

## **(EN)GENDERING SCIENCE, & TECHNOLOGY**

Arizona State University  
WST 394 (86724) – Fall 2007  
Monday & Wednesday 1:40-2:55  
Location: ECA 219

### Instructor

Dr. Jill A. Fisher  
Office: West 212  
Phone: 480-965-3897  
Email: [jill.a.fisher@asu.edu](mailto:jill.a.fisher@asu.edu)  
Office Hours: Monday: 12:45-1:30  
Wednesday: 3:15-4:30  
Other: By appointment

## **COURSE SYLLABUS**

### Course Description

How do science and technology contribute to our understanding about what it means to be a woman or a man? Are there really “male” and “female” brains? Is sexuality hardwired in our biology or is it learned through our environments? How does gender get reinforced or challenged through our technological world?

The purpose of this course is to explore how science and technology contribute to and are shaped by gender ideals and images. We use gender as a tool for critical thinking about such topics as scientific studies of gender differences, historical and contemporary views of reproduction and sexual behavior, and the development of gendered technological systems.

### Course Content

#### *Required Text:*

- **Course Reader.** Available from AlphaGraphics, 815 W. University Dr., (480) 968-7821. [I advise that you call ahead to ensure your copy is ready for pick-up.]

*Reading:* Complete all readings (and other assignments) **prior** to the class meeting for which they are scheduled. You must bring your course reader to class each class period. In some cases, I may distribute photocopied readings to you in class. See the course outline below for details on weekly readings.

*Participation:* Through communication, ideas are formed, revised, borrowed, and developed. It is through argument, description, explanation, and improvisation – within a community – that individual learning flourishes. This course requires full participation (including active listening, facilitating, note-taking, and question-asking) to create an environment of open and shared learning. An effective participant is not someone who simply talks frequently, but someone who reliably offers thoughtful insights that help others to learn.

## Course Assignments & Grading

*Tests:* There will be two tests in this course. Tests will consist of short-answer and essay questions from the readings, lectures, and films. The first test will be administered in class on October 10, 2007. A makeup test will only be allowed with a medical excuse for a documented illness or family emergency. The makeup test will not be the same test taken by the rest of the class. There will be no exceptions to this policy. The second test will be a take-home exam distributed in class on December 3 and will be due on December 7, 2007. No tests will be accepted after December 7 at 5 PM. Students not taking the tests will receive a 0.

*In-Class Assignments:* Part of your final grade will be based on your active participation in class. This portion of your grade will consist of in-class exercises, like worksheets, writing assignments, and group activities. These activities will occur regularly throughout the course. Each in-class exercise will be worth 1 to 3 points (for a total of 35). Be aware that many of these assignments will serve as excellent review guides for the exams. The more seriously you take the assignments, the better the study guides they will be.

*Note:* If you miss an in-class exercise due to illness, family emergency, or a sports-related absence, please come and talk with me during my office hours or after class. I will do my best to accommodate you, but please note that there will be some activities, like group work, that are impossible to make up. All missed work must be made up within one week of the original assignment.

### *Grading:*

Test #1	30%
Test #2	35%
In-Class Assignments	35%

NOTE: Final grades will be whole letter grades only. There will be no plus/minus grades.

## Ground Rules

Out of respect for your classmates and yourself and in order for you to get the most from the course, please: 1) do all of the readings; 2) come to class promptly and attend regularly; 3) be courteous and respectful to one another, even in cases of disagreement; and 4) keep a sense of humor!

*Academic Honesty:* Any instance of plagiarism or cheating can be grounds for failure of the entire course or expulsion from the university. Do not copy your classmates' in-class assignments or tests, and do not allow your work to be copied by your peers! Please review the Student Code of Conduct for complete guidelines on academic honesty.

*Gender-Fair Language:* Language structures thought and action. Biases in language can (and do) naturalize inequities. Imprecise language also signifies un-interrogated values and sloppy thinking. For all of these reasons, the use of gender-fair language is expected in this course. For example, do not use words like "mankind" or "men" when referring to people in general; alternate between "she" and "he" instead of always using "he", or construct sentences in the plural instead of the singular so you can use "they" or "them" and avoid the problem altogether.

*ESL/LD Students:* Course requirements can be adjusted to serve the needs and capabilities of ESL and LD students. Please speak with me during the first two weeks of class to make arrangements. Students may be advised to attend additional sessions during my office hours so they can draw comparable value from the course.

**Disclaimer:** Finally, please be aware that this course includes topics that are controversial and may be uncomfortable. If you choose to take this class, you are responsible for completing all of the reading and written assignments. Remember that you do not have to agree with all of the material presented in this class, but you are required to read, listen, think, and write about the views presented. If you are uncomfortable with certain topics, I encourage you to discuss this with me as soon as possible so that we can determine how you will complete the assignments.

