

GLOBAL FAMILY AND SEXUAL POLITICS

Term 1, Fall 2020

Instructor: Dr. Melanie Heath
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Lecture: Fridays, 11:30am-1pm
Room: online

Office: online
Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description

This class will examine through a sociological lens how globalization shapes the ways in which family, gender, and sexualities are imagined, regulated and experienced. The course engages major social and political debates on global issues of LGBTQ+ identities; racialized sexual politics, marriage rights; technology; intimate citizenship; sexual/domestic violence; and transnational/cross-border families. We will consider the challenge of conceptualizing family and sexual politics through comparative and intersectional frameworks to critically examine power, human rights and identity in a global context. This course aims to introduce students to the analysis of contemporary power relations related to family and sexual politics, helping them to develop a critical approach to thinking about love, sexuality, and intimacy. Throughout the course, we will engage in dynamic group discussions and projects to apply course materials to news, media, politics, and legal matters related to globalized forms of sexuality and family life.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- understand key sociological theories of globalization, family, and sexualities
- identify debates over political movements concerning gender, family, and sexuality
- conduct original research using the qualitative method of textual analysis
- design a research project and write a research paper
- demonstrate improved analytic, writing, and communication skills
- pose thoughtful questions concerning debates over family and sexual politics

Required Materials and Texts

- All journal articles and chapters assigned for this course can be accessed via McMaster's library system. For more information about locating journal articles, go to: https://library.mcmaster.ca/instruction/social-science-inquiry/finding-articles/story_html5.html

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Participation – 10%

2. Four Commentaries and Peer Evaluation – 20% (5% each commentary and peer evaluation), due on **Sept. 24, Oct. 8, Nov. 5, and Nov. 19** at 11pm
3. Midterm Exam – 25%, **Oct 23** during class.
4. Group Research Project – 45%, Group Research Proposal due on **Oct. 29** at 11pm (10%); Group Data Analysis due on **Nov. 12** (5%); Group Final Paper due on **Dec. 3** at 11pm (25%); Group Presentation due on **Dec. 4** (5%)

Course Evaluation – Details

Participation (10%)

Students are expected to attend every online class meeting having thoughtfully completed the assigned readings and having prepared to participate actively in discussion. During our online class, I will take notes on your participation.

Four Commentaries and Peer Evaluation – 20% (5% each commentary and peer evaluation), due Sept. 24, Oct. 8, Nov. 5, and Nov. 19 at 11pm

To enhance our online discussions, you will submit four commentaries that address at least one assigned reading from the current and former week. Commentaries will be submitted to Kritik.io. In addition to submitting your commentary, you will also be responsible for reviewing some of your peers' commentaries. In this class, we will be using a peer-to-peer learning platform called Kritik, which will allow you to review and evaluate your peer's submissions based on a rubric. You will also provide feedback on how effective these evaluations of your own work were. Your evaluation of your peers' work is due by Monday at 11pm and your feedback of your own evaluations is due on the next Thursday at 11pm. All of these activities are graded and worth 20 percent of your final grade. Each missing commentary, evaluation, and feedback will be deducted from the 20% according to its weighted value. Instructions for how to evaluate commentaries, including the rubric, are provided on Kritik.

Your commentaries should be approximately three pages (double spaced) and written in paragraph form. It is important to think critically about the readings. Comments should include:

1. A brief summary of the main thesis of readings that discusses them together or separately, including (1) the research questions, (2) the methods and/or theory, (3) findings of the article/book chapter. Put the main arguments into your own words; **do not directly quote from the texts.**
2. Critical comments on the readings, including whether you agree or do not agree with the central arguments/thesis. You might base these critical comments on previously discussed topics from class, or you might bring in other readings and/or theoretical perspectives.

Midterm Exam – 25%, Oct. 23 at 2:30pm (2 hours)

The midterm exam will consist of 30 multiple-choice questions and one short essay question. It will be taken during class on October 23, and you will have two hours to complete the exam.

Group Research Project – 45%

Group projects are term-length efforts, starting the first week of class and ending with a finished product at the end of term. You will be provided choices on a topic in the area of the sociology of globalization, family, and sexuality and groups will be formed based on topics. I will meet with groups throughout the semester to help you shape an interesting research project. The research proposal and data analysis assignments will receive feedback and will serve as drafts to be incorporated into the final research paper. First, your group will identify the data to be analyzed and conduct an in-depth review of the sociological literature to write an 8-page research proposal that includes a sociological research question. Your group will collect media data and conduct a textual analysis. Based on this analysis, your group will write a research paper of between 20 and 25 pages that provides an introduction, literature review, data and methods section, findings section, and conclusion. Finally, your group will present findings online during the last day of class. Detailed instructions will be provided in class and on Avenue to Learn, and we will spend a portion of class time working on group projects.

