

Working Women in American Society

Spring 2012

Time: Tuesday 2:15-5:15 p.m.

Room: Ruth Adams 104

Office hours: Wednesday 1:30-3:30 p.m. & by appointment

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Dates to remember

Week 3 (1/31): media item due at start of class

Week 4 (2/7): autoethnographic data draft due at start of class

Week 5 (2/14): first quiz

Week 8 (3/6): second quiz

Week 10 (3/20): thesis statement/lit review worksheet due at start of class

Week 11 (3/27): home/work balance worksheet due in class

Week 12 (4/3): third quiz

Week 13 (4/10): final paper due at start of class

Week 15 (4/24): fourth quiz

Course description

In this course we will examine work as an important site of gendered meaning and authority. We will also look at how the institution of work itself has been powerfully shaped by ideas about gender difference. We will examine histories of women's work—both paid and unpaid—with a careful eye to the differences produced by class, ethnicity/race, nationality, and sexuality. We will examine the extent of workplace gender inequality, and explore various theories of its cause, including job segregation, tokenism, sexual harassment, the gendering of jobs and organizations, and work/family balance. Finally, we will explore alternatives and sites of resistance to the barriers to women's equitable participation in the workplace.

Learning goals

Students will evaluate their own position within the world of work, using theoretical and historical tools from the class to better illuminate understanding. A primary aim of this course is to provide students with analytical tools to make better sense of the working world and their interaction with it. Students will be able to:

- Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person's experiences of and perspectives on the world
- Analyze issues of social justice across local and global contexts
- Explain and be able to assess the relationship among assumptions, methods, evidence, arguments, and theory in social and historical analysis
- Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organizations
- Apply concepts about human and social behavior to particular questions or situations

Major assumptions of the course

- We are social beings who both shape and are shaped by the social worlds in which we live. We do not have *complete* autonomy and self-determination, but neither are we merely the products of institutions and structures.
- There is nothing natural or inevitable about the institution of work or the arrangements of power in workplace organizations. They were made by people and they can be changed by people. Therefore, it is worth our while to consider how such work and workplaces are constructed and maintained in order to imagine how they might be different.

Description of requirements

Weekly reading response. You will summarize and discuss the course readings each week of class. The weekly response should be 1-2 pages long, with at least one paragraph identifying the main argument(s) and/or point(s) of each reading you cover, and at least one paragraph connecting these ideas to what you have observed about your own working life or that of others. *At least half of your reading responses must compare and contrast the weekly readings; no more than half can focus on one reading only.* These reading responses must be uploaded to Sakai and you must bring copy to class each week. The uploaded version should be a .pdf or .doc(x) or .txt file called [yourlastname][month][day]. Thus, my first reading response would be **meyers0124.docx** (my last name, Meyers, 01 for January, and 24 for the day of class). Reading responses must be uploaded through the Assignments tab of our class Sakai page 24 hours before the start of class, and cannot be uploaded after class begins. I will provide guiding questions you may use for each week's readings, but these should not stop you from exploring other aspects of the texts that interest, excite, or upset you. The lowest reading response grade will be dropped.

Participation. Everyone is expected to participate in class, which obviously requires being present in class. I believe that students can learn best by actively engaging with material from course rather than simply memorizing names and concepts. This includes asking as many questions as are needed to understand the material, and working through the implications of new ideas. There are a variety of ways to do this: asking questions or making comments in class, facilitating small group work, writing thoughtful questions and comments to me (email or paper notes), posing or responding to questions on the Sakai course discussion board, and participating in group activities. If you're wondering about something, it's likely there are other students who don't fully understand either. There are no stupid questions! Discussion is a way to experiment with ideas. Participation can sometimes mean *not* talking to allow quieter classmates to speak. It means engaging with ideas that are different from your own in a respectful manner, even if you have serious disagreements. Criticism is encouraged, but personal attack will not be tolerated.

Quizzes. There will be four in-class, non-cumulative quizzes (dates on first page). Each will consist of two terms that must be defined and illustrated with examples. Quizzes will be based on readings, lectures, and in-class viewings and exercises.

Media analysis. In Week 2, students will choose a *recent* (within past year) media item that raises an issue faced by working women today (news article, blog entry, advertisement, etc.). Students will individually write a 1-2 page memo explaining a) what the item is about, b) what is important about the media item, and c) how it connects to course concepts or the day's reading. This will be *attached* to the media item (printout or weblink). Note that media items *must be dated*, and the date can be *no earlier* than January 2011.

