

GWS 200: Women and Western Culture
Feminist and LGBTQ Anthropological Approaches to “Women” and “the West”
Spring 2015

Class: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday Office Hours: Tuesday
9:00-9:50am 4:00-5:00pm and by appointment
Education Building, Room #318 Bentley’s House of Coffee & Tea
1730 E. Speedway Blvd

Instructor: Erin L. Durban-Albrecht
Email: urban@email.arizona.edu

Email Policy: Emails from students will be returned within 48 hours; however, emails sent between 5pm Friday and 8am Monday will be treated as if sent on Monday morning. You will need to plan ahead in order to get questions to me in a timely manner. In terms of email etiquette, include GWS 200 in the subject line along with the topic of your email. Please remember that in this context email is a means of formal, professional communication.

Course Description:

GWS 200 is an introductory course to Gender and Women’s Studies featuring selected works of critical feminist scholarship on the production and position of women in the West. This is a Tier 2-Humanities General Education course that also fulfills the University of Arizona Diversity Emphasis requirement.

This particular course approaches the topics of “women” and “the West” from an anthropological perspective that thinks about questions of culture in relationship to history, place and space, and political economy. We will concentrate in the realm of feminist anthropology, which is attentive to power and the production of social difference in terms of gender, sex, sexuality, race, nation, economic class, and (dis)ability. Feminist anthropology has strong connections to the field of queer anthropology, influenced by the growth in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) studies in the academy. The materials for this course come from where these two fields—feminist anthropology and queer anthropology—overlap. They critically analyze gender, sex, and sexuality and the extent to which these social categories “travel” within and outside U.S. contexts as well as how they relate to other social phenomena such as capitalism, racism, transnationalism, and heteropatriarchy.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Articulate an informed and sophisticated definition of feminism;
- Explain various aspects of academic knowledge production and their implications for social justice;
- Describe the major developments in feminist and queer anthropology—including key topics, methods, and modes of inquiry;
- Describe major U.S. social movements for gender and sexual liberation in the twentieth century; and
- Apply an anti-racist queer, feminist framework to academic and nonacademic representations of “women” and “the West.”

Course Reading:

Course readings will be available on D2L. D2L reserves can be accessed from the main D2L course website under “Content.” My part in our learning process is to help you understand and process these materials—you are responsible for accessing and reading the content. The D2L help desk can assist you with technological problems.

Course Requirements/Grade Distributions:

Participation	15%
Quotes, Questions, & Take Aways	35% 10pts/day
Academic Knowledge Production Assignments	20% 50pts/each
Zine Project	30%

The grading scale for the course is A (90-100%), B (80-89%), C (70-79%), D (60-69%), E (Under 59%). The grades for the course are weighted, which means that each section of the overall grade listed above is worth a certain percent of your grade.

Participation:

Participation is more than just attending the class, it is showing up prepared to participate in classroom discussions and ready to engage your co-learners. In order to prepare for class, you will need to read/watch the assigned material, take notes that include that author’s argument and main points as well as supporting evidence, look up any terminology that you do not know in a reputable dictionary or encyclopedia, and create your Quotes, Questions, & Take Aways assignment (see below). To fully participate in discussions, you will need to bring the day’s assigned reading materials, your notes, and your printed QQTA assignment. I will occasionally do a “materials check” that counts towards your participation grade by asking you to show me that you have these things with you. Otherwise, your participation grade is determined by the quality (not quantity) of your comments in class and on our course D2L site.

Quotes, Questions, & Take Aways

Each day that there is an article assigned to read, you need to make a post in the D2L discussion section about the assigned materials. This post is an assignment called Quotes, Questions, & Take Aways (QQTA). It consists of three sections: 1) three to five quotes from the readings that are interesting to you, 2) at least two discussion questions for the class, and 3) *at least* a paragraph of the things you “take away” from the reading—what you learned, what made you think differently about something, and what impacted you personally. You will additionally need to bring your daily QQTA assignment to class for our discussion, and I will use this assignment to take attendance. After class, you will need to engage at least two QQTA’s of fellow students on the D2L discussion section that reflects knowledge of the reading material as well as the classroom discussion. The QQTA assignment guidelines and rubric are posted on D2L.

Academic Knowledge Production Assignments:

Each student will complete three assignments to understand the process of academic knowledge production: a cultural biography, an ethnographic fieldnotes exercise, and a review of an academic journal article. You will post these to the D2L discussion forum as if they were QQTA assignments. The assignment guidelines for each are posted under the content tab on D2L.

Zine Project

Everyone will make a zine as the final project for the course. Zines are a form of public scholarship that translate the complex ideas you have learned throughout the semester into something accessible for people who have not read the same materials. You will make these zines for an audience of people “like you,” whatever that means to you, to synthesize the materials from the class. Consider the zine a way of expressing the most important take aways. I will keep a class set of zines, one will be kept in the Gender & Women’s Studies library, and the others will be distributed to your peers in class and a local zine scholar. The zine project assignment guidelines, rubric, and example zines are posted under the course content tab on D2L.

