

SOCIOLOGY OF LGBTQ+ FAMILIES
SOC394H1S
Summer 2019

S. W. Underwood
725 Spadina Ave., Room 335
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Class Time: Tuesday & Thursday, 12:00 – 2:00PM
Location: SS 1084
Office Hours: Thurs. 2:15-3:15 & by appointment

Teaching Assistant: Judy Beglaubter, judy.beglaubter@utoronto.ca
Office Hours: Scheduled as needed.

Course Description: This class will provide students with an in-depth understanding of the variety and lived realities of families within the LGBTQ+ communities of Canada and the USA. Students will critically examine normative notions of family across axes of gender, race/ethnicity, class, marital status, and kinship ties, giving special attention to how LGBTQ+ families challenge these patterns. At the same time, we explore the historical, material, institutional, and legal challenges faced by LGBTQ+ families.

Goals and Learning Objectives:

- To understand how gender, sexuality, and race/ethnicity (among other important axes of identity) are socially constructed and how they generate embodied experiences and material consequences in specific historical and cultural contexts
- To understand how ideas about 'family' structure our daily lives, and in particular, how LGBTQ+ families are reimagining and reshaping meanings of family, parenthood, motherhood, fatherhood, and so forth
- To develop an understanding of the social and political struggles for cultural, institutional, and legal recognition of LGBTQ+ families in Canada and the USA

Prerequisites: The prerequisite to take SOC394H1S is 1.0 SOC full course equivalent (FCE) at the 200+ level. Students without this prerequisite will be removed at any time and without notice.

Required Texts: None. All readings will be made available online on Quercus.

Evaluations:

Discussion Posts	10%	Two discussion posts due by 11:59PM Mon. & Wed. weekly Two responses due by 11:59PM Sat. weekly
Essay 1	20%	Mon. July 22 nd
Essay 2	35%	Wed. August 7 th
Final Exam	35%	TBD by the Office of the Registrar (Aug. 15 – Aug. 22)

Class Format: My teaching style is interactive and focused on student learning through writing exercises and group discussions. Students are expected to attend all lectures and to participate actively by 1) submitting online discussion posts before each class, 2) completing assigned readings, 3)

engaging in in-class discussions, and 4) keeping up to date on course information posted on Quercus. In all activities, students are to be respectful of fellow classmates, guest speakers, and teaching/administrative staff.

Email and Contact: When emailing the instructor or TA, please use your mail.utoronto.ca address. Please also include “SOC394” and a brief description in the subject line so that your email is easily prioritized. Emails will typically be answered within 48 hours. Keep in mind that for simple questions, email is the preferred method of communication. However, for longer questions, students should attend office hours and/or schedule an appointment with the instructor.

Discussion Posts: Students are responsible for attending every class session and engaging in discussions on a regular basis. Actively engaging in online discussion posts will prepare you to engage in class. I will organize the class into groups on Quercus (you will find your group under “Discussions”). There will be a thread for each class. These weekly discussion posts are required for every class with assigned readings **except** classes 1, 7, and 12 when essays are due, and you may miss 1 class of your choice. You will therefore respond to readings from **8 of the 12 classes**. Late or missing discussion posts will be penalized.

By the evening before each class (by 11:59PM on Mondays and Wednesdays), students will write at least two brief paragraphs on one or more of the week’s readings, including at least one question and a short evaluative comment. Your questions, comments, and reflections must draw on the assigned readings, including aspects of the text that you wish to understand or discuss, and/or reflections on the core concepts from the week’s readings. You are encouraged to quote excerpts from the course text, but make sure to **properly cite all paraphrase and direct quotations**.

You are also required to respond to 1 of your group members’ posts for each class. By 11:59PM on Saturday each week, you must submit one response to each class’s discussion thread. There are therefore **two required responses each week**. These posts can be shorter (one paragraph minimum), responding to another student’s questions or observations, building on something they have said, or asking questions of your own.

Students are encouraged to go beyond the minimum requirements for online discussion, and to take advantage of this forum for collective teaching and learning.

Final Exam: There will be a final exam that will include short answer and essay questions and will be written during the official examination period. The date will be set by the Office of the Registrar (between August 15th and August 22nd)

To do well on the exam, you need to know the specific arguments in each of the readings and lectures, and be able to discuss the main issues covered in both the readings and lectures. The exam is synthetic, so you should think over the **main themes and arguments** discussed in the course and review the **key arguments** in each reading and lecture to prepare for them.

Missed Final Exam: Students who miss the final exam will be assigned a grade of 0. In the case of a missed final exam, please directly contact your registrar to follow protocol.

