

Anthropology 309
Women's and Gender Studies 300
Sex, Gender and Culture
Spring 2005
MWF: 1:00-1:50
Lutz Hall, room 232

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Hours: MW 10:00-10:50, 2:00-2:50
and by Appointment

NB: This class will not meet on January 16

Required Texts

Bonvillain, Nancy
2001 Women and Men: Cultural Constructs of Gender, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, third edition

Lavenda, Robert H. and Emily A. Schultz
2000 Core Concepts in Cultural Anthropology, Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing

Ward, Martha and Monica Edelstein
2006 A World Full of Women, Boston: Allyn and Bacon

There are no texts that completely cover the subject of this course in the ways in which I want it to be covered. Also there are no texts that we will use in their entirety. The texts I have selected contain materials that I believe are central to one aspect or another of this course. But they do not contain all such material. Consequently, there will also be a number of other sources of information and insight used here. Some will be readings and some will be films. Some may even come from other media. The additional written sources are listed below. All will be on reserve in the library.

Additional Readings will be drawn from some of the following

Dahlberg, Frances, ed.
1981 Woman the Gatherer. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Ember, Carol and Melvin Ember, eds.
2003 Encyclopedia of Sex and Gender: Men and Women in the World's Cultures, New York: Kulwer Academic

Evans-Pritchard, E.E.
1970 Sexual Inversion Among the Azande. American Anthropologist, 72, 1428-1434.

Hammond, Dorothy and Alta Jablow
1976 Women in Cultures of the World, Menlo Park, CA: Cummings

Kessler, Evelyn S.
1976 Women: An Anthropological View. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston

Martin, M. Kay and Barbara Voorhies
1975 Female of the Species. New York: Columbia University Press

Nicholson, John
1984 Men & Women: How Different are They? New York: Oxford University Press

Saville-Troike, Muriel
1989 The Ethnography of Communication, 2nd edition. London: Basil Blackwell

General Comments

1) **Approach:** This course is a cross-cultural examination of the ways in which the basic facts of biological sex are elaborated by various societies into gender constructions. The major focus is on the ways in which cultural patterns constrain and direct the roles of women and men. The course begins with an examination of the biology-culture interface as an essential background. It then proceeds to a cross-cultural examination of the ways in which socio-cultural systems are gendered. There are two basic themes. One concerns the extent to which both reality and perceptions of it are socio-cultural constructions. The other focuses on the intersections of gender with race, class, power and culture. In the process of this examination, the course will also consider issues centering on the anthropology of experience, emic and etic models, and critical theory.

2) **Expectations:** One of the important questions asked in this course concerns the sources of both data and analysis for social science examinations of sex and gender. By the end of this course, you are expected to be able to communicate an understanding of social science data dealing with a cross-cultural analysis of the intersections of sex, gender and culture. By the end of the course, you are also expected to be able to communicate some of the ways in which sex and gender are socially constructed, as well as an understanding of different cultures' views of issues revolving around sex, gender and sexuality.

3) **Format:** Course format will be lecture/discussion. Course style will be loose and conversational. This means that although I will present a certain amount of information, and your readings will present a certain amount of information, you are responsible for creating classroom dialogue. This is accomplished by asking questions, raising issues, disagreeing with the instructor, contributing material from other sources, or any other mechanism for adding your contribution to the educational process.

4) **Communication:** In addition to the ordinary modes of communication and classroom discussion, this course also makes use of an electronic discussion list. Its purpose is to facilitate continuing classroom discussions outside the classroom, or starting new discussions. All students should have an e-mail address. If you do not have your own access to e-mail, the University supplies all you need: an account, an address and access to the necessary equipment at various points on campus. This is a listserv system and operates like a cross between a party line telephone and ordinary individual e-mail. If you need help accessing the system, see me. **Remember:** Anything you send to the listserv will go to the entire class. If you want to send something just to me use the address on the first page. If you want to send something to a single student, use only that person's address. The ground rules for class discussions also apply to e-mail conversations.

5) Students will be held responsible for all materials presented in class, and the appropriate text materials, as well as any additional readings or audio visual materials.

6) In spite of the size of the enrollment, the course is organized as a seminar. Expectations for student PARTICIPATION in class meetings are relatively high. Since much of your prior educational experience has not stressed a participatory classroom, a short essay outlining some general ground rules for meaningful discussions is included with this course outline.

7) If you have something to say, or a question to ask, do it. The chances are that the same thought has occurred to others in the class. On general principle, the only question that need not be asked is: "Will this be on the exam?" The answer is always "yes." Otherwise, there is no question that should not be asked. If you think something needs discussion, then it probably does. It is your responsibility to see to it that the things you think need discussing are brought up in class.

