SYLLABUS
ANTH 4701.040
SEX, GENDER, AND CULTURE
SPRING 2022

Professor: Dr. Jara Carrington (she/they)
Email: jara.carrington@unt.edu
Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:00-3:00 PM (open Zoom meeting room), or by appointment
Office: Sycamore Hall 122
Class meetings: MW 2:00-3:20
Meeting location: LANG 309

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Welcome! In this course, we will examine issues, debates, and perspectives important to feminist anthropology. Rather than studying a collection of “facts” about gender and sex across cultural contexts, in this class students will learn how to bring a feminist anthropological approach to topics related to gender and sex, and to critically consider how categories and hierarchies of gender and sex are constructed in and through cultural norms about sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, indigeneity, nationality, and more.

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 identify and think through the insights that feminist anthropology brings to both the practice of anthropology as well as to feminist theories. In the second half of the course, we 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, work/labor, and more. Throughout the course we will put scholarly concepts in conversation with a variety of popular culture texts and discourses in order to think critically about how cultural meanings about gender and sex are transmitted, reproduced, and contested in our own worlds today.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
After completing this course, you will be able to:
• Describe significant concepts, debates, and contributions of feminist anthropology
• Analyze and compare meanings about gender and sex across and within cultures
• Evaluate the “intersectional” relationship 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 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 attention 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 suggestion is that you take notes on the materials you read to aid you in this task.

COVID-Related Information
I recognize and understand the difficult times we are all in. The COVID-19 pandemic impacts us all in many ways, including physically, mentally, emotionally, financially, academically, and professionally. Please stay in communication with me throughout the semester, and I will work with you on challenges you may be encountering and to provide support to help you succeed. However, please keep in mind that I will continue to hold you accountable as a student.

Attendance
Students are expected to attend class meetings regularly and to abide by the attendance policy established for the course. It is important that you communicate with the professor prior to being absent, so you and the professor can discuss and mitigate the impact of the absence on your attainment of course learning goals. Please inform the professor if you are unable to attend class meetings because you are ill, in mindfulness of the health and safety of everyone in our community.

If you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 please seek medical attention from the Student Health and Wellness Center (940-565-2333 or askSHWC@unt.edu) or your health care provider PRIOR to coming to campus. UNT also requires you to contact the UNT COVID Team at COVID@unt.edu for guidance on actions to take due to symptoms, pending or positive test results, or potential exposure.

Face Coverings
UNT encourages everyone to wear a face covering when indoors, regardless of vaccination status, to protect yourself and others from COVID infection, as recommended by current CDC guidelines. Face covering guidelines could change based on community health conditions.
Class Materials for Remote Instruction
We may from time to time meet together as a class remotely (i.e. via Zoom) for various reasons. In addition, remote instruction may be necessary if community health conditions change or you need to self-isolate or quarantine due to COVID-19. Students in this class will need access to: a device that can access the internet, a webcam, and a microphone to participate in fully remote portions of the class. Information on how to be successful in a remote learning environment can be found at https://online.unt.edu/learn.

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

Email Policy: I prefer that you email me using your email account vs. through Canvas if possible. Please allow 48 hours for a response to your email. Emails sent during the weekend will be treated as if sent on Monday morning. When emailing me, be sure to include the course number (ANTH 4701.040) and/or name in the subject line along with the topic of the email.

Late work: As a general rule, I do not accept late assignments or exams unless you have made specific arrangements with me in advance, have a doctor’s note, and/or otherwise have received my approval. However, if you think you will miss a grade for a reason other than a medical excuse, please get in touch with me prior to the deadline and we may be able to work something out. Even if it only gets you partial credit, that is better than no credit at all!

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, attending 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:** UNT and the Department of Anthropology do 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. This means that your assignment will be compared to a database containing published writings, online content, papers turned in by students at UNT and other universities, and more.

- 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 who are suspected of cheating or plagiarism 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](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/](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 to ask 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. Many of our authors are women, persons of color, queer, and/or are born outside the United States and Europe, and plagiarism is yet another way in which these 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.

