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STS 342-101: Women and Technology

Nancy Steffen-Fluhr

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STS 342-101: WOMEN AND TECHNOLOGY

Capsule Course Description:

This course analyzes gender, race, and technology as interdependent social constructs—and explores the implications of these constructs for individual lives and professional careers.

INSTRUCTOR:

Dr. Nancy Steffen-Fluhr, Associate Professor, Humanities (Science, Technology & Society Division)

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EMAIL: steffen@njit.edu
MOODLE: <http://njit2.mrooms.net/>

CLASS MEETINGS: Thursdays, 6:00 pm--9:00 pm Kupfrian 203

REQUIRED TEXTS: **STS 342 COURSEPAK--on our MOODLE and via hardcopy handouts.**

*OPTIONAL TEXTS: Kimmel, Michael. *The Gendered Society* (6th ed. 2017). New York: Oxford UP, 2000.
Kimmel, Michael and Amy Aronson. *The Gendered Society* (6th ed. 2017). New York: Oxford UP, 2000.
Brenda Maddox. *Rosalind Franklin. The Dark Lady of DNA*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2003.
James Watson. *The Double Helix*. New York: Mentor NAL, 1968.
Shetterly, Margot Lee. *Hidden Figures: The American Dream and the Untold Story of the Black Women Mathematicians Who Helped Win the Space Race*. New York: Morrow, 2016.
Holt, Nathalia. *Rise of the Rocket Girls: The Women Who Propelled Us, from Missiles to the Moon to Mars*. New York: Little, Brown, 2016.
Ullman, Ellen. *Life in Code: A Personal History of Technology*. NYC: Mcmillan, 2017.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Please familiarize yourself with the University Code on Academic Integrity, the provisions of which will be strictly enforced in this course. <http://www5.njit.edu/policies/sites/policies/files/academic-integrity-code.pdf>

COURSE REQUIREMENTS/ GRADING:

Two analytical essays on assigned topics.

Essay #1: due November 8	20 points	
Essay #2: due December 13	20	
Midterm exam: October 18	20	
Final exam: December 20	30	
Weekly Quizzes	5	[10 quizzes @ 0.5 point each]
Class participation	5	
 TOTAL	 100 points	

READING/ DISCUSSION SCHEDULE

NOTE ON FILMS: I will show one complete feature film in class (*Zootopia* on Day 1) and a number of film/video clips. You will also be asked to see several additional films on your own. They are all widely available online and via Netflix and Amazon. If you have trouble finding a given film, please see me.

You should have completed the assigned reading and/or seen the assigned film by the date on which it is scheduled for discussion.

#1	September 6	FIRST CLASS MEETING: Course Overview
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Discussion Topics: Course objectives; course structure; grading process; the meaning of *gender*; the social construction of norms; changing images of the 'womanly body'.

PowerPoint Lecture: Women and Technology: Images & Realities

In-class exercise: The Bem Gender-Role Inventory

In-class feature film: *Zootopia* (2016)



Homework--to be completed by Sept. 13:

- Become a member of our course Moodle: Respond to *Zootopia* Forum Assignment Complete Core Readings 1a-1d and take Implicit Bias Tests [See below]

#2	September 13	THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER--part 1
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READINGS:

- 1a. Worley, Barbara A. "Where All the Women Are Strong." *Natural History* (November, 1992): 55-63. **MOODLE**
1b. Messner, Mike. "Ah, Ya Throw Like A Girl!" In *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States: An Integrated Study*, (4th ed.) ed. Paula Rothenberg, 46-48. New York: St. Martins, 199. **MOODLE**
1c. Kimmel, Michael. *The Gendered Society* (6th ed. 2017). New York: Oxford UP, 2000. [Hereafter "Kimmel!"] "KIMMEL EXCERPT #1" **MOODLE**
1d. Fausto-Sterling Anne. "Where Does Gender Come From?" in Kimmel, Michael and Amy Aronson. **MOODLE**

ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENT: Take the GENDER-SCIENCE and RACE IAT demo tests on the implicit Bias site:

<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/demo/>

Discussion Topics: Follow up discussion of *Zootopia*. The social construction of norms: changing images of the 'womanly body'; the social construction of norms: gender and work.

