Macalester College

DigitalCommons@Macalester College

Sociology Honors Projects

Sociology Department

12-14-2018

Prescribing the Impossible: State Ideals of Intensive Parenting

Francesca Vescia
Macalester College

Prescribing the Impossible: State Ideals of Intensive Parenting

Francesca Vescia

Advisor: Erika Busse-Cardenas, PhD
Department of Sociology
Macalester College

December 14, 2018

Prescribing the Impossible: State Ideals of Intensive Parenting

Abstract: The state is a powerful force in private life; families that challenge its framework face erasure or sanction. From what ideals do these families deviate? This paper investigates that question in relation to childrearing. Through a content analysis of three court-approved parenting courses for separating or divorcing parents, I explore what constitutes proper parenting in the eyes of the state. Drawing from the literature on ideologies of family and self, I find courses 1) make efforts to explicitly challenge dominant ideologies of family and parenting while implicitly naturalizing them and 2) grapple to reconcile the logics of intensive parenting and the therapeutic self. Ultimately, the state prescribes the impossible by compelling parents to make everything a top priority.

The neoclassical grandeur of Capitol Hill may contrast starkly with the festive chaos of a family room strewn with toys, but law and family are inextricably intertwined facets of American society. While families in the United States have always existed in many forms (Coontz [1992] 2016) and contemporary family life is more complex and fluid than ever before (Cherlin 2010), the nuclear family remains a dominant ideal of what a family "should be." And partnering and parenting, the processes that create the nuclear family as ideology portrays it–consisting of a heterosexual married couple and their children–are informed by the state. The law dictates who can marry. By overseeing adoption and facilitating or impeding access to reproductive healthcare such as birth control, abortion, and fertility treatment, the law helps to influence who becomes parents, and when. And when a nuclear family rearranges, through separation or divorce (or, more rarely, the emancipation of a minor), the state facilitates that process, too.

Ideologies of family exist within and beyond the law and sociologists have studied their manifestations in myriad settings. In the chambers of Congress, the construction of welfare families in hearings and debates "affirms a historically privileged traditional family structure [the nuclear family]" (Gring-Pemble 2003:473). In the home, nannies and mothers obscure the shared nature of their mother-work in the face of a dominant ideology that sees mothering as the exclusive work of the mother (Macdonald 1998). In these settings and countless others, scholars have employed a wide variety of methods to unearth such ideologies. The literature using content analysis, however, has relied primarily on popular press parenting manuals for source material (Zuckerman 1975, Ehrenreich and English 1989, Hays 1996). As Hays (1996) observes, this

introduces a shortcoming: "[t]he popularity of these manuals . . . tells one nothing about how present-day [parents] interpret such advice or the extent to which [they] have made the ideology . . . their own" (79).

Hays (1996) addresses this limitation by coupling her content analysis with ethnographic work. I take a different approach by shifting the object of analysis from popular press materials to court-approved courses for parents experiencing separation or divorce. My approach does not does not allow for the important work of understanding parents' interpretations of curricular messages. However, these courses reflect *enforceable* state ideologies, and thus allow for meaningful analysis apart from parents' experiences. As Heimer (1999) notes, "Law has coercive qualities that other institutions lack" (266). Here, with child custody potentially at stake, the incentive for parents to make the ideologies presented their own–or at least look as if they have done so–is strong.

In the pages that follow, I explore ideologies of family and parenting as they appear in court-approved parenting classes. I begin by illustrating how the courses use explicitly inclusive language while implicitly privileging dominant, narrow ideas about who constitutes a family and what roles members should play within it. Next, I investigate how the dominant ideology of parenting interacts with extrafamilial imperatives to produce a previously unexplored "cultural contradiction" (Hays 1996) of parenting.

IDEOLOGY AND THE STATE

Law is a powerful tool of the state. As Zelizer (2005) notes, legal understandings of the world largely parallel but at times diverge from social understandings. I begin with a review of literature on ideologies of family and parenting, emphasizing the results of mismatch between the state's ideological construction of family and the meanings and practices of family that make up people's lived experiences. Next I survey scholarship on emotion management and the rise of the therapeutic self, demonstrating that ideologies prescribe not just how to relate to others within particular family structures, but also how to relate to one's self. Together these prescriptions shape the messages directed toward separating and divorcing parents in the contemporary United States.

The Nuclear Family

Social scientists have both championed and challenged (e.g., Rapp 1978; Smith 1993) the idea that "[t]he nuclear family is a universal human social grouping" due to its unique "social utility" (Murdock 1949:2). A particularly strong critique comes from Smith (1993), who argues the nuclear family is the theorized form of the Standard North American Family (SNAF), an insidious "ideological code" that orders discourse wherever it goes. As an example, she cites William Julius Wilson's work on poverty among Black families. Where Stack (1974) suggests stable extended kin networks facilitate survival in conditions of perpetual poverty, Wilson bemoans the dissolution of the (nuclear) family (Smith 1993:57-59). Analyzing contributing factors, he makes women the agents of partner separation but shifts his focus to men when considering the

impact of unemployment. SNAF ordering, Smith argues, casts women as homemakers and men as breadwinners, despite the fact every parent, regardless of gender, must reconfigure their provision of both care and financial support following a separation. SNAF ordering is not confined to the academy; it also manifests in the work of the state. In fact, the two are often intertwined. For example, Wilson's "SNAF-ordered thesis about Black families is directly coordinated with the SNAF-generated data of the U.S. Bureau of Census. The statistics realize and express the thesis; the thesis interprets the statistics" (Smith 1993:63).

The ideological dominance of SNAF disadvantages non-nuclear families and non-heterosexual dyads. For example, SNAF ordering caused misrepresentation and an undercount on the 1990 Census (Smith 1993). Census categories only allowed for one head of household per unit, so members of additional nuclear families within multi (nuclear) family households–an arrangement common among Salvadoran and undocumented immigrants in San Francisco's Mission district–were misclassified as "boarders" (Romero 1992). Because Census forms offered insufficient space to document all the residents of multifamily units, some household members were not recorded at all (Smith 1993:59). While it is unlikely the Census set out to intentionally misrepresent these households, at times the law consciously defines families in ways that differ from how families define themselves. For many, marriage is a defining feature of family (Powell et al. 2010). [1] But before the Supreme Court legalized same-sex marriage nationwide in 2015, laws like California's Proposition 8 prevented same-sex couples–

---

[1] In a 2006 survey, 91 percent of respondents considered a married heterosexual couple without children a family, while only 40 percent extended the classification to a

many of whom considered themselves families–from self-identifying as such in the eyes

of the law (Powell et al. 2010). These couples were thus denied the privileges, such as

shared health benefits, that a legally recognized marriage affords (Powell et al. 2010).

