

GNDS 836 Feminist and Queer Ethnography

Fall 2019 • T 2:30 – 5:20 pm – MC A-309 • occasional W 1:00 - 2:20 pm – MC D-503

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*Ne Queen's University e'tho no'we nikanónhsote tsi no'we ne Haudenosaunee tánon
Anishinaabek tehatihsnónhsahere ne óhontsa*

Gimaakwe Gchi-gkinoomaagegamig atemagad Naadowe miinwaa Anishinaabe aking

Queen's University sits on the lands of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples

Course Description

Ethnography is an interdisciplinary method of knowledge production in which researchers learn about people and culture by attending to everyday life. Gender studies scholars use ethnography to create critical feminist, queer and trans knowledge, and scholars across the social sciences and other fields use ethnography to examine gender, sexuality, race, class, nation, disability and all modes of social difference and power.

This seminar introduces feminist and queer ethnography as distinct yet linked scholarly subfields, which constitute bodies of critical theory, literary genres, and methods for creating ethical relationships in research and social life. We will learn how scholars advance trans, queer, and feminist theories by practicing ethnography, as well as how ethnography is understood once taken up with these theoretical lenses. We study the histories of feminist and queer ethnography in anthropology and other social sciences; the ways in which the colonial and racial histories of anthropology and ethnography are confronted and transformed by feminist, queer, and trans researchers; and the importance of critically ethnographic relationships, writing, interpretation, and ethics to theories and methods in gender studies.

Given that many students may be unfamiliar with the scope of these two subfields, we begin by reading a recent textbook in feminist ethnography that bridges into queer ethnography, and a classic monograph on feminist ethnographic practice. Ethnographies realize their fullest extent in extended case studies, so we then focus our work on reading ethnographic monographs (single-authored books). Students will read three ethnographies – two assigned, one individually selected – as well as supplementary articles and book chapters.

Learning Outcomes

- Understand theories and debates in gender studies through their articulation with the distinct subfields of feminist ethnography and queer ethnography
- Understand ethnography -- its histories, methods, ethics, applications, and effects – by applying critically feminist, queer and trans perspectives
- Understand how ethnography may function as a research method, a writing genre, an arena of intellectual inquiry, a body of critical theory, or a model of ethical relationship

- Understand the importance of these qualities of ethnography to the field of gender studies
- Study and appreciate the complexities of ethical research and writing about people and interpersonal relationships
- Gain and practice skills in close, critical reading of academic texts; and, in reading comprehension of book-length arguments
- Develop and practice skills in advanced undergraduate or entry-level graduate analytical writing (short-form and long-form)
- Develop and practice skills in independent research, through the investigation, preparation, and writing of a major project

Required Texts (Campus Bookstore and Stauffer Library Reserves)

Students read four required books. Books marked with ** are online at the Queen's Library website.

Four books will be read by the entire class:

Feminist Ethnography: Thinking Through Methodologies, Challenges, and Possibilities, Dana-Ain Davis and Christa Craven, Ed. (2016) **

Fictions of Feminist Ethnography, Kamala Visweswaran (1994)

In/Divided Unity: Haudenosaunee Reclamation at Grand River, Theresa McCarthy (2016) **

Butch Queens Up In Pumps: Gender, Performance and Ballroom Culture in Detroit, Marlon Bailey (2013)

One remaining book will be assigned from this list. Do not acquire a book until one has been assigned.

Global Divas: Filipino Gay Men in Diaspora, Martin F. Manalansan IV (2003) **

Filipino Crosscurrents: Geographies of Seafaring, Masculinities, and Globalization, Kale Bantigue Fajardo (2011)

Queen for a Day: Transformistas, Beauty Queens and the Performance of Femininity in Venezuela, Marcia Ochoa (2014) **

Queer Activism in India: A Story in the Anthropology of Ethics, Naisargi Dave (2012) **

Spaces between Us: Queer Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Decolonization, Scott Lauria Morgensen (2011)

Additional required readings for the Seminar appear on the syllabus.

Required Work

Participation	30%
Reading Responses	20% (3 @ 6.67%)
Ethnography Assignment	25%
- Proposal	
- Revised Proposal	
- Recording and Transcript	
- Interpretive Analysis may be submitted alone or with the Paper	
Paper	25%
- Summary Statement	
- Paper	

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COURSE SCHEDULE

Week One

Tuesday September 10

Introductions

Read and finish this week: *Feminist Ethnography* Introduction, Chapter 2 (pp 36-50), Chapters 3-6; Visweswaran "Histories of Feminist Ethnography"; Bolles "Telling the Story Straight"

Week Two

Tuesday September 17

Feminist Ethnography Introduction, Chapter 2 (pp 36-50) [undergraduates also read Chapter 1]
Kamala Visweswaran, "Histories of Feminist Ethnography"
Lynn Bolles, "Telling the Story Straight"

Wednesday September 18

GRAD MEETING 1, 1:00-2:15pm :

