

Sample Lesson Plan: Introduction to Anthropology, Topic: Gendered Subjects.

The goal of this lesson is to get students to think about the ways that gender is constructed in everyday practice, as gendered subjects encounter social boundaries and policing mechanisms. In preparation, the students are assigned a reading, "Gendering the City, Gendering the Nation: Contesting Urban Space in Fes, Morocco," by Rachel Newcomb (2006). This article examines the ways that women in Fes, Morocco negotiate social spaces where gender roles are not clearly defined, including cafes, internet cafes, and gyms. I open the class with a debrief of the reading, asking first, generally, how social space connects to gender in the article, and then how gender roles are enforced. After laying out the basic concepts, we discuss the specific spaces analyzed in the article: cafes, internet cafes, and gyms, asking why gender roles are ambiguous in these spaces, and how the subjects of the article negotiate these ambiguities.

We then turn to the videos. I break students into groups of 4 or 5 and assign them a "jigsaw" exercise where they view and then discuss videos from the website. Students are instructed to visit the website, pick a video, and watch it. Each student in their group should watch a different video. As they watch, they should pay special attention to the following questions: What happens in the video? What social situations make the narrator especially aware of gender? How do they negotiate and/or challenge gender roles? (For example, one young woman becomes aware of gender while riding a bicycle. One young man describes being criticized for playing with dolls).

Then, students should discuss the videos with other students in their group. Each student should share with their group mates, describing the video they saw and how it addressed gendered experience. Students should compare their observations with one another. In what ways were the experiences described in the different videos similar? What differences could be observed? How does this build on (or challenge) themes raised by the reading?