

The New Black Family and Its Future
Hist 271/AAS 209/GSW 281 [REMOTE]
<https://rochester.zoom.us/j/94355236308> ID: 943 5523 6308
Class Time: TR 2:00-3:15pm.
Office Hours: Wednesday 11:00-1:00pm.
<https://rochester.zoom.us/j/91766998968> ID: 917 6699 8968
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Course Syllabus

For decades scholars have described the black family as "non-existing" or "unstable," and suggested that as a viable institution its future "is at risk." Despite these claims, the family has demonstrated a remarkable ability to overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles. In an attempt to gauge the current and future stability of the black family in America, this course will review its history, examine the social, political and legal developments that continue to impact black family structure, and assess black Americans' ability to protect this vital institution.

Course Grading will be as follows: Carr Paper and three Book Reports 2-5 sides (40%); Class Participation & Presentations (10%); Research Paper Proposal (10%); and a Research Paper (40%). Regular class attendance is expected, and students should come to class prepared to discuss the Course Readings, and later, their Work-in-Progress. (Due Dates: Carr Paper 1/16; Book Reports: White 3/2; Stack 3/16; Banks 3/28; Research Proposal 4/20; Research Paper 5/6). Please submit hard paper and electronic copies on due dates.

For your Information:

University of Rochester COVID-19 regulations: The University is committed to protecting the health and safety of the entire community - students, faculty and staff. For this reason, it is mandatory that everyone wear a mask in University buildings and observe appropriate social distancing, including classrooms.

Masks have been provided to students, faculty and staff and classrooms have been specifically assigned to allow for social distancing to support these requirements. You must wear a mask appropriately (e.g. over nose and mouth) if you are attending class in person, and you must do this for every class session and for the entire duration of each class session. If you fail to do this, you will be politely reminded of the requirement and then asked to leave if you do not comply. If you do not want to wear a mask, you may consider taking the course remotely (online). This may require you to complete a set of online requirements different from the in-person requirements, although these will be equivalent in their learning objectives.

The College's credit hour policy on undergraduate courses is to award 4 credit hours for courses that meet for the equivalent of 3 periods of 50 minutes each week. Students enrolled in Hist 269 will be expected to spend at least two hours each week engaged in close reading of assigned and relevant course texts; compiling detailed notes that will be discussed in class, and provide the major source material for course written assignments.

Note-Taking and Research:

As the material from the Assigned Readings will inform our discussions throughout the course, as well as constitute the major sources on which you will draw for your written assignments, you are strongly encouraged to maintain clear and detailed notes on all class readings.

Attendance

The faculty of the Department of History considers class attendance essential to the mastering of the content of its courses and the production of quality history papers. Students who have to miss class should inform the instructor of the reason for their absence, in advance whenever possible. Students should come to class prepared to comment on and discuss the assigned readings.

Academic honesty:

Authors of the words and ideas contained in your written essays must be fully cited. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism and will be severely punished. All assignments and activities associated with this course must be performed in accordance with the University of Rochester's Academic Honesty Policy. Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses and will be treated as such. Anyone who engages in such activities will be turned over to the College Board on Academic Honesty for disciplinary action, as outlined at <http://www.rochester.edu/College/honesty/>.

Students with disabilities: The University of Rochester respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds and abilities. In the event you encounter any barrier(s) to full participation in this course due to the impact of disability, please contact the Office of Disability Resources. The access coordinators in the Office of Disability Resources can meet with you to discuss the barriers you are experiencing and explain the eligibility process for establishing academic accommodations. You can reach the [Office of Disability Resources](#) at: disability@rochester.edu; (585) 276-5075; Taylor Hall.

Reference Librarian:

Please take time to introduce yourself to Lara Nicosia, the Outreach Librarian for History lnicosia@library.rochester.edu or ask for her at the Circulation Desk.

Course Required Texts: (Available at the Bookstore)
 Deborah Gray White, Ar'n't I a Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation South
 Carol Stack, All Our Kin: Strategies for Survival in a Black Community
 Ralph Banks, Is Marriage for White People?: How the African American Marriage Decline Affects Everyone
 K. Sue Jewell, Survival of the African American Family:

The Institutional Impact of U.S. Social Policy

Course Outline

Week One Tuesday 2 February

Introductions and Names

Week Two Tuesday 9 February What is this thing called History?

