

The Anthropology of Science, Sex, and Reproduction

2:30-3:55 Tue/Thu, Fall 2010

Adams 114, Bowdoin College

Professor Jan Brunson

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores anthropology's critical analysis of approaches to reproductive health and procreation in developed and developing countries. Throughout the course we will acknowledge science as one epistemology among many and explore the hegemonic aspects of science and gender in relation to sex and reproduction. We will examine sex and reproduction as sites of intervention from public health, development, and biomedical specialists, while also considering local constructions and strategies. Topics include cervical cancer, family planning, and new reproductive technologies. Draws primarily from ethnographies.

EVALUATION

This course requires intensive reading, writing, and analysis. Evaluation of student learning will be based on 4 response papers, a research project and presentation, active participation in the classroom, and a final exam. Further details for all assignments will be provided on Blackboard.

- **Intellectual Response Papers 40%**

In four 3-4 page papers, students will highlight and respond to a theme or issue raised by the readings in a particular section of the course. Two of the papers must be submitted by October 21st. I am available to discuss drafts.

- **Research Project and Presentation 20%**

Each student will sign up for a particular topic on the syllabus, independently research an aspect or extension of the topic that is of interest, and present their findings to the class.

- **Class Participation 20%**

Participation is defined as contributing regularly to class discussions with relevant and insightful comments. Students will be given time to engage substantively in class on issues raised in the readings and materials presented by classmates. Preparation for this part of the course involves coming to class with at least three points or comments that you would like to make about the readings for that day along with a copy of the readings. This portion of the grade may include brief exercises and unannounced reading quizzes in class.

- **Final Exam 20%**

The final exam will be an opportunity to synthesize and reflect upon the concepts and debates raised and discussed in class.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Adams, Vincanne, and Stacey Leigh Pigg, eds.

2005 Sex in Development: Science, Sexuality, and Morality in Global Perspective: Duke University Press.

Gregg, Jessica

2003 Virtually Virgins: Sexual Strategies and Cervical Cancer in Recife, Brazil: Stanford University Press.

Gutmann, Matthew

2007 Fixing Men: Sex, Birth Control, and AIDS in Mexico. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Inhorn, Marcia

- 2003 Local Babies, Global Science: Gender, Religion and In Vitro Fertilization in Egypt. New York: Routledge.
- Maternowska, M. Catherine
2006 Reproducing Inequities: Poverty and the Politics of Population in Haiti: Rutgers University Press.
- Temam, Elly
2010 Birthing a Mother: The Surrogate Body and the Pregnant Self. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Wardlow, Holly
2006 Wayward Women: Sexuality and Agency in a New Guinea Society. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- An assortment of articles on e-reserve available through Blackboard or the library website

PART I. Introductions and Frameworks

Thursday, Sept 2

- Introductions

Tuesday, Sept 7

- Topic: The anthropology of science
- Read: “The Anthropology of Science” Franklin
- Read: “Anthropology and the Cultural Study of Science” Martin

Thursday, Sept 9

- Topic: Frameworks for analyzing reproduction
- Read: “Sex and Society: A Research Note from Social History and Anthropology” Ross & Rapp
- Read: a popular news article on reproduction (from the past 3 years)
- For further reading (optional): “The End of the Body?” Martin

Tuesday, Sept 14

- Topic: Frameworks continued
 - Read: In *Sex in Development*: “Introduction: The Moral Object of Sex” Pigg & Adams
 - Read: In *Sex in Development*: “Globalizing the Facts of Life” Pigg
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PART II. Sex (without reproduction)

Thursday, Sept 16

- Topic: Moral struggles over contraception
- Read: In *Sex in Development*: “The Production of New Subjectivities” Adams & Pigg
- Read: In *Sex in Development*: “Moral Science and the Management of ‘Sexual Revolution’ in Russia” Rivkin-Fish
- Read: In *Sex in Development*: “Family Planning, Human Nature, and the Ethical Subject of Sex in Urban Greece” Paxson

Tuesday, Sept 21

- Topic: Ideologies of morality and health
- Read: In *Sex in Development*: “From Auntie to Disco: The Bifurcation of Risk and Pleasure in Sex Education in Uganda” Parikh
- Read: In *Sex in Development*: “‘Ordinary’ Sex, Prostitutes, and Middle-Class Wives: Liberalization and National Identity in India” Dell
- For further reading (optional): In *Sex in Development*: “The Creation of Normatives as a Biopolitical Project” Adams & Pigg

Thursday, Sept 23

- Topic: Agency and the body
- Read: “Resistance and Embrace: Sudanese Rural Women and Systems of Power” Gruenbaum
- Read: In *Wayward Women*: Introduction, Chapter 1

Tuesday, Sept 28

- Topic: Agency and the body continued
- Read: In *Wayward Women*: Chapters 2-3

Thursday, Sept 30

- Read: In *Wayward Women*: Chapters 4-5

Tuesday, Oct 5

- Read: In *Wayward Women*: Chapter 6, Conclusion
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PART III. Population Politics and Family Planning

Thursday, Oct 7

- Topic: Scholarly approaches to studying family planning
- Read: In *Reproducing Inequities*: Forward, Chapters 1-3

