

SESP 319 FAMILY DEVELOPMENT IN A CHANGING SOCIETY

Northwestern University

Spring Quarter 2010

M-W 9:00am to 10:20am

Classroom: Annenberg G-22

Office: Annenberg 141

Office Hours M-W 8:30-9:00am, M 10:20am-12:00pm, and by appointment

Deborah Puntteney, Ph.D.

d-puntteney@northwestern.edu

847-467-2930

Course Description: This course critically examines the family as a social institution, and explores how it has been influenced and shaped by the shifting structure, demographics, and needs of society. We will examine the changing function and structure of family units over time; how changing ideas about gender roles and work shape family development; and some of the common themes associated with the family, including love, marriage, wealth, poverty, divorce, and violence. We will also look at contemporary issues in family formation and policy, and explore whether current policies are consistent with the reasons and manner in which people form families in the 21st century.

School of Education and Social Policy Academic Integrity Statement: Students in this course are expected to comply with the policies found in the booklet, *Academic Integrity at Northwestern University: A Basic Guide*. All final examinations must be submitted as electronic files as well as delivered in printed form. Written work may be electronically tested for plagiarized content. For details regarding academic integrity at Northwestern, visit: <http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/>. If you need a copy of the brochure, visit the SESP Student Affairs Office on the 1st floor of Annenberg Hall.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: In compliance with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, Northwestern University is committed to providing equal access to all programming. Students with Disabilities seeking accommodation are encouraged to contact the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 467-5530 or ssd@northwestern.edu. SSD is located in the basement of Scott Hall and has a website at <http://www.stuaff.northwestern.edu/ssd/>.

Course Requirements and Grading: Class attendance and active contribution is required. Class assignments may be turned in late only with permission, and will result in lost points; assignments will not be accepted more than 24 hours late without prior written permission from the professor. As part of participation, contributions can be made throughout the quarter of materials related to the family and will be shared with other students. For example, articles about the family you find in the media or on the internet, movies, or any other interesting reference to the family are very welcome.

Assigned Readings: The Course Packet is available from Quartet Copies on Clark Street. From time to time, additional readings and assignments will be handed out in class.

Points:

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| 1. Class attendance and thoughtful, informed participation | 30 points |
| 2. Interview assignments | 30 points |
| 3. Final project | 40 points |

Written Assignments: *All written assignments* must be delivered in hard copy on standard size paper, typed, double-spaced in size 12 font (preferably Times New Roman), pages stapled, with a header that includes the student's name, the date the assignment is due, and the title of the course.

There will be three interview assignments and you will have about ten days to complete each one. You will write no more than 3 pages for each of your interviews; the questions on which you should focus will be handed out in class. The final project will consist of a research paper in an area related to the family. Detailed expectations will be distributed mid-quarter. Final projects must be delivered in hard copy and electronically to both the instructor and the TA.

WEEK ONE: What is a Family? An Historical View of the Family

Monday March 29—Class One

Discussion:

- Course overview; introduction to instructor Deborah Puntenney and TA Constance Lindsay.
- Review the syllabus.
- What is a family? What are the roles within a family? What functions does a family serve?

Wednesday March 31—Class Two

Read in preparation for class:

- Engels, Friedrich (1884). *The origin of the family, private property, and the state*. Chapter 2, The monogamous family (pp. 125-146 only). New York: International Publishers (1972).
- Gies, Frances, & Gies, Joseph (1989). *Marriage and family in the Middle Ages*. Chapter 1: Historians discover the family (pp. 3-15); Chapter 15: Legacy (pp. 295-306). New York: Harper & Row.
- Hartog, Hendrik (2000). *Man and wife in America: a history*. Chapter 1: The scene of a marriage (pp. 6-39). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Discussion:

- How has family been defined over time and in different places? What kinds of expectations have defined the family? What kinds of legal relationships have defined the family in the US? What kinds of consistencies and inconsistencies have defined the US family through history?

