

Lakehead University
Department of Gender & Women's Studies

WOME 3030 Theorizing Equality: Housewives, Radicals, & Gender-Blenders
Winter 2023, Online, Asynchronous

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Zoom office hours: Thursdays 10-11am

<https://lakeheadu.zoom.us/j/95464745377?pwd=SGpQb21CM0hiR3U5NFBLednZjgvUT09>

Or by appointment

Course Description: In this course you will learn about different feminist theories that are 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. You 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 succeed in this asynchronous online course:¹

1. Read the Syllabus carefully now, and contact me immediately if you have any questions. No question is too big or too small;
2. Organize!
 - a. your time: set aside fixed hours each week in your calendar so you have time for this course (minimum 5 hours per week - to do the readings well, take notes, do rough and final copies of the brief weekly Activities, and to reach out to me with any questions you have either by email, during my office hours, or in an appointment if you can't make my schedule office hour time);
 - b. your materials: print off a copy of the Syllabus for easy reference; create a binder or folder for this course where you keep all your materials related to

¹ Online, asynchronous courses are a bit like shopping at IKEA. You have the box full of the parts and instructions you need, but if you don't open the box, and put those parts together following the instructions, you won't have a beautiful bookshelf/desk/bedframe/grade by the end of the course. I believe in your building skills!

it. I strongly encourage you to take notes *by hand* as you do the readings. Studies on note-taking, retention, understanding, and overall student success all show that if you take notes by hand, instead of typing them, you incorporate an understanding of the materials much better into your knowledge-base, and will do better overall;

- c. your deadlines: plan your assignment deadlines now and calendar them so that you don't forget! Although the weekly activities are not long, if you start to miss 2, 3, 4 of them, you will see your mark drop drastically; be in touch with me if you have a question about the assignments;
- 3. Each week, actively use this Syllabus alongside D2L: check weeks off when you've finished them so you don't lose your place in the course; keep an eye on weeks when you have longer readings coming up so you can schedule your time well;
- 4. Reach out to me, confidentially, if anything arises that affects your work in this course: illness, family matters, hospitalization, questions about a week's reading, questions about the assignments. I'm here to help and to guide you through the materials, so never hesitate to reach out. You will find me to be your greatest ally and cheerleader in this course;
- 5. Check your LU email for emails with the header "WOME-3030." That is where you will receive all correspondence from me.

*Note: There are two brief assignments due by the end of Week 1, on January 15; start the term off well by doing them and handing them in. Reach out to me if you have questions.

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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 in order not to leave your assignments until the last minute.

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

I will be in our D2L classroom reading your Activity work and seeing how everyone is doing on Wednesday, so if you're looking for a day when you're pretty sure I'll be responding to emails quickly, Wednesday would be a good day!

Assignments

Weights and Due Dates

	Total 100	Due
Autobiography	5	January 15, 2023
Weekly Activities (5 marks each) Wks 1-3 Wks 4-8 Wks 9-12	15 20 20	by Sunday of their week (see below)
Reflection on the term	15	April 3, 2023
Final take-home paper	25	April 19, 2023

Instructions

Autobiography: Introduce yourself 5%
Due January 15, 2023

Maximum 250 words, posted in the "Autobiography Forum" on D2L "Discussions"
Due: January 15, 2023

- 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 us what you hope to gain from this course, and your experience with online synchronous courses.

Weekly Activities 5% each

Due weekly, handed in by Sunday, at midnight, at the latest.

*Note: some links take you to pages that include advertisements. Neither Lakehead nor the Dept. of GWS is affiliated with, nor endorses, these products

250-300 words, handed into the Assignment folder 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, or something else, 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.

Tips for success:

1. Explore one idea. The best writing is narrow, and deep: that is, well-supported, and focused;
2. Always support your arguments/ideas with evidence: this evidence will come from the week's textbook readings, the class notes I provide (key terms, for example), the Activity, or even the audio at the beginning of each of our three themes;
3. Edit your work before you hand it in – pay special attention to citing all paraphrased and directly quoted information from the textbook or other resources I've provided. I will pursue all cases of Academic Misconduct to their full extent;

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 5, that's a pretty significant reduction in the mark. Put a reminder in your Calendar about due dates to avoid late penalties.

Q: Where do I hand in my weekly activity?

A: In Assignments, in the folder for the correct 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: it will be either Lorber; the publications she provides in her chapters (other authors' work is marked by a grey line running down the side of the page); or the artist/author/etc. of the Activity. It might also be me, if the information you use is from the audio I provide, or the notes.

