

# ED 165: EDUCATING WOMEN & GIRLS

Tufts University  
Department of Education  
Spring 2014  
Tuesdays 1:20-4:20  
Paige Hall 007 (Garden room)

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## WELCOME

This seminar will examine gendered processes in schooling with a focus on girls and young women from early childhood to postsecondary education. We'll explore a range of topics including popular narratives of girlhood in the United States (e.g. "mean girls," sexual deviance), the notion of girls' academic underachievement relative to boys, and teenage motherhood. Special attention will be paid to how the construction of femininities and girlhood/womanhood varies by race, class, and sexuality, and as girls interact with one another, boys, adults, the media and music, and various institutions. The last few weeks will be devoted to analyzing key issues around girls' education outside the United States, and interrogating Anglocentrism in depictions of "the third world girl."

## OBJECTIVES

In this course you will:

1. Develop an understanding of key debates around the education of girls today.
2. Examine gender inequality across femininities and notions of girlhood/womanhood.
3. Analyze how dominant Western views of education have impacted depictions of girls' schooling in non-US contexts.
4. Sharpen your feminist thinking through intensive writing assignments and other independent and collaborative work.

## COURSE EXPECTATIONS

*Do your best.*

*Ask questions.* They're often more valuable than comments. Let me know if you're confused or something is unclear. You've heard it before, and it's true: there are no dumb questions. If you have a question, there's an excellent chance others in class have the same one, and they'll appreciate you for asking it.

***Come ready to participate.*** In-class participation takes many forms, including asking questions, clarifying points, and completing written assignments. You need to complete all the required reading in order to participate meaningfully in class. Of course, in-class participation is impossible unless you attend. Please bring the readings to class.

***Complete the assignments.***

***Be respectful.*** While you're encouraged to critique the materials and each other's ideas, always do so respectfully. Be mindful of the fact that your classmates and I represent an array of viewpoints and life experiences.

***Be open to new and alternative ways of thinking.*** You should actively seek to adopt different ways of seeing education and the social world. How might these different approaches advance your understanding and knowledge, even if those approaches are unfamiliar or uncomfortable?

***Be academically honest.*** Our course will abide strictly by the guidelines laid out in the Tufts Statement of Academic Integrity, available at:

- <http://ase.tufts.edu/biology/bguides/classes/tahonesty.htm>

A comprehensive review of university policies is available at:

- <http://uss.tufts.edu/studentaffairs/publicationsandwebsites/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

This requires you to cite appropriately, understand what constitutes plagiarism, and consult me before submitting a paper in this class and another class. Possible violations of the policies outlined in the Statement of Academic Honesty will be reported to the Office of the Dean of Students.

## **REQUIRED TEXTS**

***Course reader.*** A course reader is available for purchase at Gnomon Copy Center at 348 Boston Avenue.

***Books.*** There are three required books. You can purchase them at the campus bookstore, though I'd recommend finding cheap copies online. They are, in the order we'll read them:

Jones, N. (2009.) *Between Good and Ghetto: African American Girls and Inner City Violence.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Luttrell, W. (2003). *Pregnant Bodies, Fertile Minds: Gender, Race, and the Schooling of Pregnant Teens.* New York: Routledge.

Ellis, D. (2001). *The Breadwinner.* New York: Greenwood.

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

***Attendance and participation [20%].*** Come prepared to discuss the readings. You'll be penalized for any absence—excused or unexcused—though you can complete a make-up assignment if the absence is excused; check in with Freedon. Please notify before class if you expect to be absent.

***Personal gender narrative [5%].*** A 2 pp. double-spaced description of a poignant memory of a gendered experience from your schooling, or that of someone close to you. You'll continue to think of this narrative in relation to theories and

concepts we learn in class, which will prepare you for your final paper. This short narrative need only be descriptive; in other words, you don't have to theorize or analyze it. Just be detailed and share whatever you think is important. It's due by 10 am on Tuesday, February 4. Please include your name and the date at the top, and save the file like this:

LASTNAME\_FirstName\_Ed165\_Sp14\_GenderNarrative  
ex. JONES\_Nikki\_Ed165\_Sp14\_GenderNarrative

**Midterm exam [20]%**. An open book, open note take-home exam that will consist of two or three brief essays that respond to major questions raised in the first half the course. You'll have a ten day window to pick it up and 72 hours to complete it. We'll generate some possible essay prompts as a class.

