



Seminar on the Family (SOC 542)

Dr. Chris Wienke

Spring 2013

T 6-8:30pm (Faner 3410)

At the outset of the 21st century, American family patterns show little resemblance to the breadwinner-homemaker household that predominated during the mid-20th century. Often mislabeled “traditional,” this family form has dwindled from almost 60 percent of American households in 1960 to less than 15 percent today. In its place has risen a diverse range of arrangements, including dual-earning marriages, single-parent households, cohabiting couples, blended families, same-sex intimacies, and unmarried, childless adults. This graduate seminar will explore the causes, contours, and consequences of this “family revolution” by examining the theoretical and political debates that it has spawned and by reviewing the empirical evidence that might help resolve these debates. Readings will include major works by pioneering scholars as well as recent empirical investigations, both qualitative and quantitative, from family sociologists. We will begin by reviewing major family trends and discussing classic and contemporary theories of the family as well as debates about the family and its changing and diverse forms and functions. Then we will turn to topics that dominate current research on family change and variation. Students will be asked to write reactions to readings, to discuss readings in class, and to conduct and present their own research.

Popenoe: *Disturbing the Nest: Family Change in Modern Societies*

Giddens: *Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love, and Eroticism in Modern Societies*

Cherlin: *The Marriage-Go-Round: The State of Marriage and Family in America Today*

Klinenberg: *Going Solo: The Extraordinary Rise and Surprising Appeal of Living Alone*

Doucet: *Do Men Mother? Fathering, Care, and Domestic Responsibility*

Moore: *Invisible Families: Gay Identities, Relationships, and Motherhood among Black Women*

Stone: *Opting Out? Why Women Really Quit Careers and Head Home*

Gerson: *Unfinished Revolution: Coming of Age in a New Era of Gender, Work, and Family*

Edin & Kafalis: *Promises I Can Keep: Why Poor Women Put Motherhood before Marriage*

Lareau: *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life*

Hackstaff: *Marriage in a Culture of Divorce*