

SYLLABUS
ANTH 2200.001
GENDER IN CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE
SPRING 2019

Professor: Dr. Jara Carrington

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 10:30- 12, Thursdays 1:00- 2:30

Office: Chilton Hall 308C

Class meetings: MWF 2:00-2:50

Meeting location: ENV 115

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome! I hope you find this course challenging and rewarding. In this course, we will examine issues, debates, and perspectives important to feminist anthropology. Rather than providing a collection of “facts” about gender and sex across cultural contexts, this class attempts to help students learn how to “think like a feminist anthropologist” about gender and sex. We will examine theories of the social construction of sex and gender, and analyze various cultural contexts to understand the different meanings people hold about “gender” and “sex.”

The first half of the course offers a historical look at the development of feminist anthropology, focusing on important themes of study and debates within the field. We will also analyze the insights that feminist anthropology brought the study of anthropology as a discipline. In the second half of the course, we will apply the theories and concepts we have learned to “think like a feminist anthropologist” about topics related to sex and gender, including gender identities and practices across the globe, kinship and family, the body, sex work, and more. Throughout the course we will bring scholarly, activist, audio/visual media, fiction, and other forms of texts/writing together in conversation to understand how cultural meanings about gender and sex are transmitted, reproduced, and contested.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Learn about the history of the study of gender and sex in anthropology
- Understand significant concepts, themes, and contributions of feminist anthropology
- Understand the variation of meanings about gender and sex across and within cultures
- Understand and evaluate the “intersectional” relationships between gender, sex, sexuality, race, class, and nation
- Enrich your reading skills and teach you how to read thoughtfully and productively in ways that allow you to locate and engage with the authors’ arguments, and how to reach your own conclusions based on a thorough understanding of the “text” (broadly understood)

REQUIRED TEXT

There is one required text for this course, which is available at the UNT Bookstore. It is "Feminist Ethnography: Thinking Through Methodologies, Challenges, and Possibilities" by Dána-Ain Davis and Christa Craven (2016). All other required readings will be available for download at your pleasure on our course webpage.

WHAT IT MEANS TO READ

In completing the readings, I expect that you read the articles and books critically, that is, with an eye to the assumptions, claims, and conclusions of the authors. In other words, I expect you to derive from your reading not simply a knowledge of the content of the materials, but also the ways in which these authors understand and work with broader concepts (i.e. "sex" and "gender," as well as "race," "class," "sexuality" etc.) As the semester progresses, you will be encouraged to draw earlier readings into your written work and class discussions. As such, my strong suggestion is that you take notes on the materials you read to aid you in this task.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

General Information: This course requires considerable reading and writing. Although you do not need a background in anthropological theory to succeed in the class, you will be expected to grapple with difficult texts that you may need to re-read and sit with to fully understand. In other words, cursory readings will not be sufficient.

In addition, we may cover material in this course that challenges your personal beliefs and opinions. I do not expect you to agree with course materials in order to do well in this course, but I do expect you to approach these topics in an open and intellectual fashion. Comments that are disrespectful to your classmates and/or myself will not be tolerated.

Each class period, I will expect you to:

- Have completed the readings
- Pose questions for clarification or extension of points
- Participate actively in discussion and debate
- Respectfully challenge your instructor and peers where appropriate
- Contribute positively to the classroom climate

Late work: I do not accept late work unless you have made specific arrangements with me in advance, have a doctor's note, and/or have otherwise received my approval. That being said, if you realize you are going to have difficulty meeting a deadline, I am often willing to work with you to give you extra time if you contact me in advance to make arrangements.

Extra Credit: Extra credit can be earned at any point during the semester. I will suggest several opportunities in class, and I am relatively open to creative ideas from you. Options to earn extra credit include: relevant movie/documentary analysis, writing about a related talk/lecture on campus, a personal reflection that puts course content in conversation with an experience you have had, or developing a creative piece such as poetry or artwork. You

must get approval from me ahead of time for your choice, so check with me before you do the work.

Electronics in the Classroom: Please turn off your cell phone prior to coming to class. Students may use laptop computers to take notes and for class purposes only; students checking email, using Facebook, etc. will be asked to turn off their computers and will not be allowed to use their computers in subsequent classes.

