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Office Hours: Mondays: 3:00-4:30
Tuesdays: 10:30-12:00
Wednesdays: by appointment
Fridays: 10:00-12:00

GSC 63603/GSC 43603: Mother Nature?: An Interdisciplinary Introduction to Motherhood Studies

Over the last decade, "Motherhood Studies" has emerged as a distinct, interdisciplinary field of scholarly inquiry with associations, journals, and conferences devoted to its development. In this course, we will consider motherhood as an institution and as a practice, questioning the nature of motherhood in the ideologies that society promulgates. We will read the classic texts upon which this field is founded, including Adrienne Rich's *Of Woman Born* (1976) and Sara Ruddick's *Maternal Thinking* (1989), and contemporary responses to their work. We will investigate the ways that disciplines as diverse as economics, literature, and theology have shaped our perception of motherhood as an institution; we will explore topics like the relationship between motherhood studies and feminism; the decision to work or stay home after the birth of a child; and the different faces of motherhood, including partnered mothers, single mothers, and lesbian mothers.

Required texts:

GSC 63603

Required:

Cherríe Moraga, *Waiting in the Wings*
Andrea O'Reilly (ed.), *Maternal Theory: Essential Readings*
Andrea O'Reilly, *21st-Century Motherhood: Experience, Identity, Policy, Agency*
Adrienne Rich, *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution*
Sara Ruddick, *Maternal Thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace*
Ann Hood, *The Red Thread*

Recommended:

Andrea O'Reilly (ed.), *Maternal Thinking: Philosophy, Politics, Practice*
Andrea O'Reilly (ed.), *From Motherhood to Mothering: The Legacy of Adrienne Rich's Of Woman Born*

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All other readings will be provided via e-reserves or links to online postings of them. Please bring hard copies of the readings to class.

Course requirements/assignments:

1. Annotations for class readings (due by noon on assigned [group A or B] days; do at least 3 of the articles each time/the fiction does NOT get annotated) →15%
2. Response to article critiquing Rich (5%) and Ruddick (5%) →10%
3. Annotated bibliography for your project (follow annotation format we've done in class; minimum of 5 sources) →15%
4. Rough draft of your paper (conference length [2750-3000 words/9-10 pages] →20%
5. Final draft of your paper (grads: article length [5000-7500 words/20-30 pages INCLUDING notes and works cited]; undergrads: 18-20 pages [EXCLUDING works cited]) →40%

Grade scale:

A – Meets highest expectations

A- – superior work in all areas

B+ – Superior work in most areas

B – Solid work

B- – More than acceptable, but 1 or 2 shortcomings

C+ – Meets all basic standards

C – Meets most basic standards

C- – Meets some basic standards

D – Minimally passing

F – Unacceptable performance

Course policies:

- We are all mutually responsible for maintaining a respectful, safe, appropriate learning environment. Actions or comments which detract from this goal will not be tolerated.
- **Plagiarism cannot be tolerated. Please be mindful of the Honor Code pledge – “As a member of the Notre Dame community, I will not participate in or tolerate academic dishonesty.” – I will ask you to sign it on your major assignments, which must be done on your own, with any ideas of scholars properly cited (Please use MLA style, UNLESS you have made prior arrangements with me). You may discuss the readings with classmates both before and after class meetings, and obviously should take notes during class discussions.**
- Attendance – any absence not covered by the University’s policy on excused absences is considered unexcused. My policy for attendance is as follows: for every absence after your FIRST unexcused absence, you will lose a HALF of a letter grade; if you miss more than THREE classes (unexcused), you will FAIL the class.
- Additionally, ABSENCE IS NOT AN EXCUSE TO NOT TURN IN WORK ON TIME. Assignments must be submitted by the indicated due date. Late assignments will only be accepted if arrangements are made prior to the due date and may be assessed a letter grade penalty.
- Any discussion of grade(s) must occur during office hours.
- Email – Please use a subject line that indicates your content. Also, please compose the email in a professional manner (i.e., include both a greeting and a closing, as well as your name).
- I expect that class will not be interrupted by cell phones/text messages or laptop usage. While I will not embarrass you if this happens, please be aware that I will notice it and your grade will be affected.

You can expect the following:

- My primary commitment is to your learning: please see me, at any point in the semester, if you have questions or concerns.
 - I will be available in 325 O’Shaughnessy Hall during my posted office hours, barring an emergency (in which case, I will post a notice);
 - I will answer emails within 24 hours during the week (and typically, I will answer several times a day); on the weekends, I check once on Saturdays, and occasionally on Sundays;
- Assignments will be returned at the first class session after submission.

