

**SYLLABUS**  
**ANTH 4701.040**  
**SEX, GENDER, AND CULTURE**  
**SPRING 2020**

Professor: Dr. Jara Carrington

Email: [jara.carrington@unt.edu](mailto:jara.carrington@unt.edu)

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:30-2:30, Wednesdays 12-1, or by appointment

Office: Sycamore Hall 122

Class meetings: MWF 2:00-2:50

Meeting location: BLB 060

### **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, and how these categories are constructed in and through cultural norms about sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, indigeneity, and nationality. The first half of the course focuses on the development of feminist anthropology, with special attention to significant theories, themes of study, and debates within the field. In doing so, we will begin to identify and think through the insights that feminist anthropology brings to the practice of anthropology as a discipline more generally. 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**

**After completing this course, you will be able to:**

- Explain the history of the study of gender and sex in anthropology
- Describe significant concepts, debates, and contributions of feminist anthropology
- Analyze and compare meanings about gender and sex across and within cultures
- Evaluate the “intersectional” relationships amongst gender, sex, sexuality, race, class, indigeneity, and nation
- Read texts thoughtfully and productively in ways that enable you to locate and engage with the authors’ arguments, and to reach your own conclusions
- Apply the knowledge you learn in this class to understand how cultural norms about gender and sex impact your own lives

## REQUIRED TEXTS

There are no required texts to purchase for this course. All required readings will be available for download at your pleasure on our course's Canvas webpage.

### A NOTE ABOUT REQUIRED TEXTS: WHAT IT MEANS TO READ

In completing the readings, I expect that you read the texts critically. This does not mean trying to find fault with the text, but rather to approach each text with an eye to the assumptions, claims, and conclusions of the authors. In other words, I expect you to derive from your reading not only the basic content of the materials, but also the ways in which these authors understand and work with broader concepts relevant to this course (i.e. "sex" and "gender," as well as "race," "class," "sexuality" etc. ) As the semester progresses, you will be encouraged to put different readings in conversation with each other. 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 or gender studies 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 a) approach these topics in an open and intellectual fashion and b) use the course materials and other scholarly works to construct your arguments. 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.

From UNT's Academic Integrity Policy:

**"Cheating"** means the use of unauthorized assistance in an academic exercise, including but not limited to:

1. use of any unauthorized assistance to take exams, tests, quizzes, or other assessments;
2. use of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments;
3. use, without permission, of tests, notes, or other academic materials belonging to instructors, staff members, or other students of the University;
4. dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor;
5. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage on an academic assignment.

**"Plagiarism"** means use of another's thoughts or words without proper attribution in any academic exercise, regardless of the student's intent, including but not limited to:

1. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement or citation, or
  2. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in selling term papers or other academic materials.
- The definition of plagiarism means it 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 receive an automatic zero on the assessment. I also reserve the right to pursue further disciplinary action within the UNT system. Students will be provided the opportunity for a hearing; if found guilty they can receive an automatic "F" in the course. Multiple violations may result in 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. We use Turnitin in this class, and even without that I will likely 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 help on in-text citations, rather than passing off someone else's work as your own. B) 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.

## STUDENT RESOURCES

**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.

**UNT Learning Center:** This resource provides a variety of tutoring services that are open to students for different topics, including one-on-one and group sessions. Check out their website for more information here: <https://learningcenter.unt.edu/tutoring>

**UNT Writing Center:** The Writing Center provides assistance with any academic writing needs. If you are having troubles articulating your argument, or want assistance with in-text citations, this is the resource for you. Find more about their services here:

<https://writingcenter.unt.edu>

**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**

a) Class Participation	10%
b) Reading Assessments	16%
c) Politics of Representation Assignment	15%
d) Midterm Exam	15%
e) Research Project	44%
i. Proposal- 10%	
ii. "Annotated" List of Suggested Resources- 10%	
iii. Final Paper- 19%	
iv. Oral Presentation- 5%	

### **I. Class Participation (100 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.

Students will have the opportunity to earn both a midterm and a final participation grade, each worth 50 points. See the first paragraph in this section to make sure you understand what I mean by "participation."

### **II. Reading Assessments (160 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 8 "reading assessments" throughout the

semester worth 20 points each. The assessments will be completed in class and may take different forms— it could be a brief quiz, a “quotation commentary” assignment, a free-writing exercise or other. Reading Assessments will be random and unannounced, and will ask you to demonstrate that you have completed the required reading for that day. Students who are absent will not be given the opportunity to make up these points unless they have a documented excuse and/or have received permission from the instructor ahead of time.

