Gender and Information Technology

INFO 102, Spring 2020

Instructor: Dr. Anna Lauren Hoffmann

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Gender plays a key role the organization of social, political, and economic life. Accordingly, it also plays a role in shaping the design, dissemination, and use of information and technology—from library classifications to big data and algorithms and online expression to #Feminism (i.e., hashtag feminism) and activism.

In this class, we will examine the relationship between gender, information, and technology. In particular, we will be focused on the co-construction of gender and technology—that is, both the ways in which gender shapes technological systems and objects and the ways scientific, informational, and technological systems and objects shape our understandings of gender. During the quarter, we'll carry these themes through for main areas of attention: 1) histories of gender, computing, and work; 2) science, technology, and bodies (i.e., colonialism, genetics, and eugenic legacies); 3) gendered biases in the design of informational and technological systems; and 4) contemporary issues around gender, the internet, and online communication.

COURSE FORMAT

Course content and section discussions will be conducted online *asynchronously*—that is, they will take place on Canvas and not at set course times like an onsite course. However, the existing course times (M/W, 1:30-3:20 PM) will be used for open office hours, discussion, and question help.

Section discussions will take place on Canvas. However, TAs will be using individual sections times for open office hours and course help, as well. Please consult your course schedule for your section's meeting times.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

For this course you will need regular access to the course Canvas page to access the readings and submit assignments. If this is an issue, please let the professor know ASAP.

STUDENT OUTCOMES/LEARNING GOALS

By the end of the term, students will have a working understanding of terms and concepts central to the study of gender in society as well as broad knowledge of past and current issues related to gender, information, and technology. They will have a more critical awareness of the role of gender in shaping the informational and technological world around them in order to make better, more equitable decisions in their professional lives.

LECTURE SCHEDULE & FORMAT

All course content will be delivered asynchronously.

Each week new modules will be made available online and it will be your responsibility to move through the required components (in order!) during the week. Content will include, variously: short videos; readings; question prompts; and brief learning activities.

Note: you may skip one module entirely without it impacting your grade. Consider this a "freebie" miss and reserve it for emergencies or conflicts that suddenly arise. Note, however, that you may not skip Module 0, Module 1, or the crowdsourced final. Also: you don't need to tell the professor or TA that you're skipping. As long as you only skip one, we will account for it when tallying final grades!

Scheduled course times will be used for both open discussion and closed office hours with the professor.

Your professor will be available on Zoom from 1:30-2:30 pm every Monday and Wednesday for open group discussion. She will reserve 2:30-3:20 for individual meetings with students upon request.

These optional discussions and meetings will usually revolve around course content and activities, but not always. Sometimes you just need a space to talk about the world, college life, and maintaining your chill during a global pandemic. Scheduled Zoom links and one-on-one meetings sign up info are available on Canvas.

Section discussions will be held asynchronously, as well.

Your TAs will be conducting discussions online on Canvas each week. It is their responsibility to have instructions and format posted for each week; it is your responsibility to keep up with and engage your classmates as best you can. Expectations for each discussion section will be communicated weekly.

Your designated section time will be reserved for open discussion with your TA.

As with lecture times, your designated section times will be used for open discussion and meeting with your TAs. Here, discussions may be similarly wide-ranging, but you should prioritize module and activity help during these sessions. The TAs are here to help answer questions, navigate online discussion, and guide you through the content for each week.

Individual TAs will set up these sessions and communicate their availability on your section Canvas page.

ASSIGNMENTS

Students will complete a series of short question prompts and brief assignments throughout the quarter. At the end of the quarter, students will also complete a cumulative "crowdsourced final" alone or with a partner from their discussion sections.

Successful completion of short "in module" activities and objectives
Objective: Collect at least 40 of 50 points

> As you move through each module, you will encounter certain short activities in the form of question prompts to answer, reflections to offer, and brief writing, web search, or other exercises. These are not meant to be onerous, nor are they merely busy work. Rather, they are designed to help you apply key concepts or explore examples and ideas. Each of these activities will be graded on a simple two tier scale (full credit, no credit) based on whether or not you completed them. Also, you get a point for each module you complete, period—I want to give you credit just for doing the work!

Regular contribution to section discussions and activities
Objective: Collect at least 20 of 30 points

> Each week, TAs will post discussion activities for you to complete. At least one of those activities each week will revolve around the collective development of two (2) hypothetical "final exam" questions based on the readings—the questions that receive the most "likes" or votes from classmates will be selected as the "official" questions to be submitted to the final exam question bank (see below). Information on other brief activities or questions will be posted to your section website at the start of each week.

