

Anthropology 255W
The Anthropology of Gender
Fall 2016
DePauw University

Professor R.L. Upton, Ph.D., M.P.H.
T/TH 10 – 11:30am
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“Feminist anthropology is more than the study of women. It is the study of gender, of the interrelations between women and men, and of the role of gender in structuring human societies, their histories, ideologies, economic systems and political structures. Gender can no more be marginalized in the study of human societies than can the concept of “human action” or the concept of “society”. It would not be possible to pursue any sort of social science without a concept of gender”.
~Henrietta L. Moore, *Feminism & Anthropology* 1988:6

“I myself have never been able to find out precisely what feminism is: I only know that people call me a feminist whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a doormat or a prostitute.”
~Rebecca West in 1913

Introduction:

Gender is a cultural construction that is grounded in perceived biological differences. In any society, the concept of gender affects and tells people what it means to be masculine and feminine, how the physical body is interpreted and used, how work and resources should be distributed, and how marriage, kinship and reproduction are understood. Anthropologists are interested in analyzing these patterns in order to find out how gender shapes cultural systems and how they vary in cross-cultural contexts and across time and space. We pose questions such as; are there gender universals? What role do politics and economic systems play in the shifting determinations of gender in various places? What are the differences between sex, gender and sexuality? And why is this important in today's world?

This course introduces students to an anthropological perspective on the relationships among sex, the biological attributes by which a person is deemed "male" or "female", gender, the norms, ideals and practices defining what it means to become "men," "women" or alternative persons, and sexuality, ideas and practices related to erotic desire and sexual reproduction. In order to understand the various debates and their stakes, we will read anthropological accounts of cultures in which sex, gender and sexuality are construed very differently from our own, and combine these with discussions of documentary and popular movies and video clips. The course will provide students with ways to understand how we come to consider and express ourselves as "men", "women", or someone other to those categories, the social and cultural processes that shape us to act and think as particular kinds of sexed, gendered, and sexualized persons, including the complexities and dilemmas posed by intersecting subjectivities (e.g. race, class, ethnicity, religion), and the potential consequences for not conforming to those norms.

In this course we will examine some of the questions that anthropologists have raised when studying these issues and how they related to and are embodied within our own lived experiences. The course is broken down into two general dimensions-the first devoted to exploring the idea of marginalization and

“otherness” and the second more focused on particular ethnographic interpretations and applications of feminist anthropology. Within those dimensions we then examine topics such as race, work, religion, sexuality, language and reproduction. The semester is organized in roughly three sections – we examine Gender as Essence, Gender as Process and the Implications of Gender. There is perhaps no greater time to be studying the concept of gender. I look forward to our engagement with this idea and its many interesting implications in the semester to come. While I expect us all to keep open minds, to be thoughtful and respectful, I also fully imagine that we will not agree nor always like what we learn. Again, I do expect thoughtfulness and respect for each and every idea. We do learn best that way and it is the very essence of anthropology.

Other things I expect:

- you will attend class - I expect you to attend and be engaged in relevant discussions and demonstrate knowledge of the materials
- you will attend prepared (see above) – participation does not mean simply showing up and sitting in a seat, it means showing up prepared and willing to contribute
- you will feel free to come and see me if you are having any difficulties or just want to talk more about the class, anthropology or whatever else you need
- you will hand in all assignments on time-I will accept a late paper but will penalize it accordingly in order to be fair to others
- you must complete all of the assignments in the course in order to pass the course, no matter what your accumulated total number of points
- **you will feel free to voice your insights and simultaneously respect the freedoms of others to voice theirs (this one is tremendously important in a class where we think and learn about other cultures, ways of doing things and belief systems!) keep an open mind above all.**

Course Evaluation:

Everyone probably tells you this, but let’s be clear: according to the DePauw University handbook the grading system is as follows:

- A, A- grades reflect “achievement of exceptionally high merit”
- B+, B, B- grades reflect “achievement at a level **superior** to the basic level”
- C+, C, C- grades reflect “basic achievement”
- D+, D, D- grades reflect “achievement which falls short of satisfying the quantitative and qualitative requirements yet warrants credit”