Additional Course Expectations:

Late Policy:

Late work will only be accepted in the event of an emergency (e.g., illness, hospitalization, death of a friend/family member). Please contact me BEFORE the deadline to ask for an extension. I require that you also provide necessary documentation.

Technology:

You will need regular access to internet technology for this course. In the event that technological issues arise, I cannot help you; they are your responsibility to resolve with the help of the D2L help desk. This includes accessing all the course materials on D2L. I highly recommend that you print out the articles to bring to class unless you can make notations and highlights with your tablet/laptop.

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism:

All students in this class must uphold the [University of Arizona Student Code of Academic Integrity](#). Plagiarism of any form will not be allowed in this class. The Code of Academic Integrity prohibits the following: All forms of student academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty and plagiarism; submitting an item of academic work that has previously been submitted without fair citation of the Primary work or authorization by the faculty member supervising the work; and failing to observe rules of academic integrity established by a faculty member for a particular course.

I will hold all students to this Code. I expect that all the work that you turn in is your original work. For an introductory-level class, you should rarely have to cite sources outside course materials, although you may reference other sources for the book report.

Classroom Behavior:

I ask, at the minimum, that you show respect the space of the classroom and the opinions of your classmates. Threatening behavior is prohibited. See the [University of Arizona Policy on Threatening Behavior by Students](#). I hope that we are all here to support each other as learners and have some fun along the way.

Campus Resources:

Writing Assistance:

[Think Tank](#) offers drop-in services and other tutoring options. I also recommend utilizing the [Main Library](#), which hosts online resources such as the *Oxford English Dictionary* and *The Chicago Manual of Style 16th Edition*.

Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities who require accommodations to fully participate in course activities or meet course requirements must be registered with the [Disability Resource Office](#). Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns about course accommodations. Additional resources are available through the [Strategic Alternative Learning Techniques \(SALT\) Center](#).

LGBTQ Community:

The office of [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning \(LGBTQ\) Student Affairs](#) has programming for LGBTQ students and allies. Considering our course content, I highly recommend checking out their space and the resources that they have to offer. The University of Arizona is also a vibrant space for scholarship on LGBT and queer issues, thanks in large part to the [Institute for LGBT Studies](#). The Institute has a series of talks by faculty and advanced graduate students each semester called Deep Dish, and you can learn more by signing up for their newsletter.

Attendance, Participation, and the Classroom Environment:

Because there is a waiting list for this course, students who miss the first two days of class will be administratively dropped.

I take attendance each day by collecting your QOTA assignments or in-class work on discussion days. Two absences will be waived with no questions asked. Any absence after that will need a Dean's approved excuse, or your grade will be affected. Each missed class will result in a reduction of 5% of your overall grade for the course.

People will bring a wide range of experiences that will help further our understanding of gender, sex, and sexuality. The topics of this course—like most in Gender and Women's Studies—bring up a lot of personal issues for students and demand a level of self-reflection not typical of college courses. In your daily assignments, I ask you to engage what you are learning about yourself while you work through course materials. In the virtual forum of the class, you may reveal as much of this as you would like. Remember that even though the class has an online component in D2L form, however, it is not anonymous.

Respect, for both the instructor and other students, is absolutely required. While there will undoubtedly be differing opinions amongst class participants, the dialogue needs to remain at a level appropriate to the college classroom. Consider the experiences of your classmates to be equally valuable as your own, and be mindful about the comments you make within the context of the classroom. Harassment of any variety will not be tolerated (see "Classroom Behavior" above).

I understand that people come from a range of different backgrounds, and for some this may mean that the course content challenges your personal comfort zones. We are here to learn about people whose voices and histories have been marginalized and whose experiences are regularly misrepresented and misinterpreted. I encourage you to think like an anthropologist by forgetting what you think you know and approach each new text with curiosity and openness in order to learn a perspective of someone likely much different than you.

In terms of classroom etiquette, I expect for all cell phones, tablets, and laptops to remain tucked away in your bag. Your phone should be silenced, unless you have told me in advance that there is a reason that you may need to leave to answer it (e.g., child and elder care responsibilities). After one warning, I will ask you to leave if you have any devices out during class.

Before you begin the class, you must send me an email (see "Email Etiquette" on page 1) stating that you have read and understand the syllabus and a statement that says you agree to help create a positive and participatory learning environment. This is **due by 11:59pm on Friday, January 16**. If I do not receive the email from you, I will administratively drop you from GWS 200. Maintaining this contract will be essential to having a great course.

Course Reading Schedule

Please note that the schedule is subject to change during the semester depending on the needs of the class. I will keep a current syllabus posted on the D2L site and alert students to any changes on our bulletin board and by email.

