

School for New Learning

DePaul University

Course Syllabus:

HC 321 Contemporary Perspectives on the American Family: Unraveling the Myth

Autumn 2007 – 2008

1. General Information

Faculty: Kevin Brandyon Quinn, ABD/Ph.D.
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Location: DePaul University, Loop Campus

Dates/Time: Monday Evenings: / 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Credit Hours: 4 Quarter Hours

2. Course Description and Faculty Biographical Sketch

- All of us are experts, of sorts, on the family; we have lived in families, observed family dynamics, and compared our own family experiences with those of others. Families have been at the center of our personal and emotional lives. This course will provide an opportunity to look at something familiar (the family) in a new way. We will focus on the family as a social institution—a set of structured social arrangements for meeting certain human needs—and we will examine the larger social forces that shape those structures.

- Kevin Brandyon Quinn ABD/Ph.D. is a former student of the SNL program (2001) where he graduated with honors. Deciding to continue his education he was accepted to five graduate programs to include the University of Illinois at Urbana – Champaign where he will receive his Ph.D. in Sociology with a concentration in the intersections of Race, Class, Gender and Sexuality in September 2007. Kevin has won many awards for his teaching during his tenure at UIUC and has been

voted one the best 100 instructors each semester by his students. He is thrilled to be back at the School for New Learning.

- This course description and biographical sketch can also be located in the School's registration materials.

3. Competencies:

- **AG3** – Can assess the assumptions and implications of significant ideas about human experience.
- **H2X** – Can argue a theoretical position regarding the roles that institutions play in the misconceptions and realities of the contemporary American familial unit.
- **H3X** – Can argue a theoretical position of the realities and misconceptions of one's family in American society.
- **H4** - Can analyze power relations among racial, social, cultural, or economic groups in the United States.
- **FX**

4. Learning Experience

Section 1:

This course examines the societal forces shaping aspects of stable and changing family relations; both nuclear and constructed in the United States, focusing on social-structural factors affecting union formation and dissolution (traditional marriage, the gay marriage debate, cohabitation, and divorce); parenting; traditional and “queer”, the gendered division of paid work, caring work, responsibility and authority; and the role of the state in supporting families. To better appreciate the depth of contemporary changes in U.S. families, we will begin the semester with an examination of colonial, Victorian and 19th-century American family life.

We will pay particular attention to diverse patterns of family structure and family relationships by social class, race-ethnicity, age, gender and sexuality. We will engage with these topics in a variety of ways, including student presentations, lectures and class discussion, readings.

Attendance and participation are essential. In the event of an absence it is imperative that you (1) let me know ahead of time, and (2) contact a classmate ahead of time to be your "tutor" for the missed session. Always consult our Blackboard for handouts and assignments.

*Students missing more than **one** class of our eleven week course will not have met the requirements for a passing grade.*

Course Requirements and Grading:

-Newsflash (5% of final grade):

Up to three students will sign up for one date during the semester when he or she will be responsible for bringing in a recent news article on a topic related to families in the United States and for leading a brief discussion. You will need to make copies for your classmates.

-Class participation (25% of final grade):

A substantial portion of this course is built around in-class discussion. These conversations are meant to challenge your assumptions about families and to engage you in an active process of questioning as well as to help you learn to support your arguments with evidence. For these discussions to be fruitful, students need not only to be present, but also to have done the readings and be prepared to talk about it. You will need to take brief response notes for each group of readings. These notes are for you to refer to during the discussions. At the end of each class sessions, you will hand in your response to the readings from the following week.

These responses will also be used to check attendance. There will be a total of 10 of these various kinds of written assignments throughout the semester. *For full*

*credit on the class participation portion of your grade, you must hand in a minimum of 9 of these assignments. Late assignments are **not** accepted.*

1. Outcomes:

By the end of the semester, you should be able to place your own personal experience of families in a larger social context, and you should have developed a socio-historical understanding of the strains on families in modern industrial societies.

6. Evidence the Students will Submit:

-Midterm (20% of final grade):

An in-class midterm exam will be given on **October 15, 2007**. For this midterm, you will be asked to write a brief essay in response to one of three possible questions. In addition you will need to turn in your argument and /or hypothesis for your final paper.

-Small group project and presentation (15 % of final grade):

At the beginning of the course, students will be assigned to 5 small groups for projects and presentations. Early in the semester, the groups will have an opportunity to meet in class to discuss their topic and decide how to carry out their research. On **October 22, 2007** your group will hand in a brief statement of your intended project. Group presentations will begin with Group One's presentation on **November 5, 2007** and continue on the dates given below in the readings and in-class activities calendar. Presentations should be planned to take approximately 25 to 30 minutes.

-Final Paper (35% of Grade):

The final project will consist of a 15-20 page research paper; properly cited, with a bibliography, drawn from the course readings, lecture/discussion and articles from academic journals. All final papers must be grammar and spell checked, correctly cited in APA, ASA or MLA format. *Consistency is the key.* The

bibliography or Works Cited is in addition to the 15-20 page requirements. Failure to comply with these requests will affect your final grade. Late papers will *not* be accepted unless prior arrangements have been agreed upon and an **Incomplete** has been negotiated

The final research paper is due **November 26, 2007** by midnight one week after the final class meeting via an e-mail attachment. “Hard” copies will not be accepted.

The DePaul Student Handbook defines plagiarism as follows: “Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following: (a) The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or in part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else’s. (b) Copying of any source in whole or in part with only minor changes in wording or syntax even with acknowledgement. (c) Submitting as one’s own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment which has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency. (d) The paraphrasing of another’s work or ideas without proper acknowledgement.” Plagiarism will result in a failure of the assignment or possibly of the course. If you are unsure of how to cite a source, ask!

7. Criteria for Assessment

All Work will be Evaluated As Follows:

A= designates work of high quality; reflects thorough and comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand; reflects a clearly identifiable thesis and argument that demonstrates cogent and creative development and support of idea.

B= designates work of good quality; reflects clearly organized and comprehensive understanding of issues at hand; presents substantive thesis and argument with evident development and support of ideas.

C= designates work which minimally meets requirements set forward in assignment; reflects some organization and development of ideas but develops argument in superficial or simplistic manner; may only address part of the assignment or be otherwise incomplete.

D= designates work of poor quality which does not meet minimum requirements set forth in the assignment; demonstrates poor organization of ideas and/or inattention to development of ideas, grammar, and spelling; treatment of material is superficial and/or simplistic; may indicate that student has not done reading assignments thoroughly.

- *Unfinished work or work requiring revision will be given an Incomplete (IN) grade. In order to qualify for the IN, students must have regularly attended class, and must have completed two thirds of assignments. Work not submitted by the due date must be submitted within 2 weeks, and will be assessed on a P/F basis only.*

7. Class Schedule

Required Readings:

Cherlin, Andrew (2008). *Public and Private Families*. New York: McGraw Hill.

D'Emilio, John and Estelle B. Freedman (1997). *Intimate Matters*. University of Chicago Press.

Ehrenreich, Barbara (1983). *The Hearts of Men: American Dreams and the Flight from Commitment*. New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday.

A packet of additional *required* readings from academic journals and anthologies will be available on-line *E-Reserve*.

Class Discussion Norms:

On many occasions in this class, we will be talking about issues that many of us feel very strongly about. In order to encourage participation by everyone, it is important that we all abide by certain conventions in our discussions. This does not mean "political correctness," but it does mean that all points of view must be expressed politely and with respect for the differing opinions of others. Disagreement is fine—it is even actively

encouraged—but insults or personal attacks on those who disagree with you will be admonished.

Calendar of Topics, In-Class Activities, and Readings:

Class Topic	In-Class Activities	Readings (to be read <i>before</i> this day's lecture)
<p>Week 1. September 10, 2007</p>	<p>1. Introduction</p> <p>2. Assignment to groups</p> <p>3. Signup for newsflash</p>	
<p>Week 2. September 17, 2007</p> <p>I. Family as an Institution: Theory</p>	<p>1. Newsflash 1 & 2</p> <p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>2. Lecture / Discussion</p> <p>A. _____</p> <p>B. _____</p> <p>C. _____</p> <p>3. Small groups—meeting to Discuss Project</p>	<p>Cherlin, Chapter 1, pp. 4-33.</p> <p>D' Emilio and Freedman, Part 1</p> <p><i>E-RESERVES:</i></p> <p>1. Gittins, Diana. 1993. “The Family in Question: What is the Family? Is it Universal?” Pp. 7- 17</p> <p>2. Collier, Jane et al. 1997. “Is There Really a Family?” In <u>The Gender & Sexuality Reader</u>. Lancaster & di Leonardo eds. Routledge: New York. Pp 71-81</p> <p>3. Sussman, Marvin B. 1975. “The Four F’s of Variant Family Forms and Marriage Styles.” In <u>The Family Coordinator</u>, 24 (4) Pp. 563-76.</p> <p>4. Kurdeck, Lawrence. 1998. “Relationship Outcomes and their Predictors: Longitudinal Evidence from Heterosexual Married, Gay Cohabiting and Lesbian Cohabiting Couples.”</p>
<p>Week 3. September 24, 2007</p> <p>II. Pre-Industrial Families I: Economic and demographic contexts</p> <p>III. Pre-Industrial Families II: Marriage, parenting and gender roles in the pre-industrial household</p>	<p>1. Newsflash 3 & 4</p> <p>3. _____</p> <p>4. _____</p> <p>2. Lecture / Discussion</p> <p>A. _____</p> <p>B. _____</p> <p>C. _____</p> <p>3. Reading 1 response due</p>	<p>Cherlin, Chapter 2, pp. 36-45</p> <p><i>E-RESERVES:</i></p> <p>1. Gillis, John. “Mothers Giving Birth to Motherhood.” Pp. 140-151.</p> <p>2. Wilson, Lisa. “Patriarchy and Marriage in Colonial New England.” Pp. 49-58</p> <p>3. West, Elliott. “Children in the Plains Frontier”. Pp. 216-224.</p>

<p>Week 4. October 1, 2007</p> <p>IV. Pre-Industrial Families III: Childhood and young adulthood</p> <p>V. Industrialization & the Family I Economic and demographic contexts</p>	<p>1. Newsflash 5 & 6</p> <p>5. _____</p> <p>6. _____</p> <p>2. Lecture / Discussion</p> <p>A. _____</p> <p>B. _____</p> <p>C. _____</p> <p>3. Small group discussion mtg. #1</p> <p>4. Reading 2 response due</p>	<p>Cherlin, Chapter 2, Pp 45 -50</p> <p>E-RESERVES:</p> <p>1. Gillis, John. (1996) "Making Time for Family: The Invention of Family Time(s) and the Reinvention of Family History," <i>Journal of Family History</i> 21(1):4-18.</p> <p>2. From Coontz, <i>Marriage, a History</i>, Chapter 9, "From Yoke Mates to Soulmates," 145-160.</p> <p>3. from Frank, <i>Life with Father</i>, Chapter 2, "Their own proper task: Nineteenth century advice to fathers," pp. 23-54</p>
<p>Week 5. October 8, 2007</p> <p>VI. Industrialization & the Family II</p> <p>VII. Marriage, parenting and gender roles in the industrial household: Alienating men and domesticating women?</p>	<p>1. Newsflash 6 & 7</p> <p>6. _____</p> <p>7. _____</p> <p>2. Lecture / Discussion</p> <p>A. _____</p> <p>B. _____</p> <p>C. _____</p> <p>3. Reading 3 response due</p>	<p>D'Emilio and Freedman, Part II</p>
<p>Week 6: October 15, 2007</p> <p>VIII. Industrialization & the Family III:</p> <p>IX. Domesticating children: The transformation from sinners to little angels</p>	<p>Midterm</p> <p>1. Newsflash 8 & 9</p> <p>8. _____</p> <p>9. _____</p> <p>2. Lecture / Discussion</p> <p>A. _____</p> <p>B. _____</p> <p>C. _____</p> <p>3. Small group discussion mtg. # 2</p> <p>4. Reading 4 response due</p>	<p>E-RESERVES:</p> <p>1. from Minz <i>Huck's Raft</i>, Chapter 4, "Inventing the Middle-Class Child," pp. 75-93</p> <p>2. from Foucault, Michel. <i>The History of Sexuality: Volume I</i>, pp.</p>
<p>Week 7:</p>		

<p>October 22, 2007</p> <p>X. The "Modern" Family I: Economic and demographic context government policy (the Depression, the Second World War, and the post-War)</p> <p>XI. The "Modern" Family III: The Baby Boom Era in the United States: The Golden Age of Families or an Aberration?</p> <p>XII. Diversity: Social Class and Families: Children and childhood</p>	<p>1. Newsflash 10 & 11</p> <p>10. _____</p> <p>11. _____</p> <p>2. Lecture / Discussion</p> <p>A. _____</p> <p>B. _____</p> <p>C. _____</p> <p>3. Small group discussion mtg. #3</p> <p>4. Group project topics/methods Due</p> <p>5. Reading response 5 due</p>	<p>Cherlin, Chapter 2, pp. 59-70</p> <p>D' Emilio and Freedman, part III</p> <p>E-RESERVES:</p> <p>1. Coontz from <i>Marriage, a History</i>, Chapter 13, "Making do, then making babies: Marriage in the Great Depression and World War II," pp. 216-228</p> <p>2. Minz from <i>Huck's Raft</i>, Chapter 14, "In Pursuit of the Perfect Childhood," pp. 275-309.</p>
<p>Week 8: October 29, 2007</p> <p>XIII. Intro. to the "Post-Modern" Family: Economic and demographic contexts</p> <p>XIV. Diversity: Social Class and Families: Variations in work, households, kinship</p> <p>XV. Diversity: Race and Ethnicity and Families</p> <p>XVI. Diversity: Families in Poverty</p>	<p>1. Lecture / Discussion</p> <p>A. _____</p> <p>B. _____</p> <p>C. _____</p> <p>2. Newsflash 12 & 13</p> <p>12. _____</p> <p>13. _____</p> <p>3. Small group discussion mtg. #4</p> <p>4. Reading response 6 due</p>	<p>Cherlin, Chapter 15, pp. 496-504 and 515-522</p> <p>Cherlin, Chapter 4, 110 – 139</p> <p>D' Emilio and Freedman, Part IV</p> <p>E-RESERVES:</p> <p>1. Butler, Judith. 2002. "Is Kinship always Heterosexual?" In <i>Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies</i>.</p> <p>2. Lind, Amy. 2004. "Legislating the Family: Heterosexist Bias in Social Welfare Policy Frameworks". In the <i>Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare</i></p>
<p>Week 9: November 05, 2007</p> <p>XVII. Gender in Families: Theories and Perspectives</p> <p>XVIII. Power in couple relationships gender, conflict, and intimate partner violence</p> <p>XIX. Union formation: Marriage and cohabitation</p> <p>XX. Divorce from two perspectives: adults and children</p>	<p>1. Lecture / Discussion</p> <p>A. _____</p> <p>B. _____</p> <p>C. _____</p> <p>2. Newsflash 14 & 15</p> <p>14. _____</p> <p>15. _____</p> <p>3. Reading Response Due</p>	<p>Cherlin, Chapter 3, pp. 78-105</p> <p>Cherlin, Chapter 7, pp. 230-256</p> <p>Cherlin, Chapter 11, pp. 368-396</p> <p>Cherlin, Chapter 12, pp. 402-431</p> <p>E-RESERVES:</p> <p>1. Carol Smart, Bren Neale and Amanda Wade, "Doing post-divorce childhood," pp. 289-300</p> <p>2. From Stacey, Judith and J. Biblarz. "(How)Does The Sexual Orientation of Parents of Matter?" In the <i>American Sociological Review</i>. Pp. 159</p>