In-class film excerpts and discussion:

Dare to Compete: the Struggle of Women in Sports (HBO, 1999)
"60 Minutes: Women in Construction"
Implicit Bias (Dr. Anthony Greenwald)

#3	September 20	THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER--part 2
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READINGS AND VIDEO:

- 2a. Bem, Sandra L. "In a Male-Centered World, Female Differences Are Transformed into Female Disadvantages," **MOODLE**
2b. Hyde, Janet. The Gender Similarities Hypothesis" *American Psychologist* (September 2005): 581-592. **MOODLE**
2c. Kimmel. "KIMMEL EXCERPT 2" **MOODLE**
2d. Eliot Lise. "The Truth about Boys and Girls." Kimmel and Aronson. **MOODLE**
Online Video: Virginia Valian on Gender Equity (2012): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zx11jUej-o8>

Homework Assignment (due September 28):

See film *North Country* (2005) directed by Niki Caro

#4	September 27	THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER & WORK
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READINGS AND FILM SCREENING:

- 3a. KIMMEL EXCERPT #3 **MOODLE**
3b. Pascoe C.J. "Dude, You're a Fag: Adolescent Masculinity and Fag Discourse." In Kimmel & Aronson. **MOODLE**
3c. Willer, Robb. "Overdoing Gender: A Test of the Masculine Overcompensation Thesis." In Kimmel & Aronson. **MOODLE**
3d. Ely Robin and Debra Meyerson. "Unmasking Manly Men." In Kimmel & Aronson. **MOODLE**

FILM: *North Country* (2005) [See complete film prior to class]

Discussion Topic: The social construction of norms: gender and work.

In-class film excerpts and discussion: *North Country* (2005)

In-class short film and discussion: "Who Are You?" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iUj2OHLAG3w>

Homework Assignment (due October 5): See film *Hidden Figures* (2016) directed by Theodore Melfi

#5	October 4	THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF RACE
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CORE READINGS:

- 4a. Omi, Michael and Howard Winant. "Racial Formations" in Rothenberg: 13-22. (excerpt) **MOODLE**
4b. Smedley, Audrey and Brian Smedley. "Race as Biology Is Fiction, Racism as a Social Problem Is Real: Anthropological and Historical Perspectives on the Social Construction of Race." *American Psychologist* (January 2005): 16-26. **MOODLE**
4c. Jen, Gish. "An Ethnic Trump." In Rothenberg, 284-86. **MOODLE**

- 4d. Subramaniam, Banu. "Snow Brown and the Seven Detergents: A Meta-Narrative on Science and the Scientific Method." In *Women, Science, and Technology*, ed. May Wyer, Mary Barbercheck, Donna Giesman, Hatice Orun Ozturk, Marta Wayne, 36-41. New York: Routledge, 2001. **MOODLE**
- 4e. Buckley, Carla. "On Being a Black Female Math Whiz During the Space Race." *The New York Times*. 5 September 2016.

In-class short films and discussion: *Lunch Date* (1990)

In-class film excerpts and discussion: *Hidden Figures* (2016): **See complete film prior to class.**

OPTIONAL READING: Shetterly, Margot Lee. *Hidden Figures: The American Dream and the Untold Story of the Black Women Mathematicians Who Helped Win the Space Race*. New York: William Morrow, 2016.

#6	October 11	TECHNOLOGY, GIRL GEEKS, AND BRO CULTURE
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CORE READINGS AND FILM SCREENINGS:

FILM 1: *Ghostbusters* (2016) **See complete film prior to class.**

FILM 2: *Ghostbusters* (2006) **See complete film prior to class.**

5a. "Gamergate Controversy." Wikipedia overview. **MOODLE**

5b. Ullman, Ellen. *Life in Code: A Personal History of Technology* (2017). [Excerpts] **MOODLE**

5c. KIMMEL EXCERPT #4. **MOODLE**

5d. Summers Alicia and Monika K. Miller. "From Damsels in Distress to Sexy Superheroes..." In Kimmel & Aronson. **MOODLE.**

In-class film excerpts and discussion: *GTFO* (2015)

"Women & Core Gaming" (YouTube)

#7	October 18	GENDER AND HOLLYWOOD: Wonder Woman
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MIDTERM EXAM

1 hour

IN-CLASS FILM EXCERPTS AND DISCUSSION: *Wonder Woman* (2017) directed by Patti Jenkins

#8	October 25	SCIENCE AND GENDER (Then and Now)
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CORE READINGS:

6a. Barrett, Andrea. "Rare Bird." In *Ship Fever*. 59-79. New York: Norton, 1996. **MOODLE**

6b. Le Guin, Ursula. "Sur." In *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women*, ed. Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, 2008-2022. New York: W.W. Norton, 1985. **MOODLE**

#9	November 1	APPLYING GENDER SCHEMA THEORY TO THE FRANKLIN CASE
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READING:

7a. Asimov, Isaac. "Introduction" and "Liar," *I, Robot*. New York: Bantam Books, 1991 [1950]: vii-xi and 111-135. **MOODLE**

IN-CLASS FILM AND DISCUSSION:

The Race for the Double Helix (1987) [97 minutes]

OPTIONAL READING FOR THIS CASE STUDY:

Brenda Maddox. *Rosalind Franklin. The Dark Lady of DNA* (Paperback). Harper Perennial (October 1, 2003).

James Watson. *The Double Helix*. New York: Mentor NAL, 1968.

#10	November 8	FRANKLIN CASE CONTINUED + More on Women in STEM Today
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ESSAY #1 DUE!

MORE DISCUSSION OF FRANKLIN CASE.

IN-CLASS FILM EXCERPTS AND DISCUSSION: *NOVA: The Secret of Photo 51*

READINGS AND FILM DISCUSSION:

Contact (1997) [See the film *Contact* prior to class]

8a. "Women in STEM Fields." *Wikipedia*. MOODLE

8b. "17 Rare Images Tell the Real Story of Women in Tech."

<http://mic.com/articles/98382/17-rare-images-tell-the-real-story-of-women-in-tech>

8c. Quinn, Beth. "Sexual Harassment and Masculinity: The Power and Meaning of 'Girl Watching'" In Kimmel & Aronson.

#11 November 15 GENDER AND LEADERSHIP...in OUTER SPACE

READING AND FILM SCREENING:

9a. Shavin, Naomi. "NASA's 'Rocket Girls' Are No Longer Forgotten History." smithsonian.com. 15 April 2016.

FILM: *Gravity* (2013) [See the film *Gravity* prior to class.]

ADDITIONAL CORE ASSIGNMENT: Take the AAUW Gender and Leadership test: <http://www.aauw.org/article/implicit-association-test/>

IN-CLASS FILM EXCERPTS AND DISCUSSION:

Star Trek OS: "Turnabout Intruder" (1969)

Red Planet (2000)

Gravity (2013)

OPTIONAL READING: Holt, Nathalia. *Rise of the Rocket Girls: The Women Who Propelled Us, from Missiles to the Moon to Mars*. New York: Little, Brown. 2016

#12 November 20—TUESDAY IS THURSDAY AT NJIT! CAREER SUCCESS STRATEGIES: Communication & Negotiation

READINGS:

10a. Aries Elizabeth. "Women and Men Talking: Are They Worlds Apart?" In Walsh: 91-100. MOODLE

10b. Gender and Collective Intelligence: a Recent NSF-Funded Study. MOODLE

10c. Rosalind Barrett and Caryl Rivers. "Men and Women are from Earth." In Kimmel & Aronson. MOODLE

IN-CLASS FILMS AND DISCUSSION:

Deborah Tannen's corporate training film *Talking 9 to 5* (1997)

Presentation by Sara Laschever, co-author of *Women Don't Ask: Negotiation and the Gender Divide* (2003).



November 22 NO CLASS (Happy Turkey Day!)

#13 November 29 CAREER SUCCESS STRATEGIES: (Part 2: Work/ Life Balance)
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READINGS:

11a. Williams, Joan. "Hitting the Maternal Wall." *Academe*. Washington: Nov/Dec 2004. 90(6): 16-31. MOODLE

11b. KIMMEL EXCERPT #5. MOODLE

11c. England, Paula. "The Gender Revolution: Uneven and Stalled." In Kimmel & Aronson. MOODLE

IN-CLASS VIDEO AND DISCUSSION:

Joan Williams. "What Works for Women at Work?" <https://womensleadership.stanford.edu/whatworks>

Homework for next week: See the Amy Adams film *Arrival* (2016) prior to class

#14 December 6 LAST CLASS!

FEATURE FILM DISCUSSION: "Arrival" (2016)

REVIEW FOR FINAL EXAM!



DECEMBER 13: Essay # 2 due

December 20 FINAL EXAM!
