

ANTH 189: KINSHIP

Spring 2007

T-Th 5-6:30
104 Barrows Hall

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Office hours:
WED 1-3 and by appointment

course description

From the late 19th century to the present, the study of kinship has always meant much more than an inquiry into “what makes a relative.” This upper division undergraduate course treats kinship as a route into understanding crucial aspects of the history of anthropology. It also explores the recent feminist revival in kinship studies. We will begin by examining ideas about nature, culture, and property that animated foundational theories of genealogical relatedness and the “evolution of society.” We will then explore how some of the central issues animating much of the earlier literature come back to us in new ways. Here, we will think about such issues as reproductive technologies, the mutual constitution of kinship, gender, and sexuality in the U.S., and the ways that transnational adoption and the regulation of immigration helps illuminate the relation among kinship, race, and citizenship. The last few weeks of the course will focus on feminist kinship studies and the emergence of an anthropological interest in the biosciences, intellectual property, and genetic technologies. Many readings will focus on the United States though other regions and comparative contexts will be discussed.

articles

Required articles can be found in the Course Reader available from Copy Central, 2560 Bancroft Way, 510.848.8649. The Reader should be ready for purchase by Thursday, January 18. Additional articles, as announced during the course of the semester, will be posted on bspace or placed on reserve in the Anthropology Library (2d floor of Kroeber Hall). A copy of the articles in the Reader will also be placed on reserve in the Anthropology Library.

books

There are two required books. They are available at the campus bookstore and will also be placed on reserve in the Anthropology Library.

David M. Schneider, *American Kinship: A Cultural Account*, 1980 [1968].

Franklin, Sarah and Susan McKinnon, eds. *Relative Values: The Reconfiguration of Kinship Studies*, 2004.

of interest (not required but will be placed on reserve)

Kath Weston, *Families We Choose* 1991

Janet Carsten, *After Kinship*, 2004

Sylvia Yanagisako and Carol Delaney, *Naturalizing Power*, 1995

Charis Thompson, *Making Parents*, 2005

Nelson Graburn, ed. *Readings in Kinship and Social Structure*, 1971

course requirements

This is a reading-intensive course that demands your preparation and active participation. Please come to class having read the assignment listed for that day on the syllabus. We will work through a combination of lectures, large group discussion, films, and smaller group work. Your attendance and participation in all class meetings is required. Assessment will be based on participation and two main written assignments. There may be smaller written exercises as well, which will be factored into your participation grade.

written assignments

Evaluation in this course will not rely on exams. Instead, you will be asked to complete two writing projects/essays over the course of the semester. The first will be a 5-7 page essay (double-spaced) focusing on the readings and in-class films. The second assignment will be a short (4-6 page) analysis of a film, novel, TV show, advertising campaign, or other mass media/pop culture artifact from outside of class. You will be asked to analyze this thing, whatever it may be, in close dialogue with readings and course themes. Paper topics and criteria for evaluation will be discussed in detail when each assignment is handed out.

due dates

paper 1: March 15
paper 2: May 11

1 Introduction

T 16 Jan
 Course introduction: What is kinship (about?)

TH 18 Jan “The decade of kinship”
 Charles Darwin, “General Summary and Conclusion” from the *Descent of Man*
 ON TWO HOUR RESERVE IN THE ANTHROPOLOGY LIBRARY, KROEBER
 HALL

2 The genealogical method, then and now

T 23 Jan
 WHR Rivers, “The Genealogical Method” in Graburn, ed, *Readings in Kinship and Social Structure* [R]

 Henry Lewis Morgan, excerpts from *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity*, in Graburn, ed, *Readings in Kinship and Social Structure* [R]

TH 25 Jan
 Ghisli Pálsson, “The Life of Family Trees and the Book of Icelanders,” *Medical Anthropology*, 2002 [R]

3 The “virgin birth” debates and the mystery of paternity

T 29 Jan
 Bronislaw Malinowski, *Sexual Life of Savages* (1932), pp, 1-7; 153-178 [R]

 Carol Delaney, “The Meaning of Paternity and the Virgin Birth Debate” [R]

 RECOMMENDED: Sarah Franklin, “Conception Among the Anthropologists,” especially. pp. 17-37 [on reserve]

