

SOC 129: Gender, Work and Organizations

Dr. Rebecca Bach

Room 272, Soc/Psych Bldg.

Office Hours: Tuesday 11:00-12:00

Thursday 3:45-5:00

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Women will account for 62% of net labor force growth between 1990 and 2005. By 2005 47.4 % of the civilian labor force will be female.

U.S. Women's Bureau

The purpose of this course is to provide students with a comprehensive examination of the research and theorizing on gender issues in the work organization. As women's participation in the paid labor force has increased over the past forty years, social scientists have amplified their scholarly interest in the study of women and men in the workplace. The emergence of a vast body of literature examining gender issues at work has made it possible for us to better understand the causes and consequences of such issues as gender segregation in the workplace and the gender-based wage and promotion gaps.

Assigned Readings

Weekly reading assignments are provided in the following course schedule. Assignments are found in Perkins electronic reserves or in one of the following books:

DeLaat, Jacqueline. *Gender in the Workplace: A Case Study Approach*.

Dubeck, Paula and Dana Dunn. *Workplace/Women's Place*.

Ogasawara, Yuko. *Office Ladies and Salaried Men*. (OLSM)

Wajcman, Judy. *Managing Like a Man*. (MLM)

Wallen, Jacqueline. *Balancing Work and Family*. (BWF)

Grading

An in-class midterm and a take-home final exam, each worth 100 points, will be given over the course of the semester. Students will be required to complete two short research exercises, worth 50 points each, and a group project/presentation worth 100 points. Class participation is crucial for this course and will count for 50 points toward your final grade. Final grades for the semester will be assigned according to the following scale:

A = 405-450

B = 360-404

C = 315-359

D = 270-314

F = below 270.

Group Projects and Presentations

After the drop/add period ends, I will assign you to teams of six. At various times throughout the semester we will meet in teams to discuss course material or do in-class learning exercises. In addition, your team will select one of the case studies from the DeLaat book for its project and presentation. Your task will be to examine the case as a group and develop individual, organizational, and societal “solutions” to the particular problems found in the case. Each team will present the basic information on their case and their suggestions for resolving the gender and work issues involved. Presentations are scheduled for weeks 12 and 13 of the semester.

Learning Exercises

Students are required to complete two learning exercises for this class. Exercise #1 is required for all students, however students may choose to do either Exercise #2 or #3.

Exercise #1 is a study of gender segregation in the workplace. Students will examine 15-20 want ads from a major U.S. newspaper and assign each ad to a “male”, “female”, or “neutral” category. You will write a 4-5 page paper answering the following questions:

1. How did you make the decisions to categorize each of the want ads. What criteria did you use?
2. Do the requirements for the job(e.g. experience, education) vary for each of your categories?
3. What is the occupational prestige of the job described in the ad?
4. Is there a gender pattern in the prestige of occupations?
5. Among the ads that mention a specific salary, is there a gender pattern?
6. Are there more jobs for women in one sector of the economy than another? What about for men? Gender-neutral jobs?

Exercises #2 and #3 involve interviewing two people regarding work and family issues and solutions. The goal of these projects is to gain an understanding of how career decisions are affected by family responsibilities and vice versa. For Exercise #2 you will need to interview your mother and father about their educational backgrounds, career aspirations when they were young adults, particularly those they held prior to marriage, their work histories, and their family responsibilities (i.e. housework, shopping, childcare arrangements, etc.). You will write a 4-5 page paper summarizing your findings.

If you choose to do Exercise #3, you will need to identify a man and a woman who currently hold the same occupation, preferably one to which you aspire. You will interview them regarding how they manage work and family responsibilities. A 4-5 page paper is required for this exercise also. The questions for the interviews involved in Exercises #2 and #3 will be developed in class and distributed at a later date.

Course Schedule

- August 29: Introduction to the study of gender and work. How do sociologists study work? What is the sociology of gender?
Readings: *Balancing Work and Family* (BWF): chapter 1
Managing Like a Man (MLM): Introduction
McIlwee and Robinson, "Women's Work and Engineering: Theoretical Issues."
- September 3: A brief history of gender and work: Pre-industrial societies and the division of labor.
Readings: Workplace/Women's Place (WWP): Pages 1-12
Friedl, Ernestine. "Society and Sex Roles."
- September 5: A brief history (cont.): The impact of the Industrial Revolution.
Readings: BWF: chapter 2
Kessler-Harris, Alice. "The Wage Conceived: Value and Need as Measure of a Woman's Worth."
Jones, Beverly. "Race, Sex, and Class: Black Female Tobacco Workers in Durham, North Carolina, 1920-1940."
- September 10: Contemporary occupational segregation.
Readings: WWP: Chapters 4 and 6
Acker, Joan. "Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A Theory of Gendered Organizations."
- September 12: Potential causes of occupational segregation.
Readings: WWP: Chapters 1,2, and 3.
- September 17: Differences in earnings.
Readings: WWP: Chapter 5
Steinberg, R. "How Sex Gets into Your Paycheck."
BWF: chapter 12
- September 19: Cross-national comparisons.
Readings: Rosenfeld and Kallenberg. 1991. "A Cross-National Comparison of the Gender Gap in Income."
Learning Exercise #1 due 9/19 by 5:00 pm.
- September 24: Moving up and taking charge.
Readings: *Managing Like a Man* (MLM): chapters 1 and 2
- September 26: The mommy track and the glass ceiling.
Readings: WWP: Chapters 10, 11 and 21
- October 1: Masculinity and femininity in the corporation: Is leadership gendered?

- Readings: MLM: Chapters 3, 4, and 5.
- October 3: Sexual harassment at work.
Readings: WWP: Chapters 9, 23, and 29
- October 8: **Midterm Exam.**
- October 10: Paid work/family work: New workers and couples.
Readings: BWF: Chapters 4, 5
- October 17: Paid work/family work: What about kids?
Readings: BWF: Chapter 6
MLM: Chapter 6
WWP: Chapters 16 and 17
- October 22: Paid work/family work: Mid-life and later-life
Readings: BWF: Chapters 7,8
Hogan and Perrucci. "Producing and Reproducing Class and Status Differences."
- October 24: Men and Women in non-traditional occupations.
Readings: Williams, Christine. "The Glass Escalator: Hidden Advantages for Men in 'Female Professions'."
Murray, Susan. "'We All Love Charles': Men in Child Care and the Social Construction of Gender."
WWP: Chapters 22,25, and 26
- October 29, 31: Gender, work and power in Japanese corporations.
Readings: OLSM: Chapters 1, 2, and 3
Learning Exercise #2 or 3 due 10/31 by 5:00 pm.
- November 5,7: Gender, work and power in Japanese corporations (cont.).
Readings: OLSM: Chapters 4, 5, and 6
- November 12, 14: Current and future trends in work.
Readings: Cooper, Cary and Suzan Lewis. "Gender and the Changing Nature of Work."
BWF: Chapters 13 and 14
- November 19: Team presentations on gender and work case studies.
Case 1: "Half a Pie, or None?"
Case 2: "Did Attorney Bump her Head on the Glass Ceiling?"

November 21: Team Presentations (cont.)
Case 3: “Medical Mentoring”
Case 4: “The Pregnant Professor”

November 26: Team Presentations (cont.)
Case 5: “Sexual Harassment in the Army”

November 28: Thanksgiving

December 3: Summary of Course
Group Project due on 12/3 by 5:00 pm.

December 5: Review for final exam

December 13: Take-home final exam due by 7:00 p.m.