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Bartlett 202
TR 1:00-2:15PM
Office hours: TR 3-4 in Bartlett 208C
Fall 2014

WOMENSST 295M: The Politics of Reproduction and Mothering

The popular media blames feminism for the intensifying time crunch of families in the US struggling with having to have every adult in the work force and no time left for reproductive labor: raising children, caring for elders, building communities, caring for people with disabilities. Furthermore, it offers only two solutions: "lean in" or lean back and ask the workplace to change. In addition, we tend to think of all of these as professional and white people problems. This course explores an alternative analysis: that feminists in the '70s argued fiercely for good, free, 24-hour community day care centers and almost won, but for the intervention of an emergent evangelical right; and that some feminists and communities of color have been struggling ever since on questions of social reproduction, and these fights have had names like welfare, health care, schools, neoliberalism, gay marriage, immigration, IVF, and foreclosure.

In this course, we will explore the many strands of this struggle. One of the key ones has been the movement for reproductive justice rooted primarily in women of color feminism. Others reach back to the Black Panther Party's survival programs, public housing and welfare rights activism, and the Popular Front and its inheritors among socialist feminists in the past four decades, the Labor feminism of the 1940s and 50s, Chicana and Indigenous communities. We will also explore the more recent activism, primarily in communities of color, around foreclosure, prisons, and school closures. This work is increasingly pushing even mainstream feminist groups like Planned Parenthood to replace their "pro-choice" language and speak of "women's lives," "women's health," and "economic issues."

Because the politics of reproduction and mothering are broad issues, constantly changing, and in the news, students will be asked to add to this syllabus based on their own research (individually or as part of a group) by doing a presentation in the last weeks of class. One of our goals is to learn from each other and the evolving conversation in the news.

Grading and structure of assignments

Break-down of final grade, by percent:

20--class discussion

15--1st paper (2 pp.), due 9/25/14

20--2nd paper (5 pp.), due 10/9/14

20--3rd paper (5 pp.), due 11/12/14

25--final project (presentation) and paper, due 12/9/14

Assignments are detailed in the syllabus, below. Make sure you read the *whole* syllabus ahead of time.

All papers will be due before the class meeting and should be submitted to the online drop box in Moodle.

Required texts

Lisa Duggan, *The Twilight of Equality?: Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics, and the Attack on Democracy* (UC Press, 2004)

France Winddance Twine, *Outsourcing the Womb* (Routledge, 2011)

E-reserves (and all URLs or PDFs listed) will be available in Moodle.

Day-to-day business of the course

Reproductive politics has not always engendered good conversation or thoughtful engagement—in fact, the usual image of the conversation includes screaming, threatening, and barely suppressed (or not suppressed) violence. That is not what we are about here. Universities provide us the privilege and pleasure of reading together and learning from each other. Our job in this class is to create an intellectual community, one in which all are enriched by each others' readings. We will be discussing weighty, critical issues, which is why we need each other's help to think well as to try to understand how the reading can (or fails to) speak to our situation in the world. This imposes on each of us the responsibility of coming to class with the reading done, speaking up about our insights and questions, and listening respectfully to each other (which is not to say always agreeing). It's worth noting that these are not clear left/right or Democrat/Republican issues—the state with the best subsidized daycare is Oklahoma, where it is a Republican program.

So. You are expected to come to class with the reading done. For this class to work well, everyone needs to talk and think out loud. In order to facilitate this, we need to have the highest level of respect for each other. Your class participation grade will rest on how successfully you exhibit engagement with the material and with your classmates. This course is not a competition over who has "good" or "bad" politics (whatever we may consider those to be), it is an honest exploration of various kinds of political and intellectual positions, and the ways these have been historically constituted. Students are encouraged to bring questions, change their minds, make counter-arguments, and voice politically unpopular positions in class. While intellectual and moral passion, as well as lively disagreement (including with the instructor) are valued, *ad hominem* and *ad feminam* attacks will not be tolerated, nor will slurs or disparagement of any group.

