IS A GENDER-EQUAL SOCIETY POSSIBLE?

GENDER, SOCIETIES AND ECONOMICS

Professor: Hélène PÉRIVIER
Academic Year 2020/2021: 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 introduces gender perspective in social sciences. It 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

The course is listed under the rubric “introduction” offered by the formation commune and follows a decentralization related to specific detailed questionings around class and gender. The course does not require any specific knowledge neither in gender study nor in social sciences. It aims to define basic principles by raising socio-economic issues in a gender perspective.

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)

01/23/2017 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.

Challenging societies: Research and production of knowledge: why gender matters?

01/30/2017 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 gender stereotypes free?
The case of gender biases in evaluation of teachers by students
Guest: Anne Boring, researcher in economics, OFCE-PRESAGE, Sciences Po, EGERA

Required readings:

02/06/2017 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?

Required readings:

Recommended readings Part I.


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

**02/20/2017 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


**02/27/2017 SESSION 5: The politic of women’s work in the 19th and the early 20th centuries.**
Production/Reproduction dilemma and the industrialization process. This session will focus on the major factors explaining the increase of female participation in the labor market during the second part of the 20th century and point the “unequal status quo” observed in most European countries.

*Challenging societies: Who decides in which category people are classified?*
**Guest**: Paul Schor, Researcher in American History, University Paris Diderot.
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**

03/06/2017 SESSION 6: Welfare States and gender
From the male breadwinner model to the dual earners model: the feminist critics of Welfare state’s classifications. The articulation of the three institutions Family/State/Market is 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: Gender and migration in Asia
Guest: Hélène Le Bail, CERI, Sciences Po

Recommended readings Part II.


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

03/13/2016 SESSION 7: Inequalities in post-industrialized countries
This session addresses the general trends in gender gap in participation in the labor market, working time, wages, occupations, segregations, education, glass ceiling are, in Europe and post industrialized countries. As far as female participation in the labor market is concerned,
one has to distinguish the life cycle effect (women’s careers are more chaotic than men’s one, this is mainly due to sexual division of labor within family) and the generational effect (the most recent women’s cohorts are more active than the oldest one).

**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*

**Elisabeth Marteu**

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**03/20/2017 SESSION 8: He-Cession and She-Austerity**

What do we learn from the great recession? The economic crisis experienced by European countries in 2009 has led to pipeline of low economic growth, high level of unemployment, increase in poverty and a crisis of public debt. In the after math of the crisis, austerity policies have been implemented in most European countries to achieve fiscal consolidation. Those economics policies are gender blind but not gender neutral. The session analyses the consequence of the crisis and question the business cycle in a gender perspective.

**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

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**03/27/2017 SESSION 9: Analyzing, measuring and tackling discriminations**

Discriminations produce inequalities but all forms of inequalities do not result from discriminations. From a legal point of view, discrimination process is defined as an unequal treatment of individuals on the basis of criteria that are prohibited by law (sex, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation ....). New concepts and approaches of discrimination have been developed to integrate more complex processes such as indirect discrimination, multiples discriminations and systemic discriminations. Measuring discriminations is a first step to tackle them. What are the different policies implemented to tackle discrimination? Are they efficient? What is the power of law?

**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)**

04/03/2017SESSION 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: 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

04/10/2017 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. The gender perspective in economic development has been integrated progressively. This session proposes a critical analysis of these approaches and shed light on the empirical literature on poverty, gender and economics growth.

04/17/2017 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/sexist Series?
Sciences fiction and feminism: from the Cyborg manifesto 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