Schedule of readings:

An important note regarding the reading assignments:

- The standard rule of thumb in academia is that you should spend approximately 3 hours of prep time for each hour of class time at the graduate level (for our class, this translates into spending about 7.5 hours before each of our class meetings).
- At the undergrad level, the expectation is 2 hours of prep time/class hour (and so about 5 hours per session). TIP: read in the order that I’ve listed the readings (I expect you to read at least the first 3-4 articles each week, plus the fiction selections that are highlighted).
- Please see me if you find that you are spending significantly more time than this on a routine basis and you would like to brainstorm some reading/writing/studying strategies.

Schedule of Readings:		
Week 1: 8/24/11	Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alice McDermott, “Our Girls” [E]
Week 2: 8/31/11	Feminist theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adrienne Rich, <i>Of Woman Born</i> / UNDERGRAD: Rich, “Introduction from <i>Of Woman Born</i>” [MT]; Rich, “Anger and Tenderness” [MT]; Rich, “Motherhood and Daughterhood” [E] • Julia Kristeva, “Stabat Mater” [MT] • Dorothy Macardle, “The Return of Niav” [E]
Week 3: 9/7/11 Group A	Psychology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nancy Chodorow, “Early Psychological Development: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender” [MT] • Jessica Benjamin, “The Omnipotent Mother: A Psychoanalytic Study of Fantasy and Reality” [MT] • Miriam M. Johnson, “Women’s Mothering and Male Misogyny” [MT] • Emma Donoghue, “The Tale of the Hair” [E] • ASSIGNMENT DUE: SUMMARY/CRITIQUE OF AN ESSAY FROM <i>FROM MOTHERHOOD TO MOTHERING: THE LEGACY OF ADRIENNE RICH’S OF WOMAN BORN</i> (ED. O’REILLY) – AVAILABLE AT THE RESERVE DESK

<p>Week 4: 9/14/11</p>	<p>Philosophy, literature, I</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sara Ruddick, <i>Maternal Thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace</i> (Parts I and II) / UNDERGRAD: “Maternal Thinking” [MT] • Tillie Olsen, “I Stand Here Ironing” [E]
<p>Week 5: 9/21/11</p>	<p>Philosophy, literature, II</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ruddick, <i>Maternal Thinking</i> (Part III)/ UNDERGRAD: “Preservative Love and Military Destruction: Some Reflections on Mothering and Peace” [MT] • Mary Lavin, “The Nun’s Mother” [E]
<p>Week 6: 9/28/11 Group B</p>	<p>Cultural constructions of “mother”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judith Warner, “The Motherhood Religion” [MT] • Paula Kaplan, “Don’t Blame Mother: Then and Now” [MT] • Susan Douglas and Meredith Michaels, “The New Momism” [MT] • Andrea O’Reilly, “Feminist Mothering” [MT] • Shari I. Thurber, “The Myths of Motherhood” [MT] • Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore, “Ideals and Realities of Motherhood: A Theological Perspective.” (<i>Mother Troubles: Rethinking Contemporary Maternal Dilemmas</i>. Eds. Julia E. Hanigsberg and Sara Ruddick. Boston: Beacon P, 1999. 281-303.) [E] • Cristina Traina, “Maternal Experience and the Boundaries of Christian Sexual Ethics” [<i>Signs</i> 25.2 (Winter 2000): 369-405] http://www.jstor.org/stable/3175560 • ASSIGNMENT DUE: SUMMARY/CRITIQUE OF AN ESSAY FROM <i>MATERNAL THINKING: PHILOSOPHY, POLITICS, PRACTICE</i> (ED. O’REILLY) – AVAILABLE AT THE RESERVE DESK – this can be submitted via email by Friday, 1:00pm • Paper topic due (via email)
<p>Week 7: 10/5/11 Group A</p>	<p>Film</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kenneth Branagh’s <i>Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein</i> [watch in advance] • Marianne Hirsch, “Prelude: Origins and Paradigms” [MT] • Elaine Tuttle Hansen, “A Sketch in Progress: Introducing the Mother without Child” [MT] • Barbara Almond, “‘Before the Beginning’: Women’s Fears of Monstrous Births” (<i>The Monster Within: The Hidden Side of Motherhood</i>. Berkley: U of California P, 2010. 51-72) [E]

