

Lakehead University
Department of Gender & Women's Studies

WOME 3030 Theorizing Equality: Housewives, Radicals, & Gender-Blenders
Fall 2021, Online, Asynchronous

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Zoom room drop-in time (aka: office hours): Fridays 9:30am – 12:30pm
Zoom link in D2L calendar, if you want to visit

Course Description: In this course you will learn about different feminist theories used to explain and combat gender inequality. You will examine the questions, tensions, and debates in feminisms, and learn about feminist praxis – the transformation of theory into practice. As a class, we will explore how the boundaries between gender and other axes of identity are created, maintained, and/or challenged; the degree to which contemporary theoretical positions account for material inequalities and experiences of marginalization; and gaps in various praxes or theories. Theory explains why social inequalities exist and offers up solutions. Different feminist groups have different explanations for gender inequality, and develop different political initiatives based on their theories. The project is not finished, and all the theories we review this term are alive and well.

How to use this Syllabus to manage the course:

- 1) Read the Syllabus carefully now, and send me an email if you have any questions. No question is too big or too small. Print off a copy of the Syllabus for easy reference.
- 2) Plan your assignment deadlines now; be in touch with me if you have a question about the assignments.
- 3) Set aside firm hours each week in your calendar so you have time for this course.
- 4) Use this Syllabus alongside the weekly information posted on D2L.

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Required Course Materials

Text: Lorber, Judith. *Gender Inequality: Feminist Theories and Politics*. 5th edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Links: on D2L

My Availability

I check my email during regular office hours, 8:30am – 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday. During busy times it could take me up to 3 days to get back to you. If you email me about an assignment at the last minute, I may not reply until it is too late, so plan your time not to leave your assignments until the last minute.

I am really happy to set up one-on-one meetings. Just send me an email and we'll find a time that works for us.

I will be in our D2L classroom site reading your work and seeing how everyone is doing on Fridays from 9:30am until 12:30pm. During that time, I will be in the zoom room, available via the link in the D2L calendar. I always enjoy talking to students in person, so don't hesitate to pop in if you want to chat.

If you don't see me at my desk when you join, don't worry! I've just stepped away for a minute, and will be right back. Say hi when you come on so I know you're there.

Assignments

Weights and Due Dates

	Weight / 100	Due
Autobiography	5	Sept. 12, 2021
Weekly Activities	30	by Sunday of their week (i.e.: week 1 Activity in Week 1, etc.)
Mid-term "Best of Activities" weeks 2-5	20 (2 x 10)	By October 17, 2021

End-of-term “Best of Activities” weeks 7-12	20 (2 x 10)	By December 3, 2021
Final take-home paper	25	December 18, 2021

Instructions

Autobiography: Introduce yourself

Maximum 250 words, posted in the “Autobiography Forum” on D2L “Discussions”
Due: September 12, 2021

- 1) Let us know what you know about feminist theory;
- 2) Tell us what experiences do you have working for equality / with equality-related issues / thinking about equality, particularly in relation to gender and its constructions, but also in any other way you are thinking about social equality
- 3) Tell the class (and me!) what you hope to gain from this course

Weekly Activities

(note: some links take you to pages that include advertisements. Neither Lakehead nor the Dept. of GWS is affiliated with or endorses these products)

250-500 words (equivalent of one-two pages), posted in the “Activities” section (aka: the discussion page) each week
MLA or APA in-text citations are required
Due: Each week, Sunday by midnight at the latest

Go to the Activity in the week’s links. It might be a song, a news article, a website, a cartoon, and follow the instructions posted for the week’s Activity.

The *Rubrics* section at the end of this Syllabus explains how I will evaluate all your work.

Remember: length does not necessarily result in a better grade. An incredibly well-written, supported, one-page Activity will always garner a better mark than an unfocused, meandering, two pages.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What if I forget to hand in my Activity response on Sunday?

A: Then it is late, and you will have 3 marks deducted. Because each Activity is worth 3, you will receive zero for that week

Q: If I hand in an Activity late (and it receives 0 for the week), can I still choose it as one my “Best of Activities”?

A: Yes. As long as it was posted during the weeks for that “Best of Activity”.

Q: Where do I hand in my weekly activity?

A: You post it in the “Activities” section for the week.

