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## **Gender and Society**

SOC 270, Section 1, Tu and Thur 12:45-2:05  
ARH 120, Grinnell College, Fall 2005

*Sexual identity--the belief that there is maleness and femaleness and that one is either male or female--is among the most fundamental ideas with which we interpret our experience. Not only do we "know" and "believe in" the idea of sexual identity, but the idea of sexual identity largely determines how and what we know. With the idea of sexual identity in our head, we see things and feel things and learn things in terms of it. ... The idea of sexual identity, in fact, has a claim on us that our actual experience does not; for if our experience "contradicts" it, we will bend our experience so that it will make sense in terms of the idea. ... Gravity just is; we don't have to make it be. Not so the idea of sexual identity. Sexual identity is a political idea. Its force derives entirely from the human effort required to sustain it...--John Stoltenberg. Refusing to Be a Man: Essays on Sex and Justice.*

### **Course Description**

In this course we will consider gender in the U.S. today. Our study will connect us to questions that reach into the past, as we consider the durability of divisions between the sexes, and politicized efforts to make gender visible. Our study will challenge us to scrutinize the production of gendered identities, the reproduction and transformation of gender in institutions and how contemporary ideas about gender both enable and constrain gendered behavior. We will consider how schools, offices, and families function as gendered institutions that reproduce gender, and at times, challenge contemporary gender roles, norms and stereotypes. We will also look closely at gender as structure, as a source of power, influence and resource distribution.

To begin, we will develop a context for our study by studying changes in gender theory and practice during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, allowing for a historically contextualized and comparative study of gender in the contemporary moment. Our two readers, *Men's Lives* and *Feminist Frontiers*, gather key sociological studies of gender in a wide variety of contexts. These two texts will provide us with a rich array of lenses through which we can explore how gender is produced, performed and reproduced through interaction and institutions. Our study will continue with Connell's *The Men and the Boys*, which provides an elaborate and provocative exploration of contemporary masculinity. Next, we will explore the limits and tensions of the sex/gender system with the help of Kessler's fascinating study of sex-assignment in individuals born with ambiguous genitalia. Finally, we will conclude our study with Susan Bordo's provocative examination of the male body in popular culture.

As a sociological object of study, gender is rich with ambiguity, and slippery in its complexity. In short, it makes for an exciting intellectual journey. At the same time, gender is a lived experience. We do not simply study gender; we live it. We will wrestle with this knowing/doing gender divide, particularly through class activities, and field exercises. We'll learn a lot along the way, emerging with some answers and likely even more excellent questions because gender rarely stands still so you can examine it! I hope it will be a stimulating semester. Welcome to the course.

### **Objectives**

It is my hope that together we will:

1. Become familiar with a range of theories of gender.

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2. Strengthen our ability to recognize, challenge, celebrate and critique gendered performances, roles, and experiences.
3. Develop a nuanced understanding of how gender varies across communities, families, institutions and cultures.
4. Hone our insight into how gender influences the distribution of opportunities and resources, and informs identity, group and individual behavior.
5. Refine our ability to appreciate how aspects of identity including race, nation, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and region crosscut perceptions and performances of gender.

### **Books & Supplies**

<i>Men's Lives</i> , 6 <sup>th</sup> Edition	Michael S. Kimmel, Michael A. Messner, eds.	2004
<i>Feminist Frontiers 6</i>	Laurel Richardson, Verta Taylor and Nancy Whittier, eds.	2001
<i>The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America</i>	Ruth Rosen	2001
<i>The Men and the Boys</i>	R. W. Connell	2000
<i>Lessons from the Intersexed</i>	Suzanne J. Kessler	1998
<i>The Male Body: A new look at men in public and private</i>	Susan Bordo	1999

### **Attendance and Deadlines**

This course requires a high level of student interaction, participation and involvement. Each class meeting you are expected to have read all the assigned readings and have worked in your journal beforehand, in order to come to class prepared to actively discuss the materials. The course starts promptly at 12:45; I take attendance at the start of class, so be on time. Everyone gets one "oops" as I call it, one day off from the course while still getting full credit for attendance. More than three unexcused absences will lower your final grade for the course (every additional absence will lower your grade one step, for example from an A- to a B+). When you do need to miss class, it is your responsibility to get notes and an update from a classmate and to contact me regarding your absence.

