COURSE CONTENT AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course examines selected topics in the growing area of gendered work-family intersections. It explores how employment and family life are interwoven, and the implications of these linkages for the well-being of women, men, and children. Of particular interest will be how gender, class, ethnicity and family structures affect the ability of working parents to combine work and family in different national, cultural and policy contexts. Topics covered include an overview of the work-family field; welfare state regimes; the time squeeze of mothers and fathers; paid and unpaid care work; the gendered division of labor; dual career and lone mother families; work and the care-giving conflict; mothering and fathering norms and practices; government and employer work-family policies; child well-being as related to poverty and inequality. This course has an international focus and is organized around key issues related to gender, work, family and policy in a range of national contexts, with a particular focus on European countries. We will begin with the US and then use a comparative approach with other developed nations with several case studies. Lastly, we will cover the particular issues faced in developing countries and use a few countries as examples. Although intersectional issues related to race/ethnicity, ability and sexual identity and orientation are not the major focus of the course, interested students are encouraged to explore these topics in their papers.

Students should learn to:

✓ understand and write effectively about key concepts related to gender, work, and family in comparative perspective.
✓ understand and write effectively about current empirical patterns and policies related to variations in work and family-related issues for women, men, and children.
✓ analyze how gender, class, ethnicity, culture, and policy affect the relationship between work and family cross-nationally.
✓ identify best practice workplace and government policy initiatives aimed at helping parents manage work and family conflicts.
✓ analyze, compare, synthesize, and critique scholarly work in this research area in writing.
✓ understand the variations of policies and their effects on child well-being and gender equality in the US based on international comparisons.

For undergraduates (433), this course is designated as writing intensive, which means it instructs students “in writing as a form of critical inquiry and scholarly research.” Effective written communication of theoretical arguments and empirical results is the cornerstone of social science as a discipline. The process of writing helps students to clarify their thinking and to demonstrate the flow of ideas necessary.
to develop persuasive arguments supported by appropriate evidence. Hence, writing is an integral part of this course and students are expected to write and rewrite frequently inside and outside of class. The goal is to encourage students to reflect on and improve their writing ability by revising work based on feedback on drafts from the instructor and their peers.

This seminar is intended to be a participatory and collaborative experience. It includes lectures, discussions, and written analytic exercises. These activities are aimed at sharpening critical thinking, debating, and writing skills. Another agenda is that students will learn how social science methodology is used to examine the effects of gendered societal structures on their lives. The international nature of the course exposes students to a variety of cultural and policy patterns regarding the links among household, economy, and the state. Students are encouraged to examine and question structures of dominance inherent in our work and family systems, which are maintained through economic, political and cultural forces. Intellectual curiosity, initiative, eagerness to learn, and willingness to work hard will be rewarded. I am hoping we can establish a comfortable learning environment based on cooperation, mutual respect, and collaboration rather than competition. One goal for this course is to create a learning community. In order to accomplish this, students need to **actively engage** in this class.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Readings**

4. Additional Readings are available under **Assignments in the Readings folder** on Blackboard (BB)

**Readings, Class Participation, and Attendance**

The readings are assigned for each class meeting and students are expected to be familiar with the assigned material. You are expected to read several chapters and/or articles for each weekly meeting and to be prepared to summarize and critique the assigned readings in class. The instructor reserves the right to ask students specific questions about the assigned materials in class and to have unannounced quizzes. Class participation includes regular attendance and is part of your grade. Throughout the semester I may e-mail you additional topical information relevant to class discussion or post them on BB for review. Checking your email and BB regularly is important so that you stay up-to-date with those and other announcements.

**Writing Assignments**

**Short Papers**

This is a *Writing Intensive* course. Students are required to write (and undergraduates to also to *rewrite*) three (3) short (UG: about 4-5 pages each; Grad: about 6-8 pages each) papers answering questions after reading relevant assignments, doing online work, and referencing other class materials (including discussions). These include internet exercises and other electronically available materials and are due on various days during the semester (see "Paper due" on the schedule). The paper assignments and format guidelines are on Blackboard under assignments. Papers will only be accepted in **typed** hard copy format; I accept electronic copies via e-mail only in exceptional circumstances.

