

ANTH 414/514: Activist Anthropology
Prof Ana-Maurine Lara
M & W, 3pm – 5.50pm
(Winter 2018)

This course examines the role of anthropology in public engagement and social justice activism. This course is geared towards students interested in applying ethnographic methodologies as a form of activism, and thinking through praxis – the relationships between theories and practice – both within movement and academic spaces.

About this course

This is a student driven course that applies a critical feminist pedagogical framework. What does that mean? The professor is a facilitator of conversation and interaction, providing an overarching framework and points of evaluation. After an initial introduction (Weeks 1 – 4), students will engage in collective knowledge production. Students hold each other accountable for achieving the goals set out at the beginning of the class, for the ethics, values and methodologies we apply and for the deepening of our critical analysis skills and approaches. In this course, there is a high value placed on multiple modes of knowledge production, and on diverse and broad bases for articulating ideas and approaches to activist research.

Who is this course for?

- Student activists who are interested in learning about the ethical and methodological approaches and challenges of research for social justice.
- Activist scholars who are interested in deepening their research practices as social justice practice.
- Anyone interested in thinking about the ways in which anthropology and activism intersect.

Required Texts

Books

- Grise, Virginia *Your Healing is Killing Me*. Plays Inverse Press, 2017. [Book]
- Jobin-Leeds, Greg & AgitArte. *When We Fight, We Win!: Twenty-first-century Social Movements and the Activists that are Transforming our World*. [Book]
- Lorde, Audre. *Sister outsider: Essays and speeches*. Crossing Press, 2012. [Book]
- Sandoval, Chela. *Methodology of the Oppressed*. Vol. 18. U of Minnesota Press, 2000. [Book]
- Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. Zed Books Ltd., 2013. [Book]

Articles on Canvas

- Alexander, M. Jaqui. and Chandra T. Mohanty "[Cartographies of Knowledge and Power: Transnational Feminism as Radical Praxis](#)" *Critical transnational feminist praxis* (2010): 23-45. [On Canvas]
- Hale, Charles. "[What is activist research?](#)" SSRC, Vol 2, No. 1 -2, 2001. [On Canvas]
- Hale, Charles, "[Activist Research v. Cultural Critique: Indigenous Land Rights and the Contradictions of Politically Engaged Anthropology.](#)" *Cultural Anthropology* 21(1): 60-96, 2006

- McIntosh, Peggy. "[White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack](#)" originally from: Peace and Freedom Magazine, July/August, 1989, pp. 10-12. [On Canvas]
- Rich, Adrienne. "[Notes towards a politics of location](#)." *Feminist postcolonial theory: a reader* (1984): 29-42. [On Canvas]

Critical Topics

Students will be asked to work on a critical topic over the course of the term. Those topics listed here are starting suggestions. Students may bring additional suggestions to class.

- Immigrant Rights
- Racial Justice
- Environmental Justice
- Economic Justice
- LGBTQIA+ Rights
- Sexual Violence
- Islamophobia & Anti-Semitism
- Native Sovereignty
- Prison Activism/Abolition
- Art as activism
- Faith based communities/Spiritual Activism

Evaluation

You will be evaluated on the following:

[Attendance](#) (10 points) - Because this is a class that requires a high degree of participation, you will be graded on attendance. Each class is worth .5 points, for a total of 10 points allotted toward your attendance grade.

Graduate students will not receive an attendance grade.

[Text selection](#) (5 points) - Each student will select two texts. Both texts should engage a critical topic (see below). One text must be a scholarly article from peer-reviewed scholarly journals or books. The second can be a blog, newspaper article, magazine article, a film, a website, a video, etc.

Graduate students are required to select texts, but will not receive a text selection grade.

[Zine](#) (10 points) - Each student will develop a zine on a critical topic, and will provide copies to their peers on the day of their workshop.

Community Education Component (25 points UG /40 points G) - students will choose to do one of the following two options:

Option A: [Student-led workshops](#) – The workshop should be conceptualized as a process geared toward social movement activists, students and/or scholars who are working on particular social justice issues. Students will facilitate a workshop on the critical topic they have selected and researched. The workshop will incorporate scholarship and participatory education practices drawn from a range of sources.

