

# **Sociology of Women, Soc 216**

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Mon/Thur 9:50 AM - 11:10 AM  
Murray Hall 210 (College Ave Campus)

## **Professor Norah MacKendrick**

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**Office Hours:** Mondays, 2:30-3:30

## **Summary of the course**

Gender profoundly shapes our personal and social experiences. Women in the U.S. have made significant advances in education, the family and the workforce, but gender inequality still exists. Depending on one's race, ethnicity, sexuality and social class, the nature of this inequality can take on many different and sometimes subtle forms. This course is an introduction to the study of gender, with a focus on femininity and issues that affect women. It will introduce you to the sociological conceptualization of gender and examine various social problems and issues that affect women.

## **Course objectives**

In this course we will:

- (1) Explore what gender means and how it is studied sociologically, with a focus on women, women's issues, and intersectionality
- (2) Examine the social processes through which gender is constructed
- (3) Explore how social structure and individual agency shape women's opportunities and choices
- (4) Take a critical look at how women are represented in popular culture
- (5) Examine the relationship between gender and power

## **Readings:**

There is a substantial amount of reading to do in this course. Required readings are in the **textbook** as well as on the course **Sakai site**. The Sakai readings include academic journal articles, chapters from popular books, and news articles.

### **(1) Required Text (T):**

There is one required textbook for this course:

Ryle, Robyn. 2012. *Questioning Gender: A Sociological Exploration*. *SAGE Publications, Inc*  
(N.B. This book is sometimes listed as a 2011 edition. The 2011 and 2012 are the same edition. Do *not* buy the new 2014 edition!)

You can buy a new or used copy at the Rutgers University Bookstore or **NJ Books** on Easton Avenue. There is also a copy on reserve at **Alexander Library**. Assigned chapters are noted with a (T) in the lecture schedule.

## **(2) Other required readings (\*):**

There are other required readings that are posted on Sakai in the Resources folder. These are noted with a (\*) in the lecture schedule.

## **Contacting me**

My office hours are listed above. If you are not able to make these hours, please contact me and we can arrange to meet at another time. The best way to reach me is by email. I check email throughout the week (not on weekends), and I will do my best to respond within 24 hours.

**\*\*For all email messages, you must have “soc of women” at the start of your subject heading or I may not open your message. This is very important. If you emailed me and did not receive a response, double-check that your message contained the right subject heading.\*\***

## **Keeping up with course material**

At a basic minimum, to pass this course you must do all of the assigned readings and come to class having read the material. If your work or study schedule makes it difficult to keep up with these readings and attend lectures, you should reconsider taking this course. Active participation and attendance are vital to learning the course material. I post lecture slides on Sakai, but your own notes from the lectures, documentaries and assigned readings are most important to learning the material. **AUDIO, PHOTO OR VIDEO RECORDING OF THE LECTURES IS NOT PERMITTED.** Students with a documented disability must seek special permission from me to record lectures.

If you would like to improve your skills at writing multiple-choice exams, I highly recommend arranging for a tutorial from the Learning Centers at Rutgers (see below).

If you miss multiple classes because of medical issues or personal problems, contact your **Dean of Students**. <http://deanofstudents.rutgers.edu/>. This office can help you manage these issues and stay on top of your schoolwork. If you are struggling to keep up with material in this course because of factors outside of your control (e.g. illness, financial aid problems), I can direct you to services at the University that can assist you.

## **Student conduct**

I expect students to be on time for class and to stay for the duration of the lecture. The classroom should be a place for the free exchange of ideas, and students should act with mutual respect and use common courtesy. I hope for, and indeed encourage, debate among students. I welcome thoughtful discussion and critical thinking; but discourteous remarks will not be tolerated, and disruptive students will be asked to leave. Students are expected to follow the Code of Student Conduct, which can be found here:

<http://policies.rutgers.edu/PDF/Section10/10.2.11-current.pdf>.

## Academic integrity and Plagiarism

All students must review Rutgers' policy on plagiarism. I take plagiarism very seriously and will follow University policy if I suspect plagiarism. Please refer to:

[http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI\\_Policy\\_9\\_01\\_2011.pdf](http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI_Policy_9_01_2011.pdf)

According to this policy, "Plagiarism is the use of another person's words, ideas, or results without giving that person appropriate credit. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or appropriate indentation and both direct quotation and paraphrasing must be cited properly according to the accepted format for the particular discipline or as required by the instructor in a course.

