

AMERICAN STUDIES 01:050:389:01: JUNIOR SEMINAR:  
AMERICAN FAMILIES

Instructor: Professor Louise Barnett  
W 5:35-8:35 p.m., RAB 018  
Office: RAB 205C  
Tel. 732-932-4254  
Office Hours: 9:30-11:30 W and by appointment  
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**BOOKS REQUIRED FOR PURCHASE**

1. Edmund Morgan, *The Puritan Family: Religion and Domestic Relations in Seventeenth-Century New England*. 1944; reprinted New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1966. \$13.95. **SASIN:** B000UFGWN4.
2. Willa Cather, *The Professor's House*. 1925; reprinted New York: Vintage Classics, Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, 2008. \$12.95. **ISBN-10:** 0679731806; **ISBN-13:** 978-0679731801.
3. Eugene O'Neill, *Long Day's Journey into Night*. 1955; reprinted New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002. Foreword by Harold Bloom. \$12.95. **ISBN-10:** 0300093055; **ISBN-13:** 978-0300093056.
4. Monica Sone, *Nisei Daughter*. Introduction by S. Frank Miyamoto. 1953; reprinted Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998. \$14.95. **ISBN-10:** 0295956887; **ISBN-13:** 978-0295956886.
5. Edward Steichen, *The Family of Man*. Prologue by Carl Sandburg. 1955; reprinted New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2002. \$19.95. **ISBN-10:** 0870703412; **ISBN-13:** 978-0870703416.
6. Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era*. 1998; reprinted New York: Basic Books, A Subsidiary of Perseus Books, L.L.C., 2008. \$22.00. **ISBN-10:** 0465010202; **ISBN-13:** 978-0465010202.
7. Paule Marshall, *Brown Girl, Brownstones*. With an afterword by Edwige Danticat. 1959; reprinted New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 2009. \$10.95. **ISBN-10:** 0486468321; **ISBN-13:** 978-0486468327.
8. Kath Weston, *The Families We Choose: Lesbians, Gays, Kinship*. 1991; revised New York: Columbia University Press, 1997. \$24.95. **ISBN-10:** 0231110936; **ISBN-13:** 978-0231110938.
9. Sherman Alexie, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*. 1993; New York: Grove Press, 2005. \$14.00. **ISBN-10:** 0802141676; **ISBN-13:** 978-0802141675.

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course examines the evolution of American families from colonial times to the present. 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 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 engage significant problems, locate sources, interpret and deploy evidence, draw from useful analytical and methodological approaches, and develop all necessary writing skills.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

The design of this course has been assisted by advice from John Gillis and Philip Greven of the Rutgers-New Brunswick Department of History, Jan Lewis of the Rutgers-Newark Department of History, Al Nigrin of the Rutgers Film Co-op, Charles Silver of the Museum of Modern Art Film Study Center, Marc Stein of York University, and Susan McKinnon of the Department of Anthropology of the University of Virginia.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

**THE SYLLABUS FOR THIS COURSE AND ALL OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD AT <https://sakai.rutgers.edu/>. THEY SHOULD BE PRINTED OUT AND BROUGHT TO CLASS. ANY COMMUNICATIONS WITH ME SHOULD BE SENT DIRECTLY TO MY E-MAIL ADDRESS: profbarnett@comcast.net**

**NOTE: ALL PAPERS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE INSTRUCTOR IN HARD COPY ON THE DATE ASSIGNED. PENALTIES FOR LATENESS MAY INCLUDE FAILURE ON THE ASSIGNMENT. HELP IN WRITING PAPERS MAY BE FOUND IN THE RESOURCE SECTION OF THE SAKAI WEB SITE: ACKNOWLEDGING SOURCES, GUIDE TO FOOTNOTES AND ENDNOTES, AND GUIDE TO WRITING ESSAYS AND TERM PAPERS IN AMERICAN STUDIES.**

**Full Attendance and Spirited Class Participation = 30%. 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 (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. 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 instructor. Missing more than four class sessions will result in an automatic failing grade (F) for the**

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course. If you miss a screening, you are responsible for arranging with Media Services to make it up.

