

ANTH2310 & UGEC2653
Gender and Culture
Spring 2021
Draft



Lecture: Wednesday, 3:30 - 5:15 pm (MMW707)
Tutorial: Monday, 1:30 or 2:30 pm (UCC207)
Lecturer: Dr. Ju-chen Chen (juchen@cuhk.edu.hk)
RA: TBA
Office hour: By appointment

Course Description:

Gender speaks to differences, in most cases, binary differences. We use man and woman; femininity and masculinity to understand all sorts of contrasts: the sun and the moon, nature and culture, the state and the nation, the West and the East, the colonizers and the colonized, the public and the domestic, breadwinners and caretakers, blue and pink colors and so on. Categorization creates rules and order, but also results in stereotypes and hierarchy. Hence, studying the construction of gender gives us a way to contemplate the production of difference and inequality, granting insight into similarity and humanity.

This is an introductory course on gender from an anthropological perspective. Some questions we start with include:

- What is gender? How does gender matter in our everyday life?
- Is gender biological or cultural?
- Are there different ways of being masculine and feminine?
- How do we understand gender fluidity?

- Do our bodies define our sexually preferences?
- Is sexual desire personal or social?
- Why do some societies seem to be more sexual liberal than others?
- How can we account for differences in status between women and men?
- Does the development of technology have an impact on gender?
- Do political and economic structures affect gender?
- If gender is culturally specific, how do globalization and migration influence gender?
- Does gender (still) matter?

Anthropological, cross-cultural studies help us to see taken for granted beliefs. This course, reflecting upon the issues addressed anthropologically, brings to the fore the study of culture, identity production, and systems of oppression.

This course has two parts. In the first part, Gender as a Cultural Construct, we address gender-related beliefs and practices through various anthropological theories and arguments. In the second part, Contemporary Challenges, we examine gender-related issues we are familiar with in life. Topics addressed include women's double burdens, changing patriarchy, homosexuality and gender fluidity, the nation-state's impacts, gender in the media- and the commodity-saturated world, and migration and gender diversity.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completing this course, students will be able to

- be aware of and reflect on gender's impacts on our daily life;
- have a good overview of anthropological inquiry of gender;
- understand gender and sexual diversities in different cultures;
- argue how gender intersects with other forms of hierarchy and categorization;
- reflect on politics of identity, the production of differences, and human similarity;
- cultivate critical reflections about gender stereotypes and choose one's standpoint;
- also, do independent research on gender-related topics.

Readings:

This course uses various articles and book chapters. All required materials are available on Blackboard.

However, we will read several chapters from the following book. You are encouraged to acquire a copy for your reference.

Mascia-Lees, Frances E. and Nancy Johnson Black (1999) *Gender and Anthropology*.

Requirement and Assessment:

This course encourages students' participation in class. You are expected to finish the required readings before the tutorials. We will discuss your understanding and questions

regarding the required materials in tutorials first. Then, in lectures, the instructor will address the weekly topics and invite the class to give feedback and share ideas.

Preparation and discussion:

| | | |
|---------------------------|-----|-----------------|
| Participation | 20% | |
| Tutorial facilitation x 2 | 30% | (various dates) |

Writing and presentation:

| | | |
|-------------------------|-----|-----------------|
| Lecture reflection | 20% | (various dates) |
| Final (essay or poster) | 30% | (30 April) |

Participation marks reflect your preparation and contribution to our classes. What matters is whether you have read and think about the topic, actively engage in tutorial and lecture discussions, and help the class to further the inquiry. Participation can include both your contribution in class and via Blackboard.

Tutorial Facilitation: Each student is required to take the role as a tutorial facilitator **twice** in the semester. As the facilitator, you will lead us to read **one required reading** each time. The requirement is that 1) you give a 5-minute introduction of the reading in tutorial and 2) you proactively join the instructor to facilitate the seminar. In the 5-minute introduction, you can share with the class your reading of the material, how it is related to the topic at hand, perhaps identify some key concepts, or suggest questions for the class to discuss, etc. I would suggest that you could also share a summary paragraph or a less than one-page outline with the class. Sharing it via the discussion board on Blackboard would be a good idea. If you are very shy, you can also consider do a video or audio recording before hand. Make sure the message is clear. The TA and I will give the facilitators full support. You will not be alone to take charge of the tutorials.

