

SOCIOLOGY OF THE FAMILY

Sociology 571

Spring 2008

M 9:50am-12:30pm

Lucy Stone Hall, Room A256

Professor: Kristen W. Springer

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Office Hours: Wednesday 1:45pm-2:45pm or by appointment

Course Website: sakai.rutgers.edu (course designation: "Soc 571: Sociology of the Family")

Course Description: This course is an introduction to Sociology of the Family, and is divided into four broad sections. We will first discuss historical trends in the U.S. family and explore the contemporary debate on the "decline of American families." The following three weeks focus on theoretical perspectives that have been used to understand families from a sociological perspective. We will survey foundational perspectives, but will prioritize feminist theories and "decentering" approaches (race/ethnic and queer theories). The course then turns the focus to inside the family covering topics including family power, housework, marriage, parenting, children, and alternative family forms. The final section utilizes reproduction/mothering as a case study to explore how the family as an institution intersects with other prominent institutions in the U.S. (the labor market, medicine, and the law).

Required Readings: All material listed on the syllabus is required reading and should be closely read before each class period. The articles and book chapters are available on our Sakai website. In addition, the following required books are available at the Livingston Bookstore.

Stone, Pamela. 2007. *Opting Out?: Why Women Really Quit Careers and Head Home*. University of California Press.

Markens, Susan. 2007. *Surrogate Motherhood and the Politics of Reproduction*. University of California Press.

Roberts, Dorothy. 1998. *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty*. Vintage. New York.

Overview of Course Requirements and Grading: The course is organized as a seminar and I expect everyone to be fully prepared and participatory. While I may provide a very brief overview of each week's readings, the vast majority of the course will consist of student discussion, presentations, and exchanges focused on the readings. Course grades will be based on three major requirements. Incompletes will only be given for serious extenuating circumstances.

(1) Participation in weekly discussion (25 percent of class grade).

This grade reflects participation in discussion and the quality of the questions submitted each week. Students should read carefully so that they come to class with both insightful comments and questions. Students who read materials that are not on the syllabus but that are germane to the discussion should feel free to contribute this knowledge to the discussion; the class as a whole will benefit from the specialized knowledge of all participants. Each week, class members will email 3-4 discussion questions to the discussion leader and professor, no later than 9am Sunday on the day prior to class.

(2) Leading a class discussion (15 percent of class grade).

Each week, a student or pair of students will be responsible for leading discussion. The student leader(s) may base the discussion on the questions submitted by class participants, or may design a discussion that incorporates both assigned readings and his/her own research interests. Developing ways to incorporate the ideas emailed to you by other class members is an important part of the leadership role; summarizing readings assigned for the week in a way that presumes others in class have not read them is not “leading the class discussion.”

(3) Final research paper or proposal (60 percent of class grade).

The main course requirement is the preparation of an original research paper or research proposal (about 20-25 pages, double spaced). Each student will present a brief synopsis of their research project near the end of the semester. These presentations will be opportunities to learn from and help each other with research before the final paper is due. Paper topics and methodology will be chosen in consultation with the instructor. The paper should define a research question, review relevant prior studies, and either: (1) analyze suitable data, and present the findings and their implications (research paper) or (2) propose a detailed strategy and justification for conducting an original research project (research proposal). Students are encouraged to use this class project to develop a qualifying paper, conference paper, dissertation prospectus, or journal article. Completion of the paper/proposal will proceed in three steps.

1. Submit a brief (2-3 page) proposal **by the start of class on February 18th**. This brief proposal should be an early attempt to delineate your research interests in the sociology of the family and should move toward describing your research question, the data or methodology to be used, and the analyses to be undertaken.
2. Short (~10 minute) presentations to the class on **April 14th**. Having presentations on April 14th will give you approximately one month to incorporate feedback and write the final paper.
3. The final draft of the paper/proposal is due **no later than May 10th at 5pm in my mailbox**. **I strongly discourage late papers or extensions.**

For students planning to conduct secondary data analyses, many data sets are available through University of Michigan’s Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (<http://www.icpsr.umich.edu>).

Sakai: This course has a Sakai website where I will post announcements and articles. All announcements will also be e-mailed to your Rutgers’ e-mail account.

SECTION I – INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW

Week 1 (1/28): Introduction

Week 2 (2/4): Historical Trends in U.S./Decline in the American Family?

Bernard, Jessie. 1981. "The Good-Provider Role: Its Rise and Fall." *The American Psychologist*. 36(1): 1-12.

