

**Rutgers University, Department of Anthropology**  
**#01:070:225: Gender in Global Perspective**  
**Spring 2018**

**Instructor:** Professor Tristan D. Lee-Jones

**Office Hours:** BIO 204C, Weds., 10:00am – 11:00am.

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**Class Time:** Mon. and Wed., 2:15pm – 3:35pm in BIO 205

Gender is a vital component of a society: it can determine division of labor, family units, rights, and even power. Gender is also an important component to health – or lack thereof – and influences patterns of violence, healing, and suffering. But what is “gender”? In this course, we will explore the different meanings of “gender,” how it is constructed variously in different societies, and how it also plays a role in constructing that very social order. Gender is neither static nor binary: we will expand beyond the categories “male” and “female” to contemplate gender as a fluid category that can change over time. We will consider why people think and act in certain ways because of how we are all socialized to think about gender, while turning the lens on ourselves to think about our own perceptions. This course will use ethnographic and theoretical texts to explore the economic and social impacts of gender in society. Our multidisciplinary perspective will open the door for discussions on the complex intersections between gender, ethnicity, race, class, sexuality, and other points of “intersectionality.” More broadly, we will contemplate social challenges connected with gender historically and today, from gender-based violence to immigration to healthcare, and how rapid globalization in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is bringing those challenges into focus. By considering these challenges, we will discuss the connection between gender, power, and rights, allowing us to take a closer look at the importance of gender-based social movements around the world.

### **Goals and Learning Objectives**

This 200-level course will provide students with an introduction to the field of gender studies from a multidisciplinary and ethnographic perspective. Through this course, students will learn to critically analyze both historical and 21<sup>st</sup> century issues related to gender around the world. Students will fulfill the following *SAS Core Learning Objective*:

- Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person’s experiences of and perspectives on the world

For anthropology majors, this course will address the following department goals:

- Demonstrate proficiency in the use of critical thinking skills (Goal 2)
- Express knowledgably and proficiently in writing about central issues in major field (Goal 4)
- Express knowledgably and proficiently in speaking about central issues in major field (Goal 5)

### **Readings**

Course readings *are required* and will be provided in advance on our Sakai page. Many readings are drawn from: Hodgson, Dorothy L. 2015. *The Gender, Culture, and Power Reader*. Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780190201777.

### **Communication**

Students are encouraged to meet with the professor throughout the semester. This is the appropriate forum to address concerns about the syllabus, assignments, and grades. All substantive questions regarding assignments, grades, and course topics should be addressed in office hours – not via email! For email inquiries in general, you should expect a response within 24 to 48 hours, and potentially longer on the weekends.

### **Grades**

Final Assessment: 30%

Critical Reflection Papers: 20%

Class Participation and Attendance: 35%

Group Presentation: 15%

### **Participation**

Because this is a discussion-based class, your active participation in this class is critical and contributes more to your grade than any other criteria. This includes one-sentence writing responses to each reading, uploaded to Sakai, in advance of our class meeting. Additionally, participation includes attendance, overall engagement with peers and the professor, and your level of effort towards in-class assignments.

### **Attendance and Late Assignments**

Students are permitted *two excused absences only* throughout the semester, including illness and emergencies. Use these wisely. These may be used at any time for any reason without prior notification, but *no* additional absences will be excused without a letter from a school administrator. All other absences will result in *loss of a third of a letter grade on your participation grade* (for example, a B to a B-). Lateness beyond 10 minutes will result in a half-absence. For extenuating circumstances, please visit the professor during office hours.

### **Critical Reflection Papers**

Throughout the semester, you will be responsible for writing two critical reflection papers. Critical reflection papers are brief yet thoughtful responses to a prompt related to a particular course unit. Unless otherwise instructed, they should be approximately 2-3 pages, double-spaced, 12-pt. Times New Roman font, 1-inch margins. They should use grammatically correct full sentences. Critical reflection papers are your opportunity to demonstrate that you have completed, thoughtfully considered, and synthesized the assigned materials and class discussions. You should contextualize your answers to the prompt in terms of not only the particular class materials at hand, but also previous class materials and discussions. Critical reflection papers should always be appropriate to share in class, respectful and use academically appropriate language and tone.

### **Group Presentations**

At the beginning of the semester each student will select a group of 3 – 4 peers that will investigate and present research on an issue related to gender; the topic selection is up to you,

but you are encouraged to run preliminary ideas by the professor to test their viability and relevance to the course. Topics should be specific and focused. Any topic you wish to explore will be written up as a research proposal, to be approved by the professor before beginning serious work. All proposals will be due **Monday, Feb. 19**. Each group will write a 3-page summary of their work, and present their research to the class in the final weeks of the course. Each student is expected to participate in the presentation.

