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# Seminar in Gender & Communication

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COMM 850 — Fall 2007

Professor: Dr. Kristen Lucas  
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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays @ 2:00-4:00. Other times by appointment or chance.

## Role & Mission Statement

The role and mission of the faculty and students of the Department of Communication Studies are to examine human symbolic activity as it shapes and is shaped by relationships, institutions, and societies. This work concerns the creation, analysis, and critique of messages. The Department's research, teaching, and service devote particular attention to understanding the ways in which communication erodes and sustains collaboration within and among local, national, and global communities.

## Course Perspective & Objectives

This course is designed to examine the relationship(s) between gender and communication. Primary emphasis will be on gender (i.e., women/female/feminism, men/male/masculinity[ies], and gendered/sexual identities) in organizational contexts. Additionally, we also will devote attention to family communication and rhetoric/culture contexts.

The objectives of this course are to:

- Gain exposure to a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches to studying gender and communication
- Read and evaluate current research at the intersection of communication and gender
- Focus on contexts that parallel the Communication Studies Department's three focus areas: organizational, interpersonal and family communication, and rhetoric and culture

## Required Reading

Buzzanell, P. M., Sterk, H., & Turner, L. H. (Eds.). (2004). *Gender in applied communication contexts*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dow, B. J., & Wood, J. T. (Eds.). (2006). *Sage handbook of gender and communication*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lynch, C. (2007). *Juki girls, good girls: Gender and cultural politics in Sri Lanka's global garment industry*. Ithaca, NY: ILR Press.

Reading pack (available in the Communication Studies office).

## Grading & Expectations

*Grading.* Your final grade will be determined based on your performance on the following weighted assessments:

	Weight	Grade
Take-Home Exam	25%	_____
Article Presentation	10%	_____
Project Proposal	10%	_____
Project	40%	_____
Participation	15%	_____

*Take-Home Exam.* The take-home exam will be comparable to a typical “comps question” (with the exception, of course, that it is a *take-home* exam). That is, you will be asked to demonstrate your mastery of the subject developing carefully argued essays that synthesize, apply, and/or extend the readings from this course.

*Article Presentation.* The articles we read in this course are only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to gender and communication. You will be asked to present a summary of one scholarly research article of your choosing related to the respective week’s topic area. You will sign up for your week on the first night of class.

*Project Proposal.* The project proposal is designed to get you thinking early in the semester about your final project and to ensure that your efforts will be on track before the final project is due.

*Project.* The purpose of the project is for you to do a project that is personally meaningful and showcases your in-depth knowledge of gender and communication. It may be done individually or in small groups. Possible formats include, but are not limited to: writing a conference-quality paper (I promise to have detailed feedback to you prior to NCA’s February deadline), proposing a research study, writing an extended literature review (suitable for publication in *Communication Yearbook* or *Review of Communication*), doing a gendered analysis of an existing dataset, doing a gendered analysis of organizational practices (e.g., work-life programs, sexual harassment policies), doing a content analysis of a media outlet and/or advertising campaign.

*Participation.* You are expected to participate actively in the course. In order to do so, you should prepare yourself by reading assignments before class and thinking critically about the material. Participation is not limited only to “having the answers.” Some of the liveliest and most interesting conversations are sparked by *questions* instead of *answers*. Therefore, you can participate in a variety of meaningful ways, including asking clarification questions, critiquing a research approach or theory, and sharing personal experiences that confirm or contradict what you have read, to name only a few. Although I will encourage you to challenge ideas, I also will demand that you show respect for the people who share differing viewpoints in support of a climate that encourages participation from everyone.

*Academic Honesty.* Academic honesty and integrity is expected in this course. Any student who is found to have engaged in an act of academic dishonesty (e.g., cheating, plagiarism, complicity) will *automatically fail the assignment* (and possibly the course). Additionally, he or she will be reported to his or her respective graduate director for further action. Ignorance of the rules is not an excuse for academic dishonesty. See Section 4.2 of the Student Code of Conduct (<http://stuafs.unl.edu/three.html>) for definitions of what constitutes academic dishonesty.

### **ADA Statement**

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructor for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation. It is the policy of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration, 472-3787 voice or TTY.

## Course Schedule

\* = Article not in reading pack. Waiting on copies.

