

## **STS 342-101: GENDER, TECHNOLOGY & SOCIETY**

### ***How We Think About Identity—Now***

**INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Nancy Steffen-Fluhr**

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**CLASS MEETINGS:** Tuesdays, 6:00-8:50 pm **Cullimore Lecture Hall #2**

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**BRIEF COURSE DESCRIPTION:** STS 342 focuses on the intersection of gender, sexual identity, race, and ethnicity in the world today. Using a variety of print and digital materials—including SF films, video games, and web content in all its forms—we'll explore the ways in which gender and ethnic/racial identity are being contested...in politics, mass media, and high-tech workplaces.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:** There are no textbooks to buy for this course. All of the required readings are available in our course Canvas either as downloadable files or URLs.

**REQUIRED FILM VIEWING:** I will show several films and film clips in class. You will also be asked to see additional films on your own. Some of the films/videos are available for free at the URLs indicated in the syllabus. The others are widely available for a small rental fee on YouTube, Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, iTunes, and/or Vudu, among other sources. If you have trouble finding a given film, please contact me.

**COURSE GRADING SCALE:**

GRADE	POINTS
A	90-100
B+	88-90
B	80-87
C+	78-80
C	70-77
D	65-70
F	Below 65

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS/ GRADING (Here's How You Earn those 100 Points!)**

**Two analytical essays on assigned topics--**

Essay #1: due November 14 20 points

Essay #2: due December 12 20

Midterm exam: October 15 20

Cumulative Final Exam: December 19 30

Weekly In-Class Quizzes 5 [10 quizzes @ 0.5 points each]

Weekly Class Participation Grade 5

## WEEKLY READING/ DISCUSSION SCHEDULE

The schedule below provides a basic outline of each week's readings/films and discussion topics. You should have completed the assigned reading and/or seen the assigned film by the date on which it is scheduled for discussion. There will be a short quiz at the beginning of each class.

<b>September 5</b>	<b>FIRST CLASS MEETING: Course Overview</b>
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**Discussion Topics:** Course objectives; course structure; grading process; the meaning of *gender*; the social construction of norms; changing views of gender identity

**PowerPoint Lecture:** Women and Technology: Images & Realities  
**In-class exercises:** "Who Are You?" and the Bem Gender-Role Inventory  
**In-class feature film:** *Zootopia* (2016)



**Homework--to be completed by Sept. 12:**

- Become a member of our course Canvas. Respond to the *Zootopia* Forum Assignment. Complete Core Readings 1a-1c and take Implicit Bias Tests [See below]

**Homework—to be completed by Sept. 26:** See in in-theater film "Barbie" (2023)

<b>MODULE 1</b>	<b>September 12</b>	<b>THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER--part 1</b>
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**READINGS:**

- 1a.** Messner, Mike. "Ah, Ya Throw Like A Girl!" In *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States: An Integrated Study*, (4<sup>th</sup> ed.) ed. Paula Rothenberg, 46-48. New York: St. Martins, 1998.
- 1b.** Kimmel, Michael. *The Gendered Society* (6th ed. 2017). New York: Oxford UP, 2000. [Hereafter "Kimmel"] "KIMMEL EXCERPT #1"
- 1c.** Fausto-Sterling Anne. "Where Does Gender Come From?" in Kimmel, Michael and Amy Aronson. **CANVAS**

**HOMEWORK EXERCISE:** Take the GENDER-SCIENCE IAT test at: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html>

**DISCUSSION TOPICS:** Decoding *Zootopia*; the social construction of gender; implicit bias.

**In-class Film Clips:** Dare to Compete: *The Struggle of Women in Sports* (HBO, 1999)  
Kay Switzer Clip  
"Playing with Gender"  
"Implicit Bias/ Concepts Unwrapped"  
"Barbie" (2023) Trailer

<b>MODULE 2</b>	<b>September 19</b>	<b>THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER--part 2</b>
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**READINGS:**

- 2a.** Bem, Sandra L. "In a Male-Centered World, Female Differences Are Transformed into Female Disadvantages," **CANVAS**
- 2b.** Hyde, Janet. The Gender Similarities Hypothesis" *American Psychologist* (September 2005): 581-592. **CANVAS**
- 2c.** Kimmel. "KIMMEL EXCERPT 2" **CANVAS**
- 2d.** Rippon. Gender and Our Brains **CANVAS**
- 2e.** Fuentes, Augustin. "Biological Science Rejects the Sex Binary, and That's Good for Humanity." *The Scientist*. 12 May 2022. **CANVAS**
- 2f.** "Busting Myths About Sex and Gender." Excerpted from the second edition of *Race, Monogamy, and Other Lies They Told You*. © 2022 by Agustín Fuentes. Published by the University of California Press. **CANVAS**



