

**SOCI 4365.001**  
**SOCIOLOGY OF REPRODUCTION**  
T/TH 9:30-10:50

Instructor: Dr. Heather Jacobson  
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Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:00-12:00 and by appointment  
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**Course Description:**

This course investigates the history and sociology of reproduction in the United States through an examination of the cultural norms, social institutions, and personal experiences associated with reproduction. Topics include the changing meaning of children, childbirth education, the experience of birth for both men and women, pre-natal diagnostic testing, pregnancy loss, adoption, infertility, living “child-free,” new reproductive technologies, sperm/egg donation, and surrogacy.

**Course Learning Objectives**

- 1) Students will be able to list core concepts in the field of the Sociology of Reproduction
- 2) Students will become familiar with a range of topics within the Sociology of Reproduction literature
- 3) Students will be able to list, discuss, and analyze key debates within the field of the Sociology of Reproduction

**Course Requirements:**

Grades for the course will be calculated on a 100-point scale, as follows:  
Class participation (attendance and participation in class exercises and discussion): 15 points  
Class writings: 20 points  
Exams: 40 points total (20 points each)  
Research paper proposal: 2.5 points  
Research project final presentation: 2.5 points  
Final paper: 20 points

**Required Texts:**

*Reproduction and Society: Interdisciplinary Readings*. 2014. Edited by Carole Joffe and Jennifer Reich. Routledge.

Other readings marked **(R)** on the syllabus are on e-reserve on the UTA library website.

\*\*\*\*\*Course Outline\*\*\*\*\*

**August 27: Introduction**

**September 1: Reproduction in the U.S.**

Joffe, Carole and Jennifer Reich. "Reproduction and the Public Interest in Private Acts."

**R&S Introduction**

**September 3, and 8: Controlling Reproduction I**

Gordon, Linda. "The Folklore of Birth Control." **R&S Chapter 1**

Gutierrez, Elena. "The Fertility of Women of Mexican Origin: A Social Constructionist Approach." **R&S Chapter 3**

Roberts, Dorothy. "Reproduction in Bondage." **R&S Chapter 15**

**September 10: FIRST ONE-ON-ONE MEETINGS FOR RESEARCH PROJECTS**

**September 15 and 17: Reproductive Politics**

Furstenberg, Frank. 2008. "Cause for alarm? Understanding recent trends in teenage childbearing." *Pathways: A magazine on poverty, inequality, and social policy*, summer. Stanford Center for the Study of Poverty and Inequality. **(R)**

Joffe, Carole. "A Selection from Doctors of Conscience: The Struggle to Provide Abortion Before and After Roe v. Wade." **R&S Chapter 5**

Simonds, Wendy and Ellertson, Charolotte (2004). "Emergency contraception and morality: Reflections of health care workers and clients." *Social Science & Medicine* 58: 1285-1297. **(R)**

**September 22: Controlling Reproduction II**

Chen, Michelle. "Invisible Immigrants: What Will Immigration Reform Mean for Migrant Women?" **R&S Chapter 22**

Kallianes, Virginia and Phyllis Rubinfeld. "Disabled Women and Reproductive Rights." **R&S Chapter 25**

Solinger, Rickie. "Motherhood as Class Privilege in America." **R&S Chapter 26**

**September 24: Discussion on conducting library based research and writing proposals and research papers**

**September 29: SECOND ONE-ON-ONE MEETINGS FOR RESEARCH PROJECTS**

**\*Proposals Due\***

**October 1 and 6: Pregnancy and Birth I**

Coeytaux, Francine, Debra Bingham, and Nan Strauss. "Maternal Mortality in the United States: A Human Rights Failure." **R&S Chapter 16**

Morris, Theresa. "The Liability Threat in Obstetrics." **R&S Chapter 21**

**October 8: Pregnancy and Birth II**

Layne, Linda. "Motherhood Lost: Cultural Dimensions of Miscarriage and Stillbirth in America." **R&S Chapter 19**

Rapp, Rayna. "Contested Conceptions and Misconceptions." **R&S Chapter 18**

## **October 13: Exam One**

### **October 15 and 20: The Reproductive Marketplace**

Almeling, Rene. "Selling Genes, Selling Gender." **Chapter 11 in R&S**

Bell, Ann. 2009. "'It's way out of my league': Low-income women's experiences of medicalized infertility." *Gender & Society* 23: 688-709. (R)

