

**FAMILY PATTERNS**  
**SOC 214H1F**  
**Fall 2017**

Professor Bonnie Fox  
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Class Time: Tues. 2:00-4:00  
Location: RW 117  
Office Hours: Tues. 12:00-1:00  
& Thurs. 12:00-1:00

Course Website: [www.chass.utoronto.ca/~bfox/soc214](http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/~bfox/soc214)

Teaching Assistant: Spencer Underwood ([s.underwood@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:s.underwood@mail.utoronto.ca))  
Office Hour: Tues. 4:00-5:00, room 225F, 725 Spadina Ave.

Tutorials: Tuesdays 12:00-1:00 (in UC 52) or 1:00-2:00 (in UC 52) or 4:00-5:00 (in SS 2105) on the dates listed.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The prerequisite to take this course is .5 SOC at the 100 level. Students without this prerequisite will be removed any time they are discovered.

**Course Objectives:** (1) -To raise questions about what we take for granted with respect to family, and to show the benefits of a sociological perspective for answering them. (2) To examine diverse family patterns in order to better understand why families are organized as they are. (3) To explore some of the implications of living in different types of families for men, women and children.

**Course Description:** We live in a time of change in family life. Far fewer Canadians marry than married decades ago, cohabitation is more common than marriage for first live-in relationships, divorce rates are high, blended and single-parent families are common, there are sizable numbers of lesbian and gay couples (and parents), and many adults live alone but give and receive care and support from friends. Couples are also having fewer children and those who have young children are facing the challenge of juggling employment and family responsibilities. Meanwhile, unquestioned divisions of work by gender in heterosexual couples have given way to ideals of sharing – although the reality is often somewhat different. Families assume many different shapes today, and people experience considerable change in their families over their lifetime. This diversity of family patterns is a product of increases in the choices that women and men have about how they live their lives, but it is also due to economic insecurity and weakened government supports.

Amidst this diversity in family patterns, there are some things common to most Canadian families -- for example, an expectation of love (and monogamy) in intimate

sexual relationships and a preference to live in nuclear-family households. As well, many young adults expect that they will be parents, -that both parents will be very involved in caring for their children, but that the woman will be responsible for child care if shared parenting proves to be too difficult. Meanwhile, although many features of family seem natural, social historians and anthropologists tell us that most, if not all, family arrangements and relationships we take for granted are fairly new in human history. Social scientists generally assume that family is socially created – and therefore influenced and even shaped by social factors, including economic forces.

To begin our discussion, the lecture on Sept.12 describes current family patterns and issues, and the lecture on Sept. 19 reviews the different theoretical approaches that sociologists use to study families, the strengths and weaknesses of these different approaches, and the theoretical approach adopted in this course. On Sept. 26, we learn something of the diversity of family arrangements across human cultures and human history. To enable us to question what we often take for granted about family – especially, the apparent naturalness of heterosexual nuclear families – the lecture will focus on the communal arrangements common in foraging (or hunting and gathering) societies. Next, on Oct. 3, we explore some of the history that produced nuclear families with ‘conventional’ gender roles as the dominant family pattern today in Canada. The point of this social history is to better understand how family arrangements develop and the forces undergirding arrangements that are familiar to us. Oct.10 features a look at the 1950s, the period when a majority of Canadians lived in nuclear families in which men were financial providers and women full-time homemakers and mothers. Doing so allows us to ask questions about arrangements many of us take for granted – to question what is familiar. And on Oct. 17 our attention turns to families today, exploring wedding practices, marriage expectations and the realities of parenthood.

