This course provides you with a critical and cross-cultural perspective on human reproduction. We explore how reproduction is shaped by personal and cultural meaning at the same time that it is embedded in local, national and trans-national politics. We consider men's and women's perspectives on reproduction and give particular emphasis to the ways in which infertility, fertility, pregnancy, and birth intersect with social hierarchies of gender, wealth, ethnicity, sexuality, and ableness. Among the topics addressed through a range of cross-cultural examples are state intervention in fertility and reproduction, family size as a marker of “development,” the cultural production of “natural” childbirth, the politics of fetal personhood, meanings of infertility, surrogacy and pregnancy loss, and cultural variation in ideas about procreation, prenatal diagnosis, and abortion. The prerequisite to this course is ANTH 200.

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Additional readings available on Reserve in the McPherson Library as hardcopies (R) or accessible on-line (E)

COURSE WORKLOAD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Feb. 23 (1.5 hours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper Topic</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>anytime before Mar. 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>March 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take home Final Exam</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Due April 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Your active participation in class is expected. Please do the readings in advance of the class and come prepared to ask and answer questions about them.
- Use the first weeks of the term to read ahead in the two ethnographies.
- The mid-term examination may include definitions, short answer, essay questions, and multiple choice questions. The take-home final exam will test material from the entire course; LMM will hand out essay questions on the last day of class. Requests for make-up exams will only be considered with documentation from a physician/counsellor.
- Research paper guidelines are provided in a separate handout. Browsing the websites and on-line journals listed in this syllabus may help you choose a research topic.
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY, PLAGIARISM, CHEATING
Students should familiarize themselves with the University's Policy on Academic Integrity [http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2006/FACS/UnIn/UARe/PoAcI.html](http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2006/FACS/UnIn/UARe/PoAcI.html). Students who plagiarise and/or cheat will receive a failing grade.

EQUITY STATEMENT
The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive, supportive and safe learning and working environment for all its members (Senate resolution, Jan.13, 1999). As part of our commitment to equity, the Department of Anthropology has in place an Equity committee. This Committee is currently reviewing and considering the recommendations of a University report that addresses, in part, the experiences and concerns of gay, lesbian, bisexual, two spirited, transgendered and queer students. If you have concerns regarding this or any other equity issue in the classroom, please contact the Dept of Anthropology for the names of current Equity Committee members.

Useful Websites
- Canadian Women's Health Network [http://www.cwhn.ca/indexeng.html](http://www.cwhn.ca/indexeng.html)
- College of Midwives of British Columbia [http://www.cmbc.bc.ca/](http://www.cmbc.bc.ca/)
- Development Gateway [http://www.developmentgateway.org/pop](http://www.developmentgateway.org/pop)
- Global Reproductive Health Forum [http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/grhf/](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/grhf/)
  (site is no longer updated but has lots of useful information)
- Museum of Menstruation [http://www.mum.org/bibliog.htm](http://www.mum.org/bibliog.htm)
- Reproductive Health Reality Check [http://www.rhrealitycheck.org](http://www.rhrealitycheck.org)
- World Health Organization- Reproductive Health [http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/](http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/)

Let me know if you find other useful sites.
ASSESSMENT SCALE:
Half points are rounded up when the final grade is determined. You will not be permitted to do revisions or additional work to improve your final grade for this course.

►Please familiarize yourself with the grading scale used in this course.◄

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>95-100%</td>
<td>Exceptional</td>
<td>Outstanding comprehension, innovative analysis, original or thought-provoking insight, elegant writing, impressive research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-94%</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Very high level of comprehension and application of material, and effective advanced analysis. Statements are well-substantiated. Excellent organization and writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>85-89%</td>
<td>Very good</td>
<td>Consistently high level of comprehension and application of material; evidence of ability to analyse and critique. Statements are well-substantiated. Very good organization and writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>80-84%</td>
<td>Above average</td>
<td>Good comprehension of and application of course material. Some evidence of effective analysis. Statements are substantiated, very good organization and writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>75-79%</td>
<td>Somewhat above average</td>
<td>Good comprehension of course material. Some application and analysis is attempted. Statements are substantiated, with some over-generalization. Good organization and clear writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>70-74%</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Some evidence of comprehension of materials; mostly descriptive, rather than analytical/critical work. Passable organization and writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>65-69%</td>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>Some evidence of comprehension of materials, but generally weak application and analysis. Some unsubstantiated and over-generalized statements. Weak organization and writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>60-64%</td>
<td>Minimally Adequate</td>
<td>Limited evidence of comprehension; little or no application and analysis. Superficial treatment, statements are unsubstantiated, over-generalised. Weak organization and writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>50-59%</td>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>Little or no evidence of comprehension or analysis. Superficial treatment, statements are unsubstantiated, over-generalised. Poor organization and writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-49%</td>
<td>Failure</td>
<td>Does not meet minimum standard for comprehension, analysis, documentation, organization or writing. Plagiarism.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Class and Readings Schedule**