Successful completion of the final exam
Objective: Collect a maximum of 20 points

> At the end of the quarter, we will have a final exam—with a twist. The exam will be crowdsourced from the questions you and your classmates develop during section each week. Moreover, you will be able to complete the final either alone or with a partner. Additional details on the exam, question banks, and study guides will be available on Canvas.

GRADING

Question prompt and assignment point values are variable and commensurate with time commitment/difficulty. Regardless of point values, all prompts will be evaluated on a two-tier scale (credit/no credit) and all assignments will be evaluated on a simple three tier scale (full credit, half credit, or no credit).

At the end of the term, point totals will be converted to letter grades according to the following scale:

Tier	Point Range	4.0 scale (Letter)
Tier 1	80 and above	4.0 (A)
Tier 2	78-79	3.8 (A-)
Tier 3	73-77	4 (B+)
Tier 4	70-72	3.1 (B)
Tier 5	68-69	2.8 (B-)
Tier 6	63-67	2.4 (C+)
Tier 7	60-62	2.1 (C)
Tier 8	58-59	1.8 (C-)
Tier 9	53-57	1.4 (D+)
Tier 10	50-52	1.1 (D)
No credit	49 and below	0.0 (E)

Late Assignments: You are responsible for managing your time. If you know in advance that you might need an extension, please contact your TA as soon as possible—they will work with you to set a suitable timetable for submission. For assignments turned in late without advance notice, they may be accepted for a maximum of half credit. However, exceptions will be made for credible emergencies.

Please note: given the ongoing global pandemic as a result of covid-19 and the novel coronavirus that causes it—the professor and TAs will be interpreting "credible emergency" very, very broadly.

What do these grading tiers mean for you, the student?

You have to do work for the class—that is unavoidable. But I'm not interested in making you slog through busywork that is, at best, tangential to the in-module content.

Rather, I am interested in giving you control over your experience. Using this grade scale, you should do exactly the amount of work that corresponds with your course goals and bandwidth for the quarter. If you want an A, then make sure you put together a minimum of 80 points by the end of the term. If all you want or need is a C, then make sure you get at least 60 points. It's entirely up to you.

And, better yet, you never have to wonder where you stand in the class—you can just look at your points, look at the grade scale, and plan accordingly.

What do these grading tiers mean for the professor and teaching assistants?

By simplifying evaluation scales and assigning point tiers, we are able to focus on the important things, like designing engaging content and interacting with students' ideas. (And we get to eliminate the really unimportant things—like the hair-splicing that is deciding the difference between a B+ and an A-.)

It also helps us limit the most subjective dimensions of grading—dimensions that often implicitly reproduce Western gendered, racial, ethnic, class, ability or other biases. If A grades are going to have to be an option (and they are, according to UW grading policies and decades of grade inflation across higher ed), then we want an A to be reasonably attainable by all who want to do the appropriate work. It shouldn't only be something "natural" talents or stereotypically "good" students can get, since "natural" and "good" are often just codes for certain kinds of privileges.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY

Diversity and Inclusivity

At the University of Washington, diversity is integral to excellence. We value and honor diverse experiences and perspectives, strive to create welcoming and respectful learning environments, and promote access, opportunity and justice for all.

Access and Accommodations

It is the policy and practice of the University of Washington—as well as your instructor—to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have already established accommodations with Disability Resources for Students (DRS), please communicate your approved accommodations to me at your earliest convenience so we can discuss your needs in this course.

If you have not yet established services through DRS, but have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations (conditions include but not limited to; mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts), you are welcome to contact DRS at 206-543-8924 or uwdrs@uw.edu or disability.uw.edu. DRS offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and/or temporary health conditions.

RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS

Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW's policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at Religious Accommodations Policy. Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the Religious Accommodations Request form.

RESOURCES

Student Resources

A number of challenges from a variety of directions can affect your ability to bring your optimal attention and energy to a course. Student Resources is a set of links to campus resources that UW makes available to students in trying to mitigate and cope with some of these challenges.

iSchool Technology Requirements

The iSchool has a set of technology requirements for both online and residential students. We highly recommend that students adhere to these standards which are updated annually. Students who do not meet these standards may experience technology problems throughout the course.

iSchool Learning Technologies Support Site

Knowledge base for Canvas, VoiceThread, web conferencing systems, and other learning technologies tools.

UW Libraries

In this course you may be required to access a large number of databases through the Internet.

Several of these databases are publicly available, but some are proprietary and access requires authentication through the UW Libraries. Information about logging in to use these databases is available on the Connecting to the Libraries page.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)
This FAQ was created by the University of Washington to help students impacted by the rescission of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program in the United States. Though the FAQ does not constitute legal advice, it can direct you to useful resources. In addition, the City of Seattle maintains a list of relevant workshops, legal resources, and other information for Seattle residents here.

