

Global Family and Sexual Politics

SOCIOLOGY 4UU3

Winter, 2020

Day and Time of Class: Fridays 2:30 - 5:20pm

Class Location: LRW 1057

Instructor: Dr. Melanie Heath

Office: KTH-638

Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:30-12:30pm

Email: mheath@mcmaster.ca

Course Description

This class will examine how globalization shapes the ways in which family, gender, and sexualities are imagined, regulated and experienced through a sociological lens. 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 to apply course materials to news, media, politics, and legal matters related to globalized forms of sexuality and family life.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, you will 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 Readings

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 Requirements

This seminar will teach you how to use your sociological imagination to think critically about the global aspects of social change in relation to family and sexualities.

Participation (10%):

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

Weekly Commentaries and Peer Evaluation (20%) due each **Thursday 5pm**; Peer Evaluation due **Monday 5pm**, and Feedback due the following **Thursday 5pm**: In preparation for the week's discussion, you must submit a commentary of the week's readings on Kritik (see below) by

Thursday at 5pm. 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 5pm and your feedback of your own evaluations is due on the next Thursday at 5pm. 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, and how each of these components are weighted for your final grade are provided on Kritik (see section below). Instructions for the assignment and on how to write a commentary are provided on Avenue.

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

1. A summary of the two 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. The next page provides guidelines for writing a commentary.

Midterm Exam (25%): The essay question will be posted on Avenue to Learn on Friday, February 14 at 9am and will be due on **February 18 at 5pm**. Detailed guidelines on how to write the essay will be discussed in class. This essay is submitted exclusively in electronic format on Avenue to Learn. I will take 5% off your mark per day of being late.

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. 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 analyze it to address your research question. Based on this analysis, your group will write a research paper of about 20 pages that provides an introduction, literature review, data and methods section, findings section, and conclusion. Finally, your group will present their findings on the last day of class. Detailed instructions will be provided in class, and we will spend a portion of class time working on group projects.

This project will be submitted in four components:

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|----------------------------|------------|
| Research proposal (15%) | February 6 |
| Data analysis (5%) | March 13 |
| Research paper (20%) | April 3 |
| Research presentation (5%) | April 3 |

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

Additional Information on Assignments

Assignments must be turned in electronically via Avenue to Learn <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca/> by the deadline on the course schedule. It is your responsibility to check Avenue to Learn prior to each class for updates or changes. This course will use the originality checking feature in Avenue to Learn to screen all assignments for plagiarism (see below). All pages must be numbered and have 1" to 1.25" margins on all sides. All text should be double-spaced in an easy-to-read 12-point font. You should use ASA citation style in all the assignments. A brief introduction to this style is provided on Avenue to Learn. Failure to adhere to these guidelines will be reflected in the mark for the assignment.

Kritik.io

In this course, we will be using 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.

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.

Email Policy

Please contact me via McMaster email (mheath@mcmaster.ca) with questions or concerns. You should address me as Professor or Dr. Heath, and you can expect to receive a reply to your email

within 48 hours, excluding weekends. Please note that it is best to raise questions about course content in class or during office hours, and I encourage you to visit me during office hours. It is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all email communication sent from students to instructors, and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University email 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.

Accommodations

I am committed to making appropriate accommodations for students' observance of religious holidays. Please contact me early in the term to make arrangements. I am also committed to working with students with disabilities to make individualized accommodations according to your specific needs. All such arrangements must be made through Student Accessibility Services. Please drop by my office hours at the beginning of the term to make individual arrangements and to complete the necessary paperwork. All details regarding accommodation arrangements will be kept strictly confidential.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and 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 kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

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

Department/University Policies

The Sociology staff do not date-stamp assignments, nor do they monitor the submission or return of papers. 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.

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.

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

Jan. 10: Introduction to the course

Jan. 17: Globalization, Sexuality, and Intimacy

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

- 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.

Jan. 24: 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."

- 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.

Jan. 31: Group Work on Proposal

Feb. 7: Gender, Sexuality, and the State

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

- 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).

Feb. 14: Same-Sex Sexuality, Queer Politics and LGBT Activism

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

- 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.

Feb. 21: Mid-term recess

Feb. 28: Race, Religion, and the Hijab

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

- 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.

Mar. 6: Sexuality, Gender, and Agency

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

- 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.

Mar. 13: Globalization and Cross-Border Marriages

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

- 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.

Mar. 20: Globalization and Sex Work

We delve into the topic of how globalization shapes sex work, including debates over trafficking.

- 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.

Mar. 27: Politics of Being Transgender

We consider comparative issues of prejudice concerning transgender rights and how bathrooms became political.

- 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.

Apr. 4: Research Presentations