

Syllabus

Course description

Course title:	Body, gender and family in transcultural perspective
Course year:	2nd
Semester:	1st
Course code:	51081
Scientific sector:	M-DEA/01
Degree:	Bachelor in Social Work
Lecturer:	Salvucci Daniela
Module:	no
Lecturer other module:	/
Credits:	6
Total lecturing hours:	45
Total Hours of availability for students and tutoring:	18
Office hours:	from Monday to Friday on request
Attendance:	according to the regulation
Teaching language:	English
Propaedeutic course:	none
Course description:	<p>Body, gender and family are often taken for granted as a “natural” basis of our everyday life. Nonetheless, people from different cultural contexts perceive, practice and perform body, gender and family in very different ways. These diverse sets of cultural perceptions and practices tend to cross, overlap and even mix nowadays in our globalized society. The naturality, or biological evidence of body, sex-gender and heterosexual nuclear family, although it works as a dominant category, is but just one among multiple sociocultural understandings, one which has been disputed by grass-roots and LGBTQ political movements, and deconstructed by scholars from social and cultural sciences as a specific ethnocentric ideology.</p> <p>This course draws on theories and examples from sociocultural anthropology, including insight from sociology of the family and historical demography as well as from such interdisciplinary fields as feminist theory, women, gender and queer studies. It promotes a deconstructionist approach toward body, gender and family, in order to understand how these sets of categories and practices are historically, politically and culturally produced, reproduced and transformed in different sociocultural contexts, as well as in transcultural perspective.</p>
Specific educational objectives:	<p>Basic course Scientific area: sociocultural anthropology</p> <p>The course is designed for acquiring academic knowledge on sociocultural theories of body, gender and family, as well as for acquiring skills in reflexivity, critical analysis, and transcultural interpretation and mediation, which are needed for professional social work.</p>

	<p>The course aims to produce knowledge, and thereby to raise awareness, on the interconnections of body, gender and family, conceived of as culturally and politically constructed categories and models, which orientate social organization and power relations. It gives the students theoretical and methodological tools to deconstruct these often-taken for granted categories, as well as to analyze and understand body, gender and family in transcultural perspective as experiences, practices and performances that people incorporate, enact, or dispute in their everyday life.</p> <p>Additionally, the course will encourage students to critically engage scientific texts and to produce individual and in-group small works, enhancing their skills in reading and discussing scientific literature, as well as in elaborating and presenting their own work in an academic setting.</p>
<p>List of topics covered:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural relativism and transcultural perspective. • Theories of incorporation of sociocultural worlds: embodiment (Csordas); habitus (Bourdieu); agency. • The body-person in its sociocultural context: purity and danger of a hierarchical social body (Douglas, Dumont); Western individual and Melanesian individual personhood (Strathern). • Illness and healing ritual practices in transcultural perspective. • Sexualized biological bodies and bio-power: the modern Western regime of power-knowledge (Foucault). • Sociocultural production of gender: the sexual labor division and the traffic in women (Rubin); social status, hierarchy and gender asymmetry in transcultural perspective (Ortner, Whitehead). • Gender troubles: performativity and subversive performances (Butler). • Interconnection of body, gender, family, kinship: circulation and transmission of substances and powers; kinship as descent and as alliance; gender and kinship/family ideologies in transcultural perspective (Collier, Yanagisako). • Kinship and relatedness: blood, law and love within Euromerican kinship (Schneider); from kinship to relatedness (Carsten). • Family and households: family-household forms, networks and dynamics (Collier, Rosaldo, Yanagisako; Yanagisako); new forms of families (patchwork, homoparental, living apart, transnational families). • Strong/weak family ties (Reher) and intimacy (Giddens, Berlant) • New technologies of body and gender reproduction: e.g. Assisted Reproductive Technologies (Grilli, Parisi).
<p>Teaching format:</p>	<p>Frontal lectures; reading and discussion workshops; individual and in-group tasks (such as reading, small works and presentations)</p>
<p>Learning outcomes:</p>	<p>Knowledge and understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of basic concepts referring to cultural relativism and the transcultural perspective. • Knowledge of specific sociocultural theories on

	<p>body, gender and family in sociocultural anthropology, as well as in women, gender and queer studies, such as the cultural incorporation; cultures and politics of the body-person; the discourse on sexuality and the bio-power; the sociocultural production of gender hierarchies and asymmetries; the interconnection of body, gender, family and kinship.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquisition of appropriate scientific languages for the description and analysis of sociocultural phenomena. <p>Applying knowledge and understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to apply cultural relativism, the transcultural perspective and a deconstructionist approach to body, gender and family. Ability to apply anthropological approaches and concepts to the analysis and understanding of body, gender and family both as culturally and politically constructed categories, and as experiences and practices of the everyday life. Ability to apply academic knowledge and sociocultural theories on body, gender and family to one own personal and professional experience, as well as to possible situations of transcultural interpretation and mediation within social work. <p>Making judgements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of critical and independent thinking regarding the sociocultural production, reproduction and transformation of categories and practices of body, gender and family. Development of reflexive self-awareness in relation to body, gender and family as sets of sociocultural categories and practices. <p>Communication skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to recognize the fundamental elements of scientific writing. Ability to develop a correctly structured short scientific presentation. Ability to participate in scientifically grounded discussions and express an informed opinion. Ability to communicate appropriately in an academic setting. <p>Learning skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to autonomously extend the knowledge acquired during the course in dealing with social works settings. Ability to acquire new approaches and theoretical concepts to analyze, deconstruct and understand taken for granted categories and the diversity of sociocultural practices.
<p>Assessment:</p>	<p>Attending students will assessed on the basis of their individual and in-group small work and presentation in class, as well as on the basis of a short final oral exam.</p> <p>Non-attending students will be assessed on the basis of a long oral exam on the contents of the course in relation to both required and supplementary readings.</p> <p>Further instructions for the individual and in-group small</p>