**Participation in class discussion: This will include always bringing a passage for discussion to class AND a question or two to pose to the class. (15% of final grade).**

**Each student will be the primary moderator of one class. (5% of final grade).**

**In-class writing. (10%)**

**Some short writing assignments: 20%**

**The New York Times paper due Wednesday, January 28th (10% of final grade)**

The world of families, the social policies that shape and sustain them, the biological acts that produce them, the cultural meanings we attach to them, have all changed enormously in the last generation. Complicated family issues appear constantly in the popular media, and not always in just the ways we expect. The intent of this assignment is to teach you to read for family issues and to give you some practice in the kinds of close analysis of sources that will go into your final papers.

To write these papers go to the *New York Times* for the week of your birthday **forty years ago** and find one such family question addressed. You are to locate the article from *New York Times* (*Proquest Historical Newspapers*). Go the Rutgers University Libraries home page, make sure that you are logged on, click on Find Articles, then click on Indexes and Databases. Search the letter N. You will find ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *New York Times*. Search the *Times* for the week of your birthday (seven days before or afterward) forty years ago, and provide me with a printout of both the article image (PDF) and the page map of the page on which the article had been located. Don't be afraid to be imaginative. Look in all sections of the paper. You should summarize the issues raised and explain how an idea about "family" is present in the article you have chosen. What assumptions about the shape and nature of family and family-related issues inform the article? What questions does the article raise? How have such questions and assumptions changed in the last four decades? What does the story tell us about the concerns of the 1960s? What does the story reveal about the kinds of tensions historian John Gillis has described between the cultural ideals represented by an idea of family and the real worlds in which people operate (see excerpt below)? **Your paper should be about 2 pages long. You should include the full citation for the article you analyze and a printout of the article image (PDF) and of the page map of the page on which the article appears.**

John R. Gillis, *A World of their Own Making: Myth, Ritual, and the Quest for Family Values*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997. P. 7.

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We must be careful not to confuse the family that we live by with the families that previous generations actually lived with. Until quite recently, historians also failed to make this distinction, but in the last two decades demographic and social history research has revealed a very different picture of families past, one that suggests much more continuity between families past and present in actual behavior than anyone would have imagined. It seems that the fragmentation, instability, and discontinuity that we feel so keenly today have been part of the European experience of family life since at least the Middle Ages.

**Research proposal Prospectus and Annotated Bibliography due Wednesday, February 4<sup>th</sup>** in class. Students will write a 1,000 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.

Tuesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>: 7:00 P.M.: **REQUIRED** attendance at presentation on “The Role of Culture in Responding to Domestic and Family Violence” by Jessica Vasquez, Chief Executive Officer of the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, in conjunction with the screening of the documentary film *Defending Our Lives* (1993, 30 minutes) featuring four women imprisoned for killing their batterers and their terrifying personal testimonies. Each of these women tells her own horrific tale of beatings, rape, and torture at the hands of her husband or boyfriend. The event will take place on Tuesday, February 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 P.M. in Traves Hall B of the Douglass Campus Center. For extra credit students can submit a one-page response paper on the film and/or the presentation by Jessica Vasquez by Wednesday, February 24<sup>th</sup>. If students have a conflict with work, class, or other commitments that make it impossible to attend the screening, at which attendance will be taken, such students can notify me in advance and can arrange to view the film on reserve at the Music Library of the Mabel Smith Douglass Library from Wednesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>-Wednesday, March 4<sup>th</sup> and to write a **required** one-page response paper, which will receive extra credit.

**First draft due Wednesday, March 11<sup>th</sup>** in class. **First draft should consist of introduction and at least one section.**

**Final paper:** Polished and complete. Authors will submit their finished papers, complete with annotated bibliography, on Wednesday, April 29, in class. Provide stamped self-addressed 9 x 12” manila envelope for return of term paper with instructor’s comments unless you prefer for the paper to be returned to your Rutgers PO box. Submit the manila envelope without postage in that case. (40% of final grade)

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**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** Students with documented disabilities should present their documentation to the instructor at the beginning of the semester in order to be afforded appropriate accommodations.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

Except for collaborative assignments officially approved by the instructor 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>). The Writing Program maintains a website that defines and discusses plagiarism: [http://wp.rutgers.edu/courses/201/plagiarism\\_policy/](http://wp.rutgers.edu/courses/201/plagiarism_policy/). This site clarifies many issues regarding the University's policy on academic integrity. Failure to comply with this policy can result in failure of the course.