**University Resources**

**UNT Food Pantry:** Any current UNT student in need can visit the 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. **YOU CAN’T LEARN IF YOU ARE HUNGRY!**

**NEED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE? Contact the UNT IT Helpdesk!**
Phone: 940-565-2324
E-Mail: helpdesk@unt.edu
Location: Sage Hall, Room 130

**More Technology Resources**
[http://it.unt.edu/helpdesk](http://it.unt.edu/helpdesk)

**NEED ACADEMIC ASSISTANCE? UNT is here for you!**
**UNT Learning Center**
The UNT Learning Center provides a variety of tutoring services that are open to you—including online tutoring for distance students. Check out their website for more information here: [https://learningcenter.unt.edu/tutoring](https://learningcenter.unt.edu/tutoring)

**UNT Writing Center**
Also, the UNT Writing Center provides assistance with any academic writing needs. Find more about their services here: [https://writingcenter.unt.edu](https://writingcenter.unt.edu)

**MISC. POLICIES**
Canvas Privacy Policy: [https://www.instructure.com/policies/privacy](https://www.instructure.com/policies/privacy)
Canvas Accessibility Policy: https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-2061-accessibility-within-canvas

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
This course is designed to help you develop and use skills important to feminist anthropologists—reading, asking questions, and communicating orally and in writing. Students can earn up to 1000 points for the semester in the following assessments:

I. Class Participation
II. Weekly Discussion Questions
III. Politics of Representation Assignment
IV. Essay Exam
V. Research Project
   i. Proposal and Annotated List of Suggested References- 10%
   ii. Final Project- 20%

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: participating in group work, 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.

Students will have the opportunity to earn both a midterm and a final participation grade, each worth 50 points.

II. Weekly Discussion Questions (200 points)
Discussion is a crucial component of our meetings. In order to participate in the discussion, you need to come to class having read the assigned readings. As a reward to you for reading, you will be able to earn points by raising one original, substantial, and thought-provoking Discussion Question pertaining to each week’s readings and topics. I will utilize the most pertinent discussion questions in our class to help prompt and guide our conversations.

Your original, substantive, and thought-provoking Discussion Question should focus on an assigned reading for that week. In doing so, it can focus only on that reading, or it can put that reading in conversation with previous readings or current events. The goal of this
assignment is to encourage deeper engagement with the text in question and the points the author is making.

You should submit one discussion question each week by **9:00PM on the day before the class that the related reading is assigned**, for a total of 11 submissions. Each Discussion Question is worth 20 points, and I will drop the lowest score of one submission. Late discussion questions will not be accepted without proper documentation.

In order to earn all of the points, your Discussion Question should be:

A. **Contextualized.** The question should be situated in terms of at least one of the following:
   - A particular passage, quote, or theme from the text
   - A particular school of thought
   - A topic or event presented as a framework for the question

This means that you need to provide some discussion of the relevant part or themes from the text prior to asking your question in order to show explicitly how it connects to the text. If you choose a quote or passage, be sure to talk about it in your own words as well (i.e. don’t just leave a quote there and ask a question—show me how they connect).

B. **Open-ended.** Make sure to ask “open-ended” questions, i.e. questions that cannot be answered with yes/no or either/or. The point for this assignment is to encourage open discussion, and questions that are “closed-ended” tend to lead to a closed response. Learning how to ask good questions is an important skill for anthropologists!

C. **Answerable.** Please ask questions that the class can answer using knowledge or information that we have learned in the class (as opposed to questions based on speculation or opinion). While I appreciate attempts to think “otherwise” about our world, the goal for this assignment is really to get us to think more about the arguments/stances within and across texts.

D. **Substantive and Relevant.** That is, it should be related to a significant point/argument in the reading and it should ask us to consider that point/argument in the context of the themes of the course.

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, **8-10 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 **500-600 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. Essay Examination (150 points)**

There is one essay examination for this class. This assessment will allow you to demonstrate your understanding of, and ability to communicate 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: Analyzing Gender/Sex in a Cultural Context (300 points)**

Your objective will be to complete a final research project on a contemporary social issue, event, text, or institution related to sex and/or gender. 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 in addition to two outside scholarly sources**.

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

- Analysis of representation in media, including literature, news media, TV or film, animation, social media, etc.
- Current political debates about matters related to gender and sex
- Particular areas of law and policy such as: anti-discrimination law, privacy law, abortion law, sex work law, laws regulating kinship and marriage
- Dynamics of institutions such as the university, the medical system, the criminal justice system, immigration enforcement, etc.
- Related activist/advocacy groups, their activities, missions, and/or advocacy materials (present or historical)
- Archival research about a particular social movement, group, place, or person

The topic should be SPECIFIC. That is, I want you to focus in on a particular aspect of your selected topic/site. For instance, if you are interested in representation, the paper should focus on a specific film or genre, rather than something like “women in media.” If you are interested in the criminal justice system, the paper might focus on a particular demographic or aspect of the system (i.e. policing/detainment vs. sentencing/incarceration). The more specific the focus, the more able you will be to think through complex cultural processes and practices and to articulate an argument about how they work and/or their effects.

