

Oklahoma Scholar-Leadership Enrichment Program
March 10-14, 2010
At the University of Oklahoma
Marriage and Family

Scholar: Stephanie Coontz

Course Description:

Everyone knows that marriage, parenting, and family life have changed immensely in the past 40 years. But there is a lot of confusion about why those changes occurred, what their consequences have been, and how these changes vary by race, class, gender, and sexuality. This class will explore what is actually new and what is not in marriage patterns, sexuality, the experience of growing up, and family formation. We will discuss the social origins of dilemmas that are often experienced as purely personal, exploring the historical roots and sociological determinants of contemporary marital and parenting dilemmas. Students will learn why assessing the societal consequences and personal implications of these changes is more complex than it may initially appear.

Book List:

Mary Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865* (Cambridge University Press).

Stephanie Coontz, *Marriage, a History: How Love Conquered Marriage* (Viking Press)

Coontz, Raley, and Parsons, eds, *American Families: A Multicultural Reader* (Routledge)

Beth Bailey, *From Front Porch to Back Seat: Courtship in 20th Century America* (Johns Hopkins)

Andrew Cherlin, ed, *Public and Private Families: A Reader* (fifth edition: Johns Hopkins)

Syllabus:

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE READINGS FOR THE SECOND DAY OF CLASS ARE LONG AND DENSE. MAKE SURE TO GET AHEAD ON THESE WELL IN ADVANCE OF CLASS

I. Wednesday, March 10

“In all their [not quite] infinite variety”: Cross-cultural and historical variations in family life, marriage, and sexuality

Readings:

Coontz, *Marriage A History*, pp. 15-49

West and Zimmerman, "Doing Gender," in Cherlin, pp. 47-56

Nemoto, "Intimacy, Desire, and the Construction of Self," in *American Families*, pp. 422-32

Schwartz and Rutter, "Sexual Desire and Gender," in Cherlin, pp. 132-140

Tey Medow and Judith Stacey, "Keyword: Families" from *Contexts*, Fall 2006 (also appears in *The Contexts Reader*, Jeff Goodwin and James Jasper, eds, WW Norton, 2008), pp. 43-47, with discussion questions)

II. Thursday, March 11

The Emergence of the "Modern" Family

Readings:

Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle class*, pp. 18-104, 145-85, 230-42

Bailey, *Front Porch to Back Seat*, pp. 13-24, 77-96

Evelyn Glenn, "Split Household," in *American Families*, pp. 81-93

III. Friday, March 12

Marriage, Then and Now

Readings:

Coontz, "History of the Family," in Cherlin, pp. 30-35

Coontz, *Marriage, a History*, pp. 229-301

Casper and Bianchi, "A 'Quieting' of Social Change," in Cherlin, pp. 5-13

Bailey, *From Front Porch to Back Seat*, pp. 141-43

Meezun and Rauch, "Gary Marriage, Same-Sex Parenting" in Cherlin, pp. 345-53

IV. Saturday, March 13

Parents, Children, and the Transition to Adulthood

Readings:

Steven Mintz, "Huck's Raft excerpt," in *American Families*, pp. 96-106

Cotter, England, and Hermsen, "Moms and Jobs," in *American Families*, pp. 379-386

Annette Lareau, "Invisible Inequality," in Cherlin, pp. 82-102

Annette Lareau, "Unequal Childhoods," in *American Families*, pp. 400-414

Furstenberg et al, "Growing Up Is Harder to Do," in Cherlin, pp. 36-41

Furstenberg, "Family Change and Family Diversity" in Cherlin, 359-70

England and Folbre, "The Cost of Caring," in Cherlin pp. 176-182

Jacobs and Gerson, "Work and American Families," in *American Families*, pp. 454-465

Saturday evening: Pizza dinner and film : "Hoop Dreams"

V. Sunday, March 14
Race, Poverty, and Family Life

Edin and Kefalas, "Unmarried with Children," in Cherlin pp. 167-73

Nancy Folbre and Stephanie Coontz, "Marriage, Poverty, and Public Policy." CCF briefing paper:
<http://www.contemporaryfamilies.org/subtemplate.php?t=briefingPapers&ext=marriagepovertypublicpoli>

Sugrue, "Poverty in the Era of Welfare Reform," in American Families, pp. 325-34
Raley, "Avenue to Adulthood," in American Families, pp. 338-48
Pugh, "Windfall Child Rearing," in American Families, pp. 366-75

Paula England and Kathryn Edin, "Understanding Low-Income Unmarried Families with Children." CCF briefing paper:
<http://www.contemporaryfamilies.org/subtemplate.php?t=briefingPapers&ext=lowincomecouples>

Heymann, Earle and Hayes, "How Does the U.S. Rank in Work Policies for Individuals and Families?" CCF briefing paper:
<http://www.contemporaryfamilies.org/subtemplate.php?t=briefingPapers&ext=workpolicies>