

Psychology of Women
Mon. 5:30- 8:20/ PSY 80350/Spring 2005

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“When we can open up new opportunities for expression, enjoyment and achievement for women, we should do it because it is morally right. But that is very different from saying that gender has no biological basis and that the nature of men and women is wholly constructed by society.”

- Anne Campbell, *A Mind of Her Own: The Evolutionary Psychology of Women*

It is hard *not* to be a woman (or a man) in this culture without developing a personal ‘theory’ about the nature and psychology of women. And yet, when you tell people you are taking a course called “The Psychology of Women” what is their reaction? Do some, albeit with humor, say that they think they *need* a class to learn about the psychology of women!?

The *myth* is that women are mysterious, unknowable, close to earth. Where does this myth come from? Is there any truth to it? What *is* a ‘psychology of women’? And should a psychology of women be political? Indeed is it possible for it not to be?

In this class, we’ll examine the ‘theories’ we’ve developed (since we are all social

psychologists in some sense), while trying to uncover the unknowable. We'll also learn about other theories, and critically examine and evaluate them all. Though the dichotomous nature-nurture lens is simplistic and we all know that everything is nature *and* nurture, it is heuristically a valuable tool to help us look at many of the issues that face women. We will ask: Is gender socially constructed and environmental, or is it essential and innate? And we will ask the same sorts of questions about sexuality, cognitive and personality differences, rape, mental illness, etc. Is it in men's nature to rape? Is it in women's nature to be nurturing and passive? Are men better at math? Are women better at language? (These are important questions that have real relevance and consequence to us all. To wit: the recent talk that Harvard President Summers gave and the fury it caused.)

When it comes to these polarized questions of innatism versus environmentalism in relation to women's psychology, there are two camps or disciplines that appear to be at odds: evolutionary psychology (EP) and feminism, and so we will contrast and explore these different viewpoints to help us gain a better understanding of the psychology of women. One question we need to ask ourselves over the course of the semester: Are female evolutionary psychologists (EPs) and evolutionary feminists...sexists? Have they just blindly imbibed and internalized the patriarchal, positivist, dominant ideology? Are they sleeping with the 'enemy'? Or are they truly concerned with finding the truth, as ugly as it might be (for example, it's in women's 'nature' to compete with other women for men), in the hope of finding some liberation; and as Campbell writes above, in finding "new opportunities for expression, enjoyment and achievement." This is a question we will consider carefully.

Indeed, one of my goals for this class is to challenge you, to provide opportunities and an environment for you to feel safe to stretch your mind and to question and re-think some of your assumptions and beliefs about these issues. I'm not looking to change your mind, I have no reason to do that—I'm looking to expand it, to deepen it, to enrichen it, to make

your synapses grow and connect. And you can help toward this effort: by taking your reading seriously, by keeping an open mind in class discussions, by being engaged in your writing.

Required Reading:

- “PoW” reader.
- *Trine Erotic*. Andrews, A. (2002) New York: Vivisphere Publishing. (\$15). The book is available at: Ariel, Esoterica, Rhino Records, Amazon, etc. It is also on reserve and in the collection of the Sojourner Truth library. (This is my novel which deals with questions related to evolutionary psychology and the ‘psychology of women’.)
- Other readings will be handed out in class, made available on Blackboard, and/or will be on the Internet.

Grade breakdown:

- **Participation: 15 points**
 - **Response-papers: 12 points (6 points each)**
- [3- Satisfactory; 4- Good; 5- Very good; 6-Excellent]**

Read the assigned reading. Respond to specific quotes/passages/ideas in some fashion.

Try to do at least 2 of the following:

1. Relate a concept to some aspect of your experience.
2. Disagree with or question something in the text.
3. Synthesize and connect ideas: (Relate something in text to something previous in text or to something in lecture/class discussion.)

