

University of Wisconsin, Madison
Professor: Emily Callaci
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Office Hours: Thursday, 1:30-3:30pm
Class Time: Monday 1:20-3:15
Class Location: EDUCATION 345
Course credits: 3
Designation: Honors Optional

HIST 200: Global Reproductive Politics

What are reproductive politics? Why is “reproduction” political to begin with? What is the difference between reproductive rights and reproductive justice, and why is this distinction important? How do reproductive technologies, like IUDs and birth control pills, become tools of personal freedom in some contexts and tools of coercion in other contexts? In this FIG, we will explore reproductive politics from a global perspective. Drawing on case studies from around the world, we will explore how fertility, reproduction, and child-bearing have held different and changing meanings across cultures and times, and the various contexts in which reproduction has been subject to political struggle. We will explore how the history of reproductive technologies—from birth control pills to breast pumps to midwifery to IVF and egg-freezing technologies—has been shaped by global historical processes, including the dynamics of gender, class, race, and geopolitics. While cultivating a global understanding of the history of reproduction, this FIG will also give students a chance to place their own lives, and our own society, within this global history, developing both “empathy” and “cultural competency,” in line with the core objectives of the Wisconsin Experience.

As with all FIG courses, this one is linked with two other courses: Gender and Women’s Studies 103: Gender, Women, Bodies and Health and Sociology 170: Population Problems. Together, these three classes will help students think broadly about reproductive politics from the intimate vantage point of the body to the global vantage point of population, poverty and environment.

COURSE GOALS:

- Students will gain a critical and historically informed perspective on contemporary debates about reproduction by locating them within historical context.
- Students will develop an understanding of how reproduction is experienced differently by different people, as shaped by the dynamics of class, race, gender, sexuality and geography. In doing so, students will gain and practice intercultural competence, which is one of the UW Madison Essential Learning Outcomes.
- Students will be able to locate themselves and their communities within the broader global history of reproductive politics, contributing to a sense of personal and social responsibility—one of the UW Madison Essential Learning Outcomes.
- Students will learn and practice critical skills of historical thinking. These skills include posing original research questions, analyzing primary sources, making evidence-based

arguments, and presenting findings and conclusions for a broader audience. These goals align with those of the History Major.

- Students will discuss, develop and improve study habits and routines appropriate to college-level study.
- Finally, in this course, we will strive to build a community and networks of support that students will be able to draw on throughout their time at UW Madison.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

All students are required to obtain a copy of the following book:

Laura Briggs, *How All Politics Became Reproductive Politics: From Welfare Reform to Foreclosure to Trump*, (University of California Press, 2018).

This book is available from various online vendors, such as <https://bookshop.org/> and <https://www.indiebound.org/>. All other course readings will be available on the Canvas site.

COURSE FORMAT:

Though we meet on Mondays, this course is designed to enable a workflow that carries on throughout the week. On a typical week, we will meet on Monday afternoon. After class ends, I will publish a weekly guide for the following week, under the “Pages” tab on the Canvas site. Sometime between the end of class on Monday and Friday afternoon, you should complete a first set of readings and submit a short response paper to the discussion board. After completing that first assignment, you will then have a second (shorter) assigned reading, podcast or film that pushes that week’s theme further, or in a new direction. You will write a second short response paper for the discussion board by Sunday afternoon. We will discuss all of the assigned materials on Monday in class.

REQUIREMENTS:

The credit standard for this course is met by an expectation of a total of 135 hours of student engagement with the course learning activities, which include regularly scheduled meeting times during class and office hours, reading, writing, participation in an online discussion forum, and student group projects.

Below is a summary of the assignments. All assignments for this course come with an accompanying handout with more detailed instructions, learning objectives and evaluation criteria. You can find them on the course Canvas page.

All written assignments can be turned in on Canvas.

Participation: 45%

1. Discussion board (20%): Each week students are required to participate *twice* on the discussion board in response to the week's assigned materials. The first response is due on the Friday before class meets and the second is due on Sunday. Each response should be between 100-250 words. You are welcome to complete these anytime during the week before deadline- if you want to respond to both by Monday night after class, a week in advance of the next class, that's fine! As long as your comments are there by the deadline, you will get credit. **Your discussion post should summarize what you think is the main takeaway from the assigned materials, and should end by raising a question for the class to discuss. The goal should be to foster good conversation and debate with your classmates.**
2. Class discussion (20%): All students are expected to participate in class discussion. Successful participation in discussion is not about how much time you spend speaking in class. Instead, it is about contributing in a way that supports a collaborative, inquisitive, productive learning community. This is a skill that takes time, attention and practice to learn, and we will work on that skill in this class. As members of this seminar, I encourage you to participate in a way that conveys your own ideas and questions, while also thinking about the group as a whole and engaging and bringing out the best in your fellow students.
3. Office hours (5%): All students should attend office hours at least once this semester to introduce themselves and discuss their final project.

