This course examines the evolution of American families throughout U.S. history, with emphasis on nineteenth and twentieth centuries. We will consider the impact of religion, region, race, ethnicity, gender, class, and sexual orientation on family formation and culture and will explore such issues as representation, memory, and the ideology of family life. Readings, films, photography, and discussions will emphasize an interdisciplinary approach to the development of American familial cultures and will include both primary and secondary sources. The course will focus on developing the writing and research skills essential to work in senior seminars and independent study courses.

**Required Texts**


**Learning Goals**

**Department Learning Goals Met by this Course:**

Students will be able to synthesize an interdisciplinary dialogue among the different
fields and methodologies that compose American Studies. Students will investigate American culture and society across time and space through an examination of history, politics, literature, and arts of the peoples of the United States, as well as the Americas. Students will be able to write well; speak articulately; and think critically, analytically, and creatively.

**Additional Learning Goals Met by this Course:**
The Junior Seminar will focus on providing students with preliminary training in analytical and methodological skills necessary to pursue a research project in American Studies. As a result, we will devote special attention to learning how to identify and frame engaging and significant problems, locate sources, interpret and deploy evidence, draw from useful analytical and methodological approaches, develop persuasive narrative strategies, revisit and sharpen our ideas through the writing of multiple drafts, and critique each others’ work in a constructive and mutually supportive environment.

**Acknowledgements:**
The design of this course has been assisted by advice from Leslie Fishbein of the Departments of American Studies and Women’s and Gender Studies at Rutgers-New Brunswick, Shirley Marshall Thompson of the Department of American Studies at the University of Texas- Austin, Kyla Wazana Tompkins of the Department of English at Pomona College, Juana Maria Rodriguez of the Department of Women’s and Gender Studies at University of California- Berkeley.

**Course Requirements**

**Attendance/Participation**
This is a seminar. Its success depends on your active and informed participation in our weekly discussions. Therefore, attendance is required at ALL class meetings (only ONE unexcused absence will be permitted without penalty), and class participation constitutes an essential part of the final grade. Chronic lateness will lower your final class grade.

Excused absences are those that result from documented family emergencies, illness, religious observance, court dates, jury service, etc., that is, situations over which you have no individual control. To have an absence counted as “excused,” it must be accompanied by appropriate documentation from your dean or other verifiable evidence such as a dated note from a physician, which must be presented to the professor. Missing more than four class sessions will result in an automatic failing grade (F) for the course. If you miss a screening, you are responsible for arranging with Media Services to make it up.

**Moderation**
Each student will serve as part of a team of moderators for two classes. These students should collaborate with each other in advance and will present a short oral introduction to their topic of the week and prepare questions to stimulate class discussion.

**Response Papers**
In order to facilitate discussion all students will submit to the professor five one-page response papers that relate to the reading/film of the week. They will be graded on a scale of 1-5, based on the originality of your insights and the clarity, intelligence, and engagement with course material. These responses will be due by 7:00 P.M. the night prior to the class meeting and must include a question suitable for in-class discussion. They should be posted on the Discussion and Private Messages section of the sakai course site and, only if that procedure fails for technical reasons, e-mailed to me at nifleet@rci.rutgers.edu. Make sure to include your name and the text you are discussing on your paper as well as question intended to stimulate class discussion.

**The New York Times paper**
Students will write a 2-page paper that engages with an article on family issues located in The New York Times online database. Students will need to include a printout of the article and its full citation in their submission. More details provided in class.

**Final Research Paper**
Students will write an original research paper dealing with an issue involving citizenship on topic to be approved by instructor. As components of this assignment, students will turn in a short topic proposal, a thesis statement and a preliminary bibliography (see course schedule for dates), as well as two drafts before submitting final paper.

**Research Proposal and Annotated Bibliography**
Students will write a 500 word proposal outlining their research project. Each paper must include an annotated bibliography that explains the relevance and relative strengths and weaknesses of the secondary material you have selected to contextualize and provide evidence for your topic. Proposals also will specify a question, or set of questions, you plan to explore and detail a research strategy.

**First Draft**
First draft should consist of introduction and at least one section. It should be a minimum of 5 pages in length.

**Second Draft**
The second draft should be a full rough draft of the complete seminar paper of 10-12 pages.

**Final Paper**
Student’s final submission should be 12-15 pages in length. The writing should be polished and carefully proofread before submitting. Authors will include their earlier drafts and annotated bibliography. Paper must actually use and document in footnotes or endnotes THREE of the sources provided by the instructor at meeting at which term paper topic is approved.

**Grading Breakdown**
Participation/In-Class Activities: 30%
   In-Class Discussion: 10%
Moderation: 10%
Five 1-page response papers: 10%
*The New York Times* paper: 5%
Research Proposal and Annotated Bibliography: 5%
First Draft: 15%
Second Draft: 20%
Final Research Paper: 25%

**Course Policies**

**Submitting Assignments:**
Assignments are due at the **beginning** of class, unless otherwise instructed. All assignments must be completed in order to pass the class. Late assignments will be penalized one letter grade per day late. All papers must be double-spaced, typeset with Times or Times New Roman 12pt font, and have page numbers and one-inch margins. Format of papers should adhere to a recognized style manual (such as MLA, APA and Chicago).

