Ethnographic Perspectives on Reproduction and Childbirth  
(ANTH 390)

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Semester: Spring 2016  
Location: HSB 112  
Time: 10:00-11:30 Tuesday and Thursdays  
Office: Asbury Hall 219  
Office Hours: Wednesdays 1-4pm, also by appointment  
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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.

Required Reading:


For Viewing: We may not have time to screen all of the films on the syllabus, however, the list below 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%).
- Free writing and Discussion Starters: Students must come to class prepared to share their thoughts on the assigned texts in the form of free writing exercises and discussion starter questions (1 question and 1 statement to start class discussion) (10%).

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 (20% each)

- Reproductive History Narrative
- Field Project Media Portrayals of Reproduction

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………………………………...20%
- Papers…………………………………………...40%
- 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:
“DePauw University is committed to providing equal access to academic programs and university administered activities with reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities, in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act and Amendments (ADAAA). If you are a student who believes you may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability or learning challenge you are strongly encouraged to contact Student Disability Services for further information on how to receive accommodations and support. Contact information for Student Disability Services is: 408 S. Locust Street, Suite 200, in The Memorial Student Union Building (765-658-6267) (studentdisabilityservices@depauw.edu). Accommodations cannot be implemented until the faculty member has received the official ADA letter, released by Student Disability Services. It is critical that you schedule a time to discuss the implementation of the accommodations specified in your letter with each faculty member receiving the letter. Accommodations are not retroactive. Students with documented disabilities have the right to choose not to use accommodations, and in exercising that right, they accept the
resulting outcomes. This means that faculty are under no obligation to retroactively address any issue arising from students' choices to forgo accommodations.”

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
February 2nd: Course Introduction, discussion of texts, requirements and expectations.


WEEK 2  FERTILITY and the State…Cuba
February 9th: Read Andaya chapters 1-4

February 11th: Read Andaya chapters 5-7; DISCUSSION LEADERS

WEEK 3  FERTILITY and the State…Ecuador
February 16th: Read Roberts Intro, chapters 1-2

February 18th: Read Roberts chapters 3-5 and conclusion; DISCUSSION LEADERS

WEEK 4  FERTILITY and the State…Mexico
February 23rd: Read Gutmann chapters 1-4

February 25th: Read Gutmann chapters 5-8; DISCUSSION LEADERS

WEEK 5  Men, Masculinity and Reproduction continued…
March 1st: Read Moore “Killer Sperm”* and Oaks “Manhood and Meaning in the Marketing of the Male Pill”*

March 3rd: Read Han “Making Room for Daddy”* and Miller “Husband-assisted Birth among Rarámuri of Northern Mexico”*

WEEK 6  EXAM
March 8th: MIDTERM EXAM

March 10th: Read Berry Intro and chapters 1-3

WEEK 7  CHILDBIRTH…Guatemala
March 15th: Read Berry chapters 4-6 and conclusion; DISCUSSION LEADERS

March 17th: *At Highest Risk* (documentary) OR *No Woman No Cry*

**WEEK 8 SPRING BREAK**

**WEEK 9 CHILDBIRTH...at home**
March 29th: Read Gaskin chapters 1-5

March 31st: Read Gaskin chapters 6-9; DISCUSSION LEADERS

**WEEK 10 PAPER DUE**
April 5th: PAPER DUE reproductive history

April 7th: Gutmann Lecture 4:15 UB Ballroom

**WEEK 11 CHILDBIRTH and technology**
April 12th: Read Taylor chapters 1-4

April 14th: Read Taylor chapters 5-7; DISCUSSION LEADERS

**WEEK 12 CHILDCARE**
April 19th: Read Gottlieb chapters 1-4

April 21st: *Babies* (documentary)

**WEEK 13 CHILDCARE continued...**
April 26th: Read Gottlieb chapters 5-8; DISCUSSION LEADERS

April 28th: Writing Conferences

**WEEK 14 EXAM**
May 3rd: EXAM

May 5th: TBA

**WEEK 15 CONCLUSIONS...**
May 10th: PRESENTATION OF FIELD PROJECTS

May 12th: PRESENTATION OF FIELD PROJECTS & PAPERS DUE

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