Their case is an illustrative one: differences in definition–established consciously or not–

matter because family "is a means by which necessary goods are distributed to members

of society" (Powell et al. 2010:1).

Parenting as an Ideology

There are alternatives to the limiting discourse of the (implicitly heterosexual)

nuclear family as the "natural" unit of society. For example, Hostein and Gubrium

(1999:2005) argue family is not a static constellation of particular relationships but rather

a continually recreated "interactional achievement." Hays (1996) applies a similar social

constructionist approach to childrearing, arguing ideas about appropriate parenting are a

product of time and place and thus context-specific, not universal. Ehrenreich and

English (1989) illustrate this phenomenon by tracing the evolution of parenting across the

early 1900s. They begin by noting it was not till the turn of the century that "America

'discovered' the child as the leading figure in the family" (183). And while the centrality

of the child has been a constant since then, the ideal way to *raise* that child has varied

over time. In the early 1900s, the goal of parenting was to cultivate discipline, efficiency,

and precision in children so they might thrive in the world of modern industry as adults

(201). As consumerism rose, mothers were instead tasked with shaping their children to

"fit the mold of consumer society" (213). Permissive parenting was valued for cultivating

the self-indulgence deemed "healthy for [both] the individual personality" and the

economy, the latter of which was increasingly reliant on individual consumption (212).

While Ehrenreich and English see early twentieth century childrearing as

reflective of values held in the public sphere, scholars have observed that the more

contemporary ideology of intensive parenting challenges certain values of public life. For

example, Hays (1996:x) observes that even as many women work outside the home and a

"logic of self-interested gain seems to guide behavior in so many spheres of life, . . . our

culture pressures women to dedicate so much of themselves to child rearing" and pushes

"a logic of unselfish nurturing." Such unselfish nurturing is "child-centered, expert-

guided, emotionally absorbing, labor-intensive, and financially expensive" (54).

Similarly, Lareau (2011) contrasts the frenzied *concerted cultivation* practiced by middle

class[2] parents with the more laid-back facilitation of *natural growth* in working class

families. She observes the former is legitimated by professional and institutional

supports, thereby echoing Hays' observation that an intensive approach is ideologically

dominant.

The wife and mother as solely a homemaker has "rarely [been] more than a white,

middle-class reality" (Meadow and Stacey 2006:55) and, as Hays (1996) observes, even

women of privileged backgrounds are common in today's workforce (England 2010).[3]

---

[2] Lareau (2011) focuses her analysis on class. Manning offers an important corrective to this one dimensionality, observing that concerted cultivation is incomplete without the consideration of race because parents of color engage in numerous strategies of cultivating their children to engage with a racist and racialized world and to develop racial identities.

[3] In contemporary affluent nations those with more education (a crude proxy for class) are actually more likely to be employed. Social scientists attribute this to an "opportunity-

However, the "stalled revolution" that brought white, middle-class women into the workforce did not feature a comparable shift of men's energies toward domestic contributions, so the burden of intensive parenting falls disproportionately on mothers (England 2010, Hochschild 1989). That being said, research suggests fathers are increasingly subject to some of the same expectations. Ethnographic work captures the desire and sense of duty fathers feel to be involved with their children (Kaufman 2014; Esbensen 2014) and an increase in men's self-reports of work-family conflict illustrates the tension between the long-standing pressure to provide and the more recent imperative to nurture (Galinksy, Aumann, and Bond 2009; Kaufman 2014). In sum then, contemporary parenting ideology is defined by intensive childrearing practices expected predominantly, though not exclusively, from mothers.

Emotion Management and the Mood Economy

Ideologies shape what society considers a family and how those within a family are expected to relate to each other. Ideologies also inform how members of a society are encouraged to relate to and manage themselves. Sociologists use the idea of emotion work (Hochschild 1983) to describe "how people actively shape and direct their feelings" within the constraints set by social structures and institutions (Wharton 2009:148). Drawing on Hochschild and Illouz (2008), among others, Silva (2013) situates emotion management within "a *mood economy* [where] legitimacy and self-worth are purchased not with traditional currencies such as work or marriage or class solidarity but instead

---

cost effect" whereby those with more education–and therefore higher wages–lose more income for a given amount of time not spent working (England 2010).

through the ability to organize . . . emotions into a narrative of self-transformation" (18).

Although Silva (2013) uses the idea of mood economy to understand the experiences of

working-class adults, she joins other scholars (e.g., Illouz 2008) in recognizing both the

prevalence of the therapeutic discourse throughout society and the disproportionate

access the privileged middle-class have to its vocabulary.

Silva (2013) correlates the rise of the mood economy with the United State's

embrace of neoliberalism. In the era of prosperity following the Second World War, the

country sought to protect its citizens from "the risks of modern capitalism" that wreaked

havoc during the Depression (Silva 2013:13). This protection took the form of a social

safety net sustained through risk pooling. However, the economic troubles and tense

political landscape of the 1970s raised doubts about the "feasibility and desirability of

government intervention" (13). A subsequent ideological shift in the 1980s transformed

risk management from a communal process managed by the state into an individual

responsibility. This same neoliberal spirit of individualism motivates the self-help ethos

of the mood economy. "[T]he therapeutic self has become a crucial cultural resource for

ascribing meaning and order amid the flux and uncertainty of" contemporary American

society (Silva 2013:19).

Silva emphasizes the ways in which the mood economy fosters a "sense of

distrust and rugged individualism [that] permeates intimate relationships" (17) as people

"draw unforgiving boundaries against . . . family members and friends who cannot

transform themselves" (21). In other words, relationships suffer or end because those who

fail to properly cultivate therapeutic selves are ostracized. "Children remain the last

bastion of commitment and stability" in an era of precarious intimacies undermined by a fixation with personal responsibility (59). Yet the social institutions contemporary parents are embedded within "work against their desire to anchor their lives in connection with others" (59). Similarly, I will demonstrate, the ideal of the therapeutic self interacts with the ideology of intensive parenting to create challenges for parents aiming to raise their children "right" under the watchful gaze of the state.

RESEARCH SETTING

Minnesota has a rich history of efforts to guide parenting through state institutions. The State Senate introduced its first Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) bill in 1973. By the late 1980s, Minnesota's ECFE programming–delivered through the public school system to "to enhance the ability of all parents and other family members to provide the best possible environment for their child's learning and growth" (Minnesota Department of Education 2018)–was under study by the Harvard Family Research Project as a pioneering case (Minnesota Department of Education 2011). A paper commissioned by the National Center on Children in Poverty to "provide a historical framework for better understanding . . . community based-family support programs" (Weiss and Halpern 1990:5) later identified the programming as "the most prominent" of rare, statewide initiatives (11).

