

COURSE OUTLINE

Soci403-02: Gender and the Media

University of Calgary – Department of Sociology
Fall 2013

Lecture: TR 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM, in KNB 131 (Kinesiology)

Instructor: Annette Tézli

Office: SS950

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Office hours: TR 12:30 – 1:30 PM, W 10:30-11:30 AM; and/or by appointment

Course Description

While the term “*sex*” encompasses physiological and anatomical (i.e. biological) differences between females and males, the concept of “*gender*” refers to socially constructed understandings of femininity and masculinity. The mass media, rather than providing “just entertainment, ” is conceptualized as a key socializing agent and provider of gendered representations and scripts. It thus plays a central role in creating, maintaining, and transforming notions of gender, gender relations and gender divisions. Over the course of the semester, we will critically examine contemporary representations of gender and gender relations and their intersections with other dimensions of inequality, such as race, social class, age and sexual orientation, in various media outlets. The goal of the course is to provide you with the tools to critically analyze contemporary mass media content from a sociological gender perspective.

This course will provide you the opportunity to:

- examine gender as a social construction rather than as something we ‘naturally acquire’;
- develop and enhance your ability to critically “read” the media you consume daily;
- consider the ways media representation and their creators “do gender”;
- explore how media content is produced within particular social, political, and cultural contexts;
- critically explore the commercial nature of media;
- critically examine and evaluate the impact of mass media in your own life and your understandings of gender;
- come to understand yourself as both the product of media influence and as an agent of progress, resistance and change;
- retrieve, read and discuss a collection of sociological material that takes various approaches to gender issues;
- develop your writing skills through informal and formal written assignments;
- be part of a class in which participation in discussions and group exercises is encouraged.

Course Format

I view class time as an opportunity for us to talk with each other about gender and gendered experiences. I will enter each class period assuming that every student has read all of the assigned texts. I will begin each class with a short lecture to cover key concepts and other pertinent information that will complement but not summarize the assigned readings. The remainder of the class will be interactive and devoted to hands-on exercises, group work, class discussions, and films. After each activity, we will reflect on insights gained through discussions and various formal and informal writing assignments.

Required Texts

A course pack will not be provided. An inventory of required course readings is provided on Blackboard. It is your responsibility to locate those readings through the UofC library, or on Blackboard where applicable.

Course Requirements

Assignment Schedule and Outline

Please note that all assignments have to be submitted at the beginning of class on the day they are due.

	Due date	Status	% of final grade
Course Contribution	announced in class	mandatory	15
Music Analysis	October 10	option 1	50 (2x25)
Decoding Disney	October 24	option 2	
TV Show Analysis	November 7	option 3	
TV Commercial Analysis	November 21	option 4	
Magazine Content Analysis	December 10	mandatory	35

Mandatory Assignments

Course Contribution (15%)

Throughout the semester I will ask you to post examples of media content (i.e. You Tube clips, pictures, advertisements, etc.) illustrating the topic under discussion on Blackboard. Drawing on course material, you will then, in 1-2 paragraphs, briefly comment on the ways gender and/or gender relations are portrayed and constructed in/by them. I will randomly call on a few students for each assignment for a brief in-class presentation of their content and analysis. Each student will present at least once over the course of the semester. There will be a total of 6 Blackboard assignments. Instructions and due dates will be provided in class. Detailed instructions and a grading rubric for the assignments and the presentation will be provided in class and on Blackboard.

Magazine Content Analysis (35%)

The pervasiveness of advertisements in a media saturated culture like Canada's is an important arena for sociological analysis, and is a great avenue for you to conduct your own small-scale research and provide critical interpretations. For this assignment you will put your sociological imagination to work by describing and analyzing gender representations, and their intersection with other dimensions of social inequality, such as social class, race/ethnicity, and/or age, in a recent issue of a popular magazine of your choice. In your analysis you may focus either on the magazine's advertisements or its substantive content. You will critically discuss your findings drawing on course material. Papers should be 8-10 pages in length. Detailed instructions for the assignment will be provided in class and on Blackboard.