Reading: E. H. Carr, What is History? Chaps. 1-2.
[Blackboard]

John Blassingame, "Status and Social Structure in the Slave Community: Evidence from New Sources."
[Blackboard]

(Carr paper Due Date: Due 2/16) See Essay Prompt Handout.

Thursday 11 February

Webinar: "Slavery, Race, and the Black Lives Matter Movement," Professor Steven Hahn, New York University

Week Three Tuesday 16 February Historians versus Moynihan

Reading: Daniel P. Moynihan, The Negro Family: The Case for National Action [abridged]

Deborah Gray White, Ar'n't I a Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation South (White Book Report due 3/2)

Week Four Tuesday 23 February Women, Wives, and Husbands

Reading: White, Ar'n't I a Woman?

Week Five Tuesday 2 March Making Poverty Work

Carol Stack, All Our Kin: Strategies for Survival in a Black Community

Week Six Tuesday 9 March The Structure of Poverty and Wealth

Stack, All Our Kin (Stack Book Report due 3/16)

Week Seven Tuesday 16 March

Ralph Banks, Is Marriage for White People?: How the African American Marriage Decline Affects Everyone

Video: Bill Moyers, The Vanishing Family: Crisis in Black America <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vrv416MnJ8> [Transcript below]

Week Eight Tuesday 23 March No More Black Marriages!
Banks, Is Marriage for White People?

(Banks Book Report due 4/6)

Week Nine Tuesday 30 March Study Break Day

Research Paper Topics Introduction

Week Ten Tuesday 6 April

Research Paper Proposal (1) Guidelines Handout

Readings: **Video:** "The House We Live In"

Week Eleven Tuesday 13 April

Research Paper Proposal Prep (2)

Readings:

Stephen Macedo, Just Married: Same-Sex Couples, Monogamy, and the Future of Marriage, pp. 1-16, 204-211. [Blackboard]

Rhonda M. Roorda, In Their Voices: Black Americans on Transracial Adoption (Oral History Accounts of out-of-race adoptions) [Blackboard]

Week Twelve Tuesday 20 April

Research Paper Proposal Due (4/20)

Week Thirteen Tuesday 27 April

Research Project Work-in-Progress Presentations

Week Fourteen Tuesday 4 May

Research Project Work-in-Progress Presentations

Thursday 6 May Last Class

Presentations

Research Paper Due (in class and electronic copy)

Additional Readings

Writing and Footnoting Guide: [Quick and Dirty Guide to Effective Prose](#)

Possible Research Paper Topics

We might consider more fully the past and likely future impact on the black family of the following:

Moynihan and Black Family Studies

Daniel P. Moynihan, The Negro Family: The Case for National Action, published by the United States. Department of Labor. Office of Policy Planning and Research.

Herbert G. Gutman, The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750-1925, Intro, chaps. 1-2.

John Blassingame, The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the Antebellum South

Black Family Structure: Northern Urban or Southern Style?

Stewart E. Tolnay, The Bottom Rung: African American Family Life on Southern Farms

Stephen A. Berrey, "Resistance Begins at Home: The Black Family and Lessons in Survival and Subversion in Jim Crow Mississippi," Black Women, Gender + Families, vol. 3, no. 1 (Spring 2009), pp. 65-90.

Herbert G. Gutman, The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750-1925, chap. 1.

Leslie J. Pollard, Complaint to the Lord: Historical Perspectives on the African American Elderly, pp. 32-3.

Rhonda Wells-Wilbon and Gaynell Marie Simpson, "Transitioning the Caregiving Role for the Next Generation: An African-Centered Womanist Perspective," Black Women, Gender + Families, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Fall 2009), pp. 87-105. <https://www-jstor-org.ezp.lib.rochester.edu/stable/pdf/10.5406/blacwomegendfami.3.2.0087.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A204a675b3f335cae42b78d4f7de19097>

Two Fathers/Two Mothers: Same Sex Marriage

Stephen Macedo, Just Married: Same-Sex Couples, Monogamy, and the Future of Marriage, pp. 1-16, 204-211.

