

BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE 435
FAMILY AND KIN: COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES
Fall 2007

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Office Hours:
Tu Th: 1:00-3:00
Or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course serves as an introduction to alternative family styles and kin networks in non-Western and Western societies with particular attention given to the dynamics of changing patterns of "relatedness" in the United States. Primary attention will be given to exploring the relationships between types of domestic groups and their cultural context--e.g., how are families, households, kissing kin, etc. defined and what social, economic and political functions do they perform? What are the major changes that have taken place in how we define and deal with family and kin in the 21st century? Case materials will be drawn from a cross section of non-Western cultures from Africa, Asia, and Latin America as well as various ethnic minorities from the United States (e.g., North American Indian, Mexican-American, Black, etc). Approximately the first half of the course will focus on defining the variable characteristics of domestic and other kin groups within a theoretical framework. The second half of the course will focus on more detailed examination of selected case studies.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Granskog, Jane, 2007. *Family and Kin: Comparative Perspectives – Course Review Handbook*. CSUB Reprographics.
- Pasternak, B., C. Ember and M. Ember, 1997. *Sex, Gender and Kinship*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. ISBN: 0-13-206533-9
- Skolnick, A and J Skolnick. 2007. *Family in Transition*. New York: Allyn and Bacon. (14th edition) ISBN: 9780205482658

RECOMMENDED READINGS AND READINGS ON RESERVE

- Cohen, Y. 1987 (1978). "Marriage, Alliance and the Incest Taboo." *In Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology*, J. Spradley and D. McCurdy eds. Pp. 125-135. Boston: Little, Brown.
- Graburn, N. (Ed.), 1971. *Readings in Kinship and Social Structure*. Harper and Row.
- Geertz, C, 2006 (2001). "Life without Fathers or Husbands". *In Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology*, J. Spradley and D. McCurdy, eds. Pp. 201-209. New York: Longman Press.
- Gurian, J. and J. Gurian, 1983. *The Dependency Tendency: Returning to Each Other in Modern America*. Boston: University Press of America.
- Keesing, R., 1976. *Kin Groups and Social Structure*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Lindsey, K., 1981. *Friends as Family*. New York: Beacon Press.
- Mindel, C., R. Habenstein and R. Wright (eds.) 1998. *Ethnic Families in America: Patterns and Variations*. New York: Elsevier. (Fourth Edition)
- Rynkiewich, Michael, 1984. "Matrilineal Kinship: Coming Home to Bokelab". *In Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology*, J. Spradley and D. McCurdy eds. Pp. 110-122. Boston: Little, Brown.
- Selby, H., 1974. *Zapotec Deviance*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Tanner, N. 1974. "Matrifocality in Indonesia and Africa and Among Black Americans." *In Woman, Culture and Society* M. Rosaldo, and L. Lamphere, eds. Pp. 129-156. Stanford, CA: Stanford U. Press.

- Wagner, R. and D. Schaffer, 1980. "Social Networks and Survival Strategies." *In* Twice a Minority: Mexican-American Women, M. Melville, ed. Pp.173-190. New York: C.V. Mosby Co.
- Wolf, M., 1984. "Uterine Families and the Women's Community". *In* Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology, J. Spradley and D. McCurdy, eds. Pp. 123-130. Boston: Little, Brown.
- Yanagisako, S. and J. Collier, eds., 1987. Gender and Kinship: Essays Toward a Unified Analysis. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Reading packets with selections from the above will also be placed on electronic reserve. Additional required and recommended readings not listed above may also be put on reserve during the quarter.