Q: What if I am hospitalized or something terrible happens that affects my work?

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

Reflections on the term 15%

Due April 3, 2023

Maximum 3 pages (ca. 750 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: April 3, 2023

Before you begin your reflection, re-read your initial Autobiography to situate what you have learned this term. Then discuss:

1. Which week, or readings did you connect with the most? Why?
2. Which week, or readings, posed the most difficulties for you (intellectually or emotionally, based on your own social location)? Why?
3. What lessons will you, or could you, take from what you've learned in this class to future classes?
4. How did the class impact your view of the use of theory in relation to the everyday resistance to, or practices of, gender inequality, gender itself, human rights, and structural oppressions?

Take-Home Final 25%

Due April 19, 2023

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 April 19, 2023

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 course materials?
- 2) Which feminist theories might point out some problems in her talk, 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've learned this term (as with an in-class final). Identify as many theories as you can, and impress me with how well you've absorbed the course materials! 😊

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 and Academic Misconduct

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

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 and scholarly work. I will pursue breaches of Academic Integrity to their full disciplinary extent.

Resources to help you avoid academic misconduct:

- Me (Dr. Jen Roth): if you are unsure about how to avoid academic misconduct, or if something is or is not 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>
- Use the resources available at Owl at Purdue which contains examples of APA, MLA, and Chicago, including information on: paper formatting, in-text citations, footnotes and endnotes, and works cited / references / bibliographies: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html
- Refer to the "Citation PP Handout," which uses APA and MLA as examples, and the "Ice Cream citation example" in the Course Resources – Feminist Theory section of our class website

Weekly Topics and Materials

Where is Intersectional feminism, you ask?

All these feminist theories now use an intersectional feminist lens. Some incorporated intersectional feminism early on, or birthed it, when the concept was introduced under other names by Black Socialist Feminists and Multiracial / Multiethnic feminists like Audre Lorde and bell hooks in the early 1980s; others were a bit later to the party, and took it on after the term 'intersectional' was used by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 to rename concepts like Lorde's "matrix of domination." 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: Jan 9-15, Liberal Feminism

*Autobiography and Activity are due January 15, 2023

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)

Wk. 2: Jan 16-22, Marxist & Socialist Feminism

Reading: Lorber, 51-89

Activity: World Economic Forum Press release on wage equity

Wk. 3: Jan 23-29, Indigenous Feminism

Reading: Starblanket, Gina. "Being Indigenous Feminists" (reading available on D2L)

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

B. Gender Resistance Feminisms

Listen: Audio – Gender Resistance Feminisms

Wk 4: Jan 30-Feb 5, Lesbian Feminism

Reading: Lorber, 151-167

Activity: "Black Representation in *The Colour Purple* with Roxane Gay" *Can we Talk About this?*

Wk 5: Feb 6-12, 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: Feb 13-19, Psychoanalytic and Cultural Feminism

Reading: Lorber, 168-182

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

Wk. 7: Jan 20-26, Reading Week!

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

Wk. 8: Feb 27-Mar 5, Standpoint Feminism

Reading: Lorber, 183-202

Activity: Cartoon, "Perspective is Everything"

C. Gender Rebellion Feminisms

Listen: Audio – Gender Rebellion Feminisms

Wk. 9: Mar 6-12, Social Construction Feminism

Reading: Lorber, 207-230

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

Wk. 10: Mar 13-19, Multiracial and Multiethnic Feminisms

Reading: Lorber, 231-252

Activity: BLM

Wk. 11: Mar 20-26, Feminist Studies of Men and Masculinities

Reading: Lorber, 253-283

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

Wk. 12: Mar 27-Apr 2, Postmodern and Queer Feminisms

(your Reflection on the term is due next week)

Reading: Lorber, 284-303

Activity: Scott Turner Schofield, "Ending Gender"

Wk. 13: Apr 3-9, Third-Wave Feminism [but so amorphous that I do think we need a new name for this theory]

***Remember:** Your Reflection on the term is due April 3, 2023

Reading: Lorber, 304-325

Roxanne Gay's "Confessions of a Bad Feminist" – are you a 'bad feminist' too?
Thanks for a really great term!

***Remember:** Your take-home final is due by or on April 19, 2023.

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>

Ombudsperson

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

Writing Help and other Supports

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

Rubric for All Evaluated Work

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.