FALL BREAK

Thursday, Oct 14

- Topic: International and local politics
- Read: In *Reproducing Inequities*: Chapters 4-7

Tuesday, Oct 19

- Topic: The role of the state
- Read: “Controlling Births and Bodies in Village China” Greenhalgh
- Read: “China’s One-Child Policy and the Empowerment of Urban Daughters” Fong
- For further reading (optional): “Polygamy, disrupted reproduction, and the state: Malian Migrants in Paris, France” Sargent

Thursday, Oct 21

- Topic: Sexuality and agency
- Read: In *Virtually Virgins*: Chapters 1- 6

Tuesday, Oct 26

- Topic: Meanings of cervical cancer
- Read: In *Virtually Virgins*: Chapters 7-11

Thursday, Oct 28

- Topic: Masculinity
- Read: In *Fixing Men*: Chapters 1-4

Tuesday, Nov 2

- Read: In *Fixing Men*: Chapters 5-8
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PART IV. Technologies of Pregnancy and Birth

Thursday, Nov 4

- Topic: Obstetrical ultrasounds

- Read: “Image of Contradiction: Obstetrical Ultrasound in American Culture” Taylor
- Read: “Sonography and Sociality: Obstetrical Ultrasound Imaging in Urban Vietnam” Gammeltoft

Tuesday, Nov 9

- Topic: Genetic testing
- Read: “Accounting for Amniocentesis” Rapp
- Read: “Perfecting Society: Reproductive Technologies, Genetic Testing, and the Planned Family in Japan” Lock
- Recommend: “Provisional Normalcy and ‘Perfect Babies’” Press et al

Thursday, Nov 11

- Topic: Birth and risk (Guest speaker: Midwife)
- Read: “Traditional Birth Attendants in Rural North India” Jeffery & Jeffery
- Read: “Analysis of a Dialogue on Risks in Childbirth” Kaufert & O’Neil

Tuesday, Nov 16

- Topic: Technologies of birth
- Read: “Invoking Vali: Painful Technologies of Birth in South India” Van Hollen
- Read: “The Vanishing Mother: Cesarean Section and ‘Evidence-Based Obstetrics’” Wendland

PART V. Reproduction (without sex)

Thursday, Nov 18

- Topic: Heteronormativity in reproduction
- Read: “Alternative Kinship, Marriage, and Reproduction” Levine
- Read: “Negotiating Conception” Mamo

Tuesday, Nov 23

- Topic: Surrogacy
- Read: In *Birthing a Mother*: Chapters TBA

HAPPY THANKSGIVING

Tuesday, Nov 30

- Read: In *Birthing a Mother*: Chapters TBA

Thursday, Dec 2

- Topic: New Reproductive Technologies (NRTs)
- Read: In *Local Babies, Global Science*: Prologue, Chapters 1-3

Tuesday, Dec 7

- Read: In *Local Babies, Global Science*: Chapters 4-6

Thursday, Dec 9

- Topic: Conclusions
- Read: In *Local Babies, Global Science*: Chapters 7-10

FINAL EXAM: Take-home essay exam, respond to two other students’ exam essays on the blog

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ARTICLES AND CHAPTERS

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2002 China's One-Child Policy and the Empowerment of Urban Daughters. *American Anthropologist* 104(4):1098-1109.
- Gammeltoft, Tine
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- Greenhalgh, Susan
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- Gruenbaum, Ellen
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- Jeffery, Roger, and Patricia Jeffery
1993 Traditional Birth Attendants in Rural North India: The Social Organization of Childbearing. *In Knowledge, Power, & Practice*. S. Lindenbaum and M. Lock, eds. Pp. 7-31. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Kaufert, Patricia, and John O'Neil
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- Levine, Nancy E.
2008 Alternative Kinship, Marriage, and Reproduction. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 37(1):375-389.
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- Mamo, Laura
2007 Negotiating Conception: Lesbians' Hybrid-Technological Practices. *Science Technology Human Values* 32(3):369-393.
- Martin, Emily
1992 The End of the Body? *American Ethnologist* 19(1):121-140.
- Press, Nancy, et al.
1998 Provisional Normalcy and "Perfect Babies": Pregnant Women's Attitudes Toward Disability in the Context of Prenatal Testing. *In Reproducing Reproduction*. H. Ragono and S. Franklin, eds. Pp. 46-65. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Rapp, Rayna
1993 Accounting for Amniocentesis. *In Knowledge, Power, & Practice*. S. Lindenbaum and M. Lock, eds. Pp. 55-76. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Ross, Ellen, and Rayna Rapp
1981 Sex and Society: A Research Note from Social History and Anthropology. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 23(1):51-72.
- Sargent, Carolyn, and Dennis Cordell
2003 Polygamy, disrupted reproduction, and the state: Malian migrants in Paris, France. *Social Science & Medicine* 56(9):1961-1972.
- Taylor, Janelle
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- Van Hollen, Cecilia
2003 Invoking Vali: Painful Technologies of Modern Birth in South India. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 17(1):49-77.
- Wendland, Claire
2007 The Vanishing Mother: Cesarean Section and "Evidence-Based Obstetrics". *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 21(2):218-233.