

Sociology 320 – Diversity in Family Forms

Class time: 3-6pm

Summer Term I: May 10-June 16, 2016

Class location: BUCH B215 (B209 for split presentations)

Instructor: H el ene Frohard-Dourlent

Office: ANSO 3112

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1-2pm or by appointment

Email: helenefd@alumni.ubc.ca

TA: Tanvi Sirari

Office: ANSO 3112

Office Hours: By appointment

Email: tanvi.sirari@alumni.ubc.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Family is a major institution that organizes social life in 20th century and early 21st century North America, the period and area that we focus on to consider questions of diversity within and between families. Rather than a question that belongs only to private and personal realm, notions of “the family” have been, and continues to be constructed by state regulations, cultural discourses and practices of ruling. For instance, legacies of colonization as well as racist and sexist state policies of inclusion/exclusion shape how we think of belonging, home, and familial relationships. This course draws on interdisciplinary critical scholars to raise questions about the social relations of gender, sexuality, race/ethnicity, and social class as they intersect with the institution of the family. We discuss the normative power of what feminist sociologist Dorothy E. Smith terms the post WW II ‘Standard North American Family’ (SNAF) and explore forms of families that challenge this norm, including single-parent, adoptive, First Nations, racialized, queer, and trans families. As with other upper year courses, it is expected that students will be able to discuss controversial topics with respect and intellectual rigor.

COURSE MATERIALS

- ❖ All readings will be made available online through Connect.

COURSE EVALUATION

While this is a large course, this course is designed with the expectation that students will actively participate in a critically engaged dialogue about issues and ideas related to the assigned reading material. Marks for the course will be assigned as follows:

- 1) Attendance and Participation – 15%
- 2) Seminar Presentation – 20%
- 3) Midterm – 20%
- 4) Media Analysis – 25% [due Class 5]
- 5) Final exam – 20%

All assignments will be handed in through the assignment function on Connect at 3pm on the due date.

Attendance and Participation – 15% The evaluation of attendance and participation will be calculated on the number of classes attended, verbal contribution, written contribution, and active listening. Every effort will be made to provide different opportunities for students to engage and participate in class, both verbally and with written work.

Seminar Presentation – 20%: Students (in groups) will lead a seminar session every week. Groups are required to prepare a **25-minute** oral presentation focused on the required readings for the class and lead discussion with their classmates for another 20 minutes.

The seminar presentation should address the themes, issues, and questions raised in the required readings. Students should:

- review the main argument(s) from the readings
- highlight at least 2 strengths and 2 weaknesses of the articles
- discuss the implication of their topic for thinking about family and the diversity of family forms
- relate their article to current events or analyze a piece of relevant media
- create 2-3 discussion questions and discuss them with the class. Groups should organize their time so that they have time to pose their questions and lead a meaningful discussion after their presentation and discussion. The goal is to engage your classmates with the readings and the issues they raise.

Media Analysis – 25 %:

(Due Class 8)

In this assignment, you will select one of three different media clips provided by the instructor and analyze the material selected using the concepts and analytics explored the first four classes of the course. The goal is for you to reflect critically on how families are represented in modern media, paying particular attention to issues of gender, race, class, sexuality and ability.

This short paper should be organized in the following way:

1. **Provide a short introduction** to the clip you chose. What kind of families are represented in this clip?
2. Drawing on the readings from the first four classes, **analyze the clip** you've selected to answer the question: how is family constructed in this clip, and what assumptions does this construction rely on? To help with your analysis, answer some of the following questions. Don't try to answer all the questions! Different questions will be more relevant depending on what clip you chose. These questions are meant to help you think critically about the clip. You are responsible for organizing your thoughts in a coherent way.
 - How are race, class, and ability presented in this clip?
 - What characteristics are associated with men, and with women? Are these very different?
 - Does this clip challenge or confirm dominant ideas that we have about gender, sexuality, class, race and ability? How does it do that? In other words, what is expected about family in this clip, and what is unexpected? (There is often a mix of both.)
 - How does this clip use humour and/or emotion to convey its messages about family? What is the clip assuming about the audience when it does that?
 - What ideals about family are promoted in this clip? In the case of ads, how does it help sell the product? In the case of the TV show, how does this help make the characters relatable? What does this reveal about who the audience is expected to be?
 - Do you see any other messages in this clip? Are there subversive ways to read this clip?
3. **Conclude** by reflecting on the analysis that you've conducted. Did anything surprise you? What meanings about family are changing, and which ones are staying stable?