In addition to expressing its perspective on parenting through the education system, Minnesota also uses the legal system to guide childrearing. In any court proceeding where custody or parenting time is contested, parents must "attend a

minimum of eight hours in an orientation and education program that meets the minimum standards promulgated by the Minnesota Supreme Court" (Minn. Stat. § 518.157 (2018)). The court may also require parent education in any other proceeding involving custody, support, or parenting time. In 2012, the Court's Standards were amended to allow parents to complete parent education virtually (Minnesota Supreme Court 2012). These online courses provide the basis for my study.

The state's approach paternity and custody is of particular relevance to my exploration of family and parenting ideologies. By default, a child born to unmarried parents in Minnesota is in sole custody of the mother until a court issues a custody order; only then does the father have any legal rights or responsibilities to the child, even if he was previously listed on the birth certificate. If the mother is married to a man at the time of the child's birth, that man is presumed the father and legally responsible for the child until alternate paternity is established (Minnesota Judicial Branch N.d.). However, custody proceedings in court "shall not prefer one parent over the other solely on the basis of the sex of the parent" (Minn. Stat. § 518.157 (2018)). In other words, the mother is technically privileged only until the court becomes involved–be it through a divorce, separation, or child custody proceedings–at which point the "bests interests of the child" are used to determine custody.[4]

---

[4] However, it should be noted that "the history and nature of each parent's participation in providing care for the child" is listed as a relevant factor in determining the best interests of the child. Insofar as unwed mothers are granted sole custody by default, this piece of the law potentially disadvantages unmarried fathers who have to establish paternity before being awarded any legal rights to their children.

DATA AND METHODS

This study examines three online parenting courses approved for parents in

Minnesota. As of 2012, parents may complete court-mandated parent education in person

or online. The state approves the curriculum for in person courses but cannot control

every aspect of how a course is delivered if it is happening real time. In contrast, the state

can approve online courses *exactly* as they will be presented to parents. With no

instructors serving as interpretive intermediaries, online courses provide a unique

opportunity for direct analysis of state-sanctioned messages.

To determine my sample, I generated a list of the online parent education

programs approved in each of Minnesota's judicial districts. Eight of the ten districts

provide directories of approved programs online; the District Deputy Administrators for

the other two districts provided me with lists of their approved programs over email. At

the time that I generated my master list, each district had approved the same four

programs, or a subset thereof. A fifth program has been approved in some districts since I

began my research.

My sample consists of courses[5] from three of the four programs on the original

master list. The University of Minnesota Extension's online Parents Forever (PF) course

"was created in partnership with the Minnesota Supreme Court" and was the first–and for

a time only–online parent education program approved by the Minnesota Supreme Court

(University of Minnesota Extension). Children in Between (CIB) is a product of the

Center for Divorce Education, a nonprofit corporation based in Ashland Oregon, which

---

[5] For additional information on the courses, including links to their home pages, see
Appendix A.

customizes content for counties and states. Online Parenting Programs (OPP), a subsidiary of Extended Learning Center, Inc., offers a wide variety of parenting classes as well as a reentry program for ex-prisoners. Two of the program's courses are approved in Minnesota. I completed the six-hour Co-Parenting/Divorce class that Online Parenting Programs identifies as the state's preference (Online Parenting Programs 2018). I excluded the fourth course, Impact Parent Education, from my sample because its author and facilitator was not comfortable with a college student completing her course for research purposes.[6] As I discuss below, the primary focus of this analysis is themes that hold constant across the sample. Therefore the exclusion of one course, though not ideal, does not compromise the integrity of the research design.[7]

The courses in my final sample are produced by different entities–a university (PF), a nonprofit (CIB), and a corporation (OPP)–and at times vary somewhat in how they engage with dominant ideologies of family and parenting. This variation is worthy of future exploration. However, my focus here is on these courses as a reflection of the state's perspective. Because the state does not mandate parents complete a specific course, just that they complete *a* course, any message not present in every course analyzed can be interpreted as nonessential in the eyes of the state. Thus, for the purposes of my analysis, I emphasize themes and contradictions shared among the programs.

---

[6] Lois Warner, e-mail message to Erik Larson October 17, 2018.
[7] Additionally, Warner wrote that "the mandated topics are somewhat repetitive between providers just taught differently" and shared that she trained in and taught Parents Forever before writing her own course. This suggests her course overlaps with Parents Forever, which is included in my sample.

As well as the substantive similarities I discuss below, the courses share certain formal features. Some of the overlap is informed by the Minnesota Supreme Court Parent Education Minimum Standards, which provide specifications about course content and administration, among other things (see Appendix B). Each course divides its content, delivered through a mixture of text and video, into sections followed by a quiz. Parents Forever and Children in Between both offer downloadable workbooks to supplement their online content. The online content itself is the result of a mixture of in-house production and outsourcing. As an instate product serving only two states, Parents Forever relies the least on outsourced content. In contrast, Children in Between and Online Parenting Programs are both available in multiple states. They require the user to specify their county and state and use that information to link to source information from places like Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid and Legal Services State Support or LawHelpMN.org. Additionally, Online Parenting Programs relies on an eclectic assortment of videos sourced from its own and others' YouTube channels.

To gather my data, I completed the version of each course approved in Minnesota. Taking inspiration from Hays' (1996) analysis of childrearing manuals, I perform a content analysis motivated by the argument that instructional materials reflect ideas about appropriate childrearing. Prior to completing the courses, I drew from existing literature on families and parenting to generate a coding sheet, which I used to compile notes on each course's online and supplementary content. My sheet had a table for tracking positive, negative, and ambiguous cases of concepts I anticipated would be present in text and video content, as well as space for additional notes that did not fit within my

predefined categories. I drew from these unstructured notes to add and modify categories in my coding sheet as analysis progressed. The analysis below features a combination of concepts identified prior to analysis and concepts that emerged through the analysis process.

ANALYSIS

In this section, I explore how dominant ideologies manifest in online parent education programs. I begin with ideologies of family and parenting, illustrating how courses implicitly naturalize ideas about the nuclear family and gendered parenting even as they make explicit efforts to use inclusive language. I then demonstrate that online parent education programs also exhibit the extrafamilial ideology of the therapeutic self. Because this ideology addresses how the individual "should" relate to themselves, it is not informed by family formation. However, I argue it interacts with parenting ideology to produce unique consequences for parents.

Grappling with Entrenched Ideologies

As previously discussed, I focus my analysis on themes present in each of the three courses. Recurring internal contradictions are of particular interest: to different extents, each course makes at least some explicit effort to move beyond narrow stereotypes about family while implicitly naturalizing them. I illustrate this phenomenon in relation to household formation and gendered parenting roles.