At three random, unannounced times during the semester (determined by the instructor before the class meets), you will be given a class discussion grade. If you happen to be absent on "your" date, you will be given one (equally unannounced) opportunity to make it up. In other words, your class discussion grade will work basically like a pop quiz grade, in order to provide incentive to keep up with readings and come to class reliably. You will be informed by email after the fact of the discussion grade for "your" class dates. (If you have to miss class for a religious observance or some other excused or excusable

reason, you *must* notify me before the class meeting). A fourth discussion grade will awarded as a semester-long grade, and all four averaged together.

Academic Integrity, University Policies, Disability Accommodations, Late Papers

Academic dishonesty destroys trust and the good-faith work of a course. Students who get stressed about their grades or having enough time to complete an assignment are sometimes tempted to cheat—to download sections of a paper from the Internet, to borrow quotes or ideas from other students or published sources. Don't. It's not worth it. Chances are good you will be caught and will fail the assignment or the course. (See the UMass policy on sanctions and procedures on Academic Honesty, http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/#D) Cite *all* your sources, all the time.

Helping someone else cheat is an offense as serious as cheating yourself. Although it is always appropriate to discuss the course material and assignments with each other, inside and outside class, it is *not* appropriate to collaborate on the writing of actual sentences.

If you have learning or other disabilities, it is my goal and that of the Disability Services to ensure that you have reasonable accommodations that minimize the impact of that disability on your learning or your ability to demonstrate what you have learned in the context of assignments. It is your choice whether to disclose your disability to me; you can simply access services through Disability Services (<http://www.umass.edu/disability/current.html>) and ask me to work with that office to provide appropriate accommodations. However, you do need to let me know that you will need accommodation at or near the beginning of the semester, well in advance of any assignments. If we agree on a modified timeline for the completion of assignments or alternative formats, you are still responsible for completing assignments in a timely way and attending class.

All students are required to have a UMass email account or the equivalent at another college, which will be used for all correspondence for this course. That and registration for this course will also provide access to Moodle, which we will use for supplementary course materials, e-reserves, extra credit opportunities, and to turn in assignments.

Week 1: What is Reproductive Justice?

Tuesday Sept. 2—course overview

Sept. 4—Loretta Ross, What is Reproductive Justice?

<http://www.trustblackwomen.org/our-work/what-is-reproductive-justice/9-what-is-reproductive-justice>

What is the history of these politics? “Historical Note” on the Reproductive Rights National Network, 1977-1982 Sophia Smith Collection.

http://asteria.fivecolleges.edu/findaids/sophiasmith/mnsss482_bioghist.html

Rickie Solinger, “Choice is a moving target,” *Beggars and Choosers: How the Politics of Choice Shapes Adoption, Abortion, and Welfare in the United States* 3-36.

Marlene Gerber Fried, "Acknowledgements and Introduction," *From Abortion to Reproductive Freedom: Transforming a Movement* vii-xiv.

Week 2: Feminists, Child Care, and Caring Labor

Sept 9—Briggs, "What Do Feminists *Really* Say About Raising Children?" in *All Politics are Reproductive Politics* (work in progress)

Sept. 11—Eileen Boris et al. "After Harris v. Quinn," *The Nation*
<http://www.thenation.com/article/180478/after-harris-v-quinn-state-our-unions#>

Week 3: Contemporary Issues: Foreclosure and Housing

Sept. 16—from Laura Gottesdiener, *A Dream Foreclosed: Black America and the Fight for a Place to Call home* (Zuccotti Park Press). 45-111.

Sept. 18—from Rhonda Williams, *The Politics of Public Housing: Black Women's Struggles against Urban Inequality*. Introduction and Chapter 6.

Week 4: Back to the Future: BPP Food, Child Care, and Health Care Programs

Sept. 23—Raj Patel, "Survival Pending Revolution: What the Black Panthers Can Teach the U.S. Food Movement," in Eric Holt-Giménez, *Food Movements Unite!: Strategies to Transform Our Food System* (Oakland: Food First)

Sept. 25—from Alondra Nelson, *Body and Soul: The Black Panther Party and the Fight Against Medical Discrimination* preface and chapter 3, "The People's Free Medical Clinics"

2pp response paper: develop an argument about the BPP's survival programs: do they have a relationship to a reproductive justice politics?

Week 5: Foster Care: Who loses children and why?

