HISTORY OF THE FAMILY IN THE UNITED STATES

INSTRUCTOR: LAKISHA SIMMONS

HISTORY 368 / AMCULT 342 / WOMENSTD 360
4 CR • ID
Course Guide: bit.ly/fa19_hist368

Description: How do our family histories help us tell stories about who we are and where we have come from? Companies such as Ancestry.com promise to unlock personal pasts and make sense of our future through use of genealogy and DNA testing. Television shows like Finding Your Roots and Who Do You Think You Are? use DNA testing and historical research to show how family history also "shapes our national identity."

This course critically engages with Ancestry.com and family history TV shows by telling the story of the science of DNA testing and the history of the idea of "family" in America. We will weave together histories of America’s past with ideas about identity, home, belonging, and intimacy. Major themes of the semester include: racial identity, ethnicity, migration, sexuality, queer kinship, non-traditional and chosen families, and science and technology.