



Sociology 3359f (270)
Gender, Violence, and Digital Media
Fall/ Winter 2026-2027

Instructor: J. Fairbairn
Email: jfairba4@uwo.ca

Course Information

Calendar Description:

This course examines the intersections of gender, violence, and digital media from a variety of theoretical and critical perspectives. We explore how emerging media impact gendered violence and how gender shapes both media representations of violence and digital media design.

Prerequisite(s): [Sociology 2266A/B](#) and third or fourth year standing in a module in Sociology or Criminology

Extra Information: 3 hours.

Course Weight: 0.50
Breadth: Category A
Subject Code: SOCIOLOG

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

King's University College
SOC3359F 270 – Gender, Violence, & Digital Media
Fall 2026

Instructor: Dr. Jordan Fairbairn (she/her)

Email: jfairba4@uwo.ca

Office Hours (Zoom): Wednesday 10-11am on Zoom or by appointment

<https://westernuniversity.zoom.us/j/jordanfairbairn>

Course Description:

This course will examine the intersections of gender, violence, and digital media from a variety of theoretical and critical sociological and criminological perspectives. We will focus on the socially constructed nature of gender, violence, media, and technology and explore: (1) how gendered violent crimes such as sexual violence and intimate partner violence are impacted by emerging media; (2) how gender and its intersections with other aspects of identity including “race”/racialization, age, ability, and class shapes representations of crime, digital media design, and user experience; and (3) the role of media and technology in violence prevention.

This course will deal directly with content related to violence, including gender-based and sexual violence. If you have any questions or concerns about course material and content, please do not hesitate to reach out. There will be space to unpack and debrief these issues, and information and resources, made available on a regular basis.

Course Objectives:

Upon the completion of this course, you will have begun to:

1. Discuss and apply contemporary sociological and criminological perspectives on gender, violence, and digital media;
2. Understand the mutual shaping of media, technology, gender, and violence and contextualize these areas within broader systems of historical, legal, political, and cultural change;
3. Understand and discuss the role that gender, racialization, age, sexuality, ability, and social class play in the development, use, and abuse of digital media;
4. Develop, enhance, and apply critical thinking skills through critical reading, writing, and discussion.

Mode of Instruction: In-person and online. This is a blended (270) course, meaning that a minimum of 25% of course instruction will be online. Further details will be provided on Brightspace and in our first class (in-person).

Course textbooks/materials:

There is no required text for this course. All readings will be available through Brightspace.

Drop Date: November 30 is the last day to drop this course without academic penalty.

Methods of Evaluation:

The overall course grade will be calculated as listed below:

- Course contributions (15% - in-class discussion, asynchronous and in-class activities, and attendance; ongoing)
- Reading reflection journal (15% - 5 entries for in-person weeks, completed prior to class)
- Knowledge mobilization presentation and peer feedback (15%, presentation due Friday Oct 2 by 11:59pm)
- Experiential learning project for community partner (25%, due Friday, Nov 20 by 11:59pm)
- Final exam (TBD – December Exam Period): 30%. Written questions (short & long answer).

Assignment Descriptions – See Course Brightspace page for detailed instructions**Academic Considerations:**

- Students will be able to make up 1 class of missed participation via written discussion assignment.
- Optional 48-hour (2 day) extension can be applied to the knowledge mobilization presentation and the experiential learning project without late penalty or documentation.

Academic Integrity:

- Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence:
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf
- **AI tools:** Developing critical sociological thinking, reading, and writing skills are key learning objectives of this course. As such, within this course, it is expected that students have conceptualized and created their own assignments. Assignments produced by generative AI tools are not permitted to be submitted as part of work for evaluation. Grammar checking and translation tools are permitted *if the use of these tools is disclosed in a statement at the beginning of the assignment*. Coursework submitted with the unauthorized use of AI will be subject to academic discipline. As with all aspects of the course, students are encouraged to reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns at all.
- **Turnitin:** All required assignments will be submitted for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism.