Sept. 30—Dorothy Roberts, "Destroying Black Families in the Name of Child Welfare," *Shattered Bonds* 2-100.

Oct. 2— Ross Douthat, "The Parent Trap," *The New York Times* (July 19, 2014)
<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/20/opinion/sunday/ross-douthat-the-parent-trap.html>

Kim Brooks, "The day I left my son in the car," *Slate* (June 3, 2014),

http://www.salon.com/2014/06/03/the_day_i_left_my_son_in_the_car/

Ada Calhoun, "The Criminalization of Bad Mothers," *New York Times* (April 25, 2012).

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/29/magazine/the-criminalization-of-bad-mothers.html?pagewanted=all& r=2&>

Lynn Paltrow, "Roe v. Wade and the New Jane Crow: Reproductive Rights in the Age of Mass Incarceration"

Week 6: Welfare Mothers and Queer Parents

Oct. 7— Premilla Nadasen, "The Origins of the Welfare Rights Movement," *Welfare Warriors: The Welfare Rights Movement in the United States* (2014): 1-45.

Oct. 9—from Daniel Rivers, *Radical Relations: Lesbian Mothers, Gay Fathers and Their Children in the United States since World War II* (UNC Press, 2013), chapter 3, 53-80.

2nd 5pp paper due: Write about an aspect of reproductive justice or caring labor or raising children that you had not thought about very much before this course. Can you develop an analysis of what activism or advocacy in relation to this issue should look like?

Week 7: Neoliberalism: The Contemporary questions of the role of the state that undergirds reproductive justice questions

Oct. 14—No Class (Monday Schedule)

Oct. 16—Lisa Duggan, *The Twilight of Equality?*

Week 8: Schools and Prisons

Oct. 21—Rickie Solinger et al., *Interrupted Life: Experiences of Incarcerated Women in the United States* (UC Press, 2010). Part 2: “Being a Parent from the Inside”

California Prison sterilization

<http://cironline.org/reports/female-inmates-sterilized-california-prisons-without-approval-4917>

(Western Massachusetts) Prison Birth Project (<http://theprisonbirthproject.org/>)

Dani McClain, "The Murder of Black Youth is a Reproductive Justice Issue," *The Nation* (August 13, 2014) <http://www.thenation.com/blog/180957/murder-black-youth-reproductive-justice-issue#>

Oct. 23— Journey for Justice Alliance, *Death by a Thousand Cuts: Voices from America’s Affected Communities of Color* (May 2014); OCR, “Data Snapshot: School Discipline” (March 2014). <http://ocrdata.ed.gov/Downloads/CRDC-School-Discipline-Snapshot.pdf>

Week 9: Immigration

Oct. 28—Rhacel Parreñas, *Children of Global Migration: Transnational Families and Gendered Woes* (2005). Introduction and chapter one.

Oct. 30—Urban Institute, *Facing Our Future: Children in the Aftermath of Immigration Enforcement*. Pdf available at <http://www.urban.org/publications/412020.html>

Week 10: IVF

Nov. 4--Miriam Zoll and Pamela Tsigdinos, “Selling the Fantasy of Fertility,” *New York Times* (September 11, 2013).

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/12/opinion/selling-the-fantasy-of-fertility.html?_r=0

France Winddance Twine, *Outsourcing the Womb: Race, Class and Gestational Surrogacy in a Global Market* (Routledge, 2011).

Nov. 6--**5 pp paper due:** Make an argument about how the economic and cultural transformations of neoliberalism have affected one of the following questions as it touches on reproduction or motherhood: prisons, im/migration, IVF, schools, welfare, foster care, or adoption.

Week 11—What are the other issues?

Nov. 11—No class (Veterans' Day)

Wed. Nov. 12— (Tuesday schedule): Developing the Research Paper/presentation

Nov. 13—**Research day: meet at the library**

Week 12: Presentations

Nov. 18

Nov. 20

Week 13: Presentations

Nov. 25 (if you are not scheduled to present, plan on being there out of respect for your classmates and because I will take attendance).

Nov. 27—**NO CLASS THANKSGIVING**

Week 14: Presentations

Dec. 2

Dec. 4

Final Paper Due December 9, 2014