Marriage and Adoption Outside the Race

Patricia Edmonds, "The Many Colors of Matrimony" National Geographic Magazine (Images)

Randall Kennedy, Interracial Intimacies, Marriage, Identity, and Adoption, Vintage Books, 2003

Social and Policy: Welfare and Family Formation

K. Sue Jewell, Survival of the African American Family: The Institutional Impact of U.S. Social Policy

Bruce Sacerdote, "Slavery and Intergenerational Transmission," <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~bsacerdo/wpapers/Slavery3.pdf>

Premilla Nadasen, "From Widow to 'Welfare Queen': Welfare and the Politics of Race," Black Women, Gender +elderl Families, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Fall 2007), pp. 52-77.

<https://www-jstor-org.ezp.lib.rochester.edu/stable/pdf/10.5406/blacwomegendfami.1.2.0052.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A0a6afba38e79e01e132de25e23924b96>

Criminal Justice System: Mass Incarceration

Ta-Nehisi Coates, "The Black Family in the Age of Mass Incarcerations," The Atlantic

Michelle Alexander

Health: Drug Dependency and Other Matters

Mary S. Jackson, "Afrocentric Treatment of African American Women and their Children," Journal of Black Studies, (vol. 26, no. 1, 1995), pp. 17-35.

Religion: Black Atheism and other Attacks on the Black Church

Annalise Fonza, Black Women, Atheist Activism, and Human Rights: Why We Just Cannot Seem to Keep It to Ourselves, Cross Currents, (vol. 63, no. 2, 2013), pp. 185-197.

Slavery's Trauma Legacies

Joy DeGruy Leary, Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome: America's Legacy of Enduring Injury and Healing

Dorthie Cross, et al, "Trauma exposure, PTSD, and Parenting in a Community Sample of Low-income, Predominantly African American mothers and children," Psychol Trauma, vol. 10, no. 3, (May 2018), 327-335.

Bruce Sacerdote, "Slavery and Intergenerational Transmission," <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~bsacerdo/wpapers/Slavery3.pdf>

Loving v. Virginia, 1971 "The Legacy of Loving," Hofstra Law Faculty Scholarship, 2007.

Slavery and Sexuality

Thomas Foster, "The Sexual Abuse of Black Men under American Slavery," Journal of the History of Sexuality, vol. 20, no. 3 (Sept. 2011), pp. 445-464.

<https://www-jstor-org.ezp.lib.rochester.edu/stable/pdf/41305880.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3Aabf7cfd95eab8e217ef51acc3d7746a>

Media: Imagining a New Black Family

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vrw416MnJ8>

Radio-Television: Television Reviews - THE VANISHING FAMILY--
CRISIS IN BLACK AMERICA

Kev Variety (Archive: 1905-2000); Jan 29, 1986; 322, 1;
Entertainment Industry Magazine Archive pg. 58.

<https://billmoyers.com/content/the-vanishing-family-crisis-in-black-america/>

Black Family On TV, in Movies and Magazines.

The Black Family and its Future

K. Sue Jewell, Survival of the African American Family: The Institutional Impact of U.S. Social Policy

Ralph Banks, Is Marriage for White People?: How the African American Marriage Decline Affects Everyone

Lyman Stone, "The Rise of Childless America," Institute for Family Studies, (June, 2020)

<https://ifstudies.org/blog/the-rise-of-childless-america>

[Samhita Mukhopadhyay](#), "One Legacy of the Pandemic May Be Less Judgment of the Child-Free," The Atlantic, August 5, 2020

https://amp-theatlantic-com.cdn.ampproject.org/v/s/amp.theatlantic.com/amp/article/614896/?amp_js_v=a6&_gsa=1&usqp=mq331AQHKAFQArABIA%3D%3D#aoh=16120724196427&referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com&_tf=From%20%251%24s&_share=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.theatlantic.com%2Fculture%2Farchive%2F2020%2F08%2Fpandemic-changing-my-mind-about-having-kids%2F614896%2F

Primary Sources

Daniel P. Moynihan, The Negro Family: The Case for National Action, published by the United States. Department of Labor. Office of Policy Planning and Research.

Rhonda M. Roorda, In Their Voices: Black Americans on Transracial Adoption (Oral History Accounts of out-of-race adoptions) [Blackboard]