

Carleton University
Fall 2017
Pauline Jewett Institute of Women's and Gender Studies

WGST 3812A: *Intersectional Families*

Monday 2:35 -5:25 pm
Location: Mackenzie Building 4342

Instructor: Anuppiriya Sriskandarajah
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Phone: ext. 4209
Office Hours: Thursday 11:30-12:30 pm

*Prerequisite: Third-year standing and 1.0 credit in WGST or permission of the Institute

Course Description

This course centers the idea that family is not a static concept and recognizes the complexity of family. This course examines family as situated within larger social systems. Central to the discussions will be the intersecting structured inequalities that inform family life. The course begins with examinations of theoretical concepts that challenge normative ideas of the family. Students will explore contemporary issues that affect family dynamics in Canada using an intersectional approach which accounts for differences of class, race, gender, sexuality, and religion. The course also examines the intersection of family and other institutions in society, including the economy, media, and the state.

Learning Objectives:

Through this course, you will:

- Gain a critical understanding of family by centering an intersectional approach to studying family.
- Looking at research gathered using various methodologies students will be exposed to different methods of knowledge construction. Students will also learn how different methods allow for differing insights.
- The final research paper allows students to apply concepts learned in class to their own research topic.
- There is no single or all pervasive definition or function of family. As such, this course requires that students consider and critically evaluate different axes of inequalities and their intersections.

Required Texts:

Course Pack *WGST 3812A Intersectional Families* available at the bookstore.

Learning Assessments:

Mid-term assignment: 35% -October 16

In-Class exam: 30%-November 13

Research Paper: 35%- December 8

Course Requirements

The aim of this course is to teach students to think critically about intersectionality as it pertains to the concept of family. All written work should be in a 12-point Times New Roman font, with page numbers and appropriate citations for all sources. Late assignments will be deducted 5% per day, this includes weekends. Students must hand in a hard-copy of the assignment. Students should keep a hard-copy for their records.

In-Class Exam (30%): Short answer and essay questions.

Mid-Term Assignment (35%)-Autoethnography: You will be required to write a personal or observational reflection on any aspect of family as discussed in class. You need to demonstrate the intersections of inequalities as it pertains to family. You can write about your own experiences or based on the observations of someone else. You are expected to draw on course material to substantiate your argument. You can also draw on outside academic sources. The assignment should be 6-8 pages in length. Your reflection should have an overarching thesis that deals with issues related to the course.

Research Paper (35%): You will be required to write a 10-15 page research project on a topic of your choice, related to some aspect of gendered childhoods. This paper will require that you demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the theoretical perspectives, concepts, and/or major arguments and debates presented in the course that relates to your topic. The final paper requires an argument. You must draw on a minimum of 8 academic sources.

REQUEST FOR 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*). **Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.** After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website (www.carleton.ca/pmc) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (*if applicable*).

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.

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

September 11: Introduction to the course

September 18: Introduction to Family and Intersectionality

How has the notion of family been constructed historically and in contemporary contexts? What is the relationship between intersectionality and the concept of family?

Shirley, Hill. 2012. "Chapter 1: The Evolution of Families and Marriage." Pp. 1-28 in *Families: A Social Class Perspective*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc. [Course pack]

Trask, Bahira Sherif. 2007. "Chapter 1: Historical Trends in the Study of Diverse Families." Pp. 3-19 in *Cultural Diversity and Families: Expanding Perspectives*, edited Bahira Sherif Trask and Raeann R. Hamon. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc. [Course pack]

September 25: Family and Poverty

What are the implications of social life in family life? How is class inequality structurally embedded?

Allen, Katherine R. and Beitin, Ben K. 2007. "Chapter 4: Gender and Class in Culturally Diverse Families." Pp. 63-79 in *Cultural Diversity and Families: Expanding Perspectives*, edited by Bahira Sherif Trask and Raeann R. Hamon. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc. [Course pack]

Roschelle, Anne. R. 2013. "Why do you Think we don't get Married? Homeless Mothers in San Francisco Speak Out About Having Children Outside of Marriage." Pg. 89-111 in *Notions of Family: Intersectional Perspectives-Advances in Gender Research Volume 17*, edited by Marla H. Kohlman, Dana B. Krieg, and Bette J. Dickerson. Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited. [Course pack]

October 2: The Intersections of Family and Race

How do racial differences inform family? How do the intersection of race and class inform family?