Your written work needs to be in on time. I rarely allow late work to be handed in, and only if you contact me in advance of the deadline. All written assignments must be printed out and handed in, I do not accept emailed assignments. Whenever possible, please print double-sided. Assignments should either be handed in during class, or to my mailbox in Carnegie 115.

### **Contacting Me**

I expect to stay in contact with students throughout the term. Please come by during my office hours to discuss course content, your thoughts or concerns about assignments, or to get extra assistance. My office hours are posted weekly outside my door (ARH 116B). If you

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cannot attend my office hours, talk to me about scheduling an appointment at a different time or scheduling an email or phone discussion. I am online daily, so email is the fastest way to get in touch with me.

### **Course Policies**

\*If you have a physical or learning disability that requires you to make some adaptations to this course, please contact me to discuss arrangements. All conversations will be confidential. For help with disability services, contact Joyce Stern (3702). The Student Affairs Office offers a wealth of resources for all students. Stop in during business hours in the basement of the forum, or during drop-in hours, Friday 1:30-4:30.

### **Assignments**

*Participation* This course will be student driven. This means that discussion and leadership by students is built into the course. I consider myself a guide for the course, whose job it is to provide you with the tools to learn. But I expect each of you to make your own way, and to work earnestly to develop your own thinking/philosophy/approach to gender. I expect you to come to class with your readings done, with prepared responses and ideas, ready to discuss with your classmates, and actively engage with the ideas and challenges posed by the study of gender. In addition to your group presentation, I expect students to interact, ask questions, share insights, and push each other's thinking throughout the term. The participation grade is determined by your level of involvement both in terms of frequency and *quality* of your contributions. Participation is ten percent of your grade, meaning that your participation can potentially raise or lower your final grade by one letter grade. If you have any concerns about this portion of the grade, please speak to me early in the term.

*Journal* This course requires a significant amount of reading, writing and discussion. The purpose of the journal is to help you prepare to participate in class discussion, to allow you to articulate in your own words significant concepts and ideas raised in the readings, and facilitate connections between the readings and your own life experiences. Your journal will potentially be your greatest tool for developing and advancing your understanding of gender. As you prepare for each class session, I hope you will generate key points you want to discuss and a minimum of two excellent questions. I will ask each of you to contribute 2-4 discussion questions for two class meetings. We will sign up during the first week. You will need to read the assignment, and email the questions to me by 8am on the day we meet.

*Gender Assignments* In this course, we will not simply read other scholar's ideas, theories and observations about gender, we will also produce our own insights about how gender is performed, produced, structured and what it means to be a gendered being at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Throughout the term, we will be putting learning into practice through field exercises that invite you to activate your sociological imagination and challenge your own assumptions by participating in outside "gender assignments." Gender assignments may include participant observation, small experiments, interviews, or media analysis. Our activities will be grounds for discussion and interpretation, and

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will prepare you for your final project. At times, I will ask you to hand in an informal written response to your gender assignments. Completing and reporting back on gender assignments will be reflected in your participation grade.

*Panel Presentation* Along with several of your classmates, you will be responsible for leading one class discussion. We will discuss the panel presentation assignment and sign up for dates to present early in the semester. Your group will need to read the assigned readings in advance and meet at least once outside of class to prepare your presentation. You may opt to assign additional readings or activities to your classmates prior to your presentation date. Panel presentations may include setting up a guided debate, skits, films, music, web resources, media analysis, current events, social policy review . . . in short, any activity that you think will help teach the topic of the day. The panel presentation grade will be based on your planning and preparation as demonstrated during the class period you lead, peer evaluation of the presentation, and the group memo that you hand in to me on the date of your presentation.