Q: Do I have to do a Works Cited section for my Activity?

A: No, but use in-text citations appropriately so it’s clear who you’re citing.

Q: Do I have to do all the Activities?

A: Only if you want the marks. If you don’t do an Activity, you cannot get the 3 marks for that week.

Q: What if I am hospitalized?

A: Contact me as soon as you can. With appropriate documentation, we will work out alternate due dates.

Mid-term “Best of Activities” weeks 2-5

Email me your choices no later than October 17, 2021

Choose your best two (2) activities from weeks 2 to 5: the ones you’re most proud of; that you think best showcase your analytical skills and your ability to apply class readings and concepts; the ones that are best-written and best-evidenced.

Email subject heading “Best of Activities,” and let me know which two Activities you want me to mark in depth. Check the marking rubric at the end of this Syllabus to see how I will evaluate “Best of Activities.”

If you do not email me your choices by the due date, I will choose two weeks at random, without re-reading your work. The weeks I choose may not be your best work, but those are the Activities for which you will receive the grades.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Any two of my Activities from those weeks?

A. Yes. It’s completely up to you.

Q. What if I forget to send an email by the due date letting you know which Activities I choose?

A. I will choose two weeks at random, without re-reading your work. The weeks I choose may not be your best work, but those are the weeks for which you will get the grades.

End-of-term “Best of Activities” weeks 7-12

Email me your choices no later than December 3, 2021

Instructions are the same as “Best of Activities” weeks 1-5.

Take-Home Final

Maximum 8 pages (ca. 2000 words), excluding the title page and works cited. Double-spaced, 12-point font, Ariel or Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, letter-sized paper, MLA or APA in-text citations. Papers not following this format will lose 5 marks immediately.

Due: by December 18, 2021

Watch Chimamande Ngozi Adichie’s *TEDxEuston* talk, “We Should all be Feminists,” available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hg3umXU_qWc

- 1) Adichie uses many of the theories we’ve learned this term to build her arguments. How many can you identify, and where is the evidence to support your answer with reference to her talk and the required readings?
- 2) Which feminist theories would be critical of certain moments in her presentation, and why?
- 3) Adichie doesn’t explicitly name the theories she uses to make her argument, but she uses them anyway: in your own thinking about gender inequality, which theories do you now recognize as the ones you most often use, and why (that is, how does your own social location affect your theorizing, as Adichie’s does hers)?

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Where do I hand in my final?

A. In the Assignments folder.

Q. Will you give feedback on a rough draft of my take-home final?

A. Yes, as long as I receive your rough draft at least one week before the due date.

Q. Do you want us to focus on just one or two theories?

A. No. This is your chance to showcase how much you learned this term (as with an in-class final).

Q. What if I don’t use any theory to think about equality? How can I answer the third question?

A. You do theorize, even if you haven't been able to name it until now. Take time to think about where you see gender inequality coming from (why masculine-linked traits and people are more privileged in dominant discourses, institutions, and ideology than feminine-linked traits and people), and that will help you to frame your answer.

Extensions, Late Work, Academic Dishonesty, and Other Details

Due Dates and Late Penalties

You have all assignment instructions and due dates from the first day of class, so there will be no extensions, except in the case of a documented medical or other emergency.

Late work will be reduced by 3 marks per day, including Saturdays and Sundays. Work more than 7 days late will not be accepted without University-approved documentation.

Academic Misconduct and Disciplinary Procedures

Academic misconduct is a serious offence. The principle of academic integrity, particularly of doing one's own work, documenting property (including paraphrased ideas), and avoiding misrepresentation is a core principle in University study. I will pursue breaches of Academic Integrity to their full disciplinary extent because this is a third-year course.

If you have questions about how to avoid academic misconduct, ask me.

Review the rules at: <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/departments/services/provost-vice-president-academic/academic-integrity-plans-policies/academic-dishonesty-regulations>

Weekly Readings and Materials

Where is Intersectional feminism, you ask?

All these feminist theories now use an intersectional feminist lens. Some incorporated intersectional feminism early on, when the concept was introduced under other names by Black Socialist Feminists and Multiracial / Multiethnic feminists in the 1980s and early 90s; others were a bit later to the party, and took it on after the term 'intersectional' was used by Crenshaw to rename concepts like Lorde's 'matrix of domination' in the late 90s and early 2000s. It is everywhere, as it should be, and I will look for it in your work too.