The readings and lecture on Oct. 31 offer a look at family patterns that are different from what was normative in much of the twentieth century in Canada and the U.S – arrangements and relationships that reflect poverty, economic insecurity and also immigration. As well, we consider new forms of sexuality and caring relationships. Nov. 14 features a look at an important trend for families across much of the world: the increasing age at which young adults leave their parents’ home. We explore the causes and implications of this change, as discussed in Katherine Newman’s research-based book, *The Accordion Family*. On Nov.21, we examine how couples (married or not) juggle the incompatible responsibilities of employment and family when both adults work full time. We consider both how they are handling work/family conflict and possible long-term social-policy solutions to the problem. Returning to the issue of family diversity, on Nov. 28 we look at the relationships and families created after divorce – at lone parents and remarried couples —as well as social-policies needed to address family problems.

**NOTE:** This course may be different from others you have had. Unlike courses in which there is a textbook that surveys the field of study, raising key questions and summarizing key research findings, the **lectures** provide that function in this course. The readings (in both the Fox text and the “coursepack”) are from journal articles and book chapters. I chose them because they are either classics in the field, offering insightful analysis or important research findings, or because they offer clear sociological analyses of the topics under discussion. All of the readings are (I think) interesting. They illustrate the arguments I make in the lecture – and present some of the research on which I build my lectures. The **lectures themselves are essential** for an overview and understanding of the key questions, issues, findings and arguments in the course. Lectures tie together the readings and develop the main arguments in the course. In short, the lectures and the readings are both essential to your understanding, and to do well in this course. Tests will draw equally on both lectures and readings. Attendance at lectures is therefore essential! So are careful reading and thinking about the lectures. You are expected to be able to identify and discuss the *key* arguments in each reading and every lecture.

**[NOTE:** This course is not on Blackboard. Instead, see the course website (at the address on the first page). Overhead slides and other essential information will be posted on that site.]

**Required Texts:**

Bonnie Fox, editor, 2014. *Family Patterns, Gender Relations. Fourth Edition.* Don Mills: Oxford University Press.

Katherine S. Newman, 2012. *The Accordion Family: Boomerang Kids, Anxious Parents, and the Private Toll of Global Capitalism.* Boston: Beacon Press.

Coursepack from Canadian Scholars Press.

These three texts can be purchased at the University of Toronto Bookstore.

**Grading:**

The assignments will be weighted as follows:    The dates:

First Essay	20%	Oct. 10
First Test	25%	Oct. 24
Second Essay	30%	Nov. 21
Second Test	25%	Dec. 5    [no Final Exam]

Please note: Test/Assignment Dates are fixed and non-negotiable.

**Attendance:** Students are responsible for attending every lecture. Students unable to attend a lecture must get notes from other students. Lectures synthesize large bodies of research findings and, in the absence of a textbook that reviews the research in the field, are essential. I strongly recommend that you read the required material before coming to class: you will better understand both the lecture and the readings if you do.

**Class procedures:** The two hours will be used for lecture (except for a brief break), but students should feel free at any time during the lecture to raise questions or comment on the material. A point-form outline of the lecture will be presented in the form of slides during lectures. These slides are not lecture notes; they do not summarize the lecture. They are posted before class on my website at [www.chass.utoronto.ca/~bfox/soc214](http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/~bfox/soc214) and they are meant to help you take notes in class and follow the lecture.

**Tutorials:** There will be several tutorials. The dates of these are listed on the course outline below (Oct. 3, Oct. 17 & Nov. 14). Attendance is mandatory because we will give guidance on effective reading of sociological work, effective writing of essays in sociology (including how to cite properly), and effective test-taking. As well, the first test will be returned, and the grading explained, in tutorial.

### **Requirements:**

**Tests:** There will be two in-class tests that will include both multiple-choice and essay questions. To do well on the tests, you need to know the specific arguments in each of the readings and lectures, and be able to discuss the main issues covered in both the readings and lectures. The tests are synthetic, so you should think over **main themes and arguments** discussed in the course, and review the **key** arguments in each reading and lecture, to prepare for them. The dates of the tests are on the course outline (and above).