Plagiarism is the representation of the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or by appropriate indentation and must be promptly cited in the text or in a footnote. Acknowledgement is required when material from another source is stored in print, electronic, or other medium and is paraphrased or summarized in whole or in part in one's words. To acknowledge a paraphrase properly, one might state: "to paraphrase Plato's comment ..." and conclude with a footnote identifying the exact reference. A footnote acknowledging only a directly quoted statement does not suffice to notify the reader of any preceding or succeeding paraphrased material. Information which is common knowledge, such as names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc., need not be footnoted; however, all facts or information obtained in reading or research that are not common knowledge among students in the course must be acknowledged. In addition to materials specifically cited in the text, only materials that contribute to one's general understanding of the subject may be acknowledged in the bibliography. Plagiarism can, in some cases, be a subtle issue. Any questions about what constitutes plagiarism should be discussed with the faculty member. For information on proper documentation, consult Acknowledging Sources:

<http://amerstudies.rutgers.edu/documents/AcknowledgingSources.pdf>, the guide prepared by the Rutgers American Studies Department, which is available on the American Studies Department web site and on the course Sakai web site.

**FILM SHOWINGS:**

**FILM**

**SHOW DATE**

*Bathing Babies in Three Cultures* (1954, 9 minutes) and  
*Why Can't We Be a Family Again?* (2002, 27 minutes)

January 21

*Long Day's Journey into Night* (excerpts) (1962)

February 18

*The Mothering Heart* (1913, 30 minutes)

February 25

*Family Gathering* (1988, 53 minutes)

March 4

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<i>An American Family Revisited</i> (1983, 60 minutes)	March 25
<i>Ugly Betty: The Complete First Season</i> (2006)	April 15
<i>Paris Is Burning</i> (1990, 76 minutes)	April 22
<i>Smoke Signals</i> (1998, 89 minutes)	April 29

**FILMS PLACED ON RESERVE AT MEDIA SERVICES, MABEL SMITH DOUGLASS LIBRARY (CALL 732-932-9411, EXT. 34 TO BOOK MEDIA TO INSURE AVAILABILITY AND TO CHECK MEDIA LIBRARY HOURS)**

<i>Long Day's Journey into Night</i> (1992, 170 minutes)	Tuesday, February 3 <sup>rd</sup> - Wednesday, February 18 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Defending Our Lives</i> (1993, 30 minutes)	Wednesday, February 18 <sup>th</sup> - Wednesday, March 4 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Raisin in the Sun</i> (1961, 128 minutes)	Tuesday, March 10 <sup>th</sup> – Wednesday, April 1 <sup>st</sup>

**ASSIGNMENTS:** All readings on reserve at the Mabel Smith Douglass Reserve Desk and articles available on electronic reserve or as class handouts

<b><u>No.</u></b>	<b><u>Week of:</u></b>	<b><u>Readings and Films:</u></b>
I.	January 20 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Introduction: Workshop on Writing a Research Paper: Using film as a primary source and framing research questions</b>  <b><i>BATHING BABIES IN THREE CULTURES (9 MINUTES, 1954) SHOWN IN CLASS</i></b>  <b><i>WHY CAN'T WE BE A FAMILY AGAIN? (2002) (27 MINUTES, 2002) SHOWN IN CLASS</i></b>
II.	January 27 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Workshop on Drafting Paper Proposals and on Contextualizing Visual Culture Evidence</b>  Edmund S. Morgan, <i>The Puritan Family: Religion and Domestic Relations in Seventeenth-Century New England</i> . 1944; reprinted New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1966. Foreword, pp. ix-x; 1-186.  <b>**New York Times paper due in hard copy in class</b>
III.	February 3 <sup>rd</sup>	John Blassingame, Chapter 3: The Slave Family in <i>The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the Antebellum</i>