Review *Feminist Ethnography* Intro & Ch. 2; Visweswaran; Bolles
Trinh T. Minh-ha, "The Language of Nativism"
Lila Abu-Lughod, "Can There Be a Feminist Anthropology?"
Kirin Narayan, "How 'Native' Is a Native Anthropologist?"
Patricia Zavella, "Feminist Insider Dilemmas"
**Audra Simpson, "On Ethnographic Refusal"
Diane Wolf, "Situating Feminist Dilemmas in Fieldwork"
Feminist Ethnography Chs. 3-6

Week Three

Monday September 23

Reading Response may be submitted: on *Feminist Ethnography* & Wolf

Tuesday September 24

Review *Feminist Ethnography* Chs. 3-6; Wolf

Wednesday September 25

GRAD MEETING 2, 1:00-2:15pm :

***Fictions of Feminist Ethnography* Introduction, Chs. 1-4, 6-7

Week Four

Monday September 30

Reading Response may be submitted: on Trinh, Abu-Lughod, Narayan, Zavella, Visweswaran (any chapter)

Tuesday October 1

Review Trinh, Abu-Lughod, Narayan, Zavella, and Visweswaran Ch. 3

Wednesday October 2

GRAD MEETING 3, 1:00-2:15pm :

Kath Weston, "Lesbian/Gay Studies in the House of Anthropology"

Evan Towle and Lynn Morgan, "Romancing the Transgender Native"

"Retrospectives: Queer Anthropology" *Cultural Anthropology* 31(4)

- Martin Manalansan, "Queer Anthropology: An Introduction"
- Ellen Lewin, "Who's Queer? What's Queer? Queer Anthropology through the Lens of Ethnography"
- Scott Morgensen, "Encountering Indeterminacy: Colonial Contexts and Queer Imagining"
- Jafari Sinclair Allen, "One View from a Deterritorialized Realm: How Black/Queer Renarratives Anthropological Analysis"
- Margot Weiss, "Always After: Desiring Queerness, Desiring Anthropology"

Ethnography Assignment Proposal Due Thursday October 3

Week Five

Required Instructor Meeting to discuss Ethnography Assignment (appt times will be circulated)

Tuesday October 8

Review Weston; Towle and Morgan

Tom Boellstorff, "Queer Studies in the House of Anthropology" SKIM pp. 20-23

Martin Manalansan, "Introduction: Points of Departure" pp. 1-18

Marcia Ochoa, "Introducing The Queen" pp. 1-14

Wednesday October 9

GRAD MEETING 4 11:45-1pm :

Review Bolles; Trinh

**Johannes Fabian, "Taking Stock: Anthropological Discourse and the Denial of Coevalness"

Faye Harrison, "Anthropology as an Agent of Transformation" pp. 1-7, 9-10

**Faye Harrison, "Decolonizing Anthropology: A Conversation with Faye Harrison": links to

[Part I](#) and [Part II](#)

Jafari Allen and Ryan Jobson, "The Decolonizing Generation" *Current Anthropology* 57:2 (2016)

Week Six

Monday October 14

Reading Response may be submitted: on "Queer Anthropology" Retrospectives

Tuesday October 15

Seminar Attendance Optional this week

Review "Queer Anthropology" Retrospectives; Harrison "Anthropology as an Agent of Transformation"; Allen and Jobson

Read and finish this week: *In Divided Unity*

Submit Revised Ethnography Assignment Proposal (to potentially begin research in Week 7)

Week Seven**Monday October 21****Reading Response may be submitted:** on *In Divided Unity***Tuesday October 22***In Divided Unity****Week Eight*****Tuesday October 29**

Class Cancelled

Begin reading this week: *Butch Queens Up in Pumps****Week Nine*****Monday November 4****Reading Response may be submitted:** on *Butch Queens Up In Pumps***Tuesday November 5**

Review Allen

*Butch Queens Up In Pumps***Wednesday November 6**

GRAD MEETING 6, 1-2:15 pm :

Discussion of Ethnographic Research and Paper

Submit Revised Ethnography Assignment Proposal (to potentially complete research in Week 10)***Week Ten***

Week 10-11 Instructor Meeting to discuss Paper (appt times will be circulated)

Tuesday November 12

Review Visweswaran Ch. 6 ("Feminist Ethnography as Failure")

Beatrice Medicine, from "Ella C. Deloria: The Emic Voice"

Janet L Finn, "Ella Clara Deloria and Mourning Dove"

Graciela Hernandez, "Multiple Subjectivities and Strategic Positionality"

Wednesday November 13

GRAD MEETING 5, 11:45-1pm:

** Your assigned ethnography

Week Eleven

Week 10-11 Instructor Meeting to discuss Paper (appt times will be circulated)

Tuesday November 19

Ethnography Assignment / Paper Presentations

Thursday November 21
Paper Summary Statement Due

Week Twelve

Tuesday November 26

No seminar meeting – work on Ethnography Assignment and Paper

Ethnography Assignment Materials Due Wednesday December 4 - Friday December 6

- **Interview recording and coded transcript must be submitted**
- **interpretive analysis of the interview may be submitted, or may follow with the paper**

Paper Due between Monday December 16 - Wednesday December 18

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