

**New Topics in Sociology:**  
**SOCIOLOGY OF LGBTQI+ FAMILIES**  
**SOC351H1F (Online)**  
**Fall 2020**

S. W. Underwood  
725 Spadina Ave.  
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Class Time: Friday, 12-3PM EST (asynchronous)  
Location: Online on *Quercus*  
Office Hours: TBD

Teaching Assistant: Jaime Nikolaou, j.nikolaou@utoronto.ca

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**Course Description:** This class will provide students with an in-depth understanding of the variety and lived realities of families within the LGBTQI+ communities of Canada and the USA. Students will critically examine normative notions of family across axes of gender, race, ethnicity, class, marital status, and kinship ties, giving special attention to how LGBTQI+ families challenge these patterns. At the same time, we explore the historical, material, institutional, and legal challenges faced by LGBTQI+ families.

**Goals and Learning Objectives:**

- To understand how gender, sexualities, and race (among other important axes of identity) are socially constructed and how they generate embodied experiences and material consequences in specific historical and cultural contexts
- To understand how ideas about 'family' structure our daily lives, and in particular, how LGBTQI+ families are reimagining and reshaping meanings of family, parenthood, motherhood, fatherhood, and so forth
- To develop an understanding of the social and political struggles for cultural, institutional, and legal recognition of LGBTQI+ families in Canada and the USA

**Prerequisites:** The prerequisite to take SOC351 is completion of SOC201H1, SOC202H1, & SOC204H1, plus two of the following: SOC251H1, SOC252H1, SOC254H1. Students without this prerequisite will be removed at any time and without notice.

**Required Texts:** None. All readings will be made available online on Quercus.

**Evaluations:**

Discussion Posts	10%	One discussion post due by 11:59PM Thursday weekly  One peer response due by 11:59PM Monday weekly
Tutorial Participation	10%	A response is due within 24 hours of each tutorial video
Essay 1—Proposal and Annotated Bibliography	25%	Thursday, October 15 <sup>th</sup>
Essay 2—Research Paper	35%	Thursday, November 26 <sup>th</sup>
Final Assessment	20%	Final Assessment Period, TBD

**Class Format:** Lectures for this course are *asynchronous*, which means that they will be recorded in advance and posted to Quercus at normal class times. Students may therefore ‘attend’ lectures at any time they choose, but it is **strongly encouraged** that students listen to them during the normal class hours so that we are all ‘on (the same) schedule’. Students are therefore expected to attend (listen/watch online) all lectures and to participate actively by 1) submitting online discussion posts before each class they are due [verify the dates on the course calendar], 2) completing assigned readings, 3) engaging continuously in online discussions, and 4) keeping up to date on course information posted on Quercus. In all activities, students are to be respectful of fellow classmates, guest speakers, and teaching/administrative staff.

**Tutorials:** Because this course is online and students may be in different time zones, the tutorials for this course will also be *asynchronous*, which means that they do not need to be attended live. However, tutorial videos will be recorded and uploaded by the TA immediately after each lecture. The tutorial video will offer students something thought-provoking or that aims to develop core research and writing skills (especially that will serve you in your final research paper!). Students will have 24 hours to respond to the exercise provided by the TA. Responses will be posted directly to Quercus.

**Email and Contact:** When emailing the instructor or TA, please use your mail.utoronto.ca address. **Do NOT use Quercus to contact me or the TA as these messages will not be read.** Please also include “SOC351” and a brief description in the subject line so that your email is easily prioritized. Emails will typically be answered within 48 hours. Keep in mind that for simple questions, email is the preferred method of communication. However, for longer questions, students should attend office hours and/or schedule an appointment with the instructor.

**Discussion Posts:** Students are responsible for attending every class session and engaging in online discussions on a regular basis. Actively engaging in online discussion posts is vital for your progress in this course. There will be a discussion thread for each class. These discussion posts are required for every class with assigned readings **except classes 1, 6, 11, and 12**. You will therefore comment on readings from **8 of the 12 classes**. You must ALSO respond to a fellow student in your group at least once for each class. In total, you will submit 8 posts and 8 responses (16 entries). Late or missing discussion posts will be penalized.

By the evening before each class (by 11:59PM on Thursdays), students will write at least two brief paragraphs on one or more of the week’s readings, including at least one question and a short evaluative comment. Your questions, comments, and reflections must draw on the assigned readings, including aspects of the text that you wish to understand or discuss, and/or reflections on the core concepts from the week’s readings. You are encouraged to quote excerpts from the course texts, but make sure to **properly cite all paraphrase and direct quotations**.