What this means for this class is that work that satisfies instruction and basic material will receive grades which reflect that basic achievement-C grades. In order to receive B grades, your work must demonstrate superior work in terms of your own critical insight, synthesis and communication skills. **This is really very important because many of us are used to getting the “A” grade and view “B”s as poor grades...Please don’t believe that. Getting a B in this course, and in any good course at DePauw is reflective of really very GOOD work.** A grades reflect exceptionally high levels of achievement and reflect a high degree of intellectual rigor and carefully considered work. **Throughout the semester remember that you are accumulating points – your final grade is a total out of 300 possible points – while you will be busy calculating and keeping track of your points/grades along the way, please keep in mind that you are working toward that final goal and therefore your calculations along the way are estimations.**

While I will subtract points for errors or deficiencies I will happily add points for carefully written, imaginative thinking and communication. Please let me know throughout the semester if you have any questions or if any aspect of your grade is unclear. This is a dialectical enterprise—a discussion between us and the whole point is that we *all* get something out of it. One last thing—your grade is based upon your own mastery of the material—it is not based on how you compared with others in the class.

*I urge you to **do two things this semester**: take advantage of the **Writing Center** – learning to craft a well written essay and communicate ideas in a persuasive manner are cornerstones of anthropology, your education at DePauw and life itself – they are here to help, use the center. Secondly, make certain that you understand the **Academic Integrity Policy** here at the University. If you are at all uncertain about what counts as *plagiarism* please ask – what we learn is grounded in the work of others but learning to interpret and communicate new ideas based upon that knowledge and in our own manner is essential. Do not plagiarize. Even cutting and pasting things from the web is mosaic plagiarism. Penalties for this practice are severe and not worth finding out about – just do not do it and if you are worried, ask. The only bad/silly/ridiculous questions are those that are never asked.

Graded Materials:

Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	20%
Final Paper	25%
Weekly Moodle posts	20%
In class Participation	20%

Final Paper – If you read the first section of this syllabus you should see the statement, ‘The semester is organized in roughly three sections – we examine Gender as Essence, Gender as Process and the Implications of Gender. There is perhaps no greater time to be studying the concept of gender.’ To that end, for your final paper in this W course, you should research a topic loosely related to one of those three areas. So for example you might elect to study in some more depth the idea of gender essentialism/biological determinism, or you might choose to write about gender and politics (the implication of gender in public realms) or you might choose to write about gender as flexible, or gender in advertising or gender and health. Any number of topics might pique your interest – my hope is that through our study of cross-cultural and cross-temporal constructions and meanings of gender that you have a topic you would like to pursue and write about further. There are no doubt myriad things that we have not talked about, here, in this paper is your opportunity to do some research and put your ideas and arguments on paper. More guidelines will be posted on Moodle but the paper should be between 7-8 pages in length, double-spaced, one inch margins, AAA citation style. We will discuss this further in the semester but the paper is due electronically on the last day of classes and you are asked to write an Introduction to the paper by the first week of November.

***Note on Participation:** You will notice that class participation is the equivalent to your other graded work. Participating in and attending class are very important—*you cannot participate if you are not there* and when you are there, active participation that both demonstrates thoughtful consideration of the readings/questions/topics at hand as well as moves the discussion forward are essential – we *all* benefit from an actively engaged class and I look forward to hearing what you think of the materials and ideas that we encounter together! If you are going to miss class, it is your responsibility to let me know in

advance and your responsibility to get the information we covered. Acceptable reasons for an excused absence include family emergency, serious illness, religious holiday, and participation in college athletic competitions and are typically documented. Please note that excessive absences, *even when excused*, will negatively impact your participation grade and your final course grade at the professor's discretion. Students with unexcused absences will receive no participation credit for the days they are absent. Typically, no more than two excused absences are permitted over the course of the semester. Per the DePauw University handbook, **if you have more than four absences, you may not be eligible to continue in the course whether these absences are excused or unexcused.**

ADA STATEMENT:

It is the policy and practice of DePauw University to provide reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. Written notification from Student Disability Services is required. If you are eligible to receive an accommodation and would like to request it for this course, please contact Student Disability Services. Allow one week advance notice to ensure enough time for reasonable accommodations to be made. Otherwise, it is not guaranteed that the accommodation can be provided on a timely basis. Accommodations are not retroactive. Students who have questions about Student Disability Services or who have, or think they may have, a disability (psychiatric, attentional, learning, vision, hearing, physical, medical, etc.) are invited to contact Student Disability Services for a confidential discussion in Union Building Suite 200 or by phone at 658-6267.