This project should present an ARGUMENT. That is, I want it to be more than a descriptive effort. In your project, you should select a “site”/topic that you think tells us something about how cultural meanings about gender and sex get produced, reinforced, or contested, and/or the social implications of this process. As you are developing your ideas, you may want to consider the following questions: What does your topic tell us about dominant cultural norms around gender and sex? How might cultural meanings about gender and sex get created and circulated through this “site”? What does this topic tell us about how norms around gender and sex are 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?

In your final project, you will be required to research and substantively use specific concepts or theories from at least 2 outside scholarly sources in addition to 2 of the required scholarly readings from the course. To do this well, you will need to define/describe the concept or theory and make substantive use of it in your analysis. 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.

Embracing a feminist decolonial ethnographic approach to knowledge production and transmission, the form that the final project might take is open, and is limited only by your creativity.

A. Research Paper: If you choose to write a final research paper, your paper should be between 1500-1700 words, double-spaced, with 12-point font and 1-inch margins on all side. Citations and references are required.

B. Creative Projects: A creative final project could include but is not limited to: a digital exhibit and analysis from online archives, a “zine”, a Wakelet collection, an original work of art with artist description/analysis, a blog, a comic book/graphic novel, a podcast, a life history interview, or whatever interests you! I am happy to talk out ideas with you if you would like.
Note that creative projects must still meet the requirements of the assignment, so will likely require an additional (short) write-up to fully incorporate the scholarly resources.

**C. Praxis Projects:** A praxis-based project requires substantive engagement with a relevant organization/group/individual doing advocacy or service work related to gender/sex throughout the majority of the semester. This could be a group that you already work with, or one that you would like to get involved with. By substantive engagement, I mean that you should be engaging with this group or person regularly (i.e. weekly) for the majority of the semester, for a total of at least 25 hours. This could be in the capacity of a member or employee that works with a group, or it could be as an intern, a volunteer, or through some other connection. Note that there should also be someone in the group that can verify/sign off on your participation.

**Like the creative option, this project must still meet the requirements of the assignment, so will require an additional (short) write-up to fully incorporate the scholarly ideas and resources.**

You must get approval from me before doing the praxis option! Preferably we will have talked about this PRIOR to you submitting your project proposal.

To help you get an early start thinking about your project, you will have two assignments leading up to the final project submission.

i. **Project Proposal and Annotated Bibliography (100 points)**
   You will turn in a 250-350 word project proposal that describes in narrative form your idea for your project, 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.

   In addition to your proposal, you will research and find at least 5 scholarly sources not included on our class reading list that are relevant to your project. For each source, you will write a one paragraph (3-5 sentences) description that briefly summarizes the reading and identifies why you think it might be useful for your project. You are not necessarily required to use any or all of these specific resources in your final project, but this assignment will encourage you to start the research process.

ii. **Final Project (200 points)**
   Regardless of format, 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).

*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.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER
Each week: Discussion Questions Due
Your personal Current Event Date
3/7: Project Proposal and Annotated Bibliography Due
3/27: Essay Exam Due
4/24- 4/29- Final Projects Due

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
1/19: Welcome! No required readings
*no discussion question due

Feminist Theories of Gender and Sex


Rethinking the Category “Woman” in Anthropology and Beyond


Note: some discussion of gender and sexual violence


(pages 333-346 required, entire article recommended!)

Debates and Interventions in Feminist Anthropology


*no discussion question due

TURN IN: FINAL PROJECT PROPOSAL AND ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY (DUE MONDAY MARCH 7 by 11:59PM on Canvas)

*no discussion question due

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3/14- 3/18  SPRING BREAK! NO CLASS

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*no discussion question due

3/23:  **NO CLASS, WORK ON YOUR ESSAY EXAM!**

*no discussion question due

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TURN IN: ESSAY EXAM (DUE SUNDAY MARCH 27 by 11:59PM on Canvas)

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

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


Note: some discussion of sexual and gender violence


**Gender, Marriage, and Kinship**


**Gender, Race, and Nation**


Note: some discussion of sexual and gender violence

**Embodiment and Agency**


Note: some discussion of racial and gender violence

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


*no discussion question due*

5/4: Conclusion/Final Take Aways

**TURN IN: FINAL PROJECT (DUE WEDNESDAY MAY 11 by 11:59PM on Canvas)**