Guidelines for Participation

While attendance is required, it is only the first step toward meaningful participation in the course. You are expected to come to class fully prepared to engage in lively, pointed, and collegial discussion and analysis of the week's assigned materials. The following criteria, adapted from a rubric created by Adam Nelson and Walter Stern, will be used to assess your participation grade.

A: This student always comes to class having completed assigned reading, ready to think carefully and the connections between readings and topics. They are willing to take the lead in discussion periodically, posing interesting questions or taking risks by answering tough questions. They also avoid dominating discussion, instead participating mindfully in discussion with other students, considering their ideas and responding thoughtfully and respectfully.

AB: This student does most of what an A student does, but may be slightly deficient in one area – for instance, they may be a conscientious reader and thinker who tends not to listen to other students or otherwise dominates conversation instead of engaging in productive deliberation.

B: This student participates often, but not consistently. They may attend every class but they avoid taking the lead in discussion, instead only responding to questions or adding periodically to others' ideas.

BC: This student may be a regular but superficial discussion participant, not participating as fully as they should. At times the student may seem not to have done the readings, though they usually come prepared.

C: This student is intermittently prepared for class and rarely participates beyond the occasional superficial comment.

D: This student very rarely participates, and only in superficial ways.

F: This student has missed three classes without adequate explanation and/or attends most classes but never participates.

Assignments: 55%

1. Paper #1, Persuasive Letter (10%): How should contemporary advocates of reproductive rights grapple with the legacy of eugenics and racism that are part of the history of birth control? We will explore this deeply political, existential question through one specific question: should family planning clinics named after Margaret Sanger keep her name, or drop it? For this assignment, you will write a letter to the board of Planned Parenthood about what you think they should do, and why. You must use historical evidence from course readings to make your argument. (2-3 pages)
Due: October 4
2. Paper #2, Oral history project (20 %): You will conduct an oral history interview with someone about their experiences of reproductive health and medicine. Most students choose to interview someone in their family, but you can choose anyone you'd like. You will then write an essay about that person, placing their individual life experience within the broader historical context of the time and place they lived.

Assignment Components:

5%: list of interview questions (Due October 4)

5%: oral presentation (Due October 25)

10%: essay, 4 pages (Due October 29)

3. Final "Unessay": (30%): This assignment invites each student to design a project that engages with the course theme and deepens their own exploration of that theme. While this assignment accomplishes everything that a conventional academic essay accomplishes—it must draw on historical evidence to advance thinking about global reproductive politics—students are invited to explore a range of modes of expression other than the academic essay. Examples include art projects, digital projects, graphic novels/comic books, lesson plans for children/young people, creative writing projects, podcasts, short films or museum exhibits. I encourage all students to meet with me in office hours well in advance of the first deadline in order to discuss project ideas.

Assignment Components:

5%: proposal (Due November 5)

20%: project (Due December 13)

5%: reflection paper (Due December 13)

Honors Requirement: Students enrolled in this course for honors credit will build on one of these 3 assignments to complete a longer, more in-depth project. Students might choose to expand on essay number 1 and research the longer history of the debate over how to reckon with the history of eugenics and racism within the reproductive rights movement. Students who choose assignment number 2 will create an extended oral history project, interviewing 2 additional people and writing an essay about 3 lives. Students who choose assignment number 3 might develop a public-facing component of their final project so that it is shared beyond the class. Alternatively, students are welcome to propose their own project in order to meet the honors requirement. *Students enrolled for honors credit must submit a 1-paragraph proposal for how they will meet the honors requirement by Friday October 29.*

EVALUATION:

Grading Scale:

A = 93-100%
AB = 88-92%
B = 83-87%
BC = 78-82%
C = 70-77
F = -69

RESOURCES AND POLICIES

Office Hours:

I encourage you all to come to my office hours to discuss any aspect of the course or your academic program. These hours are set aside specifically for your benefit, and I really hope to see you there.