*Response Essays* Each of you will be asked to write 3 response essay. Everyone will write the first essay. Each of your response essays (3-4pgs) will ask you to integrate course concepts in an analytical paper that critiques and extends the argument of each scholar. There are 4 deadlines listed on the syllabus, you need to hand in an essay for 3 of those dates. Detailed directions for the response essays are included in the last page of this syllabus.

*Research Paper* Each of you will conclude the course with an in-depth study of a topic of your own choosing. The final paper (8-10 pgs) is due on the last day of class. We will work through the stages of design, study and write-up throughout the term. The final project is yours to design. For example, your research paper may be based on original research that you conduct on campus or in town, analyze previous findings, propose new legislation, or might even take a creative form like a video, play or performance piece. The only requirement is that the final project address an aspect of gender that you find interesting, demonstrate your knowledge of course concepts, and present evidence of in-depth individual research in a coherent and compelling manner. We will talk at length about this final paper later in the term.

*Exams* Two exams based on weekly readings and discussion, are scheduled throughout the term. If you keep up on the reading, participate in class, and take good notes in your journal, you will be prepared for both exams.

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### **Grading**

<i>Participation and Contributing Questions</i>	20%
<i>Panel Presentation and Memo</i>	10%
<i>Response Essays</i>	30%
<i>Midsem Exam</i>	10%
<i>Research Paper</i>	20%
<i>Final Exam</i>	10%

### **Grading Distribution**

94 and up	A
90-93	A-
87-89	B+
84-86	B
80-83	B-
76-79	C+
70-75	C
60-69	D
59 and below	F

### **A Note on Reading**

While reading, you should be seeking to answer the following questions:

1. What is the author's main point or argument?
2. Building Block 1: What theories does the author build on or critique to demonstrate his/her point?
3. Building Block 2: What key pieces of evidence are presented in support of the author's argument?
4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the particular argument?
5. What questions does their argument raise for you?
6. How does this article or chapter relate to previous discussions, readings or experiences?

### **A Note on Writing**

While what you write is essential, how you present your ideas in writing is also extremely important. Informal writing, in class writing and response essays will provide you with an opportunity to exercise and strengthen your writing skills. You will have an opportunity to have the draft of your final paper reviewed by your classmates and I. I recommend that you take advantage of the Writing Lab for assistance with your assignments. If you do go to the Writing Lab, acknowledge the assistance of the writing specialist in your paper.

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### Course Schedule

*This schedule is tentative and subject to change. Abbreviations are as follows: Men's Lives (ML), Feminist Frontiers (FF), The World Split Open (World), The Men and the Boys (Connell), Lessons from the Intersexed (Intersexed) and The Male Body (Bord0). JSTOR articles are available off of our pioneerweb site. ERESERVE articles are available through the library page, search for course by my name or course number. You will need to enter your name and ID number to access ERESERVE articles. Supplemental readings are indicated by (supp) and will be provided to you in class.*

Week	Date		Assigned Reading	Topic
1	8/25	TH	First Day-Welcome and Introduction to the Course	
2	8/30	T	Introduction by Messner and Kimmel ix-xvii ML  Oppression, Marilyn Frye 6-8 FF  "Night to His Day" The Social Construction of Gender, Judith Lorber 33-37 FF  Preface and Chronology, World xi-xxxvi  New Directions in Theory and Research, 15-36 Connell  What is Gender? Ivy Kennelly, Sabine Merz, and Judith Lorber, 598-605 <b>Pioneerweb</b>	What is Gender? Introduction
	9/1	TH	Part I Refugees from the Fifties - Chapter 1: Dawn of Discontent and Chapter 2: Female Generation Gap, 1-59 World	History: The World Split Open
3	9/6	T	Part II Rebirth of Feminism – Chapter 3: Limits of Liberalism and Chapter 4: Leaving the Left, 63-140 World	History: Feminism makes Gender Visible
	9/8	TH	Part III: Through the Eyes of Women, Chapter 5: Hidden Injuries of Sex, 143-198 World  <b>Group 1 Presents</b>	History: The Hidden Injuries of Sex
4	9/13	T	Part III: Through the Eyes of Women, Chapter 6: Passion and Politics, and Chapter 7: The Politics of Paranoia, 198-260 World	History: The Personal IS Political
	9/15	TH	Part IV: No End in Sight, Chapter 8: The Proliferation of Feminism, and Chapter 9: Sisterhood to Superwoman, 263-330 World The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House, Audre Lorde, 22-24 FF Some Group Matters: Intersectionality, Situated Standpoints and Black Feminist Thought, Patricia Hill Collins, 66-83 FF  <b>Response Essay #1 DUE</b>	History: Ain't I a Woman?
5	9/20	T	Epilogue: Beyond Backlash, 331- 344 World Debates about men, new research on masculinities, 1-14 Connell The Black Male: Searching Beyond Stereotypes, Manning Marable 21-27 ML	History: Feminist Men or a Men's Movement?