**These papers involve a considerable time commitment for online exercises and writing, and cannot be completed in one sitting, so please plan ahead.** Undergraduates are required to work on improving their writing skills by writing and revising all assignments. All written assignments are graded based on content and writing. Undergraduates will turn in drafts and re-written assignments based on feedback to improve their writing and grade. Graduate students do not turn in drafts or re-writes, should
make use of peer review of their work, and are expected to discuss more readings in a more thorough manner than undergraduates.

**Country Profile (433) or Research Paper (633)**

Students will select a country of interest for which sufficient data are available (check with the professor), but that is not extensively covered in class (see schedule below). All students will participate in a peer review of a paper draft at a specific date. All students have to submit a paper topic outline for approval by the date specified on the syllabus. This outline should cover (1) the country you wish to examine, (2) a tentative reference list of data sources, internet sites, and at least five (5) recent scholarly literature sources. In addition, graduate students add (3) their research question and specific focus of the paper. Select the country from the list of country profiles here: [http://genderindex.org/](http://genderindex.org/) and also check data availability here: [https://genderstats.un.org/#/countries](https://genderstats.un.org/#/countries)

**Students enrolled in 433:** The country profile will be completed in 2 stages – draft and final. In addition to the bibliography at the end, the completed paper will have 3 parts: Introduction with brief literature review, Country Profile Table and description of the patterns in the table in paragraphs, and Conclusion. You will turn in a draft for feedback (see deadline on the schedule) and peer review. The final revised profile is due on the final exam day. Students will share their country profile table in form of a handout with the rest of the class. The completed paper should be about 8 pages long, including table and references. I expect you to review at least 5 recent scholarly articles in addition to materials assigned for class. More information on the paper and writing resources are on BB under Assignments.

**Students enrolled in 633 (graduate students):** The research paper will be completed in 2 stages – draft and final. In addition to the bibliography at the end, the paper will have 4 parts: Introduction with research question and significance of research, Literature review relevant to research question, Country Profile Table and table with data and analysis related to data and research question, and Conclusion. You will do a peer review on a draft for peer feedback (see schedule). The final revised paper is due on the final exam day.

The research question of the paper may focus on empirical patterns or policies over time, and/or current statistics or policies on gender, work and family characteristics. Specifically, this research paper can take either of the following forms:

a. You examine a specific research question involving a gender, work and family issue historically (data reflecting changes over time) for a country not covered in class. Example: How have policies related to fatherhood or motherhood changed since World War 2 in X country? How did this affect father involvement or mother’s employment?

b. You examine existing contemporary data to answer a research question about an aspect of gender, work and family for a country not covered in class. Example: What is the status of employed single mothers in X country? What effects do culture or a particular work-life policy have on this status?

Graduate students are expected to review at least 10 recent scholarly sources in addition to materials assigned in class, and turn in a graduate quality research paper (about 20 pages including tables and references). Graduate students are also required to present their paper in class for another grade at the end of the semester (about 30 minutes). I expect all work to be original with sole authorship of the course participants. The paper should follow ASA referencing guidelines (see here: [http://www.asanet.org/documents/teaching/pdfs/Quick_Tips_forASA_Style.pdf](http://www.asanet.org/documents/teaching/pdfs/Quick_Tips_forASA_Style.pdf)) and be formatted like a research paper published in a sociological journal. It should employ non-sexist language, and address the issues clearly and succinctly. More information on the paper and writing resources are on BB under Assignments.

**Writing Tips for Papers**

Writing good papers always requires multiple drafts - revisions help organize your thoughts more effectively and allow you to convey your arguments with brevity and clarity. It is important that your paper is clearly organized and includes transition sentences between sections. Use headings and sub-headings...
strategically to reflect the “roadmap” of your paper. Use citations (noting the author and year of a piece in parentheses) for paraphrased materials to support your arguments; but use direct quotations sparingly (in quotation marks, noting author, year, and page number of the quotation). Be certain to list full references to any sources you cite at the end of the paper. Focus on scholarly materials. Use the smallest number of words, and most concrete words possible, to make your points. Avoid “throat-clearing” (example: “it is the opinion of this author that...”). Use the active voice. It is also fine to write in the first person, but avoid starting sentences with qualifiers like “I believe” or “I think.”

