ANSC 125: Gender, Sexuality, and Society

Winter 2017

Tues, Thurs 2:00-3:20, CSB 001

Professor Suzanne Brenner

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Social Sciences Building 262

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Course Description

This course looks at gender and sexuality from a cross-cultural perspective. Integrating broad themes and theoretical issues with ethnographic case studies, the course explores social, cultural, and political dimensions of gender and sexuality. How are ideas and practices of gender and sexuality shaped by cultural values and ideologies; social institutions and transformations; global flows of people, ideas, goods, and capital; and local and national politics and economics? We begin with the assumption that gender roles, gender differences, and ideas about sexuality are strongly influenced by social and cultural factors rather than predetermined by biology. The sociocultural study of gender and sexuality focuses not on the physical differences between the sexes, but on the ways that these differences acquire meaning in particular cultural and historical contexts. It is also concerned with how gender and sexuality serve as basic principles of social organization that are closely linked to other aspects of everyday life such as kinship and family life, politics, and economics.
Course Requirements

Required readings include four books (some with only selected chapters required) and a number of articles and book chapters. You should try to finish the assigned readings before coming to class so that you can participate fully in class discussions. You will also be expected to write brief responses to some of the readings that will be submitted online (see below). Lectures and in-class discussions will be supplemented by videos, which you should make every effort to attend (or view on your own if necessary), as they are an important part of the course. There will also be an in-class midterm exam and a final exam.

Articles for the course will be available online through library course reserves (https://reserves.ucsd.edu/ares/). Books can be purchased at the UCSD Bookstore and are also on reserve in the library. The required books are: Margery Wolf, Women and the Family in Rural Taiwan (selected chapters; note that this book is also available online through course reserves); Judith Stacey, Unhitched: Love, Marriage, and Family Values from West Hollywood to Western China (selected chapters; also available online through course reserves); Mary Beth Mills, Thai Women in the Global Labor Force; and Don Kulick, Travesti: Sex, Gender, and Culture among Brazilian Transgendered Prostitutes.

Course grades will be based on the weekly online responses to readings (25%), the in-class midterm exam (35%), and the final exam (40%). If you are on the borderline between two grades, participation in class discussions may be taken into consideration in determining your course grade.

Online Reading Responses: You will be asked to write a brief response (between five and ten sentences depending on the assignment) to all four books assigned for the course (including Women and the Family in Rural Taiwan) as well as to any ten of the other required readings for the course. These will be due shortly before the class in which the reading will be discussed. Reading responses will be submitted through Turnitin on the course website on TritonEd (more information about this requirement will be made available on the website). Each reading will have a short prompt for you to answer that will be posted on the course website at least a few days before the assignment is due. The ten shorter reading responses will be worth six points each; responses to the four books will be worth ten points each. You can earn a maximum of 100 points by completing these reading responses. If you have technical difficulties submitting any of the responses on TritonEd, please bring a hard copy to class and try to figure out the source of the problem.

Lecture Topics, Readings, Videos, and Exams

Jan. 10: INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

No assigned readings, but please start reading ahead and working on your reading responses for the next section of the course.

Jan. 12: EARLY THEORIES OF GENDER INEQUALITY

--Michelle Rosaldo, "Woman, Culture, and Society"
--Sherry Ortner, "Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?"

Jan. 17: KINSHIP AND GENDER (1)

--Margery Wolf, Women and the Family in Rural Taiwan, chapters 2, 3, 8, 9, 11 (available online through Library Course Reserves)

Jan. 19: KINSHIP AND GENDER (2)

--Linda Stone and Caroline James, “Dowry, Bride-Burning, and Female Power in India”
--Evelyn Blackwood, "Senior Women, Model Mothers, and Dutiful Wives: Managing Gender Contradictions in a Minangkabau Village"

Jan. 24: WOMEN'S POLITICS AND POWER (1)

VIDEO: No Longer Silent

--Chandra Mohanty, “Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses”

Jan. 26: WOMEN'S POLITICS AND POWER (2)

--Judith van Allen, "'Aba Riots' or Igbo 'Women's War'?"
--Mary Pardo, "Mothers of East Los Angeles"

Jan. 31: WOMEN'S POLITICS AND POWER (3)

Guest Lecture by TA Esin Duzel: “Other Ways of Being Political: Kurdish Women’s Beauty Practices in Turkey”

--Handan Çaglayan, “From Kawa the Blacksmith to Ishtar the Goddess”

Feb. 2, 7, 9: GENDER IN LOCAL AND GLOBAL ECONOMIES

Feb. 2: VIDEO: China Blue [NOTE: This video runs for about 88 minutes, so most of it will be shown on Feb. 2 with the remainder shown at the beginning of class on Feb. 7]

--Start reading Mary Beth Mills, Thai Women in the Global Labor Force (please read the whole book, but focus in particular on chapters 4 – 9.)

Feb. 7: Watch the last part of China Blue and begin discussion of Thai Women in the Global Labor Force

-- Finish reading Mills, Thai Women in the Global Labor Force

Feb. 9: Finish discussion of Thai Women in the Global Labor Force and midterm review

Feb. 14: IN-CLASS MIDTERM EXAM
Feb. 16: MARRIAGE AND FAMILY IN THE 21ST CENTURY (1)

--Start reading assigned chapters in Judith Stacey, Unhitched (Introduction and Chapters 1, 2, and 5) (available online through course reserves)

Feb. 21: MARRIAGE AND FAMILY IN THE 21ST CENTURY (2)

VIDEO: The Women’s Kingdom

--Finish reading assigned chapters in Stacey

Feb. 23: Masculinities (1)

--Stanley Brandes, “Drink, Abstinence, and Male Identity in Mexico City”
--ADDITIONAL READING TO BE POSTED

Feb. 28: Masculinities (2)

-- C. J. Pascoe, “‘Dude, You’re a Fag: Adolescent Masculinity and the Fag Discourse.’”
--Yen Le Espiritu, “All Men Are Not Created Equal: Asian Men in U.S. History”

March 2: VIDEO: Guardians of the Flutes

March 7: CROSSING BOUNDARIES OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY (1)

--Anne Fausto-Sterling, “The Five Sexes”
--Anne Fausto-Sterling, “The Five Sexes, Revisited”
--Anna Meigs, "Male Pregnancy and the Reduction of Sexual Opposition"

March 9: CROSSING BOUNDARIES OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY (2)

--Sabine Lang, “Lesbians, Men-Women and Two Spirits”
--Evelyn Blackwood, “Tombois in West Sumatra”
--Padawer, Ruth, “When Women Become Men at Wellesley”

March 14, 16: CROSSING BOUNDARIES OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY (3)

--Start reading Don Kulick, Travesti: Sex, Gender, and Culture among Brazilian Transgendered Prostitutes

March 14 VIDEO: Juchitán Queer Paradise

--Finish reading Kulick, Travesti

March 16 (last class): Discussion of Travesti

FINAL EXAM: THURSDAY, MARCH 23, 3:00 – 5:00 PM (Please note that this exam will run for two hours, not three.)
Readings Available Online through Library Course Reserves


11. ADDITIONAL READING ON MASCULINITY TO BE POSTED