Draw on course material from Class 1-7 to substantiate your analysis. No outside research is required to complete this assignment (but you are welcome to use outside research if it is relevant), but you MUST reference the course readings you draw on using APA format.

*Length: **4 to 5 pages double spaced**, plus reference page.*

Policies for Written Assignments:

- Before submitting your written assignments, please make sure they:
 - are written in 12 point, Times New Roman Font
 - contains the title of your paper; your name and student ID; the date you are submitting the paper; the course number; and the name of the instructor
 - have page numbers marked at the bottom right hand of your paper
- **Assignments must be submitted via Connect email by 3pm on the date due (just before class). Late penalties will apply if you hand in the assignment later. Assignments will not be accepted if submitted in person, ANSO paper drop box or slipped under my office door.**
- Please follow the citation guidelines for the **American Psychology Association (APA)** for all written assignments. A guideline for how to cite different types of texts using the APA format will be uploaded to Connect.
- Late assignments will be deducted 3% for each working day it is submitted after the deadline. Exceptions will be made for unforeseen medical or family crises. If you experience a medical, emotional or personal problems that detracts from your academic performance, please contact the Faculty of Arts Academic Advising Office, located in Buchanan A201, phone 604-822-4028. **I only make exceptions for missed deadlines with a letter from the Arts Advising Office.** For more information: <http://www.arts.ubc.ca/students/degree-planning-advising/advising.html>

Students needs & Early Alert

This course welcomes and seeks to accommodate students with physical or learning disabilities or chronic illnesses. If you require any assistance or adaptation of teaching or evaluation, please feel free to discuss your needs with the instructor. The Disability Resource Centre in Brock Hall is available for further consultation and resource provision.

If you speak or read English as an additional language and find the teaching, or evaluation formats, a disadvantage for you, please inform the instructor. If classes or assignments due dates are scheduled during a religious or cultural holiday that you observe, please inform the instructor, and together we can negotiate alternative arrangements.

During the term, I will do my best to reach out and offer support. If I am concerned about your academic performance or wellbeing, I also encourage you to come and speak with me if you need assistance. In addition, I may identify my concerns using Early Alert. The program allows academic, financial, or mental health concerns to be identified sooner and responded to in a more coordinated way. This provides you with the earliest possible connection to resources like academic advising, financial advising, counselling, or other resources and support to help you get back on track. The information is treated confidentially and is sent because I care about your academic success and wellbeing. For more information, please visit www.earlyalert.ubc.ca.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Class 1 (May 10): Introduction to the course

- ❖ Dorothy Smith (1993). The Standard North American Family: SNAF as an Ideological Code. *Journal of Family Issues*, 14(1), 50-65.

Class 2 (May 12): Courtship & wedding rituals

- ❖ Chrys Ingraham (1999), "Chapter 4: McBride Meets McDreamy: Television, Internet, and Popular Film Weddings." In *White Weddings: Romancing Heterosexuality in Popular Culture*. New York: Routledge

- ❖ Fetner, T., & Heath, M. (2015). Do same-sex and straight weddings aspire to the fairytale? Women's conformity and resistance to traditional weddings. *Sociological Perspectives*. [online before print]

Class 3 (May 17): Parenting and discourses of motherhood & fatherhood

- ❖ Rachel Epstein (2002). Butches with babies: Reconfiguring gender and motherhood. *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, 6(2), pp. 41-57.
- ❖ Terry, G., & Braun, V. (2012). Sticking my finger up at evolution: Unconventionality, selfishness, and choice in the talk of men who have had "preemptive" vasectomies. *Men and Masculinities*, 15(3), 207–229.