### **Course Schedule and Reading Assignments**

---

#### **Week One: Introductions**

---

August 20: Introductory Lecture

August 22: Theoretical frameworks for thinking about science and technology

**Readings:**

- Hubbard, “Science, Facts, and Feminism”
- Hess, *Science & Technology in a Multicultural World*. Chapter 2

---

#### **Week Two: Women in Science & Engineering**

---

August 27: Overview of Women’s Participation in Science & Engineering

**Readings:**

- Eisenhart & Finkel, *Women’s Science*. Chapter 1 & 2

August 29: Public Controversy about Women in Science & Engineering

**Readings:**

- Whitelegg, “Girls in Science Education”
- (Former) Harvard President’s speech at NBER conference (1/14/05)
- Barres, “Does Gender Matter?”

---

#### **Week Three: “Scientific Revolution”**

---

September 3: **NO CLASS** (Labor Day)

September 5: “Legitimate” Knowledge

**Readings:**

- Gordon, “Magic”
- Rowbotham, “Feminist Approaches to Technology”

---

**Week Four: Androcentric Science**

---

September 10: Historical Ideas about the Origins of Sex Differences

**Readings:**

- Tuana, “The Weaker Seed”

September 12: Sex under the Contemporary Microscope

**Readings:**

- Martin, “The Egg & the Sperm”
- Van den Wijngaard, “The Liberation of the Female Rodent”

---

**Week Five: Gendering Brains**

---

September 17: Historical Research on Brains and Intelligence

**Readings:**

- Gould, “Women’s Brains”
- Genova, “Women and the Mismeasure of Thought”
- Kaplan & Rogers, “Race and Gender Fallacies”

September 19: Recent Controversy over the “Female” Brain

**Readings:**

- Garofoli, “Femme Mentale”
- [www.gettoworkmanifesto.com](http://www.gettoworkmanifesto.com) comment on Brizendine
- Birke, “In Pursuit of Difference”

---

**Week Six: Scientific Constructions of Identity**

---

September 24: Historical Science on Race and Gender

**Readings:**

- Fausto-Sterling, “Gender, Race, and Nation”
- Terazawa, “Racialising of Bodies”

September 26: Female Criminality

**Readings:**

- Horn, “This Norm Which is not One”
- Kowalsky, “Who’s Responsible for Female Crime?”

---

**Week Seven: Science of Sexuality**

---

October 1: (Ab)Normal Female Sexuality

**Readings:**

- Groneman, “Nymphomania”
- Barker-Benfield, “Sexual Surgeries in Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century America”

October 3: Research on Homosexuality

**Readings:**

- Terry, “Anxious Slippages Between ‘Us’ and ‘Them’”

---

**Week Eight: Science of Sexuality Continued**

---

October 8: Contemporary Research on Sexual Dysfunction

**Readings:**

- Marshall, “Hard Science”
- Fishman, “Sex, Drugs, and Clinical Research”

October 10: **Mid-Term**

---

**Week Nine: Women and Technology**

---

October 15: Film (no readings)

October 17: Revising History

**Readings:**

- Stanley, “Women Hold Up Two-Thirds of the Sky”
- McGaw, “Why Feminine Technologies Matter”

---

**Week Ten: Technologies in the Home**

---

October 22: More Work for Mother?

**Readings:**

- Cowan, “The ‘Industrial Revolution’ in the Home”

October 24: Making Appliances Indispensable

**Readings:**

- Goldstein, “From Service to Sales”
- Rosen, “Are We Worthy of Our Kitchens”

---

## **Week Eleven: Car Culture**

---

October 29: Gendered Distinctions

**Readings:**

- Scharff, “Femininity and the Electric Car”
- Shackelford, “Masculinity, Hierarchy, and the Auto Racing Fraternity”

October 31: Cultural Meanings of Automobility

**Readings:**

- Jain, “Violent Submission”

---

## **Week Twelve: Technology and the Body**

---

November 5: Hair Removal

**Readings:**

- Herzig, “Removing Roots”
- Toerien & Wilkensen, “Gender and Body Hair”

November 7: Plastic Surgery

**Readings:**

- Morgan, “Women and the Knife”
- Davis, “Re-Making the She-Devil”

---

## **Week Thirteen: Technology and the Body Continued**

---

November 12: **NO CLASS** (Veteran’s Day)

November 14: Non-Conforming Bodies

**Readings:**

- Kessler, “The Medical Construction of Gender”
- Elliott, “A New Way To Be Mad”

---

## **Week Fourteen: Technology and Sexuality**

---

November 19: Vibrators, etc.

**Readings:**

- Maines, “Socially Camouflaged Technologies”
- McCaughey & French, “Women’s Sex-Toy Parties”

November 21: “Trans” bodies

**Readings:**

- Stone, “The ‘Empire’ Strikes Back”
- Garber, “Spare Parts”

---

**Week Fifteen: Reproductive Technologies**

---

November 26: Women’s Birth Control

**Readings:**

- Explore the content of PBS’s website on the Pill:  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/pill/>
- Kaler, “The Female Condom in North America”
- Bunkle, “Calling the Shots?”

November 28: Men’s Birth Control

**Readings:**

- Mar, “Jagged Little Pill”
- van Kammen & Oudshoorn, “Gender & Risk Assessment in Contraceptive Technologies”

---

**Week Sixteen: Information Technologies**

---

December 3: Gendering Computing & Gaming

**Readings:**

- Light, “Programming”
- Stone, “End of Innocence, Part II”

December 7: **Take Home Exam Due at 5 PM**