Spar, Debora and Anna Harrington. 2009. "Building a Better Baby Business." *Science & Technology* 10 (1): 41-69. (R)

### **October 22, 27, and 29: Surrogacy**

Gamson, Joshua. "The Belly Mommy and the Fetus Sitter: The Reproductive Marketplace and Family Intimacies." **R&S Chapter 14**

Rudrappa, Sharmila. "India's Reproductive Assembly Line." **R&S Chapter 12**

### **November 3 and 5: Adoption**

Berebitsky, Julie. 2006. "Family Ideals and the Social Construction of Modern Adoption." Pps 29-42 in *Adoptive Families in a Diverse Society*, edited by Katarina Wegar. (R)

Jacobson, Heather. 2008. "Constructing Families: Race, Adoption, and the Choice of Country" and "Adoptive Families in the Public Eye." Pps 13-52 and 145-163 in *Culture Keeping: White Mothers, International Adoption, and the Negotiation of Family Difference*. (R)

Rothman, Barbara Katz. 2006. "Adoption and the Culture of Genetic Determinism." Pps 19-28 in *Adoptive Families in a Diverse Society*, edited by Katarina Wegar. (R)

### **November 10 and 12: Child-free by Choice**

*Guest Speaker: Jessica Lott, Doctoral Candidate, Southern Methodist University. Ms. Lott will discuss her research on child-free living in North Texas.*

Letherby, Gayle. 2002. "Childless and Bereft?: Stereotypes and Realities in Relation to 'Voluntary' and 'Involuntary' Childlessness and Womanhood." *Sociological Inquiry* 72(1): 7-20. (R)

Campbell, Annily. 2003. "Cutting Out Motherhood: Childfree Sterilized Women." Pp 191-204 in *Gender, Identity, and Reproduction: Social Perspectives*, edited by Sarah Earle and Gayle Letherby. (R)

### **November 17 and 19: New Reproductive Technologies and Gay and Lesbian Parenting**

Berkowitz, Dana and William Marsiglio. 2007. "Gay men: Negotiating procreative, father, and family identities." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 69: 366-381. (R)

Mamo, Laura. "Debates over Lesbian Reproduction within Lesbian/Gay and Feminist Communities." **R&S Chapter 13**

### **November 24: Class Wrap Up**

Goldberg, Michelle. "The Globalization of the Culture Wars." **R&S Chapter 29**

Luna, Zakiya and Kristin Luker. "Reproductive Justice." **R&S Chapter 27**

### **November 26: No Class, Happy Thanksgiving**

**December 1: Exam Two**

**December 3: Student Presentations**

**December 8: Student Presentations**

**December 15 at noon: FINAL PAPERS DUE** (*email to: [jacobson@uta.edu](mailto:jacobson@uta.edu)*)

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**Drop Policy:** Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://www.uta.edu/ao/fao/>).

**Disability Accommodations:** UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, *The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA)*, and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a letter certified by the **Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD)**. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting: **The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD)** [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or calling 817-272-3364. **Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS)** [www.uta.edu/caps/](http://www.uta.edu/caps/) or calling 817-272-3671.

Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

**Title IX:** *The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit [uta.edu/eos](http://uta.edu/eos). For information regarding Title IX, visit [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX).*

**Academic Integrity:** Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code: *I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence. I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents' Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University.

**Electronic Communication:** UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

**Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” shall be directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

**Final Review Week:** A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

**Emergency Exit Procedures:** Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.

**Student Support Services:** UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to [resources@uta.edu](mailto:resources@uta.edu), or view the information at <http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/index.php>

**The English Writing Center (411LIBR):** Hours are 9 am to 8 pm Mondays-Thursdays, 9 am to 3 pm Fridays and Noon to 5 pm Saturdays and Sundays. Walk In *Quick Hits* sessions during all open hours Mon-Thurs. Register and make appointments online at <http://uta.mywconline.com>. Please see [www.uta.edu/owl](http://www.uta.edu/owl) for detailed information.

**Note on Attendance:** At the University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required. Rather, each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students’ academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. As the instructor of this course, I expect you to attend class at every class session. Your attendance will factor into your participation grade.