Autoethnographic paper. Over the semester you will develop an analysis of factors affecting your future (and/or perhaps past) working life. It will explore your own experience through course concepts. The final paper will be in social science format, and you will produce parts along the way: a draft of the data (projected career path), a thesis statement, and a lit review.

Writing mechanics will be part of assessment and grading. You may come to my office hours to discuss this, but be aware of other resources, particularly the Rutgers Learning Centers. (<http://lrc.rutgers.edu/>) These were established to assist students with writing projects. This is a great resource for students who wish to improve their writing—an excellent goal for all of us. Contact them early for help with your assignment.

Final grade breakdown

Quizzes	40 percent
Autoethnographic paper	20 percent
Participation	20 percent
Reading responses	15 percent
Media analysis	5 percent
Make sure to complete <i>all</i> assignments; missing assignments count as 0 percent, not F.	

Instructor meetings

All students are strongly encouraged to meet with me to discuss questions or concerns, or simply to continue discussions that piqued your interest in class. If you have a conflict with office hours, we may be able to find another meeting time.

Course format and policies

Students are expected to complete all required readings before class, and come to class prepared to discuss what they do and do not understand about them.

I will do what is in my power to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities, but you must let me know what is needed (preferably after class or during office hours). Contact the Office of Disability Services for Students at 151 College Ave, Suite 123, Mon-Thurs, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. and Fri 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. for examples of services and accommodations available on campus. (732) 932-2848 or <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/>

Don't plagiarize. Be sure you know the difference between *citing* a text, *quoting* a text, and *stealing* from a text (whether published, on the internet, or from another student). For more information, see the official policy at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml> or use the online tutorial at http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/cir_tutorial.shtml. You can also get help at the Rutgers Learning Centers.

Diverse ideas and beliefs will come up during the course, and you may find yourself disagreeing with fellow students or me. That's normal and expected, and the discussion of our difference analyses makes for a lively classroom and more sharply honed opinions for everyone. However while passionate intellectual debate is welcome, personal attacks or insults are not. Please refrain from making faces while someone speaks, using an angry or sarcastic tone in addressing their ideas, or snickering.

Students are expected to have regular attendance; because we only meet weekly, more than two missed classes will significantly affect your grade. If you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me. Be sure to

contact me *well in advance* of a due date or quiz if you foresee difficulties meeting a deadline. The only excuses for missing a deadline or quiz without notice are illness or family emergency. There are no exceptions to this policy in the interest of fairness to the whole class.

I will discuss your questions about assignments, including papers, during office hours. Bring a paper copy for me to read and review. *Do not send papers as attachments by email.* You are strongly urged to discuss your final paper at least one week in advance of the due date.

Papers must be uploaded into Sakai (Assignments tab) by the start of class on the day they are due. Late papers will be docked by half a grade for each day late *beginning at the start of class on the due date.* Do not miss class to finish a paper! Nothing will be accepted a week past the due date.

If you believe you have received a lower grade than you should, you may contest it within two weeks by following these steps. 1) Allow a *24-hour "cooling off" period* so that you will be calm and collected when you ask for reconsideration of your work. 2) *Write out* the reason you think the grade should be changed. Describe *how* your work fulfills the assignment. We all make mistakes but, "I just think I deserve better" doesn't explain what is missed.

Up to half of any missed credit on the first three quiz questions can be partially made up *within one week* by a) reviewing the correct answers on Sakai, b) writing a critique pinpointing how the answer given on the quiz failed to fully address the question, and c) writing a new answer entirely in your own words. The key is your critique of the original answer. *No extra credit* will be given without this critique.

Laptops and cellphones can be a great resource for bringing course readings and other pertinent information into the classroom, but can also be a huge temptation to text, email, use social media, or otherwise focus on non-course matters. Know yourself and turn off the electronic devices if they are too tempting. Use of electronic devices for non-course matters is distracting to other students as well as you, and is therefore not permitted. Such use of electronic devices will have a *strong negative effect on your participation grade.*

Course Texts

All course readings are available for download on the class Sakai page at the Resources tab.

Course reading list

Part I History and contexts

Week 2: Introductions

- The syllabus

Week 3: Histories of women's work in the United States

- Hesse-Biber, S. N., & Carter, G. L. 2005. "A Brief History of Working Women." *Working Women In America* (Second ed.). NY & Oxford: Oxford University Press. (pp. 20-45)
- Davis, A. "'Don't Let Nobody Bother Yo' Principle': The Sexual Economy of American Slavery." 2002. In S. Harley (Ed.), *Sister Circle: Black Women and Work*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. (pp. 103-127)
- Bao, X. 1994. When Women Arrived: The Transformation of New York's Chinatown. In J. Meyerowitz (Ed.), *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960* Philadelphia: Temple University Press. (pp. 19-36).