Academic Honesty: The Department of Anthropology does not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or helping others to cheat. For this class, writing assignments will be submitted through Turnitin, a Web based resource that compares the text of student papers to an extensive electronic database. Writing assignments will be assessed by Turnitin for textual similarity review.

- Cheating includes the physical or electronic **distribution or use** of answers for graded components, such as discussion posts, writing assignments, and exams.
- Plagiarism is defined as misrepresenting the work of others (whether published or not) as your own.
- Plagiarism may be inadvertent or intentional. That is, plagiarism is still plagiarism even if you “didn’t mean to do it.” Any facts, statistics, quotations, or paraphrasing of any information that is not common knowledge, should be cited.
- Students suspected of any of these will be provided the opportunity for a hearing; if found guilty they can receive an automatic “F” in the course. In addition, I reserve the right to pursue further disciplinary action within the UNT legal system, which may result in your dismissal from the university.
- For more information on paper writing, including how to avoid plagiarism, and how to use citations, see <http://www.unt.edu/anthropology/writing.htm>. For information on the University’s policies regarding academic integrity and dishonesty, see the UNT Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities, <http://www.unt.edu/csrr/>.

Two more points about this: A) Just don’t do it. I promise, I will be able to tell if the writing is not yours. It is better to talk with me about why the assignment is not complete, or asking for (even late) help on in-text citations, rather than passing off someone else’s work as your own. B) As we will talk about in detail this semester, this is also an issue of a politics of citation. When you represent someone else’s thoughts/writing as your own, you are denying them credit for their intellectual work. For many of our authors, especially those who are women, persons of color, queer, and/or live outside the United States and Europe, this is yet another way in which their voices are marginalized within the western academy. Actions have meaning. Please cite your sources.

Academic Accommodations: The University of North Texas is committed to providing accommodation for all students with disabilities. If you have or acquire a disability that may affect your participation in class, I will strive to accommodate your needs. To ensure that the necessary accommodations are made, be sure to contact the Office of Disability Accommodation (located in Sage Hall) as soon as possible to ensure your needs are met in a timely manner. They will work with both of us to ensure proper accommodations are made. If you need accommodations, please remember that reasonable prior notice needs to

be given to the Office of Disability Accommodation. Note that students need to obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

Basic Needs: You can't learn if you are hungry! UNT does have a Food Pantry on campus. Any current UNT student in need can visit the UNT Food Pantry 8am-6pm Monday-Thursday and 8pm-5pm on Fridays. Students will check-in at the Dean of Students Office front desk in the Union, Suite 409. Students may go directly to room 366 from 5PM-6PM, Monday-Thursday. Students who visit the food pantry can request to meet with a staff member to discuss any difficulties they may be facing during the hours of 8am-5pm. When appropriate, referral to additional campus and/or community resources will be made. The Dean of Students Office has established protocols that allow for student confidentiality and dignity to be maintained. In addition, there is a pantry located at the Discovery Park Location in the Engineering Library (M130) next to the Career Center, as well as a Food Pantry located at UNT's Frisco campus, which can be accessed by visiting the information desk.

Emergency Notification and Procedures: UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

COURSE EVALUATION

I.	Class Participation	5%
II.	Quotation Commentaries	15%
III.	Current Events Assignment	20%
IV.	Midterm Exam	20%
V.	Research Paper and Presentation	40%
	i. Proposal-	5%
	ii. "Annotated" List of Suggested Resources-	5%
	iii. Final Paper-	20%
	iv. Oral Presentation-	10%

I. Class Participation (50 points)

This class relies on the intellectual commitment and *active* participation of all students. This goes beyond merely showing up for class, and includes: responding to discussion questions that I pose to the class, asking your own questions for clarification, and respectfully responding to classmates' discussion points if relevant. In order for you to participate, you need to have completed the reading assignment for that day and be ready to talk about it in class.