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			Lives at the Center of the Periphery, Anthony S. Chen 48-65 ML What Promises Can Men Keep?: How Men Renegotiate Gender and Racial Ideologies in the Promise Keepers Movement, Melanie Heath 484-494 FF	
9/22	TH		What are little boys made of? Michael Kimmel 166-168 FF Girls and Boys Together, But Mostly Apart, Barrie Thorne 154-165 FF Barbie Girls versus Sea Monsters: Children Constructing Gender, Michael A. Messner 87-102 ML “I’m not friends the way she’s friends” Ideological and Behavioral Constructions of Masculinity in Men’s Friendships,” Karen Walker 389-401 ML	Socialization

### Group 2 Presents

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6	9/27	T	Cool guys, Swots and Wimps, 129-147 Connell Making a Name for Yourself: Transgressive Acts and Gender Performance, Ann Ferguson 154-166 ML Becoming a Gendered Body: Practices of Preschools, Karin Martin 494-511 <b>Pioneerweb</b> I threw like a girl, some difficulties with male bodies, 86-101 Connell	Gendered Bodies
	9/29	TH	Girls Will Be Girls and Boys Will be First, Pat Mahony 140-153 ML Teaching the Boys, 148-176 Connell Teaching About Being an Oppressor, Steven Schacht 24-29 FF Gender Equity in the Classroom: The Unfinished Agenda, Myra Sadker, David Sadker, Lynn Fox and Melinda Salata 210-216 <b>ERESERVE</b>	Gender at School

### Response Essay #2 DUE

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7	10/4	T	If Men Could Menstrate Gloria Steinem 347-348 FF I’m taking back my pussy! Clairit Portin 348-353 FF Men’s Health, 177-196 Connell “Doing” Gender, Candace West and Don H. Zimmerman, 131-149 <b>ERESERVE</b> Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A Theory of Gendered Organizations, Joan Acker 105-111 <b>ERESERVE</b>	Gendered Institutions
	10/6	TH	Lesbian Continuum and Compulsory Heterosexuality, Audre Lorde, 227-254 <b>ERESERVE</b> The Heterosexual Questionnaire, M. Rochlin 427 ML Wedding Bells and Baby Carriages: Heterosexuals Imagine Gay Families, Gay Families Imagine Themselves, Susana Danuta Walters 286-295 FF Masculinity as Homophobia: Fear, Shame and Silence in the Construction of Gender Identity, Michael Kimmel 119-141 <b>ERESERVE</b> Conformity Pressures and Gender Resistance among Transgendered Individuals Patricia Gagne and Richard Tewksbury 81-101 <b>Pioneerweb</b>	Gender and Compulsory Heterosexuality

