

GENDER AND WORK IN RURAL AMERICA
Community and Environmental Sociology / Sociology / Gender and Women's Studies 215
SPRING 2013

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SUBJECT MATTER AND OBJECTIVES:

This course focuses on gender and work within the spatial context known as "rural America." Mining, forestry, and farming traditionally have been considered rural work, but increasingly other types of economic activity are found in nonmetropolitan places because of the availability of certain resources. Some industries are drawn to rural areas by plentiful water or land; environmental concerns that make metropolitan locations problematic have pushed some industries to rural areas. Some employers have been drawn to rural places by yet another economic resource: rural labor. Sometimes, the hard-working rural labor force attracts industries. In other cases, employers are simply looking to lower their production costs by hiring "cheap labor."

We will study the sociological concepts and theories necessary to understand work, industry, and gender as they operate in places outside of US cities. In the course of our study and readings, we will look at the character of work, its forms and consequences in a variety of settings and for a variety of peoples. The gender implications of traditional and new forms of work in rural settings and industries will be at the center of these examinations. Issues of class, race, and citizenship are also important in rural divisions of labor and this course is sensitive to these dimensions.

As a result of this course, students should develop an understanding of how both gender and space matter in the organization and outcomes of work. You should develop a sociological view of the problem, an understanding of sociological research and analysis, and an ability to apply sociological concepts and theories to "the real world."

REQUIRED TEXTS: Available for purchase from A Room of One's Own bookstore

- Irene Padavic and Barbara Reskin. 2002. *Women and Men at Work- Second Edition*. (Pine Forge Press)
- Deborah Fink. 1998. *Cutting into the Meatpacking Line: Workers and Change in the Rural Midwest*. (UNC Press)
- Daniel Rothenberg. 2000. *With These Hands: The Hidden World of Migrant Farmworkers Today*. (University of California Press)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS and GRADING:

We will read the books listed above in their entirety. Additional assigned readings will be available through LearnUW. The schedule for reading is in the course outline of this syllabus. Although I do not lecture *on* the books, *per se*, I try to make linkages to the assigned reading. Thus, it will be helpful for you to have the assigned reading done before coming to lecture. You will be expected to have all the reading done for the week by time your discussion section meets. Discussion sections provide the opportunity to analyze and discuss the assigned reading, to apply the theories, and to amplify the concepts and theories. *You will be well prepared for the exams if you take the reading seriously, start early, keep up, and outline as you go.*

Attendance will be taken in lecture and sections. In lecture, you will need to swipe your student ID through a card reader which will track your attendance. If your final grade is bordering on the next highest grade, excellent attendance will boost your grade.

There will be three exams composed of multiple-choice, short answer, and essay-type questions covering assigned reading, films, lectures, and discussion section activities for that part of the course (exams are not cumulative). The essay questions will be integrative in nature and will emphasize application of theories and analysis of the books. I anticipate that the exams will be given on the dates indicated in the syllabus but reserve the right to change to a later date with advance notice in class and by e-mail. The last exam will be given on the last day of lecture - May 8. Please plan accordingly.

Students with Disabilities: Please contact me early in the semester if you have a documented requirement for accommodation to obtain equal access to this class or any of its requirements. If you have any questions about this I hope you will also feel free to contact me. I am quite willing to work with students to find the best way to achieve this accommodation.

Grading:

Lecture and Readings:

3 Exams 25% each

Section activities and assignments .. 25%

see section syllabus for details

Grade cut-off, percent of total points

A 93-100

AB 89-92.99

B 83-88.99

BC 79-82.99

C 70-78.99

D 60-69.99

F <60

Make-up exams will be allowed only in cases of properly documented personal/family emergency or illness. The format of make-up exams may vary from the original at my discretion.

