

**Sociology 3341G:**  
**The Social Construction of Gender**  
**University of Western Ontario, Section 001**  
**Winter 2022**

*Prof. Tess Hooks*  
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**Class Session:**

Thursdays, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. UCC 59

**Office Hours:**

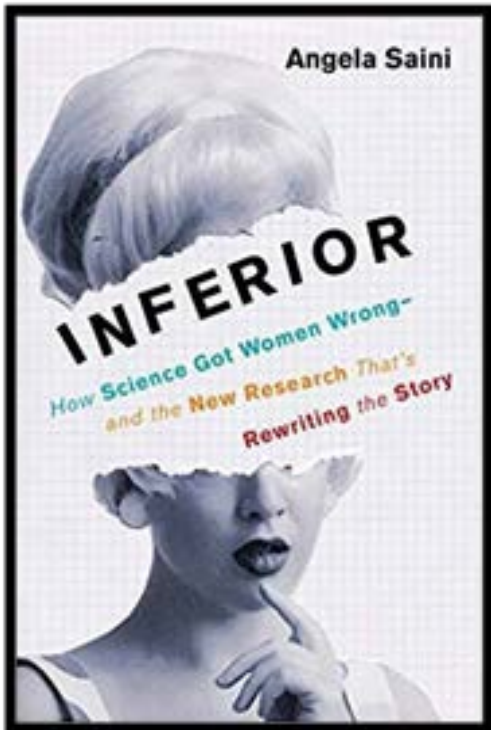
Tuesdays 12:00 to 1:00 p.m.  
or by appointment

## Learning Outcomes

When students have completed this course, they should be able to:

- develop an understanding of gender that takes into account structural dimensions as well as individual attributes
- develop an understanding of gender that recognizes the multiplicity and fluidity of gender
- understand what is meant for gender to be socially constructed
- demonstrate an understanding of the socially constructed nature of gender in a well formulated essay

## Textbook



*Inferior: How Science Got Women Wrong—and the New Research That's Rewriting the Story* by Angela Saini.  
Boston Massachusetts: Beacon Press (2017).

Additional readings also posted on the OWL site for the

## Evaluation:

Class participation	10%
Reaction/Discussion Paper	15% variable dates
Mid-term Exam	20% February 15
Essay	30% variable dates
Final Exam	25% per exam schedule

### Class Participation (10%)

Participation is an important facet in the learning process. It helps students digest new concepts, apply those concepts to real world situations, and interject their own perspectives on the topic under discussion. For this reason, a significant component of your evaluation is tied to class participation. Participation will be based on a combination of attendance and class participation. Attendance alone, however, is not enough to achieve an above average mark. You will also be evaluated on your level of participation in group and class discussions as well as the relevance and quality of your participation.

On those occasions in which you miss class because of illness or other valid reasons, you may still earn participation credit for those absences by writing a response to an instructor selected discussion question (one double spaced page per hour of class time missed). It is your responsibility to make arrangements with me on the first day you return to class after an absence, or you forfeit the right to make up for your absence. The response will be due within one week of your return. If you miss more than 50% of class sessions without offsetting participation credits, your participation mark will be zero (0).

Because class participation is an important component of your evaluation it is important to create a safe environment for everyone to participate. So, the first rule is: people are sacred, ideas are not. This means that we need to be respectful of each other and give each other space to participate. In line with this, laptops are permitted in class but if it is observed that students are on social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter, they will be told to close the lid and they will not be permitted to use it for the remainder of the class. Be sure that all cell phones are turned off at the beginning of class.

### COURSE ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS:

**There is an expectation that you will attend each class session, either Zoom classes with your video on or in person classes. With the exception of legitimate medical/personal excuses (documentation required to be submitted) students are expected to attend at least 80% of the class meetings for this course. A passing grade in the course cannot be obtained without meeting this attendance requirement.**

## **Exams (45%)**

The exams for this class will include a combination of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions. **The Final Exam is NOT CUMULATIVE.** Computer-marked multiple-choice questions may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Make-up exams will be granted with approved documentation only. If you have a conflict with one of the exam dates, it is your responsibility to discuss it with the Academic Counselling office at least one week before the regularly scheduled exam and provide documentation of the conflict. If approved, you will be allowed to schedule a make-up exam.