Elective Assignments - Choose any TWO (50% total, 25% each)

Elective assignments give you the opportunity to delve deeper into issues of gender representations across different media on an individual basis. Elective assignments allow you to select for analysis media outlets most relevant/interesting to you. The assignment instructions are broad enough so you can "make them yours" and explore issues/topics that are of interest to you. In addition, elective assignments provide you with some flexibility, allowing you to select assignments that work best for your examination and assignment schedule. All assignments require you to write a 5-page paper, and each of the two selection options is worth 25% of your final grade.

Option 1: Music Analysis (25%)

For this assignment you will critically examine gender representations in contemporary popular music. Your analysis will focus on the ways in which artists, through their music, endorse, support or challenge problematic understandings of femininity, masculinity, gender roles and gender relations. To analyze gender representations in contemporary popular music, you can choose from the following options: analyzing one artist's song lyrics, analyzing one artist's music videos, or watch an hour of music television to assess gender representations across different genres/artists. More detailed instructions will be provided on Blackboard.

Option 2: Decoding Disney (25%)

Disney is a large part of how a child growing up in North America learns gender and culture. For this assignment you will select one animated Disney film and conduct a case analysis of this cultural text with a critical eye toward the underlying messages and images about gender it perpetuates. The goal of your analysis is to critically assess to which degree gender representations in your chosen film reinforce or defy existing gender stereotypes using illustrations from the film to support your argument. According to your own interests, you choose the focus of your analysis, which can include, but is not limited to, representations of masculinity, femininity, gender roles, gender relations, patriarchy, heteronormativity, and intimate relationships. More detailed instructions will be provided on Blackboard.

Option 3: TV Show Analysis (25%)

In this assignment, you will de-code gendered messages that permeate prime time television programming. Your analysis will focus on the ways in which TV shows endorse, support or challenge problematic understandings of femininity, masculinity, gender and family roles, and gender relations. You will further analyze how media representations of gender intersect with other dimensions of social inequality, such as social class, race/ethnicity, and/or age. To analyze gender representations in prime television, you can choose between the following two options: analyzing five episodes of one TV show of your choosing, or an analysis of gender representations across various programming in 4 hours of prime time television. More detailed instructions will be provided on Blackboard.

Option 4: TV Commercial Analysis (25%)

In this assignment, you are asked to de-code gendered messages that permeate prime time television programming, focusing on the commercials aired between shows. You will watch television for 3 hours (3 sessions, one hour each). The 3 sessions must cover a different time slot, different days, and different channels. During each session, you will record in detail the content of the commercials aired. You will then conduct a content analysis, using your observations as data and interpret that data drawing on course material to "discover" its social meaning.

Grading Scale

Letter grades will be assigned and submitted to the registrar based on the following scale:

A+	96 – 100%	B+	80 – 84%	C+	67 – 69%	D+	55 – 58%
A	90 – 95%	B	75 – 79%	C	63 – 66%	D	50 – 54%
A-	85 – 89%	B-	70 – 74%	C-	59 – 62%	F	< 50 %

The grades for a course component may be scaled to maintain equity among sections and to conform to departmental norms.

Emergency evacuations

In the case of fire or other emergency evacuation of this classroom/lab, please proceed to the assembly point by the ICT Food Court.

Technology Use

You are welcome to use your laptop/tablet in class. If you are using a laptop/tablet in class, I would kindly ask you to sit in the back of the class so that other students are not distracted. Please use your laptop/tablet for course-related purposes only (i.e. to access course presentations, take notes). Bear in mind that using your computer/tablet/phone to surf the net, shop, email, check Facebook, update your tweets, etc. is distracting to your classmates. It is also a waste of your tuition fees. Permission to use laptops/tablets may be withdrawn if they are not used appropriately. Please make sure to mute your cell phone and refrain from using it during class.

Attendance and Participation

Reading the assigned material, an open mind, and your active participation is required for this class to reach its fullest potential and to make it a rewarding experience for you and me. Furthermore, attendance is important in any class. If you miss a class, you will miss material relevant to your success in this course. To attend classes regularly is your responsibility. If you have to miss a class, it is your responsibility to obtain the covered material and information about assignments from one of your class mates. If you need to leave class early, it is courteous to let me know in advance, and to sit somewhere that will allow you to leave without disrupting others.