### **III. Politics of Representation Assignment (150 points)**

As a means to kick off some of our 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, you will research and present a report about a current, relevant form of representation that deals with gender and/or sex. In the report, you will consider how gender and/or sex gets represented in the media source (widely construed) of your choosing. For example, you may want to think about film, television, print news media, social media, art work, music, or some other site. Be creative! For this presentation, I would like for you to focus in on one specific example—for instance, not a whole genre (i.e. graphic novels) but one specific text (i.e. the graphic novel adaptation of Octavia Butler’s “Kindred”) to do a “deep reading” of that site, and to think more in-depth about the cultural meanings that are produced circulated by and through that site. In your presentation and paper, you will analyze both the substantive content of the text, and identify how it represents norms, bodies, and/or politics related to gender and sex.

In the second week of class, you will sign up to give a short, **7-10 minute presentation (50 points)** 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 **400-500 word paper (100 points)** that is an analysis of your Politics of Representation topic/materials. In your presentation and assignment, you will want to:

1. Identify and provide a brief description/summary of your media site
2. Explain this media site’s significance to course content using at least **TWO relevant concepts or theories 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

Make sure to practice! Your verbal presentation should not go over ten minutes, and be ready to answer any questions we might have for you.

### **IV. Midterm Examination (150 points)**

There is one examination for this class, a midterm. It is 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.

### **V. Research Project (400 points)**

Your objective will be to complete a final research project on a contemporary social issue/dynamic/relationship related to sex and/or gender of your choosing. In your project, you will analyze your chosen topic using a feminist anthropological approach, with specific attention to how your “site of analysis” participates in broader cultural processes/meanings about gender and/or sex. In order to do this, you will need to substantively incorporate/use at least **TWO significant concepts or theoretical models from our class readings**.

The focus of your paper could include, but is not limited to:

- Sites of representation such as literature, news media, TV or film, animation, social media
- Current political debates about issues related to gender and sex
- Particular areas of law and policy such as immigration law, anti-discrimination laws, privacy laws
- Dynamics of institutions such as the university, the medical system, or the criminal justice system; related activist/advocacy groups or materials, or other.

This project should present an ARGUMENT. That is, I want it to be more than a descriptive effort. In your project, you should attempt to analyze a site where cultural meanings about gender and sex get produced, reinforced, and/or contested. As you are developing your ideas, you may want to consider the following questions: How do cultural meanings about gender and sex get created and circulated? How are norms around gender and sex categories related to other categories of social difference, like sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, religion, nationality, indigeneity, etc? What links can you find between norms around gender and sex and cultural ideas about citizenship, community, or belonging?

Embracing a feminist ethnographic approach, the form that the final project might take is open, and is limited only by your creativity. It could take the form of a final paper (see parameters below) or you can choose to do something less traditional. A creative piece could include producing a Wakelet collection, an original work of art with description/analysis, a blog, a “zine,” comic book, a podcast, a life history interview, or whatever interests you! Note that if you choose a creative option, you must still 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. Thus, these will often require a short write-up in addition to the final product. Students will give a brief oral presentation of the results of their research projects at the end of the semester.

You will be required to research and use at least **3 outside scholarly sources** in addition to using **2 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, you will have two assignments leading up to the final project and presentation.

**i. Project Proposal (100 points)**

You will turn in a **250-350 word** project proposal that describes in narrative form your idea for your research, including the topic/site 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 (100 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 one paragraph (3-5 sentences) 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 (190 points)**

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?

**a. CREATIVE PROJECTS:** 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. Note that creative projects must still meet the requirements of the project, so may require an additional (short) write-up to fully incorporate the scholarly resources.

**b. RESEARCH PAPER:** If you choose to write a final paper, your final paper should be between **1750-2000 words**, double-spaced, with 12-point font and 1-inch margins on all side.

**c.** All forms should include:

- i. Proper formatting and citation rules
- ii. Substantive use of at least 3 relevant outside scholarly sources
- iii. Substantive use of at least 2 relevant scholarly sources from required course readings

**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 (50 points)**

Each student will give a 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;"><b>IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER</b> Your personal Current Event Date 3/8- Midterm Exam Due 3/20- Project Proposal Due 4/8- "Annotated" List of Suggested References Due 4/24- 4/29- 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.

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## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

### **Introduction to the Course**

1/13: Welcome! No required readings

1/15: a. Adrienne Rich "Claiming an Education"

b. James Peacock Ch. 1- "It's Real! Culture Beheld" in *The Anthropological Lens: Harsh Light, Soft Focus* (pages 1-9)

## **Introduction: Sex/Gender as a Social Construction**

1/17: Judith Lorber "Believing is Seeing: Biology as Ideology"

1/20: NO CLASS: MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY

1/22: a. Anne Fausto-Sterling "The Five Sexes"  
b. Anne Fausto-Sterling "The Five Sexes, Revisited"

1/24: Ricki Wilchins- "Its Your Gender, Stupid!"