If you miss an exam due to illness or for any other unforeseen reason, you must provide documentation of the reason for missing the exam to your Academic Counsellor within 48 hours of the regularly scheduled exam. If your Academic Counsellor agrees that your reason for missing the exam is legitimate and is supported by your medical doctor's documentation, you will be allowed to write a makeup exam.

## **Reaction/Discussion Paper (15%)**

Discussions and activities during class time are designed to enhance learning. Students must positively and actively participate in this process. Each student is expected to come to class fully prepared to participate in discussion of the readings assigned for that date. To improve the quality of preparation and discussion, once during the term, students will prepare a brief reaction/discussion paper for that particular class. The paper must be posted on the OWL course site for this class by 6:00 p.m. on the Monday before the class for which the readings are assigned. Students should read these postings before coming to class.

The format for the reaction/discussion paper should be the following (students can write the paper in this outline format or in a more prose-like form, whichever is preferred):

Your name, the title of the reading(s), and the date.

**Thesis:** What is the author's primary thesis? (A thesis asserts a specific claim or answers a question.) Summarize the author's main thesis (argument) in one to two sentences.

**Significance:** Next state what you think is significant about this argument. For example, how does this fit with what you already knew, how does this fit with other readings, how does this fit what we have already covered in class? How does it contribute a new perspective?

**Evidence:** What evidence does the author use to support this thesis? What evidence could be collected that would explore this thesis?

**Critique:** What is your critique of the author's argument/evidence/conclusions? Make at least two separate points here—positive or negative. Is the argument persuasive? What are the strong points of the reading and why are these strengths? What unstated biases or assumptions does the author incorporate into arguments? What are flaws in reasoning and how do they relate to the argument?

**Personal response:** What is the most interesting thing that you learned from this reading? What questions does this reading raise for you? What did this reading make you think about? How can this reading be applied to something you know?

**Question:** Select a specific passage, quote, or theme from the reading(s) that you would like to explore further in class. Note the page number. Write your question and explain why it is worthwhile to answer.

## **Essay**

Students are required to write a 2000-to-2500-word (or 8 to 10 page) essay for this course. Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence (the Scholastic Offence Policy can be viewed in the Western Academic Calendar).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Essays must be submitted at the latest by **April 7th at 9:30 a.m.** (See the OWL course site for more information on due dates.) No essays will be accepted after 4:00 p.m. on April 8, 2022. Late submissions will be penalized by 5% if the submission deadline is missed. They will be penalized by an additional 2% for each day of lateness.

## **Course delivery with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic**

Although the intent is for this course to be delivered in-person, the changing COVID-19 landscape may necessitate some or all of the course to be delivered online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will not change. Any assessments affected will be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

When deemed necessary, tests and examinations in this course will be conducted using a remote proctoring service. By taking this course, you are consenting to the use of this software and acknowledge that you will be required to provide personal information (including some biometric data) and the session will be recorded. Completion of this course will require you to have a reliable internet connection and a device that meets the technical requirements for this service. More information about this remote proctoring service, including technical requirements, is available on Western's Remote Proctoring website at: <https://remoteproctoring.uwo.ca>.

### **How to Contact Me:**

The best way to contact me is via email.

### **How to get important information:**

Please check the announcements for the course and check the OWL site for the course regularly.

# Important Policies

## ***A Note on Plagiarism:***

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence (the Scholastic Offence Policy can be viewed in the Western Academic Calendar).

## ***Plagiarism Checking:***

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com ([www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com)).

## ***Policy on Laptops and other Electronics/Phones in Class:***

Laptops are permitted in class at the discretion of the professor for note taking or any other purpose approved by the professor. If, however, they are used for personal purposes during class time (Facebook, e-mail, web surfing, gaming, etc.) the privilege of using laptops may be withdrawn. Using laptops is a privilege, not a right.

Cellphones and similar devices must be turned *OFF* (not just vibrate) during classes unless specific permission is sought for emergency purposes in a given class. Text messaging and Twittering are not permitted during class.

## ***Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness***

Western's policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness can be found at [www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf).

Students must see the Academic Counsellor and submit all required documentation in order to be approved for certain accommodation:

[https://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/academic\\_consideration.html](https://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/academic_consideration.html)

## ***Academic Consideration for Student Absences***

Students who experience an unexpected illness or injury or an extenuating circumstance (48 hours or less) that is sufficiently severe to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements (e.g., attending lectures or labs, writing tests or midterm exams, completing and submitting assignments, participating in presentations) should self-declare using the on-line Self-Reported Absence portal. This option should be used in situations where the student expects to resume academic responsibilities within 48 hours or less. Students will be able to use two self-reported absences between September and April.

