Overview
Human reproduction is typically thought of as simply a natural phenomenon, yet reproduction is as profoundly social as it is merely biological. As such, studying the multiple aspects of reproduction offers an analytic window onto the intersection between private issues and public concerns, between individual bodies and broader patterns of social configurations. In this class, we will examine the social dimensions of reproduction, focusing particularly on what makes reproduction “political”. In doing so, we will examine how reproduction interfaces with the politics of women’s health, men’s health, child health, family formation, reproductive technologies, and reproductive practices, among other topics. We will scrutinize how the politics of reproduction shape and are shaped by inequalities based on gender, race, class, sexuality, and citizenship, and we will consider cultural, political, and economic forces that influence reproductive experiences and discourses.

Requirements
Attendance and participation
Your consistent attendance and active participation is critical to doing well in this course. Absences will be noted and reflected in your final grade. You should have completed all readings before the start of each class and bring your notes to class, with discussion points in mind. Please note that we will discuss topics in class that are controversial. I expect students to engage in thoughtful and respectful discussions.

Paper: Film or Book Review (3-5pp)
This assignment requires you to choose a film or book that depicts a reproductive issue and write a brief review. The course material should inform your analytic lens in the paper. More information and guidelines on this assignment will be provided as the course progresses. This assignment will be due at the beginning of class, September 29.

Midterm (5-7pp)
The take-home midterm will consist of an analytic response to one or more prompts that will be handed out in class one week in advance of the deadline. The paper is intended to reflect and synthesize the material up to this point in the course. The midterm essay will be due at the beginning of class, October 13.
**Paper: “Birth Story” (3-5pp)**
What do you know about the circumstances of your own birth and/or gestation? Interview a parent (or both parents if possible) or a caregiver who knows about the details of your birth. As an alternative, you may tell the story of a friend’s birth/gestation or struggles with infertility. You should relate details of the story to relevant course themes/topics. More details about this assignment will be given in advance of the deadline. The paper is due at the beginning of class, November 10.

**Final (5-7pp)**
The take-home final will consist of an analytic response to one or more prompts that will be handed out in class one week in advance of the deadline. The paper is intended to reflect and synthesize the course material. The final essay will be due via blackboard by 5pm on December 8.

**Assessment**
Your final grade in this course will be based on the following:

- Attendance and participation: 10%
- Film/book review paper: 20%
- Midterm essay: 20%
- Birth story paper: 20%
- Final essay: 30%

**Policies**

*University Attendance Policy*
Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children or close family members experience serious illness.

*Academic Honor Policy*
In the academic setting it is critical that the work you present is original and that you cite outside sources rigorously and appropriately. Please see me if you have a question about plagiarism. The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to “...be honest and truthful and ... [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University.” (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at [http://fda.fsu.edu/Academics/Academic-Honor-Policy](http://fda.fsu.edu/Academics/Academic-Honor-Policy).)
Disabilities Policy
Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center as well as bring me a letter indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class. This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact:

Student Disability Resource Center
874 Traditions Way
108 Student Services Building
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167
(850) 644-9566 (voice)
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)
sdrc@admin.fsu.edu
http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/

Syllabus Change Policy
Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation of your performance in this course, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Week 1: Introduction to the Politics of Reproduction
August 25:
No readings; overview of course and syllabus

August 27:

Week 2: Historical Perspectives on Reproduction
September 1:


September 3:
**Week 3: Nature, Culture, Reproduction**

**September 8:**


**September 10:**

**Week 4: Menarche/Menstruation**

**September 15:**


**September 17:**

**Week 5: Governing Reproduction, Controlling Populations**

**September 22:**

**September 24:**

**Week 6: Preventing Fertility**

**September 29:**
*Book/film review paper due*


**October 1:**

**Week 7: Assisted Reproduction**

**October 6:**
Markens, Susan. 2007. ““Choice” and the “Best Interests of the Children”: Claiming the Problem of Surrogate Motherhood.” Pp. 50-76 in *Surrogate Motherhood and the Politics of Reproduction*. Berkeley: University of California Press. (eBook)


**October 8:**

**Week 8: Reproductive Technologies**

**October 13:**
*Midterm essay due*


**October 15:**

**Week 9: Regulating Pregnancy**

**October 20:**

**October 22:**


**Week 10: Birth, Historical Context**

**October 27:**

**October 29:**

**Week 11: Birth, Contemporary Issues**

**November 3:**


**November 5:**

**Week 12: Adolescent and Unintended Pregnancy**

**November 10:**
*Birth story paper due*


**November 12:**


**Week 13: Men and Reproduction**

**November 17:**
November 19:

Week 14: Infant Feeding and Infant Care
November 24:

Week 15: Reproductive Aging
December 1:


December 3:
No readings; course recap and review session

Final paper to be turned in on BB; due Tuesday, December 8, by 5pm