This seminar explores the sociology of the family from a specific vantage point -- the intersections of families and the economy. It studies the evolution of American families and the historical processes that have shaped them, especially industrialization, slavery, and global capitalism. With this focus, it asks about the consequences of the emerging class and race stratification for families, and in turn, the ways in which families shape structural change. It investigates alternatives to culturally dominant family forms, in particular the Oneida community in the mid-nineteenth century and early twenty-first century experimentation with post-modern family structures.

The seminar examines several controversies regarding the family: Is the family best conceived as an economic unit or a group of individuals with varying experiences and conflicting interests? How do we view the consequences of family transformation from a producing unit to a consuming one? How have families managed to rear children while mothers and fathers engage in "productive" labor over time? How are changes in family structure and the meaning of kinship affected by transformations in the global economy? What is the relationship between the household division of labor and gendered hierarchies in the marketplace? Within these debates the course will consider the alternative theoretical and methodological approaches to understanding the changing character of family life in North America.

This course has a Latte page: http://latte.brandeis.edu.

Course Requirements

Students are expected to attend and participate in the weekly seminar (10%). Each student will be responsible for two collaborative presentations on weekly readings (20%) and a 15-20 page paper, related to the themes of the course (70%).

If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.
Required Readings


All of the articles marked with an asterisk (*) below can be found on LATTE.

Recommended:

Course Outline

Week 1: 15 January – Defining Families and Debating Marriage

Week 2: January 22 – Industrialization and Women’s Work

Tilly, Louise and Joan Scott, Women, Work, and the Family

Recommended:
- Shorter, Edward, The Making of the Modern Family
- D’Emilio, John and Estelle Freedman, Intimate Matters

Week 3: January 29 – Envisioning an Alternative Family-Economy Axis

Klaw, Spencer, Without Sin

Recommended:
- Stack, Carol, All Our Kin

Week 4: February 5 – Black Families in a Slave Economy

Genovese, Eugene, Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made

Recommended:
- Jones, Jacqueline. Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow
- Gutman, Herbert, The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750-1925
Week 5: February 12 -- Childrearing and the Reproduction of Class and Race

Lareau, Annette, *Unequal Childhoods*

*Paper Prospectus DUE*

*TBA -- Movie: “35 Up”*

Recommended:
Zelizer, Viviana, *Pricing the Priceless Child*

Week 6: February 19 – No University Exercises – Winter Recess

Week 7: February 26 – Making and Unmaking Modern Families

Stacey, Judith, *Brave New Families*

Recommended:
Michael Young and Peter Willmott, *Family and Kinship in East London*

Week 8: March 4 – Networks and Households

Hansen, Karen V., *Not-So-Nuclear Families*

Recommended:
Mirra Komarovsky, *Blue Collar Marriage*

Week 9: March 11 – When Work Competes with Families

Hochschild, Arlie, *The Time Bind*

*Paper Outline and Preliminary Bibliography DUE*

Week 10: March 18 -- On Fatherhood and Motherhood

Townsend, Nicholas, *The Package Deal*
Families and Economic Intersections  
Spring 2008  
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***Guest Speakers: Nicholas Townsend, Brown University & Anita Ilta Garey, University of Connecticut

Recommended:  
Hochschild, The Second Shift

Week 11: March 25 –— Single Motherhood, Poverty, and “Making Do”

Nelson, Margaret, The Social Economy of Single Motherhood

***Guest Speaker: Margaret Nelson, Middlebury College

Recommended:  
Hertz, Rosanna, Single by Chance, Mothers by Choice  
Edin, Kathryn and Laura Lein, Making Ends Meet: How Single Mothers Survive Welfare and Low Wage Work  

Week 12: April 1 – Global Capitalism and Transnational Families


***Guest Speaker: Nazli Kibria, Boston University
Week 13: April 8 -- The Care Work Debates


***Guest Speaker: Mignon Duffy, University of Massachusetts, Lowell

Recommended:


Week 14: April 15 -- Debating Careers, Balancing, and “Opting Out”


***Guest Speaker: Meg Lovejoy, Ph.D. candidate, Brandeis University

Recommended:


Week 15: April 22 – NO CLASS, Brandeis Spring Break

Week 16: April 29 – NO CLASS, Brandeis Friday
*Final paper due MAY 6*