1/27: Judith Butler "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory"

## **Rethinking the Category of "Woman" in Anthropology and Beyond**

1/29: Craven and Davis- from "Feminist Ethnography" Timeline and Ch. 1

1/31: a. Audre Lorde "Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference"  
b. Audre Lorde "There is no Hierarchy of Oppressions"  
c. The Combahee River Collective Statement

2/3: Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color"

2/5: María Lugones and Elizabeth Spellman- "Have We Got a Theory for You: Feminist Theory, Cultural Imperialism, and the Demand for the 'Woman's Voice'"

2/7: Chandra Mohanty "Under Western Eyes" (pages 333-346 required, entire article recommended!)

2/10: Gloria Anzaldua- selection from Borderlands/La Frontera (pgs. 4- 10 and 15-17 of PDF required, entire selection recommended!)

2/12: Patricia Hill Collins "What's in a Name?: Womanism, Black Feminism, and Beyond"

2/14: Catherine A. MacKinnon "Intersectionality as Method: A Note"

## **Debates and Interventions in Feminist Anthropology**

2/17: Lila Abu-Lughod "Can there be a Feminist Ethnography"

2/19: Kirin Narayan "How Native is a 'Native' Anthropologist?"

2/21: Irma McClaurin "Forging a Theory, Politics, Praxis, and Poetics of Black Feminist Anthropology"

- 2/24: Faye V. Harrison "Writing Against the Grain: Cultural Politics of Difference in Alice Walker's Fiction" (pgs. 401-412)
- 2/26: Faye V. Harrison "Writing Against the Grain: Cultural Politics of Difference in Alice Walker's Fiction" (pgs. 412-421)
- 2/28: Selection from Zora Neale Hurston "Of Mules and Men"
- 3/2: Graciela Hernandez "Multiple subjectivities and strategic positionality: Zora Neale Hurston's Experimental Ethnographies"
- 3/4: Audra Simpson "On Ethnographic Refusal: Indigeneity, 'Voice,' and Colonial Citizenship"
- 3/6: NO CLASS: MIDTERM EXAM

<p><b>MIDTERM EXAM DUE SUNDAY 3/8 11:59PM</b></p>
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**3/9- 3/13 SPRING BREAK!**

**Using a Feminist Ethnographic Approach: Analyzing Sex, Gender, and Power in our World**

**Gender Identities, Practices, and Politics Across the Globe**

- 3/16: Gayatri Reddy- selection from "Hijras, Individuality, and Izzat"
- 3/18: Evelyn Blackwood "Tombois in West Sumatra: Constructing Masculinity and Erotic Desire"
- 3/20: Saylesh Wesley "Twin-Spirited Woman/Sts'iyóye smestíyexw slhá:li"  
**Project Proposal Due**
- 3/23: Evan B. Towle and Lynn Morgan "Romancing the Transgender Native: Rethinking the Use of the 'Third Gender' Concept" (pgs. 469-483)
- 3/25: a. Evan B. Towle and Lynn Morgan "Romancing the Transgender Native: Rethinking the Use of the 'Third Gender' Concept" (pgs. 484-492)  
 b. Joel Sanders and Susan Stryker "Stalled: Gender Neutral Bathrooms"

### **Gender, Marriage, and Kinship**

3/27: Gayle Rubin- "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the Political Economy of Sex" (pgs. 27-43)

3/30: Gayle Rubin- "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the Political Economy of Sex" (pgs. 43-58)

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

### **Gender, Race, and Nation**

4/3: Cynthia Enloe "Carmen Miranda on My Mind: International Politics of the Banana"

4/6: Ann McClintock- selection from "Lay of the Land: Genealogies of Imperialism" (pgs. 28- 36)

4/8: Deborah Miranda "Extermination of the Joyas: Gendercide in Spanish California (pgs. 253-268 required, entire article recommended!)"

### **Annotated Bibliography Due**

#### **Embodiment and Agency**

4/10: Saba Mahmood "Feminist Theory, Embodiment, and the Docile Agent: Some Reflections on the Egyptian Islamic Revival" (pgs. 202-217)

4/13: Saba Mahmood "Feminist Theory, Embodiment, and the Docile Agent: Some Reflections on the Egyptian Islamic Revival" (pgs. 217-225)

4/15: Zine Magubane "Which Bodies Matter? Feminism, Poststructuralism, Race, and the Curious Theoretical Odyssey of the Hottentot Venus"

#### **The Future(s) of Feminist Anthropology?**

4/17: Chela Sandoval "US Third World Feminism: Differential Social Movement I" (pgs. 17-27)

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

4/22: Anna Tsing "Arts of Inclusion, or How to Love a Mushroom"

#### **Oral Presentations of Final Projects**

4/24- 4/29 IN CLASS PRESENTATIONS