

SOC 231-601
Syllabus for GENDER and the FAMILY (WSTD 231)
Spring Semester, 5:30-8:10 p.m. Mondays

Instructor: Jennifer HICKES Lundquist
Office: 250 McNeil Office Hours: by appointment
Telephone: 8-6325 e-mail: jhickes@ssc.upenn.edu

Required Texts

1. Ingraham, Chrys. (1999) White Weddings: Romancing Heterosexuality in Popular Culture, Routledge, England.
2. Kurz, Demie. (1995) For Richer For Poorer: Mothers Confront Divorce, Routledge, NY.
Books available at House of Our Own Bookstore.

Required Articles

Bulkpack of readings available at Wharton Reprographics. All assigned Readings not otherwise specified can be found in this bulkpack.

Course Description

This course explores the extent to which the concept of the family is a gendered social construction. We will consider how the institution of the family reflects and perpetuates gender roles that are intrinsically woven into the social norms of our society. The class will analyze ideas about the family both as a cohesive unit and as a locus of struggle between differentially-situated individuals within it. We will take into consideration various theoretical perspectives on the family, including feminist, conflict, and symbolic interactions. Focusing on the contemporary United States, topics will include the symbolic meaning of the wedding ceremony, marriage and its division of labor, the differing ideals of fatherhood versus motherhood, domestic violence, and alternative approaches to household formation. Changing trends in cohabitation, single parenthood, fertility rates, divorce and remarriage will be placed in a gendered context for critical analysis.

Course Requirements

Class Journal

- Maintain a journal to be turned in every class with a critical summary of at least one of the assigned readings (average of one page, double-spaced per reading). You are permitted one "free pass" per semester.
- On the day you lead the reading discussion you are not responsible for a journal entry.
- Your write-ups will be graded primarily for content so that I may see that you read the material carefully but were able to summarize the author's overall point. While I will not grade for writing style in the journals, I will make comments and suggestions on your writing, which should be heeded in light of the final paper.
- Journal entries count for 20% of your grade.

Class Participation

- You are expected to attend class, read Assigned Readings before each class period, and actively participate in class discussion.
- Class participation will count for 10% of your grade.

Discussion Leadership

- Every student must lead one class discussion based on the readings.
- S/he will present a brief analysis of the readings and facilitate discussion and debate with the class.

- Discussion leadership will count as 20% of your grade.

Autobiographical Family Sketch

- See end of syllabus
- The Family Sketch counts as 25% of your grade.

Three-Quarters Term Exam

- The format of the exam will be short answer and essay questions. It is based on readings and class lecture.
- The midterm counts for 25% of your grade.

January 13

Overview of course and requirements

January 20 NO CLASS (Martin Luther King Day)

January 27

Lecture: Why the family? Historical Origins of Patriarchy and the Heterosexual Family

Discussion: Feminist Theory and its relation to the Family

- **Assigned Reading:** Smythers, Ruth. (Fall 1894) Instruction and Advice for the Young Bride, Madison Institute Newsletter.
- **Assigned Reading:** Jaggar, Alison. (1983) Excerpts: “The Liberal Feminist Analysis” and “The Traditional Marxist Analysis” and “The Radical Feminist Analysis” in Feminist Politics and Human Nature.

Homework Due: Journal write-up of Jaggar reading.

February 3

Lecture: To Love, Honor and Obey: The Western Wedding Ritual

Discussion: The Gendered Wedding Industry

- **Assigned Reading: Text** White Wedding by Chrys Ingraham

Homework Due: Journal write-up of Ingraham reading.

February 10

Cohabitation and Marriage

- **Assigned Reading:** Furstenberg, Frank. (2001) “The Fading Dream: Prospects for Marriage in the Inner City” in Problem of the Century.
- **Assigned Reading:** Nock, Steven. (July/August 1999) The Problem with Marriage *Society* 11-19.
- **Assigned Reading:** Stoddard, Thomas. (Fall 1989) Why Gay People Should Seek the Right to Marry *Out/look: National Lesbian and Gay Quarterly* 6:9-13.
- **Assigned Reading:** Editors (June 2000) I do! I do? *Ms. Magazine* 10:4, p. 56-70.
- **Assigned Reading:** Goldstein, Amy. (April 2002) “Tying Marriage Vows to Welfare Reform” *Washington Post*. A1.

