IS A GENDER-EQUAL SOCIETY POSSIBLE?

GENDER, SOCIETIES AND ECONOMICS

Professor: Hélène PÉRIVIER
Academic Year 2018/2019: Common core curriculum – Spring semester

COURSE DESCRIPTION

All societies are characterized by sex and gender inequalities. Economic and social organizations rely on a sexual division of labor based on social norms which assign different roles for men and women. Despite the fact gender inequalities are a common feature of all societies, some countries perform better than others in tackling them. This course focuses on analyzing the reconfiguration and the persistence of sex inequalities by relying on theoretical and empirical knowledge. The interactions between Welfare state, market and family are analyzed through international, historical, and socio-economic perspectives. A particular attention is paid to controversies among researchers and feminist thinking. The ultimate goal is to identify major challenges faced by societies. A specific attention is paid in linking academic knowledge to policy making process, based on cases study and practical dilemma. For each session, 30-45 minutes are dedicated to “Challenging societies” by opening up a debate in the class on topics that reveal the relevance of a gender perspective. A broad spectrum of topics is addressed in the course to shed light on the importance of gender in the understanding of our societies and their future.

PEDAGOGICAL FORMAT

This is a 24h lecture course in English. The teaching assistant will organize occasional work sessions to help students with their assignments and the preparation of the paper.

Throughout the course, all academic honesty rules apply. Please be sure to use proper citation and bibliographic references for all written work.

COURSE OUTLINE

Part I. Sex, Gender and Controversies (3 sessions)
SESSION 1: Introduction
Presentation of the general purpose and outline of the course. The different topics are presented, as well as the guests who are invited for some sessions.

SESSION 2: Why gender matters?
Major concepts used in gender studies are defined and developed. A specific attention is paid to debates and controversies that might emerge in social sciences around key concepts: gender, inequalities, sexual hierarchy, and sexual division of labor, intersectionality, gender mainstreaming approach versus specific approach …

**Challenging societies: Are you free from gender stereotypes?**
The case of gender biases in evaluation of teachers by students

Required readings:

SESSION 3: Majors Concepts and controversies
Follow-up on Session 2.

Required readings

**Challenging societies: Speaking, meetings, and gender**
Is “Manterrupting” a massive phenomenon? If yes, how can we get rid of it?

Recommended readings Part I.

Part II. The roots of gender/sex inequalities (3 sessions)

SESSION 4: Telling the story of sexual division of labor
Why and when did a sexual division of labor emerge? Gender inequalities in pre-industrialized societies.

**Challenging societies : The power of fictions**

*Guest*: Anne Besnault, Researcher in British Literature, University of Rouen
Women and fiction. How are gender inequalities fought through fiction? Is fiction a way towards emancipation? Women as an object and subject: “That fiction is a lady”: Gendering Fiction in Virginia Woolf’s Essays,”

Required readings
- Text provided by Anne Besnault

SESSION 5: The politic of women’s work in the 19th and the early 20th centuries.
Production/Reproduction dilemma and the industrialization process

Challenging societies: Who decides in which category people are classified?


Is the classification process an instrument of domination and/or hierarchy? The social construction of identities by statistics: Categories, inequalities and intersectionality concepts

“The View From Below and the View From Above: What U.S. Census-taking Reveals about Social Representations in the Era of Jim Crow and Immigration Restriction”

Required readings

SESSION 6: Welfare States and gender

From the male breadwinner model to the dual earners model: the feminist critics of Welfare state’s classifications. In which manner, is the different ways to articulate the following three institutions: Family/State/Market embedded with the gender issue. What makes an institutional environment gender friendly? Parental leaves, childcare system and the challenge of ageing population: what are the more efficient public policies to promote emancipation of women? How protecting the maternity without stigmatizing women?

Challenging societies: Who should look after the kids?

Redesigning parental leaves to promote equal share parental time. What are the conditions under which parental leave can transform the social relationship within family and eventually support gender equality?

Required readings

Recommended readings Part II.
Part III. Labor markets and gender/sex inequalities (3 sessions)

SESSION 7: Inequalities in post-industrialized countries
General trends in gender gap in participation in the labor market, working time, wages, occupations, segregations, education, glass ceiling

Challenging societies: Covering the cost of freezing eggs
Covering Egg freezing cost for female employees and work-life balance policies: a tool to promote gender equality in the workplace or a new form of oppression?

Required readings

SESSION 8: Gender, business cycle and the role European Institutions
What do we learn from the great recession? Have European countries experienced a “He-Cession and She-Austerity” phase during the crisis?

Challenging societies: Gender migration in Asia
Guest: Hélène Le Baye, Researcher, CERI, Sciences Po

SESSION 9: Analyzing, measuring and tackling discriminations

Challenging societies: The power of law
Guest: Marie Mercat-Bruns, Researcher in Law, Cnam, Sciences Po

"Undoing gender norms to build human rights and fundamental rights (liberty and equality): The workplace as a case study. How social sciences enrich the law to tackle discriminations"

Required readings

Recommended readings Part III.
Part IV. Gender and societies in transition (3 sessions)

SESSION 10: Capitalism and gender
Can the market economy produce gender equality? Does Capitalism cope with class, race and sex inequalities or does it create them? Sharing the economic power, quota and law: what results in terms of gender equalities? Gender equality and/or diversity is more and more used or presented as a lever to increase economic performance (productivity, wealth and better functioning of organizations…). How and why does this perspective jeopardize gender equality as a concept and as an achievement?

Challenging societies: Are Socialist societies more gender friendly?
Guest: Maxime Forest, Political scientist, OFCE-PRESAGE Sciences Po.

Gender equality and social change in Socialist and Post-socialist Societies: the case East European countries

SESSION 11: Gender and economic development.
International institutions (UN, OECD, IMF? World Bank…) promote gender equality as tool for boosting the economic development of poor countries. Education of girls, microcredits for women create female "empowerment", and would in the end help increase the GDP of these countries. These discourses can be dissected and analyzed


Challenging societies: Co-ed or not co-ed?
How to build a gender neutral education system?
SESSION 12: Ecological economics and feminism.

Does an ecological approach reinforce the identification of women with nature? Can dualistic thinking about men and women, humans and nature be replaced with a fuller picture of human identity and knowledge?

Challenging societies: What is a feminist/sextist Series

Sciences fiction and feminism: from the manifest Cyborg to BattleStar Galactica

http://wonderwomendoc.com/

Recommended readings Part VI.

- Nelson J., "Is Dismissing Environmental Caution the Manly thing to Do?: Gender and the Economics of Environmental Protection", Ethics & the Environment, Vol.20, Number 1, Spring 2015
- Rajkai Z. (ed.), Family and Social Change in Socialist and Post-Socialist Societies, BRILL, 2014