### Group 3 Presents

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8	10/11	T	On "Good" Black Fathers, Michael C. Hanchard 497-504 ML Ideology, Experience, Identity: The Complex Worlds of Children in Fair Families, Barbara Risman 169-180 FF The Four Facets of Fatherhood, Nicholas Townsend 50-81 <b>ERESERVE</b>	Gendered Fatherhood
	10/13	TH	The Mommy Test, Barbara Ehrenreich 259-261 FF Working at Motherhood: Chicana and Mexicana Immigrant Mothers and Employment, Denise Segura 261-270 And Baby Makes Two, Peggy Orenstein 142-163 <b>ERESERVE</b> Feminism and Motherhood: An American Reading, Ann Snitow, 32-51 <b>Pioneerweb</b>	Gendered Motherhood
<b>Group 4 Presents</b>				
<b>Midsem DUE by 4pm on Friday, October 14</b>				
	10/17-10/21		NO CLASS - Enjoy your Fall Break	
9	10/25	T	The Wage Conceived: Value and Need as Measures of a Woman's Worth, Alice Kessler-Harris 185-196 FF Why Marcia You've Changed, Kevin D. Hensen and Jackie Krasas Rogers 289-304 ML The Glass Escalator: Hidden Advantages for Men in the "Female" Professions, Christine L. Williams 227-240 ML	Gendered Labor at Work
<b>Group 5 Presents</b>				
	10/27	TH	Guarding the Gates: The Micropolitics of Gender, Judith Lorber 270-295 <b>ERESERVE</b> Rambo Litigators: Emotional Labor in a Male-Dominated Job, and Mothering Paralegals: Emotional Labor in a Feminized Occupation, Jennifer Pierce 50-102 <b>ERESERVE</b> Why Marcia You've Changed, Kevin D. Hensen and Jackie Krasas Rogers 289-304 ML	"Doing" Gender at Work
10	11/1	T	Household Labor and the Routine Production of Gender, Scott Coltrane 167-187 <b>ERESERVE</b> Strategies Men Use to Resist, Francine M. Deutsch 469-475 ML The Administrative Mother And Evading the Time Bind Arlie Russell Hochschild, 73-84 and 197-238 <b>ERESERVE</b>	Gendered Labor at Home
	11/3	TH	Doing Desire: Adolescent Girls' Struggles for/with Sexuality, Deborah L. Tolman 312-323 FF Becoming 100% Straight, Michael Messner 327-331 FF Memories of Same-Sex Attractions, Ritch C. Savin-Williams 116-132 ML Man to Man: homosexual desire and practices among working-class men, 102-128 Connell	Gendered Desire
<b>Response Essay #3 Due</b>				
11	11/8	T	How to Build a Man, Anne Fausto-Sterling 342-346 ML	Embodied Gender

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			<p>“A Way Outa No Way”: Eating Problems among African-American, Latina, and White Women, Becky Wangsgaard Thompson 353-361 FF</p> <p>Introduction and The Medical Construction of Gender, 1-32 Intersexed</p>	
	11/10	TH	<p>The Five Sexes: Why Male and Female are Not Enough, Anne Fausto-Sterling 39-43 <b>ERESERVE</b></p> <p>Varieties of “Real Men,” James Messerschmidt 3-20 ML</p> <p>Defining and Producing Genitals and Evaluating Genital Surgery, 33-76 Intersexed</p>	Regulating Gender
12	11/15	T	<p>Punks, Bulldaggers and Welfare Queens: the Radical Potential of Queer Politics? Cathy J. Cohen 495-511 FF</p> <p>Questioning Medical Management and Rethinking Genitals and Gender, 77-120 Intersexed</p> <p>Feminism and the Subversion of Identity, Judith Butler 496-504 <b>ERESERVE</b></p> <p><b>Group 6 Presents</b></p>	Queering Gender
	11/17	TH	<p>The Rape of Mr. Smith (supp) Supremacy Crimes Gloria Steinem 401-402 <b>ML?????</b></p> <p>Raped: A Male Survivor Breaks His Silence, Fred Polka, 424-428 <b>ERESERVE</b></p> <p>Fraternities and Rape on Campus Patricia Yancey Martin and Robert A. Hummer 389-398 FF</p> <p>Men on Rape Tim Beneke 406-411 ML</p> <p>Men Changing Men, Robert Allen and Paul Kivel 398-401 FF</p> <p>Arms and the man: The question of peace, 212-226 Connell</p> <p>Clarence, William, Iron Mike, Tailhook, Senator Packwood, Spur Posse, Magic . . . and Us, Michael S. Kimmel 565-579 ML</p> <p><b>Response Essay #4 Due</b></p>	Gendered Violence
13	11/22	T	<p>Private parts, 3-106 Bordo</p> <p>Beer Commercials: A Manual on Masculinity Lance Strate 533-542 ML</p> <p>The Morality/Manhood Paradox: Masculinity, Sport and the Media Shari Lee Dworkin and Faye Linda Wachs 507-521 ML</p> <p>Looking for My Penis: the Eroticized Asian in Gay Video Porn Richard Fung 543-552 ML</p> <p><b>Group 7 Presents</b></p>	Representations of Gender
	11/24	TH	<b>No Class</b>	
14	11/29	T	<p>Public Images, 107-228 Bordo</p> <p>Selling Hot Pussy, bell hooks 119-127 FF</p>	Screening Gender
	12/1	TH	<p>The Male Animal Reconsidered, 229-332 Bordo</p> <p>Decisions, Decisions, Decisions from Maneuvers: the International Politics of Militarizing Women’s Lives, 561-568 Cynthia Enloe <b>ERESERVE</b></p> <p>Masculinities and Globalization, 39-56 Connell</p>	Political Economy of Gender