**Missed Tests:** In the case of **illness** that prevents you from taking a test, you must inform Professor Fox during the week the test is given. Messages should be left on my office voice mail or sent as emails, and these should include your name, telephone number and email address so that you can be reached with information about a possible make-up test. Make-up tests will only be given to students who have proper documentation from a doctor or college registrar explaining why you missed the test: For illness, you must supply a duly completed Verification of Student Illness or Injury form (available at [www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca](http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca)). A doctor's note is not acceptable. For other problems, you need a letter from your college registrar, emailed by him/her to Professor Fox or submitted in person before the make-up test. The make-up tests must be taken (and will be given) within two weeks of the missed test, and their format will be the same as those of the regularly-scheduled tests – part multiple-choice, part essay.

**Essays:** Two short essays are required. The first essay will involve a 3-page discussion addressing a question I will assign about one (or two) of the key readings. The second essay will involve a 5-page discussion of the book, *The Accordion Family*, focused on questions I will assign in class. Both assignments must be handed out in class. And the essays are **due at the beginning of class, in class** (not the drop box), on the due dates. There will be a penalty for handing in any essay after the start of class, and a daily penalty thereafter – two percentage points per day. NOTE: For both essays, you must sign and attach the Academic Integrity Checklist. [See course website for this form.]

**Late essays** ~~may b~~ will be accepted (extensions given) only if Professor Fox has given you **permission** beforehand. Contact me if you are ill before the essay is due and unable to meet the deadline. You need to supply proper documentation (the Verification of Student Illness or Injury form) from a doctor. If a personal or family crisis prevents you from meeting a deadline, you must get a letter from your college registrar (or have them send me an email) and also contact me yourself – both, as soon as possible. (It is a good idea anyway to advise your college registrar if a crisis is interfering with your studies.) Both Verification of Student Illness forms and letters from college registrars must be either emailed to Professor Fox or submitted with your work in class or during office hours.

You will lose **2** percentage points for every day an essay is late, beginning the day it is due, unless you have an extension approved by Prof. Fox. Attach the registrar's letter or Verification of Student Illness form to the essay when you hand it in. Also attach the Academic Integrity Checklist. Work handed in outside of class, should be put in the second-year dropbox in room 225 in the Sociology Department building (at 725 Spadina Ave., open Monday to Friday, 9 - 5 pm). It must also be date stamped using the machine in room 225. Alternatively, it can be slid under my office door (before 5 pm any week day), but first **stamp the date** on it at the date/time machine located in room 225 on the second floor at 725 Spadina Ave. (Students must keep copies of their work, in case assignments are lost. Students are responsible for assignments that are lost.)

**Note:** Please be aware that turning in an old paper, or large parts thereof, for credit in a second (or third etc.) course, is considered an academic offense that results in students being referred to the Office of Academic Integrity.

**On writing essays:** Students who have questions or concerns about how to write an essay should make an appointment to see me or Spencer Underwood during our office hours. I recommend using the very helpful website, "Writing at the University of Toronto," at [www.writing.utoronto.ca](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca). Look under "advice" and then "style and editing." Writing workshops are also available for students; for information on them go to [www.writing.utoronto.ca/news/writing-plus](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/news/writing-plus) A helpful guide to writing is: Margot Northey

and Margaret Procter, *Writer's Choice: A Portable Guide for Canadian Writers* (Prentice Hall Cda). And Wm. Strunk and E.B. White's *The Elements of Style* is the best general summary of the rules of grammar and good writing.