The "natural myth" of the nuclear family household. Smith (1993) defines the dominant conception of the Standard North American Family as "the family as a legally married couple sharing a household" (52) and notes, "SNAF equates family and the household" (61). Insofar as divorcing and separating parents are, by definition, transitioning away from the SNAF imperatives of marriage and cohabitation, co-parenting courses designed to facilitate this transition offer a unique environment in which to observe the persistence of the SNAF ideal. First, I illustrate that online parent education programs naturalize the nuclear family, as Smith's theory of SNAF as an ordering discourse suggests they would. Next, I demonstrate how, in the face of separation's inherent challenges to SNAF, courses portray "semi-SNAF" arrangements in which both parents remain involved in caregiving and parents and children are the exclusive constituents of separated households as the next best thing.

In *What About the Children?*, one of two companion workbooks for Children in Between, psychologists Donald A. Gordon and Jack Arbuthnot (2016:7) write, "A mom and dad and 2.4 children living together is an American myth. Today, there are many more stepparent families than natural families." Even as they recognize stepparent families as more common than two-parent families, they imply the latter family formation is the "natural" one. Similarly, Online Parenting Programs contrasts "separated

and long-divorced couples" with "intact" families, implying the two-parent nuclear family is the original, proper unit from which separated parents deviate (7.3[8]).

The dissolution of this "proper" unit does not preclude the preservation of its parts; online parent education programs emphasize the importance of two parents as children's caregivers following a divorce or separation. Parents Forever observes, "We hope you are starting to realize that, unless safety is a concern, the other parent should be a key member of your family's support network" (4.7.7). Children in Between takes this a step further:

> Often, the maternal grandmother offers a lot of support, sometimes provides childcare, and gives childrearing advice. At times, choices must be considered. Should the family move to get a grandparent's support? Or should access to the non-residential parent come first? Most often, the children have a greater need for access to their other parent (Gordon and Arbuthnot 2016:44).

> Two aspects of this excerpt merit attention. First, Children in Between argues for

the *exclusion* of other caregivers if this is what it takes to preserve two-parent caregiving. While the claim reads like scientific knowledge, no citation or footnote points to research supporting it.[9] Instead, the text seems to rely on the presumably self-evident superiority of a two-parent approach. Second, the excerpt demonstrates the SNAF imperative of

---

[8] I refer to course content by location, moving from general to specific. For example, 7.3 refers to the third page of the seventh section of the course. See Appendix C for numbered outlines of each course.

[9] Those interested in the literature can consult Musick and Meier 2010 for a review. The general consensus is that children, on average, fare better when they grow up with two married parents (vs. in single-parent or step-parent families). However, parental conflict, such as may occur in unhappy marriages that parents stay in for the sake of their children, is associated with a host of negative outcomes, so it is not always preferable for parents to remain married.

mothers as primary caretakers persisting across generations; not only is the mother assumed to have custody, but it is her mother (the child's *maternal* grandmother) offering childcare and childrearing advice.

This SNAF ideal of parent(s) and child(ren) as the exclusive building blocks of the proper household persists where programs acknowledge or even encourage non-parental caregivers as an important part of children's support networks. For example, Parents Forever observes that "Meeting your children's needs is a big job–you can't and don't need to do it alone!" and goes as far as to note "[r]esearch shows that children, on average, need five important adults in their life–*other than their parents*–in order to achieve a healthy future" (3.7.1, emphasis added). However, the course prompts divorcing or separating parents to consider if there will be changes in housing: "moving, downsizing, living with relatives, etc." (2.1.2), thereby implying that living with relatives, as opposed to just with one's spouse and child(ren), is an alternative pursued in extenuating circumstances. This assertion is at odds with the reality that one fifth of Americans live in multigenerational family households (Cohn and Passel 2018).

Similarly, *What About the Children?* observes, "Children's bond with relatives is important but often overlooked . . . The affection of family and friends helps children, and such connections should be protected and encouraged" (Gordon and Arbuthnot 2016:51). Here, once again, non-parental caregivers are seen as essential to child wellbeing. However, parents are the proper householders:

> [E]ven young children will get used to frequent transitions if they are not too stressful. They already handle this well in 'normal' families (for example,

> attending daily day care), and they can also do well in 'broken' families (moving
> from *parent to parent* and back again) (2016:49, emphasis added).

As this quotation illustrates, if a child cannot have a "normal" SNAF household,

alternating between two semi-SNAF households headed by each parent will do. Having

illustrated the ways in which ideology determines who constitutes an ideal household, I

turn my attention to the way it shapes notions of proper roles within the family.

Maternal Primacy and The Breadwinner Imperative. Regarding roles within the SNAF

household, Smith (1993:52) writes:

> The adult male is in paid employment; his earnings provide the economic basis of
> the family-household. The adult female may also earn an income, but her primary
> responsibility is to the care of husband, household, and children.

Parents Forever is an anomaly in defying these imperatives. The course actively avoids

most gendered language, so messages reinforcing gendered parenting roles are largely

absent from the course. Moreover, the text that (implicitly) addresses traditionally

gendered divisions of labor actively rejects them. Regarding custody, the course reads,

> Custody is decided based upon the "best interests" of the minor children. In
> Minnesota, the best interests are defined by state statute–the statute is linked on
> the Parents Forever website. Custody can be granted to either parent–the parent's
> gender is not a factor (1.2.7).

This language challenges the idea that mothers are more capable and nurturing

caregivers–what I have termed maternal primacy–by asserting that fathers are equally

worthy of custody. Similarly, a video rejects the breadwinner imperative of fathers as the

family's sole economic actor noting, "[i]t's important for both parents to understand the

costs associated with raising children" (2.8.1). In both these examples traditionally gendered roles are depicted as within the purview of any parent, regardless of gender. Parents Forever not only challenges the notion that roles within a family must be gendered, but also recognizes that not all partnerships consist of different genders. For example, one quiz features the question in which a hypothetical mother, Becky, asks for her divorce from her wife (2.11). By using "wife" as opposed to "partner," the course avoids any ambiguity about the homosexual nature of the relationship.

The other courses are more equivocal in their approach to gendered parenting roles and heteronormative partnering expectations. Much as all three courses recognize other family formations while privileging the nuclear family, Children in Between and Online Parenting Programs sometimes hint at a gender neutral approaches to parenting or the reversal of gendered roles, but largely reinforce the SNAF ideal of the father as the breadwinner and the mother as the primary caretaker. For example, *What About the Children?* (from Children in Between) argues that "quality of parenting is critical for *both parents*" (Gordon and Arbuthnot 2016:45) and emphasizes "the importance of maximizing the time that children of divorce spend with both parents whenever possible" (49). Here time with children, which correlates with caregiving as opposed to breadwinning, is described as important for both mothers and fathers; this implies fathers are not only capable of but also expected to engage in some caregiving. However, elsewhere mothers' supposed superiority as nurturers is illustrated. For example, in one of the video scenarios a mother reflects, "Motherhood is sacred and I want to make sure I give the best to my son. Because of that, I don't work. I can't work. I gotta make sure I'm

there for him emotionally, physically, any way I can" (2.3). The workbook page detailing

the consequences of absent mothers also makes it clear that the caregiving work of

emotional support is predominantly the mother's work. When she is gone,

> Children will likely have emotional and learning problems. Girls lose their main
> role model, resulting in problems developing their identity. Fathers are limited in
> their ability to understand their daughters. Boys also suffer, as mothers can help
> them develop emotionally (help them with their learning about and managing
> their feelings) (Gordon and Arbuthnot 2016:33).

