

# Sex/Gender and Culture

Course Number: ANT 3603

Course Term: Summer II 2014

Meeting Time: M-F 2:30 – 4:00 p.m.

Meeting Location: MH 2.01.44

Instructor: Will Robertson

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Office: MH 4.02.78

Office Hours: M-F 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. or by appt.



Andreja Pejic, transgender model

**Course Description:** “Examination of the biological and cultural sources of differences between men and women.” (From the 2012-2014 Undergraduate Catalog).

Welcome to Sex/Gender and Culture! This course will explore sex and gender from a biocultural perspective. In particular, we will seek to problematize and destabilize reductionist and essentialist views of sex as strictly biological and gender as strictly cultural. We will ground our efforts in anthropological and science studies approaches to sex/gender, with a heavy emphasis on how science has helped and hindered our understandings of these phenomena.



Casey Legler, “female” model

**Course materials:** There are four required texts for this course:

Jordan-Young, Rebecca. 2010. *Brainstorm: The Flaws in the Science of Sex Differences*. Harvard University Press.  
Karkazis, Katrina. 2007. *Fixing Sex: Intersex, Medical Authority, and Lived Experience*. Duke University Press.  
Martin, Emily. 2001. *The Woman In The Body: A Cultural Analysis of Reproduction*. Revised Edition. Beacon Press.  
Valentine, David. 2007. *Imagining Transgender: An Ethnography of a Category*. Duke University Press.

You should find ***the cheapest copies available*** of these texts. ***Do not*** purchase or rent e-book versions of any texts as you will not be allowed to access them in class.

All other readings will be made available on Blackboard Learn.

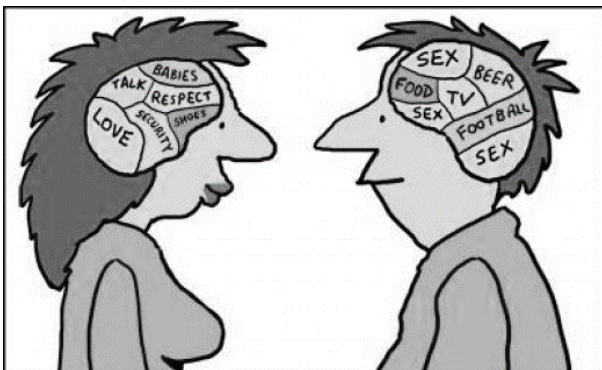
**Course Objectives:** The course will provide students with the opportunity to:

- Identify and explain main concepts, theories, and terms in critical anthropological studies of sex/gender and sexuality
- Identify and critique theoretical and methodological strengths and weaknesses of course texts
- Improve writing and critical thinking skills by synthesizing course content in discussion questions
- Improve verbal and conversational skills by discussing important topics in class

**A Note on Prerequisites:** While upper-division anthropology coursework does not have prerequisites, it is expected that students will do any extra work required to familiarize themselves with an anthropological worldview. As this is a summer course, there will not be any time to go into depth to introduce anthropology to students who have no previous anthropology coursework. If at any time you feel that there are concepts or terms being used that you do not understand or have never heard of, *it is incumbent upon you to speak up*, either in class or in private. Rest assured, even students who have had previous anthropological coursework (and even the instructor!) can benefit from reviewing foundational anthropological ideas, so please do not hesitate to ask for clarifications and explanations.

**Common Course Threads:** The following are “common threads” that run throughout the readings of this course. These should be considered major course themes that students should have a firm grasp on by the end of the term.

- Anthropology can serve as a form of **cultural critique** by helping to **destabilize what is “naturalized” and assumed to be “normal”** in the study of sex/gender and sexuality
- Sex and gender are not separate, discrete domains, but are **related to and inform each other**
- Sex/gender is **embodied** through **biocultural** processes, and it is expressed in the language of *identities, subject positions, and subjectivities*
- **Science**, including **biomedicine**, is a sociocultural system of knowledge production that is subject to the **cultural biases** of practitioners



**Course Structure:** This course will be a mixture of lecture and discussion. Lectures will seek to clarify important topics, concepts, and theories, and will generally precede class discussion. Students are expected to regularly engage in dialogue with the instructor and with other students. Discussion is a vital component of this course. Students should *actively* listen while others are speaking, always with a focus towards course content. Any discussion that is unrelated to course material will be considered a distraction and could result in loss of participation points.

Discussion is *not a competition*. Rather, the purpose of discussion is to create understanding by bringing different viewpoints and questions to the table. Please see Course Policies for more information on inappropriate classroom behavior.

**A Note on Reading:** This course requires *reading, writing, and in-class discussion*. You are expected to come to class *each day* prepared for discussion by having read the assigned readings *thoroughly for content*. This means actively engaging with the text by making notes in the margins or taking reading notes and asking yourself questions as you read. Passive reading as you do for pleasure or in your daily life *will not suffice for this course*.