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_illness.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_illness.pdf)

### ***Accessibility Options:***

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website: [www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated\\_exams.html](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html)

### ***Scholastic Offences***

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site: [www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

### ***Mental Health***

Students who are in **emotional/mental distress** should refer to Mental Health@Western ([http://uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/index.html](http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html)) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.

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### **Important Note: Please Read**

You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites. If you do not have the requisites for this course, and you do not have written special permission from your Dean to enroll in this course, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. ***This decision may not be appealed.*** You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

**Prerequisite(s):** Third or fourth year standing in any module in the Department of Sociology.

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## General Course Outline

**PLEASE NOTE:** Ideally, reading assignments should be done before you come to class in order to get the most out of lectures. All assigned journal articles are posted on the OWL site for the course.

### Jan 11 Introduction: What is Gender?

READING: No Assigned Readings

### Jan 18 Biological Determinants of Gender?

READING: Saini, Introduction and Chs. 1 and 2:1-48

Katie Ann Hasson

2016 "Not a "Real Period"? Social and Material Constructions of Menstruation." *Gender & Society* 30(6):958-983.

### Jan 25 Gendered Institutions

READING: Saini, Chs. 3 and

4:4995 Judith Lorber

1993 "Believing is Seeing: Biology as Ideology." *Gender & Society* 7(4):568-581.

Joan Acker

1990 "Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A Theory of Gendered Organizations." *Gender & Society* 4(2):139-158.

### Feb 1 Intersex Individuals: Challenging the Concept of Gender

READING: Anne Fausto-Sterling

2000 "The Five Sexes, Revisited." *The Sciences* July/August: 18-23.

Suzanne J. Kessler

1990 "The Medical Construction of Gender: Case Management of Intersex Infants." *Signs* 16(1):3-26.

Georgiann Davis, Jodie M. Dewey and Erin L. Murphy

2016 "Giving Sex: Deconstructing Intersex and Trans Medicalization Practices." *Gender & Society* 30(3):490-514.

Cheryl Chase

1998 "Hermaphrodites with Attitude: Mapping the Emergence of Intersex Political Activism." *GLQ* 4:2:189-211.

Alice Domurat Dreger

2006 "Intersex and Human Rights: The Long View." *Ethics and Intersex* Springer: 73-86.



## Feb 8 **Trans Identities and Doing Gender**

- READING: Candace West and Don H. Zimmerman  
1987 "Doing Gender." *Gender & Society* 1(2):125-151.
- Bernice L. Hausman  
2000 "Do Boys Have to be Boys? Gender, Narrativity, and the John/Joan Case." *National Women's Studies Association Journal* 12:114-138.
- Tara Gonsalves  
2020 "Gender Identity, The Sexed Body, and the Medical Making of Transgender." *Gender & Society* 34(6): 1005-1033.
- Valerie Jenness and Sarah Fenstermaker  
2013 "Agnes Goes to Prison: Gender Authenticity, in Prisons for Men, and Pursuit of the 'The Real Deal'." *Gender & Society* 28(1): 5-31.
- Wendy McKenna and Suzanne Kessler  
2006 "Transgendering: Blurring the Boundaries of Gender." in *Handbook of Gender and Women's Studies* edited by Kathy Davis et al. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications Inc.: 342-354.
- OPTIONAL: Harold Garfinkel  
1967 "Passing and the Managed Achievement of Sex Status in an Intersexed Person." Chapter 5 in *Studies in Ethnomethodology*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.:116-185.

## Feb 15 **Mid-Term Exam**

## Feb 22 **Reading Week**

## March 1 **The Social Construction of Gender**

- READING: Saini, Ch. 5:96-119
- Judith M. Gerson and Kathy Peiss.  
1985 "Boundaries, Negotiation, Consciousness: Reconceptualizing Gender Relations." *Social Problems* 32:4(April):317-331.
- Barbara J. Risman  
2004 "Gender as a Social Structure: Theory Wrestling with Activism." *Gender and Society* 18(4):429-450.
- Cecilia L. Ridgeway and Shelly J. Correll  
2004 "Unpacking the Gender System: A Theoretical Perspective on Gender Beliefs and Social Relations." *Gender and Society* 18(4): 510-531.
- Shauna Pomerantz, Rebecca Raby, and Andrea Stefanik  
2013 "Girls Run the World?: Caught Between Sexism and Postfeminism in School." *Gender and Society* 27(2): 185-207.

