

***Feminist Ethnography***  
**Deborah Kapchan, Dept. of Performance Studies**  
**H42.2404.001 (Torchtone #75034)**  
**Wednesdays 6:30-9:15, 721 Broadway, Room 636**

Is ethnographic writing a feminist project? What is feminism for women in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa? How can ethnographic writing be made to serve the advancement of feminisms conceived broadly? In this course we examine the role and agency of ethnography and the ethnographer in the feminist enterprise, as well as the way feminisms in various cultural contexts are represented ethnographically. We also interrogate the “feminization” of cultural disciplines in their embrace of the subjects of emotion, the senses, gesture, and the body.

Requirements: Student may choose either option #1 or option #2 below:

1. Students will write 5 book reviews of publishable quality during the course of the semester. Drafts may be necessary. Reviews are at least 500 words long, not to exceed 1000 words. (90% of grade) Every week, one student will be responsible for the oral presentation of the weekly readings. (10% of grade)
2. Students will write a research paper on a topic relevant to the course. A proposal for the paper and bibliography (250-500 words) are due the third week of classes. The research paper should be article length (16-25 pages). (90% of grade) Every week, one student will be responsible for the oral presentation of the weekly readings. (10% of grade)

**Required Readings:**

- Aparicio, Frances R. 1998. Listening to Salsa: Gender, Latin Popular Music, and Puerto Rican Cultures. Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press.
- Abu-Lughod, Lila. 1993. Introduction. Writing Women's Worlds : Bedouin Stories. Berkeley: University of California Press. *\*Note: we will be reading only the Introduction for class discussion.*
- Behar, Ruth and Deborah A. Gordon, Eds. 1995. Women Writing Culture. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Browning, Barbara. 1995. Samba: Resistance in Motion. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Fernea, Elizabeth Warnock. 1998. In Search of Islamic Feminism: One Woman's Global Journey. New York : Doubleday.
- Grosz, Elizabeth. 1994. Volatile Bodies. Toward a Corporeal Feminism. Indiana University Press, Bloomington; and Allen and Unwin, Sydney.
- Phelan, Peggy. 1993. Unmarked: The Politics of Performance. London and New York: Routledge University Press.
- Norkunas, Martha. 2002. Monuments and Memory: History and Representation in Lowell, Massachusetts. Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Pini, Maria. 2001. Club Cultures and Female Subjectivity: The Move from Home to House. New York: Palgrave Press.
- Seremetakis, C. Nadia. 1994. The Senses Still: Perception and Memory as Material Culture in Modernity. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press.
- Visweswaran, Kamala. 1994. Fictions of Feminist Ethnography. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Wolf, Margery. 1992. A Thrice-Told Tale: Feminism, Postmodernism, and Ethnographic Responsibility. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.

**Articles: Cixous, Kapchan. Young**

Wednesday September 3<sup>rd</sup>: **Feminism and Performance**

Wednesday September 10<sup>th</sup> **The Predicament of Women and Culture**  
Wolf, A Thrice-Told Tale

Wednesday September 17<sup>th</sup> **Writing Women I**  
Women Abu-Lughod, Introduction. Writing Women's Worlds  
Reading from Behar and Gordon, Eds. Women Writing Culture

Wednesday September 24<sup>th</sup> **Writing Women II**  
Behar and Gordon, Eds. Women Writing Culture //First book review due

Wednesday October 1 **Writing Women III**  
Cixous, Helene. 1975. "The Laugh of the Medusa"  
Visweswaran, Fictions of Feminist Ethnography.

Wednesday October 8 **Performing Feminism**  
Phelan, Unmarked: The Politics of Performance // Second book review due

Wednesday October 15 **Feminism and Difference**  
Fernea, Elizabeth Warnock. 1998. In Search of Islamic Feminism

Wednesday October 22 **The Feminization of the Subject**  
Seremetakis, The Senses Still  
Young, The Memory of the Flesh: The Family Body in Somatic Psychology. Body and Society  
8 (3): 25-47  
----- 2000. Gestures and the Phenomenology of Emotion in Narrative. Semiotica 131-1/2:  
79-112. //Third book review due

Wednesday October 29 **Women and the Public Landscape**  
Martha. 2002. Norkunas, Monuments and Memory

Wednesday November 5 **Women and Public Culture I**  
Pini, Maria. 2001. Pini, Club Cultures and Female Subjectivity

Wednesday November 12 **Women and Public Culture II**  
Aparicio, Frances R. 1998. Listening to Salsa // Fourth book review due

Wednesday November 19 **Women and Public Culture III**  
Browning, Barbara. 1995. Samba: Resistance in Motion AAA

Wednesday November 26 **The Feminine Body**  
Grosz, Elizabeth. 1994. Volatile Bodie. // Fifth book review due

Wednesday December 3<sup>rd</sup> discussion

**Recommended for review:**

- Abu-Lughod, Lila. 1998. Remaking Women : Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Abu-Lughod, Lila and Catherine Lutz, Eds. 1990. Language and the Politics of Emotion. Cambridge (England): Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, Karen McCarthy. 1991. Mama Lola : A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Chatterjee, Piya. 2001. A Time for Tea: Women, Labor, and Post/Colonial Politics on an Indian Plantation. Durham: Duke University Press, 2001.
- Csordas, Thomas, Ed. 1994. Embodiment and Experience: The Existential Ground of Culture and Self. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- di Leonardo, Micaela, Ed. 1991. Gender at the Crossroads of Knowledge: Feminist Anthropology in the Postmodern Era. Berkeley : University of California Press.
- Joseph, Suad and Susan Slyomovics, Eds. 2001. Women and Power in the Middle East. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Taylor, Julie M. 1998. Paper Tangos. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt. 1993. In the Realm of the Diamond Queen: Marginality in an Out-of-the-Way Place. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Articles at **Advanced Copy Center** at 552 Laguardia Place near w. 3rd street - 212-388-1001:

- Cixous, Helene. 1975. "The Laugh of the Medusa" in Cixous, Helène and Catherine Clement. The Newly Born Woman. 1975. Trans. Betsy Wing. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986.
- Kapchan, Deborah. In press. Nashat: The Gender of Musical Celebration in Morocco. In Music and Gender: Perspectives from the Mediterranean, edited by Tullia Magrini, Series "Chicago Studies in Ethnomusicology", Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- . 2000 Gender on the Market in Moroccan Women's Verbal Art: Performative Spheres of Authority. In Linda Seligmann, ed. Market Women in Cross-Cultural Perspective. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Young, K. 2002. The Memory of the Flesh: The Family Body in Somatic Psychology. Body and Society 8 (3): 25-47
- . 2000. Gestures and the Phenomenology of Emotion in Narrative. Semiotica 131-1/2: 79-112