

**Sociology Generic Elective (GE) 02**  
**Family and Intimacy**

**Course Objectives:**

This course seeks to introduce students to a range of contemporary concerns pertaining to family as a social institution from a sociological viewpoint and with an interdisciplinary orientation. It situates family in its historical, cultural, social and comparative contexts. The course enables students to examine the commonsensical notions of family by making them aware of the diversity of family forms and reconstitute it as a possible arena of justice. It aims to familiarize students with different aspects of family and intimate life using ethnographic accounts from India. Its objective is to enable students to examine the institution of family and analyse intimacy in a sociological way.

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. An ability to examine the institution of family and realities of intimate experiences from a sociological perspective.
2. Knowledge of diverse forms of the family within their appropriate historical contexts and comparative appreciation of their features.
3. A disposition to constitute everyday spaces of family and intimacy as an arena of democracy, gender justice and empowerment.
4. Making students aware of the symbiotic relationship between conceptual, ethnographic and critical literature in social sciences and demonstrating how they work in close tandem.
5. To alert next-generation policymakers to take the questions of the intimacy with seriousness and make them integral to public reason and conversation.

**Course Outline:**

**Unit 1: What is Family?**

**Unit 2: Family and Intimacy: Themes and Accounts**

**Unit 3: Family and Intimacy: Critiques and Transformations**

## **Course Content:**

### **Unit 1. What is Family? (Weeks 1-4)**

Collier, Jane, Michelle Z. Rosaldo and Sylvia Yanagisako. (1992), Is there a Family? New Anthropological views. in Barrie Thorne and Marilyn Yalom eds. *Rethinking the Family: Some Feminist Questions*, Boston: North-western University Press. Pp. 25 – 38.

Gittins, Diana. (1993) How have Families Changed? in *The Family in Question: Changing Households and Familiar Ideologies*. 2e London: Macmillan. Pp. 6-34

Okin, Susan Moller. (1989) *Justice, Gender, and the Family*. New York: Basic Books. Chapter 2. The Family: Beyond Justice? Pp. 25 – 40.

Weston, Kath. (1991) *Families We Choose*. New York: Columbia University Press. Chapter 2. Exiles from Kinship. Pp. 21 – 42.

### **Unit 2. Family and Intimacy: Themes and Accounts (Weeks 5-10)**

Diane P. Mines and Sarah Lamb (Eds.) (2010), *Everyday Life in South Asia*, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press. Pp. 9-22

Uberoi, Patricia. (2003), The Family in India: Beyond the Nuclear Versus Joint Debate, From Veena Das Ed. *The Oxford Companion to Sociology and Social Anthropology*, Delhi: OUP. Pp. 1061-1092

Trawick, Margaret. (1993), *Notes on Love in a Tamil Family*. Delhi: Oxford University Press. Chapters. 3 The Ideology of Love. Pp. 89 – 116

Raheja, Gloria Goodwin, and Ann Grodzins Gold. (1996), *Listen To the Heron's Words: Reimagining Gender and Kinship in North India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press. Chapter 2. Sexuality, Fertility, and Erotic Imagination in Rajasthani Women's Songs. Pp. 30 – 72.

Lynch, Owen M. (Ed.) (1990) *Divine Passions: The Social Construction of Emotion in India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press. Chapter 3. "To be a Burden on Others": Dependency Anxiety among the Elderly in India. Pp. 64 –88.

### **Unit 3. Family and Intimacy: Critiques and Transformations (Weeks 11-14)**

Barrett, Michèle, and Mary McIntosh. (1991), *The Anti-Social Family*. London: Verso. Chapter 2. The Anti-Social Family. Pp. 43 – 80.

Cartledge, Sue, and Joanna Ryan. (1983), *Sex & Love: New Thoughts on Old Contradictions*. London: Women's Press. Chapter 7 'Is a Feminist Heterosexuality Possible?' Pp. 105 – 123.

Anshen, Ruth Nanda. (1959), *The Family: Its Functions and Destiny*. New York: Harper and Brothers. Pp. 359- 374

### **Suggested Readings:**

Ahmad, Imtiaz. (1976), *Family, Kinship, and Marriage among Muslims in India*. Delhi: Manohar Press.

Beck, Ulrich and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim. (1995), *The Normal Chaos of Love*. Oxford: Polity Press.

Becker, Gary (1993). *A Treatise on the Family*. Harvard: Harvard University Press. Coontz, Stephanie. (2005), *Marriage, A History*. New York: Viking.

Giddens, Anthony. (1992), *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies*, Cambridge: Polity Press. Pp. 184-203.

Hochschild, Arlie Russell. (2013), *So, how's the Family? And other Essays*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Madan, T. N. (1989), *Family and Kinship: A Study of the Pandits of Rural Kashmir*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Mitterauer, Michael, and Reinhard Sieder. (1982), *The European Family*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Ross, Aileen D. (1967), *The Hindu Family in its Urban Setting*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Uberoi, Patrica. (Ed.)(1996), *Social Reform, Sexuality and the State*. New Delhi: Sage Publications.

### **Teaching-Learning Process:**

Besides conventional lecturing for communicating concepts, the teaching-learning process for this paper seeks to draw extensively on the diverse cultural competencies, observations and experiences of the class to make the issues involved more vivid. Group discussions providing a space for students to voluntarily share their observations and experiences of family life are an integral part of the teaching-learning process. Given that family and intimate experiences are also a staple of popular culture, teaching-learning seeks to mobilize those resources to make classes more engaging.

**Assessment Methods:**

Recommended evaluation is one assignment that tests conceptual competence and one project that puts the conceptual learning into empirical practice.

**Keywords:**

Family, Intimacy, Life Cycle, Childhood, Marriage, Old Age, Gender, Emotions, Sexuality, Love, Law, Justice, Democracy