Popenoe, David. 1993. "American Family Decline, 1960-1990: A Review and Appraisal." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 55(3):527-542.

Stacey, Judith. 1993. "Good Riddance to 'The Family': A Response to David Popenoe." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 55(3):545-547.

Wilcox, W. Bradford, and Steven L. Nock. 2007. "'Her' Marriage after the Revolutions." *Sociological Forum* 22(1):104-111.

Springer, Kristen W. 2007. "Research or Rhetoric? A Response to Wilcox and Nock." *Sociological Forum*. 22(1). 112-117.

SECTION II – THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Week 3 (2/11): Survey of Family Theories

Sex Roles

Parsons, Talcott. 1942. "Age and Sex in the Social Structure of the United States." *American Sociological Review*, 7(5): 604-616.

Relative Resource/Family Power

Safilios-Rothschild, Constantina. 1970. "The Study of Family Power Structure: A Review 1960-1969." *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 32(4): 539-552

New Home Economics

Ben-Porath, Yoram. 1982. "Economics and the Family-Match or Mismatch? A Review of Becker's a Treatise on the Family." *Journal of Economic Literature*, 20(1): 52-64.

Psychoanalytic

Williams, Christine L. 1993. "Psychoanalytic Theory and the Sociology of Gender." In *Theory on Gender/Feminism on Theory* ed. Paula England. Chapter 7. pp. 131-150. Adeline de Gruyter, New York.

Life Course

Elder, Glen H. 1998. "The Life Course and Developmental Theory." *Child Development*. 69(1): 1-12.

Biosocial

Booth, Alan, Karen Carver, and Douglas A. Granger. 2000. "Biosocial Perspectives on the Family." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 62: 1018-1034.

Week 4 (2/18): Feminist Theories

Risman, Barbara. 1999. "Gender as Structure." *Gender Vertigo*. Yale University Press: New Haven. Chapter 2, pp. 13-44.

West, Candace and Don H. Zimmerman. 1987. "Doing Gender." *Gender & Society* 1(2):125-151.

Ferree, Myra Marx. 1990. "Beyond Separate Spheres: Feminism and Family Research." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 52(4):866-884.

Fox, Greer Litton and Velma McBride Murry. 2000. "Gender and Families: Feminist Perspectives and Family Research." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 62(4):1160-72.

Thompson, Linda. 1992. "Feminist methodologies for family studies." *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 54:3-18.

Week 5 (2/25): Shifting the Center: Race/Ethnic and Queer Perspectives on Family

Zinn, Maxine Baca. 2005. "Feminist Rethinking from Racial-Ethnic Families." In: *Shifting the Center: Understanding Contemporary Families*. Ferguson, Susan J. (Ed.) Chapter 2. pp.18-27. McGraw-Hill: New York.

Collins, Patricia Hill. 2000. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. Chapters 2-3, pp.19-66. Routledge: New York.

Dunham, Charlotte Chorn, Julie Harms Cannon and Bernadette Dietz. 2004. "Representing the Other in Sociology of the Family Texts." *Teaching Sociology*. 32(4), 374-384.

Glenn, Evelyn Nakano. 1983. "Split Household, Small Producer, and Dual Wage Earner: An Analysis of Chinese-American Family Strategies." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 45(1):35-46.

Weston, Kath. 1991. "The Politics of Gay Families." *Families We Choose*. Chapter 8, pp. 195-213. Columbia University Press. New York.

SECTION III – FOCUS WITHIN THE FAMILY

Week 6 (3/3): Power in Marriage

Komter, Aafke. 1989. "Hidden Power in Marriage." *Gender & Society* 3(2):187-216.

Pyke, Karen D. 1996. "Class-Based Masculinities: The Interdependence of Gender, Class, and Interpersonal Power." *Gender & Society* 10(5):527-549.

Walker, Alexis J. 1996. "Couples Watching Television: Gender, Power, and the Remote Control." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 58(4):813-823.

Johnson, Michael P. 1995. "Patriarchal Terrorism and Common Couple Violence: Two Forms of Violence Against Women." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 57(2):283-294.

Kristen W. Springer. "His and Her Marriage Today: Wives' Income and Husbands' Midlife Health." Under review at *Journal of Marriage and Family*

Week 7 (3/10): Household Labor

Coltrane, Scott. 2000. "Research on Household Labor: Modeling and Measuring the Social Embeddedness of Routine Family Work." *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 62, 1208-1233

diLeonardo, Micaela. 1987. "The Female World of Cards and Holidays: Women, Families and the Work of Kinship." *Signs*. 12(3): 440-453.