Readings for this course follow college-standard reading guidelines for upper-division cultural anthropology coursework, as cultural anthropology is a reading/writing-intensive discipline. Specifically, the required readings for this course will *average 50-100 pages per day*. As this is a summer class, we must fit what would be a week’s worth of reading in a normal semester into one or two class periods. Consider this your warning that this is *a reading-intensive course*.

Some readings are more dense and will require extra time spent engaging with the text. That being said, it is perfectly acceptable to come to class not understanding a reading. What is important is that you give each reading your best attempt. We will work through the reading together until it makes sense!

## **Course Requirements (200 points total):**

**Discussion Questions (120 points or 60%)** – For each day's readings, students will write a set of *two* discussion questions. Questions are due on Blackboard Learn by 11:00 a.m. the day of class that the reading is to be discussed. Questions will not be accepted past 11:00 a.m., and ***no late work or make-ups for discussion questions will be accepted.*** Questions are worth a maximum of 3 points each, for a possible total of 6 points per day. At the end of the term, 24 points (4 days worth of questions) will be dropped from the point total, and any points over that will be kept as extra credit. There are 144 total points possible, and I will drop 24 points from the total. This means you can potentially earn up to a 144/120 for your DQ grade.

Specific guidelines and instructions for DQ submissions will be available via Blackboard Learn. Questions for the second days' readings (July 11) are **MANDATORY** and will be a completion grade to give students feedback on how to improve. As we get further into the term, I will increase my expectations for the quality of questions, and students will be penalized more harshly for bad and okay questions. I expect students to work on improving their critical thinking skills over the term, and this should be reflected in DQ quality.

**Participation (80 points or 40%)** – Students are expected to come to class each day and participate regularly. To this end, each day after class (due by 11:59 p.m.), whether students are present or not, students are expected to submit a short self-evaluation of their participation via Blackboard Learn. Students must indicate whether or not they participated in class each day; if yes, write a 1-3 sentence explanation of how they participated, and if no, write a 1-3 sentence explanation for why they did not participate.

Participation can take many forms, so if there are students who experience social anxiety around speaking up in class, they should meet with the instructor early in the semester to make arrangements for earning participation points. In addition to these reflexive evaluations, attendance will be taken randomly throughout the course. Also, any in-class activities may also involve submitting something in class for participation points on top of the points you get from the self-evaluation.

Finally, students must visit the instructor in office hours (or make an appointment) before **Wednesday, July 16**. This will count as 5% (4 points) of the final participation grade! This is not optional—I expect each and every student to stop by my office and say hello early on in the semester. It helps me learn your names, learn more about you, and to break the ice and hopefully make you more comfortable coming to talk to me when you have issues that need to be addressed.

***You must be present in class to obtain in-class participation credit! NO EXCEPTIONS!*** I reserve the right to withhold credit from any person who arrives to class late or leaves class early.

**Extra Credit** – There are ***no individual extra credit opportunities*** in this course. Extra credit is offered to everyone or no one. I reserve the right to assign course-wide extra credit assignments. Extra credit opportunities will be announced in class. ***DO NOT ASK ME FOR INDIVIDUAL EXTRA CREDIT ASSIGNMENTS.***

Students may select **ONE** of the following small projects to complete for extra credit (must be turned in on or before **Monday, August 11**). Specific guidelines, instructions, and a grading rubric will be provided via Blackboard Learn for all extra credit assignments.

1. **Gender Observation Log & Analysis Essay** (up to 5 points) – Students will spend one hour observing people in a public space to document the types of gendered behaviors people engage in. Students will write a 1- to 3-page summary of their experience and findings.
2. **Gender in Film Analysis Essay** (up to 10 points) – Students will view a film outside of class on their own time and write a short 2- to 4-page critical analysis of gender in the film. A list of films will be provided; if there is a film you would be interested in viewing for this project, you may nominate the film to be added to the list. All films for this project must be approved by the instructor or from the provided list.
3. **Sex/Gender Science and Journalism Critique** (up to 15 points) – Students will write a critique of a popular news article that has engaged with scientific findings concerning sex/gender. Students will be provided with a copy of both an popular media article and the scientific journal article being discussed. Students will critique both the soundness of the conclusions of the scientific article as well as how the journalist interprets or portrays the research.

## Course Policies:

Your continued enrollment in this course is acknowledgment that you are aware of and agree with the course requirements and policies outlined in this syllabus.

