Jaroslava Gajdosova, Ph.D.
Email: jg3553@nyu.edu
Class time: Tuesday and Thursday 12:00-13:20 p.m.
Office hours: Thursday: Tuesday 1:30-2:30, Faculty room (main building)

Course description: This course will provide a comparative cultural analysis of gender inequalities in a globalizing world, focusing on spheres of market, politics, and culture. The main aim of this course is to help students understand arbitrary nature of gender inequalities arguing that origins of these inequalities lie in social conditions under which men and women function rather than in their biological predispositions. The course will address two distinct questions about gender identity in a globalizing world: “How can women become who they want to be?” and “Who do men want to become?” The course is structured around two topics: the first one focuses on similarities and differences between the postcommunist "East" and the globalizing "western" world. The second explores how the understanding of gender’s social significance has changed in response to the fall of communism in Eastern Europe and a newly introduced free market economy, division of public and private spheres, and an overall “westernization” of postcommunist societies. In this comparative context, students will identify dominant gender ideologies, stereotypes and myths and locate different social institutions—such as work place, labor market, politics, and family—that continue to perpetuate gender inequalities to various degrees in the "East" and the "West". Texts studied in this course will provoke conventional perception of femininity and masculinity as (relatively) stable categories of identity and will show how a shared belief in these categories facilitates an uneven distribution of power along gender lines. Students will explore how access to power and the corresponding gender asymmetries are reproduced, reinforced, challenged, undermined and transformed in a globalizing world. Debates in this course will be profusely supported by visual materials, including films, documentaries, video clips, internet resources, and will revolve around the topics like public/political vs. private/domestic, body, beauty and market, war, media, migration, gender minorities etc.

Grading policy
Class participation: 20%
Presentations and response essays: 20%
Mid-term exam: 30%
Final paper: 30%

Course Requirements and Evaluation
Attendance: Please note that if a student has more than four unexcused absences per term, s/he will be marked half a grade down for each additional unexcused absence in the final assessment.
Class participation: This class will function as a seminar and therefore class participation, informed by the required reading materials, is essential. For each seminar, students will prepare electronic reading notes on assigned texts.
Presentations: Each student will deliver one 15 minute presentation on their prospective research paper. A presenting student will prepare a written handout for his/her classmates and the instructor. When presenting, the students will also be evaluated on leading the discussion.

Midterm Exam: Students will take a written exam consisting of short essay answers.

Term paper: Purpose of the paper is to demonstrate knowledge of concepts and theories learned in the seminar and student’s ability to apply them to a case study of their own choice. Students are encouraged to choose their topic as soon as possible and consult their research statement with me. The paper should follow standard citation criteria (font: Times New Roman, size: 12, spacing: Double). No extension will be granted, unless there are compelling and legitimate medical reasons. Late assignments will be subject to grade reduction.

PLAGIARISM WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!

Grading scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95 – 100</td>
<td><strong>Excellent performance.</strong> The student has shown originality and displayed an exceptional grasp of the material and a deep analytical understanding of the subject.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 – 94</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87 – 89</td>
<td><strong>Good performance.</strong> The student has mastered the material, understands the subject well and has shown some originality of thought and/or considerable effort.</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83 – 86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 – 82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 – 79</td>
<td><strong>Fair performance.</strong> The student has acquired an acceptable understanding of the material and essential subject matter of the course, but has not succeeded in translating this understanding into consistently creative or original work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73 – 76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70 – 72</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>65 – 70</td>
<td><strong>Poor.</strong> The student has shown some understanding of the material and subject matter covered during the course. The student’s work, however, has not shown enough effort or understanding to allow for a passing grade in School Required Courses. It does qualify as a passing mark for the General College Courses and Electives.</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60 – 64</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0 - 59</td>
<td><strong>Fail.</strong> The student has not succeeded in mastering the subject matter covered in the course.</td>
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Schedule of classes

**Week 1**  Overview of course:
14 February - P. Berger: “Sociology as an Individual Pastime” (pp. 1-33)
Week 2  
**Public/private distinction in Western and Eastern Europe**


23 February - Friedan, B. The Feminine Mystique. pp. 256-267

Week 3

28 February – **Histories of the Body – Histories of Gender Inequalities**


Hall, S. “Cultural Representation and Signifying Practices” pp. 47-64; (electronic copy will be sent by instructor)

1 March – Film analysis: Sedmikrásky /Daisies (response essay)

Week 4  
**Women in the Post-Socialist Condition: Czechoslovakia**


Week 5

**Global Gender Issues in Post-communism**


Week 6

**Women and New Social Movements**

20 March – Roth, B. “What are Social Movements…?” A Sociological Perspective, 2001


**Week 7**  
**Feminism and Media**
  29 March Cultural Analysis and Comparison: DOCUMENTARY: The Beauty Exchange (response essay)

**Week 8**  
**Women, Race, and Ethnicity**
  Collins, P. H. Some Group Matters (electronic copy will be sent by instructor)
  5 April MIDTERM EXAM

**Week 9 - Spring Break – no classes**

**Week 10**  
**Women, Nationalism, Violence**
  Video: Violence against women in Bosnian war

**Feminism and Politics of the Body**
  Video: Czech Dream

**Week 11** -  
**Masculinity and feminine world**
  Video: Everest: Beyond the Limits
Week 12  
**Masculinity and Globalization**  
1 May - National Holiday – No Classes  
3 May  

Week 13  
**Masculinity and Globalization**  
8 May - National Holiday – No Classes  
11 May  

Week 14  
**Gender Politics**  
15 May  
**STUDENTS' PRESENTATIONS**  
17 May  
Pheterson, G. “Open Space: Group Identity & Social Relations”, *The European Journal of Women’s Studies*, v.1, 1994  

Week 15 –  
Exam week  
**TERM PAPER DUE: May 22**

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