### **Classroom Respect**

In this course, we'll discuss many challenging topics that may take students out of their comfort zone or challenge their expectations. Therefore, it is vital that all students make a conscious effort to create an inclusive, safer, and supportive environment for their fellow classmates and professor at all times. For a successful course, the professor expects that all students will maintain this sense of integrity in their language, actions, and responses to other students and to the professor.

### **Academic Integrity**

Please keep in mind that academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarism, failure to cite sources accurately, fabrication and falsification, stealing ideas, re-use of yours or another's earlier work, and deliberate slanting of research designs to achieve a pre-conceived result. The Rutgers Department of Anthropology takes this misconduct very seriously, and to do well in this course the professor expects all students to respect this policy. When in doubt, please consult the professor. Please review Rutgers' Academic Integrity policies at:

<https://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/students.shtml>.

### **Disabilities and Accommodations**

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disabilities services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodation. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss your needed accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS website:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>

### **Final Assessment**

This semester we have explored the relationship between gender and society from multiple perspectives around the world, including the connections between gender and health, gender and state, labor and gender, and many more. We have considered how gender is both shaped by society and how it shapes society, and how gender norms are fluid and changing. We have additionally

considered how conflicting perspectives on the meaning and significance of gender can especially make for tensions in our globalizing world. As we move forward through the 21st century, understanding these tensions and this multitude of perspectives becomes more pertinent than ever: as we have discussed throughout this course, since gender is a key construct for keeping order in a society, what happens when differing global perspectives become impossible to ignore, and challenge that very societal order? In turn we have examined examples of these tensions from a multidisciplinary lens, including their economic, social, and political consequences. Lastly, you have been challenged to consider your own perspectives on gender, including how and why they may differ from others based on your particular experiences of the world and how these shape your daily life.

For your final assessment in the course, you will be asked to write a 8 to 10-page paper on a contemporary issue related to gender in which you will compare and contrast two or three different—although not necessarily opposing—viewpoints presented in one or more of the ethnographic works we have read this semester. The topic may be of your own choosing with the approval of your professor; for example, transgender rights in contemporary USA. You must narrow your analysis to a particular place, arena, or group(s) of people and present two to three different perspectives on this issue as presented in one or more of your ethnographic materials. You must analyze the following:

- 1.) An example of a person or group who holds each perspective
- 2.) How their perspectives have been shaped by their particular experiences of the world
- 3.) What are the scope and limitations of each perspective
- 4.) How do these perspectives importantly differ and where do they have common ground
- 5.) Lastly, using theoretical readings from this course and a multidisciplinary lens, you must critically assess the future of this 21st century challenge given these different perspectives. For example, what are the social, political, and/or economic implications?

Your analysis should demonstrate your critical thinking skills, your thoughtful presentation of a pressing 21st century gender-related issue, and your consideration of and mastery over both theoretical and ethnographic course materials. You may base your analysis on one particular ethnographic account and support your analysis with additional readings, or compare across multiple ethnographic accounts and readings. You should include citations of at least 3 different readings from the semester, and a properly formatted bibliography. Successful completion of this assignment will demonstrate that you have satisfied the Core 21C requirement:

*“Student is able to analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person’s experiences of and perspectives on the world.”*

Possible examples include:

- A Christian fundamentalist and an LGBTQ advocate’s perspectives on transgender rights in the USA
- A Muslim woman and the French government’s perspectives on the hijab in contemporary France

Your essay is worth 30% of your final grade and should be double-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font. Your essay will be graded according to the given Evaluation Rubric.

Students must discuss their final assignment with the professor no less than three weeks before the essay is due. Final assignments should be uploaded as a Word.doc attachment in the Final Assessment assignment tab on Sakai.

## **Course Schedule and Assignments**

### **Constructing Gender**

- Wed., Jan. 17 No assignment. Introductions and syllabus review.
- Mon., Jan. 22 “Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?” by Sherry B. Ortner
- Wed., Jan. 24 “Female Forms of Power and the Myth of Male Dominance: A Model of Female/Male Interaction in Peasant Society” by Susan Carol Rogers
- Mon., Jan. 29 “The Gender of Brazilian Transgendered Prostitutes” by Don Kulick
- No class meeting; required meeting – Colloquium, Holly Okonkwo, “BlackGirlsCode’: Navigating Race, Gender, and What It Means to Be a Scientist.” 2:15-3:55pm, RAB 104.*
- Wed., Jan. 31 No assigned reading. In class: Watch documentaries, *Two Spirits* (2009), and *Muxes: Mexico’s Third Gender* (2017).
- Mon., Feb. 5 Review website, “A Map of Gender-Diverse Cultures,” [http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/content/two-spirits\\_map-html/](http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/content/two-spirits_map-html/).
- Discuss Documentary*  
*First Critical Reflection Paper Due on Sakai @ 11:59pm.*

