

Carleton University
Fall 2020
Pauline Jewett Institute of Women's and Gender Studies

WGST 4812C/5902A: Sexuality and Reproductive Justice in the Americas
Location: Online, blended

Instructor: Megan Rivers-Moore
Email: Megan.RiversMoore@Carleton.ca
Thursdays 8:35-11:25am
Office Hours: Thursdays 1-2pm (or by appointment)

Course Description:

This course offers an interdisciplinary examination of the current state of debates about reproductive justice in the Americas. Rather than focusing on debates about individual “rights” or “choice”, this course uses the lenses of intersectionality theories, reproductive justice theories, and transnational feminism in order to explore how racism, classism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, and other forms of social oppression shape social relations of sexuality and reproductive justice. We will focus on the intersections of politics, religion, gender relations, colonial history and neocolonialism, social movements, governmental structures, and cultural norms in the struggles that surround reproductive justice and rights across the Americas.

Course Format: Online and Blended

This course aims to foster intellectual nourishment and social connection. We will combine asynchronous content to allow for diverse access and contexts, with synchronous discussion to facilitate learning together and to combat isolation. Course materials (syllabus, assignment details, most required readings, and dropboxes for assignments) will be available on cuLearn.

For information about minimum technical requirements for online learning, see [technical specs](#).

A note about patience, flexibility, compassion, and kindness in difficult times

This course is being delivered online because of the very unusual circumstances we are living in currently. Many of us are juggling housing and food precarity, job loss, irregular computer and internet access, medical emergencies, care-giving exhaustion, and deep grief. Delays, missed deadlines, technological snafus, and mistakes are to be expected. Students and professors are all facing new and unforeseen circumstances. We are all committed to doing the best that we can. I ask that we all do our best to extend each other patience, flexibility, compassion, and kindness as we navigate this situation together.

Required texts - available at the Carleton University bookstore (and many other places):

Lewis, Sophie (2019). *Full Surrogacy Now*. London: Verso.

Piercy, Marge (2016)[1976] *Woman on the Edge of Time*. New York: Ballantine.

All of the other readings are available online on Ares through the cuLearn site for this course. It is your responsibility to go through the syllabus carefully and ensure that you make the time to get and read the material.

Evaluation

Accept the syllabus	5%
Weekly participation	
Thought-provoking questions	10%
Discussion forums	15%
In class participation	15%
Three response papers	30%
Final paper - December 11	25%

Evaluation in detail:

Accept the syllabus:

Once you have read through this syllabus carefully, please complete the syllabus acceptance assignment in cuLearn.

Weekly Participation:

Each week, we will discuss the readings together, but we will alternate between synchronous meetings using zoom and asynchronous discussions on the class discussion forum.

Thought-Provoking Questions

You must submit a thought-provoking question on cuLearn **by Wednesday at noon**, every week. The question **MUST** directly relate to the required readings. It might be a question about something you did not understand, a question that acts as a jumping off point for discussion, or a question about connections between the readings. This will require careful reading of the assigned texts. Take notes while you read. Consider what the author's intention is, how the work contributes to our understandings of reproductive justice, and what you might critique and/or appreciate about the reading. You are expected to submit 10 questions this term, but will be given two free passes. Questions will be graded as pass/fail, based on demonstrated engagement with course content.

In class participation

When we meet on zoom, we will discuss the readings using the thought-provoking questions as guides. Evaluation will be based on attendance and meaningful engagement in the activities of the class. The success of this class will depend heavily

on everyone's engagement with the course material. Quality participation includes, but is not limited to: demonstrated engagement with course readings through questions and comments, respectful discussion with comrades, contribution of comments that relate directly to course content, participation in and preparation for any in-class exercises, and consistent attendance when required.

Discussion forum

On the weeks that we will not be meeting in person, you must post a written response to a peer's thought-provoking question **by Thursday at noon**. You are expected to participate in a respectful written discussion with your comrades, ensuring that your comments relate directly to course content. You are expected to submit at least 5 discussion posts this term, but will be given one free pass. Discussion posts will be graded pass/fail, based on demonstrated engagement with course content and respectful interaction with your peers.

Three response papers (maximum 4 double-spaced pages each)

These three brief assignments will allow me to assess your written engagement with and analysis of assigned material. I am not looking for exhaustive summaries here, but rather your ability to craft a response that succinctly engages with a key idea.

Responses must demonstrate that you have done the week's readings and your intervention can take a number of possible directions: discussing a particular passage in one of the readings that illuminated the week's theme; pointing to connections across two or more readings; registering and elaborating upon your disagreement with a key point in a reading; addressing the sources used in the texts etc. You must refer to at least two of the week's readings in your response, though you may engage more thoroughly with one. As a rule, these critical responses must be turned in the day before we address the readings in class (the **Wednesday before the class, by 11:59pm**). You can choose any three weeks for your critical reflection.

