ANTH 315: Gender, Folklore, and Inequality

This class explores the expressive and artistic realms of gendered lives in cross-cultural perspective in relation to questions of politics, power, resistance, and creativity. A critical perspective examines the history and political interests of anthropology and folklore and asks whether an egalitarian, emancipatory, inclusive, and feminist anthropology/folklore is possible. Topics include pollution beliefs, life-cycle events and rituals (initiations, marriage, childbirth), motherhood and fatherhood, religion, narrative and visual arts, sexuality in its broadest framework, and gender and human rights (via case studies of marriage, female genital cutting, and beauty regimes). Cast studies are drawn from many different cultures. We will have several guest speakers during the term.

I welcome questions and feedback via email, Canvas, telephone, in writing, and in person during office hours. I have a comment bag available at every class for quick anonymous feedback. Your GTF, Nikki Cox, is also available to help you. If you need accommodation for any reason, please contact us; for information: see Accessible Education Center, 346-1155, uoaec@uoregon.edu.

Please turn off all mobile devices during class. Computer use is permitted for class related activities, such as note taking.
Plagiarism is not tolerated at the UO.

Respect for the instructor, GTF, and fellow students is imperative. Some of the material in this class may be controversial. It is important that we listen to and respond civilly to one another, even when we don’t agree. I encourage everyone to participate and express their opinions freely.

The class utilizes a Canvas site. Under Syllabus, you can find the course and section syllabi. Under Modules by date you will find a list of anthropological definitions, class outlines and powerpoints, and most of the article readings. Note that journalistic and newspaper articles, blogs, videos, etc, are online via urls provided in the syllabus; some of these articles are also on Canvas. Some optional articles are also on Canvas. Please use the syllabus to distinguish between required and optional readings.
Canvas Discussions is a site to post comments, further materials, and to ask questions. Exams are posted to Canvas Assignments.

Course Requirements:
1. Attendance, participation, and presentations in your section comprise 25% of your grade. Further guidelines are explained in your Section Syllabus on Canvas. Sections meet the first week of classes. Participation in the lecture is encouraged; it counts towards the participation percentage of your section grade.

2. Attendance at lectures is required although I will not take attendance. A great deal of material will be presented during lecture that is not in the readings.
3. Three take-home essay exams, based on readings, films, and class and section discussion, comprise $25\% + 25\% + 25\%$ of your grade (approximately 7 pages each). Exams are factual, interpretive and comparative. Coherent, grammatical, and concise writing is emphasized. Lateness and excessive length will be penalized.
Exams are due **Feb 6 (in class), Feb 27 (in class), and Friday March 24, 10:15AM**.
Exams are distributed at least 5 days prior to the due date.

4. The required readings consist of scholarly articles, short journalistic articles from newspapers, magazines and blogs, and a 2-part graphic novel:


**Please do the required reading and film viewing prior to lecture. Scholarly articles are available on Canvas; short journalistic articles and YouTube and video clips are accessed via the indicated URL; some journalistic articles are on Canvas. Films will be on reserve after class viewing.**

**Grading Rubric:**
A Outstanding performance relative to that required to meet course requirements; demonstrates a mastery of course content at the highest level.
B Performance that is significantly above that required to meet course requirements; demonstrates a mastery of course content at a high level.
C Performance that meets the course requirements in every respect; demonstrates an adequate understanding of course content.
D Performance that is at the minimal level necessary to pass the course but does not fully meet the course requirements; demonstrates a marginal understanding of course content.
F Performance in the course is unacceptable and does not meet the course requirements; demonstrates an inadequate understanding of the course content.

**Course Objectives**
- Identify the definitions of gender, folklore, and inequality.
- Trace the study of gender in the disciplines of anthropology and folklore.
- Analyze the roles and statuses of women and men in select cross-cultural locations.
- Analyze gender in cross-cultural perspective in relation to questions of politics, power, resistance, and creativity.
- Interrogate whether a critical an egalitarian, emancipatory, inclusive, and feminist anthropology/folklore is possible.
- Analyze pollution beliefs, life-cycle events and rituals (initiations, marriage, childbirth), motherhood and fatherhood in a cross-cultural framework.
- Interrogate human rights issues via case studies of ethnicity, gender, and sexuality in a cross-cultural framework.
- Identify current issues illuminating the relationship of Islam and gender.
- Trace the gender roles of Roma.
- Analyze sex, gender, and sexuality in their broadest cross-cultural framework.
Course Outline:


**Jan 16. MKL Day. No class**

3. **Jan 18.** Birthing: Ritual, gender, and politics. Film: *The Business of Being Born* (87 minutes, 2008, produced by Ricki Lake). If possible, please plan to arrive on time and stay until 11:30 AM to watch the whole film.


