

ANTH 238 ANTHROPOLOGY OF REPRODUCTION

FALL 2009
HIRC 6
ANTH 238-01 TR 2-3:15pm

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Office hours: M 1-2:30pm, T 12-1pm, W 1-2:30pm & by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines women's and men's experiences of reproduction in anthropological perspective, including childbearing, childbirth, menarche, and menopause across cultures and societies. Emphasizes reproduction as a cultural and social experience.

Credit: 3 s.h. Prerequisites (LA, S2)

COURSE OVERVIEW

The anthropology of reproduction has emerged as a vibrant and vital field of study in cultural and medical anthropology. In recent years, some of the most important contributions to the development of social theory in anthropology have emerged from considerations of reproduction. New technologies raise questions about what is nature and what is culture, and new configurations of kinship and relatedness underscore the critical significance of reproduction in the organization of persons as individuals and groups.

Central to this field of study has been the premise that reproduction must be considered not only in terms of biology, but also culture and society. Indeed, anthropologists of reproduction emphasize the ways in which cultural and social experiences can shape biological experiences of reproduction. The anthropology of reproduction builds upon the insights of cultural and medical anthropology. It also bridges concerns in cultural and biological anthropology.

In this course, students will explore topics in the anthropology of reproduction. They will consider cross-cultural perspectives on childbearing, childbirth, and childlessness, and the globalization of new reproductive technologies such as in vitro fertilization. Students also will discuss in particular why reproduction generally has been treated as a women's concern, and how the role of men and fathers in reproduction might be reconsidered.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your final grades for the course will be based on total cumulative points, broken down *approximately* as follows:

Class presentation / Discussion leader	20 points
Essay exams (3 x 20 points each)	60 points
Final project	
. Project description and analysis of popular / media sources	20 points
. Annotated bibliography of scholarly sources	20 points
. Poster presentation	20 points
TOTAL	140 points

Instructions for all assignments, including criteria on which your work will be evaluated, will be discussed in detail in advance of the due dates.

In addition to the requirements listed above, *participation in class discussion* also will be considered for your final grade. For each class, you will be assigned either + or – for your participation in class discussion. Lack of participation on a regular basis will affect your grade negatively.

Your final grade will be based on meeting all of the above requirements. Failure to meet any one of the requirements can result in a failing grade. Also, please note in advance that there are no extra credit or make-up assignments.

CLASS PRESENTATION / DISCUSSION LEADER

Each student will be responsible for a class presentation on one of the assigned readings. (A sign-up sheet will be circulated during the first week of classes.) You will speak for about 5 to 7 minutes. You will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Explain the central argument.
- Highlight other key points of the article.
- Describe the evidence and examples that the author employs.
- Offer two or three questions to generate class discussion.

In addition to the oral presentation, you should prepare Power Point slides, which will be posted on the Angel site for this class. (See below regarding Angel.) Please e-mail a PDF of your PPT slides in handout form *before* your presentation.

ESSAY EXAMS

You will be required to write three (3) essay exams of no fewer than 4 pages and no more than 5 pages (double-spaced in a 12-point standard font). In your responses, you will be expected to draw from readings, discussions, and lectures. These writing assignments are intended to enable both the instructor and the student to assess the student's grasp of the material in this class. They also are intended to provide opportunities for the student to reinforce his or her understanding of it.

FINAL PROJECT PROPOSAL / POSTER PRESENTATION

For the final, you will prepare a poster presentation on a topic in the anthropology of reproduction. A list of suggested topics will be distributed. You will develop your project using both popular / media sources and scholarly (anthropological) sources. You should incorporate what you learn from readings, discussions, lectures, and essay exams for this class. The posters will be presented, or displayed, in the style of a research fair during the final class meeting.

ANGEL

All students will be required to enroll in the Angel site for this class. Announcements, instructions for written assignments, presentation notes, and supplemental readings will be available on Angel. You also will submit written assignments on Angel.

You will receive instructions in class on how to enroll in and use Angel in class.

E-MAIL

When you are e-mailing Professor Han, please use only the following information in the subject line:

Your Last Name Anth 238

This will help me respond to your queries. Thanks for your consideration.

PARTICIPATION AND CONDUCT

This is a reading and discussion-intensive class. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss readings. They also are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is respectful, considerate, and courteous of their classmates.