E-mail policy

Feel free to contact me over email at any time. Please put your course number and section in your email's subject line. I will do my best to answer emails promptly. However, it might take up to one business day for me to respond. Please take that into account when emailing me questions pertaining assignments or exams. Please e-mail me for administrative purposes only, for example to set up an appointment. Please do not use e-mail as a replacement for an office visit, if there is something you want to discuss. Questions about the course content and readings, concerns about grades, or any other personal issues should be dealt with in person during my office hours.

Assignment Policies and Deferrals

It is your responsibility to complete and submit all assignments outlined in this course outline. If at all possible you must provide **advance** notice to the instructor if you are unable to take a test or pass in an assignment on time. All requests for a deferral of an exam or assignment due to health reasons must be accompanied by written documentation as outlined in the University Calendar and should be obtained while you have the physical or emotional problem rather than after recovery. Deferrals will be allowed in the following circumstances: illness, domestic affliction or religious conviction. **Travel arrangements, misreading of the syllabus, and scheduling conflicts with other classes or employment responsibilities** are not valid reasons for requesting a deferral. Deferrals will not be granted if it is determined that just cause is not shown by the student. There are absolutely NO EXCEPTIONS.

If you have missed an exam for a legitimate reason, I can require you to write a "make up" test as close in time to the original test as possible or can choose to transfer the percentage weight to another course component. If I schedule a "make up" test for you, its date and location will be at the convenience of the Sociology Department.

Assignments submitted late (as of the beginning of class on the dates indicated in the assignment schedule) without due cause are subject to a **5 percentage points deduction** (i.e. 80% instead of

85%) for **each day** past the due date. Assignments not submitted within 7 calendar days of the due date without approval for extension will automatically receive a grade of 0.

Deferred Final Exam Form:

Please note that requests to defer a Registrar-scheduled final exam are dealt with through the Registrar's Office. Further information about deadlines, and where paperwork should be taken, is available on the form, which can be found at:

http://ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/APP%20FOR%20DF%20EXAM_0.pdf

Handing in papers outside of class, return of final papers, and release of final grades

1. When students are unable to submit papers in class, they should make arrangements to hand in their papers directly to the instructor. Electronic submissions via email or Blackboard, papers placed under my door, or those submitted to the administrative assistants in the department's main office will **NOT** be accepted.
2. Final papers will not be returned through the main Sociology Department office. The Freedom of Information and Privacy (FOIP) legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place (i.e. outside an instructor's office, the department office etc.) Students who want their final papers returned by mail must attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with the paper. Otherwise final papers will be available for pick-up only during the instructor's office hours at the end of this term or at the beginning of the next term.
3. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology Department. They are available only online.

Ethics Research

Please be advised that any research involving human subjects - including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation – must have the approval of the Departmental Ethics Committee. In completing course requirements, you must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing your plans with me, to determine if ethics approval is required.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism, cheating and other academic misconduct are regarded as serious academic offences. Please be advised to consult the University Calendar which presents a Statement of Intellectual Honesty and definitions and penalties associated with cheating, plagiarism, and other academic misconduct.

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) legislation

...disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place, e.g., outside an instructor's office or the Department's main office. I will return written assignments individually during class, or during my office hours. If you are unable to pick up your assignment, you may provide me with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of your assignment.

Student Representation

The 2013-14 Students' Union VP Academic is Emily Macphail; email: suvpaca@ucalgary.ca. The Faculty of Arts has four SU representatives who may be contacted at any of the following email addresses: arts1@ucalgary.ca, arts2@ucalgary.ca, arts3@ucalgary.ca, and arts4@ucalgary.ca. You may also wish to contact the Student Ombudsperson for help with a variety of University-related matters: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds/role>

Safewalk

The University of Calgary provides a “safe walk” service to any location on Campus, including the LRT, parking lots, bus zones, and campus housing. For Campus Security/Safewalk call 220-5333. You can also contact Campus Security from any of the “Help” phones located around Campus.

