Sex and money—intimacy and economy—are often imagined to occupy distinct and separate spheres. Sex and intimacy are figured as private or domestic, in spaces of leisure, feelings, care, and personal connections. Money and economy, on the other hand, are purportedly public, located in the market and tied to labor, rationality, and impersonal (non)-relations. This course brings these spheres together, focusing on the links, exchanges, and circuits between the intimate and the economic in diverse cultural contexts across the Americas.

Taking up intersections of anthropological, feminist, Marxist, queer, and Black theory, we will connect economic, cultural, and political formations with race, ethnicity, nation, sexuality, class, and gender—scaling up to consider transnational exchanges and down to consider how these circuits impact people, families, and communities. We will build our own working definitions of key concepts: intimacy, division of labor, exchange, commodity, value, neoliberalism, consumer culture, and more. We'll test, apply, critique, and expand these concepts as we work through ethnographic case studies on contemporary sex work and tourism, marketing and pornography, reproduction and domestic labor, marriage, labor and care work, and sex stores and commodities. Throughout, we will ask: Whose labor is valued and recognized, and why? How do bodies accrue value, and in what kinds of marketplaces? When are intimacies—sexual and social—commoditized? How is race, gender, and sexuality central to these exchanges? How do transnational circuits constrain and/or empower people? And finally, who benefits from these relations, and who does not?

This is an Anthropology course that also satisfies a “Hemispheric Americas” requirement in American Studies. It is cross-listed in FGSS, and is part of both the Queer Studies Course Cluster and the Social, Cultural, and Critical Theory Certificate.

Course Readings


Optional (we'll be reading parts of):

These books are available at the RJ Julia Bookstore. They are also on reserve, as ebooks, at Olin (via moodle). You are welcome to buy the books elsewhere and in any format that works for you. All of the articles we'll be reading for this course are available on the course Moodle and also as a course pack that you can order through your Wesleyan portfolio.

**Course Assignments**
- Attendance and Participation – 10%
- 5 P&Qs: Passage for Discussion and Question(s) – 15%
- 4 Short Reflection Papers (3 pages each) – 40%
- Collective Project: Glossary and/or Panel Presentation – 10%
- **Optional**: Final Project/Paper – 25%

**Participation**
This is an intensive seminar designed for an active learner; your participation is crucial to its success. We will be reading challenging theoretical essays, so participation in this course means coming to class ready to ask questions, to think about what is at stake, and to begin to forge your own analysis. Your participation should be grounded in the reading; pointing us to relevant sections of an article or to a particular quote is most productive. Remember, participation does not just mean talking, it means contributing to our collective learning – asking questions and expanding others’ insights is often as useful as (maybe even more useful than) making declarations.

**P&Q: Passage for Discussion and Question(s)**
Every other week, you’ll post a passage and discussion question on the moodle before class (by noon on the day of our class). I’ll ask you to lead part of our class discussion, based on your P&Q. When considering a passage: choose something from the readings that you think is especially interesting, important, provocative, challenging, or that will otherwise prompt meaningful discussion about the core issues at hand. Please type out your passage -- a passage can be anywhere from 1 sentence to 1 paragraph. Along with the passage, please include one discussion question. You will likely need a few sentences to explicate your question: make sure you give enough information for your question to be generative (aim for a question you think links to other important ideas or topics, gets at the heart of some theoretical issue, or opens up a new way of thinking). Your question can have sub-questions, if you like – it can connect to the passage, or it can be more holistic, for the day’s readings as a whole. While you should take the time to read carefully and reflect on the material, you are not expected to master the class material before our session. The P&Q is meant to allow you to direct our discussion in ways most conducive to your learning and interests, and also raise
questions you have about the approaches we are considering. This portion of the course is graded credit/no credit (for satisfactory completion). Sign up

Short Reflection Papers
You will turn in four 3-page double-spaced papers on the days listed on the syllabus (there are five papers listed – you may skip one of them without penalty). These papers give you a chance to connect and synthesize the analytical material/concepts with the ethnographic readings. While you are doing the reading for each class session, ask yourself: How do the analytical readings and concepts help us understand and analyze the ethnography? What (if anything) is missing from the analytical framework that is revealed in the ethnographic case studies? What are the (multiple) intersections between economy and intimacy in the readings? What are the relationships between these intersections and power—privilege, oppression, empowerment, etc.? These are big questions, and you’ll want to approach them anthropologically—that is, with reference to concrete and specific “on the ground” examples, and a focused framework. Avoid generalization and summary; instead, use these papers to explore a particular issue, tension, or idea that arose in the unit with as much detail as possible—you’ll want to provide specific examples from the readings (the more specific, the better: use quotes from people interviewed, particular stories that illustrate your point, etc.). Part of this assignment is to learn how to make a concise argument, so do not waste your words with extensive introductions, conclusions, or repetition—just jump right in! If you do all 5, this counts for extra credit (10%). Papers are graded if you are doing graded mode; if not, you will receive ample comments.

Collective Project: Glossary and/or Panel Presentation
You are responsible for one collective contribution to our class: either an addition of a key term to our collective glossary or participation in one of the panels. (You can do both, for extra credit of 10%). This part of the course is graded CR/U, for satisfactory completion.

- Collective Glossary: On our Moodle there is a glossary called “Key Terms.” Throughout the semester, we will build a glossary of the key terms we explore in this class: intimacy, economy, division of labor, reproductive labor, primitive accumulation, global care chain, patriarchy, and so on. Full contribution entails adding a core definition of a key term from our course readings (with page citations). A secondary contribution is adding an example or explanation, background, or summary, and/or linking to other illuminating resources), and/or editing or refining material already posted.

- Panel Presentation: There are 10 possible Panels, each meant to give the class supplementary information; they are debates or problematics that complement or expand the readings for that day. For instance, on the day we discuss Domestic Economies, the panel is on research on housework today; on the day we discuss the Global Division of Labor, the panel is on contemporary transnational surrogacy; on the day we discuss Ethno-erotics, the panel is on camming/cam girls, etc.). Working either alone or in a small (2-3 person) group, your task is to do some additional research/reading on your topic (I’ve provided starting places on the moodle), and then present this material in a clear, comprehensible way that will enhance the class’s understanding and add to our discussion. You’ll want to post (on the moodle) a “brief” – a one-page summary of the topic and the core questions or problematics it raises. In
class, you will have 20 minutes to present the material, making sure to explain how it connects to the main readings for that day. You might want to include something interactive—an exercise, a handout, short clips/media, excerpts from the reading, etc.—so that students can engage. Check with me the day before our class if you want to “bring in” something unusual, so that we can do a tech check. Sign up

Final Project/Paper
Your final assignment is a paper/project of 8-10 double-spaced pages (or equivalent). It can be based on course readings, it can be an expansion of one of your Short Reflection Papers or Panels, or it can entail research on a new topic. Broadly, the paper must be relevant for the course: it must explore an intersection of sex/intimacy and money/economy. Beyond this, the focus of your paper is up to you. Be on the lookout for something you want to examine throughout the semester (and check out my recommendations, under “want more?”). The final is optional: if you are satisfied with your grade at the end of the term, you do not need to do a final. Doing extra work during the semester (by writing the 5th Reflection Paper and/or doing additional Collective project work) could impact whether you need/want to do the final.

Grading mode
This course is offered Student Option. If you opt to take it Credit/Unsatisfactory, you will do all assignments, but they will not be graded. Instead, you will receive ample feedback on your work, and you will be asked to periodically review your own progress toward your goals. There are multiple reasons to take the course C/U; one of them is that stepping away from evaluation can enable you to prioritize deeper leaning. I know that, in our neoliberal education system, grades and credentialing are hard mindsets to take a break from, but I hope you make the most of this relatively risk-free opportunity to focus on other priorities.

Notes on the Online Format
Let’s pledge to be patient and kind with each other in these challenging times. If there are things that are not working for you – tech, connection, format, class dynamics, work or reading load – and/or if you have ideas for making our class better, please bring them to me! Since we’ll be online, we won’t be able to read each other’s cues as easily as in person, so we each need to ramp it up a little bit in order to make a connection virtually. One of the best things about a seminar like this is being able to think together, learn from and challenge each other, as the classroom becomes a space of disagreement and debate, as well as agreement, laughter, and shared insights. This kind of space doesn’t just happen; it is something we need to build together, proactively, so if you have ideas for building our classroom community, please share! You should feel free to join the class Zoom before class starts (I will not be there) to chat and hang out, as you might in a physical classroom. Other possibilities include: I could reserve on-campus study spaces for you to meet (optional, depending on the COVID situation), we could open a class SLACK (etc.) group, I could add readings to a course Perusall, etc. Please share ideas!

