Please note: No class on Sept. 17 (Rosh Hashanah)

SOCIOLOGY OF THE FAMILY
Sociology 2300:001
Dr. Donna Shai
Fall 2004  MWF 12:30-1:20
TOLENTINE 315

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Focusing on the evolving family, especially in the United States, we will consider how the lives of ordinary men and women have been reshaped by social forces. We will investigate the taken-for-granted world by studying the intimate life of families. The family will be explored from a variety of perspectives: literature, social problems, law and diversity. Finally, we will look at the future of the family as predicted by sociologists.

COURSE GOALS

1) To provide the student with a knowledge of a) the relevant facts and theories in the field of the sociology of the family, b) how the subject is investigated from a sociological perspective, and c) the variety of forms the family takes among ethnic groups in the U.S. and in other cultures.

2) To have students be exposed to a wide range of material on the family including sociological research, fiction and films.

BOOKS TO BE PURCHASED

Boss, Ambiguous Loss: Learning to Live with Unresolved Grief (paperback)
Bray and Kelly, Stepfamilies: Love, Marriage and Parenting in the First Decade (paperback)
Cohen, Dirty Details: the Days and Nights of a Well Spouse (paperback)

HANDOUTS AND ARTICLES ON WEBCT

Access classroom handouts through webct. Print out all handouts and bring the handouts and articles (electronic reserves) to each class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Regular attendance, two papers, and a final exam.

GRADES

Final grades will be based on two papers (20% each), class participation (20%), and a final (40%).
SYLLABUS

Please note: After the first week, reading assignments are expected to be completed by the beginning of the week in which they are assigned.

Week One (Aug. 25-30) Orientation to the course; The sociological perspective on the family; Family papers (paper 2 is on webct); The language of books in sociology (webct); “Which of these is a family?” (webct); What is a family?” (webct).
Assignment: Print out handouts and appropriate articles from webct and bring to the next and subsequent classes.

Week Two (Sept. 1-3, 8, 10) The present state of the family (webct); Three views on why the American family has declined (webct); Study guide to Hochschild’s “The emotional geography of work and family life” (webct)
Assignment due: Hochschild, “The emotional geography of work and family life” (webct)

(No class Sept. 17)
Assignment: start paper One

Week Three (Sept. 13, 15): The American family over the past two centuries: form and habitat (transparencies); The 19th century family and discussion of Edith Wharton’s short story; The “modern” family (1940-1960) and discussion of “greedy institutions” and the 1950s family; “How to be a good wife” (webct); The “postmodern” family (1960s and beyond); “Relatively speaking” (webct); Citing sources in your paper (webct).
Assignment due: Wharton, “The other two” in Roman Fever and Other Stories (webct)

Week Four (Sept. 20-24) Theories on love and marriage: Freud on the “family romance”; Diagram of emotional development (webct); Excerpt from The Custom of the Country (webct); Frankl on “the meaning of love”; “The three layers of the human person” (webct); Becker and Fung on the economics of dating and marriage; Romantic love and economic behavior (webct).
Assignment due: Freud, “Contributions to the psychology of love” (On Reserve and on webct)
Frankl, “On the meaning of love”(webct)

Week Five (Sept 27-Oct. 1) Ethnicity and the Family (webct); The major issues; “Questions” (webct); The Cuban American family; study guide on “El Super” (webct).
Assignment due: See film “El Super” (I.M.S., basement, Falvey)
Perez-Firmat, “Earth to Papi, earth to Papi” (webct)

Week Six (Oct. 4-8) Asian-American families: families from India.
Assignment due: Lahiri, “The third and final continent” (short story)(webct)
Chandra, “Saree of the Gods” (short story) (webct)
**Paper One due in class Oct. 18:** “Do You Believe in Love at First Sight?  
In a discussion involving the ideas of Freud, Frankl, Becker and Fung, discuss whether “love at first sight” is possible or is an illusion. Make the argument for each position. Use examples from your other readings. Discuss your ideas with a friend or classmate and report on the comparison. Be sure to cite sources in the text according to your worksheet and include your references list. Attachments not accepted.

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**Week Seven (Oct. 18-22)**  
Collect papers; Childhood as a modern invention; Children as depicted in paintings in the Middle Ages (webct); Socialization for emotion; The suburban family and Baumgartner’s concept of “moral minimalism”.  
Assignment due: Hochschild, “Between the toe and the heel” and “Gender, status and feeling” (webct).

