Sex and Politics: Reproducing Humanity?
IDST 089
Fall semester, 2010

INSTRUCTORS
Paul Gilbert, MSPH
Health Behavior and Health Education
paul.gilbert@unc.edu

Autumn Thoyre, MS
Geography
authoyre@email.unc.edu

Joseph Gindi, MA
Religious Studies
jgindi@email.unc.edu

Julia Wood, PhD
( Instructor of record)
Communication Studies
turbiville@aol.com

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE
This interdisciplinary seminar will explore the phenomenon of human reproduction at multiple levels, ranging from the individual to community, national, and ultimately global levels. We will seek to understand who is reproducing, what is being reproduced, and the various factors that facilitate or constrain different reproductive acts. Themes to be investigated include gender, historical assumptions about reproduction, the ethics of reproduction, assisted reproduction technologies, adoption and surrogacy, birth control and reproductive rights, demography and population-level trends, over-population, and climate change. Drawing on the instructors’ diverse disciplines, such as religious studies, geography, sociology, and public health, in-class activities and homework assignments will encourage students to hone their critical thinking skills by engaging with the topic of reproduction.

CLASSROOM
Davie 101

CLASS TIMES
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 11:00am - 12:15pm

OFFICE HOURS
By appointment
GRADING
The final course grade will be based on the following criteria as indicated below:

- Participation (10%)
- Daily written assignments (20%)
- Preparatory work for final projects (annotated bibliography, 10%; outline, 10%)
- Individual preliminary paper (30%)
- Group presentation and paper (20%)

HONOR CODE
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has had a student-administered honor system and judicial system for over 100 years. The system is the responsibility of students and is regulated and governed by them, but faculty share the responsibility. If you have questions about your responsibility under the honor code, please bring them to the instructors or consult with the office of the Dean of Students or the Instrument of Student Judicial Governance. This document, adopted by the Chancellor, the Faculty Council, and the Student Congress, contains all policies and procedures pertaining to the student honor system. Your full participation and observance of the honor code is expected.

The Instrument of Student Judicial Governance defines plagiarism as deliberate or reckless representation of another's words, thoughts, or ideas as one's own without attribution in connection with submission of academic work, whether graded or otherwise. Plagiarism can take many forms and there may be a number of reasons why it occurs. To avoid potential problems: **quote and cite any words that are not your own, and if you paraphrase the words of another, you must still give proper attribution.**

All academic work in this course, including writing assignments and research projects, is to be your own work, unless otherwise specifically provided. It is your responsibility if you have any doubt to confirm whether or not collaboration is permitted.

REQUIRED BOOKS
Two books are required for this seminar and are available at the UNC Student Stores.


Other required readings will be posted on Blackboard or have online links within the syllabus.
DAILY WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

These assignments are intended 1) to make sure students have completed the readings for each class, and 2) to encourage students to think critically about the readings before coming to class in preparation for discussions. Each written assignment should consist of at least three points you want to make about the readings and be three concise paragraphs in length (less than one page). Your assignment needs to demonstrate that you have completed all the readings. If there is more than one reading assigned for that day, be sure to include at least one point, question, or insight from each required reading. You will be using these assignments to generate discussion during class.

Daily written assignments are due at the end of each class period and will be submitted as a hard copy (i.e. printed out, NOT emailed).

There are several different ways to think about these three points you want to make about the readings. You could look at the Bloom’s Taxonomy handout and think about some of the questions, particularly those in the later stages of the Taxonomy while reading. Alternatively, here are some possible points you could make:

- Ask yourself whether you "buy" the main arguments the readings. If yes, what made it a particularly strong argument? If no, what could the author have done to convince you? What are the main strengths or weaknesses of the argument?
- Ask yourself if you could apply the arguments or ideas of the readings to other situations - other places, other spatial scales, other time periods, other issues - and explain what you might find out if you did so.
- Ask yourself how you might go about testing whether the ideas or arguments the authors are making are true or not - explain.
- Ask an interesting question about the reading, explaining why it is interesting and some possible answers it makes you think of.
- Relate a piece of the readings to something else that you have learned or experienced, such as to another readings, a personal experience, or to other themes of the class. Explain how the reading relates, why it is particularly thought-provoking, and whether it helps you to think in a new way?
- If something is confusing to you in the reading, explain what, why it was confusing, and what you think it might mean.
- Explain what you see as a particularly important point or conclusion in the reading; be sure to explain why you think it is so important.

The daily written assignments account for 20% of the final course grade, or up to 20 points. Each daily written assignment handed in is worth a maximum 1 point and will be graded as follows:

- Demonstrating a critical analysis of the readings: check plus (1 point)
- Demonstrating a summary of the readings but without analysis: check (0.75 point)
- Failure to demonstrate that you have read and understood the readings: check minus (0.5 point)

This means if you get full credit on all your daily assignments, you only need to turn in 20 of them (provided you receive a a full one point for each daily written assignment).
RESEARCH PROJECT
The research project for the course consists of a combination of short individual assignments and an integrated group presentation and paper from several students around a common theme.

