Reproducing Race:
Race, Reproduction, Parenting, and Families

Tuesdays, 10:30am-1:30pm
Location: HSB-9

Instructor: Prof. Carolyn McLeod
Office: Lawson Hall 3233 & Stevenson Hall 4133
Contact information: cmcleod2@uwo.ca
Office Hours: Tues. 1:30-2:30 (Lawson); Thurs. 12:30-1:30 (Stevenson)

Course Description: Race is widely understood to be a social construction. We can therefore ask how some social practices help to construct or ‘reproduce’ race, and how others deconstruct it. This course centres on historical and contemporary practices that concern race and the formation of families, and the having and rearing of children. It considers how these practices reproduce race, but also how they can deconstruct it and how well they align as a result with anti-racist politics. Among the specific topics we will cover are miscegenation laws, eugenics and race, the race selection of gametes acquired for one’s reproductive use, race in global commercial contract pregnancies, transracial adoption, and the instilling of racial identities in one’s children. The course is interdisciplinary, drawing from disciplines such as philosophy, bioethics, women’s studies, history, and critical race theory. We will also use contemporary media and film.

Course Objectives: by the end of the course, students will be able to,

- Explain how race relates to practices that concern the formation of families, and the having and raising of children
- Reflect on the value of these practices in terms of how well they align with anti-racist politics
- Discuss the social construction of race, understanding how it could be constructed differently
- Appreciate work on race and families that comes from different disciplines
In addition, through their assignments (see below under Course Evaluation), students will develop or hone the following skills:

- Critical analysis and writing (through the online forum, quizzes, and the essay)
- Thoughtful engagement with others on controversial topics (through the online forum and class discussion)
- Confident public speaking (through class discussion, which will occur in large and small groups)
- Synthesis and consolidation of significant amounts of material (through the quizzes and the essay)

**Course Materials:**
- Readings, films, etc. available through our course website

**Course Website:**
All course information, including assignments, will be posted on our OWL site at [https://owl.uwo.ca/portal](https://owl.uwo.ca/portal).

**Course Evaluation:**
1) **Participation** in an online forum and in class: 20%
   - Students will post summaries of our readings and questions or comments about them in an online forum on OWL, where they will be able to respond to one another
   - Classes will be discussion-based and the discussion will be prompted in part by what is happening in the online forum

2) **In-class quizzes:** 45%
   - Material for the course will be divided into four sections and students will write a quiz on each section
   - Only the *best three* quizzes will count, although students will be required to write all four
   - Each quiz that counts will be worth 15%

3) **One essay** (7-8 pages or 1750-2000 words): 30%

4) **Essay peer review:** 5%
   - Students will have an opportunity for their peers and for Prof. McLeod to review an outline of their paper before they submit the completed paper

There will be no final exam for the course. More information about these assignments will be available on our website under Resources and will also be provided in class.

**Course Schedule:** also available on our website under Resources.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNIT</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC(S)</th>
<th>REQUIRED READING/VIEWING/LISTENING</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Race and Racial Identity</td>
<td>Sept. 11</td>
<td>Introduction to the Course and to the Concept of Race</td>
<td><em>Case:</em> Rachel Dolezal; ‘Rachel Dolezal,’ <em>Wikipedia</em>; ‘Rachel Dolezal Exclusive Extended Interview,’ <em>MSNBC</em>, June 27, 2015 (to be shown in class)</td>
<td>Forum post</td>
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<td><em>Recommended:</em> Linda Geddes, ‘There is No DNA Test to Prove You’re Native American,’ <em>New Scientist</em> Feb. 5, 2014</td>
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<td>2. Interracial Unions and Mixed-Race Children</td>
<td>Oct. 2</td>
<td>Miscegenation law</td>
<td><em>Case:</em> <em>Loving v. Virginia</em> (history.com); <em>Loving</em> (film trailer; 2016)</td>
<td>Forum post</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Forum post</td>
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<td>Nov. 6</td>
<td>Assisted Reproduction</td>
<td><strong>Case:</strong> child of the ‘wrong’ race; ‘Why am I dark, daddy? The white couple who had mixed race children after IVF blunder,’ <em>The Daily Mail</em>, June</td>
<td><strong>Case:</strong></td>
<td>Forum post Essay Peer Review</td>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<td>Nov. 20</td>
<td>Child’s Best Interests</td>
<td><em>Indigenous child welfare in Canada</em>; <em>The Current</em>: ‘In Care and in Crisis’</td>
<td>Forume post Essay due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 27</td>
<td>Openness, Location, and a</td>
<td><em>The Adoption Ceremony By Jay Lomax</em></td>
<td>Forum post</td>
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Course Policies:

Academic Accommodation: Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth (either alone or in combination) 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department.

Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student’s Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The Student Medical Certificate (SMC) can be found at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

The full policy is available here:
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive medical documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for accommodation on medical grounds, or for other reasons (e.g. to explain an absence from class which may result in a grade penalty under an ‘Attendance’ policy in the course). All medical documentation must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student’s home Faculty.

Submitting Assignments: papers are due on the date stated on the course schedule and must be submitted to the Assignments section of our website, and ultimately to Turnitin.com (see below). You will need only to submit electronic copies of papers. Please submit them as pdfs.
If your paper is late and an academic counsellor has not recommended that you receive an extension, then you will be penalized 3% per day for up to 7 days after the due date, after which the paper will not be accepted.

Forum posts and quizzes cannot be made up unless an academic counsellor has recommended that you receive accommodation for a medical or personal emergency.

**Attendance Policy:** The very nature of this course requires that you attend class regularly in order to do well. You are therefore expected to attend all scheduled classes.

**Electronic devices:** you may NOT use a computer in class for any reason other than to take notes, write quizzes, or participate in group activities. And you may not use a cell phone in class at any time. Should you, for any reason, NEED to receive a phone call/text during class time, you should keep your phone on vibrate and step out of the classroom to take the call/respond to the text.

**OWL:** The use of Owl is necessary for the successful completion of this course. There, you will access course readings, instructions for completing and submitting assignments, grades, etc.

**Scholastic Offences, including Plagiarism:** The University Senate requires that the following statements, and Web site references, appear on course outlines:

‘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 Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy as above).

All required papers may 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).’

**Prerequisites:** the University Senate requires that the following statement appear on course outlines: ‘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.’

**Special Examinations, Incomplete Standing, and Aegrotat Standing:** all requests for Special Examinations, Incomplete Standing, or Aegrotat Standing must be made by the student, with supporting documentation, to the Dean of Arts and Humanities Academic Counselling Office. The Dean’s office reserves the right not to sign INC and SPC grades without the proper paperwork. Special examinations must be written at the University or an Affiliated College no later than 30 days after the end of the examination period involved.