Voyage: Fall 2014

Discipline: Sociology

SOC 2052: Sociology of the Family

Division: Lower

Faculty Name: Allison J. Pugh

Credit Hours: 3; Contact Hours: 38

Pre-requisites:
One course in the social sciences.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Families are under siege, although not all of them for the same reasons. The fragile bonds that hold families together are buffeted by time demands at the workplace, the struggle to make it in the market economy, growing inequality and the distortions and social divisions that it produces, even the challenge of trust when forging relationships amidst increasing instability. While these social forces are worldwide, their influence varies widely in different contexts. In this class, we’ll consider competing explanations for what makes families spin apart, and throughout the course we will also look at different ways people are trying to remake families, finding alternative ways of caring and providing for each other. At the end of this class, you should be able to think critically about where families have been and where they are going. This class is a collaborative exercise, in which what you get out of it reflects what you put into it. Students will take responsibility for their own learning, ask questions, challenge assumptions, and participate actively.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
The course has five broad goals for the new skills and understandings students will have at semester’s end:

- **You will grapple with current sociological thinking about families.** What are families like today, in the United States and in other countries? Why do we see an array of diverse family forms? What are the factors that lead to different kinds of families, and what are their consequences? What are families for, anyway?
- **You will reflect upon your own family, and broaden your exposure to other kinds of**
families worldwide.

- You will think critically about families and synthesize concepts, meaning apply ideas learned in class to new facts.
- You will help build a learning community.
- You will write well.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

AUTHOR: Cherlin, Andrew J.
PUBLISHER: New York: Vintage
ISBN #: 978-0-307-38638-0
DATE/EDITION: 2010

AUTHOR: Malloy, Aimee.
TITLE: However Long the Night: Molly Melching’s Journey to Help Millions of African Women and Girls Triumph.
ISBN #: 978-0062132765
DATE/EDITION: 2013

AUTHOR: Pugh, Allison J.
TITLE: Longing and Belonging: Parents, Children and Consumer Culture
PUBLISHER: University of California Press
ISBN #: 9780520258440
DATE/EDITION: 2009

AUTHOR: Stacey, Judith
TITLE: Unhitched: Love, Marriage and Family Values from West Hollywood to Western China.
ISBN #: 9780814783825
DATE/EDITION: 2011

TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

Depart Southampton- August 23:

UNIT ONE: Introduction
A1- August 25: Introduction: What do we already know about families and what do we want to find out?
No reading.

A2- August 27: What’s Important to Know about Family History: the Invention of Public and Private
Reading: Gillis, John. 1996. A World of Their Own Making: Myth, Ritual and the Quest for
Family Values. Chapter 5. “Making Time(s) for Family.” *

A3-August 29: Fathers and Fatherhood in Russia

St. Petersburg: August 30- September 1

A4-September 3: Contemporary Trends in Intimacy: Marriage in the United States versus Europe
Due: Choose theme for final project

Gdansk: September 5-7

Rostok: September 8-9

First set of Fieldnotes/interview notes due

A6-September 12: Overworking norms – Squeezing Family in at the Margins
Further reading (optional): Fagnani, Jeanne. "Family Policies In France And Germany."

Antwerp: September 14-16
Le Havre: September 17-19

UNIT II: Explaining the Fragile Family: Economic, Political, Legal Contexts
Second set of Fieldnotes/interview notes due
A7-September 20: Who Takes Care of Us? What Do We Owe Each Other?: From Kin to the State to “Rosie the Robot”

A8- September 22: Shifts in Public and Private

Dublin: September 24-27

A9- September 28: The Market and Childrearing: What Buying Means to Kids; and How Parents Respond
Reading:

A10- September 30: Economic Shifts, New Family Patterns
Reading:
Further Reading (Optional):
Mercedes Sánchez-Martínez and Angel Otero. 2009. Factors Associated with Cell Phone Use in


Lisbon: October 1-2
In transit: October 3
Cadiz: October 4-5

A11- October 7: The Politics of Public and Private: Intersections of Families, Gender and the Law

Third set of Fieldnotes/interview notes due


Casablanca: October 8-11

UNIT III: Families and Inequalities

A12-October 13: Gender and Intimacy in Young Adulthood


**Further reading (Optional):**


A13- October 15: Local and Global Knowledge: Gender, Culture and the Human Rights of Children


**Further Reading (Optional):**


Dakar: October 16-19

October 16 Field Lab: Parenting Practices in Senegal: Where Local and Global Knowledge Meet

A14- October 21: Gender and the Organization of Intimacy: Polgyny, Matrilineal Families and
Care

Fieldlab Reflections Paper due


A15- October 23: Gender, Race, Culture and Family Patterns


Further reading (optional):

Takoradi: October 25-26
Tema: October 27-28

A16- October 29: The Stalled Revolution: Gender and Work – Fourth Set of Fieldnotes/interview notes due


A17- October 31: New Trends in Race and Intimacy


Study Day: November 2

A18- November 3: In-class exam.

A19- November 5: Comparative Studies of Love
Ideals of Masculinity and Femininity: Love in a Divided Society.”