8) There will be two exams during the semester. There will be no exam during the formally scheduled Finals Week. The first exam will be **February 17**; the second will be **March 24**. Make-up exams must be arranged prior to the exam date. Format of all exams will be essay. All exams will be take home and **open book**. You are permitted to use any material you wish to fashion good answers to the exam questions.

9) The fact that there will be no formally defined comprehensive Final Exam makes it important to note that the very nature of all exams is that they are cumulative. The material covered on one exam will be necessary for dealing with the next.

10) This course makes use of a variety of films. For each film you will write a short statement that has two parts: 1) up to three statements about something of interest you've gotten from the film, and 2) up to three questions you still have after watching the film. The only grade you will receive for this portion of the course is a check (did it) or a blank (didn't do it). These will constitute a portion of the participation portion of your grade.

11) **Reading Assignments:** Later on in the syllabus, reading assignments will be associated with each section of the course. For **each** set of reading assignments you will turn in a two to three page summary of the material you have read. This will constitute a second part of the participation portion of your grade.

12) **Journals:** You will also keep a journal throughout the semester. During that time you will keep note, at least once a week, of something that you have encountered that involves a gender construct. This may be something that has happened to you, a movie you have seen, a television program you stayed awake through, or something you have read. The dominant consideration is noting and analyzing the way(s) in which gender or sexuality was a central issue. Journals will be collected twice during the semester on the dates indicated on the calendar.

13) There will also be a written assignment. This will be dealt with in another part of this syllabus.

14) Your grade will be based on the following weights: Each exam will count for 20% of your grade, the term paper for 30%, the Journal for 20% and participation for 10%.

Basic Course Outline

I Some Basic Biology

This section reviews the basic biological parameters for human beings. The major focus is on establishing a common fund of biological knowledge about human sex and sexuality.

Film: Gender: The Enduring Paradox

Readings: Lavenda and Schultz, Chapter 1
and one or more of the following selections from books on overnight reserve in the library.

Martin & Voorhies. Female of the Species, PP 1-40.
Nicholson, John. Men & Women: How Different are They? pp 1-51.
Kessler, Evelyn S. Women: An Anthropological View. pp 12-28.

II Biology and Culture

This section explores the relationships between human biology and human cultures. The major focus is on a paradigm stressing interaction rather than determination.

Film: To Be a Man

Readings: Lavenda and Schultz, Chapters 1, 2 and 4
Bonvillain, Chapter 1
Ward and Edelstein, pages 69-120

III Language, Worldview and Talking about Sex Gender and Culture

This section focuses on three facets of language: one is a matter of various aspects of language structure, both in the abstract and in its use as a medium for communication; the second is a matter of the cultural constructs carried in particular varieties of specific languages; the third is a matter of the extent to which our understandings based on the language we speak are applicable to other languages.

Film: American Tongues, A Word in Edgewise

Readings: Lavenda and Schultz, Chapter 3
Bonvillain, Chapter 10
Ward and Edelstein, pages 1-14

Also recommended Saville-Troike, Muriel, Chapter 3, "Varieties of Language," pp 49-106

IV The Gendered Society and Culture

In this section we discuss the differences between recognizing gender in our every day lives and the concept of a gendered society and culture. We examine the proposition that all societies and cultures are and probably must be gendered, as well as some of the implications of that proposition. This is also where we explore the concepts of matriarchy, patriarchy and the various meanings given to those terms.

Readings: Ward and Edelstein, pages 147-168
Hodder, Ian, Women and Men at Çatalhöyük, in *Scientific American*, volume 209, number 1, pages 76-83 (on e-reserve in the library).

Film: Small Happiness

III Subsistence, Environments, and Division of Labor

This section explores the relationships among ways of providing societal subsistence, physical and socio-cultural environments, and the organization of labor in various societies.

Film: Four Walls

Readings: Ward and Edelstein, pages 15-42
Bonvillain, Chapters 2-5

Also one or more of the following:

Berndt, Catherine H., Interpretations and "Facts" in Aboriginal Australia, in Dahlberg, pp 153-204.
Hammond, Dorothy and Alta Jablow, Women in Cultures of the World, Chapters 5-7, pp 61-109.

V Gender, Sexuality, Culture and Identity

This section examines issues of the cultural constructions of gender and identity. The major focus is on the variety of such constructs among various societies and the question of "natural" arrangements.

Films: Woubi Chéri

Readings: Bonvillain, Chapter 8
Ward and Edelstein, pages 43-68, 169-192
Segal, Edwin S., Male Genders: Cross-Cultural Perspectives (on reserve in the Library) or Variations in Masculinity from a Cross Cultural Perspective (also on reserve in the Library)

Also recommended: Evans-Pritchard, E.E., 1970, Sexual Inversion Among the Azande. *American Anthropologist*, 72, 1428-1434.

