IFS 3137: Politics of Reproduction
Florida State University
Spring 2017
Day/Time TBD

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Course Description
Human reproduction is typically thought of as simply a natural phenomenon, yet reproduction is as profoundly social as it is merely biological. 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, public policy discourse, reproductive technologies, and reproductive practices, among other topics. Furthermore, 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. In each class, we will address historical context, sociopolitical trends, and contemporary debates regarding specific themes and topics related to reproductive politics. Course material and discussions will draw from varied perspectives and interdisciplinary resources, including sociology, demography, anthropology, history, medicine, and public health. Although the course material focuses mostly on U.S. reproductive politics, we will consider other societies for comparison.

Course Objectives
By the end of the course, students will demonstrate the ability to do the following:

• Discuss the role of social, cultural, political, and economic factors in contemporary reproductive problems and politics.
• Analyze claims about reproduction in society.
• Analyze the major questions in the course using multiple disciplinary and intellectual perspectives.
• Demonstrate the relevance of ideas or findings from the course by applying them to public policy debates about, and lived experiences of, reproduction.
• Communicate arguments about how reproductive phenomena interface with micro-social and structural processes using clear, coherent prose that utilizes the conventions of standard American English.
• Discuss core ideas in the scholarly study of reproductive politics using sources from a variety of text types.

**Liberal Studies for the 21st Century**

The Liberal Studies for the 21st Century Program at Florida State University builds an educational foundation that will enable FSU graduates to thrive both intellectually and materially and to support themselves, their families, and their communities through a broad and critical engagement with the world in which they live and work. Liberal Studies thus offers a transformative experience. This course has been approved as meeting the Liberal Studies requirements for Social Sciences and thus is designed to help you become a critical analyst of theories and evidence about social forces and social experience. This course has also been approved as meeting the requirements for the E-Series and thus is designed to help you become a competent analytical and flexible thinker and a lifelong learner.

**Required Texts**

All texts for this course will be posted and available via Blackboard.

**Course Requirements**

*Attendance and Participation*

This course meets only once a week, in a seminar style that is conducive to accommodating lecture slides, film clips, and in-depth class discussion related to each week’s topic. Your consistent attendance and dynamic participation is critical to doing well in this course, especially since structured in-class discussions will comprise a major component of each class time. I expect everyone not only to listen but also to engage in the intellectual community of the class.

You are expected to attend every class. If you must miss class for a reason other than an excused absence, as stipulated by the University Attendance Policy, you must let me know in advance, and you will be required to write an additional response paper in order to make up for the class. If you have more than two unexcused absences, you will receive zero points for the attendance portion of your grade.

In order to actively participate in class discussions, you should complete all readings before the start of each class and bring your notes to class, with discussion points in mind. Additionally, we will discuss topics in class that are controversial. I fully expect students to engage in thoughtful and respectful discussions. To receive an “A” participation grade, a student will dependably engage with the course concepts and readings (through attentive and active involvement during class discussions), partake in small-group work during class when applicable, and consistently show respect to other students when discussing the course material. For every one of these aspects not met, the participation grade may be reduced by one letter grade.
Reading Response Papers

Five times during the course of the semester, you are required to turn in a reading response paper. You may choose your response days (starting Week 2 and beyond), allowing flexibility in planning your workload. These papers must be turned in on Blackboard by midnight prior to the class during which we will be discussing the readings. These short papers – no more than one single-spaced page each – should concisely summarize the key points of that day’s readings and reflect on how the readings relate to the politics of reproduction (note that you are not required to incorporate recommended/optional readings that are listed on the course schedule). You should also provide a critique or analysis of the readings in your own words. You may refer to other readings, personal examples, popular examples, or other sources to reinforce your point(s). Only papers that accomplish all these tasks and that are thoughtfully expressed will receive full credit.

Paper I: “Birth Story”
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. Guidelines on this assignment will be provided in class. The paper should be 3-5 pages, double-spaced, and will be due during Week 5.

Paper II: Popular Culture Review
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. Guidelines on this assignment will be provided in class. The paper should be 3-5 pages, double-spaced, and will be due during Week 9.

