

Ethnographic Perspectives on Reproduction and Childbirth (ANTH 390)

Instructor: Dr. Angela N. Castañeda, Ph.D.

E-mail: acastaneda@depauw.edu

Semester: Spring 2017

Location: HSB 112

Time: 12:40-2:10 Tuesday and Thursdays

Office: Harrison Hall 315

Office Hours: 10am-Noon Tuesday and Thursday, also by appointment

Office Tel. #: 765-658-4372

*The mother's womb is replaced by the womb of culture,
which, comfortably or uncomfortably, cradles us all.*

Robbie Davis-Floyd

Course Description

Reproduction is a topic that straddles both the public and private. It can be viewed as an intimate topic at the individual level while simultaneously open for public debate surrounding policy at local, state and national levels. Students in this course will examine the social and cultural constructions of reproduction, and how power in everyday life shapes reproductive behavior and its cross cultural meanings. For example, childbirth is a subject that touches the lives of each of us, and in this class we will be using an anthropological lens to explore the how and why of birth practices. Additional topics addressed are state intervention in fertility and reproduction, the cultural production of “natural” childbirth, the politics of fetal personhood, and cultural variation in ideas about surrogacy and prenatal diagnosis, among others.

Course Goals and Objectives

Students in this course will gain broad exposure to a number of reproductive health issues. As we work to build our class community, we will engage with multiple levels of learning: theoretically and empirically, through the readings we will do for class and through class discussion; experientially, through your essay response papers and by leading class discussions, as well as by conducting your own ethnographic field research in the form of reproductive life histories.

This course seeks to engage students and craft the following skills: 1) Develop the capacity to question assumptions surrounding reproduction and childbirth in the world around them. 2) Conduct preliminary ethnographic research, learning by doing a primary research (reproductive life history) over the course of the semester. 3) Unpack the diverse reproductive health situations influenced by the intersectional nature of gender, race, ethnicity, nationality and class. 4) Link global reproductive health issues with local concerns. 5) Demonstrate enhanced critical thinking, reading, writing, and oral presentation skills.

Required Reading:

Andaya, Elise. 2014. *Conceiving Cuba: Reproduction, Women, and the State in the Post-Soviet Era*, Rutgers University Press.

Berry, Nicole S. 2012. *Unsafe Motherhood: Mayan Maternal Mortality and Subjectivity in Post-War Guatemala*, Berghahn Books.

DeLoache, Judy S. and Alma Gottlieb. 2016 second edition. *A World of Babies: Imagined Childcare Guides for Eight Societies*. Cambridge University Press.

Gaskin, Ina May. 2011. *Birth Matters: A Midwife's Manifesta*, Seven Stories Press.

Gutmann, Matthew C. 2007. *Fixing Men: Sex, Birth Control, and AIDS in Mexico*, University of California Press.

Roberts, Elizabeth. 2012. *God's Laboratory: Assisted Reproduction in the Andes*, University of California Press.

Taylor, Janelle. 2009. *The Public Life of the Fetal Sonogram*, Rutgers University Press.

For Viewing: The following list is provided to enhance material presented in the readings and serve as supplemental material for your research projects.

A doula's story: On the front lines of teen pregnancy

All My Babies (1952 film about granny midwives in the health department system)

At Highest Risk (Documentary in Andean Peru about reproductive health of Quechua)

Babies (documentary about the first year of birth for babies in four cultures)

Birth Story: Ina May Gaskin & the Farm Midwives (recent history of American midwifery)

Birth at Home (traditional midwives of India, their spirituality rebirth, and "unclean" status)

Expecting/La Espera (story of a young couple and abortion in Chile)

Guerilla Midwife (opening birth centers in Bali)

It's My Body, My Baby, My Birth (10 mothers with varying natural birth experiences)

Juno (teenage pregnancy)

Laboring Under an Illusion: Mass Media Childbirth vs. the Real Thing (media and birth)

The Pill (one a documentary and the other a comedy about the morning after pill)

What to Expect when You're Expecting (comedy)

Course Requirements:

Thoughtful Participation: Remember, this is a seminar-style course and a portion of your grade is based on your participation. This includes active listening, responding to your classmates in respectful and engaging ways; also making comments that connect with course readings and demonstrate that you have read and thought about the material for the day's discussion.