Lecture reflection: You will write a reflective summary and outline of one lecture **after** that class. The reflection is an assignment that synthesizes your learning in the class. A timely reflection is a good practice to deepen your thoughts on a particular topic. The writing should be no more than 500 words in English and 1000 words in Chinese and include two parts. First, give a summary of the lecture. What happened? The goal is not to exhaust everything covered but to highlight the key concepts, inspirations, and arguments. Second, write a very short outline (you can use keywords and discussion questions – detailed elaboration not necessary) that illustrates your suggestions on how to deliver the lecture – if you are the instructor next time, how would you teach this topic? Submit the reflection via Blackboard **within one week after the class** of your choice (not including week 1, 2, 5, 12).

**Please note that the lecture you choose to reflect on should differ from the week(s) you facilitate.*

Final: Choose a gender-related and contemporary issue for your analysis. You can choose to **either write an essay or design a poster presentation** to explain your interests and concerns, deliver your arguments, and showcase what you have learned in this class.

- Essay: **analytical** and **argumentative** writing that elaborates on the topic of your choice. Other than course materials, you are encouraged to engage with other

academic works and news, books, films, podcasts, etc. The paper should be around 1500 words in English or 3000 words in Chinese.

- **Poster:** Create a no more than two-page poster to address the topic of your choice. The poster should have write-up explanations. Bullet points are welcome, but outlines alone are not enough. In addition to the contents, the graphic design of the poster (concerning clarity, reader-friendliness, and visual features such as the division of the sections and highlights of the information) will indeed affect your poster's receiving. Feel free to use hyperlinks and QR Codes for further details. The poster is more than a flyer of information. In other words, your argument should be embedded in the writing and design. Please assume that the poster is in the size of A4 paper(s). There is no limit for word counts, sizes, and margins (but know these are part of your visual design).

The final assignment gives students a chance to synthesize what they have learned across the various topics we have and use them to develop a more profound and critical understanding of the issues they are interested in. You will submit a rough plan of your final (no more than 250 words in English and 500 words in Chinese) by **18 March (week 10)**. And I will schedule time to meet (not mandatory) individual student during the Reading Week to talk about your finals. The completed final paper is due on **30 April**. Please submit both via Blackboard.

- **Extra reminder about essay (including poster) writing:** A good essay is concise with a clear thesis or argument. It shows me your curiosity, creativity, and organizational skills. As long as it is succinct, the length of it is not a top concern.

Criteria, formats, and other requirements:

1. The final essay/poster should 1) be analytical and argumentative, 2) illustrate your original thoughts, 3) engage materials and discussion we have in this course, and 4) be succinctly written. It should not be a summary of materials used; but a work of your emerging thoughts, critiques, or responses to the topic.
2. All writings (except the poster) should be double-spaced, use font size 12 or larger, and adopt standard margins.
3. You can write in either English or Chinese for all assignments.
4. All written assignments (including the texts of the poster) must be submitted to VeriGuide. An assignment without a signed declaration from VeriGuide will not be graded. https://academic.veriguide.org/academic/login_CUHK.jsp

Grade descriptors are as follows for the assessment of this course:

| Grade | Overall course |
|-------|--|
| A | Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes. |
| A- | Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes. |
| B | Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance. |
| C | Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses. |
| D | Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes |
| F | Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements. |

Course Schedule

I: Gender as a Cultural Construct

Week 01 (Jan. 12): Introduction

Syllabus and course overview

No reading due

Week 02 (Jan. 19): Gender as a Cultural Construct

Mascia-Lees, Frances E. and Nancy Johnson Black (1999) Ch1 & Ch2. In *Gender and Anthropology*. Pp. 1-19.

Recommended:

Rosaldo, Michelle (1974) "Woman, Culture and Society: A theoretical overview," in *Woman, Culture and Society*, Pp. 17-42.

Lewin, Ellen (2006) "Introduction," in *Feminist Anthropology: A Reader*, Pp. 1-26.

Video: *Always #LikeAGirl*. Accessed on 15 January, 2015.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XjJQBJWYDTs>

Video: *Energy That Can Change the World: Kind Words Ringback Tone by GS Caltex*. Accessed on 13 January, 2021.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mr7p_cmH2H8&ab_channel=%EC%95%94%EC%9A%94%EC%97%90%EB%84%88%EC%A7%80

News: *Why Aren't Women Advancing at Work? Ask a Transgender Person*. New Republic 2014. Jessica Nordell. Accessed on 15 January, 2015.

<http://www.newrepublic.com/article/119239/transgender-people-can-explain-why-women-dont-advance-work>

Week 03 (Jan. 26): Biology and Evolution

Mascia-Lees, Frances E. and Nancy Johnson Black (1999) Ch3. In *Gender and Anthropology*. Pp. 20-39.

Recommended:

Sax, Leonard (2005) "Differences" and "Female Brains, Male Brains." In *Why Gender Matters: What Parents and Teachers Need To Know About the Emerging Science of Sex Differences*. Pp. 1-38.