Required Readings:

Women of the Klan, Kathleen Blee
Herland, Charlotte Perkins Gillman
No Place Like Home, Christopher Carrington

All other readings will be posted on Moodle.

*All of the texts for the course are available at the Bookstore or [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

* Course schedule is subject to change by the Professor, you are expected to read all assigned materials, whether they are discussed in class directly or not, you will be responsible for assigned material/content

*All articles will be posted on **Moodle** or given to you in class and I will on occasion give you additional readings in class as I come across relevant materials.

Sensitive Topics and Encountering Images

Anthropology courses address some of the most sensitive issues humans face (kinship, race, gender, sexuality, class inequality, violence, state politics, etc.). At the same time, class discussion is the central activity of this course and students are required to be proactive in their preparation for it (please see above). Active participation should also mean a 'safe' environment – that does not mean everyone has to agree, but as I state above, a respectful environment is paramount. While most of our readings, films and assignments will not directly portray graphic or violent material; I find use of the "Content Notes"* notation particularly useful to alert class members to any such content ahead of time. I prefer that term (vs. "Trigger warnings") because it avoids psychologizing us and does not assume what our responses to material will be when we encounter these data. I also prefer the more neutral-sounding "Content Notes"

* Grateful acknowledgement to Dr. Charlene Makley at Reed College for this phrasing and useful terminology.

because it encourages us not to prematurely foreclose our engagements with difficult material, but just to be aware of our own needs and to provide extra care for ourselves if necessary.

Gender Blogging - Weekly Moodle Responsibility

This is a writing course and one that relies heavily on our discussion of the implications of gender in our everyday lives. As class members you are each responsible for continuing our conversation beyond the classroom and on our Moodle site. Beginning with the first full week of class and each week thereafter, **I will begin** the discussion and post a comment, an article, a film, a question, etc. and **you should incorporate** weekly readings, thoughts you have and any other relevant material/information that you wish into some Moodle discussion.

What makes a good Moodle post/s? Posting more than once a week (no word limit here but you cannot simply say 'I agree with Professor Upton' or 'What she said...') you **must advance** the conversation and contribute to ongoing consideration of gender in our everyday, cross-cultural lives. I am looking for quality not necessarily quantity but certainly being an active, contributing and engaged presence is essential and adds immeasurably to the quality of everyone's experience in this course. Please remember to be respectful of others' opinions and writing and simultaneously that critical thinking, differing ideas and thoughtful discussion are the essence of intellectual sophistication. Looking forward to it!

Course Schedule of Events:

Week 1:

[8/25] Introduction to the course & syllabus – watch "[Generation Like](#)", **Frontline, 2014 (53 mins) in advance of class**

Week 2: **The Cultural Politics of the Gendered Gaze**

[8/30 & 9/1] T: Read: Laura Mulvey (1975). "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema". *Screen* 16 (3): 6–18.

hooks, bell. 1992. "The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectators," *Black Looks: Race and Representation*, 1992.

TH: Halberstam, Bordo, Miller, Marcus, Mulvey. "The Male Gaze in Retrospect," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, December 15, 2015.

Week 3: **Nature, Culture and 'Science'**

[9/6 & 9/8] T: Read [Herland](#) [entire]

TH: Read: Jordonova, L.J. Introduction and Ch. 3 "Body Image and Sex Roles," *Sexual Visions: Images of Gender in Science and Medicine Between the Eighteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Madison: Univ of Wisconsin Press, 1992.
**Content Notes: *discussion of 18th century medical text representations*

(discourse and images) of female bodies, including genitalia and internal organs. Discussion of violence against female bodies and pornography.

[Anne Fausto-Sterling](#), 1994 "The Five Sexes: Why Males and Females are not Enough." *The Sciences* 33(2): 20-25 and "The Five Sexes Revisited." *The Sciences*, July/June 2000 ****Content notes: discussion and analysis of history and medical representation of intersexed persons, including genitalia and botched surgeries.**

Optional Additional Readings

Read: [Pinker, Steven](#). 1997. "Men and Women," (pp. 460-476) in Ch. 7 "Family Values," *How the Mind Works*. New York: Norton.

[Mckinnon, Susan](#). "Introduction," Ch. II "Mind and Culture," pg 1-42, Ch. IV "Sex and Gender," (pp. 72-119). *Neoliberal Genetics*. Prickly Paradigm Press, 2006.

