

Non Traditional Parents Sociology 488w: Fall 2009

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COURSE GOALS

This semester we will focus on a sociological examination of Non Traditional Parents. The primary objectives of the course are (1) enhance critical thinking skills, (2) examine the academic literature related to non-traditional parents, (3) apply thinking skills and knowledge to the social world, (4) improve writing skills, and (5) develop oral presentation and discussion skills.

To meet the course goals students will:

- Write summaries of the readings. These summaries will be peer edited for content, clarity, grammar, language, and organization.
- Lead weekly (or bi-weekly) discussions of the assigned readings.
- Develop a research question.
- Conduct a thorough literature review. During this process the student will create an annotated bibliography.
- Write a research proposal that includes a complete literature review that summarizes, integrates and critiques “what we know” about X.
- Present research proposal to the class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS.

PREPARED FOR CLASS (i.e. do the reading). This is a seminar class. Thus, most of the in class time will be devoted to CLASS DISCUSSIONS. For class discussions to be productive and for them to facilitate the learning process everyone must have completed all of the reading. Therefore, **the first requirement for this class is that everyone reads the assignments BEFORE class.**

<u>Requirements</u>	<u>% of grade</u>
Weekly summaries	15%
Peer editing of weekly summaries	15%
Leading class discussions	10%
Participation in class discussions	15%
Annotated bibliography	20%
Research proposal with a complete literature review	20%
Presentation	<u>5%</u>
	100%

Grades will be based on the 90% & above an A; 80% to 89% a B; 70% to 79% a C; 60 to 69% a D, and anything below a 60% an F scale.

Weekly summaries and peer editing of summaries: A summary of one of the week’s assigned readings is usually due on Monday. The class will edit others’ summaries on Monday. On Wednesday or Friday the summaries (along with the draft and its edits) will be turned in for grading. Some changes to this schedule are noted on syllabus others will be announced in class.

Leading class discussion: Most Wednesday and Friday classes will consist of student lead discussions. About every other week you will be responsible for facilitating the discussion on one of the readings. **Turn in** a copy of your notes, points to discuss and/or discussion questions at the beginning of class.

¹My email office hours are Tuesday and Thursday 10:00 – 11:00.

Participation.

This course is a seminar. A seminar is very different from a lecture course in that a seminar is designed with the expectation that students will learn through reading, discussion and application. Thus, everyone must actively participate in class discussion. Further, and importantly, the discussion **MUST** be based on the readings.

To help everyone improve their participation I will evaluate the discussions. Your class participation grade will be based on your contributions to class discussions such as asking and answering questions and general contributions such as bringing in other relevant information. This portion of your grade will **NOT** be based on how much you talk but rather on your contributions (both negative and positive) to the class.

The participation points are broken into three components. These are “Preparation for class”, “Attendance”, and “Behavior that encourages class discussion”.

Preparation for Class will be evaluated by the following criteria

Content:

above average– student’s comments and answers demonstrate a thorough grasp of assigned reading

average– student’s comments and answers demonstrate a basic understanding of the main points from the assigned reading

below average- content absent or gross errors are present. Comments do not suggest a basic understanding.

Development: must be informed by the reading

above average– student offers a central thesis and provides supporting evidence and/or arguments

average– student has two or more points that are at least indirectly connected

below average- student offers points not relevant to the issue or the points have little or no interconnections

Behavior that encourages class discussion will be evaluated by the following criteria

Contribution to Discussion:

above average– student clarifies a point for the class or makes a suggestion or observation pursued by others

average– student makes relevant, if obvious, points; helps move discussion along

below average- student does not speak to the issue; makes largely irrelevant points

I will record your participation regularly. Your score sheet will be available for review during my office hours.

Annotated bibliography: Your annotated bibliography must have at least fifteen entries.

For a good description of an annotated bibliography see <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/01/>. Note: The owl.english.purdue.edu web site is excellent. Use it often.

Extra Credit- Participate in Ms Halverson’s Research Project: Those that participate in Ms Halverson’s research will earn a 4% increase in their final grade.

MISCELLANEOUS IMPORTANT INFORMATION.

CHEATING: *Please do not.* The penalty for cheating in this class is an F. If you do cheat and I catch you, you and I will find it a very unpleasant experience. I have caught cheaters before so I know how unpleasant it is. Please take my word for it and do not cheat. Note: Plagiarism is cheating.

All students must practice academic honesty “Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University.” All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The code is available for review online at

<http://ordway.umt.edu/SA/documents/fromWeb/StudentConductCode1.pdf>.

ACADEMIC ETIQUETTE: Academic etiquette includes, but is not limited to, arriving on time, not leaving or packing up to leave until class is over, treating all class members with respect, and not carrying on private conversations with the people sitting near you. Even whispering is distracting to others, including the instructor. If you must be late or leave early please let me know ahead of time and sit near the door so you disturb as few people as possible.

It is also distracting when students carry on private conversations on a cell phone, use their headphones, read the paper, or *text message*. Cell phones, palm pilots, and music listening devices (iPods, etc.) must be left in your bags,

NOT ON THE TABLE AND NOT IN YOUR LAP. To date I have been unable to deter students' texting. Thus, I decided to adopt a rigid and punitive policy. The following policy is based on Dr. Carmen Lugo Lugo's (WSU) syllabi.