The topics we will be discussing can be emotionally and politically charged, so I expect everyone to *actively* listen to others as well as be respectful of each other's ideas. You should bring assigned readings to class each day as we will refer to and utilize them throughout our meetings. You should take notes regarding lectures and classroom discussions because these notes, alongside your marginalia/notes on the readings, will come in very handy for exam preparation and your research paper.

II. Quotation Commentaries (150 points)

In order to encourage students to come to class, and to come to class having read the material and ready to discuss, there will be 10 "quotation commentary" assignments assigned throughout the semester and they will be worth 15 points each. These commentaries will be unannounced, and they will be completed in class. I will hand out a sheet of paper with one or more quotations from that day's assigned reading. You will be asked to respond to this quote in the following ways: Paraphrase, Interpret, Comment/Analyze. Students who are absent will not be given the opportunity to make up these points unless they have a documented excuse and have received permission from the instructor ahead of time.

III. Current Events (150 points)

As a means to kick off most course meetings with student leadership and to provide an opportunity for you to put the concepts and ideas we are learning in class in conversation with events and issues in our society today, each student will complete one "Current Event" presentation (**50 points**) and short paper (**100 points**) during the course.

For this assignment, you will identify a "current event" and analyze it using concepts from class. Current Event topics can include anything related to gender, sex, and/or sexuality (which, you will find out, is most everything!) including economics, politics, law, social movements, religion, language, kinship, social and news media, food, and more. While current news stories or notable events make especially good "Current Events," other options include identifying and analyzing activist efforts/groups (history of organizations and/or coalitions, organizational brochures, manifestos, protest and mobilization, etc), artistic works (poems, music lyrics, artwork, performance art, etc), academic or intellectual work (articles, books, etc), or any other sites of analysis that you think are relevant. Be creative!

In the second week of class, you will sign up to give a short, **5-6 minute presentation** that will take place at the beginning of class on the day you select. On the day of your presentation, you will also be required to turn in a **300-400 word paper** that is an analysis of your Current Event topic/materials. In your presentation and assignment, you will want to:

1. Identify and provide a brief description/summary of your topic
2. Explain this current event's significance to course content using at least **one concept or topic from class or your required readings**
3. Offer your very insightful and critical analysis of the topic/materials (FYI: "I thought it was interesting" is neither insightful nor critical)
4. In your written paper, please include a weblink or copy of object if relevant

IV. Midterm Examination (200 points)

There is one examination for this class, a midterm. It will be an essay exam that will allow you to demonstrate your understanding of, and ability to apply, course content. Course content includes assigned readings, lectures, discussions, videos, and presentations. The exam will be administered outside of class. As such, it is open book and open note, but note that this courtesy comes with increased expectations on my part and thus a higher standard for success. This means that proper preparation for the exam is key to doing well. I will provide study guidance one week before the exam.

VI. Final Project (400 points)

Your objective will be to complete a final research project on a contemporary social issue/dynamic/relationship of your choosing **using at least one** theoretical model or concept that we have explored in class this semester. In your project, you will analyze your chosen topic using a feminist anthropological approach, with specific attention to how your topic relates to broader cultural processes/meanings about gender and/or sex.

Embracing a feminist ethnographic approach, the form of this final project is relatively open, and is limited only by your creativity. It could take the form of a more traditional final paper (see parameters below) or you can choose to do something less traditional. A creative piece could include producing an original work of art with description/analysis, a blog or online forum, a “zine,” comic book/graphic novel style-work, an autoethnography, or whatever interests you! However, note that even if you choose a creative option, you must accomplish the goal of this project, which is for you to apply concepts and theories we have learned in class to better explain/analyze a “real life” social issue/dynamic/relationship. Students will give a brief oral presentation of the results of their research projects at the end of the semester.

This project will give us a chance to think through critical questions that are timely and important to all of us, particularly with recent political and cultural events. It also allows you to bring in “outside” materials into the classroom, forcing us to negotiate the relationship between theories, methodologies, politics, activisms, and agencies.

You will be required to research and use at least **3 outside scholarly sources** in addition to using **1 of the required scholarly readings from the course**. One of your central objectives of this assignment is to work towards applying and extending analyses and concepts acquired throughout the course towards your particular topic, and to juxtapose these concepts and analyses to those you have found in your own research.