ASSESSMENT
Final grades are determined by the total number of points earned in the semester, using a regular % scale (90-100% = A; 80-89.9% = B, etc). Graduate students are evaluated with plus and minus grading (90-91.9=A-; 88.1-89.9=B+; etc.). I expect higher level quality of writing, analysis and research from graduate students than undergraduates.

The points for the final grade are calculated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>UG/433</th>
<th>Grad/633</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Short papers</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research paper</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country profile</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Peer reviews</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper presentation</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>390</strong></td>
<td><strong>440</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment of course work
In general you can expect a B grade if you attend class regularly, participate, complete good assignments on time, and produce a well-written, solid research paper and exams. Especially insightful in-class participation, extra effort, and excellent written work will increase the grade. Sloppy and/or late work, infrequent class attendance and participation, and lack of effort to improve writing will reduce the grade. Specifically, an A means excellent work, which demonstrates comprehensive command of course content, exceptional ability to apply concepts, superior ability to organize and express ideas in writing, and critical thinking, good attendance and participation. A B means good work, which demonstrates solid command of course content, good ability to apply concepts, good organization and expression of ideas in writing, regular attendance and participation. A C means fair work, implying acceptable command of course content, basic ability to apply concepts, and moderate organization and expression of ideas in writing, moderate attendance and participation. A D means marginal work, with little command of course content, some ability to apply concepts, and very limited ability to organize and express ideas in writing, irregular attendance and participation. I do not assign Ds for graduate work. An F means unacceptable work and implies lack of command of course content, inability to apply concepts or to organize and express ideas in writing, lack of attendance and participation.

POLICIES
General
It is the responsibility of the student to prepare assigned materials on time and to discuss difficulties, special circumstances or issues with deadlines with the professor in person or via e-mail. Please note that some questions are better asked after class or in a session with the professor during office hours. I encourage you to stop by during office hours or to make an appointment to discuss your progress. Graduate student life is challenging and we all are busy. However, by registering for this graduate class you have voluntarily entered into a contract and have committed yourself to completing graduate-level work with all its time requirements. For your own protection, make sure you have more than one electronic and paper copy of all your assignments. Students are responsible for being informed about all announcements made in class, on
Professional Conduct
A note on courtesy and civility in the classroom and community: Professional conduct includes creating a comfortable class environment of mutual respect in which we share ideas, observations, and questions in an inclusive manner. That means using language and conduct that demonstrates respect for all students, disregarding their race, gender identity or expression, sexuality, culture, beliefs, or abilities. Graduate students are also expected to have “good manners” in class. This includes an attentive presence, verbal and mental participation, and a positive attitude towards learning and other learners in class.

Specifically, (1) refrain from carrying on disruptive private conversation in class; (2) do show courtesy to your classmates and the professor by arriving on time and prepared for class and meetings; (3) silence all electronic communication devices (phones, beepers, etc.) upon entering the classroom; (4) use laptops in class exclusively for note-taking – not for checking email, IM, games, or work for this or other classes, etc. Electronic recording of lectures is prohibited unless prior approval from the professor is received. Approval will be granted only for self-study purposes. Violations of these rules of professional conduct will be dealt with outside of class.

Diversity and Inclusion
Each person brings an abundant personal, social, and intellectual history to the university classroom. This diversity continues to grow with new experiences at UMBC. It is also part of what we study in the social sciences. The Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Health Administration and Policy (SAHAP) strives to create an inclusive environment in which students of all backgrounds can learn and thrive.

SAHAP expects students to participate in this effort. Anyone with concerns or suggestions should speak with the instructor or their faculty advisor.

Academic Misconduct
Students are reminded that the UMBC Student Honor Code is strictly enforced in this course. By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UMBC’s scholarly community in which everyone’s academic work and behavior are held to the highest standards of honesty. It is assumed that all graduates students have completed the Academic Integrity Tutorial at http://www.umbc.edu/gradschool/procedures/academic_integrity.html. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and helping others to commit these acts are all forms of academic dishonesty, and they are wrong. Academic misconduct can result in disciplinary action that may include a “0” on the assignment, an “F” in the course, suspension or dismissal from UMBC. To read the full Student Academic Conduct Policy, consult the UMBC Graduate School Policy section at http://www.umbc.edu/gradschool/procedures/.