Essays: There are two essays required for this course. The first essay will address a set of questions on the required readings and will be handed out in class. This first essay will be 3 pages in length. The

second essay will also address a set of questions on the required readings, but will ask you to include 2-3 externally sourced readings of your own choosing. This second essay will be 5-7 pages in length.

The essays must be **submitted on Quercus by 11:59PM** on their respective due dates listed above. There will be a penalty for submitting any essay after the due date.

Late essays should not surprise me! If you cannot make the deadline, tell me well ahead of it. If a personal or family crisis prevents you from meeting a deadline, you need to get a letter from your college registrar (or have them send me an email) and contact me yourself – both, as soon as possible. (It is a good idea anyway to advise your college registrar if a crisis is interfering with your studies.) The letter should be either emailed to me or submitted in class or during office hours.

If you do not have my permission to hand in your essay late, you will lose **5 percentage points** for every day the essay is late. Provided that you have my permission to hand in the work late, attach the registrar's letter or Verification of Student Illness form to the essay when you submit it. Work handed in late should be submitted on Quercus as normal. Assignments submitted 7 or more days after they are due will not be accepted.

Keep a record of your submission including the date and time submitted—a screenshot is fine for this. Students must keep copies of their work in case assignments are lost. Students are responsible for assignments that are lost. Please **do not** submit your assignments in the drop box in the Sociology department.

Note: Please be aware that turning in an old paper, or large parts thereof, for credit, is considered an academic offense that results in students being referred to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Writing Essays and Academic Integrity: Students who have questions or concerns about how to write an essay should make an appointment to see me during my office hours – for advice and help. Otherwise, I recommend using the very helpful website, “Writing at the University of Toronto,” at www.writing.utoronto.ca. Look under “advice” and then “style and editing.”

Writing workshops are also available for students; for information on them go to www.writing.utoronto.ca/news/writing-plus. A helpful guide to writing is: Margot Northey and Margaret Procter, *Writer's Choice: A Portable Guide for Canadian Writers* (Prentice Hall Cda). And Wm. Strunk and E.B. White's *The Elements of Style* is the best general summary of the rules of grammar and good writing.

Students are expected to acquaint themselves with the rules concerning **plagiarism**. Cheating and misrepresentation will not be tolerated. Students who commit an academic offence face serious penalties. Avoid plagiarism by citing properly.

The *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* in the Calendar of the Faculty of Arts and Science specifies: “It shall be an offence for a student knowingly: to **represent as one's own** any idea or expression of an idea or work of another in any academic examination or term test or in connection with any other form of academic work, i.e. to commit plagiarism. Wherever in the Code an offence is described as depending on ‘knowing’, the offence shall likewise be deemed to have been committed if the person ought reasonably to have known.” In short, do not “borrow” passages from books or articles

or websites without **citing them**. If you copy the words of other people, put quotation marks around them and cite the reference (that is, put author's surname, date, & page number in parentheses). If you paraphrase you also need to cite the reference, with the page number. Then, be sure to put all sources that you cite in the "References" at the back of the paper. Plagiarizing can result in a very serious penalty, and any suspected case will be turned over to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Familiarize yourself with the University of Toronto's *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>). It is the rule book for academic behaviour at the U of T, and you are expected to know the rules.

Re-Grading Policy: For clarification and questions about your grades, students should wait at least 24 hours after receiving their grade to contact the TA or instructor. This is intended to encourage adequate time for reflection on the grade and its rationale. If you wish to request a regrade of an assignment, you must submit a one-page document by email within 5 days of receiving your grade. Indicate specifically your areas of concern, your questions, and make an argument as to why your grade should be different. **NOTE:** Regrades can result in a higher or lower grade.

Student Services and Resources:

Accessibility: Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel welcome to approach me and/or Accessibility Services at (416) 978 8060 or accessibility.utoronto.ca

Equity & Diversity: The University of Toronto and I are committed to equity and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect. As a course instructor, I will neither condone nor tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any individual in this course and wish to be alerted to any attempt to create an intimidating or hostile environment. It is our collective responsibility to create a space that is inclusive and welcomes discussion. Discrimination, harassment and hate speech will not be tolerated.

In particular, you may wish to acquaint yourself with the Sexual & Gender Diversity Office at <https://sgdo.utoronto.ca/about-the-office/equity-diversity-u-of-t/> and the Anti-Racism and Cultural Diversity Office at <http://antiracism.utoronto.ca/>. Further resources for First Nations students, students of faith, and more can be found at <http://equity.hrandequity.utoronto.ca/>.