Your responses should be double-spaced, 12-pt. Times New Roman or 11-pt. Arial. Include a cover sheet with your name, date, and the name of the class, for example: Week 6/Appearance. Aim for 2-3 pages.

I will collect responses 3 times during the semester. I will not accept late responses; however you *will* have the opportunity to drop your lowest grade (so if you miss a class, you can drop that one). You should have your reading response in class and be prepared to read part of it or talk about it. Toward the end of the semester, I will ask you to compile your responses in a folder. The folder should be a 2-pocket paper folder, which you can also put your stapled final paper into. No binders, please! Hint: Keep up with your reading and responding every week, otherwise you may be stuck at the end!

What I am looking for: Insightful and synthetic responses that connect the readings and show me that you are thinking deeply about these questions; and that you have a good understanding of them. You can show me that you are thinking deeply about these questions by having good, insightful ideas, asking interesting questions and speculating about them, making connections. You can show me that you understand the readings by using terms (for example: ‘paternity uncertainty’; ‘social constructionist’) *correctly*. If all this is done with significant depth — and clearly, with good grammar and a display of your engagement with the readings and ideas, you will certainly get a 6.

What I am not looking for: a review and/or paraphrasing of the reading. (A response that starts out “I liked this reading because...” most probably won’t get a 5 or 6.) In addition, though I encourage personal reflection, an entire response about something personal is not likely to get a 5 or 6 if it does not show me that you are connecting it to the readings and understanding important concepts and themes.

· **Complete response-paper portfolio: extra 8 points**

- **Debates: 20 points (Assignment given out in March.)**
- **Final paper: 30 points (Assignment will be given out April 4.)**
- **Final in-class essay: 15 points**
- **Extra credit opportunity: 6 points (getting involved on campus/community/presentation or menstrual-cycle diary/paper.)**

Though I will not accept late response-papers or late extra-credit assignments, I *will* accept late final papers at a cost of 4 points off for every day late.

Communication with me:

Although I will sometimes post announcements, work and readings on Bb, I realize that not everyone visits Bb that often. So, with that in mind, you are invited to send me an email with the email address you check most regularly. That way, if I have some information I want to get to the class as a whole, in a timely manner, I can do so. To be a part of this email group, send me an email THIS WEEK. In the subject line write: pow (lowercase). In the message, write your name and your preferred email address. My email address is: andrewsa@newpaltz.edu.

Appointments with me:

Please e-mail me, or talk to me before or after class, so that we can schedule a time to meet.

Missing classes:

Although I don't exactly penalize for absences, there are a few reasons missing class will affect your grade: assignments are given out and changes are made in the schedule in

class; 15% of your grade comes from participation, and I will collect your response-papers 3 times.

Being late to class:

Please make every effort to be on time, of course.

Cell phones:

Please turn your cell to silence mode. If you're a caregiver and you need to be in touch, please turn to vibrate mode and answer phone outside of class.

Academic Integrity:

From the SUNY New Paltz statement on academic integrity:

“Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty in their college work. Cheating, forgery, and plagiarism are serious offenses, and students found guilty of any form of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action.”

For more information regarding the policy of academic integrity here at the college, you can go to:

http://www.newpaltz.edu/studentaffairs/regulations/campus_rules.html#academic

Also, please see me if you are unsure as to what violates this policy.

IMPORTANT DATES

No class: Feb 21 (President's Day)

No class: March 28

(March 25-April 1; Spring Break)

Debates: April 11

No class : April 25 (Passover)—

Makeup: Tue April 26

'Involved' Presentations: April 26

Extra-credit due: April 26

Last class: May 9

Response Portfolio due: May 9

Final paper due: May 9

Final in-class essay: May 9

N.B. These reading assignments are definitely not set in stone. I may amend them or change the day a reading is due, etc.