Week 4: Contesting Femininities

[9/13 & 9/15]

T: Read: [Lamphere, Louise](#). "The Domestic Sphere of Women and the Public World of Men: The Strengths and Limitations of an Anthropological Dichotomy," Brettell, Caroline and Carolyn F. Sargent, (Eds.). *Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective*. London: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1997. (7 pg)

Read: Tsing, Anna. "Monster Stories: Women Charged with Perinatal Endangerment". Faye Ginsburg and Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, eds., *Uncertain Terms: Negotiating Gender in American Culture*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1990. (17 pp.) ****Content Notes: Discussion and analysis of legal and popular representations of childbirth, abortion and infanticide.**

TH: Read: [Zavella, Patricia](#). "'Playing with Fire' The Gendered Construction of Chicana/Mexicana Sexuality," in *The Gender/Sexuality Reader*, New York: Routledge, 1997. (13 pp.) ****Content Notes: Discussion and analysis of personal narratives that include accounts of rape and domestic violence.**

Read: Kulik, Don. The Gender of Brazilian transgendered prostitutes. *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 99, No. 3 (Sep., 1997), pp. 574-585 (13 pp)

Week 5: Contesting Masculinities

[9/20 & 9/22]

T: Read: [Kimmel, Michael](#): "Masculinity as Homophobia: Fear, Shame, and Silence in the Construction of Gender Identity," in Harry Brod and Michael Kaufman, (Eds.), *Theorizing Masculinities*. London: Sage Publications, 1994. (20 pp).

Lancaster, Roger. Ch. 10 "Homo Faber, Family Man," and Ch. 11 "T-Power," in *The Trouble with Nature: Sex in science and Popular culture*. California, 2003. (20 pg).

TH: Katz, Jackson. "Advertising and the construction of violent white masculinity: from BMWs to Bud Light" in Gail Dines and Jean M. Humez, (eds.) *Gender, Race and Class in Media (2nd Edition)*. London: Sage, 2011.

Jackson, Peter. "Kathoey<<Gay>>Man: the Historical Emergence of Gay Male Identity in Thailand," in Manderson and Jolly, (Eds.), *Sites of Desire, Economies of Pleasure: Sexualities in Asia and the Pacific*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997. (23 pp).

Optional Additional Readings

Halberstam, Judith. "An Introduction to Female Masculinity". *Female Masculinity*. Duke University Press, 1998. (40 pp)

hooks, bell. "Ch. 6: Reconstructing Black Masculinity" *Black Looks: Race and Representation*, 1992. (26 pp.)

Week 6: Contesting Families & Kinship

[9/27 & 9/29] T: Read: No Place Like Home [entire]

[9/28 – Campus Wide Day of Inclusion & Dialogue]

Optional Additional Readings

McKinnon, Susan. "On Kinship and Marriage: A Critique of the Genetic and Gender Calculus of Evolutionary Psychology," in McKinnon and Silverman, eds., *Complexities: Beyond Nature and Nurture*. Chicago, 2005.

Oboler, Regina Smith, "Is the Female Husband a Man? Woman/Woman Marriage among the Nandi of Kenya," *Ethnology* 19, 1980 (19 pg).

Week 7: Gendering, Marginalized and Dangerous Children

[10/4 & 10/6] T: Read: Stephens, Sharon. Introduction: Children and the Politics of Culture in Late Capitalism (pp. 1-24). *Children and the Politics of Culture*. Sharon Stephens, ed. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 1995.

Connolly, Paul. Chapters 6 and 8. *1998 Racism, Gender Identities and Young Children*. London : Routledge.

TH: Gould, Lois. "X: A Fabulous Child's Story," in Kesselman et al, (Eds.), Women: Images and Realities, A Multicultural Anthology, Mountain View: Mayfield Publishing Co., 1995. (5 pg)

Rooke, Alison. Trans youth, science and art: creating trans gendered space, Gender, Culture and Power Reader, 2016 (2010).

Week 8: Dis/Embodied Gender & Sexuality

[10/11 & 10/13]

T: Read: Butler, Judith. pp. 163-180, "Bodily Inscriptions, Performative Subversions," in Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity. New York: Routledge, 1999. [NOTE: DO NOT READ THE 1990 EDITION, PAGE NUMBERS ARE DIFFERENT] (11 pp.).

