

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
University of Pennsylvania

Soci 004: The Family
Spring 2020

Professor: Pilar Gonalons-Pons

Office: 217 McNeil Building

Office Hours: M 3:45-4:45pm

e-mail: pgonalon@sas.upenn.edu

Teaching Assistant: Alexander Adames

Office: Atrium 2nd floor McNeil Building

Office Hours: MW 10:45-11:45AM

e-mail: adames@sas.upenn.edu

Lecture: Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:00pm – 3:30pm, WILL 301

Overview: Families are key nodes in the fabric of social life and play a central role in the organization of sexuality, work, politics, and inequalities. This course blends sociological and demographic perspectives to study how families and our ideas about families simultaneously shape and are shaped by the social environment in which they live in. We will focus on inequality and family change and examine when it happens, how it happens, and why it happens. We will also discuss public controversies about family issues, such as: Are some family structures better than others? Should marriage be protected or abolished? Students will learn to use critical thought and empirical research to develop an understanding of how family and social issues are interconnected. This class seeks to sociologically and critically rethink current family issues and the future of family life.

Evaluation: The grade scale for this course is: A+ (100), A (98-95), A- (94- 90), B+ (89-87), B (86-84), B – (83-80), C+ (79-77), C (76-74), C – (73-70), D+ (69-67), D (66-64), D – (63-60), F (<60). Course grades are determined by four criteria:

1. **Exams (25%):** There will be two exams: mid-term and a final (10% and 15%, respectively). Exams will consist primarily of short essay questions. The final exam will be cumulative. You will be expected to define key concepts and to connect readings and lecture topics.

DATES:	MIDTERM EXAM (take-home)	Fri, 3/6
	FINAL EXAM (in-class)	Wed, 5/6

2. **Writing assignments (25%):** Students will write four writing assignments during the semester. Students have their own choice of dates as long as they are submitted consecutively within the following time frames: first writing assignment by the end of week 4, second writing assignment by the end of week 6, third writing assignment by the end of week 10, and fourth writing assignment by the end of week 12. Writing assignments will be graded and are to be understood as preparation for the final paper. All writing assignments should include (a) a question, (b) an argument, and (c) discuss and engage the reading(s) in relation to the argument. Length: ½ to 1 page, single spaced. Submission on Canvas.

3. **Final Paper (30%):** Students will write a 1,500-2,000-word final paper building on one of the reading responses submitted during the course of the semester. This paper will include a research question, an argument/thesis, and discuss research studies in relation to your topic. This paper should incorporate at least four new bibliographic references published in sociology research journals.

DATES: **FINAL PAPER** **Wed, 5/6**

4. **Attendance and participation (20%):** Attendance and participation are required; repeated absences may affect your final grade. We all learn more and have more fun if we actively engage with the course material. In addition to attendance and active participation, there are two more pieces to your participation grade. First, students are required to submit TWO discussion questions for 10 sessions. Discussion questions should engage the assigned readings and should be submitted on Canvas by midnight before class. Second, students are required to submit an initial and final reflection free-style essay.

DATES: **INITIAL REFLECTION** **Wed, 1/22**
 FINAL REFLECTION **Tue 4/28**

Required books:

Sanday, Peggy Reeves (2007) Fraternity Gang Rape: Sex, Brotherhood, and Privilege on Campus. New York: New York University Press

This book is available at Penn Bookstore. You can also access the eBook version through Penn Libraries and a physical copy is also on reserve at Van Pelt Library.

Policies:

Cheating: Any student caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive an F in the class and will be reported to the committee on academic misconduct.

Make-ups: There are no make-ups for exams or assignments, unless otherwise noted. Look at the dates of the exams. If you have a conflict it is recommended that you DO NOT take this class.

Technology: This is a laptop-free class. Research shows students learn more in pen-and-paper classes and discussions are a million times better when we are all actively engaged. Occasionally laptops and other devices might be used for in-class activities, the students will know in advance if they need to bring their laptops. Exceptions will, of course, be allowed whenever necessary and after prior consultation with the Professor.

Class Schedule and Readings

W1 Introduction

Wed, 1/15 – Syllabus and class introductions

W2 What is *family*?

Mon, 1/20 – No class, MLK Day

Wed, 1/22 – *Almost Like Family*

- Batuman (2017) Japan's Rent-a-Family Industry
- Childress (1956) Like One of the Family
- McDonald (2010) The "Third-Parent" Ideal

*REC: Stacey (2011) Unhitched

➤ Wed 1/22 Initial Reflection DUE

W3 Theories about Family

Mon, 1/27 – Functionalism

- Parsons & Bales (1955) The American Family: Its Relations to Personality and to Social Structure

Wed, 1/29 – Conflict theory

- Zinn (1990) Family, Feminism, and Race in America
- Rich (1980) Compulsory heterosexuality

*REC: Brenner and Laslett (1991) Gender, Social Reproduction.

W4 Part I: Family change, family decline?

Mon, 2/3 – Family Change Since the 19th century

- Coontz (2004) The World Historical Transformation of Marriage
- Ruggles (2015) Patriarchy, Power and Pay

Wed, 2/5 – The queer turn

- D'Emilio (1993) Capitalism and Gay Identity
- Hart-Brinson (2016) The Social Imagination of Homosexuality

➤ Fri 2/7 First Writing Assignment DUE

W5 Part II: Family change, family decline?

Mon, 2/10 – Cohabitation, marriage, and divorce

- Sassler & Lichter (2020) Cohabitation and Marriage
- Sweeney (2020) Divorce, Repartnering, and Stepfamilies
- *REC: Smock and Schwartz (2020) The Demography of Families

Wed, 2/12 – Family decline?