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**Week 1** Introduction to the course  
8/29

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**Week 2** Verbal Communication: Sex Differences & Gender Socialization  
9/5

Barnett, R. C., & Rivers, C. (2004, September 3). Men are from Earth, and so are women: It's faculty research that sets them apart. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, pp. B11-B13.

Holmstrom, A., Burleson, B., & Jones, S. (2005). Some consequences for helpers who deliver "cold comfort": Why it's worse for women than men to be inept when providing emotional support. *Sex Roles*, 53(3/4), 153-172.

MacGeorge, E. L., Graves, A. R., Feng, B., Gillihan, S. J., & Burleson, B. R. (2004). The myth of gender cultures: Similarities outweigh differences in men's and women's provision of and responses to supportive communication. *Sex Roles*, 50(3/4), 143-175.

Duggan, A. (2007). Sex differences in communicative attempts to curtail depression: An inconsistent nurturing as control perspective. *Western Journal of Communication*, 71(2), 114-135.

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**Week 3** Gender in Interpersonal & Family Communication  
9/12

Galvin, K. (2006). Gender and family interaction: Dress rehearsal for an improvisation? In B. J. Dow & J. T. Wood (Eds.), *Sage handbook of gender and communication* (pp. 41-55). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Pennington, B. A., & Turner, L. H. (2004). Playground or training ground? The function of talk in African American and European American mother-adolescent daughter dyads. In P. M. Buzzanell, H. Sterk & L. H. Turner (Eds.), *Gender in applied communication contexts* (pp. 275-294). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Floyd, K. & Morman, M. T. (2000). Affection received from fathers as a predictor of men's affection with their own sons: Tests of the modeling and compensation hypotheses. *Communication Monographs*, 67, 347-361.

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**Week 4**      Gender and Work-Life Balance

9/19

- Medved, C. E., Brogan, S. M., McClanahan, A. M., Morris, J. F., & Shepherd, G. J. (2006). Family and work socializing communication: Messages, gender, and ideological implications. *Journal of Family Communication, 6*, 161-180.
- Kirby, E. L., & Krone, K. J. (2002). "The policy exists but you can't really use it": Communication and the structuration of work-family policies. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 30*, 50-77.
- Duckworth, J., & Buzzanell, P. M. (2007). *Performing fatherhood: Masculine and caregiving identity(ies) in work-family contexts*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the International Communication Association, San Francisco, CA.
- Edley, P. P. (2004). Entrepreneurial mothers' balance of work and family: Discursive constructions of time, mothering, and identity. In P. M. Buzzanell, H. Sterk & L. H. Turner (Eds.), *Gender in applied communication contexts* (pp. 255-273). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

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**Week 5**      Gender in Organizations (Part 1)

9/26

- Martin, J. (2000). Hidden gendered assumptions in mainstream organizational theory and research. *Journal of Management Inquiry, 9*, 207-216.
- Mumby, D. K., & Putnam, L. L. (1992). The politics of emotion: A feminist reading of bounded rationality. *Academy of Management Review, 17*, 465-486.
- Mumby, D. K., & Ashcraft, K. L. (2006). Organizational communication studies and gendered organization: A response to Martin and Collinson. *Gender, Work, and Organization, 13*, 68-90.
- Harter, L. M. (2004). Masculinity(s), the agrarian frontier myth, and cooperative forms of organizing. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 32*, 89-118.

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**Week 6**      Gender in Organizations (Part 2)

10/3

- Trethewey, A., Scott, C., & LeGreco, M. (2006). Constructing embodied organizational identities: Commodifying, securing, and servicing professional bodies. In B. J. Dow & J. T. Wood (Eds.), *Sage handbook of gender and communication* (pp. 123-141). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Buzzanell, P. M. (2001). Gendered practices in the contemporary workplace: A critique of what often constitutes front page news in the Wall Street Journal. *Management Communication Quarterly, 14*, 517-537.

Tracy, S. J., & Scott, C. (2006). Sexuality, masculinity, and taint management among firefighters and correctional officers. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 20, 6-38.

Jorgenson, J. (2002). Engineering selves: negotiating gender and identity in technical work. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 15, 350-380.

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**Week 7**      Gender and Career Communication

10/10

Buzzanell, P. M., & Lucas, K. (2006). Gendered stories of career: Unfolding discourses of time, space, and identity. In B. J. Dow & J. T. Wood (Eds.), *Sage handbook of gender and communication* (pp. 161-178). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Trethewey, A. (2001). Reproducing and resisting the master narrative of decline: Midlife professional women's experiencing of aging. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 15, 183-226.