Unit 1: Introduction to Feminist Interpretations of Culture

1/14 **INTRODUCTION**

1/16 The Social Construction of Gender, by Judith Lorber

1/21 Heterosexuality: It's Just Not Natural, by Chrys Ingraham

1/23 **CULTURAL BIOGRAPHY DUE**

1/26 [What is Anthropology?](#), American Anthropological Association
[About Anthropology](#), This is Anthropology
[Cultural Anthropology](#), Wikipedia
[Ethnography](#), Wikipedia

1/28 NO CLASS: **ETHNOGRAPHIC FIELDNOTES EXERCISE DUE**

1/30 DISCUSSION

2/02 Feminism and Anthropology: The Story of a Relationship, In *Feminism and Anthropology* (1988), by Henrietta L. Moore

2/04 Feminist Anthropology: What Difference Does It Make? In *Feminism and Anthropology* (1988), by Henrietta L. Moore

2/06 DISCUSSION

2/09 Reading Sexualities across Cultures: Anthropology and Theories of Sexuality, by Evelyn Blackwood, In *Out in Theory: The Emergence of Lesbian and Gay Anthropology* (2002)

2/11 **Lesbian/Gay Studies in the House of Anthropology (1993), by Kath Weston

2/13 DISCUSSION

Unit 2: Queer Perspectives of History

2/16 “These Natives Can Speak for Themselves”: The Development of Gay and Lesbian Community Studies in Anthropology, by Elizabeth Lapovsky Kennedy, In *Out in Theory: The Emergence of Lesbian and Gay Anthropology* (2002)

2/18 “A Weekend Wasn’t a Weekend If There Wasn’t a Fight”: The Tough Bar Lesbians of the 1950s, In *Boots of Leather, Slippers of Gold: A History of the Lesbian Community* (1993), by Elizabeth Lapovsky Kennedy and Madeline D. Davis

2/20 DISCUSSION

2/23 Preface and The Queens, In *Mother Camp: Female Impersonators in America* (1979 [1972]), by Esther Newton

2/25 On the Job, In *Mother Camp: Female Impersonators in America* (1979 [1972]), by Esther Newton

2/27 DISCUSSION

Unit 3: Women's Sexuality

3/02 Pleasure and Danger: Towards a Politics of Sexuality [Part 1], In *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality* (1984), by Carole S. Vance

3/04 Pleasure and Danger: Towards a Politics of Sexuality [Part 2], In *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality* (1984), by Carole S. Vance

3/06 DISCUSSION

03/09 **Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality [Part 1], by Gayle Rubin, In *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality* (1984)

{3/10 Lunafest at The Loft Cinema!}

03/11 **Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality [Part 2], by Gayle Rubin, In *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality* (1984)

3/13 DISCUSSION

{University of Arizona Spring Break: Week of 3/16 to 3/20}

Unit 4: Reproduction

3/23 Read one of the following chapters in *Lesbian Mothers: Accounts of Gender in American Culture* (1993) by Ellen Lewin based on the first letter of your last name:

A to M: Looking for Lesbian Motherhood, N to Z: Becoming a Lesbian Mother

3/25 Read one of the following chapters in *Lesbian Mothers: Accounts of Gender in American Culture* (1993) by Ellen Lewin based on the first letter of your last name:

A to M: This Wonderful Decision, N to Z: Ties that Endure

3/27 DISCUSSION

3/30 My Words to Victor Frankenstein [Excerpt], Susan Stryker

4/01 Guest Panel: Lesbian and Queer Parents in Arizona

4/03 DISCUSSION

Unit 5: Queer Anthropology

4/06 **Queer Studies in the House of Anthropology [Part I] (2007), by Tom Boellstorff

4/08 **Queer Studies in the House of Anthropology [Part II] (2007), by Tom Boellstorff

4/10 DISCUSSION

4/13 The Borders Between *Bakla* and Gay [Part I], In *Global Divas: Filipino Gay Men in the Diaspora* (2003), by Martin F. Manalansan IV

4/15 The Borders Between *Bakla* and Gay [Part II], In *Global Divas: Filipino Gay Men in the Diaspora* (2003) [Part II], by Martin F. Manalansan IV

4/17 DISCUSSION

4/20 The Logic of Inclusion: Transgender Activism [Part I], In *Imagining Transgender: An Ethnography of a Category* (2007), by David Valentine

4/22 The Logic of Inclusion: Transgender Activism [Part II], In *Imagining Transgender: An Ethnography of a Category* (2007), by David Valentine

4/24 DISCUSSION

4/27 Unexpected Activists: Homemakers Club and Gay Teens at the Local Library, In *Out In The Country: Youth, Media, and Queer Visibility in Rural America* (2009), by Mary L. Gray

4/29 **ACADEMIC JOURNAL ARTICLE REVIEW DUE**

5/01 DISCUSSION

5/04 **COURSE CONCEPT REVIEW DUE**

5/06 **Course Review**

Final Exam Period Begins: No Class on 5/08

5/14 **FINAL:** Bring copies of your zine project to share with your peers as well as a food or beverage item for a potluck breakfast.