WEEK TWO: What is a Family? (continued)

Monday April 5—Class Three

In preparation for class:

- Watch at least two of the following movies/series and come prepared to discuss them in class. Complete an assignment sheet for each film you watch. The movies are either on reserve at the NU library, available at the Mitchell Multimedia Center for viewing, or for rent at Video Adventure and other video rental stores.
 - Junebug
 - Secrets and Lies
 - Big Love (television series)
 - Fried Green Tomatoes
 - The Squid and the Whale
 - Imaginary Heroes
 - The Family Stone
 - The Savages
 - Eat, Drink, Man, Woman
 - Quinceañera

Discussion:

- Discuss the films. How is family defined in the films in terms of members? Relationships? Loyalties? Commitment? Which family reflects the values you associate with family?

Course Requirements:

- **DUE: film discussion sheets.**

Wednesday April 7—Class Four

Read in preparation for class:

- Frey, William H., Albrecht, Bill, & Yeasting, Jonathan (2001). *America by the numbers: A field guide to the U.S. population*. Chapter 8: Families—renegotiating norms (pp. 119-35). New York: The New Press.

- Goldscheider, Frances K., & Waite, Linda J. (1991). *New families, no families?: The transformation of the American home*. Chapter 2: Family trends since the baby boom: Decline or restructuring? (pp. 7-22). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Smith, David M., & Gates, Gary J. (2001). *Gay and lesbian families in the United States: Same-sex unmarried partner households*. Washington, DC: Human Rights Campaign.
- US Department of Health and Human Services (2004). *How Many Children Were Adopted in 2000 and 2001?* Washington, DC: Child Welfare Information Gateway. [not all pages in this report are included in the readings]

Discussion:

- What are the statistics? What are the hidden realities about families? How do these realities compare with the numbers?

WEEK THREE: The Family and Work

Monday April 12—Class Five

Read in preparation for class:

- Brannon, Linda (2002). *Gender: Psychological Perspectives*. Chapter 12: Careers and Work (pp. 304-332). London: Allyn and Bacon.
- Townsend, Nicholas W. (2002). *The Package Deal: Marriage, Work, and Fatherhood in Men's Lives*. Chapter 2: Package Deals and Scripts (pp. 30-49). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Moen, Phyllis (2003). Linked Lives: Dual Careers, Gender, and the Contingent Life Course. In W.R. Heinz & V.W. Marshall (Eds.), *Social Dynamics of the Life Course* (pp. 237-58). New York: Walter de Gruyter, Inc.

Discussion:

- Discuss first interview assignment.
- How is work defined in the private (family) and public (labor market) domains? Who fares best in the labor market? How are work decisions made among family members?

Course Requirements:

- **DUE: first interview assignment.**

Wednesday April 14—Class Six

Activity:

- Watch film in class: *The Double Shift* (47 minutes).

Discussion:

- In what ways does the film contribute to our understanding of families and work? What burdens for different kinds of work are placed on women and men?

WEEK FOUR: The Family and Poverty

Monday April 19—Class Seven

Read in preparation for class:

- Lang, Kevin (2007). *Poverty and Discrimination*. Chapter 2: Who is Poor? (pp. 31-62). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Roy, Kevin (2004). Three-Block Fathers: Spatial Perceptions and Kin-Work in Low-Income African American Neighborhoods. *Social Problems*, (51), 432-57.

- Polakow, Valerie (1993). *Lives on the edge: Single mothers and their children in the other America*. Chapter 3: The Other Motherhood (pp. 43-62); Chapter 4: Mothers' stories: Contingency continued (pp. 81-97). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Discussion:

- How does poverty limit the everyday experiences of families? How do the work and care decisions of poor families differ from other families?

Wednesday April 21—Class Eight

Activity:

- Watch film in class: *Waging a Living* (45 minutes).

Discussion:

- Discuss interviews on family in relationship to the readings.
- In what ways does the film contribute to our understanding of families in poverty?