**Analytic memos [25%]**. For each 2 pp. double-spaced memo you'll analyze one issue that cuts across the set of readings for that day. You're required to write one memo for any five classes you choose. The memo is due electronically to me by 10am the day of class. Please include your name, the class # and topic, and the memo # at the top of the first page. You don't need to include a list of references. Please save the file like this:

LASTNAME\_FirstName\_Ed165\_Sp14\_Memo#

The point of a memo is for you to critically analyze that specific class's assigned readings. You should focus on making one point and avoid summarizing. Thinking about connections between and among the readings—deeper themes, assumptions, etc.—will make for stronger memos. It's not required, but your memo might, for example, identify a single larger question that all of the readings are addressing; the purpose of your memo would be to answer the question in a way that synthesizes insights across the readings. Or, you could identify a short quote from one reading that resonates across all the texts, and analyze why that's so.

To maximize and promote class participation, I'll often ask those who wrote a memo for that day to share some of their ideas with the class. Each memo is worth 5% of your overall grade, but the entire set will be graded holistically.

**Final paper [30%]**. After a semester of grappling with concepts and theories, you'll take what you've learned to analyze your gender narrative (or another experience from your schooling) in a formal 10 pp. paper that's due at the last class.

## **GRADING SCALE**

A+	100
A	97.5
A/A-	95
A-	92.5
A-/B+	90
B+	88.5
B+/B	87
B	85
B/B-	83

B- 81.5  
[...]

## CONTACTING FREEDEN

Feel free to email me at [Freeden.Oeur@tufts.edu](mailto:Freeden.Oeur@tufts.edu). So your email doesn't get lost, make sure to include a subject in the subject line and the course number (Ed 165).

## ELECTRONICS

While you're free to use your laptop if you prefer to type up your class notes, I expect that you will not use class time to browse the internet (unless you're doing so for class purposes). Electronics can distract everyone. As for phones, unless you tell me before class that there's an emergency and you need to respond to an incoming call, you are **not** allowed to have them out during class.

## ACTIVE READING & READING CRITICALLY

*Why.* Reading critically is a skill that requires practice. Doing it often will enhance both class discussion and help you when it comes time to write and to create your final projects.

*Main questions.* For each of the readings, ask yourself:

- Why should I care about the topic?
- What is the author's or authors' main idea/thesis?
- What does this argument remind me of (other readings, real life experiences and examples)?
- How does this text relate to education and schooling?
- What are the text's strengths (ones the author or authors identify, and ones that you infer)?
- What are the text's limitations (ones the author or authors identify, and ones that you infer)?
- Is there anything on the blog that relates to the text?

*Annotating.* This is the process of engaging actively with a text by marking it up. Use whatever annotation system works best for you. I suggest you:

- Read the abstract, then skim the entire text, the introduction next, then the conclusion, before diving into the text with the weekly and main questions in mind.
- Highlight (preferably with a pen in the margins) or underline the thesis and main pieces of evidence.
- Note confusing passages or questions you have.
- Explicitly highlight other texts, blog posts/comments, class comments, etc. that bear directly on the reading.
- Develop some kind of notation system ("?" for a question, etc.).

A helpful online annotation guide is available at:

- <http://guides.hcl.harvard.edu/sixreadinghabits>

## **RESOURCES**

**Trunk.** This will have everything pertinent to the course including announcements and course materials.

- <https://trunk.tufts.edu/xsl-portal>.

**Office Hours.** Students who make use of office hours tend to do better in class. Feel free to stop by with a classmate. The time will be more productive if you come prepared with specific concerns and questions.

**Writing.** Check out Purdue University's excellent Online Writing Lab (OWL), available at:

- <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

It has a great overview of APA formatting, which you should use for all papers in this class. You should also take advantage of the writing tutoring available through the Academic Resource Center:

- <http://uss.tufts.edu/arc/writingtutoring>

**Accommodations.** Please let me know if you require any academic accommodations.

**Citing Sources.** Please use APA (American Psychological Association) formatting. The Purdue OWL website has an excellent overview of this, as well as the Tufts Library website:

- <http://researchguides.library.tufts.edu/content.php?pid=49832&sid=366072>

## **SCHEDULE**

### **Class 1 – January 21 – Introduction / Theories of Gender**

Rich, A. (1977). Claiming an education. Speech delivered at the convocation of Douglass College.

### **Class 2 – January 28 – Theories of Gender / Historical Perspectives**

Williams, J. (2013). Girls can be anything... but boys will be boys: Discourses of sex difference in education reform debates. *Nevada Law Journal*, 13, 533-546.

West, C., and D. Zimmerman. (1987.) Doing gender. *Gender & Society*, 1(2), 125-151.

The Wellesley College Center for Research on Women. (1992). *How Schools Shortchange Girls: A Study of Major Findings on Girls and Education*. Washington, DC: American Association of University Women Educational Foundation.