Final paper – undergraduates (10 double-spaced pages, plus bibliography)

The final paper will be based on your analysis of the books *Woman on the Edge of Time* and *Full Surrogacy Now*. Please see the assignment sheet for more details.

Final Paper – graduates (20 doubled-spaced pages, plus bibliography)

There are two options for the final paper:

- 1) Write your final paper based on your analysis of the books *Woman on the Edge of Time* and *Full Surrogacy Now*. Please see the assignment sheet for more details.
- 2) Turn in a chapter/section draft from your dissertation that substantively addresses or employs issues raised in this course. You cannot submit something you have already submitted to another course, or to your committee. If you choose this option, please be sure to discuss the topic you will be focusing on with me.

FINAL GRADES – undergraduate students

In accordance with the Carleton University Undergraduate Calendar, the letter grades

assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+= 90-100; A= 85-89; A-=80-84;
B+=77-79; B=73-76; B-=70-72;
C+=67-69; C=63-66; C-=60-62;
D+=56-59; D=53-56; D-=50-52;
F= Below 50

University rules regarding registration, withdrawal, appealing marks, and most anything else you might need to know can be found on the university's website, here:
<http://www.carleton.ca/cu0708uc/regulations/acadregsuniv.html>

General Academic Regulations of the University can be found here:
<http://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity>

FINAL GRADES – graduate students

The Pauline Jewett Institute of Women's and Gender Studies considers a B- to be the minimum grade for a course credited toward the Master's degree.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR GRADES AS A GRADUATE STUDENT:

A+ = 90-100 Excellent
A = 85-89; A- = 80-84 Good
B+ = 77-79; B = 73-76 Adequate
B- = 70-72 Poor
Below B- = Failure

Please note: All final grades for undergraduate and graduate students are subject to approval of the Dean.

Email Policy and Etiquette:

Emails will be returned within two business days (48 hours, excluding weekends and holidays). Only emails from official Carleton University email addresses will be answered. Please include your full name, student number, and course code in the email. Please use full sentences and formal language.

Online classroom etiquette:

This course depends on active and respectful discussion and engagement with the course materials and with one another. [SEP] This can sometimes be harder to master in the online environment than it is in person, but we will collectively aim to create an environment that is safe enough for everyone to be able to be present, learn, and share their understanding of course material. This means that behaviour that disrespects or demeans others is not acceptable.

Copyright statement

Please note: classroom teaching and learning activities, including lectures, discussions, presentations, etc., by instructors, guests and students, are copy protected and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). All course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, outlines, exams and other materials, are also protected by copyright and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). Students registered in the course may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational use only.

****Students are not permitted to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for commercial or non-commercial purposes without express written consent from the copyright holder(s).****

Schedule - please note this outline is preliminary and subject to change

1. September 10: Introduction to the course and each other – synchronous

Please use the Zoom link provided on cuLearn to join our discussion!

2. September 17: Reproductive Rights, Reproductive Justice – synchronous

Bayetti Flores, Verónica (2013). We make the road by walking: Trans-inclusive language and reproductive justice. [Choicewords Blog](#), Urge (Unite for Reproductive and Gender Equality).

Hinojosa Hernández, Leandra and De Los Santos Upton, Sarah (2018). Feminist Activism and Reproductive Control across the Américas. In *Challenging Reproductive Control and Gendered Violence in the Américas*. Lanham: Lexington. 1-18.

Morgan, Lynn M. (2015). Reproductive Rights or Reproductive Justice? Lessons from Argentina. *Health and Human Rights Journal*. [17\(1\)](#)

Saroj Bakhru, Tanya (2019). Thinking Transnationally: Reproductive Justice in a Globalized Era. In *Reproductive Justice and Sexual Rights: Transnational Perspectives*. New York: Routledge. 3-12.

3. September 24: Femicide and the necropolitics of motherhood – asynchronous

Bejarano, Cynthia L. (2002). Las Super Madres de Latino America: Transforming Motherhood by Challenging Violence in Mexico, Argentina, and El Salvador. *Frontiers* 23(1): 126-150.

Hinojosa Hernández, Leandra and De Los Santos Upton, Sarah (2018). Intersections of Culture, Gender, Religion, and Politics: Problematizing the Notion of Choice in Reproductive Femicides in Latin America. In *Challenging Reproductive Control and Gendered Violence in the Américas*. Lanham: Lexington. 69-88.

Valencia, Sayak (2019). Necropolitics, Postmortem/Transmortem Politics, and Transfeminisms in the Sexual Economies of Death. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*. 6(2): 180-193.

Wright, Melissa W (2004). From Protests to Politics: Sex Work, Women's Worth, and Ciudad Juárez Modernity. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. 94(2): 369-386.