<p>Week 8: 10/12/11 Group B</p>	<p>Economic issues / An ethics of shared parenting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ann Crittenden, “Where We Are Now” [MT] • Kasey Buckles, “Understanding the Returns to Delayed Childbearing for Working Women” http://www.jstor.org.proxy.library.nd.edu/stable/pdfplus/29730055.pdf?acceptTC=true • Chris Bobel, “Resisting, But Not Too Much: Interrogating the Paradox of Natural Mothering” [MT] • Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. “Life Boat Ethics.” 1993. <i>Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective</i>. Eds. Caroline Brettell and Carolyn Sargent. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2009. 33–39. • Sarah Hrdy, “Why it Takes a Village” & “Grandmothers Among Others” (from <i>Mothers and Others: The Evolutionary Origins of Mutual Understanding</i>)[E] • bell hooks, “Revolutionary Parenting” [MT] • Marc and Amy Vachon, <i>Equally Shared Parenting: Rewriting the Rules for a New Generation of Parents</i> [E]
<p>Week 9: Fall Break (10/16-10/22)</p>		
<p>Week 10: 10/26/11 Group A</p>	<p>Reproductive Issues , I</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary O’Brien, “The Dialectics of Reproduction” [MT] • Shannon Carter, “Gender and Childbearing Experiences: Revisiting O’Brien’s Dialectics of Reproduction” http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/nwsa_journal/v021/21.2.carter.pdf • Shulamith Firestone, <i>The Dialectic of Sex</i> [E] • Robbie Davis-Floyd, “Daughter of Time: The Postmodern Midwife” http://www.davis-floyd.com/USERIMAGES/File/Daughter%20of%20Time%20-%20postmodern%20midwife.pdf • Davis-Floyd, “The Technocratic, Humanistic, and Holistic Paradigms of Childbirth” http://www.davis-floyd.com/USERIMAGES/File/TECHNOCRATIC%20HUMANISTIC%20AND%20HOLISTIC.pdf • Katha Pollitt, “‘Fetal Rights’: A New Assault on Feminism” (“<i>Bad Mothers: The Politics of Blame in Twentieth-Century America</i>.” Eds. Molly Ladd-Taylor and Lauri Umansky. New York: New York UP, 1998. 285-298.) [E] • Margaret Atwood, “Giving Birth” [E]

<p>Week 11: 11/2/11 Group B</p>	<p>Queer studies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cherríe Moraga, <i>Waiting In The Wings: Portrait of a Queer Motherhood</i> • Bonnie Mann, “The Lesbian June Cleaver: Heterosexism and Lesbian Mothering” http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/hypatia/v022/22.1mann01.pdf • Katherine Arnup, “Does the Word Lesbian Mean Anything to You?” [MT] • Ellen Lewin, “Negotiating Lesbian Motherhood: The Dialectics of Resistance and accommodation” [MT] • Nancy Polikoff, “Lesbians Choosing Children: The Personal is Political Revisited” [MT] • Baba Copper, “The Radical Potential in Lesbian Mothering of Daughters” [MT] • Audre Lorde, “Man Child: A Black Lesbian Feminist’s Response” [MT] • Annotated Bibliography due (in class, hard copy)
<p>Week 12: 11/6/11 Group A: Class dinner at my house/ short discussion over dessert (5:30ish-9:00)</p>	<p>African American studies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patricia Hill Collins, “Shifting the Center: Race, Class, and Feminist Theorizing About Motherhood” [MT] • Collins, “The Meaning of Motherhood in Black Culture and Black Mother-Daughter Relationships” [MT] • Dorothy Roberts, “Killing the Black Body” [MT] • Angela Davis, “Racism, Birth Control and Reproductive Rights” (from <i>Women, Race, and Class</i>) [E] • Alice Walker, “Everyday Use” [E] • Walker, “One Child of One’s Own: A Meaningful Digression Within the Work(s)” [E] • Laurie A. Wilkie, “Conclusions: The Many Ideologies of African American Motherhood” (from <i>The Archaeology of Mothering</i>) [E] • NOTE: No class on Wednesday, 11/9/11

