Family Photograph Analysis

Assignment Description
We begin this semester by gaining a demographic overview of the Latino population and issues that affect family formation. This assignment is an opportunity to reflect on those broad statistics and begin to ask, “Does my family mirror any of these trends? If so, how and why? And if not, then how is mine different, and why?”

Select a family photograph that was not taken in a professional studio. It does not have to include “all” of your family; you can select either a random, candid snapshot or a posed group photo. There’s no right or wrong photograph to choose; just make it one that you find interesting.

Approach this photograph with a sociological imagination and analyze it for its cultural content: If you were an outsider to this family, what does this photograph tell you about them? Be sure to include a discussion of the following: who took the picture, when, where and why? Who is posed, where, by whom and why? What do the family members’ clothes, expressions, body language seem to express? Are any traces of the demographic trends visible in the photography? Why or why not?

In your analysis, you must strengthen your observations by drawing upon the insights you have gained from our course texts and discussions. Grading will be based on the following: (1) depth and quality of your reflection; (2) engagement with course readings; and (3) strength of your writing (i.e. style and grammar).

Technical Guidelines
- Due date: Wednesday, September 9
- 3 – 4 pages in length (a minimum of 750 words)
- 10% of overall grade
- Attach a photocopy of your photo to the back of your essay (on a separate page)
- Your work must be
  - Formatted with 1” margins all around
  - Double-spaced
  - Printed in 12-point Times New Roman
  - Numbered on all pages
  - Stapled before you turn it in
  - Spell-checked, carefully edited and proof-read
  - Follow MLA formatting (for guidelines, see link to Purdue’s Online Writing Lab on our course website)