VI Social Structures and Social Systems

This section explores issues of the distribution of wealth and power, and the organization of society as variables in understanding cultural constructs of sex and gender.

Film: Ethnic Notions

Readings: Bonvillain, Chapters 1-5 and Chapter 6
Ward and Edelstein, pages 121-144

V Globalization, Economic Development, Modernization and Change

This section focuses on the positions of women in societies undergoing or trying to undergo a variety of processes, usually referred to as economic development or modernization. The major focus is on questions of the changes wrought by development.

Film: B ringing it all Back Home

Readings: Bonvillain Chapter 7
Ward and Edelstein, pages 241-268

Some Useful Sources
Anthropology 309
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Spring 2005

Dahlberg, Frances, ed.
1981 Woman the Gatherer. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Demos, Vasiliki and Marcia Texler Segal, eds.
1994 Ethnic Women: A Multiple Status Reality, Dix Hills, NY: General Hall.
1996 and ff Advances in Gender Research (can be located in the Library as a periodical).

Duley, Margot I. and Mary I. Edwards, eds.
1986 The Cross-Cultural Study of Women: A Comprehensive Guide, New York: The Feminist Press.

Evans-Pritchard, E.E.
1970 Sexual Inversion Among the Azande. American Anthropologist, 72, 1428-1434.

Friedl, Ernestine
1975 Women and Men: An Anthropologist's View. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston

Hammond, Dorothy and Alta Jablow
1976 Women in Cultures of the World, Menlo Park, CA: Cummings

Herd, Gilbert
1987 The Sambia: Ritual and Gender in New Guinea. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston

Keohane, Nannerl O., M.Z. Rosaldo, B.C. Gelpi, eds.
1982 Feminist Theory : a Critique of Ideology. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Kessler, Evelyn S.
1976 Women: An Anthropological View New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Lancaster, Jane B.
1978 Carrying and Sharing in Human Evolution. Human Nature 1,2, pp 82-89

Lancaster, Roger N.
1988 Subject Honor and Object Shame: The Construction of Male Homosexuality and Stigma in Nicaragua, Ethnology, XXVII,2,111-126.

- Laws, Judith Long
1979 The Second X: Sex Role and Social Role. New York: Elsevier.
- Little, Suzanne
1975 You Can Fool Mother Nature. Ms. Magazine, February 1975, pp76-79,94,116
- MacCormack, Carol P., ed.
1982 Ethnography of Fertility and Birth. London; New York: Academic Press.
- MacCormack, Carol P. and Marilyn Strathern, eds.
1981 Nature, Culture, and Gender. Cambridge, England; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Mahmood, Cynthia and Stacy Brady
2000 The Guru's Gift: An Ethnography Exploring Gender Equality with north American Sikh Women,
Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing.
- Martin, M. Kay & Barbara Voorhies
1975 Female of the Species. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Marecek, Jeanne, S.E.Finn, M. Cardell
1982 Gender Roles in the Relationships of Lesbians and Gay Men. Journal of Homosexuality, 82, 2, 45-49.
- Mead, Margaret and Rhoda Metraux
1980 Aspects of the Present. New York: Morrow.
- Mead, Margaret, ed.
1937 Cooperation and Competition among Primitive Peoples. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Mead, Margaret
1950 Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies. New York: New American Library.
- Moore, Melinda A.
1988 Symbol and Meaning in Nayar Marriage Ritual, American Ethnologist, 15,2,254-273
- Nicholson, John
1984 Men & Women: How Different are They? New York: Oxford University Press
- O'Kelly, Charlotte G. and Larry S. Carney
1986 Women and Men in Society: Cross Cultural Perspectives on Gender Stratification. Belmont,
CA: Wadsworth.
- Rosaldo, Michelle Zimbalist and Louise Lamphere, eds.
1974 Woman, Culture, and Society. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Ortner, Sherry B. and Harriet Whitehead, eds.
1981 Sexual Meanings, the Cultural Construction of Gender and Sexuality
- Sanday, Reggy Reeves and Ruth Gallagher Goodenough, eds.
1990 Beyond the Second Sex: New Directions in the Anthropology of Gender. Philadelphia: University of
Pennsylvania Press
- Saville, Troike, Muriel
1989 The Ethnography of Communication, 2nd edition. London: Basil Blackwell

Tannen, Deborah
1990 You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation. New York: Morrow

Thayer, James Steel
1983 Nature, Culture, and the Supernatural among the Susu, *American Ethnologist*, 10, 116-131.