The progression of assignments for the final project will be as follows:
- September 23 - Students will bring 2-3 potential paper topics to class. We will discuss these topics in small groups.
- October 14 - Each student will bring a 1-page annotated bibliography of the topic which was strongest of the 2-3 identified earlier.
- November 4 - Outline due, outlining the logical flow of your argument.
- November 23 - Individual 8-10 page papers due.
- November 30, December 2, December 7 - Group presentations (20 minutes long each).

More detailed instructions about each assignment are posted on Blackboard.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS
Students are responsible for completing and submitting all research project assignments by the respective due dates. Late assignments will be reduced one letter grade per day past the due date.

Students will submit daily written assignments in class each day; no late submissions will be accepted.

REVISIONS
The instructors may revise this syllabus as they see fit over the course of the semester.
### Week 1  INTRODUCTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Instructor(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/24/10</td>
<td>Overview and course logistics</td>
<td>Autumn, Joseph, Paul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/26/10</td>
<td>What is reproduction?</td>
<td>Autumn, Joseph, Paul</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Required reading**


**Optional reading**

- What would life be like without sex? *Discover*; June 1992 (5 pgs)

### Week 2  BUILDING UPON BIOLOGY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Instructor(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/31/10</td>
<td>Reconceptualizing reproduction</td>
<td>Autumn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Required reading**


**Optional reading**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Instructor(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/2/10</td>
<td>Sex versus gender</td>
<td>Paul</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Required reading**


**Optional reading**


### Week 3  ANTHROPOLOGIES OF REPRODUCTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Instructor(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/7/10</td>
<td>Historical assumptions behind reproductive acts</td>
<td>Joseph</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Required reading**


### 9/9/10

**Challenging and redefining what is reproduction and who is reproducing** (Autumn)


---

### Week 4

**ETHICS**


---

### 9/14/10

**Defining human life as a matter of ethics** (Joseph)


---

### 9/16/10

**Medical ethics** (Paul)


---

### Week 5

**WHOSE BABY IS IT?**


---

### 9/21/10

**Fertilization, adoption, and surrogacy** (Autumn)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Required reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/30/10</td>
<td>Birth control, morality, and social policy (Autumn)</td>
<td>Assignment topic assignment due.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Optional reading

**10/7/10**

**Case study: Jewish continuity** (Joseph)


### Required reading

**10/7/10**


Dorff E and Kassel A. (2207) Conservative Movement Responsum (Jewish legal opinion) on "Mitzvah Children" (14 pages)

Farber, H (2008) "I'm Going to Count to Three, and Then All Rabbis Need to Get Out of My Uterus," from "jspot.org" (archived at http://web.archive.org/web/20080219182217/jspot.org/?p=1883) (Please read the blog post and the comments).

---

**Week 8**

**ABORTION**

**10/12/10**

University Day—No class

**10/14/10**

**Abortion: framing the issue and understanding arguments** (Autumn)

**Required reading**


**Assignment**

Annotated bibliography due.

---

**Week 9**

**ABORTION (CONTINUED)**

**10/19/10**

**Abortion: beyond the individual** (Joseph)

**Required reading**


**10/21/10**

Fall break—No class

---

**Week 10**

**DEMOGRAPHY**

**Research project reading**


**10/26/10**

**What demography tells us about patterns of reproduction** (Paul)

**Required reading**


**Optional reading**

Patterns of reproduction and why they matter (Paul)


Week 11

POVERTY, POPULATION, AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Research project reading


**11/2/10**

Controlling populations in developing countries (Joseph)

Required reading


Optional reading


**11/4/10**

Family planning and rights: Human, women's, and reproductive (Autumn)

Required reading


Optional reading


Assignment

Paper outline due.

Week 12

NATIONALISM, IMMIGRATION, ASSIMILATION & BABIES

Research project reading


**11/9/10**

Immigration and Nationalism in a Global Context (Joseph)

Required reading


**11/11/10**

Immigration and nationalism in the United States (Paul)

Required


Optional reading


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Week 13</strong></th>
<th>ENVIRONMENT &amp; POPULATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**11/16/10** Environmental degradation and (over)population (Paul)

Required reading


Optional reading


**11/18/10** Reproduction and climate change (Autumn)

Required reading


Contraception is the greenest technology: Family Planning Cheapest Way to combat climate change (2 pages). http://www.optimumpopulation.org/releases/opt.release09Sep09.htm

Optional reading


**Week 14** REPRODUCTION AFTER THE APOCALYPSE

**11/23/10** Reproduction after the apocalypse (Joseph)

Required reading

Genesis 19:24-19:38 (Lot's Daughters)

Assignment Individual preliminary papers due.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/25/10</td>
<td>Thanksgiving—No class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Week 15</strong> GROUP PRESENTATIONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/30/10</td>
<td>Group presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/2/10</td>
<td>Group presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Week 16</strong> LAST WEEK OF CLASS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/7/10</td>
<td>Group presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/16/10</td>
<td><strong>Complete report (final assignment) due by 12:00 noon.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>