Course Schedule:

1: Tuesday, July 2 nd	Introduction
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First day of class: no discussion post due• Moore, Mignon and Michael Stambolis-Ruhstorfer. 2013. "LGBT Sexuality and Families at the Start of the 21st Century." <i>Annual Review of Sociology</i> 39: 491-507.• Powell, Brian, Bozendahl, Catherine, Geist, Claudia, and Lala Carr Steelman. 2010. "Who Counts as a Family?" p. 16-36 in <i>Counted Out: Same-Sex Relations and Americans' Definitions of Family</i>. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
2: Thursday, July 4 th	Theoretical Perspectives: Gender, Race, and Sexualities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fausto-Sterling, Anne. 2000. "Dueling Dualisms." p. 1-29 in <i>Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality</i>. New York: Basic Books.• Somerville, Siobhan. 2000. "Scientific Racism and the Emergence of the Homosexual Body" in <i>Queering the Color Line.</i>" p. 15-38.
3: Tuesday, July 9 th	The Social Construction of Gender and Gendered Expectations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thorne, Barrie. 1993. "Children and Gender." Pp. 1-7 in <i>Gender Play: Girls and Boys in School</i>. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.• Kane, Emily W. 2006. "'No Way My Boys Are Going to be like That!' Parents' Responses to Children's Gender Nonconformity." <i>Gender and Society</i> 20(2): 149-176.
4: Thursday, July 11 th	The "Gay and Lesbian Movement"
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adam, Barry D. (1995). Chapters 7 & 8, p. 128-164 in <i>The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement</i>. Twayne Pub.
5: Tuesday, July 16 th	Families We Choose
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Weston, Kath. (1991). Chapters 2 & 5, p. 21-41, 103-136 in <i>Families We Choose: Lesbians, Gays, Kinship</i>. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
6: Thursday, July 18 th	Queer Challenges to Family Law and Policy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kelly, Fiona. (2011). Chapters 1 & 2, p. 19-71 in <i>Transforming Law's Family: The Legal Recognition of Planned Lesbian Motherhood</i>. UBC Press.
7: Tuesday, July 23 rd	Becoming Queer Parents: Kinship and Family Formation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Essay 1 DUE by 11:59PM the night before this class: Mon. July 22nd. No discussion post due.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boggis, Terry. 2001. "Affording Our Families: Class Issues in Family Formation." Pp. 175-181 in <i>Queer Families, Queer Politics: Challenging Culture and the State</i> by Mary Bernstein and Renate Reimann (Eds.). New York: Columbia University Press. • Patterson, C. J., & Riskind, R. G. (2010). To be a parent: Issues in family formation among gay and lesbian adults. <i>Journal of GLBT Family Studies</i>, 6(3), 326-340.
8: Thursday, July 25 th	Resistance and Change in LGBTQ+ Families
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Averett, K. H. (2015). The Gender Buffet LGBTQ Parents Resisting Heteronormativity. <i>Gender & Society</i> • Stacey, Judith and Timothy J. Biblarz. 2001. "(How) Does the Sexual Orientation of Parents Matter?" <i>American Sociological Review</i> 66: 159-183.
9: Tuesday, July 30 th	Lesbian Mothers: Promises of Egalitarianism
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dunne, Gilliane. (2000). Opting into Motherhood: Lesbians blurring the boundaries and transforming the meaning of parenthood and kinship. <i>Gender & Society</i>, 14(1): 11-35. • Moore, Mignon. (2008). Gendered power relations among women: A study of household decision making in Black, lesbian stepfamilies. <i>American Sociological Review</i>, 73(2): 335-356.
10: Thursday, August 1 st	Gay Fathers: Planned Parenthood 'In Extremis'
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stacey, Judith. 2011. Chapter 2 "Gay Parenting and the End of Paternity as We Knew It." In <i>Unhitched: Love, Marriage, and Family Values from West Hollywood to Western China</i>. • Carroll, M. (2018). Gay fathers on the margins: Race, class, marital status, and pathway to parenthood. <i>Family Relations</i>, 67(1): 104-117.
11: Tuesday, August 6 th	Transgender Parents: Postmodern Partnerships
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pfeffer, Carla. 2012. "Normative Resistance and Inventive Pragmatism: Negotiating Structure and Agency in Transgender Families." <i>Gender & Society</i>, 26(4): 574-602.
12: Thursday, August 8 th	Exam Review and Catch-Up
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essay 2 DUE by 11:59PM the night before this class: Wed. August 7th. No discussion post due. • No assigned readings. We will use this class to further explore issues of interest and review for the final exam.