Some common examples of plagiarism are:

- Copying word for word (i.e. quoting directly) from an oral, printed, or electronic source without proper attribution.
- Paraphrasing without proper attribution, i.e., presenting in one's own words another person's written words or ideas as if they were one's own.
- Submitting a purchased or downloaded term paper or other materials to satisfy a course requirement.
- Incorporating into one's work graphs, drawings, photographs, diagrams, tables, spreadsheets, computer programs, or other nontextual material from other sources without proper attribution."

From: Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy, Effective September 1, 2011. Page 2.

## Laptops, tablets and phones:

I respect that students use electronic devices to read material and take notes. These devices are permitted in the classroom as long as they are not disruptive. Using laptops and phones for other purposes (e.g. watching videos, looking at photos, online shopping, checking Facebook, texting etc.) constitutes a distraction. **If I believe your conduct to be disruptive or distracting, I will ask you to turn off your device and may ask you to leave the class.**

## Disabilities

To discuss academic accommodations for a documented disability, please contact me during the first week of class. Note that you must also contact the Office of Disability Services:

Kreeger Learning Center

151 College Avenue, Suite 123

**E-mail Address:** [dsoffice@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:dsoffice@rci.rutgers.edu)

**Phone:** (732) 932-2848

## Academic Support

Learning center programs are highly recommended for any student who is looking to improve their grades and enhance their learning. The Learning Centers at Rutgers can provide support, guidance and assistance for all aspects of your coursework, including writing multiple choice exams. It is important that you make arrangements with the Learning Centers well before our test dates. See: <http://rlc.rutgers.edu/index.shtml>

## Grades

The final grade is based on your total score (out of 100). A final letter grade will be allocated as follows:

A	90-100
B+	85-89
B	80-84
C+	75-79
C	70-74
D	60-69
F	59 or less

## Tests & Assignments

There is one written assignment, two tests and one final exam in this course. All tests are multiple-choice and non-cumulative. Tests cover material on slides, in readings and in documentary films shown in class.

- Test 1 (30%): Feb 18<sup>th</sup>
- Test 2 (30%): Mar 28<sup>th</sup>
- Test 3 (30%) April 21<sup>st</sup>
- Reaction Paper (10%): A 500-800 word response to readings assigned during the last week of class. More information to be provided in class.

## Missed Tests & Assignments

Traffic, car problems, missed transit connections, sleeping-in, making a mistake about the day, time or location of the exam, workload from other courses, internet or computer problems are **not** acceptable reasons for a missed test or late assignment. Problems with Sakai (e.g. a document did not upload properly, was not in the proper format, a turnitin.com score was not produced) is not an acceptable excuse for a late assignment. Contact the Sakai help desk if you encounter any technical problems uploading a document or need help learning how to use Sakai. Contact me if you see errors or missing items on the Sakai site.

In the case of severe weather, where the University is closed or major roadways and transit networks are closed, class will be cancelled and, if possible, tests will be rescheduled.

Make-up tests will be arranged only for students facing extenuating circumstances (valid supporting documentation is always required). If you know in advance that you will not be able to write a test, you must notify me well in advance and provide supporting documentation. If you miss a test, you must notify me immediately. Students who fail to notify me within 24 hours will not be permitted write a make-up test.

# LECTURE SCHEDULE

**\*\*Subject to change\*\* Check Sakai for most updated version**

(T) Textbook (*) Sakai		
Thu	21-Jan	<b>Introductions</b> Required reading: (*) This syllabus (*) The Case Against Laptops in the Classroom (From <i>Science of Us</i> )  <u>Optional:</u> Sana, Faria et al. 2013. "Laptop multitasking hinders classroom learning for both users and nearby peers." <i>Computers &amp; Education</i> 62:24-31.  Mueller, Pam A. and Daniel M. Oppenheimer. 2014. "The Pen Is Mightier Than the Keyboard: Advantages of Longhand Over Laptop Note Taking." <i>Psychological Science</i> 25:1159-1168.
Mon	25-Jan	<b>Gender: Approaches from outside sociology</b> (T) Chpt 3: How do disciplines outside of sociology study gender? (Pages 67-99)
Thu	28-Jan	<b>Gender: A sociological approach</b> (T): Chpt 1: What is Gender? (*) Kolata. "Middle aged men can blame estrogen for that waistline too..." New York Times.
Mon	1-Feb	<b>Doing Gender</b> (T) Chpt 2: What's the "sociology" in the sociology of gender? Pp. 15-20; 28-48
Thu	4-Feb	<b>Difference and Intersectional Feminist Theory</b> Film: <i>The Women's Film</i>
Mon	8-Feb	(*) Wilkins, A.C. (2012) Becoming Black Women: Intimate Stories and Intersectional Identities. <i>Social Psychology Quarterly</i> 75: 173-196. (Focus on pages 173-183)