Are Midwives Safer than Doctors? http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/15/opinion/are-midwives-safer-than-doctors.html

Optional: Twins don’t need C-Sections: http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/02/18/twins-dont-need-c-sections/?_r=0


4. **Jan 23:** Pregnancy and childbirth, birthing practices. Guest lecture by Melissa Cheyney, Assoc. Professor of Biocultural Anthropology, Oregon State University, and practicing midwife.

Optional: Parts 1, 2, 4, and 5.


http://www.msmagazine.com/Fall2008/LikeANaturalWoman.asp

http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/08/opinion/end-the-tampon-tax.html

View the following advertisements and be ready to discuss them:

Serena Williams Mother Nature 2010: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HIeYV63ap20
Mother Nature 2010: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9kDT3xmj9bU

Fake Russian Tampax ad (from Movie 43, 2013):
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wGZpWOMGJCM

U by Kotex- Reality Check:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lpypeLL1dAs

Tiny Tampon Queen:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0XnznfRqkRxU

Bodyform Responds: the truth
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bpy75q2DDow
6. Jan 30: Female Circumcision/Female Genital Cutting: Human rights abuse or valid cultural practice? Cultural relativism vs. human rights.


Optional: This Female Genital Mutilation Survivor Teaches Victims How To Enjoy Sex [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/how-this-female-genital-mutilation-survivor-learned-to-love-sex_us_5759d1fae4b0e39a28ad0672?section](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/how-this-female-genital-mutilation-survivor-learned-to-love-sex_us_5759d1fae4b0e39a28ad0672?section)

7. Feb 1: Mothering, and Fathering: Instinct or Learned?


9. **Feb 8**: Contemporary Beauty Regimes in Beirut. Guest lecture by Anthropology major Eugenia Lollini, on her original 2016 research.


Optional: Men in Iran are wearing hijabs in solidarity with their wives who are forced to cover their hair July 28, 2016. http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/men-in-iran-are-wearing-hijabs-in-solidarity-with-their-wives-a7160146.html


Malala Yousafzai UN Speech 2013: Girl Shot by Taliban Gives Address: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5SClmL43dTo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5SClmL43dTo)


**13. Feb 22:** Honor/Shame and Gender. Veil, Headscarf, and Burkini Bans and Debates. Muslims in the US.


Read at least 3 news items from any of the 3 following websites:
European Roma Rights Center: www.errc.org
European Roma Information Office: www.erionet.eu
European Roma and Travelers Forum, sponsored by the Council of Europe: www.ertf.org/

15. Mar 1: American Roma and Gender: Stereotypes and Realities. Film Searching for the Fourth Nail (52 minutes), by George Eli.


Watch: Traveling Gypsy, New York City: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nbRJSXEFlvM

On YouTube, watch one excerpt of your choice from the TV reality show American Gypsies (National Geographic Channel); and one excerpt from the reality TV show My Big Fat American Gypsy Wedding (TLC).


Watch the documentary film *Southern Comfort* (2001, directed by Kate Davis, 90 minutes).

http://www.snagfilms.com/films/title/southern_comfort

or https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IH0L3wlV0hg

DVD also on reserve.


In Houston, Hate Trumped Fairness. On Canvas.


University of Vermont recognized a Third Gender. On Canvas


http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/20/opinion/who-gets-to-race-as-a-woman.html?_r=0


Optional: Generation LGBTQIA. On Canvas.

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/10/fashion/generation-lgbtqia.html

Optional: Toward ending workplace discrimination


Optional: In Their Own Terms: The Growing Transgender Presence in Pop Culture


Optional: A Spirit of Belonging Inside and Out: An Indian identity that means more the than being gay or lesbian. http://www.nytimes.com/2006/10/08/fashion/08SPIRIT.html

**Final Exam due Friday, March 24, 10:15 AM**