4. October 1: Everyday violence and infant death – synchronous

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy (1993). *Death Without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Chapter 7: Two feet under and a cardboard coffin: The social production of indifference to child death p.268-339.

Chapter 8: (M)Other love: Culture, scarcity, and maternal thinking p.340-399.

Chapter 9: Our lady of sorrows: A political economy of the emotions p.400-445.

5. October 8: Transnational adoption – asynchronous

Briggs, Laura (2017). *Somebody's Children*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Chapter 5: Uncivil Wars p.160-196.

Chapter 6: Latin American Family Values p. 197-240.

Epilogue: U.S. Immigrants p. 269-283.

Documentary: Good-Bye Baby. 2005. <https://vimeo.com/199366379>

6. October 15: Sex work and motherhood – synchronous

Dewey, Susan (2011). *Neon Wasteland: On Love, Motherhood, and Sex Work in a Rust Belt Town*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Chapter 4: Being a Good Mother in a "Bad" Profession p. 86-108.

Chapter 7: Body Work and the Feminization of Poverty p.160-190.

Rivers-Moore, Megan (2016). *Gringo Gulch: Sex, Tourism, and Social Mobility in Costa Rica*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Chapter 3: Selling Sex, Selling Care: Affective Labor in the Tourism Sector p. 64-89.

Chapter 4: Motherhood, Consumption, and the Purchase of Respectability p. 90-112.

7: October 22: Forced sterilization – asynchronous

Brown, Sherronda J. (2017). White Women in Robes. [Werdbrew](http://www.werdbrew.com).

Dyck, Erika (2013). Vasectomy, Masculinity, and Hyperactivity: Ken Nelson. *Facing Eugenics: Reproduction, Sterilization, and the Politics of Choice*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. 111-142.

Kovarik, Jacquelyn (2019). Silenced No More in Peru. *NACLA Report on the Americas*. 51(3): 217-222.

Rao, Ankita. (2019). Indigenous Women in Canada are Still Being Sterilized Without Their Consent. [Vice](#).

Documentary: No Más Bebés. 2015.
<https://vimeo.com/groups/492046/videos/138365861>

8. October 29: FALL BREAK

9. November 5: Surrogacy and technology 1 – synchronous

Lewis, Sophie (2019). *Full Surrogacy Now*. London: Verso.

Piercy, Marge (2016)[1976] *Woman on the Edge of Time*. New York: Ballantine.

10: November 12: Surrogacy and technology 2 – asynchronous

Lewis, Sophie (2019). *Full Surrogacy Now*. London: Verso.

Piercy, Marge (2016)[1976] *Woman on the Edge of Time*. New York: Ballantine.

11: November 19: Abortion – synchronous

Arguedas Ramírez, Gabriela and Lynn M. Morgan. (2017). The Reproductive Rights Counteroffensive in Mexico and Central America. *Feminist Studies* 43(2): 423-437.

Krauss, Amy. (2019). The ephemeral politics of feminist accompaniment networks in Mexico City. *Feminist Theory*. 20(1): 37-54.

Marcus-Delgado, Jane. (2020). *The Politics of Abortion in Latin America*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.

Chapter 1: The Politics of Abortion in Latin America p.1-26.

Chapter 3: From Revolution and Reform to “Right to Life” p. 45-63.

Wilson, Rachel and Ally Shwed. (2018). The Jane Collective. In *Comics for Choice*. Cupertino: Alternative Comics. 41-50.

12. November 26: Zika and disability rights – asynchronous

Day, Ally (2018). Zika: Grappling with Prognostic Un/certainty and Open Normativities. *Feminist Formations* 30(1): 164-183.

Guedes de Mello, Anahí and Gabriela Rondon (2020). Feminism, disability, and reproductive autonomy: abortion in times of Zika in Brazil. [Somatosphere](#)

Mohapatra, Seema (2019). Law in the Time of Zika: Disability Rights and Reproductive Justice Collide. *Brooklyn Law Review*. 84(2): 325-366.

Reis-Castro, Luísa and Carolina Nogueira (2020). Who Should be Concerned? Zika as an Epidemic About Mosquitoes and Women (and some reflections on COVID-19). [Somatosphere](#)

13. December 3: Futures – synchronous

Murphy, Michelle. (2018). Against population, towards alterlife. In *Making Kin Not Population*. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press. 101-124.

Tallbear, Kim. (2018). Making love and relations beyond settler sex and family. In *Making Kin Not Population*. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press. 145-164.

14: December 10: Extra office hours

Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#)

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#)

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/> for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and

to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit:
<https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>

Accommodation for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs."

Plagiarism is a serious offence, which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of “F” for the course.

Read more about academic integrity here:

<https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>