## March 8 **Doing Difference: Intersecting Inequalities**

- READING: Candace West and Sarah Fenstermaker  
1995 "Doing Difference." *Gender & Society* 9(1):8-37.  
Symposium on West and Fenstermaker's 'Doing Difference.' *Gender & Society*  
9(4):491-513.
- Acker, Joan  
2006 "Inequality Regimes: Gender, Class and Race in Organizations." *Gender & Society* 20(4):441-464

## March 15 **Constructing Bodies**

- READING: Kathy Davis  
2002 "A Dubious Equality': Men, Women and Cosmetic Surgery." *Body & Society* 8(1):49-65.
- Sharyn Roach Anleu  
2006 "Gendered Bodies: Between Conformity and Autonomy." in *Handbook of Gender and Women's Studies* edited by Kathy Davis et al. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications Inc.: 357-375.
- Susan Bordo  
2015 "The Body and the Reproduction of Femininity." in *The Gendered Society Reader* edited by Michael S. Kimmel, Amy Aronson and Amy Kaler Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press: 122-133.
- Breanne Fah  
2011 "Dreaded 'Otherness': Heteronormative Patrolling in Women's Body Hair Rebellions." *Gender & Society* 25 (4):451-472.

## March 22 **Gender, Sexuality and Power**

- READING: Saini, Ch. 6:120-138
- Rachael D. Perotti, Milli Lake and Chloé Lewis  
2018 "Equality on His Terms: Doing and Undoing Gender Through Men's Discussion Groups." *Gender & Society* 32(4):540-562.
- Sarah Thébaud and David S. Pedulla  
2016 "Masculinity and the Stalled Revolution: How Gender ideologies and Norms Shape Young Men's Responses to Work—Family Policies." *Gender & Society* 30(4):590-617.
- Tristan Bridges  
2013 "A Very 'Gay' Straight? Hybrid Masculinities, Sexual Aesthetics, and the Changing Relationship Between Masculinity and Homophobia." *Gender and Society* 28(1):58-82.
- Danielle M. Currier  
2013 "Strategic Ambiguity: Protecting Emphasized Femininity and Hegemonic Masculinity in the Hookup Culture." *Gender and Society* 27(5):704-727.

## March 29 Gender Violence and Power

READING: Saini, Ch. 7:139-156

Jim DeRogatis

2021 "R. Kelly Is Found Guilty on All Counts, Twenty-Five Years Too Late." *The New Yorker*, 27 September.

2021 "Why Is R. Kelly Standing Trial Alone?" *The New Yorker*, 22 September.

2021 "The Settlement Factory That Kept R. Kelly's Accusers Quiet." *The New Yorker*, 14 September.

2021 "Do No Harm? The Doctor Who May Have Enabled R. Kelly." *The New Yorker*, 24 August.

Stephanie Zacharek, Eliana Dockterman and Haley Sweetland Edwards

2017 "Time Person of the Year, 2017: The Silence Breakers." *Time*, 18 Dec.

C. J. Pascoe and Jocelyn A. Hollander

2015 "Good Guys Don't Rape: Gender, Domination, and Mobilizing Rape." *Gender and Society* 20(10) 1-13.

Heather Hlavka

2014 "Normalizing Sexual Violence: Young Women Account for Harassment and Abuse." *Gender and Society* 28(3)337-358.

## April 5 Sports: The Playing Grounds of Gender

READING: Saini, Ch. 8:157-181

Adam Love and Kimberly Kelly

2010 "Equity or Essentialism?: U.S. Courts and the Legitimation of Girls' Teams in High School Sports." *Gender and Society* 25(2)227-249.

Eric Anderson

2002 "Openly Gay Athletes: Contesting Hegemonic Masculinity in a Homophobic Environment." *Gender and Society* 16(6)860-877.

Human Rights Watch

2020 "'They're Chasing Us Away From Sport': Human Rights Violations in Sex Testing of Elite Women Athletes." Human Rights Watch Report, 4 December. Summary pages 1-16.

Michela Musto, Cheryl Cooky and Michael A. Messner

2017 "From Fizzle to Sizzle: Televised Sports News and the Production of Gender Bland Sexism." *Gender and Society* 31(5)573-596.

## April 14 - 30 Final Examination Period