Novel Coronavirus & Covid-19 Resources
For information on covid-19 and the ongoing global pandemic's effect on campus operations and teaching, students may visit the UW covid-19 facts and resources page. For information on how it might impact this class specifically, please email the professor or post to the Open Questions discussion forum.

ACADEMIC CONDUCT

Please review the iSchool Academic Policies which cover:

- Academic and Behavioral Misconduct
- Academic Integrity
- Copyright
- Privacy
- Concerns About a Course
- Evaluation of Student Work

COURSE SCHEDULE

Module 0	Course Mechanics, Resources, and Tips	
	OVERVIEW: This Module—"Module Zero"—isn't a formal module at all. Rather, it is a placeholder for helpful resources and information about the class. COURSE MECHANICS: Beyond the course syllabus, I've compiled some information about the ways we will be conducting class this quarter here: ● Course Mechanics *(includes grading information)* ● Open Discussion & Office Hours RESOURCES: On Canvas, you'll find a list of terms and definitions that will be useful for this course. Also, I've added some bonus content, tips, and tricks for successful learning, both online and off! ● Some Useful Terms and Definitions ● Some Tips for Writing Well Online ● Some Notes on Libraries and Research ● INFO 102 Spotify Playlist OPEN DISCUSSIONS: If you have a question about the class or something you'd like to share with your classmates, I've created two separate open discussion threads accessible to all students in all sections: ● Open Questions - for questions about course content, mechanics, Canvas, etc... ● Noise - for sharing news, resources, examples, and other things related to the course ACTIVITY: Now that you've poked around at the above, please complete the Course Content and Mechanics Quiz! It's among the easiest points you'll earn all quarter.	

Module 1	**Introduction, or: Studying Difference During a Pandemic**	3/30 - 4/5

THEME SONG: Virus (Björk)

OVERVIEW:
We are living in unprecedented times. This week, we will get a gentle start to the class by introducing ourselves to one another, sharing some of our thoughts on gender and technology broadly, and discussing what it means to live and learn during a global pandemic.

OBJECTIVES:
Base Level:

- Introduce yourself to your section
- Share a media object in the course
- Learn how the class is going to work

Level Up:

- Get to know another student, TA, or the professor
- Learn something from someone else's media object

READINGS:
No assigned readings this week. Instead, focus on reading the course discussions and learning about what people have to share!

DISCUSSIONS:
To find your discussion activities this week, please visit your section group page. In Global Navigation (i.e., in the furthest left menu), click the **Groups** link to view your current groups and find the one that corresponds to your section.

ACTIVITIES:
Share a media object - Choose a piece of media content (TV show/scene, movie, music video, book, comic, blog post, newspaper article, song, album, art work, performance, choreography/dance, or other object) that you think speaks to the title of this course. You will share this in your section group!

Module 2	**(Techno)Feminism is for Everybody**	4/6 - 4/12

THEME SONG: Flawless (Beyoncé ft. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie)

OVERVIEW:
This week, we look at some foundational concepts to guide our discussions this quarter. In particular, we will begin to articulate two key ideas:

- Concepts of marked vs. unmarked as it applies to gender, power, and oppression
- Understand that there is no such thing as "feminism" in the singular sense—there are many different kinds of feminism, some of which may be more useful to us than others

Finally, Dr. Hoffmann will present "three stories" to help you begin to connect these broad ideas to applied examples in information, science, and technology.

OBJECTIVES:
Base Level:

- Understand the difference between "marked" and "unmarked" in the Chambers reading
- Articulate the differences between at least two different kinds of feminism

Level Up:

- Apply the ideas of marked and unmarked to the three stories Dr. Hoffmann shares in her videos
- Reflect on your own stereotypes about feminism/feminists, gender, and technology

READINGS:
The readings for this week help us find our footing around key concepts of *feminism* and *marked/unmarkedness*. As you read, ask yourself how these descriptions align with what you already know about the subject: how did it challenge your thinking? How did it conflict with or confirm what you already knew?

Additionally, as you read Chambers discussing marked vs. unmarkedness, ask yourself how you might translate his example of race to gender for the purposes of this course.