- Cherlin (2004) Deinstitutionalization of Marriage
- Various Authors (1993) JMF debate over American Family Decline

W6 Families and Class Inequality

Mon, 2/17 – Classed family lives

- Cherlin (2014) Introduction to Labor Love Lost
- Addo (2014) Debt, Cohabitation, and Marriage in Young Adulthood
- *REC: Piotrowski et al (2015) Contingent Work Rising

Wed, 2/19 – The intergenerational transmission of advantage

- Sullivan et al (2013) Social Class and Inequalities in Early Cognitive Scores
- Lareau (2011) Invisible inequalities
- Calarco (2014) Coached for the Classroom

➤ **Fri 2/21** Second Writing Assignment **DUE**

W7 Families and Race Inequality

Mon, 2/24 – Racism yesterday and today

- Collins (1989) A Comparison of Two Works on Black Family Life
- Cross (2019) Racial/Ethnic Differences in the Association Between Family Structure and Children's Education

Wed, 2/26 – Towards a post-racist society?

- Roberts (2011) Prison, Foster Care, Systematic Punishment of Black Mothers
- Fong (2015) Changes in Interracial Marriage
- Lichter and Qian (2018) Boundary Blurring?

*REC: Dow (2016) Deadly Challenges of Raising African American Boys

➤ Take-home **MIDTERM**

W8 Reproductive autonomy and technologies

Mon, 3/2 – Reproductive justice and autonomy

- Roberts (1984) Killing the Black Body
- McMillan Cottom (2019) I was Pregnant and in Crisis
- Reingold & Gostin (2019) State Abortion Restrictions & New Supreme Court

*REC: Luna & Luker (2013) Reproductive Justice

Wed, 3/4 – Technologies

- Thompson (2001) Strategic Naturalizing Kinship in an Infertility Clinic
- Hertz & Mattes (2011) Donor-Shared Siblings or Genetic Strangers

*REC: Martin (2010) Anticipating Infertility

➤ **Fri 3/6 SUBMIT MIDTERM**

[SPRING BREAK] ***Read Book: Sanday's (2007) *Fraternity Gang Rape****

W9 Gender in families

Mon, 3/16 – What is gender?

- Connell (2009) The Gender Order
- West and Zimmerman (1987) Doing Gender

*REC: Ridgeway (2008) Framed Before We Know It

Wed, 3/18 – Doing gender in romantic relationships

- Lamont (2013) Negotiating Courtship
- Cohen (2013) Why it's so rare for a wife to be than her husband
- Espiritu (2001) We don't sleep around like white girls do

W10 Sex and power

Mon, 3/23 – Sex cultures in college campuses

- Armstrong et al (2015) Orgasm in College Hookups and Relationships
- Sanday (2007) Fraternity Gang Rape (selections)

Wed, 3/25 – Sex and power in marriage

- Hasday (2000) Contest and Consent: A Legal History of Marital Rape
- Kornrich et al (2012) Egalitarianism, Housework, and Sexual Frequency

➤ **Fri 3/27 Third Writing Assignment DUE**

W11 Division of Labor: Part I

Mon, 3/30 – Gender division of labor

- Tichenor (2011) Gendered Bargain
- Quadlin & Doan (2018) Sex-Typed Chores and the City
- *REC: Schneider (2012) Gender Deviance and Household Work

Wed, 4/1 – Intensive mothering

- MacDonald (2010) Mother-Employers. Blanket Accountability at Home and at Work
- Cain Miller (2018) The Costs of Motherhood Are Rising

W12 Division of labor: Part II

Mon, 4/6 – Involved fatherhood

- Wall & Arnold (2007) How Involved is Involved Fathering?
- Chelsey (2011) Stay-at-home Fathers and Breadwinning Mothers

Wed, 4/8 – Towards equality?

- Gerson (2015) Falling Back on Plan B
- Pedulla et al (2015) Can We Finish the Revolution?

➤ **Fri 4/10** Fourth Writing Assignment **DUE**

W13 Social Reproduction: Clashing Paid and Unpaid Work

Mon, 4/13 – Work family conflict

- Williams & Boushey (2010) The Three Faces of Work-Family Conflict
- Collins (2019) Why American Moms Can't Get Enough Expert Parenting Advice
- *REC: Fraser (2016) Contradictions of Care and Capital

Wed, 4/15 – People as public goods

- Folbre (1991) The Unproductive Wife
- England & Folbre (2001) Who Should Pay for the Kids?
- *REC: Miller (2019) Why the US Has Long Resisted Universal Child Care

W14 Queer and global

Mon, 4/20 – **Queer and trans family life**

- Stacey (2005) Families of Man
 - Reczek (2020) Sexual and gender-minority families a 2010 to 2020 decade in review
- *REC: Moore & Stambolis-Ruhstorfer (2013) LGBT Sexuality and Families

Wed, 4/22 – Globalization and family life

- Abrego (2014) Sacrificing Families
- Francisco-Menchavez (2018) The Labor of Care

W15 Beyond the nuclear family

Mon, 4/27 – Kinship struggles

- Schippers (2018) The Monogamous Couple, Gender Hegemony, Polyamory
- Interview with Sophie Lewis (2019) Want to Dismantle Capitalism? Abolish the Family

➤ **Tue 4/28** Final Reflection **DUE**

Wed, 4/29 – Final Discussion & Exam Review

FINAL EXAM

Wed, 5/6 – FINAL EXAM and FINAL PAPER DUE