

Research Paper #2 (20% of course grade)

Students are expected to write a four to five-page essay (double spaced, 12 point font, 1" margins) on a topic covered in class and discussed in the media.

To complete the assignment:

1. Choose a topic from the suggested list below or a topic of your own choosing. If you choose your own topic, it must be approved by me no later than 1 week before the due date.
2. You must find at least 1 media source on the topic. A media source includes TV show segments, traditional full-length articles in magazines and newspapers, Op-Eds, documentaries, etc.
3. You must find at least 1 peer-reviewed academic article or academic book on the topic.

The goal of the assignment:

1. Using the concepts and terms discussed in class, provide a sociological analysis of your topic.
2. You must use at least one sociological theory to guide your analysis.
3. Using your sources, concepts, terms and theory(ies), demonstrate causality, ie, discuss the social issues and structures that are causing the issue at hand.

Suggested Topics

- Working mothers
- Single parenthood (mothers and/or fathers)
- Parental leave policies
- Masculinity
- Cult of motherhood
- Parenting styles – attachment parenting, etc
- Same-sex parents
- Dating, courtship, and hook up culture
- Household division of labour
- Gender socialization and its effects
- Stay-at-home parents (mothers or fathers)
- Romantic partner selection
- Reproductive technologies – IVF, surrogacy, family planning, foster children, adoption
- Divorce
- Infidelity/Adultery
- Domestic partnerships – common-law, living apart together, polyamory, polygamy
- Aboriginal cultural heritage
- Immigration and families – experiences and issues
- Retirement
- Technology and family life
- Conflict between families and other social institutions (schools, daycares, the law)

Evaluation

Papers will be evaluated using the following criteria and grade breakdown:

Content (out of 5)

A fulsome, complete answer is provided for the chosen question.

The question is answered with reference to course content, readings, and materials.

The question is answered with reference to other sources where relevant and appropriate.

Argument (out of 5)

The essay takes a clear position on the chosen question.

Justification for the position is provided.

Organization (out of 5)

The essay structure is clear, logical and sequential (introduction, thesis statement, etc)

Ideas and arguments are presented clearly.

Presentation (out of 5)

Grammar and spelling is free of errors.

The sentence structure is clear and free of errors.

Accurate and appropriate referencing and sourcing (APA style).

Length within required range.