

## **790:395      The Politics of Reproduction**

**On Line/Fall 2020**

**Instructor:** Prof. Cynthia R. Daniels

**Contact Information:**

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**Office Hours:** By arrangement through the Canvas Conference function and we can arrange group virtual 'office hours' as needed.

**Course Summary:**

Issues of human reproduction are some of the most controversial of our age. Should abortion be banned or restricted? Does the fetus have rights separate from the pregnant woman? Should we permit the marketing of reproductive 'parts' and 'services'—eggs, sperm and wombs? What is the relationship between racial politics and reproductive politics? What is the male role and what are male responsibilities in human reproduction? Does the government have the right to force or coerce citizens into surgical sterilization?

This course is uniquely structured around Legal Cases and Documentary films. Each week, we will study **ONE U.S. Supreme Court case** with **ONE documentary film** related to the issues raised in that case. We will explore the legal cases and films through the narrative of [Storytelling](#). Both legal cases and documentary films tell stories about characters and conflicts. Who are the main characters in the story? What is the setting? What is the nature of the conflict? From whose perspective is the story told? How is the conflict resolved? What are the primary legal principles tested in the legal case and how are these represented in film? For your final class project/paper, you will pick a legal case and documentary film to write about which you will share with the class.

Even though this class is asynchronous, you will have many opportunities to interact with me and with other students throughout the semester. In the first week, we will begin with virtual introductions so we can get to know each other. During lectures, you will post comments and questions, which we can all respond to. You will also participate in organized class Discussions related to that week's issues. Finally, you will have the opportunity to work with a subgroup on your final paper/presentation.

*To make this work, you must complete assignments in the following order and keep to a weekly/daily schedule.*

**Weekly Activities:**

Watch a lecture

Complete readings

View a documentary film

Actively participate in class Discussion.

**Weekly Assignments to Complete:**

**Weekly Lecture Comments/Questions [Complete by Tuesday]:** As you watch each lecture, there will be times when I will ask you to comment on an issue and you can read and comment on other students' comments about an issue. This will be a 'precursor' to our more full class Discussion each week [10 % Pass/Fail]

**Weekly lecture and reading quiz [Complete by Tuesday]:** These include factual questions directly related to the substance of the readings and lectures. [20%; Letter grade A-F]

**Watch Weekly Documentary Film [Complete by Thursday]:** Links to all films are embedded in weekly modules.

**Weekly Legal Case and Film Storytelling Templates [Complete by Thursday]:** For the legal case and film each week, you will complete a 2-page Storytelling Template, one for the legal case (10%) and one for the film (10%), identifying main characters, issues and conflicts. [20%; Pass/Fail]

**Weekly Discussion posts [Complete between Thursday – Friday]:** Discussion question 'prompts' will be posted and you will be required to post and to respond to other students' posts. [20% Pass/Fail]

**One Final 'Film Analysis Paper' [Due at end of semester]** 8-10 pages (double-spaced) analyzing a legal case and a film related to that case and an on-line presentation (asynchronous) to the class with a film clip and legal analysis. You will also be required to work with a subgroup and comment on a draft of another student's paper. [30%; Letter grade A-F]

**Modules:** All readings, films, lectures and assignments are available through the Canvas Modules tab.

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**Learning Goals:**

This course meets the following Political Science department learning goals: more in-depth, sophisticated understanding of American institutions and politics; exposure to the range of questions that social scientists pose and the tools and approaches they use to develop answers.

**Academic Integrity:**

Violations include: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity. Students are expected to follow the university's academic integrity policy, which can be found here: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>.

**Self-Reporting Absences:**

Students are expected to complete all modules on time. If you must miss a module deadline, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your missed or delayed work. An email will be automatically sent to me.

**Accommodations:**

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations must follow the procedures outlined at <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

Full disability policies and procedures are at <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

**List of Required Materials:**

No Required Books. All readings and films are available on the class website.

**Financial Assistance May Be Available:**

If you and your family are facing financial difficulties resulting from Covid-19 or if you are trying to do your semester's work without a computer, Rutgers might be able to help. Email [deanofstudents@echo.rutgers.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@echo.rutgers.edu) for assistance getting appropriate technology. For other financial aid hardships visit <http://financialaid.rutgers.edu>