GRADING AND REQUIREMENTS

There will be a midterm (25%) and a final examination (35%). The midterm will contain objective and subjective questions; the final exam will be a take-home essay exam. The Course Review Handbook provides a detailed review outline of materials covered on the midterm and final exams along with powerpoint slides used in lectures. Do note that the final will not be comprehensive except for important and relevant concepts covered prior to the midterm. In addition to the exams, one research report/essay (10-12 double-spaced, typewritten pages minimum), dealing with the analysis of a selected case study of your own choosing (25%) and a short take-home kinship "exercise" on your own kin (15%) will be required (see below for details). These reports will be discussed in class during the last half of the quarter. Extra credit may be obtained by writing a more extensive research report. However, you need to talk it over with me before doing so. In addition to turning in a hard copy of your research report, please submit an electronic copy to www.turnitin.com before class begins on the day it is due. The **Class ID number** is **1986340** and the **password** is **familykinF07**. You will each need to get a free turnitin.com account in order to do this. If you do not submit your paper to turnitin.com, the grade for your paper will be reduced by 10%.

POLICY ON PLAGIARISM

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology will not accept or tolerate instances of academic fraud or plagiarism among its students or faculty. Plagiarism is an extremely serious offense. Using published or unpublished material without citing the source is plagiarism. You may use someone else's material if you enclose it in quotation marks and reference precisely its source. Such material, however, should be used sparingly, if at all. Simply paraphrasing someone else's material by minimal re-arrangement of the wording is also plagiarism. It is an equally serious offense if you write a paper for someone else, or copy someone else's work, or allow someone to copy your work. In all cases, this is cheating. All students must adhere to CSUB's policy on Academic Integrity, as outlined under Rights and Responsibilities in the Fall 2007 Class Schedule. Students who do not do so will receive an F in the course and will face disciplinary sanction by Student Discipline and Judicial Affairs.

GUIDELINES FOR THE TAKE-HOME EXERCISE ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF YOUR KIN

The principle of kinship upon which the family as well as larger kin groups are based, is an important mechanism of social organization in all societies. It is the primary principle underlying social organization in the majority of non-Western societies. Although kin groups are not recognized as being so significant within our own society, they still play a very important role in our lives. The purpose of this exercise is to focus on the meaning and importance of kinship within your own life and to thus gain a better understanding of its importance in general. In this exercise you are to carry out the following:

1. Draw a kin diagram of your own family that is at least three generations deep. Use the standard format for constructing kin diagrams to do this. You should include non-biological kin (kin not defined in terms of descent and marriage) in your chart. You may do so by using a dotted connecting line (or other means -- be innovative!).

2. For each individual on your chart, indicate both the term of reference (their kin relationship to you -- father, mother, sister, etc) and the term of address (what you usually call them, e.g. "Mom", "Toots", etc.). The term of address may change depending upon the context or situation. It is an important indication nonetheless of the nature of the relationship you have with that individual. This information (along with that required for "3" below) may be provided in a chart/table format.
3. For each of the "significant" individuals noted on your chart, specify the major dimensions of your relationship with them including the following: frequency of interaction (daily, weekly, etc.); content or nature of the interaction; history of the relationship (continuity); reciprocal nature of the relationship -- what have you done for them within the last month or so, what have they done for you, and whether you would call upon them in an emergency.

Discussion of the major dimensions of your kin relations (#3 above) should be also summarized in essay form. Finally, summarize the significance of kin relations for you. For example, you may know and interact much more with relatives on your mother's side than on your father's side or much more with non-biological kin than biological kin. What factors do you feel are responsible for the differences in interaction that you have noted? Include your kin chart as an appendix to your essay which should be AT LEAST 4-5 typed pages.

ORIENTING QUESTIONS FOR THE RESEARCH PAPER ON KINSHIP

Your research paper may focus on the major patterns and significance of kinship in any society at any point in time (including contemporary American subcultures). A minimum of four scholarly references must be used -- a comprehensive bibliography of relevant materials, however, is NOT required. Papers must be AT LEAST ten (10) double spaced, typed pages in length but not more than twelve (12) pages maximum.