- hooks, bell. *Feminism is for everybody: Passionate politics*. Pluto Press, 2000. (read: Introduction & Ch. 1)
- Chambers, Ross. "The unexamined." Minnesota Review 47.1 (1996): 141-156. (read: pp. 142-144)

	DISCUSSIONS: This week, your section discussions will be focused on 1) developing exam questions and 2) joining the real-time discussion sections with your TAs on Zoom (or with Dr. Hoffmann on Wednesday at 5 AM PST if you're severely time-shifted) ACTIVITIES: In addition to your section discussions, Canvas activities worth points this week include: ● Module 02 Reading Reaction ● Three Stories Response Prompt ● Complete Module 2 ● Attend Zoom Discussion VIRUS (OPTIONAL): This week, I'd like to share a zine: *Asian American Feminist Antibodies: Care in the Time of Coronavirus*. It is a collaboration between the Asian American Feminist Collective and Bluestockings NYC, it has really helped me think about the connections between feminist theory, race/ethnicity, and the ongoing pandemic. ***Each week, I will try and share a reading, video, artwork, or other media object that helps connect the coursework to the novel coronavirus, covid-19, and our ongoing global pandemic.***

Module 3	**Gender, Technology and Historical Transformations**	4/13 - 4/19

THEME SONG: Dig Me Out (Sleater-Kinney)

OVERVIEW:
This week, we tackle the pre-history of the history of gender and information technology! In particular, we trace shifting ideas of what constitutes "technology" and technical work as well as the kinds of people who were historically included (and, later, excluded) in technological domains—in particular, women. (Plus, there's lots of great historical images and references this week! Which is exciting!)

OBJECTIVES:
Base level:

- Understand that our definitions of what counts as "technology" and technical, inventive work have changed over time
- Gain some insight into gendered dynamics in the history of technology

Level up:

- See how social, political, and economic forces helped shape what we consider to be "technology" today
- Recognize the impact those forces had on marginalized groups—specifically, women—relative to technological success and representation in technical fields

READINGS:
This week, we will read a selection from Ruth Oldenziel's book *Making Technology Masculine*. The point of this reading is to help understand the historical processes that gave rise to the association between particular gendered identities (namely: *men*) and particular activities and objects (namely: *technology*) that we often take for granted today.

I'd also like for you to take a few moments to look through the "Lady Science" articles available at *The New Inquiry*. Scan a few and choose one to read. I do this because I want everyone to see how rich the gendered history of information, technology, and science is—it's so much more than just Ada Lovelace, Grace Hopper, and *Hidden Figures*!

Oh, and don't be frightened by the number of pages—there are lots of pictures and diagrams!

- Oldenziel, Ruth. Making technology masculine: men, women and modern machines in America, 1870-1945. Amsterdam University Press, 1999. (read: pp. 19-42)
- Choose one (1) Lady Science article to read at *The New Inquiry*

	As a bonus optional resource, here is a link to the UW Libraries page on the 1909 Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition. DISCUSSIONS: This week, your section discussions will be focused on developing exam qustions. ACTIVITIES: In addition to your section discussions, Canvas activities worth points this week include: ● Module 3 Reading Reaction ● Lady Science Debrief ● Recounting the History ● Complete Module 3 VIRUS (OPTIONAL): This week, I'd like to share an article from *The Atlantic:* "The Coronavirus is a Disaster for Feminism." Though I dislike the headline, the content of the article points out how many of the same social and economic forces we looked at this week help shape the experiences of differently-situated people (mainly: men and women) under conditions of crisis, like our current global pandemic.

Module 4	**“Women in Tech.” “White & Nerdy,” and Other Stereotypes**	4/20 - 4/26

THEME SONG: White & Nerdy (“Weird Al” Yankovic)

OVERVIEW:
In this module, we look more closely at computer programming's "identity shift" during the middle- to late-20th century. We explore how processes of professionalization, government investment, and popular rhetoric helped contribute to the transformation of programming’s image as clerical and routine to an activity that is creative, exciting, and valuable. Finally, we'll also look at how this "identity shift" plays out in particular visions of men and women in computing in film and television—from nerds, to bums, to women hackers!

OBJECTIVES:
Base level:

- Understand the relationship between professionalization and masculinization
- Recognize a shift in the perception of computer programming as a field, from the early to late 20th century

Level up:

- Recognize and articulate different kinds of masculinities and how they relate to the development of computer programmer as an identity
- Understand the ways these forces contributed to the increasing exclusion of women from computing from the 1970s to today

READINGS:
The readings for this module help us contextualize the shift that took place during the middle of the 20th century, moving computer programming from a profession considered rote and clerical (and often delegated to women) to one considered dynamic and creative (and suddenly dominated by men). It will help us connect the histories from last week and this week to the popular images and media examples we'll be exploring at the end of this unit.

- Ensmenger, Nathan. "“Beards, Sandals, and Other Signs of Rugged Individualism”: Masculine Culture within the Computing Professions." *Osiris* 30.1 (2015): 38-65.
- Hicks, Marie. "De-brogramming the history of computing." *IEEE Annals of the History of Computing* 35.1 (2013): 88-88.

There are also a number of additional (optional) resources to consult, as well as a link to the Raja article referenced in the Hicks piece.