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*South*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1972. Pp. 77 – 103.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Week of:</u>	<u>Readings and Films:</u>
III.	February 3 <sup>rd</sup> (continued)  <b>PROPOSAL DUE</b>	<p>Herbert G. Gutman, Chapter 2: Because She Was My Cousin in <i>The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750-1925</i>. New York: Pantheon Books, 1976. Pp. 45-100; Notes, pp. 555-564.</p> <p>Christie Farnham, “Sapphire? The Issue of Dominance in the Slave Family, 1830-1865” in <i>Black Women in American History</i>, Vol. 2. Brooklyn, New York: Carlson Publishing, Inc., 1990, pp. 369-384,</p> <p>Sharon Harley, "Gender, Work, and Domestic Roles in the Black Community, 1880-1930," in <i>Black Women in America: Social Science Perspectives</i>, eds. Micheleine R. Malson, Elisabeth Mudimbe-Boyi, Jean F. O’Barr, Mary Wyer. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988. Pp. 159-172.</p> <p><b><i>LONG DAY’S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT (170 minutes, 1992) ON RESERVE AT THE MABEL SMITH DOUGLASS LIBRARY, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3<sup>RD</sup> – WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18<sup>TH</sup></i></b></p>
IV.	February 10 <sup>th</sup>	<p><b>Workshop on bibliography, citations, and academic integrity</b></p> <p>Willa Cather, <i>The Professor’s House</i>. 1925; reprinted New York: Vintage Classics, Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, 2008. Quotation from Louie Marsellus; pp. 3-258; About the Author: p. 259.</p>
V.	February 17 <sup>th</sup>	<p>Eugene O’Neill, <i>Long Day’s Journey into Night</i>. 1955; reprinted New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002. Foreword by Harold Bloom: pp. v-xii; Publisher’s Note 1989; Dedication to Carlotta; pp. 8-179; Sketch of Eugene O’Neill. –</p> <p>Caroline Jean Acker, “Portrait of an Addicted Family: Dynamics of Opiate Addiction in the Early Twentieth Century,” in Sarah W. Tracy and Caroline Jean Acker, <i>Altering American Consciousness: The History of Alcohol</i></p>

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*and Drug Use in the United States, 1800-2000.* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004), pp. 165-181.

EXCERPTS FROM *LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT* (APPROXIMATELY 50 MNUTES, 1962)  
SHOWN IN CLASS

VI. February 24<sup>th</sup>

**WRITING WEEK**

**D. W. GRIFFITH'S *THE MOTHERING HEART* (1913, 30 MINUTES) SHOWN IN CLASS**

**Individual meetings with instructor in Ruth Adams 024C to be scheduled on Tuesday, February 24 Or Wednesday, February 25**

VII. March 3<sup>rd</sup>

Monica Sone, *Nisei Daughter*. Introduction by S. Frank Miyamoto. 1953; reprinted Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998. S. Frank Miyamoto, Introduction to the 1979 Edition, pp. vii-xiv; Preface to the 1979 Edition, pp. xv-xvii; 3-238.

***FAMILY GATHERING* (1988, 30 MINUTES) SHOWN IN CLASS**

VIII. March 10<sup>th</sup>

**FIRST DRAFT DUE**

Edward Steichen, *The Family of Man*. Prologue by Carl Sandburg. 1955; reprinted New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2000. Introduction by Edward Steichen; Prologue by Carl Sandburg; 6-193; back cover.

Roland Barthes, "The Great Family of Man," in Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, selected and translated from the French by Annette Lavers. New York: Hill and Wang, 1972, pp. 100-102.

Susan Sontag, "America Seen through Photographs, Darkly," in Susan Sontag, *On Photography*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1977, pp. 27-48.

**Each student should bring in a family photograph.**

***RAISIN IN THE SUN* (1961, 128 MINUTES) ON RESERVE MABEL SMITH DOUGLASS LIBRARY, TUESSDAY, MARCH 10<sup>TH</sup> – WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1<sup>ST</sup>**

IX. March 17th

**MIDSEMESTER BREAK**

X. March 24<sup>th</sup>

**Workshop: First Draft Critiques**



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Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era*. 1988; reprinted New York: Basic Books, A Member of the Perseus Books Group, 2008. Acknowledgments, pp. xi-xiii; Introduction, pp. 1-18; pp. 19-216; Epilogue: Echoes of the Cold War: The Aftermath of September 11, 2001: pp. 217-228; Appendices, pp. 229-248; Notes, pp. 249-288.