Lucas, K., & Buzzanell, P. M. (2004). Blue-collar work, career, and success: Occupational narratives of sisu. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 32, 273-292.

Spradlin, A. L. (1998). The price of "passing": A lesbian perspective on authenticity in organizations. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 11, 598-605.

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**Week 8**      Gender in Rhetorical Contexts

10/17

Beasley, V. B. (2006). Gender in political communication research: The problem with having no name. In B. J. Dow & J. T. Wood (Eds.), *Sage handbook of gender and communication* (pp. 201-214). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Stormer, N. (2006). A vexing relationship: Gender and contemporary rhetorical theory. In B. J. Dow & J. T. Wood (Eds.), *Sage handbook of gender and communication* (pp. 247-262). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Abbott, J. Y. (2006). Religion and gender in the news: The case of Promise Keepers, feminists, and the "Stand in the Gap" rally. *Journal of Communication & Religion*, 29, 224-261.

\* Fahey, A. C. (2007). French and feminine: Hegemonic masculinity and the emasculation of John Kerry in the 2004 presidential race. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 24, 132-150.

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**Week 9** Feminist Communication  
10/24

Buzzanell, P. M. (1994). Gaining a voice: Feminist organizational communication theorizing. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 7, 339-383.

Dow, B. J., & Condit, C. M. (2005). The state of the art in feminist scholarship in communication. *Journal of Communication*, 55, 448-478.

Meyers, M. (2004). Crack mothers in the news: A narrative of paternalistic racism. *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 28, 194-216.

Droogsma, R. A. (2007). Redefining hijab: American Muslim women's standpoints on veiling. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 35, 294-319.

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**Week 10** Masculinity Studies  
10/31

Ashcraft, K. L. (2005). Resistance through consent? Occupational identity, organizational form, and the maintenance of masculinity among commercial airline pilots. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 19, 67-90.

Mumby, D. K. (1998). Organizing men: Power, discourse, and the social construction of masculinity(s) in the workplace. *Communication Theory*, 8, 164-183.

Firminger, K. B. (2006). Is he boyfriend material? Representation of males in teenage girls' magazines. *Men & Masculinities*, 8, 298-308.

\* Waymer, D. (in press). A man: An autoethnographic analysis of black male identity negotiation. *Qualitative Inquiry*.

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**Week 11** Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Communication  
11/7

Bergen, K. M., Suter, E. A., & Daas, K. L. (2006). "About as solid as a fish net": Symbolic construction of a legitimate parental identity for nonbiological lesbian mothers. *Journal of Family Communication*, 6, 201-220.

Goltz, D. B. (2007). Laughing at absence: Instinct magazine and the hyper-masculine gay future? *Western Journal of Communication*, 71, 93-113.

\* Means Coleman, R. R., & Cobb, J. (2007). No way of seeing: Mainstreaming and selling the gaze of homo-thug hip-hop. *Popular Communication*, 5, 89-108.

Schuh, C. A. (2006). Being Lisa: Discourses of gender and transsexual identity. *Kaleidoscope: A Graduate Journal of Qualitative Communication Research*, 5, 35-56.

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**Week 12**    **NO CLASS – NCA Conference, Chicago, IL**  
11/14

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**Week 13**    **NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Break**  
11/21

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**Week 14**    Gender in a Global Context  
11/28

Lynch, C. (2007). *Juki girls, good girls: Gender and cultural politics in Sri Lanka's global garment industry*. Ithaca, NY: ILR Press.

Hedge, R. S. (2006). Globalizing gender studies in communication. In B. J. Dow & J. T. Wood (Eds.), *Sage handbook of gender and communication* (pp. 433-449). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

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**Week 15**    Darkside of Gender  
12/5

Ashcraft, K. L., & Flores, L. A. (2003). "Slaves with white collars": Persistent performances of masculinity in crisis. *Text & Performance Quarterly*, 23, 1-29.

Dougherty, D. S. (2001). Sexual harassment as [dys]functional process: A feminist standpoint analysis. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 29, 372-402.

Eguchi, S. (2006). Social and internalized homophobia as a source of conflict: How can we improve the quality of communication? *Review of Communication*, 6, 348-357.

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**Week 16**    Course Wrap-Up  
12/12