- Raja - “Gangbang Interviews” and “Bikini Shots”: Silicon Valley’s Brogrammer Problem
- Jeong & Becker - Science Doesn't Explain Tech's Diversity Problem

	DISCUSSIONS: This week, your section discussions will be focused on 1) developing exam questions and 2) discussing your programmer/hacker examples from the in-module prompt. ACTIVITIES: In addition to your section discussions, Canvas activities worth points this week include: ● Module 4 Reading Reaction ● Reflection: Professionalization and Masculinization ● Hackers, Nerds, and "Women Who Code": Expanding Our Examples of Computing on Screen ● Complete Module 4 VIRUS (OPTIONAL): This week, I'd like to share a radio segment from WNYC's *On The Media*: Armchair Virology Goes Viral. As we've seen over the last two weeks, the economic power and prestige that attaches itself to science and technology—whether it's inventors in the 19th century or a new breed of computer programmer in the 1960s and 70s—can also give rise to problematic exclusions and unwarranted claims to expertise. In this piece, the interviewer and interviewee discuss the phenomenon of Silicon Valley-types and data scientists without training in epidemiology suddenly claiming expertise on the global pandemic, simply because they can work with "the data"—and the sometimes deadly consequences it can have.

Module 5	**Let's Talk About Sex...and Power and Progress in Tech**	4/27 - 5/3

THEME SONG: 5 dollars (Christine and the Queens)

OVERVIEW:
What happens when the history of women being pushed out of technical fields collides with information technology's intimate relationship to pornography and adult content?

That is the guiding question for this week. While there are no straightforward answers, there are some surprising connections—connections that shed light on contemporary dynamics of power, objectification, and abuse today. In particular, we'll begin to raise further critical questions about who gets to be a "genius" or innovator and who is positioned as an object for consumption or—worse—outright exploitation.

Importantly, these dynamics have consequences for who "fits" in technological domains and who gets excluded.

OBJECTIVES:
Base level:

- Recognize the historical connection between information technology and pornography
- Learn the history of "the Lena image" and start drawing connections to larger power dynamics

Level up:

- Understand how the history of information technology and pornography generates imbalances of power, economic opportunity, and vulnerability to exploitation
- Begin to trace the role of exploitation and exclusion in shaping contemporary (and gendered) cultures of computing

READINGS:
The readings for this module help add both historical depth and personal experience to the module content. The Coopersmith piece offers a foundation for our thinking about the relationship between pornography and information technology in a historical context, while the Losse essay helps us situate dynamics of power and exploitation within the contemporary social network—specifically, Facebook.

- Coopersmith, Jonathan. "Pornography, technology and progress." Icon (1998): 94-125. (read: pp. 94-113)
- Losse - The Male Gazed: Surveillance, Power, and Gender

	Additionally, here's some further writing on Lena Sjooblom, the former Playboy centerfold whose photo—"the Lenna photo"—became the backbone of modern image processing research, as discussed in this week's videos. ● "Lenna, the First Lady of the Internet" - *Motherboard* ● The Lenna Story - lenna.org - site run by Charles Rosenberg, currently Head of Computer Vision at Pinterest ● Hutchinson - "Culture, Communication, and an Information Age Madonna" - *IEEE Professional Communication Society Newsletter* ● "Playmate Meets Geeks Who Made Her A Net Star" - 1997 *Wired* article about Lena Sjooblom DISCUSSIONS: This week, there is NO DISCUSSION. In fact, I think it's so important that we all take a mid-quarter break from discussion to breathe and reflect, I'm giving you all *two (2) free points* for not doing anything. (Yes, you heard right: you get points for doing nothing. Sometimes, nothing is exactly what we need.) ACTIVITIES: While there are no discussion section activities this week, I want to give you all a chance to reflect a bit on your experience in the quarter so far. The link to the reflection will be made available mid-week. VIRUS (OPTIONAL): This week, I'd like to share this Newsweek article discussing some of the challenges sex workers are having during the ongoing pandemic. It's of particular relevance to this unit as it describes some of the economic dynamics of online sex work and "cam girls" discussed during our lecture. It gives some insight into the current state of the market and what competition looks like against the backdrop of the coronavirus.

Module 6	**Domestic Tech: Information and Innovation in and Beyond the Home**	5/4 – 5/10

THEME SONG: Phone (Lizzo)

OVERVIEW:
In this session, we will explore conceptions and consequences of technology design, dissemination, and use in (and beyond) domestic and private spaces like the home. In particular, we will examine histories of technological transformations in the domestic sphere—aka, "the home"—often ignored in our ideas of what constituted the "Industrial Revolution" in the US and beyond.