“Lance Loud Obituary,” AIDS Healthcare Foundation, 25 December 2001:

[http://www.aidshealth.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=586&Itemid=194](http://www.aidshealth.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=586&Itemid=194).

***AN AMERICAN FAMILY REVISITED (55 MINUTES, 1983) SHOWN IN CLASS.***

XI. March 31<sup>st</sup>

**Workshop: Giving Paper Presentations**

Paule Marshall, *Brown Girl, Brownstones*. With an afterword by Mary Ellen Washington. 1959; reprinted New York: The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 2006. Dedication; Foreword by Edwidge Danticat: pp. ix-xii; pp. 1-310; Afterword, pp. 311-324.

***RAISIN IN THE SUN (1961) TO BE DISCUSSED IN CLASS***

XII. April 7<sup>th</sup>

Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *et al.* *The Moynihan Report (1965): The Negro Family: The Case for National Action Office of Policy Planning and Research*. United States Department of Labor, March 1965, BlackPast.org: <http://www.blackpast.org/?q=primary/moynihan-report-1965>

Lee Rainwater and Yancey L. Williams, *The Moynihan Report and the Politics of Controversy*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1967: Christopher Jencks, “The Moynihan Report,” pp. 442-444; Herbert J. Gans, “The Negro Family: Reflections on the Moynihan Report,” pp. 445-457; William Ryan, “Savage Discovery: The Moynihan Report,” pp. 457-466; Laura Carper, “The Negro Family and the Moynihan Report,” pp. 466-474; Frank Riessman, “In Defense of the Negro Family,” pp. 474-478.

Patricia Hill Collins, “Will the ‘Real’ Mother Please Stand Up: Eugenics and American Family Planning,” in Adele Clarke and Virginia Olesen, *Revisioning Women, Health, and Healing* (Routledge, 1999), pp. 266-282.

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K. Sue Jewell, "Social Policy and Black Family Structure" in *Survival of the Black Family, The Institutional Impact of U.S. Social Policy*. New York: Praeger, 1988, pp. 11-34.  
Filomina Chioma Steady, ed. *The Black Woman Cross-Culturally*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Schenkman Publishing Company, Inc., 1981: Brent Staples, "The Myth of the Black Matriarchy," pp. 335-348; Carol Stack, "Sex Roles and Survival Strategies in the Urban Black Community," pp. 349-368.

Kay S. Hymowitz, "The Black Family: 40 Years of Lies," *City Journal* (Summer 2005):  
[http://www.city-journal.org/html/15\\_3\\_black\\_family.html](http://www.city-journal.org/html/15_3_black_family.html)

XIII. April 14<sup>th</sup>

**WRITING WEEK**  
**Workshop: second draft critiques**

Henry Louis Gates, Jr., "Forty Acres and a Gap in Wealth," *New York Times* 18 November 2007: Section 4:14.

Junot Diaz, "Drown," in Junot Diaz, *Drown* (1996; reprinted New York: Riverhead Books, 1997), pp. 91-107.

***UGLY BETTY: THE COMPLETE FIRST SEASON,***  
**EPISODE 1 (2006, 45 MINUTES) SHOWN IN CLASS**

XIV. April 21<sup>st</sup>

Kath Weston, *The Families We Choose: Lesbians, Gays, Kinship*. 1991; revised New York: Columbia University Press, 1997. Dedication; Preface to the Paperback Edition: xi- xx; Acknowledgments: xxi; pp. 1-213; Appendix: 215-221; Notes: 223-233.

***PARIS IS BURNING (1990, 76 MINUTES) SHOWN IN CLASS***

XV. April 28<sup>th</sup>

**TERM PAPER  
DUE**

Sherman Alexie, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*. 1993; New York: Grove Press, 2004. Quotations from Lou Reed and Joy Harjo. Introduction: xi-xxii; pp. 1-242; biographical sketch of Sherman Alexie.

***SMOKE SIGNALS (1998, 89 MINUTES) SHOWN IN CLASS***