Sociology of Gender

The paper for this class is an open-ended paper. This means that it is up to you to decide what you will write about. If you are having trouble coming up with a paper topic, here are some questions to ask yourself:

• What have you found most interesting/engaging over the last couple of weeks? Why did these interest me?
• Have a found any contradictions in the readings that I would like to explore further?
• Have I 'connected' with any authors/passage? Is so, why?

Staring at a blank screen is scary. So just start writing. Worry about organization and formatting once you have an idea.

Undoubtedly, you will not know the answer to the above questions immediately. But if you consider why you found something interesting/weird/obscure/funny/true, you are bound to find a topic. Your job is to figure out why this topic/passage/author interests you, make connections, draw conclusions.

Once you have an idea, then you can address issues of organization. Your paper must include the following:

1) a clearly stated thesis
2) an introduction
3) a well thought out argument supported by primary sources
4) references/quotes from our class readings
5) proper citations (you can use whatever format you would like for secondary sources; we'll discuss citing primary sources)
6) a conclusion

Once you have identified your topic, here are some ideas to help flesh out your ideas:

• Consider why your topic is relevant to the modern world, or to you.
• Resolve apparent contradictions by reading sources closely and formulating analyses based on observations from primary sources.
• Rather than panic about what you don't know, think about what you do know. You might also consider how our readings/discussions have contributed to your work in your chosen discipline while at Middlebury, or how our discussions have complicated your understanding of something that seemed clear/obvious.
• You are welcome to explore scholarly articles as a means of creative exploration/evidence for your arguments. They must be cited, if you choose to use them.

Grading scheme:
An A paper will cover points 1-6 listed above, be well written, have no major factual or grammatical errors and possibly actually teach me something new.

An A- paper does these things but might have a typo or two.

A B+ paper understands the major concepts and cites the readings, but is perhaps not as well argued.

A B paper understands the major concepts, but is perhaps not as well written and doesn't use the readings sufficiently.

A B- paper fails to show me that you did the readings or has a level of writing that seriously detracts from what you are saying. Anything lower than a B- indicates that I am concerned that you either did not understand the readings or failed to do them. If you receive a grade lower than a B-, please make time to come see me during office hours so you can figure out how to improve your grade on the next paper.

Formatting:

12 point font
1.5 spaced
Times/Helvetica
4-5 pages
paper are due by 11.59 pm, PDF or word document