This module is an important first step in moving beyond an examination of gender and technology that is solely confined to the domains of scientific and technological production. Contrary to popular perception, technological innovation is not limited to industry—it often simultaneously occurs within and beyond the bounds of the home.

OBJECTIVES:
Base level:

- Recognize that the industrial revolution was not only a revolution in industry, but also in the domestic sphere
- Understand the difference between the ideal and the reality of new technology in the home

Level up:

- Think carefully about the promises of efficiency versus the realities of maintenance and appearances generated by the introduction of new technologies
- Be able to articulate how the history of the telephone can teach us something about the "work" of housework—including the emotional, physical, and community-building labor involved

READINGS:
This week's readings help add historical and empirical depth to our broader discussion of technological change in and beyond the home. They help us understand our current moment by reflecting on past moments of technological upheaval. In particular, they offer us tools for examining the ideal versus the reality of the introduction of new technologies into spaces like the home.

- Cowan, Ruth Schwartz. "The 'industrial revolution' in the home: Household technology and social change in the 20th century." *Technology and culture*, 1976: 1-23.
- Fischer, Claude S. "Gender and the residential telephone, 1890–1940: Technologies of sociability." *Sociological Forum* 3.2, 1988: 211-233.

	LISTEN: Special INFO 102 Podcast: In Conversation with Erica Sklar of Hand in Hand - The Domestic Employers Network DISCUSSIONS: This week, your section discussions will be focused on 1) developing exam questions and 2) discussing the examples included in a special video prompt posted to Canvas. In addition, you can score points this week by joining the real-time discussion sections with your TAs on Zoom (or with Dr. Hoffmann on Wednesday at 5 AM PST if you're severely time-shifted). ACTIVITIES: In addition to your section discussions, Canvas activities worth points this week include: ● Module 6 Reading Reaction ● The Industrial Revolution at Home: Sketching the Ideal ● The Industrial Revolution at Home: Facing the Reality ● Complete Module 6 VIRUS (OPTIONAL): This week, I'd like to share a *New York Times* first-person opinion article discussing the struggles faced by domestic workers during the ongoing global pandemic: "I Was Fired Because of the Coronavirus" In addition, I found the assigned reading by Fischer particularly relevant as well. Many tech researchers and evangelists have taken to the media as sudden "experts" on how technology keeps us connected during periods of social isolation. But Fischer was on top of this phenomenon 30 years ago, documenting the ways the telephone helped connect and alleviate the stresses of isolation for housewives and domestic workers largely confined to their homes.

Module 7	**Troubling "Tech Work": Life and Labor at the Margins**	5/11 - 5/17

THEME SONG: Work (Rihanna ft. Drake)

OVERVIEW:
This week, we continue down the path of "de-centering" those domains and identities often foregrounded in our ideas of science and technology. Whereas last week we "de-centered" industry to focus on the home, this week we'll "de-center" certain kinds of white-collar, professionalized work like programming to focus on the other labor that helps make "tech" possible. In doing so, we'll be able to see how the lines separating some work as "tech work" and others as mere "manual" or other labor are constructed to exclude people of color—and how they skew our ideas of who counts as a tech worker.

OBJECTIVES:
Base level:

- Understand different layers of work required to make technology possible
- Recognize the problem of sources in studying women and minoritized populations in the history of tech

Level up:

- Understand the line between "tech work" and "manual labor" as socially constructed and bound up with the exercise of power
- Understand the process of "racialization" and its relationship to how we view certain kinds of work

READINGS:
This week, I'm letting each of you choose a "custom path" for your reading. The first handful of pages of the first reading are required for everyone, as they help illuminate the challenge of sources in studying marginalized or otherwise overlooked populations in the history of technology.

Required for everyone:

- Nelsen, R. Arvid. "Race and computing: The problem of sources, the potential of prosopography, and the lesson of Ebony Magazine." *IEEE Annals of the History of Computing* 39.1 (2016): 29-51. (read: pp. 29-35)

From there, we look at two case studies in the lecture videos, so I want you to read at least one (1) of the articles those case studies are based on. Either one helps us expand what we think of as tech work—and who counts as a "tech worker"—and the consequences of our exclusions.

Choose and read just one (1) of the following two options:

- Green, Venus. "Race and technology: African American women in the Bell system, 1945-1980." *Technology and culture* 36.2 (1995): 101-144.