Cellular Phones and other Communication/Electronic Devices: Turn your cell phones and communication devices off before coming to class (that includes laptop computers—even if your computer lacks an internet connection, blackberries and any other electronic device utilized to communicate with the world outside our classroom). Of course, iPods and other gadgets used for entertainment are also prohibited. The world can survive without getting a hold of you 50 minutes. And you will also survive without knowing what's going on outside the classroom for a few minutes. Trust me, it will be ok. If, for any reason you forget to neutralize your communication device, and it does go off during class please turn it off immediately. Note: If I catch you "texting" during class, you will be required to stand up and share with your classmates why you were texting and who you were texting. You will also be awarded BA on all three participation criteria.

COURSE OUTLINE

The schedule is *TENTATIVE and SUBJECT TO CHANGE*. If there are any changes they will be announced in class. It is your responsibility to be in class to hear about the changes.

Date	Topic	Reading-Assignments
Week 1 8/31 – 9/04	Introductions Writing soc. papers What is a parent?	Syllabus Yellin: Chapter 1 No student lead discussions this week.
Week 2 9/09-9/11	No Class Monday What is a "parent"?-- continued A Social Construction?	Yellin: Chapter 4 Alber, Erdmute. 2004. Kirkman, Maggie. 2008 Edit Summaries Wed. Turn in for grading on Friday
Week 3 9/14-9/18	Who is (are) the parent(s)? Sociological Issues Related to ART (assisted reproductive technology)	Edit summaries on Monday, turn in for grading on Friday. Yellin: Chapter 2 News paper articles- no summaries required [Harmon 2007, Warner 2008 and Washington Post Writers Group 2008] Dillaway 2008 Culley and Hudson 2009.
Week 4 9/ 21 – 9/ 25	Monday: research question Wed. Library Friday: Commodification (recall Karl Marx)	<u>Monday</u> – 3 possible topics due in class Yellin Chapter 5; pages 118-123 and 146-150 –Read before Monday's class. <u>Wed.</u> library workshop facilitated by Soc. librarian Yellin Chapter 3- Look at this chapter before Wed. <u>Friday.</u> Editing summaries. Commodification Readings: Colen 1995 Hochschild 2002 From <i>The Social Life of Things</i> Intro. pgs11-16 and Kopytoff pgs. 64-91
Week 5 9/ 28 – 10/ 2	Commodification Adoption	Mon, & Wed: Discussions of commodification Friday. Editing adoption summaries Adoption readings: Fisher 2003 (Review – no formal summary required) Dorow 2006- Chapter 6 (no formal summary required) Hamilton, Cheng, and Powell 2007 Volkman 2005 Modell 1994

Week 6 10/ 5 – 10/ 9	Adoption	Mon. & Wed. discussion of adoption readings. Wed.. Due- Research questions on selected topic and at least one annotated bibliography entry. Friday: Library workshop facilitated by the class.
Week 7 10/ 12 – 10/ 16	Finish Adoption- Monday Middle Class Single Moms Pick up copies of 3 news articles for next week.	Wed. Editing Middle Class Mom summaries. Bock 2000 Hertz 2006 (from <i>Single by Chance, Mothers by Choice</i>) Hertz and Ferguson 1998
Week 8 10/ 19 – 10/ 23	Young Moms Don't forget – annotated bib is due Friday, Nov. 6th	Mon. Editing summaries Three news articles Edin and Kefalas 2005 Klaw 2008 Furstenberg 2003 (No formal summary required)
Week 9 10/ 26 – 10/ 30 Oct. 29 th – Day of Dialogue	Steps—lots of reading Day of Dialogue – extra credit	Berger, Carlson, Bzostek, and Osborne. 2008. Marsiglio and Hinojosa. 2007. Mason, Harrison_Jay, Svare, and Wolfinger. 2002. Marsiglio. 2004.
Week 10 11/ 2 – 11/ 6	Fathers – another look at “other fathers” Annotated Bibliography Due Friday, Nov. 6th	Nelson. 2004 (no formal summary required) Jarrett, Roy, and Burton 2002. Edin, Tach, and Mincy 2009.
Week 11 11/ 9 & 11/ 13 No class Wed.	Gay and Lesbian	Ciano-Boyce and Shelley-Sireco 2002 Pelka 2009 Lynch and Murray 2000 Hequembourg 2004
Week 12 11/ 16 – 11/ 20	Mon: Writing final paper. Wed. & Fri. GAP	Writing seminar. Three copies of a <u>complete</u> draft of paper due in class on Monday. GAP Readings to be assigned.
Week 13 11/ 23	Monday: Catch Up Day Thanksgiving Week	
Week 14 11/ 30- 12/ 4	Writing final paper. Wed. & Fri. – Foster	Writing seminars. Revised paper due in class on Mon. – class editing. Swartz 2004 McWey, Bolen, Lehan, and Bojczk. 2009 Bolen, McWey and Schless 2008
Week 15 12/ 7 – 11	Presentations of Research Topic	
Finals Week	Final Paper due	