**Students with Disabilities:**
Students with documented disabilities should present their documentation to the professor at the beginning of the semester in order to be afforded appropriate accommodations. Students with disabilities requesting accommodations must follow the procedures outlined at http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/request.html

**Academic Integrity:**
*Plagiarism of any sort will not be tolerated.* Plagiarism includes copying classmates’ answers and improper citation of any text in the course or otherwise. Ignorance of university policy is not an excuse.

Except for collaborative assignments officially approved by the professor in advance, all work a student submits must be his/her own independent effort. Students must cite properly all outside sources consulted in preparing written assignments. Students should review the university policy on Academic Integrity (see the website for the Center for the Advancement of Teaching: http://teachx.rutgers.edu/integrity/policy.html). You can obtain help in maintaining standards of academic integrity by taking a 20-minute interactive tutorial on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity: http://www.scc.rutgers.edu/douglass/sal/plagiarism/intro.html

For information on proper documentation, consult Acknowledging Sources: http://amerstudies.rutgers.edu/documents/AcknowledgingSources.pdf, the guide prepared by the American Studies Department, available on the departmental web site and on the course Sakai web site.

**Course Schedule**

**Thurs, 9/2:** Introduction: Workshop on Writing a Research Paper: Using film as a primary source and framing research questions
**Screening:** *All in the Family* episode; section of Judith Helfand’s *Blue Vinyl*
Thurs, 9/9: Workshop on Drafting Paper Proposals and on Contextualizing Visual Culture Evidence
Due: The New York Times paper

Thurs, 9/16: Jennifer Morgan, “‘The Breedings Shall Goe with Their Mothers’: Gender and Evolving Practices of Slaveownership in the English American Colonies” [sakai]

Sharon Harley, "Gender, Work, and Domestic Roles in the Black Community, 1880-1930,” in Black Women in America: Social Science Perspectives. pp. 159-172. [sakai]


Thurs, 9/30: Arthur Miller, All My Sons.

Thurs, 10/7: WRITING WEEK

Thurs, 10/14: Monica Sone, Nisei Daughter


Each student should bring in a family photograph.

Thurs, 10/28: Paule Marshall, Brown Girl, Brownstones

Thurs, 11/4: Betty Friedan, excerpt The Feminine Mystique [sakai]

Lynn Spigel, “The Suburban Home Companion: Television and the Neighbourhood Ideal in Post-War America” [sakai]

Elaine Tyler May, excerpt Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era.
[sakai]

**Thurs, 11/11:** Karen Houppert, *Home Fires Burning: Married to the Military – For Better or Worse*

**Thurs, 11/18:** Annette Laraeu, *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life*

Viviana Zelizer, *Pricing the Priceless Child: The Changing Social Value of Children* [sakai]

Adrian Nicole LeBlanc, excerpt *Random Family: Love, Drugs, Trouble, and Coming of Age in the Bronx* [sakai]

**Thurs, 11/25: THANKSGIVING DAY**

**Thurs, 12/2:** Rodriguez, Richard T. *Next of Kin: The Family in Chicano/a Cultural Politics.*

**Screening:** *Ugly Betty*

**Thurs, 12/9:** Elizabeth Freeman, excerpt *The Wedding Complex: Forms of Belonging in Modern American* [sakai]

Eng, David. “Transnational Adoption and Queer Diasporas” [sakai]

Kath Weston, excerpt *The Families We Choose: Lesbians, Gays, Kinship* [sakai]

**Screening:** *Paris is Burning*

**FINAL PAPER DUE IN RAB 024 ON THURS, DEC 23 AT 3PM. NO EXCEPTIONS!!**
ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES

THURS, 9/9:
The New York Times Paper
Bring to class research paper topic ideas

THURS, 9/16:
Last day to have topic approved
**First draft of research proposal due with annotated bibliography; post on sakai for feedback from other students

THURS, 9/23:
FINAL PROPOSAL DUE

THURS, 9/30:
Be sure to have submitted at least 1 response paper by this date

THURS, 10/7: WRITING WEEK
Individual meetings with professor in Ruth Adams 205-F on Mon, 10/4 or Thurs, 10/7 to be scheduled in advance

THURS, 10/14:
Be sure to have submitted at least 2 response papers by this date

THURS, 10/21:
FIRST DRAFT DUE

THURS, 11/18:
SECOND DRAFT DUE

THURS, 12/2:
Be sure to have submitted at least 4 response papers by this date

THURS, 12/9:
LAST DAY OF CLASS

FINAL PAPER DUE IN RAB 024 ON THURS, DEC 23 AT 3PM.
NO EXCEPTIONS!!