	• Nakamura, Lisa. "Indigenous circuits: Navajo women and the racialization of early electronic manufacture." *American Quarterly* 66.4 (2014): 919-941. DISCUSSIONS: This week, your section discussions will be focused on 1) developing exam questions and 2) your material analysis activity. The material analysis activity doubles as a module *and* section points activity, so please read the instructions carefully! ACTIVITIES: In addition to your section discussions, Canvas activities worth points this week include: • Module 7 Reading Reaction • Material Analysis Activity • Complete Module 7 VIRUS (OPTIONAL): This week, I'd like to draw attention the impact the COVID-19 is having on the Navajo nation, since they were the subject of one of our case studies this week. As this overview points out, the Navajo Nation—the country's largest reservation—is currently left with just four hospitals to treat cases across the entire tribal population (nearly 200,000 people).

Module 8	**Eugenics, Classification, and Colonialism**	5/18 - 5/24

THEME SONG: My Country Tis of Thy People You're Dying (Buffy Sainte-Marie) (Lyrics)

OVERVIEW:
In this module, we look at the relationship between information technology and broader processes of sorting, classifying, and organizing the world. In particular, we'll focus on the case of eugenics as one way to understand the political and social consequences of certain kinds and ideals of sorting and organizing—consequences that, as we will see, had a great cost for marginalized groups (and, in particular, women) right here in the US.

OBJECTIVES:
Base level:

- Recognize a relationship between information technology and broader processes of sorting, classification, and organization
- Understand some of the historical conditions that gave rise to eugenics as a social and political movements

Level up:

- Understand how different technological developments (scientific classification, political borders, etc...) conspired to create the conditions for eugenics' emergence
- Connect this history to contemporary processes in genetic ancestry testing, "designer babies," and other interventions into human life

READINGS:
This week, you have a little bit of autonomy in the direction you choose to take your reading. The first text—from the Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics—presents a structure that underwrites much of my lecture, so I'd like you all to read just the first 17 pages so we're all on the same page. This is a very serious topic—deadly serious—and I want us to treat it as such.

Required for everyone:

- Levine, Philippa Judith, and Alison Bashford. "Introduction: Eugenics and the modern world." *The Oxford handbook of the history of eugenics*. Oxford University Press, 2010. (read: pp. 1-17)

From there, I want you to read one (1) article of your choosing from the following list. While I don't reference them in my lecture, we are at a point in the quarter where I want you to start drawing connections on your own. Each of these articles clearly relates—in a broad sense—to the course material for the week, but you will need to do some work connecting them to the specific histories outlined in the first reading and the lecture videos.

	Choose one: ● "How not to talk about race and genetics" - *Buzzfeed News* (2018) ● "Data-Face and Ontologies of Race" - *Cultural Anthropology* (2016) ● "Eugenics 2.0: We're at the Dawn of Choosing Embryos by Health, Height, and More" - *MIT Technology Review* (2017) ● "Will the Alt-Right Promote a New Kind of Racist Genetics?" - *The Atlantic* (2016) ● "When White Nationalists Get DNA Tests That Reveal African Ancestry" - *The Atlantic* (2017) ● "Creepy, dystopian genetic identification already exists - we're just not using it yet" - *Quartz* (2015) ● "DNA tests for IQ are coming, but it might not be smart to take one" - *MIT Technology Review* (2018) ● "23andMe has a problem when it comes to ancestry reports for people of color" - *Quartz* (2016) DISCUSSIONS: This week, your section discussions will be focused on developing exam questions. ACTIVITIES: In addition to your section discussions, Canvas activities worth points this week include: ● Module 8 Reading Reaction ● Identifying Historical Conditions of Eugenics ● Revisiting Your Reading Reaction ● Complete Module 8 VIRUS (OPTIONAL): This week, I'd like to share an essay from the AI Now Institute's Sarah Myers West: "AI and the Far Right: A History We Can't Ignore." In the piece, Sarah traces the deeper connections between the eugenics movement and Silicon Valley—and its consequences for contemporary technologies like AI.

Module 9	**Choose Your Own Adventure**	5/25 - 5/31

THEME SONG: I Am Her (Shea Diamond)

OVERVIEW:
This week, you're in control! You get to choose which "further topic" you explore, from privacy to algorithmic bias to hashtags and online communication. Each of these three options builds off of ideas we've explored in weeks 3-8, offering a contemporary look at the dynamics of gender, power, and oppression related to information technology. Your "adventures" include:

Gender & Privacy

> Here, you'll look at how distinctions between spheres—like "public" versus "private"—that we discussed in early units has gendered consequences for the exercise and realization of privacy in and beyond the home.

Gender & Algorithmic Bias

> Here, you'll use our discussion of information technology, sorting, and classification as a jumping off point for understanding some of the dynamics that underwrite automated or algorithmic decision-making processes—and their consequences for particular gendered groups.

Gender & Online Communication

> Here, you'll explore the affordances of online platforms and tools—like the "hashtag" (#)—for supporting particular kinds of feminist activism or awareness-raising. You'll also see how these efforts plug into longer histories of promise versus reality, like the ones we saw in week 6.