- Discussion Leaders: Each student will be expected to lead the discussion with a partner for one class, either as advocate or critic of the assigned readings (10%).
- Discussion Starters: Students must come to class prepared to share their thoughts on the assigned texts in the form of discussion starters (1 question and 1 statement to start class discussion--to be added to our shared googledoc by noon on the day of the class; discussion leaders do NOT need to submit a discussion starter) (5%).

Written Assignments: There are two papers for this class. The process for completing these papers includes peer editing, drafting and individual writing conferences. Students will receive individual handouts for each paper

- Reproductive History Narrative (25%)
- Reproduction and the Media (20%)

Exam: There will be two exams given during the semester (20% each).

Grading

A note on graded materials—you must wait at least 24 hours (but no more than 1 week) before coming to see me about a grade you received on any class material. I am available to look over a graded assignment only after you have taken sufficient time to read through both your original work and my comments. Keep in mind that reviewing graded material also means a possible increase OR decrease in the original grade, so be sure to look over your work carefully before bringing it to my attention for a second time.

Your final grade for the course will be based on the following:

- Participation.....15%
 - Papers.....45%
 - Exams.....40%
- TOTAL 100%

Grading Scale

A 94%+	A- 90-93%	
B+ 87-89%	B 84-86%	B- 80-83%
C+ 77-79%	C 74-76%	C- 70-73%
D+ 67-69%	D 64-66%	D- 60-63%
F 59%-		

The following information will help you better understand the criteria for graded material:

A= exceptionally thought-provoking, original, creative in both content and manner of presentation, and a skillful use of concepts and/or materials which are fully supported.

B= presents a solid understanding of the subject matter and an ability to handle the issues and materials encountered in the subject with only minor errors.

C= demonstrates an adequate understanding of the subject matter with central ideas present, but too general, repetitious and not clearly supported or integrated with evidence and details.

D= a minimally acceptable performance with a confusing central idea and lacking details. Parts of the assignment are missing and/or incomplete.

F= shows lack of effort and minimal comprehension of material with major mechanical errors, no thesis, and misuse of key concepts.

Attendance

Regular attendance and active class participation is required. Also note that you should be both physically and mentally present—this means demonstrating active listening skills, participating and refraining from causing class distractions (ie. Leaving during class—unless for an emergency). Late arrivals will not be tolerated. Class attendance will be taken at the beginning of the period, and it is your responsibility to make sure you receive credit for your attendance if you arrive after attendance is taken. Irregular attendance and repeated late arrivals will result in the lowering of the final course grade.

Class Preparation

Your class preparation is essential to your required active participation in the course. You must complete assigned readings **before** the class period for which they are assigned. You must come to class with prepared questions and comments regarding the assigned readings. Things to think about regarding the readings: What was the author's main point/thesis? How does this relate to the class topic? What connection can you make between the reading and your own life?

Assignment Policy

All assignments must be turned in as specified by the instructor (either hard copy stapled and numbered or electronically submitted). In order to maintain fairness among all students, late assignments will not be accepted without a medical excuse or otherwise documented emergency. The instructor retains the right to lower the grade on any late assignment accepted. If you must miss class on the day an assignment is due, it is your responsibility to turn the assignment in early.

Academic Dishonesty

All work must be **your own**. You must give credit to **any** information and/or ideas that you use that are not your own by citing it in your work. Failing to do so will be perceived as plagiarism resulting in a zero on the assignment and possible additional penalties to be decided by the instructor. Use Chicago Manual of Style in-text citations (author/date). If you are unfamiliar with proper citation procedures, you should ask your instructor or consult the W center.

Accommodations:

“It is the policy and practice of DePauw University to provide reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. Written notification from Student Disability Services is required. If you are eligible to receive an accommodation and would like to request it for this course, please contact Student Disability Services. Allow one week advance notice to ensure enough time for reasonable accommodations to be made. Otherwise, it is not guaranteed that the accommodation can be provided on a timely basis. Accommodations are not retroactive. Students who have questions about Student Disability Services or who have, or think they may have, a disability (psychiatric, attentional, learning, vision, hearing, physical, medical, etc.) are invited to contact Student Disability Services for a confidential discussion in Union Building Suite 200 or by phone at 658-6267.”