Cheating (including plagiarism) is not tolerated. Students who are caught cheating will automatically receive an F (zero points) for the relevant assignment/exam. In addition, the incident will be reported in writing to the Dean of your school or college as well as the Dean of Students so that they may decide whether further disciplinary action is needed. A clear definition of plagiarism and information about disciplinary sanctions for academic misconduct can be found at the Dean of Students website <http://www.wisc.edu/students/saja/misconduct/misconduct.html>. It is your responsibility as a UW student to be knowledgeable of these rules; lack of familiarity with the rules will not excuse misconduct.

Religious observances and other anticipated absences: Please let me and Ms. Healey-Etten know at the beginning of the semester about any dates you will be absent from class for religious or other reasons.

Email- Announcements and updates will be emailed to the classlist and posted on the NEWS section of the course website. However, you are responsible for knowing what is announced in lecture and discussion sections.

Learn@UW will be used for this class. Check it for content, announcements, supporting documents, grades, and use it to upload assignments.

Common courtesies are expected. Please remember that the classroom is a place for learning. That means that your CELL PHONE IS TURNED OFF while class is in session and that you do not engage in behaviors that place barriers to your and others' learning. Examples include sleeping, chatting, eating, and other distracting actions.

No laptops or other internet devices including ipads (tablets) or smartphones. While computers are a valuable tool for research and study, they are inimical to respect, participation and collegiality in the classroom, creating a "cone of distraction." The use of laptops for note taking or other purposes in class, therefore, will not be permitted.

SCHEDULE of ASSIGNED READINGS and EXAMS:

Part 1. Sex segregation and sex inequality at work

(Lectures - sociological theories of gender and work, importance of place and space)

- 1/23 Welcome and overview; Part 1 of film *MissRepresentation* (more of it will be shown later)
- 1/28 Padavic and Reskin, *Women and Men at Work*, Chapter 1 "Work and Gender" and Chapter 2 "Gendered work in time and place"
- 1/30 Padavic and Reskin, Chapter 3 "An Overview of Sex Inequality at Work"
- 2/4 Padavic and Reskin, Chapter 4 "Sex Segregation in the Workplace"
- 2/6 Readings on LearnUW to be announced (TBA)
- 2/11 Padavic and Reskin, Chapter 5 "Moving Up and Taking Charge"
- 2/13 Padavic and Reskin, Chapter 6 "Sex Differences in Earnings"
- 2/18 Readings on LearnUW (TBA)
- 2/20 Padavic and Reskin, Chapter 7 "Paid Work and Family Work"
- 2/25 Readings on LearnUW (TBA)
- 2/27 Readings on LearnUW (TBA)
- 3/4 Exam 1**

Part 2. New workers and employment relations: gender, race, ethnicity, class and community
(Lectures: Relations between bosses and workers, relations among workers)

3/6 A film will be shown in lecture, discussed in section; Readings on LearnUW (TBA)

3/11 Readings on LearnUW (TBA)

3/13 Fink, *Cutting into the Meatpacking Line*, Introduction, Chapter 1

3/18 Fink, Chapter 2 - the history and context "Perry and meatpacking"

3/20 Fink, Chapter 3 - "Working Through Gender"

~~~~~Spring Break~~~~~

4/1 Fink, Chapter 4 - "Race/Ethnicity and Rural Iowa Workers"

4/3 Fink, Chapter 5 & Epilogue - "The Workings of Class"

**4/8 Exam 2**

**Part 3. Class relations and global workers: Farmworkers and farmers**  
(Lectures: theories of social class and social status)

4/10 A film will be shown in lecture, discussed in section; Readings on LearnUW (TBA)

4/15 Rothenberg, *With These Hands*, Foreword, Preface, Chapters 1-2 (farmworkers)

4/17 Rothenberg, Chapters 3-4 (growers and contractors)

4/22 Rothenberg, Chapters 5-6 (the border; debt-peonage)

4/24 Rothenberg, Chapters 7-8 (US communities; political/legal issues)

4/29 Rothenberg, Chapters 9-10 (farmworker unions; migrant children)

5/1 Rothenberg, Chapter 11 and epilogue (Mexican rancheros)

5/6 TBA

**5/8 Exam 3 (no discussion section this week)**