<p>Week 13: 11/16/11 Group B</p>	<p>Reproductive issues, II</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barbara Katz Rothman, “Beyond Mothers and Fathers” [MT] • Leslie Reagan, “From Hazard to Blessing to Tragedy: Representations of Miscarriage in Twentieth-Century America” http://www.jstor.org.proxy.library.nd.edu/stable/pdfplus/3178514.pdf • Rosalind Pollack Petchesky, “Fetal Images: The Power of Visual Culture in the Politics of Reproduction” http://www.jstor.org.proxy.library.nd.edu/stable/pdfplus/3177802.pdf?acceptTC=true • Laury Oaks, “Smoke-Filled Wombs and Fragile Fetuses: The Social Politics of Fetal Representation” http://www.jstor.org.proxy.library.nd.edu/stable/pdfplus/3175381.pdf?acceptTC=true • Lesley Larkin, “Authentic Mothers, Authentic Daughters and Sons: Ultrasound Imaging and the Construction of Fetal Sex and Gender” http://findtext.library.nd.edu:8889/ndu_local?sid=google&auinit=L&a_ulaast=Larkin&atitle=Authentic+Mothers,+Authentic+Daughters+and+Sons:+Ultrasound+Imaging+and+the+Construction+of+Fetal+Sex+and+Gender&title=Canadian+review+of+American+studies&volume=36&issue=3&date=2007&spage=273&issn=0007-7720 • Nathan Stormer, “Looking in Wonder: Prenatal Sublimity and the Commonplace ‘Life’” http://www.jstor.org.proxy.library.nd.edu/stable/pdfplus/10.1086/523816.pdf?acceptTC=true • Susan Markens, “‘Moral Conundrums and Menacing Ambiguities’: Framing the Problem of Surrogate Motherhood” (<i>Surrogate Motherhood and the Politics of Reproduction</i>. Berkley: U of California P, 2007. 77-101.) [E] • Anne Enright, “Shaft” (<i>Taking Pictures</i>)
<p>Week 14 (11/23/11): THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS</p>		

<p>Week 15: 11/30/11 Group A</p>	<p>Adoptive mothers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ann Hood, <i>The Red Thread</i> [W. W. Norton & Company ISBN-10: 0393339769 / ISBN-13: 978-0393339765] • Karen March and Charlene E. Miall, "Reinforcing the Motherhood Ideal: Public Perceptions of Biological Mothers Who Make an Adoption Plan" http://content.epnet.com.proxy.library.nd.edu/pdf18_21/pdf/2006/CRS/01Nov06/23711311.pdf?T=P&P=AN&K=23711311&EbscoContent=dGJyMNLe80SeqK84v%2BbwOLCmr0meqK5SsK24SLeWxWXS&ContentCustomer=dGJyMOzl8orjset55%2BS5krGvs0gA&D=aph • Sara Ruddick, "Thinking Mothers/Conceiving Birth" (<i>Representations of Motherhood</i>. Eds. Donna Bassin, Margaret Honey, and Meryle Mahrer Kaplan. New Haven: Yale UP, 1994. 29-45.) [E] • Drucilla Cornell, "Reimagining Adoption and Family Law" [MT] • Emily J. Noonan, "The Globalization of Love: Transnational Adoption and Engagement with the Globalized World" [MT]
<p>12/2/11: Rough Draft (conference length) due by 3:00 pm (via email); I will return your draft to you, with comments, at the last class (12/7)</p>		
<p>Week 16: 12/7/11 Group B</p>	<p>The future of the field</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrea O'Reilly, <i>Twenty-first Century Motherhood</i> (selections to be decided together on November 30)
<p>Final paper due at the end of the exam period (Monday, December 12, 2011, 6:15pm)</p>		

Recommended further reading:

Barbara Almond, *The Monster Within: the Hidden Side of Motherhood*. Berkeley, CA: U of California P, 2010.

Rima D. Apple and Janet Lynne Golden *Mothers & Motherhood: Readings in American History*. Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1997.

Nicole Cooley and Pamela Stone, eds. *Women's Studies Quarterly: Mother* 37.3-4 (Fall/Winter 2009)

Kim Edwards, *The Memory Keeper's Daughter*. New York: Penguin Books, 2006.

Martha Albertson Fineman, *The Autonomy Myth: A Theory of Dependency*. The New Press, 2005.

----, *The Neutered Mother, the Sexual Family and Other Twentieth Century Tragedies*. New York: Routledge, 1995.

Michelle Goldberg, *The Means of Reproduction: Sex, Power, and the Future of the World*. New York: Penguin Books, 2009.

Amber E. Kinsler, *Motherhood and Feminism*. Berkley, CA: Seal P, 2010.

Molly Ladd-Taylor and Lauri Umansky, eds. "*Bad*" *Mothers: The Politics of Blame in Twentieth-Century America*. New York: New York UP, 1998.

Andrea O'Reilly and Sharon Abbey, *Mothers and Daughters: Connection, Empowerment, and Transformation*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000.

Shari L. Thurer, *The Myths of Motherhood: How Culture Reinvents the Good Mother*. New York: Penguin, 1994.