To help you get started early on thinking about your project, it will be broken into two components:

i. Project Proposal with Suggested References (50 points)

You will turn in a **150-250 word** project proposal that describes in narrative form your idea for your research, including the topic that you have chosen

for analysis, the format of your final project, and the guiding research question(s) for the paper. This is due **March 22**.

ii. “Annotated” List of Suggested References (50 points)

You will submit include a list of at least 5 scholarly sources not included on our class reading list own that you think you may use for your project, with a 1-2 sentence description about the topic of the source and why you think it might be useful. You are not required to use any or all of these sources in your final project, but this assignment is meant to encourage you to start looking for resources ahead of time. It will help you to start thinking about the final product, which is due soon! This is due **April 8**.

iii. Final Project (200 points)

- a. If you choose to do a creative project, you must first come talk with me (after class, in my office hours, or set an appointment) so we can discuss the parameters of your specific project.
- b. If you choose to write a final paper, your final paper should be between **1250-1350 words**, double-spaced, with 12-point font and 1-inch margins on all side. In your paper, you should analyze your topic using a feminist anthropological approach, with attention to how your topic relates to broader cultural processes/meanings about gender and/or sex. For example, you may want to consider the following questions: what does your topic tell us about dominant cultural meanings about gender and sex? Does the topic reinforce, reproduce, and/or contest cultural meanings about sexuality or sexual norms, and if so, how? What links does this topic help you make between sexual/gendered difference and cultural norms about citizenship and belonging? How does gender work with other categories of social difference, like sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, religion, nationality, etc. to produce certain kinds of cultural meanings?

Final projects will be due on the day of your oral presentation.

ALL projects should contain a works cited/references page. In-text quotes and references should be properly cited using whatever format you are most familiar with (Anthro majors use Chicago Style).

iv. Oral Presentation of Final Project (100 points)

Each student will give a brief, 7-10 minute presentation about their final research project. In your presentation, you will describe the central issue/topic and discuss your analysis of it, including the theories/concepts that you used from class readings.

***A Note on Paper Formatting: All written assignments are to be double spaced, with 12-point font and 1-inch margins on all sides, and should contain a works cited/references page. In-text quotes and references should be properly cited. You may use whichever format you are most familiar with (i.e. MLA, APA, Chicago), but**

you must be consistent. If you do not know what I am talking about here, please, please, please ask the Instructor or you are always welcome to go to the UNT writing lab for help.

<p style="text-align: center;">IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER Your personal Current Event Date 3/8- Midterm Exam 3/22- Project Proposal Due 4/8- “Annotated” List of Suggested References Due 4/22- 5/1- Final Projects Due and Oral Presentations</p>
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NOTE: The instructor reserves the right to add, delete, or revise segments of the syllabus. Any changes in the course schedule will be announced in class and on the course webpage.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Introduction to the Course

1/14: No required readings

1/16: Adrienne Rich “Claiming an Education”

Sex/Gender as a Social Construction

1/18: Emily Martin “The Egg and the Sperm” (pages 1-8)

1/21: Emily Martin “The Egg and the Sperm” (pages 8-17)

1/23: Judith Lorber “Believing is Seeing”

1/25: Anne Fausto-Sterling “The Five Sexes”

1/28: Ricki Wilchins- “Its Your Gender, Stupid!”

Looking Back: Anthropology, Feminist Politics, and Shifting Conceptions of “Woman”

1/30: Feminist Ethnography- Timeline (starts pg xv), Introduction (pgs. 1-6), and Ch. 1 (pgs. 7-13)

2/1: Feminist Ethnography- Ch. 1 (pgs 14-28)

- 2/4: María Lugones and Elizabeth Spellman- “Have We Got a Theory for You”
- 2/6: Chandra Mohanty “Under Western Eyes” (pages 333-346 required, the whole article is recommended!)
- 2/8: Feminist Ethnography- Ch. 2 (pgs. 29- 42)
- 2/11: Feminist Ethnography- Ch. 2 (pges 42- 52)

Building Our Theoretical and Methodological Toolkit: Intersectionality

- 2/13: Audre Lorde “Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference”
The Combahee River Collective Statement
- 2/15: Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color” (pgs. 1-12 required, the whole article is recommended!)
- 2/18: Catherine A. MacKinnon “Intersectionality as Method: A Note”

Want more?? Supplemental Readings:

Crenshaw, Kimberlé Williams. 1989. Demarginalizing the Intersections of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 139, 168.