Hook, Jennifer L. 2006. "Care in Context: Men's Unpaid Work in 20 Countries: 1965-2003." *American Sociological Review* 71(4):639-60.

Thompson, Linda. 1991. "Family Work: Women's Sense of Fairness." *Journal of Family Issues*, 12, 181-196.

Brosnan, Sarah F. & Frans B. M. de Waal. 2003. "Monkeys Reject Unequal Pay." *Nature*. 425: 297-299.

Week 8 (3/17): Spring Break

Week 9 (3/24): Parenting

Chodorow, Nancy and Susan Contratto. 1992. "The Fantasy of the Perfect Mother," in Thorne and Yalom, eds. *Rethinking the Family: Some Feminist Questions*, 2nd edition. Chapter 10. pp. 191-214. Boston: Northeastern University Press.

Collins, Patricia Hill. 2000. "Black Women and Motherhood." *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. Chapter 6, pp.115-138. Routledge: New York.

Leviten-Reid, Catherine, Brenda Parker and Kristen W. Springer (alphabetical order). *Forthcoming*. "Learning Through Life: Balancing Graduate School and Motherhood." In *Informal Professionalization for Sociology Graduate Students*, edited by Ira Silver and Dave Shulman. Washington DC: American Sociological Association.

Coltrane, Scott. 1989. "Household Labor and the Routine Production of Gender." *Social Problems*. 36(5): 473-490.

Wall, Glenda and Wilfried Laurier. 2007. "How Involved Is Involved Fathering? An Exploration of the Contemporary Culture of Fatherhood." *Gender & Society*, 21(4): 508-527.

Week 10 (3/31): Children

Risman, Barbara J. 1999. "Ideology, Experience, Identity: The Complex Worlds of Children in Fair Families." *Gender Vertigo: American Families in Transition*. Chapter 6. pp. 128-150 in New Haven: Yale University Press.

Lareau, Annette. 2003. *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race and Family Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press, chapters 1, 3, 4, and 5. pp.1-13; 35-103.

Kathleen Gerson. 2002. "Moral Dilemmas, Moral Strategies, and the Transformation of Gender: Lessons from Two Generations of Work and Family Change" *Gender & Society* 16(1): 8-28.

Stacey, Judith and Timothy J. Biblarz. 2001. "(How) Does the Sexual Orientation of Parents Matter?" *American Sociological Review* 66(2):159-183.

Week 11 (4/7): Families Formed Outside of Marriage

Judith A. Seltzer. 2000. "Families Formed Outside of Marriage" *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 62(4): 1247-1268.

Andrew J. Cherlin. 1999. "Presidential Address: Going to Extremes: Family Structure, Children's Well-Being, and Social Science." *Demography*, 36(4): 421-428.

Charlotte J. Patterson. 2000. "Family Relationships of Lesbians and Gay Men." *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 62(4): 1052-1069.

Edin, Kathryn. 2000. "What Do Low-Income Single Mothers say about Marriage" *Social Problems*. 47(1): 112-133.

Barbara Risman. 1986. "Can Men 'Mother?' Life as a Single Father." *Family Relations*. 35(1): 95-102

Week 12 (4/14): Class Presentations

**SECTION IV: INTERSECTION OF FAMILIES
AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS:
MOTHERHOOD & REPRODUCTION AS A CASE STUDY**

Week 13 (4/21): Labor Market

Correll, Shelley J., Stephen Benard and In Paik. 2007. "Getting a Job: Is There a Motherhood Penalty?" *American Journal of Sociology*. 112: 1297–1338.

England, Paula, Michelle Budig, and Nancy Folbre. 2002. "Wages of Virtue: The Relative Pay of Care Work." *Social Problems* 49:455-473.

Stone, Pamela. 2007. *Opting Out?: Why Women Really Quit Careers and Head Home*. University of California Press.

Week 14: Medicine (Genetics/Technology)

**NOTE: I will be not be able to be at class on 4/28.
We will need to find a make-up day.**

Almeling, Rene. 2007. "Selling Genes, Selling Gender: Egg Agencies, Sperm Banks, and the Medical Market in Genetic Material." *American Sociological Review*. 72: 319-340.

Markens, Susan. 2007. *Surrogate Motherhood and the Politics of Reproduction*. University of California Press.

Week 15 (5/5): Law

Roberts, Dorothy. 1998. *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty*. Vintage. New York.

Final Papers Due on May 10th by 5pm