Questions To Address

1. What is the importance of "kinship" in the society/group you have chosen to examine? Illustrate how it is used in: economic life (important groups and relations); social organization (important groups and relations); and ideology (expression of values held by community members). NOTE: "kinship" as it is used here includes descent groups, marriage patterns, and kin relations defined by blood, marriage and other social/ritual means.
2. How would you characterize the changes that have taken place in this society/group in terms of their effect on the relative emphasis given to kinship? In particular, take note of the way in which utilization of kin networks may be employed as an important adaptive strategy.
3. What new understandings or insights about the nature and importance of kin relations have you gained from analyzing this society/group?
4. Please be careful to reference your material. The American Anthropological Association format must be used for this paper. Guidelines for the appropriate style to be used can be found at http://www.aaanet.org/pubs/style_guide.htm A summary is also provided on my website under guidelines for citations for turnitin.com. In brief, for short direct quotes (less than 2-3 lines in length) and specific comments by your author(s), use the following form in the context of your paper: (Keesing 1976:6). For lengthy quotes, separate the quote from the body of text, single space, and indent it 5 spaces on either side. At the end of the paper, list all the references that you have used in alphabetical order, giving the following type of information:

Keesing, Roger

1976 Kin Groups and Social Structure. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF READINGS

Date	Subject	Readings
9/11, 13, 18	Introduction to Kinship Studies: Major Theoretical Approaches	Pasternak et.al.: Ch. 1; Gurian & Gurian: Ch 1-2; Skolnick et al, pp 1-40 (rdgs. 1-3); Article by Yanagisako & Collier (Rec'd: Keesing: Ch 1-2)
9/18, 20	The Basis of Kinship - Sex and Gender	Pasternak et.al.: Ch. 2-3; Skolnick et al: pp. 105-150 (Ch. 3-4)
9/ 25, 27, 10/2, 4	Marriage, Residence, and the Incest Taboo 9/27: Video on <i>Polygynous Mormons, Love, Lust & Marriage, Why We Stay, Why We Stray, and Extramarital Relations among the Canela</i>	Pasternak et.al.: Ch. 4-10; Skolnick et al: pp. 151-240 (Ch. 4-5) Articles by Geertz, Cohen
10/4, 9, 11	Family, Household, and Descent Groups	Pasternak et.al., Ch. 11-12; Rynkiewich, Wolf (Recd: Keesing, Ch 3,4,6; Fox, Ch 4,6)
10/11	Preliminary selection of research case study due	
10/11, 16	New Approaches in the Analysis of Kin Relations and Networks <u>Review for Midterm</u>	Articles in Graburn, (Firth, Bott, Schneider, Schneider & Homans), Wagner & Schaffer, Tanner
10/18	MIDTERM EXAM	
10/23, 25, 30	Variations in Family Forms Changing Family Relations -- The Transformation Of The Modern Family	Pasternak et.al., Ch. 13; Skolnick et al pp. 40-104 (rdgs 4-7), 325-397 (rdg. 26-31) Gurian & Gurian, Ch 3; Lindsey (pp. 1-21, 107-115)
10/30, 11/1	Dimensions of Diversity in America	Mindel, Habenstein, & Wright, Ch 1, 2, Skolnick et al: pp. 398- 421, 448-468 (rdgs 32,34). Rec'd M, H & W: Ch. 15, 16
11/1	<u>TAKE-HOME KIN EXERCISE DUE</u>	
11/6, 8	Hispanic/Latino Ethnic Minorities vs Zapotec Indians of Mexico	Skolnick et, al: pp. 422-447 (rdg. 33) Selby, Ch 2 & 4; Rec'd: M, H & W., Ch. 7, 8 & 9;
11/13, 15	Contrasts with the East - Film: <i>Dada's Family</i> . Summary and Review	Skolnick et, al: pp. 469-490 (rdg. 35 M, H, & W: Ch. 10, 11
11/15	<u>RESEARCH PAPER DUE</u>	
11/27	<u>FINAL ESSAY TAKE-HOME EXAM – DUE NOVEMBER 27th TUESDAY by 5 p.m.</u>	