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Office location: Annex 111A
Office hours: Wednesday, 2:30-4:00
Tuesdays and Fridays, 8:30-10:00

Calendar description

This course attempts to locate personal biography in the context of social history. Students' genealogies provide the starting point for explorations of family heritage, social history, and personal identity. Students will apply sociological ideas to help them understand how society helped shape their personal and family histories. Three credits.

Course objectives

Through lectures, discussion and exercises, we will contemplate how personal identity or self reflects familial and social experiences. The readings focus on the autobiographical method, also called autoethnography, social memory, and social experiences influencing identity, such as gender, race, ethnicity, class, place, and so on. You will seek out sociological readings and examine your family traditions and socio-cultural experiences to complete two papers.

Required reading

Course-pack (available @ Campus Store)

Evaluation exercises

	Value	Due date
1. A sociological family tree	10%	September 29, start of class
2. A 2000 word essay on class background	20%	October 20, start of class
3. Quizzes	20%	
4. Contribution to class discussion	10%	
5. A 5000-6000 word term essay	40%	December 1

Course essays

Both essays are auto-ethnographies, involving an analysis of how one's ancestry and history has influenced your personal identity. Students are not expected to discuss their family and ancestry in class. Further instructions for the two papers will be provided in handouts and in class.

Quizzes and attendance

Class attendance and preparation is required. You are required to follow the reading schedule outlined below. Three surprise quizzes will be given, focused on the readings assigned to that date. Your best two grades will be used for your mark. There are no "make-up" quizzes. There will not be a pop quiz on the Sept 29 or Oct 20, as you have projects due those days.

If you miss a class, you are required to submit a 100 word critical summary of the reading for that day *before the next class begins*. Failure to do will result in a penalty.

Schedule of Readings for Sociology 421 (see bold for possible quiz dates on each reading)

Mills, C Wright. 2000. "The promise." Pp. 1-13 in *The Sociological Imagination*. Oxford: Oxford University Press [originally published 1959]. **Thursday, September 8**

Tye, Diane. 2010. "A Life in Recipes." Pp 3-43 in *Baking as Biography: A Life Story in Recipes*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press. **Sept. 12 and November 7**

Misztal, Barbara. 2003. "Theorizing Remembering." Pp. 50-74 in *Theories of Social Remembering*. Maidenhead: Open University Press. **September 19 and November 14**

Zerubavel, Eviatar. 1996. "Social Memories: Steps to a Sociology of the past." *Qualitative Sociology* 19(3):283-299. **September 26 and November 21**

Sociological family tree due September 29

Doucet, Andrea. 2009. "Gender equality and gender differences: Parenting, habitus and embodiment." *Canadian Review of Sociology* 46(2): 103-121. **October 3 and Nov 28**

Gillis, John R. 2004. "Gathering Together: Remembering memory through ritual." Pp. 89-103 in *We are What we Celebrate*, edited by A. Etzioni and J. Bloom. New York: New York University Press. **October 6**

Goodsell, Todd L and Liann Seiter. 2011. Scrapbooking: Family capital and the construction of family discourse. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 40(3):318-341. **October 13**

Zussman, Robert. 2006. "Picturing the self: my mother's family photo albums. *Contexts* 5(4): 28-34. **October 17**

Essay on social class background due October 20, beginning of class

Langellier, Kristin M. 2002. "Performing family stories, forming cultural identity: Franco American Mémère Stories. *Communication Studies* 53(1):56-73. **October 24**

DuBois, W. E.B. 2003. "Double consciousness and the veil." Pp.445-449 in *Inner Lives and Social Worlds*, edited by in Holstein and Gubrium. New York: Oxford University Press [original published in 1903]. **October 27**

hooks, bell 2003. "Talking back". Pp.507-510 in 449 in *Inner Lives and Social Worlds*, edited by in Holstein and Gubrium. New York: Oxford University Press **October 27**

Silva, Kumarini. 2009. "Oh, give me a home: diasporic longings of home and belonging." *Social Identities* 15(5):693-706. **October 31**

As noted in this Schedule of possible in-class quiz dates, the themes from these readings will be discussed more than once during the course. In November, we will focus on their relatedness.