Academic Honesty:

The University of Wisconsin takes matters of academic honesty very seriously. Plagiarism in particular is a very serious offense that can pose a real threat to your success and to the integrity of our broader learning community. I will strictly enforce the university policies on academic honesty. The rules about plagiarism can sometimes be confusing. If you are unsure about them, please be on the safe side and check. You can start here:

http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_plagiarism.html

If you are still unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, and whether you are committing plagiarism, please come speak to me during office hours. Ignorance of the definition of plagiarism will not be an acceptable excuse. More detailed information about student codes of conduct may be found here:

<http://students.wisc.edu/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html#points>

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES STATEMENT

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA. (See: [McBurney Disability Resource Center](#))

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION STATEMENT

[Diversity](#) is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.

In this seminar, my intention is to create a safe learning environment where all students can participate in open and honest dialogue with one another. I expect all members of the seminar to contribute to a learning atmosphere that is respectful and inclusive and which recognizes the dignity of each member. I welcome disagreement and varying viewpoints as a productive and necessary part of intellectual inquiry, and I expect seminar members to express disagreement in a respectful way.

Academic Resources for Students:

DoIT Help Desk – If you have questions about Canvas, BBCollaborate, Zoom or other platforms supported by UW, you can contact the DoIT Help Desk: <https://it.wisc.edu/services/help-desk/>. They can also guide students to resources for help with bandwidth issues.

History Lab – The History Lab is a resource where expert PhD students work with you and your history/history of science projects 1-on-1. No matter your stage in the writing process—choosing a topic, conducting research, composing a thesis, outlining your argument, revising your drafts—the History Lab staff will help you sharpen your skills and become a more successful writer. Visit our

website <http://go.wisc.edu/HLAB> early and often to schedule an appointment with a Lab TA or to find writing tips, guides, and resources.

Design Lab – For help with digital assignments, Design Lab provides one-on-one help for students working on digital assignments. By appointment. <https://designlab.wisc.edu/>

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Introductions, Week 1: September 13

Read:

1. Nikita Stewart, “Planned Parenthood in NY Disavows Margaret Sanger Over Eugenics,” *New York Times*, July 20, 2020

Due on discussion board by Friday before class (Sept 10): write a few sentences introducing yourself on the discussion board.

Week 2, September 20: Birth Control and Women’s Liberation

Read and comment on discussion board by Friday, 12:00pm:

1. Linda Gordon, “The Prehistory of Contraception,” in *The Moral Property of Women: A History of Birth Control Politics in America*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1974), 9-21
2. Elaine Tyler May, *America and the Pill*, Chapter 1, 11-56
3. Jesse Olszynko-Glyn, “Technologies of Contraception and Abortion,” *Reproduction: Antiquity to the Present Day*, 535-551

Read and comment on discussion board by Sunday, 5:00pm:

Margaret Sanger, *Motherhood in Bondage*, (New York: Brentano’s, 1928), 221–237.

Listen sometime before class:

Loretta Lynn, The Pill (song)

Week 3, September 27: Eugenics and the Population Bomb

Read and comment on discussion board by Friday, 12:00pm:

1. Alison Bashford, “World Population from Eugenics to Climate Change,” *Reproduction: Antiquity to the Present Day*, 505-520
2. Dorothy Roberts, “Margaret Sanger and the Racial Origins of the Birth Control Movement,” in *Racially Writing the Republic: Racists, Race Rebels, and Transformations of American Identity*, eds. Baum and Harris, (Duke University Press, 2009), 196-213.

3. Sanjam Ahluwalia, "Rethinking Boundaries: Global and the Local in the History of Birth Control: An Indian Case Study," *Journal of Women's History* 14 (4) Winter 2003, 88-95

Read and comment on discussion board by Sunday, 5:00pm:

1. Margaret Sanger, "Birth Control and Racial Betterment," (1919)
2. Margaret Sanger, "My Way to Peace" (1932)

Week 4, October 4: The Anti-Abortion Movement in the US and Beyond

Read/listen and comment on discussion board by Friday, 12:00pm:

1. Jill Lepore, "Birthright," *The New Yorker*, November 14, 2011.
2. Jennifer Holland, "Survivors of the Abortion Holocaust: Children and Young Adults in the Anti-Abortion Movement," *Feminist Studies* 46 (1) 2020, 74-102.
3. Podcast: "Shmashmortion," On the Media, NPR, January 4, 2018

Read and comment on discussion board by Sunday, 5:00pm:

4. Yana Rodgers, *The Global Gag Rule and Women's Reproductive Health: Rhetoric vs. Reality*, (Oxford University Press, 2018), 13-66

Due on Monday before class: Paper #1

Week 5, October 11: Racism and the Movement for Reproductive Justice

Read and comment on discussion board by Friday, 12:00pm:

1. Alexis Okeowo, "Fighting for Abortion Access in the South," *The New Yorker*, October 14, 2014.
2. Linda Villarosa, "Why America's Black Mothers and Babies Are in a Life or Death Crisis," *New York Times*, April 11, 2018
3. Dorothy Roberts, *Killing the Black Body* 1-55

Read and comment on discussion board by Sunday, 5:00pm:

4. Loretta Ross and Rickie Sollinger, "Reproductive Justice in the Twenty-First Century," in *Reproductive Justice: An Introduction*, 58-117

Due on Monday before class:

1. Identify potential oral history interviewee and set up a time for the interview.
2. Peruse the Baylor University "Introduction to Oral History materials": <http://www.baylor.edu/oralhistory/index.php?id=23566>
3. Make a list of five interview questions to discuss in class.

Week 6, October 18: Welfare Politics and Reproductive Labor

Read and comment on discussion board by Friday, 12:00pm:

1. Laura Briggs, *How All Politics Became Reproductive Politics*, Intro, Chapter 1 and Chapter 2
2. Premilla Nadasen, "Expanding the Boundaries of the Women's Movement: Black Feminism and the Struggle for Welfare Rights," *Feminist Studies* 28(2), 2002, 270-301.
3. "Welfare is a Women's Issue," by Johnnie Tillmon, (originally published in *Ms. Magazine*, 1972.)

Read and comment on discussion board by Sunday, 5:00pm:

4. Silvia Federici, "Wages Against Housework," (1975)
5. Kim Brooks, "Forget Pancakes. Pay Mothers," *New York Times*, May 8, 2020

Week 7, October 25: Immigration and "Stratified Reproduction"

Read and comment on discussion board by Friday, 12:00pm:

1. Laura Briggs, *How All Politics Became Reproductive Politics*, Chapter 3
2. Pierette Hondagneu-Sotelo and Ernestine Avila, "I'm Here, But I'm There: The Meaning of Transnational Latina Motherhood," *Gender and Society* 11 (5) 1997.

Read and comment on discussion board by Sunday, 5:00pm:

1. Mary Romero, "Nanny Diaries and other Stories: Imagining Immigrant Women's Labor in the Social Reproduction of American Families," *DePaul Law Review* 52 (3), 809-847.
2. Miriam Jordan and Caitlin Dickerson, "Plz cancel our cleaning: virus leads many to cast aside household help," *New York Times*, March 25, 2020.

Week 8, November 1: Oral History Presentations

Due in Class:

1. Prepare a 5-minute presentation on your oral history project
2. Bring in a rough draft of Paper #2. You will not hand it in to me: instead you will workshop it with a peer

Due Friday, November 5: Paper #2

Due on Friday, November 5: proposal for final "Unessay" project

Week 9, November 8: Controlling Populations: Pronatalism and Population Control

Read and comment on discussion board by Friday, 12:00pm:

1. Gail Kligman "Political Demography: The Banning of Abortion in Ceausescu's Romania," in *Conceiving the New World Order: the global politics of reproduction*, (University of California Press, 1995), 234-255
2. Phillipa Levine, "Imperial Encounters," in *Reproduction: Antiquity to the Present Day*, eds. Nick Hopwood, Rebecca Flemming and Lauren Kassell, (Cambridge, 2018), 485-497.
3. Read: Vanessa Fong, "China's One-Child Policy and the Empowerment of Urban Daughters," *American Anthropologist* 104 (4), 2002, 1098-1109.

Watch and comment on discussion board by Sunday, 5:00pm:

1. *One Child Nation*, 2019 dir. Nanfu Wang and Jialing Zhang, Amazon Studios

Week 10, November 15: Assisted Reproductive Technology

Read and comment on discussion board by Friday, 12:00pm:

1. *Once and Future Feminist*, "All Reproduction is Assisted," Forum: Boston Review, ed. Merve Emre.
2. Laura Briggs, Chapter 4: "The Politics and Economy of Reproductive Technology and Black infant Mortality," *How All Politics Became Reproductive Politics*
3. BBC, Why is IVF so Popular in Denmark? <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-45512312>

Watch and comment by Sunday, 5:00pm:

Google Baby, 2009 dir. Zippi Brand Frank, HBO 2

Week 11, November 22: Planning Final "Unessay" Projects

Meet as a class to discuss final projects

Week 12, November 29: Individual Meetings, Work on "Unessay Projects"

Week 13, December 6: Final Presentations, first half of class

Week 14, December 13: Final Presentations, second half of class

Due in Class: Final Unessay Assignments