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Globalization and Men's Bodies, 57-66 Connell

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15	12/6	T	The Women's Movement: Persistence through Transformation, Verta Taylor, et al 515-530 FF The Next Feminist Generation: Imagine My Surprise, Ellen Newborne 512-514 FF The Politics of Change in Masculinity, 199-211 Connell Men: Comrades in Struggle, bell hooks 555-563 ML Statement of Principles of the National Organization for Men against Sexism 564 ML	Future of Gender
	12/8	TH	<b>Final Paper/Project DUE</b> Wrap Up and Evaluations	

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**FINAL EXAM DUE** by Friday, December 16 by 2pm in Carnegie 115.

Congratulations on graduating from Gender and Society. Enjoy your winter break! See you in 2006.

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### RESPONSE ESSAY INSTRUCTIONS:

Response Essays are short papers intended to help focus your reactions to the readings and understand them more thoroughly. These essays should address an audience of other sociology students at your level. You should assume, however, that members of your audience might not necessarily have read the particular selections that you are discussing.

Each essay should begin by saying just enough about the author and article(s) or chapter in question to allow readers unfamiliar with that selection to put it in context. The rest of the essay should provide a creative response to the selection, not just a rehash or summary of its content. Thus, a variety of response essay formats are possible. For instance, you might try one of the following:

1. Identify an argument or conclusion that you dispute, and explain why you disagree with the logic or the facts of the claim.
2. Future Directions: Pose an interesting unanswered question and show how it follows from the reading.
3. Write a poem or a story or a dialogue that captures your reaction to the reading.
4. Describe a current event or news item that is an excellent example of an idea in the selection. Show how the example embodies or illustrates the author's idea.
5. Compare or contrast two readings. Put the two authors in conversation, and take a side or show how the two arguments are improved through combination. For example, you might want to highlight a point of disagreement between the two

selected readings or show how the theory in one of them complements the other.

6. Identify an anomaly that challenges the authors' conclusions. Give a real-life counterexample to one the claims made in the reading. Explain why the theory is inadequate to deal with examples of this type.

I expect that your response essays will gradually increase in complexity, as you develop your toolbox of gender theories and empirical findings. Each successive essay must discuss at least one new reading selection that has not been the focus of any of your previous essays. The purpose of these assignments is to help you develop your abilities to articulate your own ideas and be able to evaluate, synthesize and challenge scholars' theories of gender. I have identified 4 deadlines on the syllabus – you will need to hand in 1 3-4 page essay on 3 of those dates. You can decide which due date you want to skip, in keeping with your schedule and interests. I strongly recommend handing in an essay for each of the first 3 due dates, so that you have the last 6 weeks of class to work on your research paper/project.

### RESPONSE ESSAY DEADLINES

Essay 1	Thursday, September 15
Essay 2	Thursday, September 29
Essay 3	Thursday, November 3
Essay 4	Thursday, November 17

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