

# ANTH 490v: Anthropology of Reproduction

January 2012

Class time: Monday & Thursday 14:00-15:30

Location: EME 1203

Sessional instructor: **Michelle Walks**

Email: **michellewalks@gmail.com**

Office: **A357**

Office hours: **Thursday 12:30-13:30** (or by appointment in A384)

Focused on the subject of cross-cultural reproduction, this course will explore some of the main issues today in the Anthropology of Reproduction. Instead of delving into full-length ethnographies of particular experiences, we will instead cover a range of topics in class. That said, two major themes that will continually surface are globalization and mothering, each making purposeful connections to the focus of this course. Moreover, each student will explore (in-depth) one topic/area of particular interest to them. Overall, using particular examples from readings and other course materials, we will highlight the importance of the Anthropology of Reproduction, in and of itself, as well as its relation to other elements of culture.

## Intended Learning Outcomes

Through an *examination* of the course materials and activities...

- students will be able to *compare, contrast, and analyze* reproductive policies and practices in different cultural settings, and *critically evaluate and justify* the outcomes and experiences that result of these policies and practices;
- students will further be able to *see the connections/make links* among different topics and practices of reproduction, as well as between aspects of culture that are explicitly related to reproduction and those that are more implicit;
- students will *critically reflect* on their (privileged) positions, as well as their particular beliefs and experiences; additionally,
- students will *critically challenge* (reproductive) practices that are idealized, *developing* and *producing* a process to look beyond these romanticized presentations of cultural practices
- students will gain practice and comfort with ‘low-stakes’ writing and group-work

## REQUIRED READINGS

1. Walks, Michelle & Naomi McPherson, editors  
2011 *An Anthropology of Mothering*. Bradford, ON: Demeter Press. [AM]
2. Browner, Carole H. & Carolyn F. Sargent, editors  
2011 *Reproduction, Globalization, and the State*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. [RGS]
3. **course reader (CR) & online**: see last 2 pages of syllabus for citations
4. **handout**: Bhav Nd.

## Grading:

Class participation	30%
Annotated bib + paper proposal	20%
Presentation (oral or poster)	15%
Final Paper	35%

**List of Weekly topics & Daily readings [subject to change]**

**January 4: Welcome/Introductions**

**Week 2: Introduction**

- Jan 9:** -Ginsburg & Rapp (online); Dudgeon & Inhorn (online)  
-**optional:** *RGS*, Foreword & Intro  
**Jan 11:** -*AM* ch1

**Week 3: Foundations**

- Jan 16:** -*AM* ch2  
**Jan 18:** -Colen (*CR*)

**Week 4: Stratified Reproduction & Loss** [group-assigned focused readings]

- Jan 23:** -*AM*: 13, 17, 18  
**Jan 25:** -Allison (online); Feldman-Savelsberg (*CR*); Bhave (handout)

**Week 5: New Reproductive Technologies (NRTs)**

- Jan 30:** -*RGS* 1 & Layne (online)  
**Due:** -paper proposal & annotated bibliography 20% (\*at this time you will also need to make a decision about whether your presentation will be oral or via poster)  
**Feb 1:** -*RGS* 13, 7

**Week 6: Birth control, population control, “family planning” & ‘Sex Cells’**

- Feb 6:** -*RGS* 3; Hanh (*CR*)  
-*Missing Women: Female-Selective Abortion & Infanticide* (2006, 54m)  
**Feb 9:** Tober 2001 (online)  
-film: *Anonymous Father’s Day* (43m)

**Week 7: ‘Sex Sells’: Commodity & Reproduction**

- Feb 13:** -*RGS* 10  
-film: *Cowboys in Paradise* (45m)  
**Feb 16:** -no readings  
-film: *Nepal’s Stolen Children* (50m)

**Week 8: Reading Week** (Feb 20-24)

**Week 9: Reproduction, Islamic Countries, and Muslim Families**

- Feb 27:** -*RGS* 6, 8; *AM* 14  
**Mar 1:** DUE: *student presentations* (pt1)