Fathers may not be well suited to caregiving, but under the ideal of SNAF they

have an imperative to provide for their families. This belief emerges in an Online

Parenting Programs video where a mother rants, "Your dad, he is just a loser, a loser! He

can't keep a job for nothing!" (4.5). Elsewhere the possibility of the father as primary

caretaker is briefly voiced; in an Australian news clip, the anchor asks a visiting childcare

expert about "advis[ing] women– or men, who have split up and they're the primary

caregiver" (8.4). The way she emphasizes "or men" with a look at the camera makes it

clear that she has caught herself in the assumption that the mother will be the primary

caretaker following a separation. However, she soon falls back into reflexive

stereotyping, once again implying the mother is the primary caregiver by asking the

expert if she advises mothers receiving child support to tell children that "Dad is funding

some of their life."

Children in Between and Online Parenting Programs do little to challenge the

heteronormative assumptions of the gendered approach to parenting they implicitly

naturalize. While Children In Between features numerous instances of gender-neutral language, I noted only one explicit reference to homosexual relationships:

> It used to be that most divorcing or separating parents were in a traditional relationship with a man and a woman who were married. Now, many of these parents are not married to each other. Some parents have lived together–and raised their children together–for many years. They may be same-sex couples who did not have the option to marry or people who simply chose not to marry for other reasons (Gordon and Arbuthnot 2016:28).

Similarly, I observed just two instances in which Online Parenting Programs acknowledges non-heterosexual relationships. First, the course states, "Domestic violence and emotional abuse are behaviors used by one person in a relationship to control the other. Partners may be married or not married; heterosexual, gay, or lesbian; living together, separated or dating" (6.7). Second, an optional reading on victims and abusers acknowledges, "Since abuse can happen to anyone, people can have special concerns . . . If you are a lesbian, gay, or transgendered person ... you may be afraid of having people know about your sexual orientation" (6.10).[10] Across both courses, representation of non-heterosexual relationships is limited; in Online Parenting Programs, that representation is solely in the context of domestic violence. Thus, ideology informs ideas about who is present to parent–a mother and a father–and what roles they fulfill: nurturer and breadwinner, respectively. However, ideologies of gender are not the only forces influencing ideas about what parenting should look like; notions of the self and how it must be cultivated also inform the imperatives that confront contemporary parents.

---

[10] The course confuses its terminology here. Being transgender (preferred to "transgendered") is a gender identity that exists independent of sexual orientation.

Having It All in the Mood Economy: A New Cultural Contradiction of Parenthood

Hays (1996) observes the cultural contradictions of intensive *mothering*; for reasons discussed in the literature review, I refer to contradictions of *intensive* parenting more broadly. I argue its prerogatives not only contradict the prevailing "logic of self-interested gain" (Hays 1996:x), but also interact with the contemporary "all-encompassing culture of emotional self management" (Silva 2013:21) to necessitate a Sisyphean pursuit of balance that becomes its own form of emotion management. In today's "mood economy," parents must simultaneously practice appropriate levels of self-care and center their children. Competing views of self-care as either inherently or instrumentally worthwhile (corresponding to the self-improvement and selfless logics of the mood economy and intensive parenting, respectively) create a tension within online parent education programs.

For example, Children in Between encourages parents to "take control of [their] stress, [their] mental health, and [their] life" through "simple practices" like "[r]egular exercise and meditation . . . even for ten minutes a day" (2.3). After all, "[e]veryone has good selves and not-so- good selves. The self that thrives and shows up more often is the one you feed (with your attention) and nurture the most. Choose to feed and nurture your good self" (2.5). But in addition to taking control of their own lives, parents should set aside time for parenting instruction because "most of what [they] know [about parenting] needs improvement or changing" (2.6). For couples attempting reconciliation, "repairing [the] relationship will have to be [the] highest priority right now, along with [the]

children" (3.2). Even as parents are encouraged to work on themselves, they are reminded that children must always be a top priority. Similarly, Online Parenting Programs encourages parents to "take care of [their] health, . . . [m]aintain a good diet, . . . exercise and play to relieve stress . . . [and] [p]ractice . . . breathing and relaxation exercises" (4.3), but also reminds them that "[p]utting your children first during a divorce means . . . putting the emotional needs of your children ahead of your own" (6.4).

The tension between self-care and selflessness emerges not only in the dizzying array of instructions to parents regarding self-care and childcare, but also in the contradictory ways practices of self-care are framed. At times, parents' needs and wants are portrayed as inherently valuable: "Think for a minute... Are your children's needs and wants more important than yours? . . . Both your own and your children's needs and wants are important" (PF 3.8.2). Parents are encouraged to attune to their own emotions and acknowledge they "may have holes in [their] heart[s] that need to be filled by people [they] love and respect" (OPP 5.5). At other times, parental self-care is portrayed as worthwhile only insofar as it supports child wellbeing; just as parents on airplanes are instructed to put on their own oxygen masks first (PF 2.1.1), they must "[t]ake care of [their] own needs so [they] can be there for [their] children" (OPP 4.8).

Parents Forever captures the intersection of these competing logics of self-care and selflessness, observing, "parents should "[t]ry to review and prioritize [their] own needs and wants, as well as [their] children's" (2.1.8). But what is left to prioritize when everyone's needs and wants have been accounted for? In attempting to reconcile the imperatives of self-management and selflessness parents are asked to put *everything* first.

From this impossibility emerges a uniquely contemporary form of emotion management in which adults must constantly navigate the balancing act of taking enough care of themselves to fulfill the requirements of the mood economy without shifting their energies enough to betray the child-centeredness mandated by intensive parenting.