Technology - ***NO ELECTRONICS IN CLASS***. I have given careful consideration to the use of technology in class. While I recognize that laptops make it easier to take notes quickly for some people, research on the use of laptops in class shows that students spend considerable amounts of in-class time multitasking rather than taking notes and that multitasking causes students to retain less information during class (Fried 2008; Hembrooke & Gay 2003). Multitasking has been shown to cause distractions for both the student doing the multitasking as well as for nearby peers, even when peers do not think they are being distracted (Sana et al. 2012). Further research has shown that, even when students only use their laptops for note-taking and resist the temptation to multitask, students retain more information when they hand-write notes in class because they tend to try to transcribe lectures verbatim when typing instead of processing information and reframing it in their own words when hand writing (Mueller & Oppenheimer 2014).

Considering the above research, this course has a ***strict no electronics*** policy. All laptops, tablets, cell phones, and other electronic devices must be powered ***OFF*** or placed on ***SILENT (NOT vibrate!)***. If you have a situation that you need to keep your phone available, let me know ***before*** class begins, and sit near the exit. Students are prohibited from taking pictures or video during class, especially of slides or content on the boards, without obtaining explicit permission. Students are also prohibited from texting during class. For each time students are caught violating these policies, they will be subject to a ***five-point deduction from their final grades for each infraction!*** If a student continues to violate this policy, they will be referred to Student Conduct for disciplinary action.

Students wishing to record audio of class meetings must get prior approval from the course instructor.

Blackboard Learn - I use BBL to post readings, announcements, instructions, grades, and other course-related content. Students will submit all assignments through BBL. Students should check BBL regularly for announcements and to keep track of their grades. The mail and discussion areas of BBL will remain closed for this course. ***I DO NOT POST MY LECTURE NOTES OR SLIDES TO BBL. DO NOT ASK FOR THEM.***

Late Work and Make-Ups - All assignments are due by the deadlines provided in their specific sets of directions. I do not accept any late work or allow any make-up work except in cases of university-sanctioned travel or events, religious holidays, and emergencies that prevent turning in an assignment on time. It is your job to schedule your time accordingly so that you have ample time to read and complete all required coursework. Students who wish to request late work or make-up work for the above reasons must contact the instructor within 24 hours of the missed class. Having a job, other course work, or being busy or lazy is not a valid excuse for missing work. Any requests for make-up or late work beyond that period will not be considered. ***\*\*It is completely the instructor's discretion whether or not and in what manner to accommodate student requests for make-ups.\*\****

Academic Integrity - There is a ***strict*** zero-tolerance policy for scholastic dishonesty. Any student caught cheating or plagiarizing work will receive a zero the entire assignment as well as be reported to the Department Chair and to the Office of Student Conduct for proper disciplinary action. Scholastic dishonesty is defined by the University as including but not limited to "cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an exam for another person, or any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts." (<http://www.utsa.edu/infoguide/appendices/b.html#sd>) ***Scholastic dishonesty is harmful to yourself, your peers, and the University as a whole.*** If you have any questions regarding scholastic dishonesty, please do not hesitate to ask. Better to be safe than sorry!

Support Services for Persons with Disabilities - Students who are registered with the Office of Disability Services and who may require additional support to facilitate success in this course should contact the instructor *as soon as possible* to make arrangements. For more information, please visit [utsa.edu/disability](http://utsa.edu/disability).

Classroom Behavior - We will be discussing topics and ideas in this course that are sensitive and deeply personal to many people. As anthropologically minded persons, we should strive to listen to others with an open mind, even when we disagree. We should all confront our biases during this course, and we should be able to discuss them freely and openly without fear or ridicule. I encourage all people to speak up in class, but do so with decorum and maturity. Further, in this course, all people are not entitled to their opinions; rather, you are entitled to what you can make a cogent argument for.

***This class is a safe space for all people to be free of harassment and prejudice.*** Students will adhere to the University's Nondiscrimination and Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policies (UTSA Handbook of Operating Procedures, Section 9.1). In this vein, I maintain an ***EXTREMELY STRICT*** zero-tolerance policy for any disruptive language or behavior that negatively impacts the establishment of a safe learning environment. This includes (but is not limited to): violent, belligerent, or insulting remarks; racism; sexism; classism; homophobia; transphobia; ableism; anti-ethnic slurs; bigotry; and any inflammatory language, spoken or written, founded on ignorance or hate. You do not have the right to disrespect or intimidate people. Any disruptions that interfere with the safe learning environment of this classroom will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. It is expected that all students will help maintain an open and respectful environment during class periods. In order to do this, please:

- Refrain from personal conversations during class
- Be respectful during discussions—no personal attacks! If you disagree with someone, state why you disagree with their ideas without attacking them personally
- Keep discussions on topic and relevant to the course
- Arrive to class on time
- Do not consistently leave in the middle of class
- Wait until class is dismissed before packing up your belongings (I will never keep you late! Packing up early will actually make me take more time wrapping up class as I will insist that everyone is quiet while we are wrapping up.)