	<p>4. Small group Discussion mtg. #5</p> <p>5. Relationship Contract Due</p> <p>6. Presentation Group # 1</p>	- 183.
<p>Week 10: November 12, 2007</p> <p>XXI. Diversity: Race and Ethnicity and Families</p> <p>XXII. Diversity: Families in Poverty</p>	<p>1. Lecture / Discussion</p> <p>A. _____</p> <p>B. _____</p> <p>C. _____</p> <p>2. Newsflash 16 & 17</p> <p>16. _____</p> <p>17. _____</p> <p>3. Reading response #8 Due</p> <p>4. Group Presentation 2 & 3</p>	<p>Cherlin, Chapter 5, 144-171</p> <p>E-RESERVES:</p> <p>1. From Hutter, <i>The Family Experience: A Reader in Cultural Diversity</i>,</p> <p>2. Niara Surdarkasa, "Interpreting the African Heritage in Afro-American family organization," pp. 30-40</p> <p>3. from Edin and Kefalas, "Promises I can keep: Why poor women put motherhood before Marriage", Introduction, pp. 1-26 and Conclusion <i>Making Sense of Single Motherhood</i>, pp. 187-220.</p>
<p>Week 11: November 19, 2007</p> <p>XXIII. Children and Parents Part I: Childbearing: When and whether to have children and who decides?</p> <p>Mothers, motherhood and the "mommy wars"</p> <p>Fathers and fatherhood: Absent, present, involved, etc</p> <p>Democratic families and just societies</p>	<p>Remaining Newsflash (es)</p> <p>Lecture / Discussion</p> <p>A. _____</p> <p>B. _____</p> <p>C. _____</p> <p>Group Presentation 4 & 5</p> <p>Final Reading Responses</p> <p>Final Paper Due by Midnight November 26, 2007</p>	<p>E-RESERVES:</p> <p>1. From <i>Population and Development Review</i> 23(2): 333-358, Schoen, Kim, Nathanson, Fields and Astone, "Why do Americans want children?"</p> <p>2. From <i>The American Prospect</i>, v. 20, 1995. Jencks & Edin, "Do poor women have a right to bear children?"</p> <p>3. From Skolnick & Skolnick, <i>Families in Transition</i>, Sharon Hays, "The mommy wars: Ambivalence, ideological work, and the cultural contradiction of motherhood," pp. 49-65</p> <p>4. From Ferguson, <i>Shifting the Center</i>, Kathleen Gerson, "Dilemmas of Involved Fatherhood," pp. 324-338</p> <p>5. From Skolnick & Skolnick, <i>Families in Transition</i>, Coltrane and Adams, "Men's family work: Child-Centered fathering and the sharing of domestic labor," pp. 117-130.</p> <p>6. From Coltrane, <i>Families and Society</i>, Evelyn Nakano Glenn, "Creating a caring society," pp. 501-513</p>

		<p>7. From Coltrane, <i>Families and Society</i>, Francine Deutsch, "Equality works," pp. 297-302</p> <p>From same-sex marriage and relational justice: Hunt, Mary. 2004. "Roundtable Discussion".</p>
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Addenda:

DePaul University Academic Integrity Policy

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html> for further details.

DePaul University Incomplete Policy

Undergraduate and graduate students have two quarters to complete an incomplete. At the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) following the term in which the incomplete grade was assigned, remaining incompletes will automatically convert to "F" grades. In the case of the Law School incompletes must be completed by the end of the

semester following the one in which the incomplete was assigned. Ordinarily no incomplete grade may be completed after the grace period has expired. Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee. This policy applies to undergraduate, graduate and professional programs. NOTE: In the case of a student who has applied for graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the incomplete must be resolved within the four week grace period before final degree certification.

n.b. The SNL student who wishes to receive the grade of IN must formally request in writing that the instructor issue this grade. This request must be made before the end of the quarter in which the student is enrolled in a course.

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential.

To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter, preferably within the first week of class, and make sure you have contacted:

- PLS Program (for LD, AD/HD) at 773-325-4239 in the Schmidt Academic Center, room 220 or;
- The Office for Students with Disabilities (for all other disabilities) at 773-325-7290, DePaul University Student Center, room 307.