	work and presentation, as well as for the final oral exam will be presented during the course.
Evaluation criteria and criteria for awarding marks:	<p>Evaluation will be weighed as follows:</p> <p>Attending students: in-group small work and presentation 20%; individual small work and presentation 30%; short final oral exam (50%).</p> <p>Non-attending students: oral examination 100%.</p> <p>Criteria for the evaluation will consider the ability to accurately apply course concepts and instruments, the formulation of original opinions and analyses, and the logical structure of exposition and argumentation.</p>
Required readings:	<p>Butler, J., 1993, Critically Queer, in <i>Bodies that matter. On the discursive limits of "sex"</i>, Routledge, pp. 221-242.</p> <p>Carsten J. (ed.), 2000, Introduction, in <i>Cultures of relatedness. New approaches to the study of kinship</i>, Cambridge university press, pp. 1-37.</p> <p>Collier J., Rosaldo M. Z., Yanagisako S. J., Is there a family? New anthropological view, in Lancaster R. N., di Leonardo M. (eds.) <i>The Gender/Sexuality Reader. Culture, history, political economy</i>, Routledge, pp. 71-81.</p> <p>Collier J., Yanagisako S. J., (eds.), 1987, <i>Gender and Kinship. Essays toward a unified analysis</i>, Stanford university press, pp. 1-50.</p> <p>Csordas, T., 1990, Embodiment as a Paradigm for Anthropology, <i>Ethos</i> 18(1), pp. 5-47</p> <p>Douglas, M., 2003 (1966), <i>Purity and danger: an analysis of concept of pollution and taboo</i>, Routledge, pp. 115-129.</p> <p>Dumont, L. 1980 (1966), Postface. Toward a theory of Hierarchy, in <i>Homo Hierarchicus. The Caste system and its implications</i>, The University of Chicago Press, pp. 239-246.</p> <p>Foucault M., 1978 (1976), <i>The History of Sexuality. Volume I: An Introduction</i>, Pantheon Books, pp. 81-114.</p> <p>Grilli, S., Parisi, R., 2016, New Family Relationships: between Bio-genetic and Kinship Rarefaction Scenarios, <i>Antropologia</i>, 3(1), pp. 29-51.</p> <p>Ortner, S., Whitehead H. (eds.), 1981, Introduction: Accounting for sexual meanings in <i>Sexual meanings: the cultural construction of gender and sexuality</i>, Cambridge University Press.</p> <p>Reher, D., 1998, Family Ties in Western Europe: Persistent Contrasts, <i>Population and Development Review</i>, 24(2), pp. 203-234.</p> <p>Rubin, G., 1975, The Traffic in Women: notes on the "political economy" of sex, in Reiter R. (ed.), <i>Toward an Anthropology of Women</i>, Monthly Review Press, pp. 157-210.</p>

	<p>Strathern, M. 1988, <i>The gender of the Gift. Problems with Women and Problems with Society in Melanesia</i>, University of California Press, pp. 268-305.</p> <p>Yanagisako, S. J., 1979, Family and Household: The Analysis of Domestic Groups, <i>Annual Review of Anthropology</i>, 8, pp. 161-205</p>
<p>Supplementary readings:</p>	<p>Berlant, L., 1998, Intimacy: a special issue, <i>Critical Inquiry</i>, 24(2), pp. 281-288.</p> <p>Bourdieu, P., 2001 (1998) <i>Masculine Domination</i>, Stanford University Press, pp. (to be announced).</p> <p>Butler, J., 1999 (1990), <i>Gender Trouble. Feminism and the Subversion of Identity</i>, Routledge, 3-44, 171-190.</p> <p>Giddens, A., 1992, <i>The Transformations of Intimacy</i>, Cambridge Polity Press, pp. (to be announced).</p> <p>Stone L. (ed.), 2001, Introduction, in <i>New directions in anthropological kinship</i>, Rowman & Littlefield publishers.</p> <p>Schneider, D., 1981, <i>American Kinship. A cultural account</i>, University of Chicago Press, pp. (to be announced)</p> <p>Stone L., King D. E., 1997, <i>Kinship and gender. An introduction</i>, Routledge.</p> <p>Additional supplementary readings will be announced during lessons.</p>