If there is any issue in class that I am unaware of, please do not hesitate to bring it to my attention. If you wish to do so anonymously, you may leave a note in my mailbox in the Department of Anthropology (MH 4.03.38). Any student who violates classroom behavior etiquette will be asked to leave class for the day and may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. For each violation, students will be subject to a ***five-point deduction from their final average.***

Instructor Responsibilities - Students can expect that the instructor will adhere to the following:

- Be on time and prepared for each class
- Help all students understand course material, including answering questions during and after class and in office hours
- Be respectful of all students and treat all students equally by adhering to the terms laid out in this syllabus
- Be reasonably available over e-mail outside of class and in office hours. I try to respond to e-mail as soon as I receive it, and I leave my e-mail open while at home. If you do not hear back from me within a few hours, you are welcome to try e-mailing me again to follow up, particularly if it is important. If you still do not hear back from me, there may be a technological issue and your e-mail may not have arrived, or I may be away from the computer for an extended period of time. You may follow up with me in person the next time you see me.

Please visit UTSA's Common Syllabus website at <http://www.utsa.edu/syllabus> for more information regarding student counseling services, tutoring services, the Student Code of Conduct and Scholastic Dishonesty, Students with Disabilities, transitory/minor medical issues, supplemental instruction, and the Roadrunner Creed.

***Neither the Anthropology Department staff nor the instructor will report grades by phone, fax, or e-mail. Grades are only reported via Blackboard Learn or in person.***

***Disclaimer: This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.***

***Any changes will be announced in class and a revised syllabus will be made available via Blackboard Learn.***

# Course Calendar

WB = Woman in the Body; FS = Fixing Sex; BS = Brainstorm; IT = Imagining Transgender

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			<u>7/10</u> – No Readings  Course Introduction; What is Anthropology?	<u>7/11</u> <i>What is science?</i>  The Normative Structure of Science (Merton) <b>1<sup>st</sup> DQs DUE!</b>
<u>7/14</u> <i>Bio/ Culture</i>  The Biological Myth of Human Evolution (Marks)	<u>7/15</u> <i>Ontologies</i>  1) Investigating Sex (Harding) 2) Making Up People (Hacking)	<u>7/16</u> <i>Foucault</i>  “Incitement to Discourse” from <i>The History of Sexuality: Vol. I</i> (Foucault) <b>FACE TIME DEADLINE</b>	<u>7/17</u> <i>Performance &amp; Practice</i>  All Made Up (Morris)	<u>7/18</u> <i>Sexuality in Anthropology</i>  Anthropology Rediscovered Sexuality (Vance)
<u>7/21</u> <i>Masculinities</i>  Trafficking in Men (Gutmann)	<u>7/22</u> <i>Reproductive Politics</i>  WB Preface, Intro, One & Two	<u>7/23</u> <i>Reproductive Politics</i>  WB Three	<u>7/24</u> <i>Reproductive Politics</i>  WB Four	<u>7/25</u> <i>Reproductive Politics</i>  The Technocratic Body (Davis-Floyd)
<u>7/28</u> <i>Imagining Transgender</i>  IT Part I	<u>7/29</u> <i>Imagining Transgender</i>  IT Part II	<u>7/30</u> <i>Imagining Transgender</i>  IT Part III Intro, Ch. 4 - 5	<u>7/31</u> <i>Imagining Transgender</i>  IT Ch. 6 & Conclusion	<u>8/1</u> <i>Diagnosing Difference</i>  On the Proposed Sexual and Gender Identity Diagnosis for DSM-5 (Kamens)
<u>8/4</u> <i>Biomedical Constructions</i>  Description of sex difference as prescription for sex change: On the origins of facial feminizing surgery (Plemons)	<u>8/5</u> <i>Intersex &amp; Biomedicine</i>  FS Intro, Part I	<u>8/6</u> <i>Intersex &amp; Biomedicine</i>  FS Part II	<u>8/7</u> <i>Intersex &amp; Biomedicine</i>  FS Part III	<u>8/8</u> <i>Science as/ in Practice</i>  BS Preface, Ch. 1 - 3
<u>8/11</u> <i>Science as/ in Practice</i>  BS Ch. 4 – 7  <b>Extra Credit Assignment DUE!</b>	<u>8/12</u> <i>Science as/ in Practice</i>  BS Ch. 8 - 10	<u>8/13</u> <i>Conclusions</i>  The “Science” of Fair Play in Sport: Gender and the Politics of Testing (Henne)	<u>8/14</u> “Final”  Final Meeting Time 1:30 – 4:00 p.m.  <b>POTLUCK</b>	