

**UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
ANTHROPOLOGY 2255E
Feminist Perspectives in Anthropology
Distance Studies Online Version**

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The goal of this course is to introduce you to the ways in which feminist theory has influenced anthropology. The readings, and your course work, will explore the different kinds of work in anthropology which have been influenced by feminist social and political thought. We will end the course by looking at an ethnography which combines feminist anthropology and migration studies.

Prerequisite: Any Arts and Humanities or Social Science 0.5 or 1.0 Essay Course

Texts to purchase:

Ellen Lewin, ed. 2006, *Feminist Anthropology*.

Ruth Behar and Deborah Gordon, eds. 1995, *Women Writing Culture*.

Sheba Mariam George, 2005, *When Women Come First: Gender and Class in Transnational Migration*.

Evaluation:

Response Essay		30%
Discussion Postings		40%
Section 1	12%	
Section 2	13%	
Section 3	15%	
Final Exam		30%

Course Structure:

This course has two components: the readings and assignments as outlined here, and an online component. Once you have purchased the required texts, you will have access to the readings. The online component will provide links to other students in the course, to additional information about the readings and assignments, and to current ideas as they develop out of our interaction. You

should log in to the site immediately to find out what it looks like and how it works.

Online Forums Postings:

The advantage of taking part in an online course is that it provides opportunities for all of us to interact on a regular basis through online discussions. All students must participate in the Forums, and are required to make at least two substantial contributions to the Forum discussions of the assigned readings for each unit. By substantial, I mean fully developed comments and questions, not simply one or two sentences; however, they should not be more than one or two paragraphs in length. They must deal with issues raised in the course readings, including substantial comments on the readings, a substantial question that you feel might offer useful ideas for exploring the readings, some reflection from your experience with the issues in the course material and so on. Feel free to post often and to respond to each others' comments and queries. However, you are limited to six messages each Unit. The purpose of these online discussions is to make the learning process interactive and collaborative, a process in which each of us will contribute to the learning of others at the same time that we learn from others. Keep your postings short and focused because students typically won't read beyond one or two paragraphs. It's better to post three short messages, for instance, rather than one long one. Your discussion grade will be based on both the quantity and quality of your online participation. You will receive an evaluation of your postings, at the end of Units 8, 16, and 24. Your total Forums postings mark is worth 40% of your course grade.

Response Essay:

The purpose of the response essay is to allow you to critically discuss and question the issues raised by the authors. Your goal in this assignment is to choose issues and ideas that you think are important. When I evaluate your papers, I will be looking for evidence that you have thought about and understood the issues covered in the course and that you have been able to incorporate points from a wide variety of the readings in the course.

Your response essay should be about 2,500 words in length and is worth 30% of your grade. Papers are to be submitted to me through the Assignment tool on our website by midnight of the due date. A penalty of 2% per week day may be deducted for late papers.

Final Exam:

Your final exam will consist of essay questions. I will post information on the questions at least two weeks before the exam, to allow you time to think about how you may want to study. The final exam is worth 30% of your course mark.

Other Information:

Please feel free to email me anytime, with questions or comments (slarkin@uwo.ca). If you have not received a response within 24 hours of sending an email, Sunday to Thursday, you should assume it was not received and send it a second time. I will respond to weekend email early in the next week.

OUTLINE OF READINGS

Section One (Units 1-8)

Unit 1

Feminist Anthropology, Introduction: (pp. 1-38)

We will use the first few days to begin reading, practice using the Forums and getting to know one another.

Unit 2

Women Writing Culture, Introduction: (pp. 1-29)

Unit 3

Women Writing Culture, Chapters 4, 5, 6 (pp. 85-147)

Another History, Another Canon

Louise Lamphere

Feminist anthropology: the legacy of Elsie Clews Parsons.

Barbara A. Babcock

"Not in the absolute singular": rereading Ruth Benedict.

Janet L. Finn

Ella Cara Deloria and Mourning Dove: writing for cultures, writing against the grain.

Unit 4

Women Writing Culture, Chapters 7, 8, 9 (pp. 148-206)

Another History, continued

Graciela Hernandez

Multiple subjectivities and strategic positionality: Zora Neale Hurston's experimental ethnographies.

Sally Cole

Ruth Landes and the early ethnography of race and gender.

Nancy C. Lutkehaus

Margaret Mead and the "rustle of the wind in the palm tree school" of ethnographic writing.

Unit 5

Feminist Anthropology, Introduction and Chapters 1, 2, 3 (pp. 39-86)

Discovering Women Across Cultures

Edwin Ardner

Belief and the problem of women and the 'problem revisited.'

Judith K. Brown

A note on the division of labor by sex.

Sherry B. Ortner

Is female to male as nature is to culture?

Unit 6

Feminist Anthropology, Chapters 4, 5, 6 (pp. 87-146)

Discovering Women Across Cultures, Continued

Gayle Rubin

The traffic in women: Notes on the 'political economy' of sex.

Michelle Z. Rosaldo

The use and abuse of anthropology: Reflections on feminism and cross-cultural understanding.

Karen Brodtkin

Toward a unified theory of class, race, and gender.

Unit 7

Women Writing Culture, Chapters 10, 11 (pp. 207-244)

Another History, continued again

Gelya Frank

The ethnographic films of Barbara C. Myerhoff: anthropology, feminism, and the politics of Jewish identity.

Faye V. Harrison

Writing against the grain: cultural politics of difference in the work of Alice Walker.