Homework Due: Journal write-up of either Furstenberg or Nock reading **AND** personal reaction to *Washington Post* article.

February 17

Division of Unpaid Labor in the Family

- **Assigned Reading:** Folbre, Nancy (2001) Introduction, Chapter one and Chapter two in The Invisible Heart: Economics and Family Values. New York: The New Press.
- **Assigned Reading:** Di Leonardo, Micaela. (1987) The Female World of Cards and Holidays: Women, Families and the Work of Kinship *Signs* 12:3.
- **Assigned Reading:** Lorber, Judith (1994) "Daily Bread: Gender and Domestic Labor" in Paradoxes of Gender.

Homework Due: Journal write-up of Folbre and Lorber reading.

February 24

Families and Paid Work

- **Assigned Reading:** Hill Collins, Patricia. (2000) "Work, Family and Black Women's Oppression" in Black Feminist Thought.
- **Assigned Reading:** Oppenheimer, Valerie Kincade. 1994. "Women's Rising Employment and the Future of the Family in Industrial Societies." *Population and Development Review*, 20(2): 293-342.
- **Assigned Reading:** Gibbs, Nancy. (April 2002) "Babies versus Career: Which Should Come First for Women Who Want Both. The Harsh Facts about Fertility." *Time*.
- **Assigned Reading:** Franke-Ruta, Garance. (July 2002) "Creating a Lie: Sylvia Ann Hewlett and the Myth of the Baby Bust." *The American Prospect* 13:12.

Homework Due: Journal write-up of either Oppenheimer or Hill Collins reading **AND** personal reaction to *Time* article.

March 3

Alternative Family Structures

- **Assigned Reading:** Kennedy, Pagan. (July 2001) So...Are You Two Together? How do You Explain Sharing Your Life with a Friend instead of a Lover? *Ms. Magazine* 11:4: 75-9.
- **Assigned Reading:** Corbett, Sara. (October 2001) When Debbie Met Christina, Who then Became Chris: Does a Sex Change Mean the End of a Relationship? *New York Post Magazine* 11:4: 75-9.
- **Assigned Reading:** Weston, Kay. (1992) "The Politics of Gay Families" in Rethinking the Family.
- **Assigned Reading:** Stacey, Judith and Biblarz, Timothy (April 2001) "(How) Does the Sexual Orientation of Parents Matter?" *American Sociological Review* 66:159-183.
- **Assigned Reading:** Denizet-Louis, Benoit (May 2002) "The Boy Who Isn't" *New York Times*.

Homework Due: Journal write-up of Stacey/Biblarz reading **AND** personal reaction to *New York Times* article.

March 10-- NO CLASS (Spring Break)

March 17

Marital Dissolution

- **Assigned Reading: Text** For Richer For Poorer: Mothers Confront Divorce by Demie Kurz.

Homework Due: Journal write-up of Kurz book.

March 24

Motherhood

- **Assigned Reading:** Hill Collins, Patricia (2000). "Black Women and Motherhood" in Black Feminist Thought.
- **Assigned Reading:** Katz Rothman, Barbara. (1989) "Motherhood in a Technological Society" and "Motherhood Under Capitalism" in Recreating Motherhood: Ideology and Technology in a Patriarchal Society.
- **Assigned Reading:** Coltrane, Scott. (1998) "Engendering Children" in Gender and Families.
- **Assigned Reading:** (February 2000) "The Mommy Wars: How the Media Turned Motherhood into a Catfight" *Ms. Magazine*, 10:2, p. 62-8.

Homework Due: Journal write-up of Coltrane or Hill Collins reading **AND** personal reaction to *Ms.* article

March 31 EXAM

April 7

Fatherhood

- **Assigned Reading:** Mintz, Steven. (1998) "From Patriarchy to Androgyny and Other Myths: Placing Men's Family Roles in Historical Perspective" in Men In Families.
- **Assigned Reading:** Kindlon & Thompson (1999). "The Culture of Cruelty" and "Fathers and Sons: A Legacy of Desire and Distance" in Raising Cain: Protecting the Emotional Life of Boys.
- **Assigned Reading:** Risman, Barbara. (1998) "Necessity and the Invention of Mothering" in Gender Vertigo.
- **Assigned Reading:** O'Sullivan, John. (July 2000) The Manly Ideal, *National Review*, p. 21-2.
- **Assigned Reading:** O'Beirne, Kate. (July 2000) Paternity Fight, *National Review*, p. 22-3.