You are also required to respond to the post of one peer for each class. By 11:59PM on Mondays, you must submit one response to a peer within the previous class’s discussion thread. These posts can be shorter (one paragraph minimum), responding to another student’s questions or observations, building on something they have said, or asking questions of your own. Students are encouraged to go beyond the minimum requirements for online discussion, and to take advantage of this forum for collective teaching and learning.

**Final Assessment:** There will be a final assessment that will include short answer and essay questions and will be written online during the official assessment period. The date and time will be set by the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and announced on Quercus and in class.

To do well on the assessment, 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 assessment is synthetic, so you should think over the **main themes and arguments** discussed in the course and review the **key arguments** in each reading and lecture to prepare for them.

**Essays:** The first 'essay' assignment asks you to develop a proposal for research on an issue of interest to you among LGBTQI+ families. This assignment is intended to be the first step towards a larger research paper that you will submit at the end of the course. You will be asked to develop a research problem and a driving research question that seeks to address this. Then, you will develop an annotated bibliography of several sources that address your research question. The first essay will be 3-5 pages in length.

This second essay, a research paper, will build on the work of your first essay. This will be a more conventional written assignment that develops an argument (a thesis) that addresses your research problem. Additional research will be used to support this essay. The second essay will be 7-10 pages in length.

The essays must be **submitted on Quercus by 11:59PM** on their respective due dates listed above. Also, keep a record of your submission including the date and time submitted—a screenshot is fine for this. 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, is considered an academic offense that results in students being referred to the Office of Academic Integrity.

**Missed Tests and Late Submissions:** Students who miss a test or other assignment due to medical reasons must (1) email the instructor to discuss it, and (2) declare their absence on the ACORN system. No documentation is required for medical absences.

However, students who missed tests or assignments for other reasons (e.g., family or personal) should submit contact their college registrar to follow protocol AND submit relevant documentation to the instructor.

**Re-Grading Policy:** For clarification and questions about your grades, students should wait at least 24 hours after receiving their grade to contact the TA or instructor. This is intended to encourage adequate time for reflection on the grade and its rationale. If you wish to request a regrade of an assignment, you must submit a one-page document by email within 5 days of receiving your grade. Indicate specifically your areas of concern, your questions, and make an argument as to why your grade should be different. **NOTE:** Regrades can result in a higher or lower grade.

**Writing Essays and Academic Integrity:** Students who have questions or concerns about how to write an essay should make an appointment to discuss this during my office hours – for advice and help. Otherwise, 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.

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.

### **Student Services and Resources:**

**Accessibility:** Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel welcome to approach me and/or Accessibility Services at (416) 978 8060 or [accessibility.utoronto.ca](http://accessibility.utoronto.ca)

**Equity & Diversity:** The University of Toronto and I are committed to equity and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect. As a course instructor, I will neither condone nor tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any individual in this course and wish to be alerted to any attempt to create an intimidating or hostile environment. It is our collective responsibility to create a space that is inclusive and welcomes discussion. Discrimination, harassment, and hate speech will not be tolerated.

In particular, you may wish to acquaint yourself with the Sexual & Gender Diversity Office at <https://sgdo.utoronto.ca/about-the-office/equity-diversity-u-of-t/> and the Anti-Racism and Cultural Diversity Office at <http://antiracism.utoronto.ca/>. Further resources for First Nations students, students of faith, and more can be found at <http://equity.hrandequity.utoronto.ca/>.