**Homework Film Assignment (due September 26):** See the film *North Country* (2005) directed by Niki Caro

<b>MODULE 3</b>	<b>September 26</b>	<b>THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER &amp; WORK</b>
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**READINGS:**

3a. KIMMEL EXCERPT #3 CANVAS

3b. Willer, Robb et. al. "Overdoing Gender: A Test of the Masculine Overcompensation Thesis." In Kimmel & Aronson. CANVAS

3c. Kimmel, Michael. "Masculinity as Homophobia: Fear, Shame, and Silence in the Construction of Gender Identity." In *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States: An Integrated Study*, (11th ed.) ed. Paula Rothenberg with Christina Hsu Accomando, I:7. New York: Worth Publisher/Macmillan Learning. New York 2020. CANVAS

3d. Ely Robin and Debra Meyerson. "Unmasking Manly Men." In Kimmel & Aronson. CANVAS

**FILM TO SEE BEFORE CLASS:** *North Country* (2005) [Amazon, Vudu, iTunes, 2 hours, 6 minutes]

**In-class short film and discussion:** "Who Are You?"

**Feature Film Discussion:** "Barbie" (2023)

**DISCUSSION TOPICS:** The social construction of gender and work in *North Country* and in our country;



**Homework Film Assignment (due October 3):** *Hidden Figures* (2016) [Amazon, iTunes, Vudu, 2 hours, 7 minutes]

<b>MODULE 4</b>	<b>October 3</b>	<b>THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF RACE</b>
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**READINGS:**

4a. Omi, Michael and Howard Winant. "Racial Formations" in Rothenberg: 13-22. (excerpt) CANVAS

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. CANVAS

4c. Jen, Gish. "An Ethnic Trump." In Rothenberg, 284-86. CANVAS

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. CANVAS

4e. Rutherford. *How to Argue with a Racist: What Our Genes Do (and Don't) Say About Human Difference*. Amazon/ The Experiment, 2020. (excerpt) CANVAS

4d. Elizabeth Aries on the impact of college diversity:

<https://theconversation.com/at-a-small-liberal-arts-college-black-students-learned-to-become-bicultural-to-succeed-and-get-jobs-but-stress-followed-193429>

**FILM TO SEE BEFORE CLASS:** *Hidden Figures* (2016) [Amazon, iTunes, Vudu, 2 hours, 7 minutes]

**In-Class Short Film & Discussion:** *Lunch Date* (1990)

**In-Class Video:** [Can Artificial Intelligence Have a Bias?](#)

**DISCUSSION TOPICS:** The social construction of race; racism in *Hidden Figures* and *Lunch Date*—and in our world today; the "Alt-Right"; microaggressions



**Homework Film Assignment (due October 10):** *No Ordinary Man* (2020) [Amazon, Vudu, YouTube, 1 hour, 23 minutes]

<b>MODULE 5</b>	<b>October 10</b>	<b>TRANSGENDER IDENTITY</b>
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**READINGS:**

5a. Strangio, Chase. "The Unbearable (In)visibility of Being Trans." In *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States: An Integrated Study*, (11th ed.) ed. Paula Rothenberg with Christina Hsu Accomando, VI:12. New York: Worth Publisher/Macmillan Learning. New York 2020. CANVAS

5b. P. Carl. "Becoming a Man." *New York Times Magazine*. 22 January 2020. CANVAS

**FILM TO SEE BEFORE CLASS:** *No Ordinary Man* (2020) [Amazon, Vudu, YouTube, 1 hour, 23 minutes]

In-Class Video: [Dr. Sasha Costanza-Chock on Design Justice](#)

**DISCUSSION TOPICS:** gender identity

<b>MODULE 6</b>	<b>October 17</b>	<b>MIDTERM EXAM + film excerpts</b>
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**In-Class Film & Discussion (after the midterm Exam):** *Picture a Scientist* (2020) [1 hour 43 minutes]

<b>MODULE 7</b>	<b>October 24</b>	<b>SCIENCE AND GENDER (Then and Now)</b>
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**READINGS:**

