Fall 2016

SANT330
Special Topics: Feminist Ethnography
CRN 93460
Tues/Thurs 9:25-10:40am
Cosby 103

Dr. Erica L. Williams
Spelman College

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Office Hours: Mon/Wed 9:15-10:15am
Mon 1:15-3pm; Tues 2:30-3:30pm; Wed 2-3pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course offers an overview of classic and contemporary examples of feminist ethnography. What impact have the various approaches of feminist anthropology had on the field as a whole? How have feminist approaches shaped the questions, methods, and ethics of anthropological research? This course traces the development of, and debates around, feminist ethnography from the 1970s to the contemporary period, highlighting the key questions and dominant paradigms of the field.

The format of the class combines lectures and class discussions. Materials for the class include books, academic articles, films, and websites. SANT330 is open to students beginning at the sophomore level and/or with special permission from the professor. While there are no formal prerequisites, some background in Anthropology (SANT203) or Comparative Women's Studies (CWS270) is highly recommended.

Dr. Williams reserves the right to revise this syllabus if necessary. If this happens, all students will be notified of any changes in class and on Moodle.
COURSE OBJECTIVES
Through lectures, assigned readings, class discussions, and films, students should complete this course being able to:

- Understand theoretical perspectives that cultural anthropologists have used to study gender and sexuality.
- Articulate the contributions of feminist anthropology to the broader discipline of cultural anthropology.
- Develop critical thinking skills - engage in a comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, and facts before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion.
- Develop a critical lens to analyze current events and texts based on considerations of race, class, gender, sexuality, etc.
- Demonstrate enhanced reading, writing, and oral presentations skills.

COURSE TEXTS


Books are available at the Spelman Bookstore. Other readings are available on Moodle.

COURSE POLICIES AND ADMINISTRATION

4th Hour Justification
The quantity of reading and scholarly work required for this course is commensurate with the 4th hour course classification at Spelman College. In addition to the course readings and assignments, students may be asked to write reflections on relevant films, respond to discussion prompts on Moodle, submit written analyses of relevant current events; attend lectures and events, and research online anthropology journals. These activities justify the 4th credit hour.

Moodle
The course Moodle page contains the syllabus, readings, and other important course information. I will use Moodle to send out announcements and messages. Students must occasionally post in the discussion forums or submit assignments via Moodle.
Email Communication
Students may email me at ewilli29@spelman.edu to set appointments, ask specific questions about the reading or lecture, or send information about any health-related or personal situation that may affect your academic performance. Here are some pointers for proper email etiquette:

1. Your emails should have an appropriate subject line and use an appropriate title and salutation, such as “Dear Dr. Williams” or “Hello Professor.”
2. E-mails should be professional and respectful.
3. Your message should be concise and to the point. If you have a lot to say, you should probably come to office hours!

Crises and Incompletes
Incompletes will only be granted in the case of serious and extenuating circumstances that prevent a student (who is otherwise doing well) from passing the course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class Attendance and Active Participation
Students are required to attend every class and participate fully in class discussions. Attendance will be taken every class period and recorded in Moodle.

- Good participation = making meaningful contributions that enrich class discussions.
- Students who have missed a full week of class must submit valid documentation to get an excuse from the Office of Undergraduate Studies (OUS).

Readings
- Course lectures and discussions are intended to supplement, not replace, the readings.
- There will be 25-50 pages of reading per class.
- Students should be prepared to discuss the author(s) thesis and main arguments. Read, take notes, and bring your readings and notes to class to ensure that you are prepared to contribute to the discussion.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

In order to create a supportive, intellectually enriching learning community in the classroom, please observe the following general rules of classroom etiquette:

- Learn each other’s names as soon as possible!
- Class will begin on time. Students are expected to be in their seats and ready to begin promptly at the beginning of class.
- Avoid side conversations.
- Remember that everyone has a right to his/her/their opinion. We will be discussing controversial issues in this course. It is important to respect others' viewpoints, even if they differ from your own. This will help us to create a 'safe space’ in the classroom that is free from discrimination, harassment, intolerance, and intimidation.
- Please turn cell phones OFF (not on vibrate), and put away all electronic devices (unless being used in service of the class).
## Grading and Course Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation (i.e. in-class writing, homework, etc.)</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short Paper</td>
<td>Thurs., Sept. 22</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Paper</td>
<td>Thurs., Oct. 6</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book Review of Feminist Ethnography</td>
<td>Tues., Dec. 6</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation on Selected Book for Review</td>
<td>Tues., Nov. 29</td>
<td>10%</td>
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### Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>80-82</td>
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<td>77-79</td>
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<td>73-76</td>
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<td>70-72</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<td>66-69</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<td>60-65</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>Below 60</td>
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### Description of Assignments

- **Short Paper**: Write a 2-3 page paper based on the “Thinking Through” activity on p. 95 of the Feminist Ethnography textbook: “Select a topic that you are interested in – maybe incarceration, Black Lives Matter, access to birth control, heritage studies – whatever you like. Then in a brief essay discuss first your methodological strategy and how at least three of the methods described would be effective (or not) in researching your topic.” (Due Sept. 22, 20% of final grade)

- **Midterm Paper**: Write a 5-7 page paper based on the “Thinking Through” activity on Ethical Dilemmas on p. 118 of the Feminist Ethnography textbook. In addition to summarizing the ethical issues involved in the topic you choose and explaining what a feminist ethnographic approach would have done differently, the essay should also describe a research project that you would like to embark upon, describing the methods and theories you would employ, and the ethical dilemmas you might face. (Due Oct. 6, 25% of final grade).

- **Book Review**: For this assignment, you will choose a feminist ethnography from the list attached and write a scholarly book review. Book reviews should be approximately 1,000 words (3-4 pages) in length. A good book review should be concise. Rather than simply summarizing the content of the book, it should also assess the merit of the book, and critically evaluate the author’s purpose, thesis, arguments, methods, and analysis. Keep these questions in mind: What are the author’s main arguments? What type(s) of sources does the author use? What methods does the author utilize to gather data? What are the strengths of the book? What are the shortcomings? What theoretical, methodological, or ethical issues does the ethnographer emphasize? Take note of the methods they use, how they explain their methodology, and their strategies for analysis. What challenges did the ethnographer face in his/her research? What methods would you consider using if you were doing research on a similar topic? What contribution(s) does the book make to the study of feminist ethnography? Submit via Moodle by Tuesday, Dec. 6 at 5pm. (20% of final grade).
PREPARATION OF PAPERS

- You should NEVER submit a 1st draft of a paper. Writing is a PROCESS. Be sure to proofread and edit all written work before submitting it to ensure that is free of spelling, grammar, and/or punctuation errors.

- Written assignments should be typed double-spaced, use 12-point standard font, have 1-inch margins on all sides, and have page numbers.


- Avoid using unreliable internet sources such as Wikipedia. Make use of databases for academic journal articles such as Anthrosource.

Late Work:
- Work must be submitted by the deadline.
- There will be a 5 point-reduction per day for late work. Work will not be accepted if it is more than 7 days late. I will not accept any late work after the last day of class.
  - If you submit a late assignment, slip it in the slot in my office door, Giles 304. Do not leave anything in the hanging file boxes to the right of my office.

Policy on Plagiarism
Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Here are some steps to avoid plagiarism:
1. If you borrow more than 3 words from another text (article, book, website, etc.), cite the author.
2. If you cut and paste, summarize, or paraphrase something from a book, article, or online source, you must use quotations and document the source (author, publication, date).
3. Do not purchase or obtain a paper and submit it as your own work.

Consequences of Cheating and Plagiarism
- You will receive an F on the assignment.
- You will be reported to the Dean’s Office.
- The Incident may be placed on your permanent student record.
- You may fail the class.

Now that you are fully aware of what plagiarism is and the steps you can take to ensure that you do not "unintentionally" plagiarize, you cannot use ignorance as an excuse!