This project will be submitted in four components:

group research proposal (10%)	October 29
group data analysis (5%)	November 12
group research paper (25%)	December 3
group research presentation (5%)	December 4

All group members will evaluate the participation of their peers, and individual grades will be adjusted, if necessary, for level of contribution.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 – September 11

Introduction to the course

Week 2 – September 18

Globalization, Sexuality, and Intimacy:

This week examines transformations in intimacy and how globalization has shaped these changes.

Readings:

- Hull, Kathleen, Ann Meier and Timothy Ortyl. 2010. "The Changing Landscape of Love and Marriage." *Contexts* 9:32-37.
- Valentine, Gill. 2006. "Globalizing Intimacy: The Role of Information and

Communication Technologies in Maintaining and Creating Relationships.”
Women's Studies Quarterly 34(1/2): 365-393.

Week 3 – September 25

Same-Sex Sexuality, LGBT Activism, and Political Homophobia

This week's readings provide examples of sociological textual methods that analyze news articles. They focus on global debates over homosexuality, specifically considering the concept of “political homophobia.”

Readings:

- Currier, Ashley. 2010. “Political Homophobia in Postcolonial Namibia.” *Gender & Society* 24(1): 110-129.
- McKay, Tara, and Nicole Angotti, N. 2016. “Ready Rhetorics: Political Homophobia and Activist Discourses in Malawi, Nigeria, and Uganda.” *Qualitative Sociology* 39:397–420.

Notes: Commentary due on **September 24 at 11pm** to be submitted to Kritik

Week 4 – October 2

Gender, Sexuality, and the State

We consider the ways that the state regulates and is regulated by gender and sexuality.

Readings:

- Calnitsky, David. 2019. “The High-hanging Fruit of the Gender Revolution: A Model of Social Reproduction and Social Change.” *Sociological Theory* 37(1): 35–61.
- Puri, Jyoti. 2016. “Governing Sexuality, Constituting States,” pp. 3-23 in *Sexual States: Governance and the Struggle over the Antisodomy Law in India*. Durham and London: Duke University Press. (Chapter 1, available as an ebook from the McMaster Library).

Week 5 – October 9

Same-Sex Sexuality, Queer Politics and LGBT Activism

This week concentrates on the politics of same-sex marriage and families and LGBT activism.

Readings:

- Moore, Mignon R., and Michael Stambolis-Ruhstorfer. 2013. “LGBT Sexuality and Families at the Start of the Twenty-First Century.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 39:491–507.
- Bernstein, Mary. 2018. “Same-Sex Marriage and the Assimilationist Dilemma: A Research Agenda on Marriage Equality and the Future of LGBTQ Activism, Politics, Communities, and Identities.” *Journal of Homosexuality* 65(14):1941–56.

Notes: Commentary due on **October 8 at 11pm** to be submitted to Kritik

Midterm Recess: October 16 [No Class]

Week 6 – October 23: Midterm exam to be completed on Avenue to Learn [No Class]

Week 7 – October 30

Race, Religion, and the Hijab

We consider debates over legislation banning hijab in public schools and other state institutions.

Readings:

- Byng, Michelle D. 2010. "Symbolically Muslim: Media, Hijab, and the West." *Critical Sociology* 36(1): 109-129.
- Thomas, Jasmine. 2015. "Only if She Shows Her Face: Canadian Media Portrayals of the Niqab Ban during Citizenship Ceremonies." *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 47(2): 187-201.

Week 8 – November 6

Sexuality, Gender, and Agency

Our topic for this week is debates over sexual agency for banned patriarchal family forms and stigmatized sexual practices.

Readings:

- Heath, Melanie, Jessica Braimoh, and Julie Gouweloos. 2016. "Judging Women's Sexual Agency: Contemporary Sex Wars in the Legal Terrain of Prostitution and Polygamy." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 42(1): 199-225.
- Heath, Melanie. 2019. "Espousing Patriarchy: Conciliatory Masculinity and Homosocial Femininity in Religiously Conservative Families." *Gender & Society* 33(6): 888-910.

Notes: Group proposal due on **October 29 at 11pm**

Week 9 – November 13

Globalization and Cross-Border Marriages

This week we discuss how globalization shapes cross-border marriages and relationships.