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**Week Eight (Oct. 25-29)**  
Family violence; Family development and family therapy perspectives.  
Assignment due: Boss, *Ambiguous Loss*  
Gelles, “A life course approach to family violence” (webct).

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**Week Nine (Nov. 1-5)** Family violence continued: a feminist perspective and a social learning perspective; Two cases of family violence (webct); Cross-cultural aspects; “shaken baby syndrome”; Ambiguous loss: Situations and summary (webct).  
Assignment due: Finish Boss

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**Week Ten (Nov. 8-12)** Poverty and the family; “Suburban poverty belies the image of affluence” (webct); Family poverty and house fires in Philadelphia: a case study.  
Assignment due: Bray and Kelly, chapters 1-4, 7-9.

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**Paper two due Nov. 15** (see Webct for directions)  
Week Eleven (Nov. 15-19) Collect papers; Divorce; Risk factors for divorce (webct); Divorce Law (webct); Remarriage; The stepfamily, “An American Stepfamily” (film)  
Assignment due: start Cohen, *Dirty Details*

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**Week Twelve (Nov. 22, 29, Dec. 1)** Illness and the Family: the Individual and the Community; “Whose problem is it, anyway?” (webct) -- answer questions.  
Assignment due: Karp, “Family ties” (webct)  
Finish Cohen, *Dirty Details*

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**Week Thirteen (Dec. 3-8)** Community as Family: the kibbutz family in Israel: film “Kibbutz”; Discuss film “Kibbutz” and the recent changes in the kibbutz.  
Assignment due: Review for final exam.

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**Week Fourteen (Dec. 10, 13)**  
The future of the family: different scenarios. Final TBA.
### IMPORTANT DATES:

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 17</td>
<td>No class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 18</td>
<td>Paper one due</td>
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<td>Nov. 15</td>
<td>Paper two due</td>
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<td>TBA</td>
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### COURSE POLICY

1. **Books:** It will be important for you to have your own books and to bring them to class when asked. It is best to purchase texts immediately since the bookstore may not stock them after the initial sales period.

2. **Attendance:** Students are responsible for what is covered in the classroom, for announcements made and for work assigned. It is expected that students will attend all sessions. Since examinations will include material which is not in the text or in the library, it is unlikely that a student would be able to do well in the course with frequent absences. Also, class participation will be taken into consideration in the assigning of grades. Excessive absences (defined as more than 6 unexcused absences) will result in the lowering of your grade by one full letter grade. An excused absence is defined as one that is serious, urgent or mandatory and documented on official letterhead by a physician, University official or clergyman.

3. **Examinations and Papers:** There will be two papers and a final examination. Notice of inability to take the exam must be prior to the exam or within 48 hours. Full credit will only be given for work handed in by the deadline. Late papers must be initialed and dated by the Sociology Department. **Papers will have one-half letter grade deducted per day late.**

### Course Guidelines for Grades

The examinations in this course are the most important factor in determining a student's grade. The following represent the grading criteria which incorporate the official university grade definitions.

- **A** is the highest academic grade possible, an honor grade which is reserved for accomplishment that is distinctive and demonstrably outstanding. On examinations, question answers reflect that the student has a superior mastery of course material and a very high degree of understanding. Questions are answered completely and thoughtfully. Not only does the answer reflect the student's thorough familiarity with the material but that he/she can discuss it intelligently, apply it, when asked, to other material, and come up with examples of his/her own. Any errors are likely to be minor. ("A" students usually participate in class discussions and raise thoughtful questions. When they are not sure of something, they ask for clarification.)

- **B** is a grade that denotes achievement considerably above the acceptable standard. Good mastery of course material is evident in examination answers. Student can answer most questions asked but some answers may be incomplete or incorrect, lacking the thorough mastery demonstrated by examinations graded "A".

- **C** is a grade which indicates a satisfactory degree of attainment. It is the average grade that may be
expected of a student of average ability who gives to the work a reasonable amount of time and effort. This grade implies familiarity with the content of the course and acceptable mastery of course material as evidenced by examination answers. In exams there may be gaps in the student's explanation. He/she may not be completely familiar with all course material but shows an overall comprehension. Sometimes a "C" grade results from a number of careless errors. Major questions may be answered in a way as to imply lack of thorough preparation or mastery.

