Sociology 142/242      Prof. Cecilia Ridgeway
Spring, 2004-2005      Office 120-214
MW 11:00-12:15      email: ridgeway@stanford
Off. hrs. W 3:30-5

THE SOCIOLOGY OF GENDER

This course is an introduction to the sociological analysis of gender differences and gender inequality in contemporary American society. Because gender is a cross-cutting dimension of social relations that affects multiple aspects of both personal identity and social structure, it is not possible to survey all topics in the sociology of gender within a single quarter. Instead, this course will focus on gender as an organizing force in social relations and the system of social practices, called the “gender system,” that this gives rise to. The gender system is an institutionalized set of social practices for distinguishing between men and women and organizing relations between them on the basis of apparent difference and inequality. The gender system involves social processes at multiple levels of social analysis, including socioeconomic structure, patterns of social interaction among individuals, and patterns of socialization and the development of individual selves. We will examine key processes at each of these levels to gain an overall view of the dynamics of the current gender system in contemporary America.

Texts: There is a required package of readings available from Field Copy & Printing (email: fcp1@aol.com) at the first few class meetings and a required text, available from Stanford Bookstore.


Course Format: This is a lecture course with required attendance in a weekly discussion section. It is designed to be a 5 credit course. See me for any exceptions to this.

Course Requirements. There will be a midterm exam and a final exam, each forming 1/3 of the final grade. Both will be in-class essay exams. The final is noncumulative. In addition, there will be a paper of 7-10 pages which constitutes the final 1/3 of the grade for students enrolled in Soc 142. For upper division credit (Soc 242) students must complete both exams and write a 12 page research paper. The midterm is May 2. The paper is due May 25. Late papers will be penalized approximately ½ grade per day late. The final exam will be given during the time period scheduled by the university. NO INCOMPLETES WILL BE GIVEN for the course except in rare or extreme circumstances. Plan accordingly.

Students with documented disabilities: Students who have a disability which may necessitate an academic accommodation or the use of auxiliary aids and services in a class must initiate the request with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend appropriate accommodations, and prepare a verification letter dated in the current academic term in
which the request is being made. Please contact the DRC as soon as possible; timely notice is needed to arrange for appropriate accommodations. The DRC is located a 123 Meyer Library (phone 3-1066; TDD 725-1067).
All readings are in either the assigned text or the package of readings. The outline below represents the intended ordering and timing of topics but I may adjust this as needed as the course proceeds.

I. The Problem of Knowledge and the Issue of Differences.


II. The Gender System


Lecture: What do we mean by the “gender system.” Gender as a status rather than positional role. The multilevel nature of the gender system. The relationship of the gender system to biological sex differences.


Lecture: Sex categorization and organization of social relations. Hegemonic and nonhegemonic gender beliefs. Gender as a background identity.

III. Gender and Interaction


Lecture: Gender as performance and the effects of stereotypes in interaction. The importance of context and social networks. Interactional power and gender.


*(No class April 20)*


Lecture: Gender and status in interaction: a review of evidence

IV. Socioeconomic Structure and Gendered Institutions.

A. Paid Work.

*Overview and Current Trends*

Apr 27 Padavic and Reskin (text), chapter 2, pp. 17-36, "Gendered Work in Time and Place."
Lecture: An introduction to the socioeconomic approach to gender. An overview of gendered patterns of participation in the labor force.

MIDTERM EXAM, May 2

A GENDERED LABOR MARKET


Padavic and Reskin (text), chapter 4, pp. 57-96. "Sex Segregation in the Workplace."


WORKPLACE DYNAMICS AND THE GLASS CEILING


Padavic and Reskin (text), chapter 5, pp. 97-120, "Moving Up and Taking Charge."

Lecture: The gendered nature of organizations and authority in the workplace


Lecture: The gendered dynamics of getting ahead.

B. Family, Work, and the Household Division of Labor.

May 18 Padavic and Reskin (text), chapter 7, pp. 149-175, "Paid Work and Family Work.


Lecture: The nature of contemporary families and the balance of paid and family work. Families as an institutional source of gender ideology and conflicting as well as cooperative interests.


Lecture: Explanations for the household division of labor. When men become involved in caregiving.

**PAPER DUE MAY 25**

V. Socialization and Gendered Selves.


Lecture: Theories of gender socialization and the development of gendered selves. Early childhood development.

(May 30-Memorial Day holiday)


VI. Where Are Things Going From Here?: Comments in lecture on sources of change, resistance, and stability in the contemporary gender system.

FINAL EXAM will be as scheduled by the registrar on Tues, June 7, 8:30 AM