**Week 10: Immigration**

- Mar 5:** DUE: *student presentations* (pt2)  
**Mar 8:** -*AM* 12, 11; *RGS* 12

**Wk 11: Mothering & Repro Rights through War, Displacement, & Colonization**

**Mar 12:** -AM 15; RGS 14

**Mar. 15:** -AM 5, 6

**Week 12: Infant feeding & Breastfeeding**

**Mar 19:** -AM 7, 8, 9

**Mar 22:** peer-reviewing papers

**Week 13: Maternal care, reproductive choice & availability**

**Mar 26:** -Craven (CR) & AM 4

-film: *The Business of Being Born* (2008, 87m)

**Mar 29:** -Davis-Floyd, et al. (CR); RGS ch 5

**Week 14: Queer Reproduction & Wrap-Up**

**Apr 2:** -la Cour Mosegaard (CR)

-film: *Conceiving Family* (2011, 50m)

**Apr 5:** -RGS Epilogue

**Due: final paper**

## ASSIGNMENTS

### Participation 30%

**Participation**, including the **ink-shedding**, offers you the opportunity to *recall, identify, describe, compare and contrast, reflect, organize, explain, hypothesize and theorize*, and *examine* key ideas that have been raised in the readings, films, and classroom activities. Further, the ink-shedding will provide evidence of your reflections and learning that you can look back upon later in the semester (and after the course is finished), assisting you in *recalling* and *constructing* arguments. Ink-shedding will also provide a safe place for you to *reflect on* and *work-through* how particular readings, discussions, or films *challenge* or *relate* to your beliefs and experiences. (My expectation is that discussions/ activities in class will also be a safe place for this.)

Attendance and reading the assigned readings BEFORE class are expected aspects of 'Participation.

The instructor will decide 20%, and your classmates will decide the other 10% (via completion of peer-assessments). Obviously, the accumulation of this grade is ongoing throughout the semester.

### Annotated Bibliography & Paper Proposal 20%

The *development* of an **annotated bibliography** and **paper proposal** will allow you to *clearly identify* a workable/tangible focus for your final paper (and presentation). (See below for information on the final paper & presentation).

The **paper proposal** will 300-500 words in length (in paragraphs), and will outline the importance of your topic, its relevance to this course, and be sure to limit its scope to something tangible for your final paper.

The **annotated bibliography** will feature 8 academic/peer-reviewed anthropological references (3 from class & 5 from outside of class). Each source will be provided in the AAA style format, and be followed by 5-sentences (3 that summarize the source & 2 that outline its relevance to your topic).

**DUE: January 30**

### Presentation 15%

You will *produce* a **poster** or **oral presentation**, based on the same subject matter as your final paper. This presentation will *transfer* knowledge from your independent learning, as well as offer an opportunity for fellow students to offer feedback for further development and *analysis* in time for it to be beneficial for your final paper.

Your presentation can be either oral (10m + up to 5m for questions), or via a poster (max size 2'x3'), as both styles of presentation are used at academic conferences. This allows you to choose the medium you are more comfortable with, but also presents you the opportunity to be creative.

**Presentations will occur during Weeks 9 & 10.**

Exact dates will be decided on January 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **Final Paper 35%**

You will *compose* a **final paper** that *makes an original case* regarding a topic of your choice, related to the Anthropology of Reproduction. The paper may *compare* and *contrast* different policies/practices/outcomes/experiences of two or more cultures, or it may *critically examine* one particular culture and practice. Alternately, your *research* may lead you to *develop* a *hypothesis* or *theory*, or even to *suggest a new approach* to a particular culturally-located practice of reproduction. As final papers are written in the first-person, you will be expected to include some *self-reflection* somewhere in the paper. Papers will be about 15-pages long (or ~4500 words), plus References Cited (min. 12 academic, anthropological sources), Endnotes (if required/relevant), and a Title Page. Hard copies must be handed in, and electronic copies emailed to me.