Class 4 (May 19): Divorce, remarriage & polyamory: Challenges to the nuclear family

- ❖ Schmeekle, M. (2007). Gender dynamics in stepfamilies: Adult stepchildren's views. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 69(1), 174–189.
- ❖ Sheff, E. (2011). Polyamorous families, same-sex marriage, and the slippery slope. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 40(5), 487–520.

Class 5 (May 24): Queer families

- ❖ Margot Rawsthorne & Mayet Costello (2010). Cleaning the sink: Exploring the experiences of Australian lesbian parents reconciling work/family responsibilities. *Community, Work & Family*, 13(2), pp. 189-204.
- ❖ Damien W. Riggs & Clemence Due (2010). Gay men, race privilege and surrogacy in India. *Outskirts*, 22. Online at <http://www.outskirts.arts.uwa.edu.au/volumes/volume-22/riggs>

Class 6 (May 26): Single-parent families [Midterm]

- ❖ Jane D. Bock (2000). Doing the right thing? Single mothers by choice and the struggle for legitimacy. *Gender & Society*, 14(1), pp. 62-86.
- ❖ Roberta Coles (2002). Black single fathers choosing to parent full-time. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 31(4), pp. 411-439.

Class 7 (May 31): Racialized families

- ❖ France W. Twine & Amy C. Steinbugler (2006). The gap between whites and whiteness: Interracial intimacy and racial literacy. *Du Bois Review*, 3(2), pp. 341-363.
- ❖ Linda M. Burton, Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, Victor Ray, Rose Buckelew and Elizabeth Hordge Freeman (2010). Critical Race Theories, Colorism, and the Decade's Research on Families of Color. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72(3), 440-459.

Class 8 (June 2): Transness and gender-nonconformity in families [Media analysis due]

- ❖ Kane, Emily W. (2006). "'No way my boys are going to be like that!': Parents' responses to children's gender nonconformity." *Gender & Society*, 20, 149-176.
- ❖ Elizabeth Anne Riley, Gomathi Sitharthana, Lindy Clemson & Milton Diamond. (2011). The needs of gender-variant children and their parents: A parent survey. *International Journal of Sexual Health*, 23(3), 181-195.

Class 9 (June 7): Adoption in a global & racialized world

- ❖ Sara Dorow (2006). "Racialized choices: Chinese adoption and the 'white noise' of Blackness." *Critical Sociology*, 32(2-3), 357-379.
- ❖ Pamela A. Quiroz (2008). U.S. rainbow families online: Emblems of diversity or expansion of whiteness? *International Journal of Sociology of the Family*, 34(2), pp. 277-299.

Class 10 (June 9): First Nations families in a settler society

- ❖ Cindy Blackstock & Nico Trocmé (2005). Community-based child welfare for Aboriginal children: Supporting resilience through structural change. *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand*, 24, pp. 12-33.
- ❖ Dominelli, L., Strega, S., Walmsley, C., Callahan, M., & Brown, L. (2011). "Here's my story': Fathers of "looked after" children recount their experiences in the Canadian child welfare system. *British Journal of Social Work*, 41(2), 351–367.

Class 11 (June 14): Disability and family

- ❖ Hardonk, S., Daniels, S., Desnerck, G., Loots, G., Van Hove, G., Van Kerschaver, E., Sigurjónsdóttir, H., Vanroelen, C. & Louckx, F. (2011). Deaf parents and pediatric cochlear implantation: An exploration of the decision-making process. *American Annals of the Deaf*, 156(3), 290–304.
- ❖ Resch, J. A., Mireles, G., Benz, M. R., Grenwelge, C., Peterson, R., & Zhang, D. (2010). Giving parents a voice: A qualitative study of the challenges experienced by parents of children with disabilities. *Rehabilitation Psychology*, 55(2), 139–150.

Class 12 (June 16): Chosen families: from family to community **[Final exam]**

- ❖ Anna Muraco (2006). "Intentional families: Fictive kin ties between cross-gender, different sexual orientation Friends." *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 68(5), pp. 1313-1325.