Students are expected to acquaint themselves with the rules concerning **plagiarism**. Cheating and misrepresentation will not be tolerated. Students who commit an academic offence face serious penalties. Avoid plagiarism by citing properly (and what was alright in high school may not be alright in university). The *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* in the Calendar of the Faculty of Arts and Science specifies: "It shall be an offence for a student knowingly: to **represent as one's own** any idea or expression of an idea or work of another in any academic examination or term test or in connection with any other form of academic work, i.e. to commit plagiarism. Wherever in the Code an offence is described as depending on 'knowing', the offence shall likewise be deemed to have been committed if the person ought reasonably to have known." In short, do not "borrow" passages from books or articles or websites without **citing them**. If you copy the words of other people, put quotation marks around them and cite the reference (that is, put author's surname, date, & page number in parentheses). If you paraphrase you also need to cite the reference, with the page number. Then, be sure to put all sources that you cite in the "References" at the back of the paper. Plagiarizing can result in a very serious penalty, and any suspected case will be turned over to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Familiarize yourself with the University of Toronto's *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>). It is the rule book for academic behaviour at the U of T, and you are expected to know the rules.

#### **Accessibility Needs:**

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, please visit <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility> as soon as possible.

**Contacting Us:** I am best reached either by email (if you put "SOC 214" in the subject field) or by coming to my office during office hours on Tues. 12:00 to 1:00. I am also happy to answer brief, simple questions by email – and will usually do so within 24 hours – but longer questions must be asked in person. Spencer has office hours on Tues. from 4:00 to 5:00 in room 225. Do not hesitate to come and talk with either of us about any question you have about lectures, readings or assignments.

## COURSE OUTLINE

### **Sept. 12 Introduction: Trends and Ongoing Challenges in Families**

Reading: Bonnie Fox and Meg Luxton, 2014. 'Trends and ongoing dilemmas in family and personal life today,' pp.17-26 of Chapter 1, "Analyzing the familiar," in *Family Patterns, Gender Relations. Fourth Edition*. (Don Mills: Oxford University Press). [referred to as "Fox text" in this syllabus]

Discussion questions: What are the main trends in family and, according to Fox and Luxton, what are their main causes?

### **Sept. 19 Raising Questions about Common-Sense Beliefs**

Readings: Bonnie Fox and Meg Luxton, 2014. Pp. 2-17 of "Analyzing the familiar: definitions, approaches, and issues at the heart of studying families." Fox text.

Katherine S. Newman, 2012. Introduction & Chapter 1, "The slippery state of adulthood." Pp. ix-xxiii & 1-36 in *The Accordion Family*. (Boston: Beacon Press).

Sasha Roseneil and Shelley Budgeon, 2004. Pp. 135-142 of "Cultures of intimacy and care beyond 'the family': personal life and social change in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century." In *Current Sociology* 52, 2. [See link on course website for this journal article.]

Discussion questions: What is Fox and Luxton's definition of family? What are the advantages and disadvantages of this working definition? B. Fox and M. Luxton are making an argument about how some features of families are affected by the way people in different societies acquire their livelihood. What is their argument? Katherine Newman's study begins with a discussion of how the journey into adulthood has changed in the last few decades. How has it? Why has it? And what are Newman's findings about how young adults are now defining "adulthood"? What is Sasha Roseneil and Shelley Budgeon's criticism of family sociology, and what are they arguing?

### **Sept. 26 Is the Nuclear Family Universal or "Natural"? Some Cross-Cultural Evidence, and a Brief Consideration of Foraging Societies**

Readings: Felicity Edholm, 2014 (1982). Pp. 31-38, "The unnatural family." Fox text.

Eleanor B. Leacock, 2014 (1981). Pp. 43-54, "Women in an egalitarian society: The Montagnais-Naskapi of Canada". Fox text.

Discussion questions: These readings are by social anthropologists. According to Felicity Edholm, are any family patterns universal? The reading by Eleanor Leacock consists of selections from articles she wrote on First Nations communities in Newfoundland and Labrador (so they are not organized like a single essay). Given the lecture and Leacock's work, explain why nuclear families living independently would not have survived in a foraging context and why more communal arrangements were

therefore essential. With respect to the Montagnais-Naskapi, why did their family patterns change so dramatically during the period Leacock describes?