Week 04 (Feb. 02): Lunar New Year holidays. No class.

Week 05 (Feb. 09): Ideas, Binary, and Discourse

Mascia-Lees, Frances E. and Nancy Johnson Black (1999) Ch6 & Ch7. In *Gender and Anthropology*. Pp. 68-79 & 80-91.

Recommended:

Ortner, Sherry (1974) "Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?" In *Woman, Culture, and Society*, M. Z. Rosaldo and L. Lamphere, eds. Pp. 67-87.

Week 06 (Feb. 16): Hierarchy and Politics

Harris, Marvin (1995) "Gender Hierarchies." In *Cultural Anthropology*. 190-205.

Brown, Judith K. (2006) "A Note on the Division of Labor by Sex." In *Feminist Anthropology: A Reader*. Pp. 66-71.

Recommended:

Mascia-Lees, Frances E. and Nancy Johnson Black (1999) Ch5. In *Gender and Anthropology*. Pp. 47-67.

Lamphere, Louise (2009) "The Domestic Sphere of Women and the Public World of Men: The Strengths and Limitations of an Anthropological Dichotomy." In *Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective*. Pp. 90-98.

Video: *Oppressed Majority* (Majorité Opprimée). Eleonore Pourriat. (2014, 11 mins) (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V4UWxIVvT1A>)

Week 07 (Feb. 23): Sexing the Body: Individual or Social

Fausto-Sterling, Anne (2000) "Of Gender and Genitals: the Use and Abuse of the Modern Intersexual." In *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality*. Pp.45-77. Basic Books.

Recommended:

Martin, Emily (1995) "The End of the Body?" In *The Gender Sexuality Reader: Culture, History, Political Economy*. Roger N. Lancaster & Micaela de Leonardo ed. Pp. 543-558. Routledge.

Video: *Me, My Sex and I*. BBC One. (2011, 50 mins) (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ZRD1OdHBA4>)

Video: *Sex, Gender and Sexuality. Episode 16 of Anthropology and the Study of Humanity*. Accessed on 6 January, 2021. <https://cuhk.kanopy.com/video/sex-gender-and-sexuality>

II: Contemporary Challenges

Week 08 (Mar. 02): Womanhood: Work and Motherhood

Wolf, Margery (1972) "Uterine Families and the Women's Community." In *Women and the Family in Rural Taiwan*. Pp. 32-42. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press.

Shandy, Dianna and Karine Moe (2012) "The Opt-Out Phenomenon: Women, Work and Identity in America." In *Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology*. James P. Spradley and David W. McCurdy, eds. Pp. 197-207. Boston, MA: Pearson/ Allyn & Bacon.

Recommended Readings:

Nakano, Lynne Y (2011) "Working and Waiting for an 'Appropriate Person:' How Single Women Support and Resist Family in Japan." In *Home and Family in Japan: Continuity and Transformation*. Richard Ronald and Allison Alexy (eds). Pp. 131-151. Routledge: London and New York.

Yan, Yunxiang (2006) "Girl Power: Young Women and the Waning of Patriarchy in Rural North China." *Ethnology* 45(2): 105-123.

Video: *Asante Market Women* (1991, 53min.)

Week 09 (Mar. 09): Masculinities & Changing Patriarchy

Bourgois, Philippe (2012[2002]) "Poverty at work: Office Employment and Crack Alternative." In *Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology*. James P. Spradley and David W. McCurdy, eds. Pp. 125-135.

Sommer, Mathew H. (2002) "Dangerous Males, Vulnerable Males, and Polluted Males: The Regulation of Masculinity in Qing Dynasty Law." In Susan Brownell and Jeffrey Wasserstrom, eds., *Chinese Femininities/Chinese Masculinities: A Reader*. Pp. 67-88. University of California Press. (*Skim*)

Recommended Readings:

Gilmore, David (1993) "The Manhood Puzzle." In *Gender in Cross-cultural Perspective*. Caroline Brettell and Carolyn Sargent, eds. Pp. 163-174.

News Article: *Men Adrift*. The Economist. 30 May 2015.

Week 10 (Mar. 16): "Alternative" Sexualities

Valentine, David (2007) "'I Know What I Am': Gender Sexuality, and Identity." In *Imagining Transgender: An Ethnography of a Category*. Pp. 105-139. Durham & London: Duke University Press. (*Skim*)

Recommended Readings:

Harris, Marvin (1995) "Ch.7: Human Sexuality." In *Cultural Anthropology*. Pp. 74-83.