Course Content & Reading Schedule:**Week 1, Sept 10 – Introduction to the Course & Digital Criminology (In Person)**

No assigned reading, but there will be course content covered and an in-class activity.

Week 2, Sept 17 – Gendering Media & Technology (In Person)

Bivens, R. and A. A. Hasinoff. (2018). Rape: Is there an app for that? An empirical analysis of the features of anti-rape apps. *Information, Community and Society*, 21(8), pp. 1050-1067.

Bailey, J., & Burkell, J. (2021). Tech-facilitated violence: thinking structurally and intersectionally. *Journal of Gender-Based Violence*, 5(3), 531-542.

Week 3, Sept 24 – Digital Literacy & Digital Safety (Online Synchronous - Zoom)

Suzor, N., M. Dragiewicz, B. Harris, R. Gillett, J. Burgess, & T. Van Geelen. (2019). Human rights by design: The responsibilities of social media platforms to address gender-based violence online. *Policy & Internet*, 11(1), pp. 84-103.

Storer, H. L., Gezinski, L. B., Shulruff, T., Malorni, A., & Hamby, S. (2025). Revamping advocacy for the digital age: Approaches for nurturing survivor-centered digital resiliency. *Journal of Family Violence*, 40(8), 1579-1593.

Media Smarts guest speaker

Week 4, Oct 1 – Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (In Person)

Dodge, A. (2016). Digitizing rape culture: Online sexual violence and the power of the digital photograph. *Crime, Media, Culture*, 12(1), pp. 65-82.

Eaton, A. A., S. Noori, A. Bonomi, D. P. Stephens and T. L. Gillum. (2020). Nonconsensual porn as a form of intimate partner violence: Using the power and control wheel to understand nonconsensual porn perpetration in intimate relationships. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*.

Week 5, Oct 8 – Digital Violence Research & Ethics (Online Asynchronous)

Stuart, F. (2020). Code of the tweet: Urban gang violence in the social media age. *Social Problems*, 67(2), pp. 191-207

Ricaurte, P. (2022). Ethics for the majority world: AI and the question of violence at scale. *Media, Culture & Society*, 44(4), 726-745.

Students will work asynchronously in peer groups to view and provide feedback on knowledge mobilization presentations.

READING WEEK – No class October 15!

Week 6, OCT 22 – Mediated Masculinities (In Person)

Scholes, L., McDonald, S., & Scholes, N. (2026). Social media and the medicalization of boyhood: critical literacies to evaluate media messaging. *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*, 48(2), 171-185.

Thorburn, J., Powell, A., & Chambers, P. (2023). A world alone: Masculinities, humiliation and aggrieved entitlement on an incel forum. *The British Journal of Criminology*, 63(1), 238-254.

Week 7, Oct 29 – Misogyny & Harassment (In Person)

Banet-Weiser, S., & Maddocks, S. (2023). Networked misogyny on TikTok: A critical conjuncture. In *The Routledge Companion to Gender, Media and Violence* (pp. 369-379). Routledge.

Porter, A., Falcon, A., Graefe, B., Metheny, N., Cooper, S., & Astorini, A. (2025). Swipe left on sexual harassment: Understanding and addressing technology-facilitated sexual violence on dating apps. *Journal of interpersonal violence*, 40(13-14), 2964-2983.

Week 8, Nov 5 – Representation & Symbolic Violence (Online Asynchronous)

Atkinson, R., and T. Rodgers. (2016). Pleasure zones and murder boxes: Online pornography and violent video games as cultural zones of exception. *British Journal of Criminology*, 56(6), pp.1291-1307.

Slakoff, D. C., & H.F. Fradella (2019). Media messages surrounding missing women and girls: The missing white woman syndrome and other factors that influence newsworthiness. *Criminology, Crim. Just. L & Soc'y*, 20, 80.

Documentary: Subjects of Desire.

Week 9, Nov 12 – Queer Criminology and Media (Online Asynchronous)

Mitchell, M., O'Neill, T., & Redd, C. (2025). Queering crime reporting: Representing anti-queer violence in LGBTQ news media. *The British Journal of Criminology*, 65(4), 898-916.