Course Requirements:

- **DUE: second interview assignment.**

WEEK FIVE: The Family and Caregiving

Monday April 26—Class Nine

Read in preparation for class:

- Folbre, Nancy (2001). *The invisible heart: Economics and family values*. Chapter 2: The care penalty (pp. 22-52). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Silverstein, Louise B, & Auerbach, Carl F. (2002). Deconstructing the Essential Father. In Anne Hunter and Carrie Forden (Eds.), *Readings in the psychology of gender: Exploring our differences and commonalities* (pp. 245-62). London: Allyn and Bacon.
- Pesquera, Beatriz M. (1997). In the beginning, he wouldn't lift even a spoon: The division of household labor. In Louise Lamphere, Helena Ragone, & Patricia Zavella (Eds.), *Situated lives: Gender and culture in everyday life* (pp. 208-222). New York: Routledge.
- Casper, Lynne, M., & Bianchi, Suzanne M. (2002). *Continuity and change in the American family*. Chapter 6: Grandparenting (pp. 149-76). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Discussion:

- Which family members tend to do the majority of the care and household labor? How are decisions made about the distribution of care and household labor? What are some implications of the choices families make about how care work is distributed? How is the care dynamic altered when grandparents are involved?

Wednesday April 28—Class Ten

Read in preparation for class:

- Goodin, Robert E., & Gibson, Diane (2002). The decasualization of eldercare. In Eva Feder Kettay & Ellen K. Feder (Eds.), *The subject of care: Feminist perspectives on dependency* (pp. 246-56). Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Roszak, Theodore (1998). Retiring Boomers and the Politics of Compassion. In Olivia Smith (Ed.), *Aging in America* (pp. 25-31). New York: H.W. Wilson Company.
- Rimer, Sara (1998). Blacks Carry Load of Care for Their Elderly. In Olivia Smith (Ed.), *Aging in America* (pp.). New York: H.W. Wilson Company.

Activity:

- Watch film in class: Living Old (60 minutes).

Discussion:

- What do we know about aging? What do we know about the care of aging family members? How is this work handled and distributed in our society?

WEEK SIX: Non-Traditional Families

Monday May 3—Class Eleven

Read in preparation for class:

- Chamberlain, Jamie (2005). Adopting a new American family. *APA Monitor*, (36), 70-71.
- Ragone, H (1997). Chasing the blood tie: Surrogate mothers, adoptive mothers, and fathers. In Louise Lamphere, Helena Ragone, & Patricia Zavella (Eds.), *Situated Lives: Gender and culture in everyday life* (pp. 110-127). New York: Routledge.
- Haslanger, Sally, & Witt, Charlotte (2005). Introduction: Kith, kin, and family. In Sally Haslanger, & Charlotte Witt (Eds.), *Adoption matters: Philosophical and feminist essays* (pp. 1-15). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Cornell, Drucilla (2005). Adoption and its progeny: Rethinking family law, gender, and sexual difference. In Sally Haslanger, & Charlotte Witt (Eds.), *Adoption matters: Philosophical and feminist essays* (pp. 19-46). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Mitchard, Jacquelyn (2005). Which Ones Are Yours? In Pamela Kruger and Jill Smolowe (Eds.), *A Love Like No Other: Stories from Adoptive Parents*. New York: Riverhead Books.

Discussion:

- What kinds of families do people create? Are some forms of non-traditional families more legitimate than others? Why or why not?

Wednesday May 5—Class Twelve

Read in preparation for class:

- D'Emilio, John (1997). Capitalism and gay identity. In Roger N. Lancaster & Micaela di Leonardo (Eds.), *The gender/sexuality reader: Culture, history, political economy* (pp. 169-78). New York: Routledge
- Sullivan, Maureen (2004). *The family of woman: Lesbian mothers and their children and the undoing of gender*. Chapter 1: The emergence of lesbian-coparent families in postmodern society (pp. 17-39). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Lewin, Ellen (1993). *Lesbian mothers: Accounts of gender in American culture*. Chapter 4: Ties that endure (pp. 75-94). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Discussion:

- Discuss interviews on family in relationship to the readings.
- What kinds of families are legitimate? How do definitions of legitimacy correlate with definitions of family function? Why does it matter?

Course Requirements:

- **DUE: third interview assignment.**

WEEK SEVEN: Non-Traditional Families (Continued)

Monday May 10—Class Thirteen

Activity:

- Watch film in class: Daddy and Papa (50 minutes).

Discussion:

- What issues about family are brought up in this film? How do these issues parallel those of traditional families? What is the same? What is different?