Eisenstein, Zillah. 2005. Hatred Written on the Body in *Beyond Borders: Thinking Critically About Global Issues*. Paula S. Rothenberg, ed., pgs. 180-191. New York: Worth Publishers.

Magubane, Zine. 2001. “Which Bodies Matter? Feminism, Poststructuralism, Race, and the Curious Theoretical Odyssey of the Hottentot Venus” *Gender and Society* 15(6): 816-834.

Debates and Interventions in Feminist Ethnography

- 2/20: Feminist Ethnography Ch. 3 (pgs. 60-73)
- 2/22: Lila Abu-Lughod- selection from *Writing Against Culture*
- 2/25: Kirin Narayan “How Native is a ‘Native’ Anthropologist?”
- 2/27: Irma McClaurin “Forging a Theory, Politics, Praxis, and Poetics of Black Feminist Anthropology”

Doing and Writing Feminist Ethnography

- 3/1: Feminist Ethnography Ch. 4 (pgs. 84-96)
- 3/4: Feminist Ethnography Ch. 4 (pgs. 128- 142 required, the whole chapter is recommended!)

3/6: Faye V. Harrison- selection from "Writing Against the Grain: Cultural Politics of Difference in Alice Walker's Fiction"

Want more?? Supplemental Readings:

Abu Lughod, Lila. 1993. Introduction in *Writing Women's Worlds: Bedouin Stories*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Any of the articles in Behar, Ruth and Deborah A. Gordon. 1995. *Women Writing Culture*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

3/8: MIDTERM EXAM!

3/11- 3/15- SPRING BREAK!! ENJOY THE BREAK!

Using a Feminist Ethnographic Approach: Analyzing Gender in our World

Gender Identities and Practices Across the Globe

3/18: Gayatri Reddy and Serena Nanda "Hijras: An Alternative Sex/Gender in India"

3/20: Evelyn Blackwood "Tombois in West Sumatra: Constructing Masculinity and Erotic Desire" (pgs. 491- 499 required, the whole article is recommended!)

3/22: Saylesh Wesley "Twin-Spirited Woman/Sts'iyóye smestíyexw slhá:li"

Project Proposal Due

3/25: Ricki Wilchins "Deconstructing Trans"

3/27: Joel Sanders and Susan Stryker "Stalled: Gender Neutral Bathrooms"

Suggested Reading: Evan Bowle and Lynn Morgan. 2002. "Romancing the Transgender Native: Rethinking the Use of the 'Third Gender' Concept" GLQ 8(4) 469-497

Gender, Marriage, and Kinship

3/29: Nancy Cott "Introduction" to *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation*

4/1: Evelyn Blackwood "Wedding Bell Blues: Marriage, Missing Men, and Matrifocal Follies"

The Body

4/3: Robbie E. Davis-Floyd "Gender and Ritual: Giving Birth the American Way"

4/5: Paul Farmer "On Suffering and Structural Violence: A View from Below"

Sex Work

4/8: Cynthia Enloe- Selection from *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*

"Annotated" Bibliography Due

4/10: Kimberly Kay Hoang "Economies of Emotion, Familiarity, Fantasy, and Desire: Emotional Labor in Ho Chi Minh City's Sex Industry"

4/12: Don Kulick- selection from "Introduction" to *Travesti: Sex, Gender, and Culture Among Brazilian Transgendered Prostitutes*

The Future(s) of Feminist Ethnography?

4/15: Feminist Ethnography Chs. 7-8 (pgs. 145-152, 167-172)

4/17: Donna Haraway- Selection from "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late 20th Century"

4/19: Anna Tsing "Arts of Inclusion, or How to Love a Mushroom"

Oral Presentations of Final Projects

4/22- 5/1 IN CLASS PRESENTATIONS