Policy on Absences: You may miss 2 classes without explanation or penalty: think of these as sick (or health) days, and take them when needed. No need to let me know or provide detail unless you are dealing with something serious, in which case we should have a more detailed conversation that will likely include your Class Dean. Missing 5 or more classes is
Policy on extensions: In a typical semester, I rarely grant extensions, except for emergency situations and as disability accommodations—in part because I have found that pushing off work can make things worse for the procrastinators and anxious among us (myself included) and a crappy paper turned in while the class ideas are fresh is often better, pedagogically, than a “perfect” one turned in much later or not at all. However, this semester there is the small matter of the Global Pandemic. So, if you are having any difficulty with deadlines, please be in touch and let’s talk about it. Note, however, that you cannot turn in P&Qs late, as they are meant to structure the class discussion for that day. In addition, the Final Paper/Project is due the last moment of final exam week, so if you have valid reasons for needing more time on that, you will need to request an Incomplete for the course.

Office Hours: I have set office hours Mondays and Wednesdays; schedule an appointment using my online calendar: http://calendly.com/margot-weiss. If you cannot make any of my available times, email me and we will work out an alternative time to meet. Plan to talk to me about course material or any concerns or ideas you might have – or just to say hi and chat and connect outside of class. If you need to call (say, because you are having a sudden internet problem), my phone is (860) 398-9091.

Students with Disabilities
Wesleyan University is committed to ensuring that all qualified students with disabilities are afforded an equal opportunity to participate in, and benefit from, its programs and services. To receive accommodations, a student must have a disability as defined by the ADA. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible. If you have a disability, or think that you might have a disability, please contact Accessibility Services in order to arrange an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. Accessibility Services is located in North College, rooms 021/218, or can be reached by email (accessibility@wesleyan.edu) or phone (860-685-2332). COVID updates: https://www.wesleyan.edu/studentaffairs/disabilities/distance-learning.html

Honor Code
All work must be done in compliance with the Honor Code. If you need help with proper citations or you have questions on how to avoid plagiarism, let me know or contact the Writing Workshop: https://www.wesleyan.edu/writing/writingworkshop/index.html
Course Schedule

Wed, Feb 10: Introduction to the course

Mon, Feb 15: Setting Terms: Intimacy and Economy
Group 1 P&Q

Wed, Feb 17: Private Property, the Household, and the Division of Labor
Rec: Susan Gal, 2002. “A Semiotics of the Public/Private Distinction” differences
Group 2 P&Q

Mon, Feb 22: Domestic Economies
- Susanna Rosenbaum, Domestic Economies: Women, Work, and the American Dream in Los Angeles (Intro – Chapter 3)
Panel 1: Hours Spent Doing housework (COVID)
Group 3 P&Q

Wed, Feb 24: Domestic Economies
- Susanna Rosenbaum, Domestic Economies: Women, Work, and the American Dream in Los Angeles (Chapter 4 - end)
Rec: Arlie Hochschild, on affective labor
Rec: Shellee Colen, 1995. ““Like a Mother to Them”: Stratified Reproduction and West Indian Childcare Workers and Employers in New York” Feminist Anthropology
Panel 2: “Wages Against Housework”
Group 4 P&Q

Mon, Mar 1: Globalized Division of Labor / Accumulation and Value


Rec: Ann Laura Stoler, “Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Gender and Morality in the Making of Race” in *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*


Panel 3: Domestic Workers Organize
Panel 4: contemporary womb work
Group 1 P&Q

**Wed, Mar 3: Film:** *Paper Dolls*
(opt: *The Second Mother, Lesbian Factory, Made in India: A Film About Surrogacy*)


**Due: short reflection paper 1: Friday March 5**

**Mon, Mar 8: Sex/Gender/Race: “The” Family, Patriarchy, Racism, Labor**

- Heidi I. Hartmann, 1979. “Patriarchy” excerpt from "The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism Towards a More Progressive Union"
- Gloria Joseph, 1981. “The Incompatible Ménage à Trois: Marxism, Feminism and Racism” in *Women and Revolution*


Rec: Patricia Hill Collins, 1998. “It's All in the Family: Intersections of Gender, Race, and Nation” *Hypatia*

Group 2 P&Q

**Wed, Mar 10: Transnational Wedding Exchanges // Fairy Tales and the Wedding Industrial Complex**

- Nicole Constable, 2003. *Romance on a Global Stage: Pen Pals, Virtual Ethnography, and "Mail Order" Marriage* (excerpt: Introduction, Ch. 1, 4-6; 3 recommended): online only