Academic Accommodation

Students with a disability, who require academic accommodation, need to register with the Disability Resource Centre (MC 295, phone 220-8237). Academic accommodation letters need to be provided to course instructors no later than fourteen (14) days after the first day of class. It is a student’s responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre and to request academic accommodation, if required.

Reappraisal of Grades and Academic Appeals

If you chose to challenge a grade you received for an assignment, please refer to the UofC Calendar for more information and follow the procedures outlined therein.

Tentative Course Schedule

Subject to change. Changes will be announced and discussed in class.

The following questions should guide your reading of course material and will help you prepare for class discussions: What are the author's main arguments? What new concepts/ideas/arguments does the author introduce? How do these readings relate to my learning in previous courses and to what I experience as a member of this society? How am I reacting to these findings/arguments? Do they support or challenge my values, beliefs, knowledge? Why and how? How would I respond to the author's arguments? What questions remain unanswered? What is confusing/difficult to understand or brilliant about this reading?

Week 1 – Introduction & Theoretical Foundations

September 10 – Introductions

September 12 – Gender Review

Week 2 – Theoretical Foundations, cont.

September 17 – Feminism Review

Required Readings: Elliot and Mandell (1998)

September 19 – Capitalism, Consumer Culture, and Mediated Lives

Required Readings: Fleras (2011), Ch. 1, 4

Week 3 – The Music Industry

September 24 – Gender Display in Music Videos

Readings: Sommers-Flanagan, Sommers-Flanagan & Davis (1993), Wallis (2011)

September 26 – Sexuality in Music Videos

Readings: Aubrey and Frisby (2011)

Week 4 – The Music Industry, cont.

October 1 – Misogyny in Music Videos

Readings: Weitzer & Kubrin (2009)

October 3 – Challenging Gender Norms Through Music: Hip Hop Feminism

Readings: Perry (2003), Pough (2003)

Week 5 – The Film Industry

October 8 – Race, Gender, and Film

Readings: Smith (2001), bell hooks (1992)

October 10 – Gender Representations in Contemporary Hollywood Movies

Readings: Smith et al. (2010), Madison (1995)

Paper option1: Music Analysis, due at the beginning of class

Week 6 – The Film Industry, cont.

October 15 – Disney and Gender

Readings: Davis (2006), Stover (2013)

October 17 – Disney and Gender

Readings: Jeffords (1995), Gillam & Wooden (2008)

Week 7 – Television

October 22 – The Politics of Makeover TV

Readings: Cox (2011), Frith, Raisborough & Klein (2012)

October 24 – Femininities & Feminism

Readings: Owen, Stein & Vande Berg (2007), Goldberg (2001)

Paper option 2: Disney Analysis, due at the beginning of class

Week 8 – Television, cont.

October 29 – Masculinity and Social Class

Readings: MacKinnon (2003), Fleras (2011), Ch. 10

October 31 – Homosexuality on Television

Readings: Avila-Saavedra (2009), Hubert (2004)

Week 9 – Advertising

November 5 – Gendered Marketing

Readings: Jhally (1990), Auster & Mansbach (2012),

November 7 – Masculinities in Advertising

Readings: MacKinnon (2003), Ch. 6, Rohlinger (2002)

Paper option 3: TV Analysis, due at the beginning of class

Week 10 – Advertising

November 12 – Reading Break, No Class

November 14 – Advertising Women

Readings: Caputi (1999), Fleras (2011), Ch. 9

Week 11 – Magazines

November 19 – Advertisement in Magazines

Readings: Steinem (1994)

November 21 – Gendered Advertisements

Readings: McLaughlin & Goulet (1999)

Paper option 4: Advertising Analysis, due at the beginning of class

Week 12 – Magazines

November 26 – Teaching Femininity

Readings: Ouellette (1999)

November 28 – Teaching Masculinity

Readings: Stibbe (2004)

Week 13 – Conclusion

December 3 – Gender Representations in the Media

Readings: Fleras (2011), conclusion

December 5 – Final Class Discussion

Magazine Analysis due Tuesday, December 10, 11:00am, in SS950