Wednesday May 12—Class Fourteen

Read in preparation for class:

- Olson, T. (2010). The Conservative Case for Gay Marriage: Why Same-sex Marriage is an American Value. *Newsweek*, Jan. 9, 2010. DOWNLOAD from Blackboard.
- Review the Immigration Equality website. ONLINE at: www.immigrationequality.org
- Review the Human Rights Campaign website. ONLINE at: www.hrc.org/12129.htm

Activity:

- Guest speaker Danny Cohen

WEEK EIGHT: Special Issues in the Family Domain

Monday May 17—Class Fifteen

Read in preparation for class:

- Hartog, Hendrik (2000). *Man and wife in America: a history*. Chapter 8: The right to kill (pp. 218-41). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Finkelstein, Barbara (2000). A crucible of contradictions: Historical roots of violence against children in the United States. In Valerie Polakow (Ed.), *The public assault on America's children: poverty, violence, and juvenile injustice* (pp. 21-41). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Bartholet, Elizabeth (2005). Abuse and neglect, foster drift, and the adoption alternative. In Sally Haslanger, & Charlotte Witt (Eds.), *Adoption matters: Philosophical and feminist essays* (pp. 223-33). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Discussion:

- What kinds of historical roots predict recent and current trends in family violence? How are these traditions associated with inequalities within the family in the present? What other forms of oppression exist within the family?

Wednesday May 19—Class Sixteen

Meetings with Professor Puntenney or Constance Lindsay about final project during class time.

WEEK NINE: The Family and Public Policy

Monday May 24—Class Seventeen

Read in preparation for class:

- Fraser, Nancy, & Gordon, Linda. (2002). A Genealogy of *Dependency*: Tracing a Keyword of the Welfare State. In Eva Feder Kittay & Ellen K. Feder (Eds.), *The Subject of Care: Feminist Perspectives on Dependency* (pp. 14-39). New York: Rowman & Littlefield.

- Feder, Judith, & Levine, Carol (2004). Explaining the paradox of long-term care policy: An example of dissonant cultures. In Carol Levine & Thomas H. Murray (Eds.), *The cultures of caregiving: Conflict and common ground among families, health professionals, and policy makers* (pp. 103-112). Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Stacy, Judith (1997). The neo-family values campaign. In Roger N. Lancaster & Micaela di Leonardo (Eds.), *The gender/sexuality reader: Culture, history, political economy* (pp. 453-470). New York: Routledge.
- Polokoff, Nancy D. (2008). *Beyond (Straight and Gay) Marriage: Valuing all Families Under the Law*. Chapter 7: Valuing all Families (pp. 123-145). Boston: Beacon Press.

Wednesday May 26—Class Eighteen

Activity:

- Small group discussion of families and possible future directions for the family. What traditions should we keep? What changes should we accept? What would be ideal?

WEEK TEN: The Family: Where Do We Go From Here?

Monday May 31—NO CLASS, MEMORIAL DAY

Wednesday June 2—Class Nineteen

Read in preparation for class:

- Goldscheider, Frances. K., & Waite, Linda. J. (1991). *New families, no families?: The transformation of the American home*. Chapter 11: The future of the home in the 21st century (pp. 192-209). Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Folbre, Nancy (2001). *The invisible heart: Economics and family values*. Chapter 3: Measuring success (pp. 53-80). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- United Nations (2004). *World declaration for a Comprehensive Family Policy*. Sanya, China: United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance. <http://unpan3.un.org:8080/query.html?qt=sanya+declaration&charset=iso-8859-1>
- Okin, Susan Moller (1989). *Justice, gender, and the family*. Chapter 8: Conclusion: Toward a humanist justice (pp. 170-186). New York: Basic Books.

Discussion:

- What are realistic possibilities for families in the 21st century? To what extent will families form themselves according to dated definitions, or continue to define for themselves what a family is? Where do we go from here? What are the limits and boundaries of “family?” To what extent is the US likely to join the international community in a flexible understanding of family that recognizes its “diversity and peculiarity?”

WEEK of June 7—No Meeting: Finals Week

- **DUE: final exam by June 10 at noon.**