Panel 5: Wedding Industrial Complex/today
Group 3 P&Q

**Mon, Mar 15: Marxist Feminist Queer Critique of Marriage (and the Family, Property)**

- “Is Gay Marriage Racist?” from *That’s Revolting*
- Sophie Lewis, COVID and the nuclear private household *(online)*
Rec: Patrick J. Williams, 2018. “Intimacy and the Untouchable: Marriage and the Traumatic History of “In-law” and “Outlaw” Family” *differences*
Rec: Yasmin Nair, 2010. “Introduction” to *Against Marriage* (pp. 1-9)
Rec: Elizabeth Freeman, “Marriage” in *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*

**Panel 6: Communicizing Care**

Group 4 P&Q

**Due: short reflection paper 2: Monday, March 15**

**Wed, Mar 17: Marriage and/or Love: Gender, Sex, Race, Work, Value**
- Emma Goldman, “Anarchy and the Sex Question” (1896), "The Traffic in Women" (1910), and “Marriage and Love” (1914) (all linked on Moodle)
- Silvia Federici, 1975. “Why Sexuality is Work” in *Revolution at Point Zero*

Group 1 P&Q

**Mon, Mar 22: Film: Live Nude Girls, Unite!**

**Wed, March 24: Spring Break, no class**

**Mon, Mar 29: Sex, Love, Labor**

**Professor Luna will join us in class**
Group 2 P&Q

**Wed, Mar 31: Sex, Love, Labor**

Group 3 P&Q

**Mon, Apr 5: Stratified Intimacies: Class, Money, Authenticity and the Purchase**
- Susan Dewey, 2011, “Feminized Labor and the Classed Body” or “Being a Good Mother in a 'Bad' Profession” *Neon Wasteland: Love, Motherhood, & Sex Work in a Rust Belt Town*
- Kimberly Kay Hoang, 2011. “‘She’s Not a Low-Class Dirty Girl!: Sex Work in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam” *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*
Panel 7: Sex Trafficking?
Group 4 P&Q

Due: short reflection paper 3: Monday, April 5

Wed, Apr 7: Commodities, Value, Exchange
- Diane Tober, 2001. “Semen as Gift, Semen as Goods” in Commodifying Bodies
- bell hooks, 1992. “Eating the Other” Black Looks

Group 1 P&Q

Mon, Apr 12: Sex Tourism and the Commodification of Race/Gender/Sexuality
- Erica Lorraine Williams (2013). Sex Tourism in Bahia: Ambiguous Entanglements (first half)

Group 2 P&Q

Wed, Apr 14: cont. Commodification of Race in Sex Work
- Erica Lorraine Williams (2013). Sex Tourism in Bahia: Ambiguous Entanglements (finish)

Professor Williams will join us in class

Group 3 P&Q

Mon Apr 19: Ethno-erotics, Racialization, (Queer) Commodification

Panel 8: Camming
Group 4 P&Q

Wed Apr 21: Film: Heading South – or - Luchando

Due: short reflection paper 4: Friday, April 23

Mon, Ap 26: Queering Political Economy
(first half)

Professor Stout will join us in class

Group 1 P&Q


Group 2 P&Q

Mon, May 3: Sexual Identity and Neoliberal Capitalism
- Rosemary Hennessey, 1995, excerpt from *Profit and Pleasure: Sexual Identities Under Late Capitalism*

Rec: Beth Capper and Arlen Austin, 2018. “Wages for Housework Means Wages against Heterosexuality”: On the Archives of Black Women for Wages for Housework and Wages Due Lesbians” *GLQ*


Group 3 P&Q

Wed, May 5: Consumerism / Sexuality
- Margot Weiss, 2011. “Becoming a Practitioner” and “Unpacking the Toy Bag” in *Techniques of Pleasure: BDSM and the Circuits of Sexuality*

Rec: Donald Lowe, 1995, excerpt from “Sexual Lifestyle and Late Capitalist Consumption” in *The Body in Late-Capitalist USA*

Group 4 P&Q

Panel 9: Politics of Pornography
Panel 10: Sex (toy) Stores and Feminism

Due: short reflection paper 5: Friday, May 7

Mon, May 10: Liberation? Freedom?
Tbd

Wed, May 12: Last class wrap up!

Final paper due May 21 by noon