Week 4: Theorizing gender

- Lorber, J. 1994. "Night to His Day": The Social Construction of Gender. *Paradoxes of Gender*, New Haven: Yale University Press (pp 1-11).
- Collins, P. H. 2004. Toward a New Vision: Race, Class, & Gender as Categories of Analysis and Connection. *Race, Class, and Gender: An Anthropology*, 5th edition. (pp 45-56).

Autoethnography draft due in class

Week 5: Theorizing work

- Weber, M. 2006. Bureaucracy. In A. S. Wharton (Ed.), *Working in America: Continuity, Conflict, and Change*. New York: McGraw Hill. (pp. 51-56).
- Marx, K. (2006). Alienated Labour. In A. S. Wharton (Ed.), *Working in America: Continuity, Conflict, and Change*. New York: McGraw Hill. (pp. 44-51).

First quiz

Part II Gender Inequality and Paid Work**Week 6: Occupational segregation and other forms of workplace gender inequality**

- Padavic, I. and B. Reskin. (1993). "Sex Segregation in the Workplace" in *Women and Men at Work*, 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, California: Pine Forge Press. (pp. 57-96)

Week 7: Tokenism and sexual harassment

- Kanter, R. M. (1977). *Men and Women of the Corporation*. New York: Basic Books. (pp. 206-242)
- Texeira, M. T. (2002). "Who Protects and Serves Me?": A Case Study of Sexual Harassment of African American Women in One U.S. Law Enforcement Agency. *Gender and Society*, 16(4), 524-545.

Week 8: Gendered jobs, gendered organizations, and gendered occupations

- Williams, C. L. (1995) *Still a Man's World: Men Who Do "Women's Work."* Berkeley: University of California Press (excerpt) (pp. 69-72)
- Pierce, J. L. (1995). *Gender Trials: Emotional Lives in Contemporary Law Firms*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press. (Chaps 3 & 5; pp. 50-82, 103-142)

Second quiz

Week 9: Spring break! No class meeting!**Part III Gendered Domestic Labor, Paid and Unpaid****Week 10: Valuing motherhood**

- Crittenden, A. (2001). *The Price of Motherhood: Why the Most Important Job in the World Is Still the Least Valued*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC. (pp. 65-86)

Thesis statement/lit review worksheet due in class

Week 11: Home/work balance

- Gerson, K., & Jacobs, J. A. (2004). The Work-Home Crunch. *Contexts*, 3(4) 29-37
- Hochschild, A. R. (1997) *The Time Bind: When Work Becomes Home and Home Becomes Work*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC. (pp. 35-52)

Home/work balance worksheet due in class = participation credit

Week 12: Domestic labor as commodity

- Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. (2001, 2007). *Doméstica: Immigrant Workers Cleaning and Caring in the Shadows of Affluence*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press. (Chap 1, 5; pp. 3-28; 114-134)

Third quiz

Part IV Transformations: Replacement, Reform, Resistance**Week 13: Replacement through alternative workplaces**

- Rothschild, J., & Tomchin, A. (2006). Can Collectivist-Democracy Bring Gender Equality? The Efforts at Twin Oaks. In V. Smith (Ed.), *Worker Participation: Current Research and Future Trends* (Vol. 16, pp. 239-262)

Final paper due in class

Week 14: Reform through personnel policy

- Mainiero, L. A., & Sullivan, S. E. (2005). Kaleidoscope Careers: An Alternate Explanation for the Opt-Out Revolution. *Academy of Management Executive*, 19(1), 106-23.
- Kelly, E. L., Ammons, S. K., Chermack, K., & Moen, P. (2010). Gendered Challenge, Gendered Response: Confronting the Ideal Worker Norm in a White-Collar Organization. *Gender & Society*, 24(3), 281-303

Week 15: Resistance through collective action

- Nussbaum, K. (2007). Working Women's Insurgent Consciousness. In D. S. Cobble (Ed.), *The Sex of Class: Women Transforming American Labor* (pp. 159-176). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University ILR Press *Labor*.
- Fine, J. (2007). Worker Centers and Immigrant Women. In D. S. Cobble (ibid. pp. 211-230).

Fourth quiz