### Class 3 – February 4 – Mean Girls & The New Girl Order

- Nayak, A., and M. J. Kehily. (2008). *Gender, Youth, and Culture: Young Masculinities and Femininities*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan. (Ch. 4, Gender relations in late-modernity: Young femininities and the new girl order)
- Merten, D. E. (1997). The meaning of meanness: Popularity, competition, and conflict among junior high school girls. *Sociology of Education*, 70(3), 175-191.
- Jewett, L. (2005). Power beads, body glitter, and backseat bad-asses: Girls, power, and position on the school bus. In P. J. Bettis & N. G. Adams (Eds.), *Geographies of Girlhood: Identities In-Between* (pp. 35-52). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

**\*\*2 PP. GENDER NARRATIVE DUE BY 10 AM TODAY. BE PREPARED TO SHARE IT WITH THE CLASS\*\***

### Class 4 – February 11 – Young Children

- Reay, D. (2001). "Spice girls," "nice girls," "girlies," and "tomboys": Gender discourses, girls' cultures, and femininities in the primary classroom. *Gender and Education*, 13(2), 153-166.
- Thorne, B. (1993). *Gender Play: Girls and Boys in School*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. (Ch. 3, Boys and girls together... but mostly apart; Ch. 4, Gender separation: Why and how)

### Class 5 – February 18 – Sexual Subjectivities

- Renold, E. (2005). *Girls, Boys, and Junior Sexualities*. London: RoutledgeFalmer. (Ch. 5: Girls, girlfriends, and (hetero)sexualities: Pleasure, power, and danger)
- Eder, D., C. C. Evans, & S. Parker. (1997). *School Talk: Gender and Adolescent Culture*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. (Ch. 8, "We may be friends with them, but we're not sluts")
- Weekes, D. (2004). Where my girls at? Black girls and the construction of the sexual. In A. Harris (Ed.), *All About the Girl: Culture, Power, and Identity* (pp. 141-153). New York: Routledge.

### Class 6 – February 25 – Intersections of Race and Class

- Jones, N. (2009.) *Between Good and Ghetto: African American Girls and Inner City Violence*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. [BOOK]

### Class 7 – March 4 – Teenage Motherhood

- Luttrell, W. (2003). *Pregnant Bodies, Fertile Minds: Gender, Race, and the Schooling of Pregnant Teens*. New York: Routledge. [BOOK]

### Class 8 – March 11 – NO CLASS / TAKE-HOME MIDTERM EXAM

**\*\*MARCH 18 – SPRING BREAK\*\***

### **Class 9 – March 25 – Postsecondary Education**

- Kimmel, M. (2000). Saving the males: The sociological implications of the Virginia Military Institute and the Citadel. *Gender and Society*, 14(4), 494-516.
- Miller-Bernal, L., & Poulson, S. L. (2006.) The state of women's colleges today. In L. Miller-Bernal & S. L. Poulson (Eds.), *Challenged by Coeducation: Women's Colleges Since the 1960s* (pp. 375-388). Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.
- Diprete, T. A., & Buchmann, C. A. *The Rise of Women: The Growing Gender Gap in Education and What it Means for American Schools*. New York: Russell Sage. (Ch. 2, What has happened? Describing the reversal of the gender gap in college completion; Ch. 3, Changing incentives and opportunities for higher education)

### **Class 10 – April 1 – Anglocentrism, “The Third World Girl,” and Postcolonial Feminism**

- Ellis, D. (2001). *The Breadwinner*. New York: Groundwood. [BOOK]
- Sensory, O., & E. Marshall. (2010). Missionary girl power: Saving the “third world” girl one girl at a time. *Gender and Education*, 22(3), 295-311.
- Griffin, C. (2004). Good girls, bad girls: Anglocentrism and diversity in the constitution of contemporary girlhood. In A. Harris (Ed.), *All About the Girl: Culture, Power, and Identity* (pp. 29-44). New York: Routledge.
- Hart, M. (2008). *A Guide for Using The Breadwinner in the Classroom: Based on the Novel Written by Deborah Ellis*. Westminster, CA: Teacher Created Resources, Inc. (Excerpts)

### **Class 11 – April 8 – Africa**

- Nussbaum, M. (2003). Women's education: A global challenge. *Signs*, 29(2), 325-255.
- Lesorogol, C. K. (2008). Setting themselves apart: Education, capabilities, and sexuality among Samburu women in Kenya. *Anthropological Quarterly*, 81(3), 551-577.
- Mirembe, R., & L. Davies. (2001). Is schooling a risk? Gender, power relations, and school culture in Uganda. *Gender and Education*, 13(4), 401-416.

### **Class 12 – April 15 – Open Topics**

### **Class 13 – April 22 – Scholars' Lunch Party**

**\*\*FINAL PAPERS DUE ELECTRONICALLY BY THE START OF CLASS\*\***