ENVIRONMENT FOR LEARNING

Creating an environment for learning conducive to learning involves community effort. Students are expected to refrain from using cellular phones, iPods, etc., during classes.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

In order to meet the requirements of this class, it is expected that all of your written work, including take-home writing assignments and in-class essay exams, will represent your own honest, individual, and original efforts to engage with the material in this class. Please be careful with your written work. Dishonesty of any kind (e.g., “copying” or “borrowing”) will not be tolerated, and will result in a failing grade for the class.

You will be expected to cite your sources properly and include a list of references. You may prepare your citations in any standard style used in scholarly writing (e.g., MLA, APA), but please be sure to use it consistently and correctly. For example, the style guideline for *American Anthropologist* is available at www.aaanet.org.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance in class is required. Indeed, failure to attend class regularly can result in a failing grade for the class. If there are special circumstances to explain a pattern of absence, then it is the student’s responsibility to report these to the instructor promptly, and to present official documentation. Also, please be reminded that absence does not exempt students from responsibility for all of the material covered in class, and that there are no extra credit or make-up assignments.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Please note that special considerations such as extensions on deadlines will be permitted only with official documentation. If special circumstances arise that prevent the regular and timely completion of assignments, it is the student’s responsibility to communicate them with the instructor. Please do so as soon as possible.

REQUIRED TEXTS

In this course, we will be reading recent articles published in scholarly journals and relevant popular sources, which will be available (either as PDF’s or as Web links) on the Angel site for this class. Please print hard copies of the readings to bring to class. In addition, we will be reading the following two works, which are considered “classics” in the anthropology of reproduction:

Brigitte Jordan, *Birth in Four Cultures*
Rachel Kauder Nalebuff, *My Little Red Book*
Emily Martin, *The Woman in the Body*
Richard Reed, *Birthing Fathers*

All material on this syllabus is subject to change.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Th 8-27	APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF REPRODUCTION Introduction
T 9-1	Biosocial perspective Trevathan, “The Evolution of Bipedalism and Assisted Birth” (Angel) Jordan, Chapter 1
Th 9-3	Ethnography and cross-cultural perspective Jordan, Chapters 3 and 4
T 9-8	Authoritative knowledge Jordan, Chapter 6
Th 9-10	Stratified reproduction Excerpt from Ginsburg and Rapp, <i>Conceiving the New World Order</i> (Angel)
T 9-15	Medical metaphors Martin, Part I Discussion of final project: Popular / media sources
Th 9-17	Martin, Part II

T 9-22	Menstruation Martin, Chapters 6, 7
Th 9-24	1st essay exam due at 5pm – No class
T 9-29	No classes – Break
Th 10-1	Nalebuff, <i>My Little Red Book</i>
T 10-6	Nalebuff, <i>My Little Red Book</i> Project description and analysis of popular / media sources due at the start of class
Th 10-8	Childbirth Martin, Chapter 5
T 10-13	Martin, Chapters 8 and 9 Film: "Born in the USA"
Th 10-15	Reed, Chapters 1 and 2
T 10-20	Jordan, Chapters 2 and 5
Th 10-22	Reed, Chapter 3 Film: "Woman to Woman"
T 10-27	Reed, Chapters 4 and 5
Th 10-29	Jordan, Chapters 7 and 8
T 11-3	Reed, Chapters 6 and 7
Th 11-5	2nd essay exam due at 5pm – No class
T 11-10	Reproductive policies / policing / politics Gladwell, "John Rock's Error: What the Co-Inventor of the Pill Didn't Know" (Angel) Film: "The Pill"
Th 11-12	Excerpt from Dorothy Roberts, <i>Killing the Black Body</i> (Angel)
T 11-17	Viola Hoerbst, "In the Making: Assisted Reproductive Technologies in Mali, West Africa" (Angel)
Th 11-19	Morgan, "When Does Life Begin?: A Cross-Cultural Perspective" (Angel)
T 11-24	No classes – Break
Th 11-26	No classes – Break
T 12-1	Excerpt from Sallie Han, <i>Made, Not Born: An Anthropology of American Pregnancy</i> (Angel)
Th 12-3	3rd essay exam due at 5pm – No class
T 12-8	Individual meetings on final projects
Th 12-10	Individual meetings on final projects Annotated bibliography of scholarly sources due at 5pm
Th 12-17	Final poster presentations at 11am-1:30pm