D is a grade given when examinations show a limited understanding of course materials, meeting only the minimum requirements for passing the course. It signifies a quality of achievement which falls below the average acceptable standard for the course. Student makes serious errors in discussing sociological research. Explanation may be over-generalized, suggesting hasty or careless preparation. The student may have poor attendance resulting in lack of important information needed in exam. The student may not have taken adequate notes or may have borrowed notes which were inadequate in themselves. Important sociological terms may be used incorrectly or student may be unfamiliar with them. While in most cases the student is aware of lack of preparation, occasionally a student is truly surprised that cursory minimum effort or careless work is not sufficient for an average or above-average grade.

F Student's examination work does not come up to the minimal standards for the course. Many questions may be left unanswered or are incorrectly answered due to lack of familiarity with material. Student may not have read assigned work, may have read it quickly and not reviewed it sufficiently before examination or may have read and reviewed it but failed to convey that impression. Answers may be disjointed, confused, and/or include irrelevant material. Theory may be totally misunderstood or severely distorted. Parts of ideas may be "made-up" by student to cover lack of familiarity.
Guide to Exams

1. Attend classes regularly. You are responsible for all material presented in class.

2. Read all assignments. Questions will be specific. You will not be able to answer from general knowledge.

3. Answer all questions. Follow directions. Do not assume that there is a choice of question unless that is specifically stated. If there is a choice offered, answer only the question(s) required.

4. Read the question carefully. There may be introductory material. Answer what is specifically asked. Answer all parts of the question. Be as clear, precise and detailed as you can.

5. If you are asked to discuss a concept or to write an essay on a subject, do not be too brief or over-generalize. Never assume that you can leave out crucial information "because the professor knows the article."

6. If you are asked to refer to a concept in an essay, be sure to mention it specifically by name in your discussion.

7. Write legibly. Sometimes a question cannot be graded unless every word can be read. Under these circumstances, your exam will not be graded. An "incomplete" will be given until the exam can be read.

Guide to Writing Papers

1. Always follow directions for a written assignment. Complete all parts of the assignment as stated. If you have any questions about it or have problems in carrying it out, do not hesitate to consult me.

2. Try not to confuse fact and opinion.

3. Be sure your generalizations are sufficiently supported.

4. To avoid accidental plagiarism, acknowledge the source of any idea that is not general knowledge. When you find a passage that you want to use, take it down verbatim (copy every word, every capital letter, and every mark of punctuation exactly as in the original.) You may also paraphrase someone’s idea by changing the words completely and leaving out quotation marks. You still must give a citation. Use sociological style. Sociological style uses an in-text citation, e.g. (Smith, 1997:33) for a direct quote and (Smith, 1997) for an indirect quote. An indirect quote means summarizing someone’s ideas in your own words. A full listing in alphabetical order appears at the end of the paper on a page entitled “References”. The following are sample citations for a book and an article in sociological style:


For references from the Web, give the website, date and author, if provided.

5. Do not assume that you can leave out crucial information "because the professor knows the article." You must always give the name of the author whose works you are discussing, and the name of the book from which you are drawing your ideas.

6. If you are asked to discuss concepts, always define them in general. Examples alone are usually insufficient.

7. Write in paragraphs. A paragraph is a unit of thought made up of related sentences. The first sentence is indented about five spaces. A new paragraph signals a change in the direction of thought. It is impossible to say how long a paragraph should be, since personal style is important. A very rough rule of thumb would be about 120-150 words. Scholarly essays tend to have longer paragraphs than journalistic ones.

8. Avoid sentence fragments. A fragment is a part of a sentence which cannot stand alone but which begins with a capital letter and ends with a period. The following are some examples: "When the party broke up.", "Everyone else having gone home.", "All Americans whether they live in the city or the countryside."

9. Do not use fused sentences or the comma splice (also called "run-on"). Fused sentences are two or more sentences run together without any punctuation. An example is "It was late we went home." Comma splice is the careless linking of two sentences with a comma. "The waves were high, he could not swim to shore."

10. Use the apostrophe to indicate possession, e.g., "Gloria's brother". Use an apostrophe to mark omissions in contracted words: 't's, didn't, you're, there's. Do not use the apostrophe with pronouns such as its, ours, or theirs.

11. Proofread your paper and correct mistakes before handing it in. Check for spelling mistakes and "typos" (careless errors). Read each line carefully to check for missing words or unclear references.