Rio de Janeiro: November 7-9
In-transit: November 10-11
Salvador: November 12-14

A20- November 15: Class, Race and Childrearing
Executive Summary of findings due

UNIT IV: THE ELASTICITY OF CARE AND INTIMACY
A21- November 17: New Families, Old Families: Dilemmas of Contemporary Fatherhood
Reading:

Study Day: November 19

A22- November 20: Migration, Kin-Shifting and Extended Families
Due in class: Presentations

Bridgetown: November 22-24

A23- November 25: New kinds of families – Is Endurance and Diversity Possible?
Due in class: Presentations

A24- November 27: Conclusion.
Due in class: Presentations

Havana: November 29- December 2:

Study Day- December 3

A25-December 4 (A Day Finals): Due in class: presentations

FIELD WORK
Field lab attendance is mandatory for all students enrolled in this course. Please do not book individual travel plans or a Semester at Sea sponsored trip on the day of our field lab. This field lab is planned on Thursday, 16 October in Dakar, Senegal.

FIELD LAB (At least 20 percent of the contact hours for each course, to be led by the instructor.)

Parenting Practices in Senegal: Where Local and Global Knowledge Meet

Research on parenting practices suggests that how we raise children has a crucial effect on their life chances. Yet some recommended practices – such as stimulating and interacting with infants directly – counter traditional Senegalese folkways. For example, the belief that infants must be protected from dangerous spirits: to protect them certain parents avoid looking newborn babies in the eye and speaking regularly and directly to them. How might Senegalese parents come to view new parenting practices as culturally relevant for them? How do families integrate global and local knowledge? The organization Tostan – which means “breakthrough” in the Wolof language – employs a community education model, using traditional methods of learning, to enable communities in Senegal and seven other African countries to absorb and adapt development programming so that it is appropriate for them. Started by a young exchange student, Tostan is unusual for how it merges local and global knowledge, under the rubric of human rights, to tackle powerful traditional practices such as child marriage and female genital cutting. In this fieldlab, we’ll take an in-depth look at the Tostan program “Reinforcing Parental Practices” (RPP), in which parents and infants gather together to learn simple techniques including telling stories, copying children and asking them questions. We’ll visit the RPP team at the Tostan training center in Thies, where we’ll have a roundtable discussion with RPP Coordinator Ibrahima Giroux about how the RPP handles the introduction of new parenting ideas in a way that does not offend or ignore local sensibilities. We’ll have lunch at the training center, before heading out to a nearby village, where we’ll be able to take a tour and observe a demonstration of Tostan’s award-winning model at work.

Academic Objectives:
1. Understand the importance of parenting practices in shaping infants’ life chances.
2. Visit and observe an organization that trains parents in culturally relevant parenting practices that nonetheless incorporate new scientific findings on the important of interacting with and stimulating infants.
3. Consider and evaluate the collision of global and local knowledge, and how and when sensitive and community-centered efforts can lead to cultural change.

Assignment: Students will prepare for the fieldlab by reading excerpts from “However Long the Night,” an account of Tostan founder Molly Melcher’s work in Senegal. These excerpts include Chapter 6, pp 78-82, Chapters 9, 10, 13, 14, 19 and the epilogue. Students will also reflect on their observations in a 2-3 page position paper they will write. More details about this will be given in a class handout.

Dress and Conduct: A field lab is an extension of class, meaning conduct and classroom rules apply, including use of cell phones, headphones, and other electronics. Active participation during the lab is expected and will be part of student assessment. Only serious student illnesses will be marked as excused. All other student absences will result in a zero for the field lab assignment.

FIELD ASSIGNMENTS

Students will conduct interviews and ethnographic observations of families in four field assignments in four ports of call over the course of the semester: at least two sites must involve interviews with 2-3 local inhabitants, and at least two sites must involve 2-3 hours of field observations; some ideas for potential sites (markets, zoos, playgrounds, etc.) in each port will be posted on the class intranet. Students will use this material to think about a particular theme throughout the course, and ultimately make a presentation on this theme by the end of the class. Students can choose from three potential themes for their project (or propose their own) by the second class meeting: families and inequality, families and the market, or elastic families (see the syllabus units for further information; we’ll also discuss in class). By the end of the course, students will have 4-6 hours of field observations and 4-6 interviews on a given theme. Using course readings, students will analyze this data, and write a 2-3 page executive summary of their findings in light of the course material. Students will join in small groups of others studying the same themes, and make a 5-7 minute joint presentation, using iMovie, power-point or some other presentation program, during one of the last class sessions.

METHODS OF EVALUATION / GRADING RUBRIC

Class Participation/Attendance: 20%
Fieldnotes and executive summary: 25%
Fieldlab and reflection: 20%
In-class exam: 20%
Group Presentation: 15%
HONOR CODE
Semester at Sea students enroll in an academic program administered by the University of Virginia, and thus bind themselves to the University’s honor code. The code prohibits all acts of lying, cheating, and stealing. Please consult the Voyager’s Handbook for further explanation of what constitutes an honor offense.

Each written assignment for this course must be pledged by the student as follows: “On my honor as a student, I pledge that I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment.” The pledge must be signed, or, in the case of an electronic file, signed “[signed].”