Thu	11-Feb	<b>Learning Gender</b> (*) Hooks, B., & Mesa-Bains, A. (2006). "Family" in, <i>Homegrown: Engaged cultural criticism</i> . South End Press. (Pp. 5-26) (T) Chpt 4: How do we learn gender? Pp. 119-120; 128-143; 153-155.
Mon	15-Feb	Lecture and Review
Thu	18-Feb	<b>Test 1: Bring a pencil and eraser</b>
Mon	22-Feb	<b>Women in media content</b> (T) Chpt 10: How does gender affect what we watch, read...Pp. 419-430
Thu	25-Feb	Film: Misrepresentation
Mon	29-Feb	(*) Gengler, A.M. (2011). "Selling Feminism, Consuming Femininity." <i>Contexts</i> 10: 68
Thu	3-Mar	<b>Thinness and "Perfection"</b> (*) Lovejoy, M. (2001). Disturbances In The Social Body. Differences in Body Image and Eating Problems among African American and White Women <i>Gender &amp; Society</i> , 15(2), 239-261.
Mon	7-Mar	(*) Martin, C. Perfect girls, starving daughters (Pp. 1-36) (T) Chpt 7: p.266-272; 278-283 (Start at "Eyelids and Empowerment")
Thu	10-Mar	<b>Beauty and Bodies</b> (*) Kwan, S., & Trautner, M. N. (2009). Beauty work: Individual and institutional rewards, the reproduction of gender, and questions of agency. <i>Sociology Compass</i> , 3(1), 49-71.
Mon/Thu	14/17	<b>Spring Recess</b>
Mon	21-Mar	<b>Sexuality and Relationships</b> (T) Chpt 5: How does gender matter for who we want and desire? Pp. 169-180 (*)Armstrong, E.A., Hamilton, L. and Paula England. 2010. "Is hooking up bad for young women?" <i>Contexts</i> 9(3):22-27
Thu	24-Mar	<b>Review</b>
Mon	28-Mar	<b>Test 2: Bring a pencil and eraser</b>

Thu	31-Mar	<b>The Family &amp; Paid and unpaid labor</b> (T): Chpt 8: How does gender impact the people we live our lives with? Pp. 335-359 (*) Pew Research Center. Raising kids and running a household (pp. 1-14) (*) Pew Research Center. Breadwinner Moms, Chpt 1.
Mon	4-Apr	(T): Chpt 9: How does gender affect the type of work we do...? Pp.379-411 (*) Miller, The Upshot: A child helps your career if you're a man. (*) NYT Editorial, Women still earn a lot less than men.
Thu	7-Apr	(*) Reeves, Men's Lib! NYT (*) Slaughter. Why women can't have it all. Atlantic Magazine.
Mon	11-Apr	<b>Poverty</b> (*) Dodson, L. and Luttrell, W. "Untenable choices." <i>Contexts</i> 10:38-42. (*) Ehrenreich. It is Expensive to be Poor. Atlantic Magazine.
Thu	14-Apr	<b>Power</b> (T) Chpt 7: "Pills and Power Tools" section: Pp. 283-291 (T) Chpt 11: How does gender help determine who has power...? (pp. 469-488)
Mon	18-Apr	<b>Sexual Harassment</b> (*) Quinn, B. 2011. "The power and meaning of girl watching." (*) Reading TBA
Thu	21-Apr	<b>Test 3</b>
Mon	25-Apr	<b>Feminism: Contemporary Writings</b> (*) Readings TBA
Thu	28-Apr	<b>Film &amp; Discussion</b>
Mon	2-May	<b>Reading Response Due by 11pm (No class)</b>