Research Project
You will select a topic of your choice related to the social dimensions of reproduction. This is a chance to delve deeper into an area of reproductive politics that interests you. More details about this assignment will be passed out in class, but it will be comprised of the following components:

Research Project Proposal: This short document – no more than 2 double-spaced pages – includes your topic idea, plans for completing the research project, plans for locating outside sources, and your initial argument. You should explain how your research project matters for studying reproduction in society. This paper reflects thinking-in-progress; nevertheless, it should demonstrate what you have learned, read, and discussed in the class thus far and how this knowledge is shaping your research project. Your proposal should include 5 outside references.

Additional Note about the Proposal: On the designated due date, you will bring your proposal to class, and we will workshop it in small groups. After you receive feedback from your classmate(s) and me,
you will have an opportunity to revise your proposal before turning it in for grading.

*Research Project Final Paper:* The paper will be 8-10 pages, double-spaced, not counting references. The paper should synthesize and apply course readings, films, and discussions where relevant. Additionally, it should include several outside sources.

Please note that I will provide feedback on your writing throughout the semester.

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

- **Attendance** 10%
- **Participation** 10%
- **Reading Response Papers** 25% (5 papers @ 5 points each)
- **Birth Story Paper** 10%
- **Popular Culture Review Paper** 15%
- **Research Project Proposal** 5%
- **Research Project Final Paper** 25%

Grading will adhere to a standard scale, and plus/minus grading will be used for final grades. FSU does not allow a final grade of “A+”. The specific ranges are as follows:

- 93-100=A 90-92=A- 87-89=B+ 83-86=B 80-82=B- 77-79=C+
- 73-76=C 70-72=C- 67-69=D+ 63-66=D 60-62=D- 0-59=F

To demonstrate college-level writing competency as required by the State of Florida, the student must earn a “C-” or higher in the course, and earn at least a “C-” average on the required writing assignments. If the student does not earn a “C-” average or better on the required writing assignments, the student will not earn an overall grade of “C-” or better in the course, no matter how well the student performs in the remaining portion of the course.

**Course 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.)

Americans with Disabilities Act
Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodation to a student until appropriate verification from the Student Disability Resource Center has been provided. 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 the: 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/

Free Tutoring from FSU
On-campus tutoring and writing assistance is available for many courses at Florida State University. For more information, visit the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) Tutoring Services’ comprehensive list of on-campus tutoring options at http://ace.fsu.edu/tutoring or tutor@fsu.edu. High-quality tutoring is available by appointment and on a walk-in basis. These services are offered by tutors trained to encourage the highest level of individual academic success while upholding personal academic integrity.

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**

**Week 1: Introduction to the Politics of Reproduction**


**Week 2: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (no class)**

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


Recommended/Optional:


**Week 4: Menarche and Menstruation**


**Recommended/Optional:**


**Week 5: Fertility Control and Intentions**

*Paper I Due*


**Recommended/Optional:**

**Week 6: Pregnancy**


Recommended/Optional:


Week 7: New Reproductive Technologies I: Preimplantation and Prenatal Genetic Testing


Recommended/Optional:

Week 8: Abortion


Recommended/Optional:


**Week 9: New Reproductive Technologies II: Assisting Reproduction**
*Paper II Due*


Rudrappa, Sharmila. 2015. “Fetuses as Persons, Surrogate Mothers as Nonpersons.” Chapter 6 (pp. 126-142) in Discounted Life: The Price of Global Surrogacy in India. New York University Press.

Recommended/Optional:

**Week 10: Spring Break (no class)**

**Week 11: New Reproductive Technologies III: Making Families**
*Research Proposal Draft Due in Class and on BB*


Recommended/Optional:

**Week 12: Birth, Historical Context**
*Research Proposal Due on BB at the End of This Week*


Recommended/Optional:

**Week 13: Birth, Contemporary Issues**


Reed, Richard. 2005. “American Fathers and Hospital Childbirth” and “Men’s Experience of Birth.” Chapter 1 (pp. 1-31) and Chapter 6 (pp. 161-210) in *Birthing Fathers: The Transformation of Men in American Rites of Birth.* New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

