

SOC 314
Gender and Sociological Theory Assignment

Length Recommendation: 750 words to achieve sufficient depth, happy to read longer work

Due: by 11:59pm on Wednesday, November 11 via email
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The purpose of this assignment is to give you two different vantage points on interacting with sociological theories about gender. All students should answer Question 1 and all its subparts. This should be about 500 words. Students can **select** between 2A and 2B. This should be about 250 words. Be sure to use examples to demonstrate your understanding of the theoretical ideas.

1. How is gender socially constructed?
 - a. Give an example of how gender ideologies vary between two different cultures.
 - b. Give an example of how gender ideologies vary between two different historical eras.
 - c. Give an example of how gender ideologies vary between two different racial, class, religious, or sexual subcultures.
 - d. Give an example of how gender expression vary between two different age groups.
 - e. Think about your gender identity and expression throughout your life. If you are comfortable, try to name your gender and sexuality and state whether you feel you authentically express it. (Feel free to write “rather not answer”)
 - i. Give an example of your individual gender **socialization** shaped your ideas about gender.
 - ii. Give an example of how the **cultural context** in which you grew up (place, religion, race, etc.) shaped your ideas about gender.
 - iii. Give an example of how your place within social **structures** (your race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender/sexuality, etc.), shaped your ideas about gender.
 - iv. Give an example about your experiences within an **institution** (school, houses of worship, military, etc.).

2. Hill Collins/Connell and Gender in Sociological Theory

a. Hill Collins

- What is the **matrix of domination** according to Patricia Hill Collins?
- She writes, “a matrix of domination contains few pure victims or oppressors. Each individual derives varying amounts of penalty and privilege from the multiple systems of oppression which frame everyone’s lives.” Give concrete examples of moments or situations in your own life (or analyze a TV show or movie USING THE SAME CHARACTER FOR BOTH) in which you have found yourself a “**victim**” of oppression and concrete examples of moments or situations which you found yourself an “**oppressor**.”
- Explain how your examples reflect the matrix of domination at both the level of **personal biography** and the **systemic level** of social institutions.

b. Connell

- What is **hegemonic masculinity** according to Connell?
- Provide a detailed description and example of the type of masculinity considered superior within your culture.
- How do men AND women perpetuate hegemonic masculinity’s superiority?
- How does hegemonic masculinity come to appear to be the “common sense” way that men should express their gender identity? (Be sure to return to your notes and readings for Gramsci to explain common sense to extrapolate how hegemonic masculinity retains its power.)
- How do these cultural depictions of this version of “manliness” serve to subordinate and marginalize men and women?