7a. Barrett, Andrea. "Rare Bird." In *Ship Fever*. 59-79. New York: Norton, 1996. **CANVAS**

7b. 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. **CANVAS**

7c. Moss-Racusin, Corinne A., John F. Dovidio, Victoria L. Brescoll, Mark J. Grahama, and Jo Handelsman. "Science faculty's subtle gender biases favor male students." *PNAS* October 9, 2012 vol. 109 no. 41 16474-16479

**In-Class Film Clips:** *Picture a Scientist* (2020)

**DISCUSSION TOPICS:** *Picture a Scientist*—then and now; Explicit and implicit bias in science; the Old Maid stereotype; the Imposter/Perfect Girl Syndromes; the 80%-20% rule



**Homework Film Assignment (due October 31):** See *The Race for the Double Helix* (1987) [97 minutes]

**PART I:** <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/xitlyu>

**PART II:** <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/xitmu3>

<b>MODULE 8</b>	<b>October 31</b>	<b>APPLYING GENDER SCHEMA THEORY TO THE FRANKLIN CASE</b>
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**FILM TO SEE BEFORE CLASS:** *The Race for the Double Helix* [aka *Life Story*] (1987) [97 minutes]

**PART I:** <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/xitlyu>

**PART II:** <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/xitmu3>

**In-Class Film Excerpts:**

*NOVA* "The Secret of Photo 51" [56 minutes]

Virginia Valian. "Remedying the (Still) Too Slow Advancement of Women" (2016):

**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.

**VISUAL HISTORY:** ["17 Rare Images Tell the Real Story of Women in Tech."](#)

**DISCUSSION TOPICS:** The Franklin Case; Women in STEM—Then and Now



**Homework Film Assignment (due November 7):** *Arrival* (2016) starring Amy Adams [Amazon, Vudu, iTunes, 2 hours]

<b>MODULE 9</b>	<b>November 7</b>	<b>GENDER AND LEADERSHIP...in OUTER SPACE Part I</b>
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**REMINDER: ESSAY #1 IS DUE NEXT WEEK**

**READING:**

9a. Asimov, Isaac. "Introduction" and "Liar," *I, Robot*. New York: Bantam Books, 1991 [1950]: vii-xi and 111-135. CANVAS

**FILM TO SEE BEFORE CLASS:** *Arrival* (2016) starring Amy Adams [Amazon, Vudu, iTunes, 2 hours]

**DISCUSSION TOPICS:** Continued discussion of Franklin case; discussion of *Arrival*

<b>MODULE 10</b>	<b>November 14</b>	<b>GENDER AND LEADERSHIP...in OUTER SPACE Part 2</b>
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**REMINDER ESSAY #1 IS DUE TODAY, NOVEMBER 14!**

**In-Class Film & Discussion:** *Star Trek OS*: "Turnabout Intruder" (1969)

**In-Class Film Clip & Discussion:** "Kate Bowman" and her computer "Lucille" in *Red Planet* (2000)]

**NO CLASS ON NOVEMBER 21**

**HAPPY THURSDAY TURKEY DAY!**

<b>MODULE 11</b>	<b>November 28</b>	<b>CAREER SUCCESS STRATEGIES: Communication &amp; Negotiation</b>
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**READINGS:**

11a. Aries Elizabeth. "Women and Men Talking: Are They Worlds Apart?" In Walsh: 91-100. CANVAS

11b. Rosalind Barrett and Caryl Rivers. "Men and Women are from Earth." In Kimmel & Aronson. CANVAS

**In-Class Film Clips:**

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).

<b>MODULE 12</b>	<b>December 5</b>	<b>CAREER SUCCESS STRATEGIES: (Work/ Life Balance)</b>
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**READINGS:**

12a. Williams, Joan. "Hitting the Maternal Wall." *Academe*. Washington: Nov/Dec 2004. 90(6): 16-31. CANVAS

12b. KIMMEL EXCERPT #5. CANVAS

12c. England, Paula. "The Gender Revolution: Uneven and Stalled." In Kimmel & Aronson. CANVAS

**In-Class Video:** Joan Williams. "What Works for Women at Work"

<b>MODULE 13</b>	<b>December 12</b>	<b>LAST CLASS! ESSAY #2 DUE TODAY!</b>
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**Course review; final exam preparation**

**December 19**

**FINAL EXAM!**