

Children of Divorce: Fall 2009

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10 % - Seminar Participation Make notes so you come to class ready to discuss these questions about the reading assignments: (1) What research or statistics surprised or upset you the most and why? (2) What are two of the controversial issues raised in the reading?

15 % - Oral Presentation

You will make a 6-8 minute presentation on two research articles related to the two questions assigned for your research papers. You will find the articles by searching two data bases: PsycInfo and Social Sciences Citation Index on the library's website under "research resources" - "databases". Download the full article into your FYS folder and enter each citation into your reference file. In your presentation answer these questions: (1) What were the most important findings and what is the practical significance to families or to professionals who work with divorced families? (2) What controversial issues did the articles raise? (3) What ideas or data surprised you most? The grading checklist is on page 6. You will hand in a one page typed outline to Dr. Nielsen. Cite your references in American Psychological Association format. Be sure to practice and time yourself so that you finish in 6-8 minutes.

Three papers (4 pages, double spaced, references on 5th page, 12 point font, reset all 4 margins to 1 inch)

Instead of taking written tests, you will demonstrate your mastery of the reading assignments by writing three papers. These papers are similar to "take home tests" in that you have one specific question to answer while having access to all of the reading material while you answer the question. The grading criteria are on page 3. Staple your outline and checklist to your paper with the grade you have given yourself on each item. Follow the directions on page 4 to create your outline. An outline should take several hours to create since you must study your notes on all of the assigned reading as you write it. Include all assigned readings in your paper and in your citations. **Everyone is required to have a tutor at the Writing Center give you feedback on your first paper at least one week before the paper is due. Bring your outline & the grading checklist to your tutoring session. Appointments:758-5768 .**

25% First paper What are the major long term consequences for children of divorce in the U.S.? That is, what are the major problems that teenage or adult children are most likely to face years after their parents' divorce?

25% Second paper In the U.S. what factors determine how much of a negative long term impact divorce will have on older teenage or adult kids? That is, what should parents do to minimize the negative impact of their divorce? Remember that not all of the variables are equally influential or equally important . Your goal is to convince your reader that the variables you have chosen are the most influential according to the research.

25% Third paper Rewrite your second paper. Strengthen your paper by including the results from ten research articles from academic research journals published after 2000 (U.S. samples only) .

Required Reading

Children of Divorce – Harvey & Fine

We're still family: Grown children speak about divorce – Ahrons

Divorce: Causes and Consequence - Stewart & Brentano

Responding to Parental Alienation - Baker and Fine (e mail)

Custody and Parenting after Divorce - Kruk (e mail)

“Divorced Fathers and Their Daughters” from *Between Fathers & Daughters* (Cumberland House, 2008) - Nielsen

“Parenting after divorce: Review of Research” – Nielsen (e mail)

“Child adjustment in joint custody” - Bauserman (e mail)

Ten research articles from journals published after 2000 (from PsycInfo and Social Science Research Index)

Calendar and Assignments

8/27 Introduction

9/1 Lecture and practice: Writing social science research papers

9/3 Discuss Stewart Ch 1 & 2

9/8 Library Research training session Ms. Pressley Library Room# Bring your computer. Afterwards practice these skills: find 2 articles from PsycInfo and Social science research index , copy the articles into your FYS file, enter each article in your reference base & insert them into a mock paragraph, use spellcheck, thesaurus, & find/replace tools.

9/10 Discuss Stewart Ch 3 & 4

9/15 Discuss Stewart Ch 8 and Bauserman's article

9/17 Discuss Ahrons ch 4, 7, 8 & 9 Presentations: 1&2

9/22 Discuss Stewart Ch. 5

9/24 Film: *The Squid and the Whale* class ends ten minutes late at 2:55 (80 min. DVD 3664)

9/29 Discuss film & Nielsen's "Parenting after Divorce: Research Review" Presentation: 3

10/1 Discuss Harvey & Fine Ch 1-7 Ahrons Ch 1,2 & 3

10/6 **First paper is due** Grade papers in class

10/8 Discuss papers

10/13 Discuss Krug Chapters 1-5 Presentations 4 & 5

10/15 Discuss Krug chapters 6-10 Presentations 6 & 7

10/20 Discuss Baker & Fine's "Responding to Parental Alienation" Presentations 8 & 9

10/22 Discuss Stewart ch 6 and 7 Presentations 10 & 11

10/27 Discuss Nielsen chapter 7 Presentation 12

10/29 Discuss Harvey & Fine Ch. 5 & Ahrons Ch. 5 Presentation 13 & 14

11/3 **Second paper is due** Documentary: Two dads fights back

11/5 Discuss documentary Presentation 15

11/10 Film: *Kramer vs. Kramer* Time: _____ (DVD 809, 105 min)

- 11/12 Discuss film
 11/17 Discuss Stewart Ch 9
 11/ 19 Discuss Harvey & Fine Ch 6 and Ahrons Ch. 6
 11/24 no class, Thanksgiving
 12/1 **Third paper is due** Presentations 16, 17, 18
 12/3 Tell your classmates what you enjoyed most about interacting with them this semester and tell us how the course changed your views or feelings about children of divorce and their parents

FYS: Criteria for Writing papers – Created by Dr. Linda Nielsen

Staple this to the top of your paper with the grade you have given yourself on each item.

