

Phil 265: Philosophical Issues of Gender and Sex

Second Take-Home Assignment

Assignment Instructions

General description: This is a take-home assignment that combines short-answer and longer-answer questions. You must answer all the questions.

Due date: This assignment is **due before the start of class on Thursday, October 31. It should only contain your student ID number, not your name.** All papers will be graded anonymously. **Submit your assignment via Blackboard.** I do not need a hard copy of your assignment.

If your assignment is late, then you begin accruing the late penalties described on the syllabus (a 3% deduction if it is turned in after the start of class on October 31; a 3% deduction each day after that). Remember that I must approve any exceptions to the lateness policy *in advance*.

Formatting: Your assignment cannot be longer than **four** pages *and may be less*. It's up to you how long to make your answer to each individual question, but the total length of your responses to all questions must fit on four pages. Your assignment must be double-spaced, with at least 1" margins on all sides, in 12-point font, either Times New Roman or something very similar.

Your assignment should have a standard, single-spaced header, including your ID number, the title of this course, and the date your paper is submitted. **Because all papers will be graded anonymously, include your ID number but *not* your name.** You do not need to include a title or a title page.

Please submit your assignment as a Word document (.doc, .docx) or as a PDF (.pdf); do not write your assignment directly in Blackboard.

The assignment should not be written in essay format. Simply number your answers and write them out. When moving between questions, there is no need for introductions, conclusions, transitions, and other matters associated with essays.

Sources: You should not do any outside research on these questions or on their subject matter more generally—including *any internet research*—while completing these assignments. (You may use reference works, such as dictionaries, but you may not use print or online encyclopedias.) These assignments are about your views alone. They only require you to read your notes, recall classroom discussions, read the texts, and think hard.

Whenever you are relying on (quoting, paraphrasing, or borrowing ideas from) a written source for information, you must cite it using the page numbers from the versions of the readings that are available in our book and the reader. You may use any standard citation format, such as footnotes or parentheticals. You do not need to cite my lectures or your lecture notes.

Academic integrity: Don't work with anyone from this class on this assignment. If you missed lectures, then you may copy someone's notes and get their help in understanding the notes and the materials I have posted on Blackboard, but don't talk about the assignment itself. You are welcome and encouraged to get advice on this assignment from appropriate sources—such as the Writing Center, OASIS, and me—but this help cannot be a replacement for your own careful thinking, writing,

and revising. If you are not sure whether your process for completing this assignment violates any of RIC's academic-integrity policies, please check with me.

Assignment Questions

- 1) Stone argues that sex is a "cluster concept." Give an example of a cluster concept (besides games and sex), and explain what makes it a cluster concept. *20 points*
- 2) Give *one* reason someone might think that the many-sexes model of sex (associated with Fausto-Sterling) is *better than* the cluster-concept model (associated with Stone). Explain why this reason supports the many-sexes model rather than the cluster-concept model. *40 points*
- 3) Chappell writes, "Nobody sensible thinks that the existence of adoptive parents undermines our understanding of what it is to be a parent. On the contrary, it *extends* it" (1). Explain the significance of this quotation. First, explain why Chappell thinks that the existence of adoptive parents "extends" our idea of what it is to be a parent. Second, explain how Chappell thinks this is a useful analogy. How is the existence of trans women (or men) supposed to extend our understanding of what it is to be a woman (or a man)? *60 points*
- 4) College presidents have the following responsibilities (among others): they must keep their students safe, protect students' and professors' academic freedom to discuss controversial ideas, create an environment that helps students to learn, and avoid public-relations disasters so that new students will enroll and alumni will donate money. In addition, the presidents of women's colleges have an additional responsibility: they must create an educational environment focused on women's learning and advancement. Imagine that you are the president of Wellesley College, and you have to decide what Wellesley's policies regarding trans students should be (who should be admitted, who should be allowed to continue as a student, and how they should be treated while they're at Wellesley). Explain one policy you would put in place. Analyze the relationship this policy has to each of your responsibilities: does it help you to fulfill each responsibility, make this harder, or have no effect? If the policy makes it harder for you to carry out any of your responsibilities, explain why it's still a good policy. *80 points*