**DUE: April 5<sup>th</sup>** (hard copies, start of class; electronic copies emailed by 11:59pm)  
[due in full draft form on **March 22** for peer-reviewing]

EVERY DAY COME TO CLASS ON TIME AND WITH:

- a writing utensil (pen or pencil) & paper
- highlighter(s)
- yourself, ready to discuss the readings for that day
- an open-mind
- computer is optional for note-taking

### **Late Policy**

Assignments have due dates, and these are to be respected. Moreover, assignments are due at the start of class. If you foresee a problem of being able to hand something in on-time, please contact me ASAP and always BEFORE the due date to arrange an alternate due date. If we have not made alternate plans, late assignments are to be **emailed** to me (in **.doc** or **.docx** attachments) as soon as they are completed, and you are to bring me a hard copy ASAP. Late assignments will have a grade reduction of **10% per day** (weekends included), **starting at 14:01** on the due date, to a maximum of 50% deduction. So something handed in the next day is 2-days late (-20%), and something handed in a week late is -50%.

### **Plagiarism**

Academic dishonesty is taken very seriously. I do not hesitate to act on suspicion of academic dishonesty, and have, in the past, made such reports to the Dean. I recommend, if you have not already done so, to watch and complete the Academic Integrity tutorial produced by the UBCO library, to familiarize yourself with what academic honesty and plagiarism are, and what resources we have on campus to help you avoid engaging in academic dishonesty. The video tutorial can be found at: <http://www.ubc.ca/okanagan/library/help/ai.html>

## **Course Reader**

Colen, Shellee

- 1995 "Like a Mother To Them": Stratified Reproduction and West Indian Childcare Workers and Employers in New York. *In* *Conceiving the New World Order: The Global Politics of Reproduction*. Faye D. Ginsburg and Rayna Rapp, editors. Pp. 78-102. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Craven, Christa

- 2010 Chapter 4: Mothers in the Legislature: Claiming Respectable American Motherhood. *In* *Pushing for Midwives*. Pp.79-96. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Feldman-Savelsberg, Pamela

- 2002 Is Infertility an Unrecognized Public Health & Population Problem? The View from the Cameroon Grassfields. *In* *Infertility Around the Globe*. Marcia C. Inhorn & Frank van Balen, editors. Pp.215-232. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hanh, Nguyen Thi Thuy

- 2009 Reproductive Paradoxes in Vietnam: Masculinity, Contraception, and Abortion in Vietnam. *In* *Reconceiving the Second Sex: Men, Masculinity, and Reproduction*. Marcia Inhorn, Tine Tjørnhøj-Thomsen, editors. Pp.160-178. New York: Berghahn.

La Cour Mosegaard, Maruska

- 2009 Stories of Fatherhood: Kinship in the Making. *In* *Reconceiving the Second Sex: Men, Masculinity, and Reproduction*. Marcia Inhorn & Tine Tjørnhøj-Thomsen, editors. Pp.349-370. New York: Berghahn.

## **Online**

Allison, Jill

- 2010 Grieving Conceptions: Making Motherhood in the Wake of Infertility in Ireland. *Journal of the Motherhood Initiative* 1(2):219-231.

Dudgeon, Matthew & Marcia Inhorn

- 2003 Gender, Masculinity, and Reproduction: Anthropological Perspectives. *International Journal of Men's Health* 2(1):31-56.

Ginsburg, Faye & Rayna Rapp

- 1991 The Politics of Reproduction. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 20:311-343.

Layne, Linda

- 2009 The Home Pregnancy Test: A Feminist Technology? *WSQ: Women's Studies Quarterly* 37(1&2):61-79.

**Handout**

Bhave, Maya

Nd. The Ambiguous Space of Motherhood: The Experience of Mothering a Stillborn Son. Unpublished. (Have permission from author for use. Please do not redistribute.)