Homework Due: Journal write-up of Mintz or Kindlon/Thompson reading **AND** personal reaction to either *National Review* article.

April 14

Domestic Abuse

- **Assigned Reading:** McGoldrick, Monica et al. (1999) "Violence and the Family Life Cycle" from The Expanded Family Life Cycle.
- **Assigned Reading:** Messner, Michael. (2001) "When Bodies Are Weapons: Masculinity and Violence in Sport" in Gender Mosaics.
- **Assigned Reading:** Ostrowski, Julie (March 2002) "While Murderous Moms Shock, Homicidal Dads Ignored." *Women's Enews*

Homework Due: Journal write-up of McGoldrick or Messner reading **AND** personal reaction to *Women's Enews* article

April 21

Technology, the Family and the future

- **Assigned Reading:** Risman, Barbara. (1998) "Toward a Dizzying but Liberating Future" in Gender Vertigo.

- **Assigned Reading:** Pappert, Ann. (June 2000) What Price Pregnancy *Ms. Magazine*, 10:4, p. 42-50.
- **Assigned Reading:** Schulman, Audrey (June 2000) Inconceivable *Ms. Magazine* 10:4, p. 50-3.
- **Assigned Reading:** Katz Rothman, Barbara. (1998) "Now You can Choose!" in Revisioning Gender.
- **Assigned Reading:** Weidman Schneider, Susan (Fall 2001) Jewish Women's Egg: A Hot Commodity in the NF Marketplace *Lilith* 26:3, p. 22-7.

Homework Due: Journal write-up of Risman and Katz Rothman readings.

FAMILY AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH: This paper should be no shorter than ten pages, typed, double-spaced, well-written and fully proofread, and deal with your family of orientation (the family in which you grew up, whether that was a traditional two-parent family, a single-parent family, a blended family, a foster family--whatever the setting in which you spent the majority of your childhood years. Feel free to include photos, poetry, artwork, whatever helps convey your family realities. Also feel free to interview your parents about some of these areas and write down observations during family holidays if you have the opportunity.

Please include the following:

1. Division of labor. Who contributed what to your family (in terms of everything from economics, housework, and childcare to maintaining family and friendship ties, emotional tone, and spiritual life)? What do you see as the good and bad effects of the way your family divided up its tasks?
2. Power. (A pretty standard sociological definition of power, coming from Max Weber, is the ability to get one's way even if others resist; but there are probably more subtle and manipulative kinds of power that should also be included here.) Who had what kinds of power? Did your father dominate your mother or vice versa or were they pretty equal in terms of power? What were their areas of power? Did kids dominate parents or vice versa? Did one of the kids have more power than others? How were key decisions made? Did power relationships reflect cultural expectations about roles, or moreso reflect the individual personalities of those in the family? If you grew up in a single-parent family, do you think that had any consequences for the distribution of power?
3. Generations. How do you think your family dynamics were affected by your parent(s)' experiences in their own families of orientation? Were there certain things your grandparents had done that your parents were trying to emulate or to avoid? Are there aspects of your own family experience that you will want to emulate or avoid in the families you create?
4. Major crises. Was your family affected by unemployment, alcoholism, death, family violence, etc. and in what ways?
5. How old were your parents when their children were born? How ready do you think they were to become parents? How would you characterize their parenting style? Did they have specific ideals and values that they tried very hard to inculcate in you? Were there major differences and/or conflicts between them about parenting issues? Did they maintain a lot of control over your activities? How did this change (if at all) as you became older?

6. Discuss patterns of communication in your family. How did people express their feelings? Did you tend to all get together for certain meals, and if so, what was the pattern of conversation at those meals? How did the children in the family learn about sexuality?

7. How many siblings do you have, and where do you fit in terms of birth order and gender? Do you think your sibling(s), if any, would describe your family the same way you do? Do you think you and your siblings played distinctive roles in your family?

8. Are there aspects of your family experience with which it has taken you a long time to come to terms or with which you are still struggling? What do you think it would take to achieve a resolution of those issues?

9. What are your present relations with your family of origin?

10. Tell me anything else that is important to include for an understanding of your family experience.
