

The University of Western Ontario
London Canada

Department of Gender, Sexuality & Women's Studies

GSWS 2440F: Reproductive Justice

Wednesdays, 1:30-4:30 pm

Class location will be posted on OWL Brightspace

DRAFT – TOPICS AND EVALUATION MAY CHANGE

Instructors	Office Hours and Location
Jessica Polzer, PhD, Associate Professor, GSWS jpolzer@uwo.ca	Office hours and location will be posted on OWL Brightspace
Teaching Assistants	
TBA	Office hours and location will be posted on OWL Brightspace

Course Perspective & Organization

This course examines reproductive justice (RJ) using an intersectional and interdisciplinary approach. Through this approach, we will critically examine the politics of human reproduction with an emphasis on the ways in which state/institutional policies and practices regulate and shape fertility, bodily autonomy, access to reproductive health care, and individuals' reproductive decisions and capacities, and in ways that reproduce eugenic and socially stratified ideas about class, race, gender, and ability. Focusing on various topics and using a variety of methods and course materials (readings, films, class and on-line discussion), we will also explore how individuals and communities respond to these regulatory policies through enactments of resistance, resilience, and care.

We begin the course by reviewing the foundations, practices, and frameworks of RJ and exploring the ways in which feminist efforts aimed at improving women's lives through reproductive "choice" and autonomy intersect with eugenic programs and ideologies. Building on this, we examine contemporary topics and struggles for reproductive justice through an intersectional, anti-racist, and decolonial lens, noting the particular historical and sociopolitical contexts and perspectives that inform these efforts to achieve gender and sexual equity, and tracing how these efforts connect with other forms of activism. Topics include eugenics, abortion, contraception, access to reproductive and sexual health care, forced and voluntary sterilization, reproductive technologies, adoption, family and kinship, environmental justice and racism, obstetric violence, birthing justice, and menstrual justice.

Students will be encouraged to thoughtfully reflect on the complexity of these topics from multiple vantage points (including their own!) and will have the opportunity to explore a topic of their choice for their final projects.

Course Objectives

Through engagement with course materials and in-class discussions, students will:

- Gain an understanding of the origins of reproductive justice (RJ) and of its sociopolitical commitments and dimensions as theory and practice;
- Engage with historical and contemporary examples of struggles for RJ and their central importance in recognition of bodily autonomy and human rights;
- Consider the complexity of reproductive technologies, including their liberatory and oppressive dimensions;
- Gain an understanding of the intersectional and interdisciplinary features of RJ as an analytic lens and form of activism;
- Understand the links between RJ and other social justice movements and struggles (e.g., disability justice, environmental justice, menstrual justice, decolonizing, anti-Black racism);
- Understand how RJ can be applied to critique social structures and policies and imagine anti-ableist, anti-colonial, anti-racist approaches to sexual freedom and inclusive reproductive futures.

Through class discussion and completion of written assignments and papers students will also gain a number of practical skills. Specifically, students will:

- (i) develop their ability to read and analyze scholarly and popular texts closely and rigorously;
- (ii) gain experience critically analyzing and reviewing required course materials related to reproductive justice;
- (iii) participate in informed discussions and critical dialogues about issues relevant to reproductive justice in an interdisciplinary group setting;
- (iv) develop greater reflexivity (self-awareness) of their own understandings of and commitments to reproductive justice and its determinants; and
- (v) conduct independent research and prepare a presentation designed to engage a public audience on a topic of their choice.

Required Texts and Course Packages

There is no required text book for this course. All readings will be put on Brightspace.

Prerequisites

Prerequisite(s):GSWS 1020E, or 1.0 course from GSWS 1021F/G, GSWS 1022F/G, GSWS 1023F/G, GSWS 1024F/G, GSWS 1030F/G, or permission from the department.

Students are responsible for ensuring that they have successfully completed all prerequisites. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as the basis for appeal. Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Philosophy: Engaged Pedagogy

“Engaged pedagogy begins with the assumption that we learn best when there is an interactive relationship between student and teacher. As leaders and facilitators, teachers must discover what the students know and what they need to know. This discovery happens only if teachers are willing to engage students beyond a surface level. [...] When we see the classroom as a place where teacher and students can share their ‘inner light’ then we have a way to glimpse who we are and how we might learn together” (hooks, 2010, pp. 19-20)

In keeping with this teaching philosophy, the Instructor will strive to cultivate an inclusive learning environment so that every student has an opportunity to bring something to the class discussion.

The success of this class is dependent on the Instructor *and* the students coming to class prepared to discuss assigned readings. The Instructor will come to each class prepared to give a lecture and an overview of the key themes and background that are relevant to the week’s topic and to facilitate group discussions. Students are expected to have completed the readings prior to class each week, to bring notes they have made on the readings to class, and to contribute to class discussion on a regular basis. Making notes on readings will assist the student in their written assignments and in preparing for exams.

Learning is a *co-responsibility* that requires the active attention and participation of all those involved – teachers, teaching assistants and students.

- It is the responsibility of the professor to come to class prepared to lecture on course material, to facilitate student discussion and their engagement with course material, and to address and respond to students’ questions about course material in class and during specified office hours.
- It is the responsibility of the teaching assistants to attend class, assist the professor in the preparation and grading of exams and papers, and to address students’ questions about course material during the year and before exams.
- It is the responsibility of students to prepare for class by completing required course readings before class, to attend class regularly and listen to the lectures, take notes in class, to engage with course readings in class and/or in online discussions, and to ask questions as necessary about course material in class and on Brightspace.

Creating and maintaining a respectful learning environment

Etiquette in the Classroom

In order to maintain a respectful and productive learning environment, it is essential that students arrive at class ready to listen and attend to lectures and films. Disrespectful and disruptive behaviour during class will not be tolerated and will affect one’s participation grade. Disrespectful and disruptive behaviour includes the following: texting or talking on mobile phones, chatting on or browsing Facebook or other social media sites, persistent talking during lectures or films, wearing headphones, emailing, and/or surfing the Internet for non-class purposes. Students observed to be engaging in this behaviour during class will be asked to stop. If disruptive behaviour persists, the professor will use her discretion and judgment in deciding how best to deal with the situation. On the first day of class, all students in the class will be invited to share their views on this policy. Student viewpoints will be considered in deciding upon appropriate consequences for disruptive behaviour in the classroom.

Etiquette for Online Communication with Course Instructors and TAs

Students are welcome to direct questions concerning the course to the course instructor or TA by email. **Students must email the TA/Instructor from the UWO email accounts and put GSWS 2244 in the subject line.** Emails should address the TA/instructor appropriately – (e.g., “Hi Professor Polzer” or “Hi Florence” not “Heh prof”). We will do our best to respond as promptly as possible. If a student does not receive a response within 48 hours, a second email is acceptable as a polite reminder of the student’s question or concern. Please try to make sure that your question is not already addressed in the syllabus.

Gender-Based and Sexual Violence

Western University [is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence](#) (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/studentsupport/survivorsupport/get-help.html>

To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca

Policy on Use of AI

In this course, the use of AI (ChatGPT) is prohibited to generate written assignments. Spellcheckers and grammar checkers may be used. If AI use is suspected, the instructor may ask for research notes, rough drafts, essay outlines, and other materials used to prepare assignments. Students are expected to retain these materials until after final grades have been entered. If proof cannot be provided of these materials, this will result in deduction of marks from assignments.

Support Services

Registrar’s Office: <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Services provided by the USC: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Health -- <https://www.uwo.ca/health/>

Accessible Education - http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html - AE works with students with disabilities to set up appropriate academic accommodations that are then communicated to the course instructor

Ombudsperson Office -- <http://www.uwo.ca/ombuds/> - This office provides safe, comfortable environment where can discuss a university-related concern confidentially. The concern can relate to any part of university life.

University Policies

Health Related Policies

It is our collective responsibility to manage public health risks in the classroom. Please consider masking if you are attending class while feeling unwell and symptomatic.

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence or other public health crisis that requires online course delivery, the course will proceed either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable), asynchronously (e.g., posted on Brightspace for students to view at their convenience), or using a combination of the two. The grading scheme will not change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

Use of Electronic Devices

During Exams: Unless you have medical accommodations that require you to do so, or explicit permission from the instructor of the course, you may not use any electronic devices during ANY tests, quizzes, midterms, examinations, or other in-class evaluations.

During Lectures and Tutorials: Although you are welcome to use a computer during lecture and tutorial periods, you are expected to use the computer for scholastic purposes only. **Engaging in activities on your computer and mobile phones in ways that distract you (and, potentially, your peers) from learning and being present during class is prohibited.** From time to time, your professor may ask the class to turn off all computers to facilitate learning or discussion of the material presented in a particular class. You may not make audio or video recordings of lectures – nor may you edit, re-use, distribute, or re-broadcast any of the material posted to the course website – without the permission of the course instructor. The professor will clarify what is acceptable use of electronic devices and will allow time for a discussion.

Academic Consideration and Accommodation Supports and Policies

Students must familiarize themselves with the *University Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs* posted on the Academic Calendar:
<https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academicpolicies/appeals/academicconsiderationSep24.pdf>

This policy does not apply to requests for academic consideration submitted for **attempted or completed work**, whether online or in person. The policy also does not apply to students experiencing longer-term impacts on their academic responsibilities. These students should consult: [Accessible Education](#).

For procedures on how to submit Academic Consideration requests, please see the information posted on the Office of the Registrar's webpage:

<https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academicconsiderations/>

All requests for Academic Consideration must be made within 48 hours after the assessment date or submission deadline.

All academic consideration requests must include supporting documentation; however, recognizing that formal documentation may not be available in some extenuating circumstances, the policy allows

students to make one Academic Consideration request **without supporting documentation** in this course.

When a student misses the **Final Exam** [if applicable] and their Academic Consideration has been granted, they will be allowed to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam). See the Academic Calendar ([Special Examinations](#)), especially for those who miss multiple final exams within one examination period.

Policy on Accommodation for Religious Holidays

Students should review the [policy for Accommodation for Religious Holidays](#) . Where a student will be unable to write examinations and term tests due to a conflicting religious holiday, they should inform their instructors as soon as possible but **not later than two weeks** prior to writing the examination/term test. In the case of conflict with a midterm test, students should inform their instructor as soon as possible but not later than one week prior to the midterm.

Religious Accommodation requests for final exams should be submitted via the Student Absence Portal.

Attendance

Attendance will be recorded. Students can miss up to one class per term without penalty. Persistent absenteeism (3 weeks or more/term) may be rendered grounds for failure in the course in accordance with the policies of the Department of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies. Persistent absenteeism may result in being contacted by the instructor who may request a meeting. Continued absence after this point will be reported to the Undergraduate Chair.

Use of Plagiarism Checking Software: Turnitin

All required papers will be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

Student Code of Conduct and Scholastic Offences

The Code of Student Conduct defines the standard of conduct expected of students registered at The University of Western Ontario, provides examples of behaviour that constitutes a breach of this conduct, provides examples of sanctions that may be imposed, and sets out the disciplinary procedures that the University follows. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Health and Wellness

As part of a successful undergraduate experience at Western, we encourage you to make your health and wellness a priority. To support physical activity, all students receive membership in Western's Campus Recreation Centre as part of their registration fees. Further information regarding health and wellness-related services available to students may be found at <http://www.health.uwo.ca/>.

If you are in emotional or mental distress, refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. If you don't want to reach out to formal services, you may want to have a wellness safety plan in place with a few trusted individuals.

Getting involved in community events can be beneficial to your health. There are numerous cultural events offered at Western throughout the year. Please check out the Faculty of Music web page (<http://www.music.uwo.ca/>) and the McIntosh Gallery (<http://mcintoshgallery.ca/>). As well, the local London community offers many cultural events that may be of interest.

Grade Descriptions

The university-wide descriptor of the meaning of letter grades, as approved by Senate, is as follows:

A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work that is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable.
F	below 50	Fail

A student requesting an appeal to a specific course with respect to a grade for an assignment or examination must first contact their instructor to discuss. A guide for how to submit a grade appeal can be found here: <https://uwo.ca/fhs//policies/appeals.html>

Evaluation

Engagement (15%)

Engagement includes consistent attendance and thoughtful contributions during class and online. Guidance for what constitutes thoughtful contribution will be provided in class. The following will be considered in evaluating engagement:

- Attendance: Up to 5 points for consistent attendance. Attendance will be recorded each week. If a student misses classes persistently, the instructor may request an in-person meeting.
 - o 0-1 classes missed = 5/5
 - o 2 classes missed = 4/5
 - o 3 classes missed = 3/5
 - o 4 classes missed = 2/5
 - o 5 classes missed = 1/5
 - o 6+ classes missed = 0/5

- Contributions: Up to 10 points will be awarded for the quality of a student's contributions to the class. This will be graded primarily on the basis of participation in in-class and on-line discussions. Other opportunities for participation may also be provided (e.g., responses to prompts or questions posed during lecture; brief summaries of seminars outside of class related to course themes).

Personal Reflection Paper: (15% total)

Students will be asked to critically reflect on what reproductive justice means to them. This paper is due any time before October 2 and must be submitted on OWL and in class in hard copy. Instructions will be provided on OWL. No extensions.

Critical Reflection Papers: (2 X 15% = 30%)

Students will write two critical reflection papers on required readings/films. The first review is due in class on week 2 and will be based on the film, *The Vessel*, which is available through Kanopy. The second critical review paper is due in class anytime by week 12. Instructions and guiding questions will be provided on OWL.

Final Project: 40%

Final projects will be due the last day of class. Students will compile materials for a presentation/intervention that they could use for the purpose of engaging the public about a topic of their choice that is informed by feminist principles and relates to reproductive justice. Students will submit a portfolio that includes the following the components: (i) a revised personal reflection statement (why is this topic important to you?); (ii) a statement of the social significance of the chosen topic (why is this an important social issue?); (iii) a written summary of 5 sources that have informed your thinking about this topic; (iv) an outline of the presentation, which must include a visual element that you will use to deliver the presentation/stage your intervention (e.g., powerpoint, infographic, creative artwork); and (v) a statement of how you hope your presentation/intervention will engage the public about your selected issue. Students will present a component of their projects in the last class in an interactive session with their peers. Instructions will be provided on OWL.

Class Schedule

Week #	Date	Topic
1	Sept 9	Introduction
2	Sept 16	Foundations and Frameworks <i>Critical Reflection (CR) #1 due</i>
3	Sept 23	Abortion: Past and present
4	Sept 30	Eugenics
5	Oct 7	Contraception <i>Personal Reflection due on/before</i>
fall reading week (oct 10-18)		
6	Oct 21	Reproductive Chronicity and Care
7	Oct 28	Reproductive Technologies and Futurisms
8	Nov 4	Queering RJ: Making Family and Stratified Reproduction
9	Nov 11	Decolonization and Reproductive Justice
10	Nov 18	Adoption as/and Reproductive Justice
11	Nov 25	Obstetric Violence and Birthing Justice
12	Dec 2	Menstrual Justice and Surveillance <i>CR #2 due on/before</i>
13	Dec 9	Presentations and Course Evaluations <i>Final Project due</i>
Study Day: Dec 10 Exam Period: Dec 11-22		

Required Readings

All required readings are posted on OWL Brightspace.

Week 1 – September 9

Introduction

Abbott, D. et al. (2023). The US in uterus: A collaborative autoethnography of psychologists advocating for reproductive justice. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 47(4), S74-S89.

Film: The Vessel (86 mins, Kanopy)

Week 2 – September 16

Critical Reflection Paper #1 due

Foundations and Frameworks

Ross, L. (2017). Reproductive justice as intersectional feminist activism. *Souls*, 19 (3), 286–314.

Jones et al. (2025). Foreword: Reproductive freedom dreaming in Texas: A liveable Black futures collective statement. In Jones et al.'s (Eds.) *We are Pregnant with Freedom: Black Feminist Storytelling for Reproductive Justice*, University of California Press, vii-xv.

Mofokeng, T. (2025). Reclaiming sexual and reproductive rights through a decolonial lens. *Health and Human Rights*, 97(1), 91-94.

In-Class Film: Plan B: Abortion in America: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyiXGW1Mwtw> (25 mins)

Recommended Resources

Mutcherson, K. (2020). Introduction. *Feminist Judgments: Reproductive Justice Rewritten*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-12.

Roberts, D. (2015). Reproductive justice, not just rights. *Dissent Magazine*, Fall. <https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/reproductive-justice-not-just-rights/>

Walker, Alice (2002) "The Right to Life: What Can the White Man Say to the Black Woman?," Seattle Journal for Social Justice: Vol. 1: Iss. 1, Article 1. Available at: <https://digitalcommons.law.seattleu.edu/sjsj/vol1/iss1/1>

Salamanca, L. (2017). Reproductive justice in Canada: Exploring Immigrant women's experiences. In *Abortion : History, Politics and Reproductive Justice after Morgentaler*, edited by Shannon Stetter, et al., UBC Press, pp. 292-312.

Tragos, T. (Director). (2023). Plan C [Video file]. Level 33 Entertainment. Retrieved August 31, 2025, from Kanopy.

Week 3 – September 23

Abortion: Past and present

Johnstone, R. (2017). Between a Woman and Her Doctor? The Medicalization of Abortion Politics in Canada. In *Abortion: History, Politics and Reproductive Justice after Morgentaler*, edited by Shannon Stetter, et al., UBC Press, pp. 217-238

Gordon and Saurette (2017). The Future of Pro-Choice Discourse in Canada. In *Abortion: History, Politics and Reproductive Justice after Morgentaler*, edited by Shannon Stetter, et al., UBC Press, pp. 265-291

Arguedas-Ramirez and Wenner (2023). Reproductive justice beyond borders: Global feminist solidarity in the post-Roe era. *The Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics*, 51, 606-611.

Fim: Jane (57 mins, Kanopy)

Recommended Resources:

Pasha, A. & Sonik, R. (2024). Their body, our choice: Organized medicine's responsibility to de-medicalize abortion. *Health and Human Rights Journal*, 26(1), 137-141.

Stetter et al. (2017). Introduction. In *Abortion: History, Politics and Reproductive Justice after Morgentaler*, edited by Shannon Stetter, et al., UBC Press, pp. 3-16

Film: The Last Abortion Clinic - <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/documentary/clinic/> (part 3, 21:00-44:00)

Monchalin, R. et al. (2023). I would love for there not to be so many hoops...": Recommendations to improve abortion service access and experiences made by Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQIA+ people in Canada. *Sexual and Reproductive Health Matters*, 31(1), 1-13.

Bashevkin, Sylvia. "Explaining Feminist Movement Impact: Provincial Abortion Policies in the Wake of Decriminalization, 1988–2018." *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, vol. 56, no. 3, 2023, pp. 504–24, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0008423923000227>.

Cohen, Cathren, Wilson, Bianca D.M., and Kerith J. Conron. *Implications of Dobbs on Reproductive Health Care Access for LGBTQ People Who Can Get Pregnant [2022]*. Los Angeles: The Williams Institute, 2022.

Tragos, T. (Director). (2023). Plan C [Video file]. Level 33 Entertainment. Retrieved August 31, 2025, from Kanopy.

Week 4 – September 30

Eugenics

Klausen, S. and Bashford, A. (2012). Fertility Control: Eugenics, neo-Malthusianism, and feminism. In Bashford, A. and Levine, P. (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics*, Oxford University Press, pp. 98-115.

Lowe, P., & Rowlands, S. (2022). Long-acting reversible contraception: Targeting those judged to be unfit for parenthood in the United States and the United Kingdom. *Global Public Health*, 17(12), 3773–3784. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17441692.2022.2048408>

Winters, D. and McLaughlin, A. (2020). Soft sterilization: Long-acting reversible contraceptives in the carceral state. *Journal of Women and Social Work*, 35(2), 218-230.

Film: *Against Their Will* (24 mins), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XpW5hRWyxDs>

Film: *Surviving Eugenics – on vimeo*. <https://vimeo.com/231116550>

Recommended Resources:

Roberts, D. (1997, 2017). *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty*, Vintage Books. Chapter 6: The Darker Side of Birth Control, pp. 56-103.

Lopez, I. (2008). The Globalization of Sterilization. In *Matters of Choice: Puerto Rican Women's Struggle for Reproductive Freedom*, Ithaca, NY: Rutgers University Press, pp. 3-42. <https://doi-org.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/10.36019/9780813546247-toc>

Film: *The State of Eugenics: 55 mins (Kanopy)*

Film: *Belly of the Beast, 81 mins (Kanopy)*

Week 5 – October 7

Personal Reflection Paper due

Contraception

Littlejohn, K. (2021). *Just Get on the Pill: The Uneven Burden of Reproductive Politics*. University of California Press. Chapter 4 and Conclusion. pp. 98-134.

Lalonde, D. (2018). Regret, shame, and denials of women's voluntary sterilization. *Bioethics*, 32(5), 281–288.

Fletcher et al. (2023). Centering disability visibility in reproductive health care: Dismantling barriers to achieving health equity. *Women's Health*, 19, 1-11.

Guest Speaker: Jeanette Pickett-Pierce, PhD, GSWS

Recommended Resources

Lopez, I. (1998) An ethnography of the medicalization of Puerto Rican Women's Reproduction. In Lock M. & Kaufert, PA. (Eds.) *Pragmatic Women and Body Politics*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, pp 240-259

Films: *The Pill*, National Film Board of Canada; *The Business of Birth Control (90 minutes, Kanopy*

October 10-18 – fall reading week

Week 6 – October 21

Reproductive Chronicity and Care

Filks, E. (2024). Reproductive Chronicity. Chapter 5 in *State Intimacies Sterilization, Care and Reproductive Chronicity in Rural North India*, Berghahn Books. pp. 142-163.

Lopez, I. (2008). *Matters of Choice: Puerto Rican Women's Struggle for Reproductive Freedom*, Ithaca, NY: Rutgers University Press. *Introduction*, pp. ix-xxv and Chapter 3, *The Velez Family*, pp. 45-60.

Gallegos, O. (2020). Survivor of medical abuse at ICE center speaks out as Latinas grapple with a history of forced sterilization. <https://projectpulso.org/2020/11/03/survivor-of-medical-abuse-at-ice-center-speaks-out-as-latinas-grapple-with-a-history-of-forced-sterilization/>

Neczypor, J. (2022). A Death in the Village. In *Poetry for Sexual and Reproductive Justice*. <https://www.srhm.org/poetry-for-sexual-and-reproductive-justice/>

Film: Hamilton, Z. Munger, A. (Director). (2019). *Small Family, Happy Family* [Video file]. Documentary Educational Resources. Retrieved October 9, 2025, from Kanopy. 39 mins

Recommended Resources

Fiks, E. (2024). *State Intimacies Sterilization, Care and Reproductive Chronicity in Rural North India*, Berghahn Books.

Lopez, Iris (2008). *Matters of Choice: Puerto Rican Women's Struggle for Reproductive Freedom*, Ithaca, NY: Rutgers University Press.

Week 7 – October 28

Reproductive Technologies and Futurisms

Tongue, L. (2022). Reproductive justice: The final (feminist) frontier. *Law, Technology, and Humans*, 4(2), 95-108.

Sawicki, J. (1991). Disciplining mothers: Feminism and the new reproductive technologies. Chapter 4 in *Disciplining Foucault: Feminism, Power, and the Body*. New York: Routledge. pp 67-94.

Roberts, D. (1997, 2017). Race and the new reproduction. Chapter 6 in *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty*. Vintage Books. pp. 246-272

Podcast: The Retrievals, Season 1, Episode 1, 57 minutes. **Structure assignment or test based on this**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xCLtr2h9v8>

Recommended Resources:

Butler, Octavia. *Bloodchild*. First published 1984. London: Headline, 2014.

Butler, Octavia. *Lilith's Brood*. First published 1987–1989. New York: Grand Central Publishing, 2000.

Lam, Laura. *Goldilocks*. London: Wildfire, 2020.

Klimenko, M. (2021). *Beyond "The Last Doubler": Reproductive Futurism and the Politics of Care in Larissa Lai's The Tiger Flu*. *Studies in Canadian Literature*, 45 (2), 161–180.

Loretta Ross on Reproductive Futurism: https://uknowledge.uky.edu/st_lectures/2022/lectures/1/

Video: IVF Doctors and Patients Who conceived using IVF share their regrets.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hmnimf7sf8w> , 53 minutes

Film: Gattaca

Week 8 – November 4

Queering RJ: Making Family and Stratified Reproduction

Chen, J. (2025). Bargaining with reproductive 'capital': Multilayered stratified reproduction in the case of Taiwanese gay men seeking transnational surrogacy. *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 1-13.

Mamo L, Alston-Stepnitz E. Queer Intimacies and Structural Inequalities: New Directions in Stratified Reproduction. *J Fam Issues*. 2015 Mar 13;36(4):519–40. 4.

Tam, (2021). Queering reproductive access: Reproductive justice in assisted reproductive technologies. *Reproductive Health*, 18,1-6.

Recommended Resources:

Ross LE, Tarasoff LA, Anderson S, Epstein R, Marvel S, Steele LS, et al. Sexual and Gender Minority Peoples' Recommendations for Assisted Human Reproduction Services. *Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology Canada*. 2014;36(2):146–53.

Mayers L. (2024). From Choice to Justice: Disrupting the Binary Political Logics of Assisted Reproduction. *Health Hum Rights*, 26(Dec), 13 - 24.

Allen, Andrea S., and Lemos, T. M. 2023. "On Donors and Daughters: The Language of Queer Kinship ", *American Ethnologist* website, 28 March 2023 [<https://americanethnologist.org/online-content/essays/on-donors-and-daughters-the-language-of-queer-kinship-andrea-stevenson-allen-and-tracy-m-lemos/>]

Pfeffer, C. (2012). Normative resistance and inventive pragmatism: Negotiating structure and agency in transgender families. *Gender & Society*, 26, 574-602.

Dunne G. Opting into Motherhood: Lesbians Blurring the Boundaries and Transforming the Meaning of Parenthood and Kinship. *Gender and Society*. 2000;14(1):11–35. 6.

Hao Zheng (2022) Shared Motherhood or Free Surrogacy?: Risks and Vulnerabilities in a Chinese Lesbian's Family-Making, *Journal of Homosexuality*, 69:11, 1881-1907.

Smietana, M. (2018). Making and breaking families – reading queer reproductions, stratified reproduction, and reproductive justice together. *Reproductive BioMedicine and Society Online*, 7, 112–130.

Patton-Imani, S. (2020). *Making Family: Origin Narratives and Stratified Reproduction*. Chapter 3 in *Queering Family Trees: Race, reproductive Justice, and lesbian motherhood*. NYU Press.

Week 9 – November 11

Decolonization and Reproductive Justice

Wiebe, S. (2016). Home is where the heart is: Lived Experience in Aamjiwnaang. Chapter 4 in *Everyday Exposure: Indigenous Mobilization and Environmental Justice in Canada's Chemical Valley*, UBC Press. pp. 97-114.

Wiebe, S. (2016). Seeking Reproductive Justice: Situated Bodies of Knowledge. Chapter 6 in *Everyday Exposure: Indigenous Mobilization and Environmental Justice in Canada's Chemical Valley*, UBC Press. pp. 141-156. 146

Theobald, B. (2019). Self-determination begins in the womb. Chapter 6 in *Reproduction on the Reservation: Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Colonialism in the Long Twentieth Century*, UNC Press, pp. 170-197.

Moran, P. and McCue, D. *Hands of a midwife*. CBC Radio, The Current, September 7, 2023.
<https://www.cbc.ca/radiointeractives/thecurrent/hands-of-a-midwife> (scroll down a bit to the play button) 26 mins

National Council of Indigenous Midwives. End Forced Birth Evacuations.
<https://indigenoumidwifery.ca/end-forced-birth-evacuations/>

Guest Speaker: Peyton Campbell, PhD (Candidate), GSWS

Recommended Resources:

Wiebe, S. (2016). *Everyday Exposure: Indigenous Mobilization and Environmental Justice in Canada's Chemical Valley*, UBC Press.

Wiebe, S. (2024). *Hor Mess: Mothering through a Code Red Climate Emergency*. Fernwood Publishing.

National Council of Indigenous Midwives. Indigenous Milk Medicine video:
<https://indigenoumidwifery.ca/indigenous-milk-medicine/>

National Aboriginal Council of Midwives (NACMO). Diverse pathways: Bringing Indigenous midwifery home. Please browse these websites on Indigenous midwifery: <https://indigenoumidwifery.ca/history-strategic-plan/>; <https://indigenoumidwifery.ca/indigenous-midwifery-in-canada/>

McCormick, S. (2025). Toward a Radical We: Decolonizing Sexual and Reproductive Health. Chapter 1 in *We Are Pregnant with Freedom: Black Feminist Storytelling for Reproductive Justice*. University of California Press, pp. 31-57

Mann, S. (2018). Indigenizing child apprehension. Are Ontario's First Nations child welfare agencies different than their colonial predecessors? Briarpatch, December 27. Available at:
<https://briarpatchmagazine.com/articles/view/indigenizing-child-apprehension>

ARC, Indigenous Voices: Decolonizing Reproductive Justice. 15:47-
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yulZFBSWhWc>

Week 10 – November 18

Adoption as/and Reproductive (In)Justice

Wexler, J. et al. (2023). Understanding adoption as a reproductive justice issue. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 47(4), S10-S27.

Varley, A. (2016). “You don’t just get over what has happened to you”: Story sharing, reconciliation, and Grandma’s journey in the child welfare system. *First Peoples Child and Family Review: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 11(2), 69-75.

Phillips, D. and Pon, G. (2018). Anti-Black Racism, Bio-Power, and Governmentality: Deconstructing the Suffering of Black Families Involved with Child Welfare. *Journal of Law and Social Policy*, 28 (1), 81-100. <https://digitalcommons.osgoode.yorku.ca/jlsp/vol28/iss1/5>

Film: CBC docs. I was taken from my home and raised as a “nice Jewish girl,” but I’m Indigenous: Becoming Nakuset. 12 mins. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9P4iYYL4FYU>

Recommended Resources:

Mosher, J. and Hewitt, J. (2018). Reimagining Child Welfare Systems in Canada: *Journal of Law and Social Policy*, 28, 1-9. <http://digitalcommons.osgoode.yorku.ca/jlsp/vol28/iss1/1>

Canada 'Sixties Scoop': Indigenous survivors map out their stories: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCxBRad2_3U

Vasquez, T. (2022). Reproductive justice must recognize adoption as violence. Prism magazine. <https://prismreports.org/2022/11/29/reproductive-justice-must-recognize-adoption-as-violence/>

Tasker, J. Judge rules in favour of Indigenous survivors of Sixties Scoop. CBC, February 15, 2017. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/60s-scoop-ruling-aboriginal-1.3981771>

Currie, A. (2024). Finding Opitem sawake: the People who Own Themselves. Arsenal Books.

Week 11 – November 25

Critical Reflection Paper #2 due (on/before)

Obstetric Violence and Birthing Justice

Owens Cooper, D. (2017). American gynecology and Black lives. Introduction in *Medical Bondage: Race, Gender, and the Origins of American Gynecology*, pp. 1-12.

Nash, J. (2019). Birthing Black mothers: Birth work and the making of Black maternal political subjects. *Women’s Studies Quarterly*, 47(3-4), 29-50.

McCormick, S. (2025). Chapter 6. Policing Black birth. In Jones et al.’s (Eds.) *We are Pregnant with Freedom: Black Feminist Storytelling for Reproductive Justice*, University of California Press, pp. 152-174.

Film: Birthing Justice (2023, 86 minutes), Kanopy (we will watch in class)

Recommended Resources:

Owens, D. (2017). The birth of American gynecology. Chapter 1 in *Medical Bondage: Race, Gender, and the Origins of American Gynecology*, pp. 15-41.

Podcast: The Retrievals, Season 2, Episode 1. 47 minutes

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_mhxCq5Nss&t=1287s

Birthing while Black and Queer. Podcast episode of Black Aspiration Project, 30 minutes.

<https://blackaspirationproject.podbean.com/e/shani-robertson/>

Deirdre Owen Cooper in conversation with Jennifer Nash. Feminist Bookwatch on Birthing Black Mothers: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X2_EHTJNSHY , 50:30 – 1:15:10.

Who Can We Trust: A Look At Obstetric Violence, McMaster University:

<https://healthsci.mcmaster.ca/who-can-we-trust-a-look-at-obstetric-violence/>

Black Birth - <https://www.facebook.com/mvaaff/videos/831249280902383/>

Dr. Hazel Keedle's lecture on Women's Experiences of Obstetric Violence. Maternity and Midwifery Forum. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=REidXCKJyVY>

Week 12 – December 2

Menstrual Justice and Surveillance

Johnson, M. (2019). Menstrual Justice. *UC Davis Law Review*, 53(1), 1-79.

Gilman, S. (2021). Periods for profit and the rise of menstrual surveillance. *Columbia Journal of Gender and Law*, 41(1), 100-113.

Guest Speakers: Dr. Natalia Stofel, Universidade Federal de São Carlos, Brazil and Erika Lara Vargas, PhD student, GSWS

Recommended Resources:

Plioplyte, L. (Director). (2023). Periodical [Video file]. Collective Eye Films. Retrieved August 31, 2025, from Kanopy.

Bildhauer, B. and Karin, M. (2025). Menstruation and Menopause as Reproductive Justice Issues: Feminist Reflections on Activism, Research, and Policy from the Global Movement's Scottish Hub. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 27 (1), Available at:

<https://vc.bridgew.edu/jiws/vol27/iss1/14>

Women and Gender Equality Canada (2023). Attitudes and Awareness of Menstrual Equity and Period Poverty Among Canadians. Report prepared by Environics Research. https://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/200/301/pwgsc-tpsgc/por-ef/women_gender_equality_Canada/2023/112-22-e/report.pdf

WHO statement on menstrual health and rights. <https://www.who.int/news/item/22-06-2022-who-statement-on-menstrual-health-and-rights>

Week 13 – December 9 – Course Conclusion

Final projects due

Students will present a visual component of their projects in an interactive session during class time. Guidance will be posted on OWL.