Academic misconduct may include but is not limited to the following (adapted from UMBC’s policy):

- Cheating: Using or attempting to use unauthorized material, information, or study aids in any academic exercise, such as exams, quizzes, papers, homework, etc. That includes copying information from classmates’ papers, homework, exams, quizzes, etc.
- Fabrication: Intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise, such as exams, quizzes, papers, homework, etc.
- Facilitating academic dishonesty: Intentionally helping or attempting to help another commit an act of academic dishonesty.
- Plagiarism: Representing the words or ideas of another as one’s own in any academic exercise. That means that ANYTIME you use the exact words from a published source (including the internet), you have to put them into quotation marks and attach in parentheses the page number and all biographical source information. If you use the contents of any published source (including the internet) by PARAPHRASING it, you still have to acknowledge it in parentheses.
- Buying papers on the internet or elsewhere and turning them, or any parts of them, in as one’s own
original work constitutes cheating. Turning in a paper that was authored by another person in total or part also constitutes cheating.

Special Accommodations
UMBC is committed to eliminating discriminatory obstacles that disadvantage students based on special needs. The Office of Student Disability Services (SDS) is designated to receive and maintain confidential files of disability-related documentation, certify eligibility for services, determine reasonable accommodations, develop with each student plans for the provision of such accommodations, and serve as a liaison between faculty members and students regarding disability-related issues. If you have a disability, please refer to sds.umbc.edu. In order to request accommodations contact SDS in Math/Psych Bldg. Room 212, at 410-455-2459, or disability@umbc.edu. SDS will require appropriate documentation of disability. If you require SDS-approved accommodations for this class, please discuss these with me ASAP.

MA in Applied SOCY or Bachelors/Masters combined Program
The Master of Arts degree in Applied Sociology focuses on the practical side of sociology and prepares students for careers as research analysts in federal and state agencies, non-profits and research organizations. The core substantive areas of the program are health disparities, aging and the life course, and gender, diversity and inequality. The program is 30 credits and a few assistantships are available that require 10-20 hours work per week and provide tuition remission, health insurance, and a stipend. The department also offers a combined BA/MA degree program in which admitted undergraduates can take up to 9 graduate credits that will count toward the MA degree. The department also offers a 12 credit graduate certificate in the non-profit sector and in the social dimensions of health, which can be taken as part of the MA degree or separately. If you have a GPA of at least 3.0 and are interested in the program, contact Dr. Marina Adler, Graduate Program Director, at adler@umbc.edu.

COURSE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS, ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS
Readings are due on the date they are mentioned on the schedule, i.e., read the first readings by 2/9/17. This schedule is subject to change and will be updated accordingly on Blackboard.

Week 1: 2/2  Introduction to the course
Goals of the course; introductions
Overview of effective researching and writing about gender, work and family issues

➢ Start reading, start thinking about your paper topic

Week 2: 2/9  Studying gender, work and family intersections sociologically
Conceptual foundations - gender, work, family, time
➢ Read:
  ➢ Watch: Gendered marketing here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3JDmb_f3E2c

Week 3: 2/16  Work-family reconciliation issues
The separation of home and workplace; women’s employment; men’s participation in care work
Writing Lab 1: Clarity in writing
➢ Paper topic outline due
➢ Read:
  ➢ D, Chapter 1-2
  ➢ A&L, Introduction
  ➢ Wallen, Jacqueline. Chapters 2 and 3 [pdf on BB]

Week 4: 2/23  Research on work-family issues in the US
The gendered nature of families and workplaces
➢ Read:
  ➢ P&H, Chapter 1-2
  ➢ D, Chapter 3-4
  ➢ Wallen, Jacqueline. Chapters 6 [pdf on BB]
  ➢ Check out data - The state of working America here: http://stateofworkingamerica.org/factsheets/
  ➢ Watch: http://www.thesociologicalcinema.com/videos/do-men-really-earn-more-than-women

Week 5: 3/2  Research on work-family issues in the US
Changing family structures and policy responses
➢ Short Paper 1 due (including todays reading) – Bring 2 copies to class!
➢ Peer review of Short Paper 1
➢ Read:
  ➢ D, Chapter 5-8
  ➢ A&L, Chapter 6
For those interested in LGBT work-family: King, Eden B. et al, 2013. LGBT parents and the workplace. in LGBT-Parent Families: Innovations in Research and Implications for Practice, pp. 225-37