As they go about their lives, parents must not only carve out a balance between their own needs and wants and those of their children, but must also accommodate their children's complex needs by being warm yet firm. Children form secure attachments and thrive under the care of "authoritative parents [who] have high expectations but are also highly responsive and show warmth through love and affection" (PF 3.4.1). Love, respect, and limits are three legs of a stool; "you need all legs in order to support a healthy parent-child relationship [but] [i]f you rely too heavily on one of the legs, the other legs may become too weak to support the relationship" and "something will go wrong" (PF 3.6.3). Finding the balance between discipline and warmth is an act of emotion management in and of itself, as it is the "emotional swings" that come with separation that "can . . . cause [parents] to be inconsistent with discipline and to shift between being permissive and being harsh" (Gordon and Arbuthnot 2016:39). While parents "will not always be able to improve as quickly as [they] might like," it is essential they manage emotional swings because the stakes are high: "[o]ne risk factor of child maladjustment is a harsh, authoritarian parenting style where discipline is emphasized more than a supporting, warm connection" (39). Further, parents are reminded,

> [O]ne day your children will look back on this time. They will judge both you and the other parent. They will remember how well the two of you handled this difficult time. Work hard now and they will think highly of you and your efforts

later . . . It will have big payoffs for you, your children, and your grandchildren"
(67).

Parents are thus faced not only with the consequences of their emotion management in
the present, but with the knowledge that they and their loved ones will be living with its
effects–good or bad–for generations to come.

Online parent education programs are not entirely oblivious to the virtual
impossibility of the balance they advocate parents strike between and within their own
and their children's needs. For example, Children in Between reminds parents not to
"compare [themselves] with other parents who appear to be perfect (chances are, they
aren't)" and assures, "you are a valuable person just the way you are, with imperfections
like everyone else. No one is perfect at everything, you just do your best to improve your
life step-by-step" (Gordon and Arbuthnot 2016:68). Similarly Online Parenting Programs
observes, "You don't have to be perfect to create a secure attachment with your children .
. . No parent will interpret their children's needs correctly all the time, so try to instill
healthy interactions" (8.2). However, much as explicit attempts to challenge gendered
parenting roles are often overwhelmed by implicit affirmations of the breadwinner
imperative and maternal primacy, occasional permission for imperfection is likely
insufficient to fully counter myriad injunctions advocating the perfect balance.

CONCLUSIONS

Courts have the power make custody decisions–rulings with major implications
for children and parents alike–so it is valuable to understand what ideas about "good"
parenting inform their deliberations. In this analysis, I have illustrated that court-

approved online parenting programs vary in the extent to which they explicitly challenge

traditional ideologies of family and parenting while simultaneously implicitly

naturalizing facets of these ideologies. I have also traced how the selfless logic of

intensive parenting interacts with the self-care imperative of the mood economy to

burden parents with the impossible task of putting everything first.

The recognition that parents–especially mothers–are burdened by the idea that

they must somehow have it all is hardly novel. However, traditionally the conversation

has emphasized the contradiction between the imperatives for parents to self-interestedly

pursue their own career ambitions in the workplace and to selflessly tend their children in

the home. The contradiction is thus seen as a tension between public and private life. My

work complicates this dichotomy by demonstrating how the conflicting imperatives

contemporary parents face blur the logics of supposedly separate spheres. In some ways,

the inward focus of the therapeutic self is closer to the self-interest of the work world

than to the supposed selflessness of domestic life. However, the cultivation of the

therapeutic self–through therapy, as the name would imply, but also through forms of self

care like exercise and meditation–does not happen on the job. Instead it requires the

allocation of personal time. Thus, parents not only navigate *between* the competing

demands of their work and private lives, as Hays (1996) observes, but must also balance

self-care and childcare *within* their personal lives.

Ironically, the neoliberal individualism that gave rise to the mood economy also

discourages a welfare state that might make this balancing act more feasible. In this

sense, the arrangement benefits the state; it is relieved of certain responsibilities when

citizens focus on what they can provide for themselves, rather than on what the state is not providing. But the arrangement does not benefit parents. As my findings illustrate, contemporary contradictions of parenthood are even more complicated and pervasive than previous work acknowledges.

There are many avenues for work looking to further unpack the ideological complexities of parenting. For one, research should explore parenting instruction approved in other states to investigate if or how messages there differ. Additionally, future research should explore how parents experience and respond to these messages. Interviews and/or the analysis of existing post-program surveys would shed light on parents' experiences of online courses, while participant observation would provide insight on in person parent education programs. Such research would help uncover contemporary parenting ideology and its interactions with extrafamilial ideologies as they manifest not only on the screen and in the classroom, but in parents' lived experiences as they move through the world.

Appendix A. Study Sample: Online Parent Education Courses

Course	Producer Identity	Advertised Time for Completion	Cost*
Parents Forever[11]	University	Eight hours	$89.00
Children in Between[12]	Nonprofit	Four hours	$59.95
Online Parenting Programs[13]	Corporation	Six hours	$44.99

*All three courses reduce or waive fees for qualified parents. Understandably given I am not part of the courses' target audience, I did not satisfy the typical criteria for a fee reduction or waiver. I reached out to the courses to see if they would be willing to reduce or waive their fees based on my status as a student. Children in Between and Online Parenting Programs were unable to accommodate my request, so I paid for access to their courses. Parents Forever waived the fee, so I was able to access their course for free.

---

[11] https://extension.umn.edu/courses/parents-forevertm-online-course
[12] https://online.divorce-education.com/
[13] https://www.onlineparentingprograms.com/all-online-classes.html

Appendix B. Amended Parent Education Minimum Standards

STATE OF MINNESOTA
IN SUPREME COURT
ADM11-8006

In Re the Establishment and Amendment
Of Parent Education Minimum Standards

O R D E R

WHEREAS, in 1995, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes § 518.157, subd. 2, the Legislature requested that "[t]he Minnesota Supreme Court should promulgate minimum standards for the implementation and administration of a parent education program";

WHEREAS, in July 1997 the Minnesota Supreme Court promulgated Parent Education Minimum Standards; and

WHEREAS, technology has improved greatly since the Minimum Standards were promulgated such that online parent education programs are now available;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT: The Parent Education Minimum Standards are amended as noted in Attachment A to permit parents to complete an online parent education program that otherwise complies with the Minimum Standards.

DATED: March 21, 2012   BY THE COURT:

Lorie S. Gildea
Chief Justice

30

ATTACHMENT A

PARENT EDUCATION MINIMUM STANDARDS
Approved by the Minnesota Supreme Court July 16, 1997
Amended by the Minnesota Supreme Court March 21, 2012

Parent education programs shall include the following minimum standards for program implementation and administration.

A.   **Purpose.** The purpose of a parent education program shall be to serve as an early intervention mechanism to encourage cooperation between parents before adversarial behavior and conflict has a chance to develop. Among other goals, the parent education program should educate parents about positive communication techniques, the impact that divorce, the restructuring of families, and judicial proceedings have upon children and families, methods for preventing visitation conflicts, and dispute resolution options, and should encourage parents to always place the best interests of the children above what they may perceive as their own "rights."

