and Neurosexism Create Difference*.



**Tuesday, 1/31**

**The Social Construction of Sex Through Science**

Martin, Emily. 1991. "The Egg and the Sperm: How Science Has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles." *Signs: Journal of Women and Culture* 16 (3):485-501.

Halpern, Diane, et al. 2011. "The Pseudoscience of Single-Sex Schooling." *Science*. September 23.

Guiso, Luigi, et al. 2008. "Culture, Gender, and Math." *Science*. May 30.

**Thursday, 2/2**

**Intersex: A Rainbow of Sexual Diversity**

Preves, Sharon E. 2002. "Sexing the Intersexed: An Analysis of Sociocultural Responses to Intersexuality." *Signs* 27 (2):523-556.

Cooky, Cheryl and Shari L. Dworkin. 2013. "Policing the Boundaries of Sex: A Critical Examination of Gender Verification and the Caster Semenya Controversy." *Journal of Sex Research* 50 (2):103-111.

**Weeks Four-Five: How Gender is Done**

**Tuesday, 2/7**

**Doing Gender**

Goffman, Erving. 1977. "The Arrangement Between the Sexes." *Theory & Society* 4 (3):301-331.

West, Candace and Don H. Zimmerman. 2002. "Doing Gender." Pp 3-23 in *Doing Gender, Doing Difference: Inequality, Power, and Institutional Change* edited by Sarah Fenstermaker and Candace West. New York: Routledge.

**Thursday, 2/9**

***Paris is Burning***

hooks, bell. 1996. "Is Paris Burning?" Pp 275-290 in *Reel to Real: Race, Sex, and Class at the Movies*. New York: Routledge.

**Tuesday, 2/14                      Intersectionality**

Collins, Patricia Hill and Sirma Bilge. 2016. "What is Intersectionality?" Pp 1-30 in *Intersectionality*. Malden, MA: Polity Press.

**Thursday, 2/16                      Applying Doing Gender and Intersectionality**

Masood, Ayesha. 2019. "Doing Gender, Modestly: Conceptualizing Workplace Experiences of Pakistani Women Doctors." *Gender, Work, and Organization* 26 (2):214-228.

Crenshaw, Kimberley Williams and Andrea J. Ritchie. 2015. *Say Her Name: Resisting Police Brutality Against Black Women*. African American Policy Forum and the Center for Intersectionality and Social Policy Studies at Columbia University.

**READING RESPONSE 1 DUE FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17 AT 11:59PM**

**Weeks Six-Eight: The Gender Trap**

**Tuesday, 2/21                      Theoretical Foundations**

Emily Kane: "Introduction: 'Glamour Babies' and 'Little Toughies'" in *The Gender Trap: Parents and the Pitfalls of Raising Boys and Girls*

Emily Kane: "Chapter 1: Wanting a Girl, Wanting a Boy" in *The Gender Trap*

**Thursday, 2/23                      Parenting: Naturalizers**

Emily Kane: "Chapter 2: 'It's in Their Nature': Naturalizers" in *The Gender Trap*

**Tuesday, 2/28                      Parenting: Cultivators**

Emily Kane: "Chapter 3: 'I Think a Lot of Its Us, Parents and Society': Cultivators" in *The Gender Trap*

**Thursday, 3/2                      Parenting: Refiners**

Emily Kane: "Chapter 4: 'We Try Not to Encourage It...': Refiners" in *The Gender Trap*

**Tuesday, 3/7**                      **Parenting: Innovators**

Emily Kane: "Chapter 5: 'You Applaud All the Other Stuff': Innovators" in *The Gender Trap*

**Thursday, 3/9**                      **Resisters and Dismantling the Gender Trap**

Emily Kane: "Chapter 6: 'Surviving in a Gendered Culture': Resisters" in *The Gender Trap*

Emily Kane: "Conclusion: 'A Better World': Dismantling the Gender Trap" in *The Gender Trap*

**Week Nine: Midterm**

**Tuesday, 3/14**                      **Review/Catch Up**

**Thursday, 3/16**                      **Work on Midterm—NO CLASS**

**TAKE HOME MIDTERM DUE FRIDAY, MARCH 17 AT 11:59PM**

**Weeks Ten-Twelve: Constructing and Living Trans\***

**Tuesday, 3/21**                      **Understanding Trans**

Valentine, David. 2007. "Chapter 1: Imagining Transgender." Pp 29-65 in *Imagining Transgender: An Ethnography of a Category*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

**Thursday, 3/23**                      **Doing Sex in a Gendered World**

Dozier, Raine. 2005. "Beards, Breasts, and Bodies: Doing Sex in a Gendered World." *Gender & Society* 19 (3):297-316.

**Tuesday, 3/28**                      **Spring Break—No Class**

**Thursday, 3/30**                      **Spring Break—No Class**

**Tuesday, 4/4 +**                      **Policing Trans Bodies**  
**Thursday, 4/6**

Cavanagh, Sheila. 2010. "Trans Subjects and Gender Misreadings in the Toilet." Pp 52-78 in *Queering Bathrooms: Gender, Sexuality, and the Hygienic Imagination*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

## **Weeks Thirteen-Fifteen: Trans Kids**

**Tuesday, 4/11**                      **Introducing Trans Kids + Gender Troubles**

Tey Meadow: Chapter One: Studying Each Other in *Trans Kids: Being Gendered in the Twenty-First Century*

Tey Meadow: Chapter Two: Gender Troubles in *Trans Kids*

**Thursday, 4/13**                      **Diagnosis and Transition: The Gender Identity Clinic**

Tey Meadow: Chapter Three: The Gender Clinic in *Trans Kids*

**READING RESPONSE 2 DUE FRIDAY, APRIL 14 AT 11:59PM**

**Tuesday, 4/18**                      **A Parent Movement**

Tey Meadow: Chapter Four: Building a Parent Movement in *Trans Kids*

**Thursday, 4/20**                      **Gender Regulation**

Tey Meadow: Chapter Five: Anxiety and Gender Regulation in *Trans Kids*

**Tuesday, 4/25**                      **Telling Gender Stories and Conclusions**

Tey Meadow: Chapter Six: Telling Gender Stories in *Trans Kids*

Tey Meadow: Chapter Seven: From Failure to Form in *Trans Kids*

Thursday, 4/27

Catch-Up/Review

## **Week Sixteen: Reading, Review, Recitation Week**

Monday, May 1—Friday, May 5

**FINAL EXAM: Due Thursday, 5/11 at 10:00pm**