## Course Schedule:

1: September 11 <sup>th</sup>	Introduction: Who Counts as 'Family'?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>First day of class: no discussion post due. No tutorial.</b></li> <li>• Moore, M. and M. Stambolis-Ruhstorfer. 2013. "LGBT Sexuality and Families at the Start of the 21st Century." <i>Annual Review of Sociology</i> 39: 491-507.</li> <li>• Powell, B; Bozendahl, C; Geist, C; and L.C. Steelman. 2010. "Who Counts as a Family?" p. 16-36 in <i>Counted Out: Same-Sex Relations and Americans' Definitions of Family</i>. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.</li> </ul>
2: September 18 <sup>th</sup>	Framing Queers: Theoretical Perspectives on Gender, Race, and Sexualities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thorne, Barrie. 1993. "Children and Gender." Pp. 1-7 in <i>Gender Play: Girls and Boys in School</i>. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.</li> <li>• Fausto-Sterling, Anne. 2000. "Dueling Dualisms." p. 1-29 in <i>Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality</i>. New York: Basic Books.</li> <li>• Somerville, Siobhan. 2000. "Scientific Racism and the Emergence of the Homosexual Body" in <i>Queering the Color Line</i>." p. 15-38.</li> </ul>
3: September 25 <sup>th</sup>	The "Gay and Lesbian Movement"
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adam, Barry D. (1995). Chapters 7 &amp; 8, p. 128-164 in <i>The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement</i>. Twayne Pub.</li> </ul>
4: October 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Fractures and Solidarities: Race and Class in LGBTQI+ Movements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ferguson, Roderick. (2018). Introduction, Chapter 1, and Chapter 2 (p. 1-80) in <i>One-dimensional Queer</i>. John Wiley &amp; Sons.</li> </ul>
5: October 9 <sup>th</sup>	The HIV/AIDS Crisis and 'Families We Choose'
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weston, Kath. (1991). Chapters 2 &amp; 5, p. 21-41, 103-136 in <i>Families We Choose: Lesbians, Gays, Kinship</i>. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.</li> </ul>
6: October 16 <sup>th</sup>	Queer Challenges to Family Laws and Policies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No discussion post due. No tutorial. <u>Essay 1 DUE by 11:59PM the night before this class: Thursday, October 15<sup>th</sup></u></b></li> <li>• Kelly, Fiona. (2011). Chapters 1 &amp; 2, p. 19-71 in <i>Transforming Law's Family: The Legal Recognition of Planned Lesbian Motherhood</i>. UBC Press.</li> </ul>

7: October 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Becoming Queer Parents: Kinship and Family Formation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boggis, Terry. 2001. "Affording Our Families: Class Issues in Family Formation." Pp. 175-181 in <i>Queer Families, Queer Politics: Challenging Culture and the State</i> by Mary Bernstein and Renate Reimann (Eds.). New York: Columbia University Press.</li> <li>• Patterson, C. J., &amp; Riskind, R. G. (2010). To be a parent: Issues in family formation among gay and lesbian adults. <i>Journal of GLBT Family Studies</i>, 6(3), 326-340.</li> </ul>
8: October 30 <sup>th</sup>	Resistance and Change in LGBTQI+ Families
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stacey, Judith and Timothy J. Biblarz. 2001. "(How) Does the Sexual Orientation of Parents Matter?" <i>American Sociological Review</i> 66: 159-183.</li> <li>• Averett, K. H. (2015). The Gender Buffet LGBTQ Parents Resisting Heteronormativity. <i>Gender &amp; Society</i></li> </ul>
9: November 6 <sup>th</sup>	Queer Co-Mothers: White Egalitarianism and Black Independence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dunne, Gilliane. (2000). Opting into Motherhood: Lesbians blurring the boundaries and transforming the meaning of parenthood and kinship. <i>Gender &amp; Society</i>, 14(1): 11-35.</li> <li>• Moore, Mignon. (2008). Gendered power relations among women: A study of household decision making in Black, lesbian stepfamilies. <i>American Sociological Review</i>, 73(2): 335-356.</li> </ul>
<b>READING WEEK—NO CLASS ON NOVEMBER 13<sup>TH</sup></b>	
10: November 20 <sup>th</sup>	Queer Co-Fathers: Planned Fatherhood <i>In Extremis</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stacey, Judith. 2011. Chapter 2 "Gay Parenting and the End of Paternity as We Knew It." In <i>Unhitched: Love, Marriage, and Family Values from West Hollywood to Western China</i>.</li> <li>• Carroll, M. (2018). Gay fathers on the margins: Race, class, marital status, and pathway to parenthood. <i>Family Relations</i>, 67(1): 104-117.</li> </ul>
11: November 27 <sup>th</sup>	Transgender Parents: Queer Postmodern Partnerships
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No discussion post due. No tutorial. <u>Essay 2 DUE</u> by 11:59PM the night before this class: Thursday, November 26<sup>th</sup></b></li> <li>• Pfeffer, Carla. 2012. "Normative Resistance and Inventive Pragmatism: Negotiating Structure and Agency in Transgender Families." <i>Gender &amp; Society</i>, 26(4): 574-602.</li> </ul>
12: December 4 <sup>th</sup>	Sex Work, Family, & the Political Economy of Bodies & Intimacy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Guest Lecture by Ellie Ade Kur</b></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Brooks, Siobhan. 1999. "Sex Work and Feminism: Building Alliances Through A Dialogue Between Siobhan Brooks and Professor Angela Davis"</li><li>• Piece on political economy of sex work (McClintock; Gerassi; Magubane...?)</li><li>• Brooks, S. 2010. Hypersexualization and the dark body: Race and inequality among black and Latina women in the exotic dance industry. <i>Sexuality Research and Social Policy</i>, 7(2), 70-80.</li></ul>
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