Week 2 January 31 History/Knowledge/EP class:

Assignment

Rd: *ANPoW* (A New Psychology of Women text) Ch.1; and parts of Ch. 2 (pp.36-52; 68-73)

Rd. Alice Andrews's "An Evolutionary Mind" from *Metanexus* (2005)

Rd: Geoffrey Miller's "Courtship in the Pleistocene" from *The Mating Mind* (2000)

Rd. Doreen Kimura's Ch. 1 "Introduction" and Ch. 2 "Our Evolutionary Legacy" from *Sex & Cognition* (1

Week 3&4 February 7&14 Gender/Sexuality class:

Assignment

Do Bem Sex Role Inventory on my website

Rd: *ANPoW* Ch. 4

Rd: Anthony Stevens "The Archetypal Masculine and Feminine" from *Archetype Revisited* (2003)

Rd: David M. Buss: "Short-term Mating Strategies" *Evolutionary Psychology* (1999)

Rd: Press release: "Study Suggests Difference Between Female and Male Sexuality"

Rd: 'Meta Study' on Entelechy www.entelechyjournal.com [editor's musings]

Peruse: Chivers/Bailey link on *Entelechy*, or at 'pow' on my webpage

Rd: "Sex on Campus"

Rd: Laura Kipnis: "Love's Labors" from *Against Love: A Polemic* (2003)

Further reading:

“Women’s Long-term Mating Strategies” from Buss’s *Evolutionary Psychology* (1999)
Sexing the Body, Anne Fausto-Sterling (2000)

Week 5 February 28 EP v. Feminism class:

Assignment

Rd: David M. Buss, “Sexual Conflict: Evolutionary Insights into Feminism and the ‘Battle of the Sexes’” from *Sex, Power, Conflict* (1996)

Rd: Natalie Angier: “Of Hoggamus and Hogwash: Putting Evolutionary Psychology on the Couch” from *An Intimate Geography* (1999)

Rd: Anne Campbell: “The Essential Woman: Biophobia and the Study of Sex Differences” from *A Mind of The Evolutionary Psychology of Women* (2003)

Week 6 March 7 Appearance class

Assignment:

Rd: *ANPoW* 104-111

Rd: Doug Jones: “Sexual Selection, Physical Attractiveness, and Facial Neoteny” from *Current Anthropology*

Rd: Nancy Etcoff: “Feature Presentation ” from *Survival of the Prettiest* (1999)

Check out: www-psych.nmsu.edu/~vic/faceprints

Week 7 March 14 Cognitive/Personality Differences Class:

Assignment

Rd: *ANPoW* p52-67

Rd: Doreen Kimura: Ch 9 “Hormonal Mechanisms” from *Sex and Cognition* (1999)

Further reading: *Sex and Cognition* on reserve

Week 8 April 4 Nurturers/empaths class:

Assignment

Rd: *ANPoW*, 206-211; 306-317

Rd: Phyllis Chesler: “The Animal Within: The Female of the Species” and “Sisters and the Search for Best Friends” from *Woman’s Inhumanity to Woman* (2001)

Rd: “UCLA Study on Friendship Among Women: An Alternative to Fight or Flight” Rd: Sarah Blaffer Hr “Men Want Mommy” by Maureen Dowd

Further reading: R. A. R., & Updegraff, J. A. Female Responses to Stress: Tend and Befriend, Not Fight o

Week 9 April 11 Mental/Emotional Health class:

Assignment

Rd: *ANPoW*; Ch. 10

Rd: “Estrogen Makes the Brain More Vulnerable to Stress” Yale Press Release (2004)

Rd: Suarez/Gallup: “Depression as a Response to Reproductive Failure”

Rd: Robert Wright: “The Evolution of Despair” from *Time* (1995)

Rd: Randolph Nesse’s “Evolutionary Explanations of Emotions” from *Human Nature* Vol. 1. No 3 (1990)

Week 10 April 18 Rape/Violence/Harassment/Prostitution class:

Assignment

Rd: Barbara Smuts: “Male Aggression Against Women: An Evolutionary Perspective”

Rd: Muehlenhard, Danoff-Burg, Powch: “Is Rape Sex or Violence” from *Sex, Power, Conflict*; eds Buss ar (1996)

Rd: *ANPoW*; Ch. 13

Rd: Sebastian Horsley’s “The Brothel Creeper” in *The Observer* (2004)

Week 11 –**Debates**

Week 12 April 26 (**Tuesday**) Getting Involved class

Presentation

Rd: Gloria Steinem's "Outrageous Acts"

Extra-credit due.