A. Gender Reform Feminisms

Listen: Audio – Gender Reform Feminisms

Wk. 1: Sept. 7, Liberal Feminism

*Autobiography due September 12, Activity due by Sunday at midnight

Reading: Lorber, 27-50

Activity: *CBC News*, "Because it's 2015" (all instructions for the weekly Activities are on D2L in the week's Activity section)

NOTE: This week's activity is for practice. I will let you know what grade you would have received, and why, via your Lakehead email, so you know what is expected of the weeks to come. The grade will not count towards your Activities grades and this Activity cannot be used as a choice for your Mid-term "Best of Activities".

Wk. 2: Sept. 13, Marxist & Socialist Feminism

Reading: Lorber, 51-89

Activity: World Economic Forum Press release on wage equity

Wk. 3: Sept. 20, Indigenous Feminism

Reading: Starblanket, Gina. "Being Indigenous Feminists"

Activity: Native Women's Association of Canada: magazine publication OR policies

NOTE on my availability this week: I'm the internal reviewer for the BSc General program and will have full days with the external reviewers on the 22, 23, and 24. I will not be responding to my emails during the day.

I will check emails the 23rd and 24th (Thursday and Friday) in the evening, as an exception, in case folks need me, but cannot on Wednesday the 22nd

I will also set up a zoom room this week for Monday 9:30 – 12:30, in case folks would like to pop in then. I won't be able to be in our zoom room Friday the 24th.

B. Gender Resistance Feminisms

Listen: Audio – Gender Resistance Feminisms

Wk 4: Sept. 27, Lesbian Feminism

Reading: Lorber, 151-167

Activity: sexy lady's short book launch clip

HOLIDAY Notice: September 30th is the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. I do not expect anyone to do any work for this class that day.

Wk 5: Oct. 4, Radical Feminism

Reading: Lorber, 127-150

Activity: *The Guardian*, "The Ruined Lives of K-Pop"

A Note about TERFs: TERFs are a small minority of radical feminists and get way too much media time. Feminism interrogates gender construction and the oppressive outcomes of binary gender norms, institutions, beliefs, and embodiment. Trans-inclusive radical feminists are the majority of radical feminists. I am not at all interested in TERFs' policing of an oppressive gender binary; I am 100% interested in what Radical Feminism has to say about violence, misogyny, and control.

Wk 6: Oct. 11, Reading Week!

No work this week. Enjoy your time, and take time to ground and rejuvenate.

***Reminder though,** to send me your email letting me know which "Best of Activities" you want me to dig into from Weeks 2-5 no later than October 17th, midnight.

Wk. 7: Oct. 18, Psychoanalytic and Cultural Feminism

Reading: Lorber, 168-182

Activity: Choose either Psychoanalytic or Cultural feminism for your Activity this week. a) Psychoanalytic: BBC, "Girls Toys vs. Boys Toys, the Experiment;" b) Cultural: Guerrilla Girls

Wk. 8: Oct. 25, Standpoint Feminism

Reading: Lorber, 183-202

Activity: Cartoon, "Perspective is Everything"

C. Gender Rebellion Feminisms

Listen: Audio – Gender Rebellion Feminisms

Wk. 9: Nov. 1, Social Construction Feminism

Reading: Lorber, 207-230

Activity: No Doubt's classic hit, "I'm Just a Girl"

Wk. 10: Nov. 8, Multiracial and Multiethnic Feminisms

Reading: Lorber, 231-252

Activity: BLM

Wk. 11: Nov. 15, Feminist Studies of Men and Masculinities

Reading: Lorber, 253-283

Activity: *Buzzfeed*, "Pick Up Artists are Still a Thing"

Wk. 12: Nov. 22, Postmodern and Queer Feminisms

Reading: Lorber, 284-303

Activity: Scott Turner Schofield, "Ending Gender"

Wk. 13: Nov. 29, Third-Wave Feminism [but I do think we need a new name for this theory]

Reading: Lorber, 304-325

Just for fun as a wrap-up: Watch Roxanne Gay's "Confessions of a Bad Feminist" – are you a 'bad feminist' too? and thanks for a really great term!