Questions???

I always encourage all of my students to take advantage of my office hours, either for questions, concerns, or just “drop-in” discussions. Please feel free to stop by Asbury Hall 219, and if the “official” hours are not convenient or you would like to ensure yourself a specific block of time, we can easily set up an appointment that meets your needs and schedule, you only have to ask. You can reach me: office phone x4372 or email acastaneda@depauw.edu.

Course Outline

WEEK 1 INTRODUCTION

January 31st: Course Introduction, discussion of texts, requirements and expectations.

Inhorn “Women Consider Freezing Your Eggs”

<http://www.cnn.com/2013/04/09/opinion/inhorn-egg-freezing>

February 2nd: READ: Rayna Rapp and Faye Ginsburg's "The Politics of Reproduction;"

And

Morgan and Taylor “Egg Freezing: WTF?”

<http://www.thefeministwire.com/2013/04/op-ed-egg-freezing-wtf/>

And

“Silicon Valley Companies Add New Benefit For Women”

<http://www.npr.org/sections/alltechconsidered/2014/10/17/356765423/silicon-valley-companies-add-new-benefit-for-women-egg-freezing>

Eggsploitation (documentary)

WEEK 2 FERTILITY and the State...Cuba

February 7th: Read Andaya chapters 1-4

February 9th: Read Andaya chapters 5-7; DISCUSSION LEADERS

WEEK 3 FERTILITY and the State...Ecuador

February 14th: Read Roberts Intro, chapters 1-2; Video on gestational surrogacy
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GED9rYPkAIQ> (14:30)

February 16th: Read Roberts chapters 3-5 and conclusion; DISCUSSION LEADERS

WEEK 4 FERTILITY and the State...Mexico

February 21st: Read Gutmann chapters 1-4

February 23rd: Read Gutmann chapters 5-8; DISCUSSION LEADERS

WEEK 5 Men, Masculinity and Reproduction continued...

February 28th: Read Moore “Killer Sperm”* and Oaks “Manhood and Meaning in the Marketing of the Male Pill”*

March 2nd: Read Han “Making Room for Daddy”* and Miller “Husband-assisted Birth among Rarámuri of Northern Mexico”*

WEEK 6 EXAM

March 7th: MIDTERM EXAM

March 9th: Read Berry Intro and chapters 1-3

WEEK 7 CHILDBIRTH...Guatemala

March 14th: Read Berry chapters 4-6 and conclusion; DISCUSSION LEADERS

March 16th: *Business of Being Born*

WEEK 8 CHILDBIRTH...at home

March 21st: Read Gaskin chapters 1-5

March 23rd: Read Gaskin chapters 6-9; DISCUSSION LEADERS

WEEK 9 SPRING BREAK

WEEK 10 PAPER DUE

April 4th: DRAFT PAPER DUE in-class peer editing

April 6th: FINAL PAPER DUE reproduction and the media

WEEK 11 CHILDBIRTH and technology

April 11th: Read Taylor chapters 1-4; K. Otto “Humanizing and Heroizing the Fetus”*

April 13th: Read Taylor chapters 5-7; DISCUSSION LEADERS

WEEK 12 CHILDCARE

April 18th: Read Gottlieb chapters 1-3

April 20th: Read Gottlieb chapters 4-5; *Babies* (documentary)

WEEK 13 CHILDCARE continued...

April 25th: Read Gottlieb chapters 6-9; DISCUSSION LEADERS

April 27th: **EXAM**

WEEK 14 Reproductive History Narrative

May 2nd: Writing Conferences

May 4th: PRESENTATION OF FIELD PROJECTS

WEEK 15 CONCLUSIONS...

May 9th: PRESENTATION OF FIELD PROJECTS

May 11th: **PAPERS DUE**

NOTE: The instructor retains the right to change the syllabus for this class as necessary.