B.   **Implementation and Administration.** The plan submitted to the Judicial Council ~~Conference of Chief Judges~~ by the chief judge of each judicial district, or designee, shall include a plan for funding the program(s) within the district. Parent education programs may be implemented and administered in each county or in a group of counties or for the entire district. Education programs may be operated by the judicial district, counties, private or government agencies, or non-profit or for-profit organizations. Existing parent education programs may be utilized, so long as the programs comply with these minimum standards.

C.   **Certificate of Completion.** A certificate of completion shall be provided by the program to each participant or, at the direction of the court, to the court to verify completion of the program. The certificate of completion shall, at a minimum, include the court case number, the participant's name, and the date(s) of attendance.

D.   **Safety.** Consideration shall be given to the safety of the parent education program participants.

E.   **Fees.** Each person who attends a parent education program shall pay a fee to defray the cost of the program. Participant fees shall be as inexpensive as possible. A party who qualifies for waiver of filing fees under Minn. Stat. § 563.01 is exempt from paying the parent education program fee and the court shall waive the fee or direct its payment under § 563.01. Program providers shall implement a sliding fee scale.

F.   **Child Care.** Child care should be available.

G.   **Length and Nature of Program; Online Programs.** The parent education program sessions should be offered at least monthly, be available at flexible times (i.e., days, evenings, and weekends), and be at least four to eight hours in length to adequately cover the topics set forth below in paragraph k. In lieu of an in-person class, parents may complete an online parent education program that otherwise complies with the Minimum Standards.

H.   **Instructors.** Parent education program sessions should be conducted by one male and one female instructor using interactive teaching approaches (e.g., role playing, group discussions, etc.). Each instructor should have training or experience in family life education, family dynamics, domestic relations, marriage and family therapy, counseling, psychology, social

1

services, child welfare, or a closely related field. Training for instructors should include information on the dynamics of domestic violence and sexual assault and their impact upon children.

I. **Solicitation for Other Services.** Providers and instructors who offer private mediation or other services are prohibited from soliciting program participants as clients.

J. **Language and Cultural Needs.** The parent education program should take into account the language and cultural needs of the participants.

K. **Curriculum.** While additional topics may be covered, all parent education programs shall include information on the following topics:
   - Resources in the community to obtain additional help
   - Overview of judicial process and proceedings (dissolution and paternity)
   - Overview of legal issues (dissolution and paternity)
   - Overview of the function of the court (dissolution and paternity)
   - Alternatives for settling custody/visitation disputes
   - Phases of divorce/paternity proceeding
   - Role of custody study
   - Role of attorney
   - Role of guardian ad litem
   - Role of mediator/mediation
   - Developmental needs/stages of children
   - Impact of divorce/separation/conflict upon adults
   - Impact of divorce/separation/conflict upon children
   - Dynamics of domestic violence and sexual assault and impact upon children
   - Communication skills
   - Co-parenting skills
   - Conflict resolution skills
   - Keeping children out of the middle of conflict
   - Cost of raising a child
   - Emotional and financial responsibilities of parents
   - Coping with stress
   - Safety planning
   - Child support issues (obligations/services)
   - Visitation issues (planning and problems)
   - Impact and realities of step families

L. **Evaluations by Participants.** After completing a parent education program, participants should provide feedback, including an evaluation of the topics discussed, course content, timing, instructors, satisfaction, and other issues. In addition, at fixed intervals following completion of a course, program personnel should conduct follow-up evaluations to monitor whether participants have successfully incorporated into their lives the tools and concepts learned during the parent education program.

Appendix C. Course Outlines

Parents Forever

1. Parents Forever Course Introduction
    1. How to Navigate This Course
    2. What to Expect From This Course
2. Taking Care of Yourself
    1. Introduction–Taking Care of Yourself
    2. The Legal Side of Family Transition
    3. Grief & Loss
    4. Dealing with Anger
    5. Managing Stress
    6. Staying Safe During a Family Transition
    7. Strengthening Your Support Network
    8. The Financial Side of Family Transition
    9. Planning Your Future
    10. Conclusion–Taking Care of Yourself
    11. Taking Care of Yourself Quiz
3. Taking Care of Your Children
    1. Introduction–Taking Care of Your Children
    2. What Are Your Children Experiencing?
    3. What Do Your Children Bring to the Parent-Child Relationship?
    4. What Do You Bring to the parent-Child Relationship?
    5. How Do You and Your Children Shape Each Other?
    6. Strategies to Help Strengthen Parent-Child Relationships
    7. Strengthening Your Children's Support Network
    8. Maintaining Balance in Parent-Child Relationships
    9. Conclusion–Taking Care of Your Children
    10. Taking Care of Your Children Quiz
4. Being Successful with Coparenting
    1. Introduction–Being Successful with Coparenting
    2. What is Coparenting?
    3. Redefining Your Family?
    4. Different Approaches to Coparenting?
    5. Communication Skills for Effective Coparenting
    6. Managing Conflict
    7. Strategies for Parenting Apart
    8. Where Do Stepfamilies Fit in the Picture?
    9. Creating a Parenting Plan
    10. Conclusion–Being Successful with Coparenting
    11. Being Successful with Coparenting Quiz
5. Parents Forever Course Conclusion
    1. Parents Forever Course Conclusion

2. Course Feedback–Tell Us What You Think!
3. Parents Forever Certificate of Completion
6. Parents Forever Course Resources
    1. Parents Forever Course Resources

Children in Between

1. Introduction
    1. State Notifications
    2. County Notifications
    3. Introductory Video
    4. State/County Requirements
2. Course Content
    1. Chapter 1: Carrying Messages
    2. Chapter 2: Put Downs
    3. Chapter 3: Money Problems
    4. Chapter 4: Questioning
    5. Chapter 5: Never Married Parents
    6. Chapter 6: Conclusion
3. Wrap Up
    1. Skills Practice
    2. Alternatives to Divorce
    3. Exit Survey
    4. Results

Online Parenting Programs

1. Welcome
    1. Welcome
    2. Terms
2. Intake Forms
    1. Court Case Information
    2. Demographic Information
    3. Relationship Information
3. Minnesota Co-Parent Program Information
    1. Minnesota Divorce/Separation
    2. Minnesota ADR
    3. Minnesota Family Mediation
    4. Minnesota Custody Evaluations

1. What Will You Learn
2. Creating Secure Attachments
3. Successful Co-Parenting
4. Financial Issues
5. Medical Information
6. Holidays and Events
7. Video Quiz
8. Extra Reading: Co-Parenting Children with Special Needs
9. Sources
10. Co-Parent Mediation
    1. What Will You Learn
    2. Mediation
    3. Video Quiz
    4. Extra Reading: Co-Parent Mediation
    5. Extra Reading: Know Your Options
    6. Sources
11. Ages and Stages
    1. What Will You Learn
    2. Infants (Birth to 12 Months)
    3. Toddlers (1 to 3 Years)
    4. Preschoolers (3-5 Years)
    5. Elementary Children (5-13 Years)
    6. Teenagers (13-18 Years)
    7. Overview
    8. Video Quiz
    9. Sources
12. Designing a Parenting Plan
    1. What Will You Learn
    2. What is a Parenting Plan
    3. Writing Up a Parenting Plan
    4. Making Parenting Plans Work
    5. Video Quiz
    6. Extra Reading: Safety Focused Parenting Plans
    7. Sources
13. Final Exam
14. Survey
15. Completion

References

Cherlin, Andrew J. 2010. "Demographic Trends in the United States: A Review of Research in the 2000s." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 72:403-419.

