

April 1, 2004

Study Questions

Read: Hertz: A Typology of Approaches to Child Care
Hernandez: Revolutions in Children's Lives
Galinsky: What Children Think about their Working Parents
Coltrane and Adams: Men's Family Work: Child-Centered Fathering and the Sharing of Domestic Labor

1. Discuss Hertz's "typology" of approaches to child care.
2. Other industrialized countries have much more government-sponsored or subsidized day care than the US. Why, do you think?
3. What are the benefits to the "mothering" approach? Disadvantages?
4. Contrast the parenting approach with the mothering approach.
5. Discuss "the rise of fathering."
6. What are the benefits of "the market approach"? Disadvantages?
7. List 4 "revolutions" in children's lives during the past 100 years.
8. What are the consequences for children of the decline in number of children per family, according to Hernandez?
9. What characteristics distinguish children (in the aggregate) who do not spend most of their childhood in an intact two-parent family? What does Hernandez suggest might be playing a major role in producing these differences?
10. What percentage of children living in dual-earner or one-parent family does Hernandez predict for 2000?
11. Discuss the finding that the actual time nonemployed mothers devoted to child care probably increased by about 50-100 percent between 1926-1935 and 1943. Were you surprised by this statistic?
12. Hernandez states that mothers' employment and nonparental care "are neither necessarily nor pervasively harmful to preschoolers." What conditions must be met?
13. Hernandez mentions the degree to which real family income has increased since the beginning of the 1970s. Discuss.
14. What finding in the survey conducted by Galinsky and her colleagues on parents' time spent in child care surprised many?

15. Which parent (in the aggregate) yearns to be with their child more?
16. Are children more likely to feel they have too little time with their fathers, or mothers?
17. Galinsky mentions a discrepancy regarding attitudes of children and mothers concerning amount of time spent together. What is it?
18. Coltrane and Adams report that between 1960 and 1997 the percent of married women over 16 participating in the labor force nearly doubled, from 31.9 to 61.6 percent. And that nearly 78% of married women with school-aged children and 65 % of those with preschool children were employed. Why is the statistic for total married women *smaller* than for mothers with children still at home?
19. Housework studies found that women continue to do roughly two-thirds of the family's routine housework and married women and those with children tend to perform an even greater proportion of housework than single women and those without children. Discuss.
20. Discuss possible explanations for the "housework lag."
21. It appears that women (and men) accept the unequal division of household labor...they have to be doing more than 2/3 before they see it as unfair, whereas men see distribution as unfair if they do more than 36%. Why, do you think?
22. Do you feel that housework is a "trivial concern?" (p. 110)