A quick note about format: Rather than a series of smaller videos with prompts interspersed between them, the content for each "adventure" is one longer, continuous video (about 60 mins each). Take them at your own pace! Feel free to take breaks, pause for reflection, or step away as needed. After each, there will be a dedicated prompt to help reflect across the entire video.

OBJECTIVES:
Just one: to use a more contemporary case as a way to go deeper on the themes and dynamics we've explored in past weeks.

READINGS:
Your reading will depend on the adventure you chose:

- If "Gender & Privacy," read:
  - Young, Iris Marion. "House and home: Feminist variations on a theme." *Motherhood and space*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2005. 115-147.

	○ Jezebel - For Poor Women, Privacy is a Luxury (short video) ● If "Gender & Algorithmic Bias," read: ○ Noble, Safiya Umoja. "Missed connections: What search engines say about women." *Bitch Magazine* 54 (2012): 36-41. ○ Wired - Machines Taught By Photos Learn Sexist View of Women ● If "Gender & Online Communication," read: ○ De Kosnik, Abigail, and Keith Feldman. *#Identity: Hashtagging Race, Gender, Sexuality, and Nation*. University of Michigan Press, 2019. (read: Intro, pp. 1-19) ○ Williams, Sherri. "Digital defense: Black feminists resist violence with hashtag activism." *Feminist Media Studies* 15.2 (2015): 341-344. DISCUSSIONS: This week, your section discussions will be focused on 1) developing exam questions and 2) joining the real-time discussion sections with your TAs on Zoom (or with Dr. Hoffmann on Wednesday at 5 AM PST if you're severely time-shifted). ACTIVITIES: In addition to your section discussions, Canvas activities worth points this week include: ● Path Reflection ● Making the Connection ● Complete Module 9 VIRUS (OPTIONAL): This week, I'd like to share this post by Ali Alkhatib, Research Fellow at the University of San Francisco's Center for Applied Data Ethics. In the post, Ali assesses the leading proposals for contact-tracing apps (like the kind being developed by Apple and Google) and finds them wanting. In particular, I appreciate his attention to who is included in the proposal and who—by virtue of various social inequalities—will be left behind...and why that matters.

Module 10	**Wrap-Up, or: Three Ways to Study Gender and Technology**	6/6 - 6/12

THEME SONG: Fire (Waxahatchee)

OVERVIEW:
This week, I want to leave you with two key takeaways—one conceptual, one practical. On the conceptual side, we will take a high-level look at three ways of "seeing" gender and IT, loosely based on a framing put forward by Judy Wajcman in one of our readings for the week. Here, we'll use our past modules to illuminate the benefits and limits of each way of seeing. On the practical side, we'll further discuss the relationship between technology and human values broadly—and put forward a series of critical questions you can carry forward in your own lives and work.

OBJECTIVES:
Base level:

- Recognize three broad trends in the study of gender and technology historically
- Recognize a connection between technology, identity, and human values broadly

Level up:

- Connect particular units and examples from the course to the different ways of "seeing" gender and technology outlined in class
- Begin to ask critical questions around values, identity, and technology in your own work

READINGS:
Our first reading this week will help round out our understanding of different trends and tendencies present in the study of the relationship between gender and technology historically.

- Wajcman, Judy. "Feminist theories of technology." *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 34.1 (2010): 143-152.

Additionally, I'd like us to revisit the Chambers piece from the very start of the quarter and reflect on our understanding of it now.

- Chambers, Ross. "The unexamined." *Minnesota Review* 47.1 (1996): 141-156. (read: pp. 142-144 (read: pp. 142-150)

LISTEN:
Special INFO 102 Podcast: “Why does gender matter?” In Conversation w/ Tonia Sutherland (University of Hawai’i at Mānoa), Marika Cifor (University of Washington), and Anna Lauren Hoffmann (University of Washington).

	DISCUSSIONS: In this week's discussion activity, you will work with a partner on making a meme of a course themes, course unit, or in-class examples of your choosing. ACTIVITIES: In addition to your section discussions, Canvas activities worth points this week include: ● Reading reaction ● Synthesizing reflection ● Complete Module 10 VIRUS (OPTIONAL) None this week. We're all very tired.

Module 11	**Crowdsourced Final**	6/13 - 6/17
	Over the past 10 weeks, we have been populating an exam "question bank" with your collaboratively-developed (and voted on!) questions from your discussion sections. These questions will be the basis for the exam. In terms of format, the exam will be take-home and consist of four short essay questions, worth five points each. You must complete three of the questions; the fourth is free (i.e., you get five free points just for opening the exam). Finally, you also have the choice to complete the exam either alone or with a partner from your section.	