### **Oct. 3 A Brief Social History of Family in Western Europe and North America**

#### **First tutorial – advice on effective reading and good essay writing.**

Readings: Louise Tilly and Joan Scott, 2014 (1978). Pp. 56-82, “The family economy in pre-industrial England and France.” Fox text.

Tamara Hareven, 2014 (2000). Pp. 84-96, “Dynamics of kin in an industrial community.” Fox text.

Maxine Margolis, 2014 (1984). Pp. 97-114, “Putting mothers on the pedestal.” Fox text.

Discussion questions: What do social historians Louise Tilly and Joan Scott mean by the “family economy” in England and France before the industrial revolution? What determined the composition of the household at this time in France and England? Why did household membership change frequently? How were children raised? According to historian Tamara Hareven’s research, what was the significance of relationships with extended-family members to the Quebeckers who migrated to New England to work in factories in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (the 1800s)? Anthropologist Maxine Margolis argues that there was a relationship between changes in the economy and other factors (in the U.S.) and the development of motherhood as we know it, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Summarize what Margolis argues about the causes of the development of modern ideas of motherhood in the U.S.

#### **First Essay due Oct. 10**

### **Oct. 10 1950s Families: The “Good Old Days” involving the “Traditional Family”?**

Readings: Mary Louise Adams, 2014 (1997). Pp. 116-131, “Sexuality and the postwar domestic ‘revival.’” Fox text.

Meg Luxton, 2014 (1990). Pp. 136-158, “Wives and husbands.” Fox text.

Bev Sellars, 2013. Pp. 29-42, 43-45, 51-55, 57 & 58, 67-69, and 85 & 86 from *They Called Me Number One: Secrets and Survival at an Indian Residential School*. In Coursepack.

Discussion questions: In M.L. Adams’s description of the postwar (WW II) period (the 1950s) in Canada, what do we learn about the meaning attached to family at the time? Why was “the family” so important symbolically in this period? Meg Luxton studied families that were organized in a way that was typical in the 1950s – with a full-time male breadwinner and a full-time female homemaker/mother. According to Luxton, what were the various effects of working-class men’s waged work and their position as sole breadwinner on women and their household work, as well as gender relations in families? Are there positive aspects of this family pattern that you think Luxton might be



omitting in her discussion? What did Bev Sellars's story of her experience in residential school tell you? What do you think might be the personal effects of this experience?

### **Oct. 17 Making (Nuclear) Families: Marriage, Cohabitation and Parenthood**

#### **Second tutorial – discussion of course material, tips on test taking**

Readings: Cele Otnes and Elizabeth Pleck, 2003. "Romance, magic, memory, and perfection." Pp. 1-24 from *Cinderella Dreams: The Allure of the Lavish Wedding*. In Coursepack.

Bonnie Fox, 2014 (2009). Pp. 232-248, "When the baby comes home." Fox text.

Gillian Dunne, 2014 (2000). Pp. 270-291, "Opting into motherhood: lesbians blurring the boundaries and transforming the meaning of parenthood and kinship". Fox text.

Discussion questions: What is Dawn Currie's main finding on the planning of weddings? According to Otnes and Pleck, why do so many adults want lavish and expensive weddings; that is, what is the allure of these kinds of weddings? B. Fox's study revealed some interpersonal dynamics that many couples in her study developed when they became parents. What were they? What important things about lesbian couples did you learn from Gillian Dunne's study of mothers? Why is their pattern of parenting different from the one Fox found?

### **Oct. 24 TEST 1**

### **Oct. 31 Not-So-Nuclear Families, and the Impact of Economic Insecurity on Committed Relationships and Family Formation**

Readings: Carol Stack, 1974. "Swapping: 'What goes round comes round,'" & "Personal kindreds: 'All our kin.'" Pp. 32-61 from *All Our Kin*. In Coursepack.

Jennifer Silva, 2013. "Insecure intimacies: Love, marriage, and family in the risk society." Pp. 53-80 from *Coming Up Short: Working-Class Adulthood in an Age of Uncertainty*. In Coursepack.