Week 6: 3/9  International variation in welfare state regimes - Europe
Comparative welfare states, policy regimes, and gender regimes
Writing lab 2: Writing an introduction and issues from papers
➢ Read:
  ➢ P&H, Chapter 3-5
Jacobs and Gerson, Chapter 6 “American workers in cross-national perspective.” [pdf on BB]
Check out the 2016 annual report on the various leave policies:
http://www.leavenetwork.org/fileadmin/Leavenetwork/Annual_reviews/2016_Full_draft_20_July.pdf  .Specific country reports are here:
http://www.leavenetwork.org/lp_and_r_reports/country_reports/?S=ohne%3Ftype%3D98%3Ftype%3D98%3Ftype%3D98%3F%3F

Week 6: 3/16  Germany
Focus on leave and child care in Germany
Writing lab 3: Writing a literature review and issues from papers
➢ Short Paper 1 revision due
➢ Read:
  ➢ A&L, Chapter 2
  ➢ P&H, Chapter 7

Week 8: 3/23  Spring Break!
➢ Enjoy!

Week 9: 3/30  Scandinavia
Focus on leave and child care in Scandinavian countries
No class today – I am presenting at the SSS conference
Work on your papers
➢ Read the following and write down the key points about Scandinavian countries made in the readings and what specific policy ideas the US can learn from them.
  ➢ P&H, Chapter 6
  ➢ A&L, Chapter 1

Week 10: 4/6  Eastern and Southern Europe
Focus on Slovenia and Italy
Writing lab 4: Writing a conclusion and Issues from papers
➢ Read:
  ➢ P&H, Chapter 8
  ➢ A&L, Chapter 3, 4, Conclusion

Week 11: 4/13  Post-colonial countries: general theories
Dependency and world systems approaches to “development”
➢ Short Paper 2 due (including todays reading) – bring 2 copies to class!
➢ Peer review of Short Paper 2
➢ Read:
Week 12: 4/20  Post-colonial countries: Gender-sensitive approaches
Women in development (WID) and gender and development (GAD) approaches
➢ Peer review of research paper or country profile draft – bring 2 copies to class!
➢ Read:
  Development and Change 42:873-903 [pdf file on BB]

Week 13: 4/27  State policies and gender in post-colonial countries
Human development, Gender empowerment, Children’s well-being
➢ Short Paper 2 revision due
➢ Read:

Week 14: 5/4  The globalization of women’s labor
Migrating bodies: Nannies, Maids, Sex workers, Slaves
➢ Read:
SOCY 433/633: Gender, Work and Family

- Jacobs and Gerson, Chapter 8 (p.169-202) [pdf on BB]
- Wallen, Jacqueline, Chapter 14 [pdf on BB]

Week 15: 5/11  Last day of class: The future and policy change
Strategies for empowerment and global change

Graduate Student presentations - bring some goodies to share!
- Short Paper 3 due (including todays readings) – bring 2 copies to class!
- Peer review of Short Paper 3 (no professor review)

Final Exam period: May 18, 6pm.

- Short Paper 3 revision due
- Country profile or Research Paper due in my office by May 18, 6pm (hard copy and BB Safeassign copy) – get time stamp in office if I am not there.

GET INVOLVED...
The world is run by those who show up

Food for thought: It currently costs about $250,000 to raise a child from age 0 to 18, not including college.
CONTRACT

I have read the contents of the syllabus for SOCY 433W/633 and its cross-listed courses. I understand the requirements and policies stated in the syllabus.

