*ANTHROPOLOGY 104 SIGNATURE ASSIGNMENT: Love Songs and Gender Norms

Love songs can either reinforce or challenge the predominant gender values and norms of their society.  Students will* ***choose 4 popular love songs:*** *3 of which will come from different genres and periods in American history (such as blues of 1920's, rock and roll of the 60's and rap of the 90's) to compare and analyze.  The fourth will be contemporary.*

*This comparison and analysis should:

1) Define the concept of culture from an anthropological perspective.

2) Identify and describe the social context of the song, such as information about cultural values and gender roles or norms during the era that the song became popular. Apply the concept of culture to identify and describe how cultural values, ideologies, norms, gender roles, gender biases or other cultural biases show up in the song lyrics and contributed to its popularity.

3) Identify and describe how the lyrics of the song reinforce or challenge established American power structures and systems such as racism, colonialism, patriarchy.  Provide a concrete example and use scholarly sources to support your view and to deepen analysis.

4) Identify and describe how the lyrics of the song reinforce or challenge established American social institutions such politics, religion, education, kinship, marriage and family organization, social status or economic class. Provide a concrete example and use scholarly sources to support your view and to deepen analysis.

5) Compare the lyrics of these 3 earlier songs with a popular love song of today and critically reflect on if, or how much, American gender and sexual values, norms, and roles have changed over time.  Provide a concrete example and use scholarly sources to support your view and to deepen analysis.

6) Personally reflect on the love songs that you habitually listen to.  Do the songs you like challenge or reinforce current American gender roles and sexual values or norms? How do the songs you listen to reflect your own cultural assumptions, biases or ideas about love?  Provide a concrete example to support your view.

Students should write their papers in an MLA or APA style and* ***cite at least three scholarly and relevant books, articles or other academic sources*** *(such as academic publications or peer reviewed articles from academic journals like Ethnomusicology) to support their ideas and analysis. The use of "scholarly sources" versus popular sources can often present challenges for students. Even if they seem relevant, if all of your sources are popular rather than scholarly, your paper will not meet the assignment requirements. A good practice is at least two scholarly and one popular (though all three can be scholarly but not popular)*

*Consult the ATH 104 Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology library page (be sure to select the center tab* ***The Ath 104 Tutorial "Finding Articles in Linguistic Anthropology****). This guide was created to walk you through the process of selecting appropriate materials for your paper. These scholarly resources should be listed on a separate resource page.  Students should also demonstrate the ability to use scientific methods of inquiry, such as skills in* ***textual analysis****, language transcription, participant observation or other anthropological research methods.*