Whitehead, Harriet

1981 "The Bow and the Burden Strap: A New Look at Institutionalized Homosexuality in Native North America." In *Sexual Meanings: The Cultural Construction of Gender and Sexuality*. Sherry B. Ortner and Harriet Whitehead, eds. Pp. 80-115. Cambridge

Pelez, Michael

2006 "Transgenderism and Gender Pluralism in Southeast Asia since Early Modern Times." In *Current Anthropology*, 47(2): 309-340.

***The initial plan of your final due by Friday, 18 March.**

Week 11 (Mar. 23): Gender and the Modern State

Zhang, Everett Y. (2005) "Rethinking Sexual Repression in Maoist China: Ideology, Structure and the Ownership of the Body." In *Body & Society* 11(3): 1-25.

Recommended Readings:

Heng, Geraldine & Janadas Devan

1995 "State Fatherhood: The Politics of Nationalism, Sexuality and Race in Singapore." In *The Gender Sexuality Reader*. Roger Lancaster & Micaela di Leonardo, eds. Pp. 107-121. New York: Routledge.

Schein, Louisa

1997 "Gender and Internal Orientalism in China." In *Modern China* 23(1): 69-98.

Yang, M. M.-H.

1999 "From Gender Erasure to Gender Difference: State Feminism, Consumer Sexuality, and Women's Public Sphere in China." In *Spaces of Their Own: Women's Public Sphere in Transnational China*. M. M.-H. Yang, ed.. Pp. 35-67. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

Video: *Through Chinese Women's Eyes* (1997, 52 mins)

Week 12 (Mar. 30): Performance and Commodification

Hanser, Amy

2008 "CH4: Distinction Work and the Gendered Production of Class." In *Service Encounters: Class, Gender, and the Market for Social Distinction in Urban China*. Pp. 86-119. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. (*Skim*)

Recommended Reading:

Na, Misu

2001 "The Cultural Construction of the Computer as a Masculine Technology: An Analysis of Computer Advertisements in Korea." In *Asian Journal of Women's Studies*, 7(3): 93-114.

Urla, Jacqueline and Alan C. Swedlund

2009 "Measuring Up to Barbie: Ideals of the Feminine Body in Popular Culture." In *Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective*. Pp. 282-296.

Gillette, Maris Boyd

2000 "What's in a Dress? Brides in the Hui Quarter of Xi'an." In *The Consumer Revolution in Urban China*. D.S. Davis, ed. Pp. 80-106. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.

Video: *Killing Us Softly 4*. (2010, 45 mins) (<https://cuhk.kanopy.com/video/killing-us-softly>)

Week 13 (Apr. 06): Reading Week. No class.

***No tutorial on 4 Apr (for Week 13). Reading Week.**

Week 14 (Apr. 13): Migration and Globalization

Ehrenreich, Barbara and Arlie Russell Hochschild

2012 [2004] "CH35: "Global Women in the New Economy." In *Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology*. James P. Spradley and David W. McCurdy, eds. Pp. 325-334. Boston, MA: Pearson/ Allyn & Bacon.

Recommended Readings:

Lan, Pei-Chia

2006 "CH4: Crossing Borders and Gender Divides." In *Global Cinderellas: Migrant domestics and newly rich employers in Taiwan*. Pp. 125-159.

Constable, Nicole

2005 "Introduction: Cross-Border Marriages, Gendered Mobility, and Global Hypergamy." In *Cross-border Marriages: Gender and Mobility in Transnational Asia*. Nicole Constable, ed. Pp. 1-16.

Video: *A Reluctant Choice*. (2003, 24 mins)

Video: *The Helper – A Hong Kong Documentary*. (Kickstarter Campaign video: <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1500194098/the-helper-a-hong-kong-documentary>)

Week 15 (Apr. 20): Wrap up

Mascia-Lees, Frances E. and Nancy Johnson Black (2017) "Ch9: Gender and Anthropology in a Global World," in *Gender and Anthropology*, Pp. 109-118.

***No tutorial on 18 Apr (for Week 15). Public Holiday (Easter).**

***If you choose to write a lecture reflection for week 15, the due date is 27 April.**

***Final essay is due on 30 April via Blackboard.**

Policies

Late Submission and absence: Late submission will be marked down. One point (1%) will be subtracted for each late day.

Academic Honesty: You are required to cite properly (guidelines: <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/ant/tstyle.doc>) and please refer to the university website (<http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/index.htm> and http://www.ilc.cuhk.edu.hk/english/resource/referencing_avoidingplagiarism1.pdf) to avoid plagiarism.

Recording: No (video and audio) recording is permitted in this class without permission from Ju-chen. Please pay proper respect to your classmates and the instructor. We would all like to ensure a space of free and open discussion of ideas.