
TOPICS: ANTHROPOLOGY OF GENDER in Fall 2019 (GS2091B)

Course Code	GS2091B	Professor(s)	Nicole Berger
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	G-4th Floor
Class Schedule	TF: 12:10-13:30 in SD-1	Office Hours	Fridays 14h10 to 14h50 or by appointment
Credits	4	Email	nberger@aup.edu
Semester	Fall 2019	Office Tel. Ext.	826

Course Description

This course examines gender roles and relations from an anthropological perspective. While all human societies make distinctions based on gender, the content of these distinctions varies from one social group to another. Anthropology has greatly contributed, since the 1930s, to developing contemporary understanding of gender as a social construction, which orients people's beliefs and practices. The anthropology of gender focuses on how culture shapes individual and collective understandings of gender difference, and the ways in which gender difference structures cultural beliefs and forms of social organization around the world. In this course key concepts such as gender, sex, sexuality, kinship, sexual division of labor, social reproduction and symbolism, on the basis of anthropological literature from the last century to this day. We will deal with these topics through analysis of ethnographic case studies from different places and times, in order to highlight the historical dimension of cultural constructs.

The course will be divided in to three sections. The first section provides a brief overview of early anthropological literature on gender roles and relations. It introduces the notion of gender roles as culturally variable and initiates students to thinking about the intellectual and political implications of early anthropological scholarship on gender—a question we will deal with throughout the semester. The second section focuses on feminist anthropology, between the 1970s and the 1990s. This section will introduce students to discussions on the debates around the “cultural universal” of women's subordination, feminist research methods and theories, but also to the relationship between feminism and anthropology. The third and longest section will deal with twenty-first century anthropological literature, including how anthropologists have widened their approach in order to incorporate queer, intersectional and post-colonial approaches to gender roles.

Course Learning Outcomes

General Education

Course Outline

Please note: This schedule may be subject to change.

September

Week I – 2nd – 6th

Topics: Introduction to the Anthropology of Gender, Key Questions

Readings:

- Friday: Leni Silverstein and Ellen Lewin, “introduction: Anthropologies and Feminisms: Mapping Our Intellectual Journey” in *Mapping Feminist Anthropology in the Twenty-First Century* (2016).

September 8th – last day to drop/add courses online

Week II – 9th – 13th

Topics: Ancestors and Afterlives of Early Anthropology of Gender

Readings:

- Tuesday: Margaret Mead *Coming Of Age In Samoa* (1928), chapters 7 and 13
- Friday: Paul Shankman “What the Controversy Meant to Samoans” in *The Trashing Of Margaret Mead : Anatomy Of An Anthropological Controversy* (2009)

Week III –16th – 20th

Topics: What is 'the Status of Women'? And Who Has the Power to Define it?

Readings:

- Tuesday: Sherry Ortner, "Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture"? (1974)
- Friday: Niara Sudarkasa "'The status of Women' in Indigenous African Societies" (1986)

Week IV –23th – 27th

Topics: Feminist Anthropology: Centering Women's Experiences

Readings:

- Tuesday/Friday: Marjorie Shostak *Nisa: Life and Words of !Kung Woman* (1981), first half for Tuesday, second half for Friday.

Week V –30th – 4th

Topics: Feminist Anthropology, The Question of Women's Agency

Readings:

- Tuesday: Aihwa Ong, *Spirits of Resistance*, pp 141-221 (1987)
- Friday: Anna Tsing, "Alien Lovers" from *In the Realm of the Diamond Queen* (1993)

October

Week VI –7th – 11th

Topics: Destabilizing (Western) Gender

Readings:

- Tuesday/Friday: Marilyn Strathern *The Gender of the Gift* (1988), (Tuesday: Chapters 5 and 6; Friday: Chapters 8 and 9)

Week VII –14th – 18th

Topics: Western Feminism and Cultural Imperialism

Readings:

- Tuesday: Kamala Visweswaran “Gendered States Rethinking Culture as a Site of South Asian Human Rights Work” (2004)
- Film viewings:
 - Tuesday: Short clip of Kimberlé Crenshaw on intersectional feminism
- Friday: Lila Abu-Lughod “Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others” (2002)

October 16th, Mid-semester

October 18th, Mid-semester grades due

(at least) 5 response papers should be turned in.

Week VIII – 21st – 25th

Topics: Feminism, Nationalism, and Colonial Legacies

Readings:

- Tuesday/Friday: Joan Scott *The Politics of the Veil* (2007), first half for Tuesday, second half for Friday

Week IX - 28th – (1st)

Topics: Gender and Sex as Social Constructs

Readings:

- Tuesday: Emily Martin “The Egg and the Sperm” (1991)
- Tuesday: Marlon Bailey “Gender/Racial Realness: Theorizing the Gender System in Ballroom Culture” (2011)
- Film viewings:

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- Tuesday: Short clip of *Paris is Burning*; short clip of Judith Butler on performativity

October 30th – November 3rd, fall break (no class on Friday the 1st)

November

Week X - 4th – 8th

Topics: Decolonizing Gender/Sex

Readings:

- Tuesday: Margaret Robinson “Two Spirit Identity in a time of Gender Fluidity” (2019)
- Film Viewing:

Tuesday: *Kumu Hina* (2014) __

- Friday: J. Kehaulani Kauanui “Indigenous Hawaiian Sexuality And The Politics Of Nationalist Decolonization” (2017)
- Friday: Ty P. Kaʻiwi Tengan & Jesse Makani Markham “Performing Polynesian Masculinities in American Football: From ‘Rainbows to Warriors?’” (2009)

November 4th, last day to withdraw from a course /no credit option

Week XI – 11th – 15th

Topics: Homosexuality and Heterosexuality in (Post)Colonial Contexts

Assignment Due Friday November 15th: Research Paper Proposal and Annotated Bibliography

Readings:

- Friday: Andrew Apter, “Queer Crossings: Kinship, Marriage, and Sexuality in Igboland and Carriacou” (2017)
- Audio Recording: Listen to the Song “Ibo and Dem”

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- Friday: Tom Boellstorff, "The Emergence of Polical Homophobia" from *A Coincidence of Desires: Anthropology, Queer Studies, Indonesia* (2007)

November 11th – 12th, Armistice Break (no class on Tuesday the 12th)

Week XIII – 18th – 22nd

Topics: Sex/Gender Beyond the Binary

Readings:

- Tuesday/Friday: Gayatri Reddy, *With Respect to Sex: Negotiating Hijra Identity in South India* (2005), Chapters 1, 2, 3 (for Tuesday), 6 and 7 (for Friday)
- Film Viewing:
 - Tuesday: "The Seatbelt Crew" (3 mins)

Week XIV – 25th – 29th

Topics: Intersectional Inequalities, Care Work in a Globalized World

Readings:

- Tuesday: Rhacel Parreñas, "The Global Migration of Filipino Domestic Workers," in *Servants of Globalization* (2015)
- Film Viewing:
 - Tuesday: *Paper Dolls* (2006)
- Friday: Lalaie Ammeriar, "Pedagogies of Affect: Docility and Deference in the Making of Immigrant Women Subjects" (2015)

December

Week XV – 2nd – 6th

Topics: Confronting the Colonial Legacy of an Anthropology of Gender

Readings:

- Tuesday: Elizabeth Povinelli “The Vulva Thieves” from *The Cunning of Recognition* (2002)
- Friday: wrap up and reflections (including discussion of final paper topics)

December 6th, last day of classes,

December 7th - 11th, reading days

December 12th – 18th, Final Exam

Final Paper Due by 12pm (noon) on December 17th

January 2nd, all grades due

Textbooks

This course doesn't have any textbook.

Attendance Policy

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member

might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR, AND FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK, RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

Grading Policy

Weekly Response Papers (50%)

You are required to turn in ten response papers over the course of the semester, which will be +, v, v-. These papers should be 1-1.5 pages double spaced (with a standard font size such as Times New Roman 12pt or Arial 10pt and 1" margins on all sides) and should aim to go beyond summary to focus on key themes in the texts and/or questions you would like to raise for discussion or clarification. Bring a printed copy of your paper to give to the instructor. Papers may be turned in on either Tuesday or Friday, addressing the readings for that day. Response papers will not be accepted after the class meeting for a given topic/reading. If more than ten papers are received, only your highest ten grades will be totaled in your grade. You may choose which topics throughout the semester for your response papers, but aim to have turned in five papers by the middle of the semester (October 16th).

Participation and Respectful Listening (10%)

Your presence in the classroom (i.e. attendance) and commitment to contributing to a respectful and engaging learning environment account for 10% of the course grade. Participation means both contributing your own insights and listening attentively to those of others--including minimizing distractions by keeping cell phones put away, using laptops exclusively for notetaking, etc. (the professor reserves the right to request electronic devices be put away if they become a distraction).

Final Research Project (40% total: 15% proposal and annotated bibliography + 25% 8-10 page paper)

You will turn in a **final research paper** of at least 8 pages and no more than 10 pages before 5pm, Paris time, on December 17th (Tuesday of finals week) via email. Late papers will not be accepted. This paper can be on any topic related to the anthropology of gender, however it must be approved by Prof. Berger at the stage of the proposal assignment (detailed below). You must have a minimum of 5 different scholarly citations in your work. One of these may be an assigned reading from the syllabus, though additional (that is, not already assigned) readings by scholars listed on the syllabus will be considered original sources. Please follow the same style guidelines as for your Weekly Response Papers (see above).

The **proposal and annotated bibliography** are due Friday November 15th, at the beginning of class (bring in a printed copy, please). Late proposals/bibliographies will be accepted with a grade penalty of one half grade per day. The proposal should be made up of three sections, each of which should be one paragraph long:

Relevance: What does your proposed topic have to do with the objectives of the course. How is it related to what we have learned so far?

Impact: What possible questions could your research answer? Is there a potential social/political/intellectual impact to exploring these questions?

Methodology: What will you need to do to find the answers (i.e. library research, film analysis, current news media, etc.)?

An **annotated bibliography** should also be included with your proposal. It should contain five

scholarly sources (of which one can be taken from the assigned readings). For each source, you should give one or two sentences explaining how it is relevant to your research project and/or what you hope to learn from it.

Other