- TH 1 Feb
LH Morgan, Selections from *Ancient Society* [R]
- 4 Family, private property, and the state**
T 6 Feb
Friedrich Engels, “The Origins of the Family, Private Property, and the State” [R]
- Th 8 Feb
Karen Sacks, “Engels Revisited” [R]
Recommended: *The Anti-Social Family* (on reserve)
- 5 Kinship as exchange**
T 13 Feb
Claude Levi-Strauss, *Elementary Structures of Kinship* (selections) [R]
- Th 15 Feb
Susan McKinnon, “The Economies in Kinship and the Paternity of Culture”
in *Relative Values*
- 6 Kinship as exchange, revisited**
T 20 Feb
Gayle Rubin, 1975, “The Traffic in Women” [R]
- Th 22 Feb
Rubin, “Traffic in Women,” continued
- 7 Anthropological folk theories**
T 27 Feb
David Schneider, *American Kinship* (first half)
- Th 1 Mar
Schneider, *American Kinship*, finish
- 8 Continuity, disruption**
T 6 Mar
Susan Benson, “Injurious Names: Naming, Disavowal, and Recuperation in
Contexts of Slavery and Emancipation, in *The Anthropology of Names and
Naming*, edited by Gabrielle vom Bruck and Barbara Bodenhorn [R]
- Th 8 Mar
Kath Weston, “Kinship, Controversy” in *Relative Values*
- 9 Reconfiguring relatedness**
T 13 Mar
Kath Weston, “Exiles from Kinship” and “Families We Choose” in *Families We
Choose*, 1991 [R]
- TH 15 Mar
PAPER # 1 DUE IN CLASS
Film in class: “All about my mother”

10 The marriage question(s)

T 20 Mar
Judith Butler, "Is Kinship Always Heterosexual?" In *Left Legalism/Left Critique* [R]
Michael Warner, "Beyond Gay Marriage" In *Left Legalism/Left Critique* [R]

Th 22 Mar
In-class viewing: "Big Love"
Discussion

11 SPRING BREAK Read for April 3 and 5

T 27 Mar

Th 29 Mar

12 Gender, genetics, generation

T 3 Apr
Cori Hayden, "Gender, Genetics and Generation," *Cultural Anthropology* 1995 [R]

Th 5 Apr
Mark Rose, "Mothers and Authors" in *Critical Inquiry* [R]

Karin T. v. Michael T., 127 Misc. 2d 14 (N.Y. Fam. Ct., Monroe County 1985) (in class discussion)

Recommended: (on reserve) Marilyn Strathern, "Emergent Properties" in *Kinship, Law, and the Unexpected: Relatives are always a surprise*

13 Reproducing kinship

T 10 Apr **The infertility clinic**
Charis Thompson, "Strategic Naturalizing" in *Relative Values*

"Adoption's New Frontier," CBS News report, 2005 [R]

Th 12 Apr **Transnational Adoption**
Ann Anagnost, "Scenes of Misrecognition: Maternal Citizenship in the Age of Transnational Adoption" *Positions* 8:2 (2000), [R]

Film, "First Person Plural"

14 Kinship, belonging, citizenship

T 17 Apr
Adoption in-class discussion

Th 19 Apr
Bill Maurer, Selections from *Recharting the Caribbean: Land, Law, and Citizenship in the British Virgin Islands*, pp.123-65 [R]

15 New biologies: imperatives and uncertainties

T 24 Apr

Sahra Gibbon, "Genealogical Hybridities: The Making and Unmaking of Blood Relatives and Predictive Knowledge in Breast Cancer Genetics," used with permission (on reserve)

Th 26 Apr

Sarah Franklin, "Biologization Revisited" in *Relative Values*

Stefan Helmreich, "Kinship in Hypertext" in *Relative Values*

16 Humans, properties, nonhumans

T 1 May

Donna Haraway, selection from the chapter, "FemaleMan meets OncoMouse," in *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium*, pp. 49-101[R]

Th 3 May

Haraway discussion, continued

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T 8 May: LAST DAY OF CLASS

11 May: **PAPER #2 DUE by 4PM**