Did you read your paper aloud to yourself? Yes no

Writing style – 25% of grade

- yes/no No spelling errors (“spellcheck” on computer will find all errors)
 yes/no Do not use any direct quotations. Summarize research in your own words.
 yes/no Do not say “as researchers say” or “according to research” or “studies show”
 ___ Avoid using first or second person voice - “I”, “you”, “my”, “your”
 ___ Avoid using the passive tense for verbs
 ___ Punctuation: Don’t use semicolons in place of periods or over use commas. **P**
 ___ Use nouns instead of pronouns (that,this,they,IT). **Pro**
 ___ Sentence structure: so poorly constructed or so long that the message is lost **??**
 Readers don’t have to re-read a sentence trying to figure out what author is trying to say
 ___ Use words correctly and in the correct context (use thesaurus) **squiqgly underline**
 ___ Transitional words are in first sentence of every paragraph to create flow between paragraphs **trans**
 ___ Avoid using “his/her” or generic “he”. Use plural nouns and pronouns to avoid this awkwardness **gen**
 ___ Grammar: split infinitives, subject/verb or noun/pronoun disagreement. **gram**
 ___ References are cited in APA format and are cited wherever they are needed **ref**
 ___ **GRADE**

Logical, rational organization – 25% of grade

- ___ Succinctly and clearly states the thesis of the paper (author’s point of view) in first paragraph
 ___ Each paragraph has a comprehensive topic sentence stating exactly what the paragraph is going to be about **TS**
 ___ Every sentence is directly related to the topic sentence **X**
 No sentence strays off or changes the topic or makes reader ask: *Why is this sentence in this paragraph?* ___ Avoids repeating the same idea so that the topic sentence is fully developed in the paragraph **Rep**
 ___ Appropriate paragraph length: 5-7 sentences which all support the topic sentence
 ___ Each sentence in a paragraph & and each paragraph builds on the previous one, so readers never have to ask
What does this have to do with what I just read?
 ___ Every paragraph is directly related to the paper’s thesis so the reader doesn’t have to ask:

What exactly does this paragraph have to do with the thesis of this paper?

____ Final paragraph summarizes in a conclusive, convincing way in 3-4 sentences (no topic sentence here)

____ **Grade**

Content & analytical thought – How well did you understand and analyze the ideas, research & controversies from the reading assignments? How convincing and persuasive is your reasoning? (50% of grade)

____ demonstrates understanding of ideas, research & controversies from all of the assigned reading

____ demonstrates insight - goes beyond the most obvious things someone could say about the topic

____ offers specific information and specific ideas – avoids broad or vague generalities

____ presents a wide range of issues, ideas and research from all of the assigned reading

____ convinces the reader to accept the thesis – persuades the reader to adopt the writer's point of view

____ **grade**

____ **FINAL GRADE**

**Highlight in yellow your thesis sentence & the topic sentence in every paragraph
Circle every transitional word or phrase in the first sentence of each paragraph**

WHAT IS A “THESIS STATEMENT” AND HOW DO YOU MAKE AN OUTLINE

Thesis statement: In one or two sentences, you need to tell your readers in your first paragraph exactly what point you are going to make in this paper. What is this paper going to be about?

What should we expect to read in the next 4 pages? What is the central argument of your paper?

OUTLINE - Typed – one page, single spaced

An outline for a social science research paper should take 3-4 hours to create. As you create and organize your outline, you should be studying all of the notes and all of the passages you have underlined for every assigned reading. A powerful paper is based on a powerful outline – an outline that is thorough, specific and rationally organized. Making your outline should take almost as much time as writing the paper.

Write your exact topic sentence for each paragraph

Then write brief phrases for each of the 4-5 research points you are going to use to support that one topic sentence

Paragraph 1 : Divorce has a devastating long term impact on most grown up children

- 1- suicide rates (2) (5)
- 2- school drop out rates (1)
- 3- pregnancy and sexual diseases (1) (3)
- 4- depression and eating disorders (3) (4) (5)

Paragraph 2: There are many reasons why divorce has a worse impact on girls than on boys

- 1 awareness of family dynamics (4)
- 2 gender differences in social maturity (1) (5)
- 3 father's bond to the son (1)
- 4 society's attitudes about dads and daughters (4) (2)

References – Make a list of all the references you're going to cite in your paper. Give each reference a number. Then insert the number onto your outline to show you where you will be entering those references in the paper.