SPELMAN ACADEMIC POLICIES

Academic Honesty
At the heart of Spelman College’s mission is academic excellence, along with the development of intellectual, ethical and leadership qualities. These goals can only flourish in an institutional environment where every member of the College affirms honesty, trust, and mutual respect. All members of the academic community of Spelman College are expected to understand and follow the basic standards of honesty and integrity, upholding a commitment to high ethical standards. Students are expected to read and abide by the Spelman College Code of Conduct (see the Spelman College Student Handbook 2003-2004) and are expected to behave as mature and responsible members of the Spelman College academic community. Students are expected to follow ethical standards in their personal conduct and in their behavior towards other members of the community. They are expected to observe basic honesty in their work, words, ideas, and actions. Failure to do so is a violation of the Spelman College Academic Integrity Policy. Violators will be subject to the sanctions outlined in the Spelman College Bulletin.
Disability Statement
Spelman College is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in its programs. If you have a documented disability (or think you may have a disability) and, as a result, need a reasonable accommodation to participate in class, complete course requirements, or benefit from the College's programs or services, you should contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) as soon as possible. To receive any academic accommodation, you must be appropriately registered with ODS. The ODS works with students confidentially and does not disclose any disability-related information without their permission. ODS serves as a clearinghouse on disability issues and works in partnership with faculty and all other student service offices. For further information about services for students with disabilities, please contact the Student Access Center at 404-270-5289 (voice), located in MacVicar Hall, Room 106.

Tutorial Services
If you need academic support, please visit the Center for Academic Planning and Success - Student Success Center, Milligan Building, 2nd Floor, the Comprehensive Writing Center, Cosby Academic Center, Room 313; or the Language Resource Center, Cosby Academic Center, LL16.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

Week 1 Course Introduction
Thurs. Aug 18
• Course Introduction: Why Feminist Ethnography?

Week 2 Defining and Historicizing Feminist Ethnography
Tues, Aug 23 (28 pgs)
  • Homework: “Thinking Through” activity on p. 27 (1 page typed)

Thurs. Aug 25 (37 pgs)
• Feminist Ethnography, Ch. 2 Historicizing Feminist Ethnography p. 29-52.
• Hernandez, Graciela. “Multiple Subjectivities and Strategic Positionality: Zora Neale Hurston’s Experimental Ethnographies.” In Women Writing Culture. p. 148-162. (Moodle)

* * * August 26 – Last Day of Drop/Add * * *

Week 3 Histories of Feminist Ethnography
Tues., Aug 30 (29 pgs)

Thurs., Sept. 1 (47 pgs)
• Optional: Cole, Sally “Ruth Landes & Early Ethnography of Race & Gender.” In Women Writing Culture. p. 166-181. (Moodle)

Week 4 Debates in Feminist Ethnography
Tues., Sept 6 (30 pgs)
• Feminist Ethnography Chapter 3 Debates in Feminist Ethnography p. 53-73.
Thurs., Sept 8 (27 pgs) (Moodle)

Week 5 Case Study: Fictions of Feminist Ethnography
Tues., Sept 13 (59 pgs)
• Visweswaran, Kamala. Fictions of Feminist Ethnography. Ch. 1-3 (p. 1-59)

* * * Aimee Meredith Cox visiting Spelman College Sept 14-15 * * *

Thurs., Sept 15 (53 pgs)
• Visweswaran, Kamala. Fictions of Feminist Ethnography. Ch. 4-6 p. 60-113.

Week 6 Doing Feminist Ethnography
Tues., Sept 20 (64 pgs)
• Visweswaran, Kamala. Fictions of Feminist Ethnography. Ch. 7-9 p. 114-178.

Thurs., Sept 22 (36 pgs)
• Feminist Ethnography Chapter 4 How does one Do Feminist Ethnography? p. 79-96.
  ▪ Short Paper - “Thinking Through” activity #3 on p. 95 (2-3 pages typed)

Week 7 Methods
Tues., Sept 27 (31 pgs)

Thurs., Sept 29 (38 pgs)

Week 8 Fieldwork
Tues., Oct 4 (20 pgs)
• Feminist Ethnography Ch. 5 Challenges for Feminist Ethnographers p. 99-119.
  ▪ Homework: “Thinking Through” activity p. 109 (1-2 pages typed)