Weston, Kath. "Do Clothes Make the Woman? Gender, Performance Theory, and Lesbian Eroticism," Genders 17, Fall 1993. (17 pp).

Optional Additional Readings

Valentine, David. "We're Not About Gender": The uses of Transgender. in Lewin and Leap, eds. Out in Theory: The Emergence of Lesbian and Gay Anthropology. Chicago: Univ of Illinois Press, 2002. (18 pp)

McGlotten, Shaka. "Ch. 3 Feeling Black and Blue: Online Gay Sex Publics and Black Affects" in Virtual Intimacies; Media, Affect, and Queer Sociality. 2013. pp 61-79. (18 pp).

Midterm Exam ~ in class on 10/13

Week 9:

[10/15 & 10/23]

[Fall Break!] ☺

Week 10: Gender and Language

[10/25 & 10/27]

T: Read: Gal, Susan. "Between Speech and Silence: The Problematics of Research on Language and Gender," in Micaela di Leonardo, ed., Gender at the Crossroads of Knowledge: Feminist Anthropology in the Postmodern Era. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991. (20 pp.)

TH: [NYT Magazine 2009: "The All-Purpose Pronoun"](#)

[Lal Zimman blog post 2014: "Facebook, the gender binary, and third-person pronouns"](#)

Week 11: Gender and Religion/Ritual

[11/1 & 11/3] T: Saba Mahmood. Chs 1-3 (Skim ch. 2). Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject Princeton University Press, 2005.

Saba Mahmood. Ch. 5, Epilogue. Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject Princeton University Press, 2005.

Due on 11/1 : Introductory paragraph for Final Paper – see instructions on Moodle – we will discuss these on 11/3 in class

Week 12: Gender, Colonialism & Power

[11/8 & 11/10] T: Read: Mohanty, Chandra. "Under Western Eyes," Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity. Duke, 2003. (25 pp.) (Bookstore, book reserve).

TH: Stoler, Ann. "Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Gender, Race, and Morality in Colonial Asia," in The Gender/Sexuality Reader, New York: Routledge, 1997. (16 pp.).

Heng, Geraldine and Janadas Devan. "State Fatherhood: The Politics of Nationalism, Sexuality, and Race in Singapore," in The Gender/Sexuality Reader, New York: Routledge, 1997. (9 pp.).

Week 13: Gender, Race and Power

[11/15 & 11/17] Read: Women of the Klan [entire] – we will meet with Dr. Kane's 'Gender & Society' class to begin discussion of this book.

NO CLASS 11/17 – Professor Upton at American Anthropological Association meetings

Week 14: Political Gender

[11/22] TBD

THANKSGIVING! ☺

Week 15: Gender and Violence

[11/29 & 12/1]

T: Read: Veena Das, "[Violence, Gender, and Subjectivity](#)," Annual Review of Anthropology, Vol. 37: 283-299, October 2008. JSTOR

Valentine, David. "The Calculus of Pain: Violence, Narrative, and the Self," in *Imagining Transgender: an Ethnography of a Category*. 2007.

TH: Read: Enloe, Cynthia. "Ch. 3: Nationalism and Masculinity," in *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*. London: Pandora, 1989. (20 pg).

Enloe, Cynthia. 2000. Ch. 4 "When Soldiers Rape," *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press. (80 pp). **Content Notes: some description of sexual assault.

Optional Additional Reading

Boellstorff, Tom. [The emergence of political homophobia in Indonesia: masculinity and national belonging](#). *Ethnos*, vol. 69:4, dec. 2004 (pp. 465–486).

Week 16: Gender and Globalization – Selling Sex & ‘Passenger Women’

[12/6]

T: Read: Aguilar, Delia. "Questionable claims: colonialism redux, feminist style," *Race and Class*. 2000; 41 (3): 1-12.

Read: Wardlow, Holly. Ch. 4-5 (pp. 134-190). *Wayward Women: Sexuality and Agency in a New Guinea Society*. Univ. of CA press, 2006. **Content Notes: some narratives and discussion of interpersonal violence and sexual assault.

Final Reflections/Evaluation/Wrap-Up Discussion

12/8

Last Day of Class ~ Professor in NYC for Fulbright Review Committee Meeting – final day class material TBD.

Final Exam: 1-4pm Tuesday December 15th