Ellis, J. R. (2025). Digiqueer criminology and the new LGBTQ+ visibility. *Crime, Media, Culture*, 21(4), 490-507.

Week 10, Nov 19 – Artificial Intelligence and Gender-Based Violence (In Person)

Lee, J. J. (2026). "Who is sexually harassed? A python code haha": Imaginaries of a post-violent AI world. *Feminist Media Studies*, 26(2), 475-490.

Mesa Velez, L. F. (2025, September). Artificial intelligence for gender-based violence: A decolonial feminist analysis. In *Proceedings of the 2025 International Conference on Information Technology for Social Good* (pp. 150-154).

Week 11, Nov 26 – Violence Prevention Knowledge Mobilization (In Person)

Grondin-Robillard, L. (2026, August 11.) Conversation Canada: "A social media ban for Canadian kids sounds simple, but Bill C-34 has major limitations".

Dodge, A., Mendes, K., Dietzel, C., & Dunn, S. (2026). Desperately seeking non-judgmental supports: Young people's perceptions of adult responses to technology-facilitated harms. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 08862605251414437.

Week 12, Dec 3 – Digital Media and Social Change (Class format TBD)

Trott, V. (2021). Networked feminism: Counterpublics and the intersectional issues of #MeToo. *Feminist Media Studies*, 21(7), 1125-1142.

December Exam Period – Final Exam (30%) – Date TBD.

**KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
GENERAL COURSE POLICIES
2026-27**

1. Academic Accommodations (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found at [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

2. Academic Consideration for Student Absences

Students must be approved to write a makeup exam or for an extension of the assignment deadline. If you need to miss an exam or the deadline for the assignment, please follow these instructions.

There are two ways to seek academic consideration:

(i) Academic consideration based on medical or compassionate grounds

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate grounds), they should contact the Academic Advising Office. As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration.

For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is the appropriate documentation. The SMC is available at <https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical-certificate.pdf>

- King's students: The Academic Advising Office website is located in DLH 104. The Academic Advising website is <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising>.
- If your home faculty is Huron or at Western, please submit your documentation to your faculty's academic counselling office.
- Requests must be made as soon as possible, and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

You may submit requests for academic consideration through the **Student Absence Portal**, linked on this website: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising/academic-consideration-requests-and-student-absence-portal>.

(ii) Academic consideration through an undocumented absence

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per half-course (0.5) weight.

- Note that instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline to confirm this which assessment has been designated as requiring documentation for consideration (that is, exempt from undocumented absences).
- Undocumented absences can not be used as the basis for academic consideration for December or April exams.

If an instructor has built flexibility into their assessments (e.g., “complete 8 of 10 quizzes”), this flexibility will already address consideration needs and thus academic consideration may be denied.

For further information on the academic consideration policy, please see

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

c) Absences from Final Exams

If you miss the Final Exam, **contact your Academic Advising Office** as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the “Special Examination” (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a multiple exam situation (i.e., you are scheduled to write more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

d) Religious Accommodations

Students should consult the University’s list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and their Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

3. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King's University College:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/accessibility-services>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King's University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/campus-life/student-supports/>

Good2talk is an online and phone resource for students, available 24/7, with services in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options on how to obtain help:

<https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental-health/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King's University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/academics/academic-supports/>

4. Statement on Gender-Based Sexual Violence

King's and Western are committed to reducing incidents of gender-based sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: [Mental Health and Wellness at King's](#).

You can reach supports at King's by emailing care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a Social Worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by email (health@uwo.ca) or by calling 519-661-3568. Additional support services can be found <https://www.uwo.ca/health/gbsv/support/index.html>

5. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see https://kings.uwo.ca/sites/2025/assets/files/campus/Kings_Code_of_Student_Conduct.pdf

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

6. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. **Check with you instructor to check which tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in each course.** Note that although some courses may permit the use of such tools, it does not mean use of such tools is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality_Reports_-_TurnItIn.html.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

7. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

8. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

9. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.