Thurs., Oct 6 (38 pgs)
• Wolf, Diane. 1996. “Situating Feminist Dilemmas in Fieldwork.” In Feminist Dilemmas in Fieldwork. (Moodle)

* * * Midterm Paper Due * * *

Week 9 Fieldwork cont’d
Tues., Oct 11 ***Fall Break – No Classes * * *
Thurs., Oct 13 (26 pgs)
• Newton, Esther. “My Best Informant’s Dress: The Erotic Equation in Fieldwork.” In Feminist Anthropology: A Reader. P. 170-180. (Moodle)

Week 10 Writing Feminist Ethnography
Tues., Oct 18 (21 pgs)
• Feminist Ethnography Ch. 6 Producing Feminist Ethnography p. 121-142.

Thurs., Oct 20 (20 pgs)
• Feminist Ethnography Ch. 8 Thinking through the Future of Feminist Ethnography: A Conversation (p. 167-172).

Week 11 Feminist Activist Ethnography
Tues., Oct 25 (45 pgs)
• Feminist Ethnography Ch. 7 Feminist Activist Ethnography (p. 145-165)

Thurs., Oct 27 (28 pgs)
• Homework– Do “Thinking Through” activity on p. 159 of FE book (1-2 pages typed)
• Feminist Activist Ethnography book:
  o Ch. 1 Border Crossings: Intimacy & Feminist Activist Ethnog. in the Age of Neoliberalism p. 23-37.
  o Ch. 3 Feminist Ethnog. w/ DV Shelter Advocates: Negotiating the Neoliberal Era p. 53-67

** October 28 – Last Day to Withdraw from Class **

Week 12 Feminist Activist Ethnography cont’d
Tues., Nov 1 (38 pgs)
• Feminist Activist Ethnography
  o Ch. 4 Seeking ‘Marriage Material’: Rethinking US Marriage Debates under Neoliberalism p. 77-98.
  o Ch. 6 Fracturing Feminism: Activist Rsch & Ethics in a Women’s Human Rights NGO p. 119-136.

Thurs., Nov 3 (39 pgs)
• Feminist Activist Ethnography

Week 13 Feminist Activist Ethnography cont’d
Tues., Nov 8 (54 pgs)
• Feminist Activist Ethnography
  o Ch. 8 Women, Food, and Activism: Rediscovering Collectivist Action in Individ. World p. 165-179.
  o Closing Questions p. 223-24.
Thurs., Nov 10 (42 pgs)
• Cox, Aimee M. *Shapeshifters*. Ch. 1 p. 38-80.

Week 14 Case Study: Black Girlhood Studies
Tues., Nov 15 (40 pgs)
• Cox, Aimee Meredith. *Shapeshifters* Ch. 2 p. 81-121.

Thurs., Nov 17 (59 pgs)
** Dr. Williams will be attending a Conference – Moodle Discussion of Reading **
• Cox, Aimee Meredith. *Shapeshifters* Ch. 3-4 p. 122-185.

Week 15 Case Study: Black Girlhood Studies
Tues., Nov 22 (56 pgs)
• Cox, Aimee Meredith. *Shapeshifters* Ch. 5 and Epilogue p. 186-242.

Thurs., Nov 24
** NO CLASSES – THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY **

Week 16
Tues., Nov 29 LAST DAY OF CLASSES
** STUDENT PRESENTATIONS ON BOOK REVIEW **
List of Books for Book Review

You may select a book from this list or choose one on your own (but must be approved by professor).


Student Information Sheet

Name:_________________________________ Class Year:____________________________

Email:________________________________ Phone:______________________________

Major/Minor:________________________________________________________________

Do you speak any foreign languages? If so, which ones?

Have you traveled to any foreign countries? If so, which ones?

Have you, or are you planning to study abroad? If so, where?

What are your goals/hopes/expectations for this class?

Do you consider yourself to be a good writer? Why or why not?

Do you have any special needs or issues that I should know about?

Do you plan to go to graduate school? If so, in what field?

What is your ultimate career goal?

I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the guidelines, requirements, and expectations regarding my responsibilities in this course.

Signature:________________________________ Date:____________________________