Cohn, D'vera, and Jeffrey S. Passel. 2018. "A Record 64 Million Americans Live In Multigenerational Households." Washington, DC: Pew Research Center. Retrieved December 12, 2018 (http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/04/05/a-record-64-million-americans-live-in-multigenerational-households/).

Coontz, Stephanie. [1992] 2016. *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap.* New York: Basic Books.

Ehrenreich, Barbara, and Deirdre English. 1989. *For Her Own Good.* New York: Anchor Books.

England, Paula. 2010. "The Gender Revolution: Uneven and Stalled." *Gender and Society* 24(2):149-166 (https://www.jstor.org/stable/27809263). doi: 10.1177/0891243210361475.

Esbensen, Heidi R. 2014. "Illuminating the Experiences of Single Fathers." Masters thesis, Department of Sociology, Portland State University. Retrieved September 2018 from Portland State University PDXScholar Dissertations and Theses Database (doi: 10.15760/etd.1962).

Galinsky, Ellen, Kerstin Aumann, James T. Bond. [2009] 2011. "Times Are Changing: Gender and Generation at Work and at Home." Families and Work Institute. Retrieved December 10, 2018 (http://familiesandwork.org/downloads/TimesAreChanging.pdf).

Gordon, Donald A. and Jack Arbuthnot. 2016. *What About the Children?* 9th ed. Ashland: The Center for Divorce Education.

Gordon, Donald A. and Jack Arbuthnot. 2018. *CDE's Children in Between: Parents' and Children's Guidebook.* 8th ed. Ashland, OR: The Center for Divorce Education.

Gringle-Pemble, Lisa M. 2003. "Legislating a 'Normal, Classic Family': The Rhetorical Construction of Families in American Welfare Policy." *Political Communication* 20:473-498.

Hays, Sharon 1996. *The Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Heimer, Carol A. 2014. "Law, Medicine, and Family in Neonatal Intensive Care." Pp. 265-275 in *The Law & Society Reader II*, ed. E. Larson and P. Schmidt. New York: New York University Press.

Hochschild, Arlie R. [1983] 2012. *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling.* Berkeley: University of California Press

Hochschild, Arlie R., and Anne Machung. 1989. *The Second Shift.* New York: Penguin Group.

Holstein, James A., and Jay Gubrium. 1999. "What is Family? Further Thoughts on a Social Constructionist Approach." *Marriage & Family Review* 28(3-4):3-20.

Kaufman, Gayle. 2013. *Superdads: How Fathers Balance Work and Family in the 21st Century.* New York: NYU Press.

Macdonald, Cameron L. "Manufacturing Motherhood: The Shadow Work of Nannies and Au Pairs." *Qualitative Sociology* 21(1):25-53.

Manning, Alex. 2017. "The Age of Concerted Cultivation: A Racial Analysis of Parental Repertoires and Childhood Activities." Unpublished paper presented in SOCI 335-01: Families and Social Change at Macalester College, February 10, Saint Paul, MN.

Minnesota Department of Education. 2011. "Timeline History of Early Childhood Family Education." Roseville, MN: Minnesota Department of Education. Retrieved November 9, 2018 (https://education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/elsprog/ECFE/).

Minnesota Department of Education. 2018. "Early Childhood Family Education." Roseville, MN: Minnesota Department of Education. Retrieved December 14, 2018 (https://education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/elsprog/ECFE/).

Minnesota Judicial Branch. N.d. "Paternity." Retrieved November 9, 2018
        (http://www.mncourts.gov/Help-Topics/Paternity.aspx).

Minnesota Supreme Court. 2012. *Parent Education Minimum Standards.* Retrieved
        October 17, 2018 (www.mncourts.gov/Documents/0/Public/Clerks_Office/2012-
        03-21%20Order%20Parent%20Education%20Online%20Course.pdf).

Murdock, George P. 1949. *Social Structure.* New York: Macmillan.

Musick, Kelly, and Ann Meier. 2010. "Are Both Parents Always Better Than One?
        Parental Conflict And Young Adult Well-Being." Retrieved December 12, 2018
        (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2930824/pdf/nihms195431.pdf).

Obergefell v. Hodges, 2015 W.L. 213646 (U.S. 2015). Retrieved December 9, 2018
        (https://scholar.google.com/scholar_case?case=497090211360466192&q=obergel
        l+hodges+june&hl=en&as_sdt=6,24).

Online Parenting Programs. 2018. "Minnesota State (MN) Court Approved Online
        Parenting Classes." Retrieved November 9, 2018
        (https://minnesota.onlineparentingprograms.com/).

Powell, Brian, Catherine Bolzendahl, Claudia Geist, and Lala Carr Steelman. 2010.
        Counted Out: Same-Sex Relations and American's Definitions of Family. New
        York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Rapp, Rayna. 1978. "Family and Class in Contemporary America: Notes Toward an
        Understanding of Ideology." *Science & Society* 42(3):278-300
        (https://www.jstor.org/stable/40402109).

Romero, Mary. 1992. "Ethnographic Evaluation Of Behavioral Causes Of Census
        Undercount Of Undocumented Immigrants And Salvadorans In The Mission
        District Of San Francisco." Ethnographic Evaluation of the 1990 Decennial
        Census Report #18. Washington, D.C.: United States Census Bureau. Retrieved
        December 9, 2018 (https://www.census.gov/srd/papers/pdf/ev92-18.pdf).

Silva, Jennifer M. 2015. *Coming Up Short: Working-Class Families in an Age of
        Uncertainty*. Cary: Oxford University Press.

Smith, Dorothy E. 1993. "The Standard North American Family: SNAF as an Ideological
    Code." *Journal of Family Issues* 14(1):50-65.

University of Minnesota Extension. "Online course approved by Minnesota Supreme
    Court." Retrieved October 22, 2018 (https://extension.umn.edu/parents-
    forevertm-parent-handbook/online-course-approved-minnesota-supreme-court).