Readings:

- Starr, Emily, and Michele Adams. 2016. "The Domestic Exotic: Mail-Order Brides and the Paradox of Globalized Intimacies." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 41(4): 953-975.
- Liu, Monica. 2019. "Devoted, Caring, and Home loving: A Chinese Portrayal of Western Masculinity in Transnational Cyberspace Romance." *Men and Masculinities* 22(2): 317-337.

Notes: Commentary due on **November 5 at 11pm** to be submitted to Kritik

Week 10 – November 20

Globalization and Sex Work

Readings:

- Lerum, Kari, and Barbara G. Brents. 2016. "Sociological Perspectives on Sex Work and Human Trafficking." *Sociological Perspectives* 59(1): 17 –26.
- Hoang, Kimberly K. 2014. "Flirting with Capital: Negotiating Perceptions of Pan-Asian Ascendancy and Western Decline in Global Sex Work." *Social Problems* 61(4): 507-529.

Notes: Group data analysis due on **November 12 at 11pm**

Week 11 – November 27

Politics of Being Transgender

Readings:

- Westbrook, Laurel and Kristen Schilt. 2014. "Doing Gender, Determining Gender: Transgender People, Gender Panics, and the Maintenance of the Sex/Gender/Sexuality System." *Gender & Society* 28(1):32–57.
- Elischberger, Holger B., Jessica J. Glazier, Eric D. Hill, and Lynn Verduzco-Baker. 2018. "Attitudes Toward and Beliefs about Transgender Youth: A Cross-Cultural Comparison Between the United States and India." *Sex Roles* 78:142–160.

Notes: Commentary due on **November 19 at 11pm** to be submitted to Kritik

Week 12 – December 4

Research Presentations

Notes: Final Group Paper due on **December 3 at 11pm**.

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

Commentaries will be submitted to Kritik.io, a peer-to-peer learning platform. It is an engaging and gamified web technology that helps you develop your higher-order-thinking skills according to [Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive thinking](#). It includes Creation and Evaluation skills. When you participate in Kritik activities, you will receive 3 scores: "Creation" score, "Evaluation" score, and "Participation" score. Together, these will add up to 20 percent of your final course mark. To understand what these scores are and how they are calculated, please read the section "how scoring works" on Kritik help center [here](#). An email invitation will be sent to your school email account that contains the link to register an account on Kritik online and enroll in the course. You **MUST** use your university email to sign up in order to access the course. If you have not received any email yet, please contact support@kritik.io.

How to get help: If you have any questions about Kritik, please contact their support team at support@kritik.io or use the live chat in the app. They usually respond promptly in a few minutes during business hours. You can also visit Kritik Help Center at <https://www.kritik.io/student-user-guidance-page>, which outlines a brief overview to get you up and running on the system.

All written components of the group research project will be submitted to Avenue to Learn.

Review of Marks

Occasionally, students may disagree with the marks they receive. If this occurs, you may request a review of a mark by writing a brief (1 page) memo that describes in detail the nature of the perceived marking error. Submit this memo to me via email. You may submit requests for review no sooner than 48 hours and no later than 2 weeks after the assignments are returned. Please note that when a mark is reviewed the new mark may be lower than the original.

Late Assignments

The McMaster Student Absence Form (<http://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf/>) is a self-reporting tool for Undergraduate Students to report absences that last up to 3 days and provides the ability to request accommodation for any missed academic work. You may submit a maximum of 1 Academic Work Missed request per term. It is YOUR responsibility to follow up with your instructor immediately regarding the nature of the accommodation. If you are absent more than 3 days, exceed 1 request per term, or are absent for a reason other than medical, you MUST visit your Associate Dean's Office (Faculty Office). You may be required to provide supporting documentation. This form should be filled out when you are about to return to class after your absence. In the absence of a vetted excuse, late assignments will be marked down 5 percentage points for each day late.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar "Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work".

Avenue to Learn

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Turnitin.com

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via Avenue to Learn (A2L) plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work through A2L and/or Turnitin.com must still submit an electronic and/or hardcopy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com or A2L. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more information please refer to the [Turnitin.com Policy](#).

University Policies

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty

- Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- Improper collaboration in group work.
- Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Authenticity/Plagiarism Detection

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. **All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld** (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

Courses with an Online Element

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a [RISO](#) accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the "Code"). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

Land Acknowledgement Statement

McMaster University recognizes and acknowledges that it is located on the traditional territories of the Mississauga and Haudenosaunee nations, and within the lands protected by the “Dish With One Spoon” Wampum agreement.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F