

Core III: Gender and Religious Belief (HONC 2310)  
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### **Gender Self-Analysis Assignment**

*Task:* In 1000-2000 words, analyze the impact of gender categories, social expectations, and power structures on your own life to this point. In other words, tell the story of your relationship to gender in your own life experience, from the beginning until now. Consider messages communicated to you by institutions (education, church, media), expectations set by family and by your peers. Then assess your own responses to these forces. Note especially whether the forces and/or your responses have changed over time. Utilizing concepts from our readings and discussion, identify the ethical principles that underlie these messages and your response. Are these principles consistent and congruent, or contradictory and conflicted?

*Purpose:* We receive many messages about gender before we have the capacity to think critically about them. These messages become assumptions, which may persist unchallenged for a large portion of our lives if we remain in a relatively homogeneous environment. Reflecting on our own lives to notice messages about gender enables us to identify forces that have shaped who we are now. Responding thoughtfully and with nuance to our life history, including elements we chose or controlled as well as those we did not, trains our muscles of empathy. Empathy, in turn, is one of the engines of all ethical thinking.

*Criteria:* To receive the full point value of this assignment, submit an honest narrative\* that is well organized, grammatically correct, stylistically sound, responds to all aspects of the prompt, and meets all requirements of word count and formatting. You will have a chance to rewrite to raise your grade.

\*An honest narrative is not one in which you have come to a final conclusion about the meaning of the events or ideas within. Honestly examining yourself and your life usually means searching, raising questions you cannot fully answer, and confronting complicated matters (perhaps for the first time). Conclusions will probably be tentative, and the narrative will reveal the openness of the author to learn and reassess.

Your paper must follow all guidelines for formal writing, as laid out in the Course Information section. Submissions that do not follow these guidelines will not be accepted.