Whitehead, Tony Larry and Mary Ellen Conaway, eds.
1986 Self, Sex, and Gender in Cross-cultural Fieldwork. Urbana,IL: University of Illinois Press.

TERM PAPER ASSIGNMENT

Anthropology 309

WGST 300

Sex, Gender and Culture

Spring 2005

- 1) The major goal of this assignment is for you to produce an extended written work dealing with some aspect of the subject matter of the course.
 - 2) The following assumes that your written assignment will take the form of a traditional term paper. If you can think of another approach that still fulfills the goal stated above, please see me before beginning your work.
 - 3) All references to pages and numbers of pages assume a typed, double spaced page, with one inch margins on all sides as the standard. In terms of word count, this is equivalent to 350-400 words per page.
 - 4) Choose a suitable topic. If you have difficulty, see me.
 - A) Complete a one or two page discussion of your topic. Explain:
 - 1) what your topic is,
 - 2) why it seems worth the research effort,
 - 3) the particular approach you plan to take, and
 - 4) what you think the ultimate result of your research will be.
 - B) Make a list of at least ten sources in the library that are relevant to your subject.
 - 5) HAND IN the statement of topic AND the bibliography NO LATER THAN March 6. Your only grade will be pass or fail, BUT anyone who does not turn in a statement of topic and preliminary bibliography will not receive a grade for the completed paper.
 - 6) The bibliography will contain all relevant information, presented in a consistent format. The bibliography will also contain the library call number, or some other specific notation of location for each listed work (e.g., personal copy). For help with an enumeration of the appropriate categories of information and possible formats, see:
- Turabian, Kate L.
1973 A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations. Chicago: University of Chicago Press (Available in the Bookstore, Gray's and the Library)
- 7) Your preliminary bibliography **may** include material from: a) books, b) chapters in general works or selections in anthologies, c) articles in professional journals, d) articles in mass circulation journals. The bibliography should have **at least TEN** entries, and **no more than 20%** from category "d." This requirement may be adjusted to fit certain topics, but you must see me first with a specific request along these lines.
 - 8) Remember: 1) the narrower the topic, the better the paper; 2) this course focuses on the inter-relations among sex, gender and culture; 3) if you are unsure of any aspect of the assignment, see me.
 - 9) If you wish, you may complete a draft of the paper for me to read and criticize, prior to receiving a grade. If you choose this option, I must receive your draft by April 3.
 - 10) The minimum expectation is that your paper will be the equivalent of 10 pages. You may write as many

more as you wish. I will read them.

11) The final draft of your paper is DUE by Friday, April 24. You may hand your papers in early.

Plagiarism

For purposes of this course, plagiarism is understood to refer to:

A) Direct quotes without adequate source citation.

B) Paraphrase or precis without adequate source citation. All material: fact, theory, or hypothesis, derived from the works of others must be properly cited.

Source citations must include: author, title of the work being cited, pages being referred to, date of publication. In the case of journal articles, proper citation includes the above **plus**: journal title, volume number, and pages in the journal occupied by the article.

GROUND RULES FOR CLASS DISCUSSIONS¹

The first part of setting the stage for profitable classroom discussion consists of acknowledging the existence of certain conditions existing in our society that have a significant effect on the social organization of all classes in the University. There are two conditions I want to stress.

- 1) Racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism and other institutionalized forms of oppression do exist.²
- 2) One of the mechanisms of institutionalized oppressions is that we are all systematically taught misinformation about our own group and about members of other groups. This is true for members of both privileged and oppressed groups.

Keeping these conditions in mind:

- 1) We agree not to blame ourselves or others for the misinformation we have learned about the past, but accept responsibility for not repeating misinformation after we have learned otherwise.
- 2) We agree not to “blame victims” for the conditions of their lives.
- 3) We assume that people -- both the groups we study and the members of this class -- always do the best they can.
- 4) We will actively pursue information about our own groups and those of others.
- 5) We will share information about our groups with other members of the class and never demean, devalue, or in any other way “put down” people for their experiences.
- 6) We agree to actively combat the myths and stereotypes about our own groups and other groups so that we can break down the norms which prohibit group cooperation and group gain.
- 7) Our ultimate goal is to create a safe atmosphere for open discussion. If members of the class wish to make comments they do not want repeated outside the classroom, they can preface their remarks with a request that the class agree not to repeat the remarks.

¹ Adapted from a document by Lynn Weber Cannon, Center for research on Women, Memphis State University, Memphis, TN 38152

² There are many institutionalized forms of oppression which could be listed here. A more complete list might include: age, ethnicity, disability, gender, race, religion, color, national origin, sexual orientation and physical appearance. A similar statement can be made about all these as well.