Option B: [Political Education Binders](#) - These binders should be conceptualized as tools for social movement activists, students and/or scholars who are working on particular social justice issues. Students will conduct research to develop a political education binder on a critical topic.

[Final presentations](#) (15 points) - In Week 10, students will have two opportunities to present their work in poster session format. The first opportunity will be to their peers in the class, where they can receive feedback on their binders and their presentation. The second opportunity will be to a broader community audience.

[Self-Assessment](#) (10 points) - At the end of Week 10, students will complete a self-assessment of their participation in the course.

Grades

This course includes faculty and self-evaluation. Grades are assigned on a point basis, with a possible total of 100 points. Faculty is responsible for 90 points; you are responsible for 10 points.

Grades will be assigned based on the following criteria

- (A) Outstanding performance relative to course requirements; demonstrates a mastery of course content at the highest level;
- (B) Performance that is significantly above course requirements; demonstrates a mastery of course content at a high level
- (C) Performance that meets course requirements in every respect; demonstrates adequate understanding of course content;
- (D) Performance that is at a minimum level to pass, but does not fully meet requirements in all aspects; demonstrates a marginal understanding of course content;
- (F) Performance that does not meet requirements, for whatever reason; demonstrates an inadequate understanding of course content.

A	100	to	94	points
A-	< 94	to	90	points
B+	< 90	to	87	points
B	< 87	to	84	points
B-	< 84	to	80	points
C+	< 80	to	77	points
C	< 77	to	74	points
C-	< 74	to	70	points
D+	< 70	to	67	points
D	< 67	to	64	points
D-	< 64	to	61	points
F	< 61	to	0	points

If you take this course pass/fail, you must have at least 65 points to pass.

READING SCHEDULE

January 8

- Rich, Adrienne. "[Notes towards a politics of location](#)." *Feminist postcolonial theory: a reader* (1984): 29-42. [On Canvas]

January 10

- Lorde, Audre. *Sister outsider: Essays and speeches*. Crossing Press, 2012. [Book]
- McIntosh, Peggy "[White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack](#)" originally from: *Peace and Freedom Magazine*, July/August, 1989, pp. 10-12.

January 15: Martin Luther King Day

- Hale, Charles. "[What is activist research?](#)"
- Hale, Charles, "[Activist Research v. Cultural Critique: Indigenous Land Rights and the Contradictions of Politically Engaged Anthropology](#)." *Cultural Anthropology* 21(1): 60-96, 2006
- Sandoval, Chela. *Methodology of the Oppressed*. Vol. 18. U of Minnesota Press, 2000. [selection]
- *When We Fight, We Win!* Intro, Chapter 1

In lieu of class meeting, students are asked to attend the Martin Luther King Day March.

January 17

- Alexander, M. Jaqui. and Chandra T. Mohanty "[Cartographies of Knowledge and Power: Transnational Feminism as Radical Praxis](#)" *Critical transnational feminist praxis* (2010): 23-45. [On Canvas]
- *When We Fight, We Win!*, Chapter 2

January 22

- Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. Zed Books Ltd., 2013. [Chapters 1 - 3]
- *When We Fight, We Win!*, Chapters 3 & 4

January 24

- *When We Fight, We Win!*, Chapters 5 & 6

January 29

- Grise, Virginia *Your Healing is Killing Me*. Plays Inverse Press, 2017. [Book]

January 31

Read and assess proposed reading selections and rationales in preparation for deciding what reading selections we will choose for the remainder of the term.

THIS SYLLABUS IS A DRAFT AND IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

February 5 - Workshop 1

February 7 - Workshop 2

February 12 - Workshop 3

February 14 - Workshop 4

February 19 - Workshop 5

February 21 - Workshop 6

February 26 - Workshop 7

February 28 - Workshop 8

March 5 - Workshop 9

March 7 - Workshop 10

March 12 - Presentations (Class only)

March 14 - Presentations (Community)

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