Printed Name: _____________________________________

Signature: _______________________________________________

Date: ________________
Brief Definitions of Theories (adapted from the Sloan Work and Family Research Network webpage, p. 56ff)

**Biological Determinism**
According to this perspective, the behavior of men and women is determined by their chromosomes, hormones, their genitals and reproductive organs. There are significant sex/gender differences based on the “fact” that women and men are biologically different. These differences result in a number of critical differences in the nature of how men and women behave and what they are able to achieve/accomplish. By nature, women are inherently more passive, nurturant, caring and emotional, which handicaps them in achieving responsible work-related positions (e.g., managerial positions or public office). They are meant to be mothers, in the private sphere, “in the home.” In fact, they are much better at caregiving than men. They are victims of their “raging hormones,” which on a monthly schedule, makes them less capable. By nature, men are inherently more aggressive, more competitive, more capable, more rational, smarter than women. Because of their hormonal make-up, they have a tendency to be more violent than women, and are more sexually promiscuous than women. Because they are more rational than women, they are more able to take on major responsibilities in their jobs. Because they are better workers than women, they should be paid more money. Men’s place is in the public sphere, in power positions.

**Gender Role Theory**
According to this perspective, women and men fulfill a set of expectations in relation to existing social roles. These expectations determine their actions, behaviors. Being a woman or man means enacting a social role that reflects one’s sex. Women’s and men’s behaviors are different because they respond to different social expectations from the various situations and social institutions they encounter. The behavior of individuals is controlled by positive and negative sanctions which flow from social interaction. The social roles of “man” and “woman” are viewed as complementary, rather than reflecting any power relationship between men and women. The “female role” and the “male role” are tacitly treated as equal. All women are put into the category of woman; all men are in the category of men. What is normative (based on social expectations) is also considered the standard, the way all people live. When people behave outside of “the norm,” they are considered deviant. Sex roles can be changed, but this requires a change in the expectations of women and men. In the context of paid work, expectations of women and men are different, based on gendered social norms, and considered complementary in nature.

**Social constructionist perspective**
According to this perspective, there are gender imbalances in our everyday world that are reinforced and reproduced in our social institutions. Class and race intersects with gender as it influences the opportunity structures available to women and men, and the interactions between women and men. Gender also systematically functions at broader levels, within social institutions (e.g., work), and within the structure of our economic system. The roles that women and men find themselves are NOT determined by their biological functions or physiological beings; rather, they are created within the social world. People actively “do gender” (West and Zimmerman); that is, they behave based on norms of what is appropriate for women/men, and in so doing, actually reinforce or reproduce notions of gender. This is reinforced by the world around them, via social and economic structures that reflect gendered norms.

**Interlocking structures of oppression (Patricia Hill Collins)**
According to this perspective, race, class and gender are categories of analysis that are essential in helping us understand the structural bases of domination and subordination. “Additive analyses” of oppression rank individuals by their experience of dominance and subordination – assuming that oppression can be quantified and that some oppressions are worse than others. But this approach doesn’t recognize that race, class and gender function as parallel and interlocking systems of domination and subordination. Gender/race/class oppression is maintained at three dimensions:
Institutional oppression, in which systemic relationships of domination and subordination is structured within social institutions like schools and in the workplace. While these institutions may profess equal opportunities, race/class/gender biases affect opportunity structures (people have “varying degrees of penalty and privilege”).

Symbolic dimension of oppression, in which stereotypes or controlling images are used to define diverse race, class and gender groups. Symbolic images of these groups interact to maintain systems of domination and subordination (e.g., black women viewed as mammy, the matriarch; white men viewed positively as aggressive in the workplace, while aggressiveness by black or Hispanic men, or by women in the workplace viewed negatively). It is critical to see how these symbolic images perpetuate stereotypes.

Individual dimension of oppression – we all live within institutions that reproduce race/class/gender oppression and encounter images of all groups, but individual biographies vary tremendously. “Each of us carries around the cumulative effect of our lives within multiple structures of oppression”.

These three dimensions frame our opportunity structure, but we also have “agency”, or the ability to make choices and work towards change. We live in a world with varying levels of power and privilege. These differences frame our relationships. Differences in power constrain our ability to connect with one another, even when we think we’re engaged in dialogue across differences. There may be a tendency to “rank” one’s privilege in relation to others (by class/race/gender), rather than feel compassion for others’ suffering. At the same time, those in privileged positions may not recognize the contribution of women, people of color or the poor, other than as spokespeople for their “interests” (e.g., gender, race). People need to come together in coalitions around common causes, seeing how race/class/gender systems maintain the status quo. Essential in doing this is empathy for the experiences of others with experiences different from ourselves. The privileged are less motivated to do so, but it is essential for these individuals to have any empathy for others.