Week 13 May 2 Power class:

Rd: ANPoW, Ch 14

Rd: Ethel Person: "Sex, Gender, Hierarchy, and Power" from *Authentic Power (2003)*

Week 14 May 9

Last class. Wrap up.

Final in-class essay. Final paper and portfolio due.

**Sometimes during discussion I make references to books which have
'informed' me.**

Here are some:

Ways of Seeing; John Berger

A Fortunate Man; John Berger

Women in Love; D.H. Lawrence

Two Essays on Analytical Psychology; C.G. Jung

The Will to Live; Arthur Schopenhauer

The Will to Power; Friedrich Nietzsche

The Birth of Tragedy; Friedrich Nietzsche

On the Genealogy of Morals; Friedrich Nietzsche

Studies on Hysteria; Josef Breuer/Sigmund Freud

Civilization and Its Discontents; Sigmund Freud

The Language of the Body; Alexander Lowen

The Dragons of Eden; Carl Sagan

The Holographic Paradigm; Ken Wilbur

The Ending of Time; J. Krishnamurti & David Bohm

Think on These Things; J. Krishnamurti

Siddhartha; Hermann Hesse
Concerning the Spiritual in Art; Wassily Kandinsky
The Meme Machine; Susan Blackmore
The Ecstasy of Communication; Jean Baudrillard
The Pleasure of the Text; Roland Barthes
The Use of Pleasure; Michel Foucault
On Human Nature; E.O. Wilson *Women's Way of Knowing*; Mary Field Belenky, et al.
Plain and Simple; Sue Bender
Much Ado About Nothing; William Shakespeare
The Symposium; Plato
The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat; Oliver Sacks
The Legend of Maya Deren; Clark & Hodson & Neiman
Sexual Personae: Art & Decadence from Nefertiti to Emily Dickinson; Camille Paglia
Vamps & Tramps: New Essays; Camille Paglia
Sex, Art, and American Culture: Essays; Camille Paglia
The Descent of Woman; Elaine Morgan
The Scent of Eros; James Kohl & Robert Francouer
A Natural History of the Senses; Diane Ackerman *A Natural History of Love*; Diane Ackerman
Woman; Natalie Angier
Beauty of the Beastly; Natalie Angier
Sexing the Cherry; Jeanette Winterson
Sexing the Body; Anne Fausto-Sterling
The New Science of Intimate Relationships; Garth Fletcher
Woman's Inhumanity to Woman; Phylliss Chesler
Anatomy of Love; Helen Fisher
Why We Love; Helen Fisher
A General Theory of Love; Thomas Lewis, Fari Amini, and Richard Lannon
Against Love: A Polemic; Laura Kipnis
The Blank Slate; Steven Pinker
The Selfish Gene; Richard Dawkins
Evolution and the Capacity for Commitment; Randolph Nesse (Ed)
Evolutionary Psychiatry; Anthony Stevens and John Price *The Adapted Mind: Evolutionary Psychology and the Generation of Culture*; Jerome H. Barkow (Ed.)

Evolutionary Psychology: The New Science of the Mind; David M. Buss

The Evolution of Desire: Strategies of Human Mating; David M. Buss

The Evolution of Allure; George L. Hersey

The Mating Mind: How Sexual Choice Shaped the Evolution of Human Nature; Geoffrey Miller

Digit Ratio: A Pointer to Fertility, Behavior and Health; John T. Manning *Sex and Cognition*; Doreen Kimura