**Recommended/Optional:**


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**Week 14: The Politics of Reproductive Harm**


**Recommended/Optional:**


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**Week 15: Governing Reproduction, Controlling Populations**

Solinger, Rickie. 2005. “Racializing the Nation: From the Declaration of Independence to the Emancipation Proclamation, 1776-1865.” Chapter 1 (pp. 27-


**Recommended/Optional:**


**Week 16: Postpartum Politics**


**Recommended/Optional:**


**Final paper to be turned in on Blackboard; due date/time TBD.**
Syllabus Appendix for Liberal Studies Honors Course Application

APPENDIX SECTION I:
ASSESSMENT OF COMPETENCES AND GOALS

E-Series Course Competencies and Goals

Competency 1: Analyze the major questions or problems in the course using various intellectual perspectives.

This course draws on material from varied perspectives and interdisciplinary resources, including sociology, demography, anthropology, history, medicine, and public health. Students will learn to critically assess and discuss empirical work on reproduction from multiple disciplines in order to identify core ideas in the scholarly study of reproductive politics.

I will assess this competency through the second course paper (the popular culture review paper). Please see the syllabus appendix below, Paper Assignment II, for full guidelines on this assignment. This assignment makes up 15 points of the course grade. These points will be assessed in the following way:

First, the student must clearly demonstrate how class readings and discussion intersect with the student’s analytic reading of the popular culture text. 5 points will be dedicated to this part of the assignment, which requires the student to analyze and synthesize information across interdisciplinary class readings to begin to make her/his case about a cultural text, thus blending various intellectual perspectives, from cultural studies to social science concepts. (5-points broken down: 1 point is given for incorporation of interdisciplinary class discussion; 2 points for proficient use of one reading; 2 points for proficient use of a second reading.) Second, the student is required to produce a main argument for the paper about what the cultural text reveals about broader norms and values concerning reproduction in society. This task requires creative and interdisciplinary analysis of a source text in a constructive and synthetic way in order for the student to formulate a novel argument about the cultural text vis-à-vis the major questions or problems in the course (5 points will be dedicated to this section of the assignment, with the student receiving full points only with elaboration of a sustained argument that is creative and interdisciplinary). Finally, 5 points are dedicated to the presentation and structure of the paper, with the expectation that the student presents an elegant argument vis-à-vis core ideas in the social study of reproduction.

Competency 2: Demonstrate the relevance of ideas or findings from the course.

Students have several individual paper assignments that require them to give in-depth thought to reproductive politics from both a public policy standpoint and from the perspective of their lived experiences, an aspect of the course that is
intended to position them to give critical assessment of reproductive politics throughout their lives.

This competency will specifically be assessed through the first course paper (the birth story paper assignment), the guidelines for which are provided in the appendix below. The assignment is worth 10 points of the course grade.

This assignment asks students to re-imagine what they “know” about their own birth, highlighting and parsing the social dimensions of what might otherwise be considered a typical biological event. It is intended to capture the course’s overarching thesis: that reproduction offers a key analytic window into understanding how private issues relate directly to public concerns. With this assignment, the students are asked to consider how an everyday reproductive event (birth) that is monitored actively by organizations and the state is, at the same time, subjectively meaningful in various ways. Students are asked to highlight the attendant social dimensions of their birth story and to identify any intersecting social problems therein. The 10 points are broken down in the following way: story narrative presentation (2 pts.), reflection on how birth story intersects with micro processes: the family, the self (2 pts.), reflection on how birth story intersects with macro processes: broader norms/values regarding reproduction (2 pts.), application of a sociological perspective to birth story (2 pts.), and relevant use of interdisciplinary class readings/discussion (2 pts.).

**Competency 3: Communicate arguments central to the course using clear, coherent prose that utilizes the conventions of standard American English.**

**Competency 4: Discuss relevant ideas from the course using sources from a variety of text types.**

Competencies 3 and 4 will be measured via the research paper assignment for the course. This major writing assignment will also serve as the basis for measurement of the Social Sciences Competencies (see next section).

The final research paper is worth 25 points of the course grade. 5 points of this total will be dedicated to E-Series Competency 3; on the grading rubric, these 5 points will be assessed through the student’s use of style/mechanics. To receive all points, thoughts in the paper will be elegantly expressed, structured coherently, and free of grammatical errors.

5 points of the final research paper grade will then be dedicated to E-Series Competency 4. As described in the final research paper assignment guidelines in the appendix below, students are expected to locate and critically assess outside social scientific sources about the reproductive topic on which they are writing their final paper, in addition to incorporating relevant ideas from the course. Students will be assessed here on how well they incorporate scholarly sources into their final papers. To receive all points, a student will use the required number of outside social
scientific sources as well as incorporate said sources in a relevant way into the argument and analysis of the paper.

**Social Sciences and History Competencies**

**Competency 1: Discuss the role of social factors in contemporary problems or personal experiences.**

In every class, students are expected to discuss the social trajectory of a specific reproductive topic, from historical context to sociopolitical trends and contemporary debates. For the major assignment in the course, students are asked to complete a research project on a reproductive topic of their choosing. For this assignment, students will be expected to develop an argument about the role of social factors in the contemporary problem they are addressing. Interdisciplinary social science texts that we cover in class should be useful to the student, but he/she will also be expected to find external, relevant sources. This is a paper that draws on previous scholarship to develop an original argument about a topical issue related to the social dimensions of reproduction. Students will be expected to make an argument that is complex and sustained throughout the paper, drawing on scholarship about reproductive governance and reproductive lived experiences.

The final research paper is worth 25 points of the course grade. 10 points of this total will be dedicated to this competency, broken down in the following way: the student’s discussion of the reproductive topic vis-à-vis micro-level (private and subjective decisions of individuals, families, etc.) and macro-level (public policy, reproductive governance) factors (5 pts.) as well as the construction of an argument about how social context matters for present debates surrounding the reproductive topic/problem of choice (5 pts.).

**Competency 2: Analyze claims about social phenomena.**

This competency will also be measured through the final research paper. 5 points of the 25 points allocated to the research paper final grade will be dedicated to this competency. We will spend class time practicing scholarly search techniques and discussing social scientific research approaches and claims-making in preparation for final projects. The student will receive all points if she tackles the claims within the sources she uses, rather than simply taking them as a given, and if she assesses the merits of the claims in the use of her paper's argument.
APPENDIX SECTION II:
ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES (as they will be distributed to students)

Paper Assignment I: Birth Story

Overview
For the first assignment in this course, you are expected to interview at least one parent or caregiver who knows the details of your birth and gestation. Ideally, you would interview two individuals (e.g., both parents, a parent and a grandparent, etc.). Prepare your respondent(s) in advance by telling him or her to start thinking about the facts of their reproductive experience.

You already know your birth date, of course, and probably the city/state in which you were born. And you may have heard stories about your birth before. But try to find out more details about your gestation and birth, such as: What was the weather like when you were born? What was the name of the hospital or birth center where you born? Or were you born at home? Was the pregnancy easy or hard? Was your birth easy or hard? Who was present at your birth? Did you come early, late, or right on time? How much did you weigh? Where were your siblings during your birth, if you had any? Were you breast-fed or bottle-fed? Were there any medical interventions during your birth (epidural, cesarean section, other)? Did your respondent take a birthing class in preparation for birth? What particular memories does your interviewee have of your birth? If you interviewed two people, did their accounts differ at all? Did each person emphasize different aspects of the birth story? What do you make of this?

You should spend the first part of the paper telling your birth story, in first-person narrative form. Then, you should reflect on the story and provide analysis. Were there any surprises to you in the interview(s)? Does your story affect how you think about yourself or your family? Do any details of your story reflect broader practices, norms, or values related to reproduction in society? Make sure to elaborate your birth story from a sociological perspective, highlighting not just the biological or physiological aspects of your birth but the noticeably social dimensions of your birth story narrative.

If it not feasible for you to interview a person who is familiar with your birth (e.g., parent, grandparent, caregiver), you may tell the history of a family member’s or friend’s birth story or struggles with infertility.

Paper Preparation and Deadline
The paper should be 3-5 pages, double-spaced, with 11 or 12 point type. The assignment will be due during Week 5. Late papers will be penalized.

I recognize that you may consult other sources when thinking about and drafting your paper. Please include a separate page at the end of your paper listing which materials you consulted (class materials or outside readings, websites, reviews, etc.)
as well as everyone with whom you discussed your topic/analysis or with whom you shared a draft (including, for example, a librarian, a roommate, a Facebook group, parent, etc.). Please also provide details about your interviewees (names not required).

Grading will generally adhere to the following criteria:
C range (average paper): Paper needs improvement. It does not offer clear synthesis of material or original analytic thought. It lacks a clear thesis statement and focus; the paper is carelessly written.

B range (good paper): Paper solidly addresses the topic. There is a clear thesis statement, with lucid demonstration of knowledge of class discussions and material.

A range (excellent paper): Paper reflects considerable and exceptional intellectual engagement with the topic. The assignment was prepared and written with insight, and it makes and supports a sophisticated argument, using course material. Thoughts are elegantly expressed and the paper is free of grammatical errors.

**Paper Assignment II: Popular Culture Review Paper**

**Overview**
For the next assignment in this course, you should choose a movie, television series/episode, or book that depicts some aspect of reproduction in a detailed way. That is, reproduction should not just be a passing mention but rather constitute a major part of the piece’s narrative. It will be helpful to choose a specific reproductive topic that interests you, such as birth, contraception, reproductive technology, family size, menstruation, abortion, infertility, etc. There are many depictions of reproduction in popular culture. Just some examples include TV shows such as “16 and Pregnant,” “Call the Midwife,” or “A Baby Story,” and movies such “What to Expect When You’re Expecting,” “Gattaca,” “Baby Mama,” “Vera Drake,” “Knocked Up,” and “Four Months, Three Weeks and Two Days.” Some titles are available through the FSU Libraries. Many titles may also be found online, via Netflix, or other streaming services. Alternatively, you may choose a book (fiction or non-fiction) that depicts some aspect of reproduction, such as “The Handmaid’s Tale,” “Baby Love,” “Cider House Rules,” “The Purity Myth,” and innumerable others. As you’re trying to choose a popular culture source, you may find it helpful to search keywords (e.g., “contraception”) on the FSU Libraries databases or sites such as IMDB or Barnes & Noble.

You should spend no more than one or two paragraphs summarizing the movie, show, or book. Assume that I have never seen or read the piece you are describing, and briefly provide a synopsis. You may also provide a very brief assessment of the artistic or aesthetic merits of the piece, if you deem it relevant.

The bulk of your paper should be focused on providing an analysis of how reproduction is depicted in the piece. Is the depiction accomplished with humor or
other tactics? Is it accurate? Does the depiction present misleading information? Does it stoke myths about reproduction or expose them? What would an “expert” on reproduction say about this depiction? Importantly, how do our class readings or discussions intersect with your analytic reading of this particular movie, show, or book? In your analysis, you must use at least two course readings, in a thoughtful and/or detailed way. Finally, and perhaps most crucially, what might this topic/depiction tell us about broader norms or values related to reproduction in society?

**Paper Preparation and Deadline**

The paper should be 3-5 pages, double-spaced, with 11 or 12 point type. The assignment is due during Week 9. Late papers will be penalized.

I recognize that you may consult other people or sources when thinking about and drafting your paper. Please include a separate page at the end of your paper listing which materials you consulted (class materials or outside readings, websites, reviews, etc.) as well as everyone with whom you discussed your topic/analysis or with whom you shared a draft (including, for example, a librarian, a roommate, a Facebook group, parent, etc.). I’m happy to discuss potential topics and ideas at any point.

**Grading will generally adhere to the following criteria:**

C range (average paper): Paper needs improvement. It does not offer clear synthesis of material or original analytic thought. It lacks a clear thesis statement and focus; the paper is carelessly written.

B range (good paper): Paper solidly addresses the topic. There is a clear thesis statement, with lucid demonstration of knowledge of class discussions and material.

A range (excellent paper): Paper reflects considerable and exceptional intellectual engagement with the topic. The assignment was prepared and written with insight, and it makes and supports a sophisticated argument, using course material. Thoughts are elegantly expressed and the paper is free of grammatical errors.

**Paper Assignment III: Research Project**

**Overview**

Throughout this course, we are examining human reproduction as not simply a biological phenomenon but as a process and subject that is socially significant in various ways, from individuals to public policy. For your research project assignment, choose a reproductive topic of your choice and develop an argument about its social, political, and/or or cultural significance. In doing so, you should highlight both micro-level social factors (relevant to individuals, families, etc.) and macro-level social factors (public policy, government regulation, etc.). You should also make sure to highlight social debates relevant to or emergent from your reproductive topic and insert your own ideas into these ongoing debates. Texts that
we have covered in class should be useful to you, but you will also be expected to find external, relevant sources. This is not a book report or general review of a topic. Rather, it is a paper that draws on previous scholarship to develop an original argument about a topical issue related to the social dimensions of reproduction. You want to make an argument that is complex and sustained throughout the paper. Examples of topics might include sperm and egg donation, surrogacy, or any other number of reproductive technologies, prenatal care, breastfeeding, childbirth practices, birth control practices, reproductive justice, and many, many more. In fact, you need not be confined to this list by any means, but make sure to pick a narrow topic about reproduction in society. That is, do not choose a broad topic like “gender and reproduction,” but rather pick a more defined topic that carries with it some social debate concerning the politics of reproduction, such as “commercial surrogacy” or “emergency contraception.”

Feel free to talk to me or meet with me as you’re contemplating your topic choice.

Research Project Proposal
This short document includes your topic idea, plans for completing the research project, plans for locating outside sources, and your initial argument. You should explain how your research project matters for studying human reproduction in society. This paper reflects thinking-in-progress; nevertheless, it should demonstrate what you have learned, read, and discussed in the class thus far and how this knowledge is shaping your research project.

The purpose of the proposal is to help you formulate a topic so that you may begin your research with a definite but flexible goal in mind. You should view this as an exploration of your topic, your ideas on the topic, your reasons for choosing the topic, and what you will need in order to complete your essay. Try to create a research question that will guide your initial thinking about the topic of your choice. Here are some guiding questions to consider as you write your proposal:

• Why does this topic interest you?
• What questions do you want to address in your paper?
• How do those questions or ideas intersect with what we have been discussing in class?
• How focused is your topic? Have you highlighted a specific theme, author, or debate?
• Do you have any inclinations about how you will structure your paper?
• Do you have any inclinations about which readings you may use?
• Do you have a preliminary position or argument in relation to your topic and research question? If not, indicate how you might plan to think through the topic. If so, indicate your position or argument.

This paper should be about 2 pages, double-spaced. On the designated due date, you will bring the proposal to class, and we will workshop it in small groups. After you receive feedback from your classmate(s) and me, you will have an opportunity to
revise your proposal before turning it in for grading. The first due date is March 20 (Week 11) in class (we will workshop the research proposals, so make sure and bring a hard copy); the second is during Week 12.

Research Project Final Paper
Sources: This paper should synthesize and apply interdisciplinary course readings, films, and discussions where relevant (given your choice of topic). Additionally, you should use at least 10 other academic sources from various disciplines. You will need to be scrupulous about citing your sources. We will discuss research and writing techniques in class.

Style: Research papers are often stylistically boring, but they do not need to be! Be creative while conveying your argument. Grading will focus not only on the content of the research paper but also will consider the elegance with which your argument is expressed.

Length: The final paper should be 8-10 pages long, double-spaced, not counting references.

Deadline: TBA. Please turn in your final paper on BB.

Grading will generally adhere to the following criteria:
C range (average paper): Paper needs improvement. It does not offer clear synthesis of material or original analytic thought. It lacks a clear thesis statement and focus; the paper is carelessly written.

B range (good paper): Paper solidly addresses the topic. There is a clear thesis statement, with lucid demonstration of knowledge of class discussions and material.

A range (excellent paper): Paper reflects considerable and exceptional intellectual engagement with the topic. The assignment was prepared and written with insight, and it makes and supports a sophisticated argument. Thoughts are elegantly expressed and the paper is free of grammatical errors.