Unit 8

Women Writing Culture, Chapters 1, 2, 3 (pp 33-82)

Beyond Self and Other

Lirin Narayan

Participant observation.

Dorinne Kondo

Bad girls: theater, women of color, and the politics of representation.

Ruth Behar

Writing in my father's name: a diary of a translated woman's first year.

Section Two (Units 9-16)

Unit 9

Feminist Anthropology, Introduction and Chapters 7, 8 (pp. 147-185)

Questioning Positionality

Lila Abu-Lughod

Writing against culture.

Esther Newton

My best informant's dress: The erotic equation in fieldwork.

Unit 10

Feminist Anthropology, Chapters 9, 10 (pp. 186-216)

Questioning Positionality, Continued

Patricia Zavella

Feminist insider dilemmas: Constructing ethnic identity with Chicana informants.

Paulla A. Ebron

Contingent stories of anthropology, race, and feminism.

Unit 11

Feminist Anthropology, Introduction and Chapters 11, 12 (pp. 217-249)

Confronting the USA

Louise Lamphere

Bringing the family to work: Women's culture on the shop floor.

Faye Ginsburg

Procreation stories: Reproduction, Nurturance, and procreation in life narratives of abortion activists.

Unit 12

Feminist Anthropology, Chapters 13, 14 (pp. 250-288)

Confronting the USA, Continued

Elizabeth Chin

Ethnically correct dolls: Toying with the race industry.

Charis Thompson

Strategic Naturalizing: Kinship in an infertility clinic.

Unit 13

Feminist Anthropology, Introduction and Chapters 15, 16 (pp. 289-332)

Maintaining Commitments

Begona Aretxaga

Dirty protest: Symbolic overdetermination and gender in Northern Ireland ethnic violence.

Lynn Stephen

Women's rights are human rights: The merging of feminism and feminist interests among El Salvador's Mothers of the Disappeared (CO-MADRES).

Unit 14

Feminist Anthropology, Chapters 17, 18 (pp. 333-374)

Maintaining Commitments, Continued

Christine J. Walley

Searching for "voices:" Feminism, anthropology, and the global debates over female genital operations.

Lynn M. Morgan

Imagining the unborn in the Ecuadoran Andes.

Unit 15

Feminist Anthropology, Introduction and Chapters 19, 20 (pp. 375-410)

Interpreting Instability and Fluidity

Shellee Colen

"Like a mother to them:" Stratified reproduction and West Indian childcare workers and employers in New York.

Carla Freeman

Femininity and flexible labor: Fashioning class through gender on the global assembly line.

Unit 16

Feminist Anthropology, Chapters 21-22 (pp. 411-448)

Interpreting Instability and Fluidity, Continued

Evelyn Blackwood

Tombois in West Sumatra: Constructing masculinity and erotic desire.

Gloria Wekker

"What's identity got to do with it?": Rethinking identity in light of the *Mati* work in Suriname.

Section Three (Units 17-24)

Unit 17

***Women Writing Culture* , Chapters 12, 13, 14 (pp 249-305)**

Does Anthropology Have a Sex?

Catherine Lutz

The gender of theory.

Barbara Tedlock

Works and wives: On the textual division of labor.

Judith Newton & Judith Stacey

Ms Representation: Reflections on studying academic men.

Unit 18

***Women Writing Culture* , Chapters 15 &16 (pp. 306-335)**

Does Anthropology Have a Sex? Continued

Laurent Dubois

"Man's darkest hours": maleness, travel, and anthropology.

Ellen Lewin

Writing lesbian ethnography.

Unit 19

***Women Writing Culture* , Chapters 17, 18, 19 (pp 338-389)**

Traveling Feminists

Lila Abu-Lughod

A tale of two pregnancies.

Aihwa Ong

Women out of China : traveling tales and traveling theories in postcolonial feminism.

Deborah A. Gordon

Border work: feminist ethnography and the dissemination of literacy.

Unit 20

***Women Writing Culture* , Chapters 20, 21, Conclusion (pp 390-441)**

Travelling Feminists, continued

Paulla Ebron & Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing

In dialogue? Reading across minority discourses.

Smadar Lavie

Border poets: translating by dialogues.

Deborah A. Gordon

Conclusion: Culture writing women: inscribing feminist anthropology.

Unit 21

When Women Come First, Introduction, Chapters 1 & 2 (pp. 1-76)

Sheba Mariam George

Introduction

Chapter 1, "Contradictions of Gender When Women Come First."

Chapter 2, "Work: Nursing, Women's Networks, and Men 'Tied to a Stake.'"

Unit 22

When Women Come First, Chapters 3 & 4 (pp. 77-157)

Sheba Mariam George

Chapter 3, "Home: Redoing Gender in Immigrant Households."

Chapter 4, "Community: Creating Little Kerala and the Paradox of 'Men Who Play' in the Church."

Unit 23

When Women Come First, Chapter 5, 6 (pp. 158-212)

Sheba Mariam George

Chapter 5, "Transnational Connections: 'The Janus-Faced Production of an Immigrant Community.'"

Chapter 6, "Conclusions."

Unit 24

Catch Up

General University Policies:

All students should familiarize themselves with Western's current academic policies regarding accessibility, plagiarism and scholastic offences, and medical accommodation. These policies are outlined (with links to the full policies) at:

http://anthropology.uwo.ca/undergraduate/course_information/academic_policies.html