Gillian Creese, Isabel Dyck and Arlene McLaren, 2014 (2009). Pp. 386-397, "Gender, generation and the 'immigrant family.'" Fox text.

Sasha Roseneil and Shelley Budgeon, 2004. Pp. 142-159 of "Cultures of intimacy and care beyond 'the family': personal life and social change in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century." In *Current Sociology* 52, 2. [Link on course website.]

Discussion questions: What were the "survival strategies" used by the poor African-American women in the 1970s, as described by Carol Stack? Why did these people trade and give away their scarce resources? "Domestic networks" (and not nuclear

families) constitute family in the 1970s Black community studied by Stack. What are these networks? Jennifer Silva argues that economic insecurity (due to the changed nature of the labour market and jobs) has changed the way working-class Americans think about intimate relationships and marriage. What are the ways in which it has, according to Silva? According to Gillian Creese, Isabel Dyck and Arlene McLaren, why are relationships beyond nuclear-family relationships important to immigrants' adjustment in Canada? What common assumptions about family and caring are challenged by the relationships that Sasha Roseneil and Shelley Budgeon discovered in their research?

### **Nov. 14 “Accordion Families” and the Impact of Economic Insecurity on Young Adults and their Parents**

#### **Third tutorial – return and review of Test 1**

Reading: Katherine S. Newman, 2012. Chapters 2 (“Why are accordion families spreading?”), chap. 5 (“When the nest doesn’t empty”), chap. 6 (“Trouble in paradise”) and “Conclusion.” Pp. 37-62 & 127-174 & 195-202 in *The Accordion Family*.

Discussion: For each chapter, write a short summary of the main findings and arguments. These notes should indicate why ‘accordion families’ are increasingly common, what the implications of them are for parents, and what the ‘trouble in paradise’ is – as well as the key ideas in the conclusion.

#### **Second Essay due on Nov. 21**

### **Nov. 21 Dual-Earner Families: Juggling Employment and Family Responsibilities**

Readings: Meg Luxton, 2014 (2003). Pp.342-360, “Family coping strategies: balancing paid employment and domestic labour”. Fox text.

Sedef Arat-Koc, 2014 (2009). Pp. 316-337, “The politics of family and immigration in the subordination of domestic workers in Canada.” Fox text.

Diane-Gabrielle Tremblay, 2014 (2009). Pp. 541-553, “Quebec’s policies for work-family balance: a model for Canada?” Fox text.

Discussion questions: According to Meg Luxton, what alternatives do dual-earning Canadian couples have for handling the responsibilities of employment and family (especially children and other dependents)? What needs to happen for the problem to be addressed? Sedef Arat-Koc describes and analyses the situation of paid domestic workers in Canada. What does she think are the main sources of their vulnerability? Diane-Gabrielle Tremblay describes Quebec’s family policies. What are they?

### **Nov. 28 Divorce, Lone Parents, Stepfamilies and Others**

Readings: Catherine K. Riessman, 2014 (1990). Mourning different dreams: gender and the companionate marriage. Fox text.

Elizabeth Church, 2014 (2003). Kinship and stepfamilies. Fox text.

Kate Bezanson, 2014. Putting together a life: families, coping, and economic change, 1997-2008. Fox text.

Discussion questions: Catherine Riessman describes her findings from a study of recently divorced women and men. The reasons they left their marriages reveal much about what people want in marriage. What do women want and what do men want? Based on Elizabeth Church's essay, describe the complexities common to stepfamilies: What challenges do the adults and children in them face? How are these families different from other families? Do you agree with her about the advantages these families may have? Kate Bezanson describes some of the people who were interviewed for a study of Ontario families coping with economic insecurity and neoliberal social policy in the 1990s. What were the problems these people faced? How did they cope with them? What changes in policy are needed?

**Dec. 5      TEST 2**