***Remember:** Email me your choices for "Best of Activities," weeks 7-12, no later than December 3rd

***Remember:** Your take-home final is due by or on December 18th.

Support Resources

In distress or crisis?

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CShaNXhajf0vbT8oCmBao3aQo_HX45QT/view

Student Accessibility Services

<https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/departments/services/sas>

Indigenous Student Services

<https://www.lakeheadu.ca/current-students/student-services/tb/aboriginal-services>

Student Health and Wellness

<https://www.lakeheadu.ca/students/wellness-recreation/student-health-and-wellness>

Office of Human Rights and Equity

<https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/departments/services/human-rights-and-equity>

Writing Help and other Supports

<https://mysuccess.lakeheadu.ca/home.htm>

Rubrics for All Evaluated Work

Autobiography 5/100

You receive up to 1 mark for each numbered instruction, and 2 marks assigned to your writing skills (grammar, punctuation, syntax, etc.).

Weekly Activities (3/100 each = 30 total for weeks 2-5 and 7-12)

3 = Great work! Few to no errors in the writing, your thoughts are well-supported with references back to the readings, and you're very clear about what you are focusing on in the Activity and the connections you're making.

2 = You engage with the Activity well, and provide clear connections between the Activity and the readings. This mark differs from a 3 in that there are multiple spelling / syntax / grammar or other writing errors; and/or you have not cited well to support your ideas. You are beginning to engage with the Activity in a scholarly, supported, way.

1 = You do an entry that mentions the theory and the Activity. No specifics, no details, no citations, no clear connections, but you have submitted something, and I can see you working with the theories' concepts and the Activity. Mainly opinion with little scholarly support for your ideas.

0 = Total misunderstanding, nothing but opinion with no references back to the text, or plagiarism, which I will pursue through the Dean's office

All other written work, including “Best of” and the Take-Home Final

A+ (90-100%): Near-Perfection. The work clearly develops a near-irrefutable argument concisely and convincingly. Ideas are linked and flow clearly from sentence to sentence and paragraph to paragraph. The argument leads clearly and inexorably to its conclusion, is stimulating to read and shows analytical and connective abilities well in excess of expectations for the level. There are no errors in scholarly documentation or formatting, and the work is virtually free of errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation. Secondary sources never stand in for your own thoughts, but are used as evidence for your ideas.

A-, A (80-89%): Excellent. The work thoughtfully develops an interesting thesis, or story, if that option is selected; secondary source material is used to support your ideas, and not as a substitute for your own thinking. You are in command of the topic and show some originality and enthusiasm in discussing it. The work is well organized, convincingly argued, and clearly expressed – a pleasure to read. It is mainly free of errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation, and uses the conventions of scholarly documentation correctly.

B-, B, B+ (70-79%): Very Good to Good. The work is a competent, accurate treatment of its topic. It is well written and has a clear thesis. Writing at the bottom of this range may not have fully digested the materials, and may lean uncritically on secondary sources. The organization is good and the sentences are all comprehensible. There are few errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation. The work follows standard conventions of scholarly documentation.

C-, C, C+ (60-69%): Good to Fair. The thesis is unclear, or trivial, or undeveloped. Much of the work is summary or paraphrase, with only occasional analytical comment. There may be inaccuracies; writing at the bottom of this range may rely exclusively on secondary sources instead of the students’ own thoughts. The writing is disjointed; some sentences may be convoluted and incomprehensible. There may be mistakes in grammar, spelling and punctuation, as well as carelessness about scholarly documentation.

D-, D, D+ (50-59%): Poor. The work has serious inaccuracies and inconsistencies. The student has some grasp of the topic, but not much. Where sources are cited, they tend to be misused or misinterpreted. The student expresses opinions, but does not support them with evidence from the course materials in support of their position. The writing lacks coherence, is unclear, and has many errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation, as well as carelessness about scholarly documentation.

E (40-49%): Failure Grade. Near-total misunderstanding. The student has very little grasp of the materials or subject. The writing is disorganized, obscure, full of grammatical errors and is unscholarly.

F (0-39%): Failure Grade. Total misunderstanding. The student seems to have no grasp of the materials or subject. The essay is disorganized, obscure, full of grammatical errors and is unscholarly. Cases of plagiarism will be submitted to the Dean with my request that a mark of zero be assigned.