

COURSE OUTLINE

Soci403.9-01: Gender and the Media

University of Calgary – Department of Sociology
Spring 2016

Lecture: MW 9:00 AM – 11:145 PM, in SB 148 (Science B)

Instructor: Dr. Annette Tézli

Office: SS950

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Office hours: TW 12:00-1:00 PM; and 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 Course Readings

A textbook or course pack is not required for this course. Required course readings are listed in the course schedule and links to assigned academic articles will be provided on D2L.

Recommended Readings:

Yellin, L.L. (2009). *A sociology writer's guide*. Boston: Pearson.

Methods of Evaluation

Assignment Schedule and Outline

Please note that all assignments have to be submitted at the beginning of class (9:00 AM sharp) on the day they are due. All papers submitted after 9:00 AM are subject to late penalties.

	Due date	% of final grade
Attendance & participation		10
6 Artifact analyses	weekly	25
Children's book analysis	June 6	30
Media analysis	June 29	35

Attendance and participation (10%)

Regular attendance and reading the assigned material, an open mind, as well as your active and meaningful participation is required for this class to reach its fullest potential and to make it a rewarding experience for you and me. I expect you to have critically read the assigned texts prior to the session in which they will be discussed, that you are an active participant in class discussions and group exercises, and that your contributions are generally informed by the assigned reading. Your grade will be based on the merit of your contributions to group and class discussions. If you cannot attend class, please email me prior to the class meeting for an excused absence as defined in the course policies.

6 Artifact analyses (25% total)

Each week we will cover a different media outlet. Each week, you will select a corresponding media artifact (music, virtual world, film, TV, advertising, magazine) and provide a description as well as an analysis of gender representations therein. Your discussion should make mention of intersections with other dimensions of inequality. In your analysis, you should make explicit reference to the readings assigned for the week as well as course discussions. You will be graded based on the suitability of your example and the thoroughness of your analysis. More details will be provided in class and on D2L.

Children's book analysis (30%)

This assignment gives you the opportunity to explore gender representations in children's books, which are an important socializing agent. First, you will use library resources (academic books, journal articles, subject librarians, etc.) to conduct independent research on trends academic research has identified pertaining to gender representations in children's books. Next, you will visit a bookstore or library, peruse its selection of children's books, take note of trends in gender representation you observe, and pick one book that you will analyze in-depth using the literature you identified during your library research. You will present your results in a 5-7 page paper. More details will be provided in class and on D2L.

Media analysis (35%)

A media saturated culture like Canada's is an important arena for sociological analysis, and a great avenue for you to conduct your own small-scale research. 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 focusing on a media outlet most relevant/interesting to you. You will develop your own research question, research methodology, and analysis. 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 D2L.

Grading Scale

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

Grade	Percent range	Grade Point Value	Description
A+	96 – 100%	4.0	Outstanding performance
A	90 – 95%	4.0	Excellent-superior performance
A-	85 – 89%	3.7	
B+	80 – 84%	3.3	
B	75 – 79%	3.0	Good – clearly above average performance
B-	70 – 74%	2.7	
C+	67 – 69%	2.3	
C	63 – 66%	2.0	Satisfactory - basic understanding
C-	59 – 62%	1.7	
D+	55 – 58%	1.3	
D	50 – 54%	1.0	Minimal pass - marginal performance
F	<50%	0	unsatisfactory performance

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.

Course Policies

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 mute your cell phone and refrain from using it during class.

Attendance

I expect you to be on time so that other students in the class are not interrupted by your late arrival. If you miss a class, you will miss material relevant to your success in this course. If you have to miss a class, it is your responsibility to obtain the covered material from one of your class mates.

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. I expect you to have done the assigned readings prior to the session in which they will be discussed and that your contributions to class discussions are informed by the required reading.

E-mail

Feel free to contact me over email at any time. Please put your course number and section in your email's subject line. Also, it is courteous to include a proper salutation, your full name, student ID, and a proper closing in the body of your email. All emails violating customary email conventions will be ignored. All other emails will be answered within one business day. I do not answer emails over the weekend. Please take that into account when emailing me questions pertaining assignments or exams. If you have a course-related question, please check the course outline first. Questions that can be answered by consulting the course outline will not be answered. Also, 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.

Assignments 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**.

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 Term Work Form:

Please note that requests to defer a final paper 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://wcm.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/deferred_termwork.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 D2L, papers placed under the instructor's 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 Faculty 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 Misconduct

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 2014-15 Students' Union VP Academic is Alicia Lunz; email: suwpaca@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 who require academic accommodation, must register with Student Accessibility Services (formerly the Disability Resource Centre) at MC 452 (or phone 403-220-8237). 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 Student Accessibility Services 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:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-2.html>.

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?

May 9 - Introduction & Theoretical Foundations

Capitalism, Consumer Culture, and Mediated Lives

Readings: Fleras (2011) - Ch. 1/2

May 11 - The Music Industry

Gender Display in Music Videos

Readings: Bretthauer, Zimmerman & Banning (2007), Wallis (2011)

Sexuality in Music Videos

Readings: Aubrey and Frisby (2011), Hall, West & Hill (2012)

May 16 – The Music Industry, cont.

Misogyny in Music Videos

Readings: Enck & McDaniel (2012), Weitzer & Kubrin (2009)

Challenging Gender Norms Through Music: Hip Hop Feminism

Readings: Pough (2003), Durham (2012)

May 18 – Virtual Worlds

Gender and Gender Relations in Online Gaming

Readings: Waddell et al. (2014), Sanford & Madill (2006)

Gender, Race and Violence in Video and Online Games

Readings: Cote (2015), Tomkinson & Harper (2015)

May 23 – Victoria Day, NO CLASS

May 25 – Virtual Worlds, cont.

Keyboard Warriors

Readings: Coston & Kimmel (2013), DeKesedery, Fabricius & Hall-Sanchez (2015)

Symbolic Violence in the Virtual World

Readings: Jane (2014), Mannivannan (2013)

May 30 & June 1 – Congress, NO CLASS

June 6 – The Film Industry

Gazes and Spectators

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

Gender and Race Representations in Contemporary Film

Readings: Bailey (2009), Brook (2015)

June 8 – The Film Industry, cont.

Disney: Good Girls and Wicked Witches

Readings: Davis (2006), Stover (2013)

Disney/Pixar and the Alpha Male

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

June 13 – Television

Is Feminist TV The New Normal?

Readings: Owen, Stein & Van de Berg (2007), Cuklanz & Moorti (2006)

The Politics of Makeover TV

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

June 15 – Television, cont.

Masculinity and Social Class

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

The Increasing Visibility of Non-Hetero Relationships and Gender Non-Conformity

Readings: Avila-Saavedra (2009), Lee & Meyer (2010)

June 20 – Advertising

Marketing Consumer Culture

Readings: Jhally (1990), Steinem (1994)

Codes of Gender

Readings: MacKinnon (2003), Fleras (2011) - Ch.9

June 22 – Advertising

Women in Advertising

Readings: Stern & Mastro (2004), Baker (2005)

Advertising Masculinities

Readings: Rohlinger (2002), Messner & Montez de Oca (2005)

June 27 – Magazines

Gender, Race and Sexual Orientation in Magazines

Readings: Pompper, Lee & Lerner (2009), Draper (2010)

Inventing the Cosmo Girl

Readings: Ouellette (1999), Gill (2009)

June 29 – Magazines

Representations of Modern Masculinity

Readings: Dines (1998), Stibbe (2004)

What's the Big Deal? It's Just Entertainment?

Readings: Fleras (2011) - conclusion