Religion and Gender

Objectives:
1) Introduce students to the relationship between religion and gender
2) Familiarize students with the various theories that explain this relationship
3) Examine the differences in religiosity between men and women
4) Investigate the different experiences men and women have within organized religion
5) Familiarize students with online research tools

Activity:
Using the QuickStats tool on The ARDA, compare men and women on religious affiliation, behaviors, beliefs, and experiences: denominational affiliation, strength of religious affiliation, frequency of prayer, religious service attendance, belief in hell, belief in heaven, belief about the Bible, importance of religion, felt called by God to do something, feel God’s love directly, been protected from harm by a guardian angel.

Explore the gender distribution of regular adult participants in U.S. congregations and the associated demographic patterns of those congregations.

Examine whether women are allowed to be religious leaders or preach in U.S. congregations and the associated demographic patterns of those congregations.

Compare the gender distribution of members for American denominations (example) using the QuickStats tool on The ARDA.

Assessment:
Direct students to complete the Women and Religion in the United States learning module (module explores differences in religious belief and behavior between women and men).

Direct students to complete the Boys, Girls, and Religion: How Adolescent Religiosity Differs by Gender learning module (module explores national patterns of adolescent religious belief and how they differ by gender).

Direct students to complete the Women and Men in the Catholic Church learning module (module explores how women and men in same denomination can hold drastically different religious beliefs).

Instruct students to write a response piece to one of the Ahead of the Trend articles on women or gender (archive for women).

Direct students to the Women and Religion section on the Interactive Timeline page. Have students use the interactive timeline to find three key events that either hindered or
improved women’s standing in American religion. Describe the events and the effects they had.

Suggested reading: