

**Families in Flux:  
Family, Childhood, & Gender in Early Modern Europe & the Atlantic World**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

In the early modern world, “the family” was at the center of politics, economics, society, and culture. Although we often presume that in older eras the stereotypical father-mother-children triad flourished, “family” held a more complex and flexible definition in the early modern era. Instead, an early modern family was comprised of both related individuals and non-related household members, such as domestic servants, apprentices, and even slaves, who lived under the same roof and were subject to the authority of the same patriarch. Using “family” and “childhood” as analytic categories, we will examine primary and secondary sources that describe family formation, sex and reproduction, education and childrearing, family work, and families in revolution from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries and Europe and the Atlantic World. In addition to thinking about the family unit as a whole, in each of our units we will also explore the roles and experiences of individual family members, notably children and women.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- 1) Provide a definition of “family” history, explaining its nuances and subfields, including gender history and childhood history
- 2) Explain the structure and dynamics of early modern families in Europe and the Atlantic and how these changed over the course of the early modern period.
- 3) Confidently analyze and cite translated primary sources related to the history of the family, gender, and childhood.
- 4) Discuss and analyze secondary sources
- 5) Write clear, concise analytic reflections of primary and secondary source material.

**COURSE STRUCTURE:** This class is an upper division seminar course which means students will be responsible for reading primary and secondary source material, analyzing those documents, and presenting their findings both in select writing assignments and in daily discussions. The professor will present a brief overview of the objectives of the day at the beginning of class with necessary background information, but the class will primarily be a discussion, propelled by students’ questions and responses to each other. A pre-requisite of this course is a general knowledge of early modern world history. Although not assigned, students are highly suggested to obtain a copy of Euan Cameron (ed) *Early Modern Europe: An Oxford History* as a reference book. The course is split into four units:

- Unit 1: Historiographies: Family, Childhood, and the Atlantic
- Unit 2: Building a Family
- Unit 3: Families at Work
- Unit 4: Families in Revolution

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS/ASSIGNMENTS:**

- **20% Class Attendance & Thoughtful Participation-** Students are expected to attend *all* class meetings and be active participants in our class discussions. Aim for *at least two* contributions to our discussions. Excessive unexcused absences (more than 2) will negatively impact your grade.
- **40% Primary Source Reflection Papers (5 out of 7)-** Students will write short (min-one page, max-three pages, double-spaced) writing exercise that analyzes at that week's required primary source document(s). You should not merely summarize what the author said, but include a thoughtful analysis of the text, relating it back to our secondary source readings and class discussions. There are seven possibilities, but students should only complete 5 of these assignments.
- **40% Final Essay Exam-** This is a comprehensive exam with two parts: 1) ID's (10 of 15) and an essay (5-6 handwritten pages, single-spaced) exam. It is scheduled for **Friday, May 9**.

**COURSE SCHEDULE:****UNIT 1: HISTORIOGRAPHIES: FAMILY, CHILDHOOD, AND THE ATLANTIC****WEEK 1: Defining Europe & the Atlantic****Tuesday: Introductions and Outlining the Course**

⇒ Required: In class, write a brief definition of Atlantic history, family history, and childhood history. We will use these over the next two weeks as we assess our categories for historical analysis.

**Thursday: What is European and what is Atlantic History?**

⇒ Required: Bernard Bailyn, "The Idea of Atlantic History," *Itinerario*, 20 (1996)

**WEEK 2: Family & Childhood as Analytic Categories****Tuesday: Why "Family" History?**

⇒ Required: 1) Karin Wulf, "Women and Families in Early (North) America and the Wider (Atlantic) World," *History Compass* 8.3 (2010): 238-247; 2) Julie Hardwick, "Family Matters: The Early Modern Atlantic from the European Side," *History Compass* 8.3 (2010): 248-257

**Thursday: Is the history of "childhood" different from family history?**

⇒ Required: 1) Margaret King, "Concepts of Childhood: What We Know and Where we Might Go" *Renaissance Quarterly*, Vol. 60, No. 2, Summer 2007, pp. 371-407; 2) Bianca Premo, "How Latin America's History of Childhood Came of Age," *The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth*, Vol. 1, Number 1, Winter 2008, pp. 63-76

**WEEK 3: European Origins, Gender Stereotypes, & the Patriarchy****Tuesday: Family Life & Structure in Early Modern Europe**

- ⇒ Required: Jean-Louis Flandrin, “Introduction” in *Families in Former Times: Kinship, Household, and Sexuality*: pp. 1-10

### **Thursday: Forming Gender Stereotypes & Patriarchal Families**

- ⇒ Required Primary Source: John Knox, “The Monstrous Regiment of Women”
- ⇒ Required: Sarah Hanley, “The Family-State Compact” and Jean-Louis Flandrin “The Government of the Family,” in *Families in Former Times* pp. 118-144
- ⇒ **DUE: Knox Reflection Paper**

## **UNIT 2: BUILDING A FAMILY**

### **WEEK 4: Marriage & Coverture**

#### **Tuesday: Marriage: Contracts & Negotiations**

- ⇒ Required Primary Source: “The Memoirs of Gluckel of Hameln”
- ⇒ Required: 1) Weisner-Hanks, “Laws Regarding Women” in *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 34-40;
- 2) Ulrike Strasser, “Introduction” & Chapter 1: What Public Matters Most?: Rites of Marriage Formation” in *State of Virginity*, pp. 1-57 (on Blackboard)

#### **Thursday: Coverture**

- ⇒ Required: Amy Erickson, “Coverture and Capitalism,” *History Workshop Journal*, 2005
- ⇒ **DUE: Gluckel Response**

### **WEEK 5: Reproduction**

#### **Tuesday: Contraception & Pregnancy**

- ⇒ Required: 1) Leslie Tuttle, “Gendering Reproduction,” in *Conceiving the Old Régime*; 2) Weisner-Hanks, “The Female Life Cycle” in *Women & Gender in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 51-101;

#### **Thursday: Childbirth**

- ⇒ Required Primary Sources: Chapter 2, “Herein is my Father glorified: Childbirth” in *Puritan Family Life: The Diary of Samuel Sewall*

### **WEEK 6: Illicit Sex & Children**

#### **Tuesday: Illegitimate Births**

- ⇒ Required: Selections, Matthew Gerber, *Bastards*
- ⇒ Required Primary Source: “A Pregnant Servant: Deborah Brackley, 1651” (Blackboard)
- ⇒ **DUE: Brackley Response**

#### **Thursday: Abandonment & Infanticide**

⇒ Required: Gowing, “Secret Births and Infanticide in Seventeenth-Century England,” *Past and Present*, 156 (Feb. 1997)

### **WEEK 7: Households**

#### **Tuesday: Apprentices**

⇒ Required Primary Source: Selection of Translated French Apprenticeship Contracts

⇒ Required: Clare Crowston, "From School to Workshop: Pre-Training and Apprenticeship in Old Regime France," in *Learning on the Shop Floor*

⇒ **DUE: Apprenticeship Response**

#### **Thursday: Domestic Servants & Slaves**

⇒ Required: 1) Wendy Warren, “The Cause of Her Grief: the rape of a slave in early New England,” *Journal of American History* (March, 2007); 2) Gowing ”The Haunting of Susan Lay,” *Gender and History*, 12 (August 2002) 2, pp.183-201

### **WEEK 8: Children’s Education & Rearing I**

#### **Tuesday: European Educations**

⇒ Required: 1) Weisner-Hanks, “Literacy and Learning” in *Women & Gender in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 147-173; 2) Mark Motley, “Introduction” in *Becoming A French Aristocrat* (Blackboard)

#### **Thursday: Colonial Educations**

⇒ Required: 1) Roger Magnuson, “Introduction,” *Education in New France*, pp. 1-20; 2) James Axtell, “Reduce Them to Civility” in *The Invasion Within* (Blackboard)

### **WEEK 9: Children’s Education & Rearing II**

#### **Tuesday: Huguenot Child-Rearing**

⇒ Required Primary Source: “Our littlest darlings,” Huguenot Children and Childrearing in the Letters of Louis de Coligny,” in *Gender and Early Modern Constructions of Childhood*

#### **Thursday: Puritan Children**

⇒ Required Primary Source: **Chapter 6**, “Your Son is Now One of Us: Education” in *Puritan Family Life: The Diary of Samuel Sewall* AND **Chapter 3**, “The Sorrowful Rememberance of Adam’s Carriage: Child Rearing,”

⇒ **DUE: Education/Childrearing Response (on either Coligny or Sewall or both)**

<b>UNIT 3: FAMILY AT WORK</b>
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### **WEEK 10: Family Labor**

#### **Tuesday: Household Economy**

⇒ Required: Jan de Vries, “Between Purchasing Power and the World of Goods: Understanding the Household Economy in Early Modern Europe”

**Thursday: Family Business**

⇒ Required: Selections, Hardwick *Family Business*

**WEEK 11: Work & Credit**

**Tuesday: Women’s Work**

⇒ Required Primary Source: “Getting a Living” (Blackboard)

⇒ **DUE: Getting a Living Response**

**Thursday: Familial Credit**

⇒ Required: Scott Taylor, “Credit, Debt, and Honor in Castile, 1600-1650,” *Journal of Early Modern History*, 7, 1-2 (2003)

**WEEK 12: Familial Networks of Exchange**

**Tuesday: Mediterranean Networks**

⇒ Required: “Diasporic Families and the Making of Business Networks” in *The Familiarity of Strangers* (Blackboard)

**Thursday: Atlantic Networks**

⇒ Required: “Credit in Life and Letters” in Pearshall, *Atlantic Families*

**UNIT 4: FAMILIES IN REVOLUTION**

**WEEK 13: The Rise of Paternalism**

**Tuesday: The Good Father?**

⇒ Required: Lynn Hunt, “The Rise and Fall of the Good Father,” *The Family Romance of the French Revolution*

**Thursday: Paternalism in Politics**

⇒ Required: Suzanne Desan, “What Makes a Father?,” *The Family on Trial in Revolutionary France*

**WEEK 14: The American Revolution**

**Tuesday: The Father King**

⇒ Required: McConville, “A Funeral Fit for a King,” in *The King’s Three Faces: A History of Royal Power in Colonial America*

**Thursday: Revolutionary Pamphlets**

⇒ Required Primary Sources: Selection of Revolutionary Pamphlets that depict political paternalism

⇒ **DUE: American Rev Response**

**WEEK 15: The French Revolution**

**Tuesday: Contesting Marriage**

⇒ Required: Desan, “Broken Bonds: The Revolutionary Practice of Divorce,” *The Family on Trial in Revolutionary France*

**Thursday: New Families?**

⇒ Required: Desan, “Natural Children, Abandoned Mothers, and Illegitimate Fathers,” *The Family on Trial in Revolutionary France*

**FINAL EXAM- FRIDAY, MAY 9, 3-6PM**