Ray, Rashwan and Jackson, Pamela Braboy. 2013. "Intersectionality and Work-Family Balance: A Study of Black, White, and Mexican-American Adults." Pg. 241-262 in *Notions of Family: Intersectional Perspectives-Advances in Gender Research Volume 17*, edited by Marla H. Kohlman, Dana B. Krieg, and Bette J. Dickerson. Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited. [Course pack]

Owens, Matthew. 2011. "Decent Daddy, Imperfect Daddy: Black Male Rap Artists' Views of Fatherhood and the Family." *Journal of African American Studies* 15: 327-351.

October 9: Thanksgiving Day-No class

October 16: Same-Sex Families

What are points of divergences within the LGBTQ community in regards to notions of family and marriage? How does the state govern same-sex marriage and family relations?

Kimport, Katrina. 2013. "Marrying for the Kids: Gender, Sexual Identity, and Family in Same-Sex Marriage." Pg. 67-88 in *Notions of Family: Intersectional Perspectives-Advances in Gender Research Volume 17*, edited by Marla H. Kohlman, Dana B. Krieg, and Bette J. Dickerson. Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited. [Course pack]

Andersson, Catrine. 2017. "Governing through love: Same-sex cohabitation in Sweden." *Sexualities*, 20 (5-6): 604-621.

***Mid-Term Assignment Due (Autoethnography) ***

October 23: Mid-term recess no classes

October 30: Intersectionality and Mothering

What constitutes good mothering? How does race, class, and gender inform dominant constructions of motherhood?

Dillaway, Heather E. and Pare, Elizabeth, R. 2013. "A Campaign for Good Motherhood? Exploring Media Discourse on Sarah Palin, Hillary Clinton, and Michelle Obama During the 2008 Presidential Election Campaign."- Pg. 209-239 in *Notions of Family: Intersectional Perspectives-Advances in Gender Research Volume 17*, edited by Marla H. Kohlman, Dana B. Krieg, and Bette J. Dickerson. Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited. [Course pack]

Longman, Chia, De Graeve, Katrien, and Brouckaert, Tine. 2013. "Mothering as a citizenship practice: and intersectional analysis of 'carework' and 'culturework' in non-normative mother-child identities." *Citizenship Studies*, 17(3-4): 385-399.

November 6: Family and Aging

With an increasing aging population what are the implications for families? How does aging intersect with global care chains?

Trask, B.S. 2010. "Chapter 7-Critical Issues Around Global Aging." Pp. 129-143 in *Globalization and Families*. New York: Springer. [e-book available on Carleton University Library website]

Roberto, Karen A. and Blieszner, Rosemary. 2015. "Diverse Family Structures and the Care of Older Persons." *Canadian Journal of Aging*, 34(3):305-320.

November 13: In-Class Exam

November 20: Transracial Adoption

What are the dimensions of racial socialization within 'transracial' families? What are the intersections of class and race within the context of transracial adoption?

Butler-Sweet, C. (2011). "A healthy black identity" transracial adoption, middle-class families, and racial socialization. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 42(2), 193-212.

Smith, Darron T. Juarez, Brenda G. and Jacobson, Cardell K. 2011. "White on Black: Can White Parents Teach Black Adoptive Children How to Understand and Cope with Racism?" *Journal of Black Studies*, 42 (8): 1195-1230.

November 27: The Intersection of Technology and Family

How has digital technology informed family life? While technology has made life easier, what are some of the new challenges for families caused by new technological changes?

Simpson, Brian. 2014. "Tracking children, constructing fear: GPS and the manufacture of family safety." *Information and Communications Technology Law*, 23 (3): 273-285.

Whittaker, Andrea. 2014. "Patriarchal Bargains and Assisted Reproductive Treatment in Thailand." *Gender, Technology and Development*, 18 (1):9-31.

December 4: Transnationalism and Family

How do cross border relationships inform family constructions? How does increased global migration change configurations of family?

Mahler, Sarah J, Chaudhuri, Mayurakshi, and Patil, Vrushali. 2015. "Scaling Intersectionality: Advancing Feminist Analysis of Transnational Families." *Sex Roles*, 73: 100-112.

Trask, B.S. 2010. "Chapter 4-Global Migration and the Formation of Transnational Families." Pp. 61-81 in *Globalization and Families*. New York: Springer. [e-book available on Carleton University Library website]

December 8: Medical advancements and family

How have recent medical advancements changed family configurations? What are the gendered, classed, and raced implications of these advancements?

Bhatia, Rajani. 2010. "Constructing Gender from the Inside Out: Sex-Selection Practices in the United States." *Feminist Studies*, 36 (2): 260-291.

Lustenberger, Sibylle. 2016. "From Mumbai to Tel Aviv: Distance and Intimacy in Transnational Surrogacy Arrangements." *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, 12(2): 203-224.

Final research paper due