### **Intersectionality: Gender, Race, Class and Sexuality**

- Wed., Feb. 7 Kimberle Crenshaw. 1993. “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color.” *Stanford Law Review* 43(6): 1241-1299.
- In class: Watch and discuss Crenshaw’s TED Talk, “The Urgency of Intersectionality”*
- Mon., Feb. 12 “Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses” by Chandra Mohanty.
- Wed., Feb. 14 “‘Like a Mother to Them’: Stratified Reproduction and West Indian Childcare Workers and Employers in New York” by Shellee Colen
- Mon., Feb. 19 No assigned Reading. In class: Watch film, *Paris is Burning* (1990)
- Group research proposal Due on Sakai @ 11:59pm.*

### **Bodies and Health**

- Wed., Feb. 21 Emily Martin. 2001 [1987]. *The Woman in the Body: A Cultural Analysis of Reproduction*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Mon., Feb. 26 Selection: Koss-Chioino, Joan. 1992. *Women As Healers, Women As Patients: Mental Health Care and Traditional Healing in Puerto Rico*.

Boulder: Westview Press.

- Wed., Feb 28      Wentzell, Emily and Marcia C. Inhorn. "The Male Reproductive Body." In *A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, First Ed., ed. Frances E. Mascia-Lees, 307-319.
- Mon., Mar. 5      No assigned reading. In class: Watch documentary, *Unnatural Causes* Episode 2: "When the Bough Breaks"
- Wed., Mar. 7      *Discuss Documentary*  
*Second Critical Reflection Paper Due @ 11:59pm.*

### **SPRING BREAK MARCH 10 – 18**

#### **Structural and Gender-Based Violence**

- Mon., Mar. 19      "Lifeboat Ethics: Mother Love and Child Death in Northeast Brazil" by Nancy Scheper-Hughes
- Wed., Mar. 21      Parson, Nia et al. 2016. "Health at the Intersections of Precarious Documentation Status and Gender-Based Partner Violence." *Violence Against Women* 22(1): 17-40.
- Mon., Mar. 26      Green, Linda 1994. "Fear as a Way of Life." *Cultural Anthropology* 9(2): 227-256.
- Wed., Mar. 28      No assigned reading. In class: Watch documentary, *Southern Comfort* (2001)
- Mon., Apr. 2      No assigned reading or class meeting.  
*Student Conferences this week, BIO 204C 2:15pm – 4:45pm.*

#### **Gender and Human Rights**

- Wed., Apr. 4      "These Are Not Our Priorities": Maasai Women, Human Rights, and the Problem of Culture" by Dorothy L. Hodgson.
- Mon. Apr. 9      Abu-Lughod, Lila. 2011. "The Active Social Life of 'Muslim Women's Rights.'" In *Gender and Culture at the Limit of Rights*. Dorothy L. Hodgson,

ed. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 101-11.

*Guest Speaker: Donna Auston, Rutgers Dept. of Anthropology*

Wed., Apr. 11 Ticktin, Miriam. 2011. *Casualties of Care: Immigration and the Politics of Humanitarianism in France*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Mon., Apr. 16 *No assigned reading*. In class: Watch documentary (TBD).

### **Power, Agency, and Resistance**

Wed., Apr. 18 Lynn Stephen. 2006. "Women's Rights are Human Rights: The Merging of Feminine and Feminist Interests among El Salvador's Mothers of the Disappeared (CO-MADRES)." In *Feminist Anthropology: A Reader*, ed. Ellen Lewin, pps. 311-332.

Mon., Apr. 23 "Feminist Theory, Embodiment, and the Docile Agent: Some Reflections on the Egyptian Islamic Revival" by Saba Mahmood

Wed., Apr. 25 Selection: Aretxaga, Begoña. 2005. *States of Terror: Begoña Aretxaga's Essays*. Reno, NV: Center for Basque Studies, University of Nevada, Reno.

Mon., Apr. 30 Student Presentations.  
*Group paper Due May 1 @ 11:59pm.*

**READING PERIOD MAY 1 – 2**  
**EXAM PERIOD MAY 3 – 9**

Mon., May 7th *Final Assessment Due @ 11:59pm.*

***I have read and agree to the terms and coursework within this syllabus, and will refer to the syllabus first before asking fellow students or the professor for clarifications.***

***Signed:***

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