**Week 1: Conceiving Reproduction: Biology, Relationships, Meaning and Power**
We introduce anthropological approaches to reproduction with examples of the ways in which childbearing in all societies is a biosocial-biocultural process, diversely interpreted and a key site for reproducing socially significant ideas and relationships.

**Readings**
- Mitchell, Ch. 1

**If you want more:**

**Week 2: Authoritative Knowledge**
We introduce and critique Jordan’s concept of ‘authoritative knowledge’ to discuss relationships of power and authority in knowing and managing birth.

**Film:**

**Readings**
- Mitchell, *Baby’s First Picture*, Ch. 3

**If you want more:**
Week 3: Births as Cultural and Political: Technocratic Births
This week and next, we examine contemporary debates among physicians, midwives, and women and men in Canada and the United States over how, where, and with whom women should labour and give birth. We focus on birth as a key site for expressing core cultural ideas and socially significant ideas and relationships.

Readings
- Mitchell, Ch. 3&4

If you want more:

Week 4: Births as Cultural and Political: Midwifery and “Natural” Childbirth
We will discuss the resurgence of midwifery in North America, the social construction of “natural” childbirth, and the meanings and politics of place in childbirth.

Readings

If you want more:
Week 5: Technology in Trans-national Circulation: Fetal Imaging

Using the example of ultrasound fetal imaging, we discuss ways in which biomedical reproductive technology and practice have been accepted by and/or imposed upon people in diverse cultural contexts.

Readings

- Mitchell, Baby’s First Picture, Ch. 2, 5, 6, and 7

If you want more:


Week 6: Stratified Reproduction

"Stratified reproduction" (Ginsburg and Rapp 1995:3) highlights the ways in which the reproductive lives of some groups are de-valued and subjected to increased social surveillance and control. Social hierarchies of gender, economics, ethnicity, sexuality and ableness mean "some categories of people are empowered to reproduce and nurture, while others are disempowered" (Ginsburg & Rapp 1995:3). Specific examples for discussion include low income women, Indigenous populations, school age pregnancy, same-sex parents, and women and men in prison.

Readings:


If you want more:

Week 7: Reading Break---No Class

Week 8: Midterm Exam Tonight
Readings: None.

Week 9: Global Politics of Reproduction: Maternal Mortality
A woman in Africa has a one in 16 chance of dying from pregnancy-related causes; the risk to women in wealthy countries is one in 2,800 (http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/).
We examine political, economic and social factors which contribute to maternal deaths during pregnancy and childbirth and discuss both hospitalization and traditional birth attendants as strategies to make childbearing safer for women in low-income countries.
Readings:
• Maternowska, Ch. 1 and 2

Week 10: Population and Contraception I
This week and next we discuss the global politics of “overpopulation.” We examine the historical and social construction of “over population,” the inequitable global distribution of contraceptive methods and consider population control as a form of state- and industry-sanctioned violence.
Readings
• Maternowska, Ch. 3 and 4
If you want more
Week 11: Population and Contraception II
Continuing our discussion of population control, we focus on Haiti in order to explore the intersections of stratified reproduction and population control. We focus in particular on the ways in which poverty and gender inequity profoundly shapes reproduction.

Readings
- Maternowska, Ch. 5, 6, and 7

Week 12: Reproductive Struggles: Abortion
Tonight we consider abortion care in diverse settings, contested meanings and politics of abortion, abortion care, sex-selection and abortion, and reproductive rights.

Readings
- Mitchell, Baby's First Picture, Ch. 7 & 8

If you want more

Week 13: Reproductive Struggles: Infertility, IVF and Surrogacy
Meanings of childlessness are considered as are the social, cultural and material practices of attempting to reproduce through in-vitro fertilisation and surrogacy.

Readings

If you want more:
- Feldman-Savelsberg, Pamela (1994) Plundered Kitchens and Empty Wombs: Fear of


**Week 14: Prenatal Diagnosis and Reproductive Loss**

We finish the course with anthropological analyses of pregnancy loss, the birth of infants with significant problems of health and development, and of child fostering and adopting.

**Readings**


**If you want more:**