- (1) Nielsen's chapter on girls and divorce
- (2) Kruk's book on Custody
- (3) Bauserman's article on joint custody
- (4) Stewart's book
- (5) Ahron's book

TRANSITIONAL WORDS - FROM DR. NIELSEN FYS

Illustration	Thus, for example, for instance, namely, to illustrate, in other words, in particular, specifically, such as.
Contrast	On the contrary, contrarily, notwithstanding, but, however, nevertheless, in spite of, in contrast, yet, on one hand, on the other hand, rather, or, nor, conversely, at the same time, while this may be true.
Addition	And, in addition to, furthermore, moreover, besides, than, too, also, both-and, another, equally important, first, second, etc., again, further, last, finally, not only-but also, as well as, in the second place, next, likewise, similarly, in fact, as a result, consequently, in the same way, for example, for instance, however, thus, therefore, otherwise.
Time	After, afterward, before, then, once, next, last, at last, at length, first, second, etc., at first, formerly, rarely, usually, another, finally, soon, meanwhile, at the same time, for a minute, hour, day, etc., during the morning, day, week, etc., most important, later, ordinarily, to begin with, afterwards, generally, in order to, subsequently, previously, in the meantime, immediately, eventually, concurrently, simultaneously.
Concession	Although, at any rate, at least, still, thought, even though, granted that, while it may be true, in spite of, of course.
Similarity Of Comparison	Similarly, likewise, in like fashion, in like manner, analogous to.
Emphasis	Above all, indeed, truly, of course, certainly, surely, in fact, really, in truth, again, besides, also, furthermore, in addition.
Details	Specifically, especially, in particular, to explain, to list, to enumerate, in detail, namely, including.

Examples	For example, for instance, to illustrate, thus, in other words, as an illustration, in particular.
Consequence Or Result	So that, with the result that, thus, consequently, hence, accordingly, for this reason, therefore, so, because, since, due to, as a result, in other words, then.
Summary	Therefore, finally, consequently, thus, in short, in conclusion, in brief, as a result, accordingly.
Suggestion	For this purpose, to this end, with this in mind, with this purpose in mind, therefore.

ORAL PRESENTATION – CRITERIA FOR GRADING
Dr. Nielsen – FYS

Speaking style

- _____ speaks loudly, clearly, and slowly enough
- _____ avoids nervous words: like, you know, it's like, um, and um
- _____ uses written outline as a guide without reading from it
- _____ maintains eye contact with the audience
- _____ conveys enthusiasm about the research - animated tone of voice
(if you're not excited and interested in the topic, why should your audience be interested?)
- _____ **grade**

Content and analytical thought

- _____ focuses on the major findings rather than dwelling on minor details
- _____ demonstrates insight - goes beyond the most obvious things one could say
- _____ explains how or why the chapter is important to real families
What's the practical importance or what advice are you offering divorced parents or their kids?
- _____ points out the controversial or the unresolved issues
- _____ Grade

Films about divorce, troubled marriages and father absence

All of these films are available on DVD in the library. Watching them during the semester may help you gain greater insight into the issues and the situations that affect children of divorce and their parents.

The Squid & the Whale - course assignment

Kramer vs. Kramer – course assignment

Smoke Signals

Smoke

Affliction
Twice in a Lifetime
Nobody's Fool
Tender Mercies
Ordinary People
Secret Lives of Dentists
Shoot the Moon
Diary of a Tired Black Man
Duane Hopwood
Bye bye love
Mrs. Doubtfire

Film Guide: Two Divorced Dads who fought Back

1. How do “false allegations of domestic violence and abuse” affect custody decisions and how to these false allegations affect divorced fathers?
2. What is “Fathers 4 justice” and how do you feel about the tactics they use to bring attention to inequality in the family court system?
3. What are restraining orders and what is supervised visitation?
4. How did you feel about each of these two fathers? What advice would you give them?
5. How does the “divorce industry” make shared parenting difficult?
6. Senator Anne Cools – native American Canadian - says that “male judges and legislators are biased and behind the times. They’re afraid of losing votes even though the public is in favor of shared parenting.”
7. What is a rebuttable presumption of shared parenting? Do you agree with this proposed legislation? Why or why not?
8. What is parental alienation? How might it be reduced? How would you deal with your kids if you were the alienated parent?

Film Guide: Kramer vs. Kramer

1. Which of these two adults is the better parent? Why?
2. In your opinion what would be the best parenting plan (residential plan) for this son?
3. The mother says: “I took care of him for 4 years and you’ve only taken care of him for 18 months. I’m his mother and he needs me more than he needs you.” How do you feel about her point of view?

4. Which parent did you like and admire most and why? What were each person's strengths and weaknesses as a spouse?
5. Do you think the female friend is making the right decision to take her husband back? Why or why not?
6. This mother says she left the marriage because her husband "wasn't there for me" and because he undermined her self esteem by discouraging her from going back to work. She also says that the reason she abandoned her son is because she felt she wasn't a good enough mother. But now that she has spent a year in therapy, she says "I have found myself and I know now that I'm a good mother." How do you feel about her reasons for leaving her marriage and leaving her son? Who was most at fault for this failed marriage?
7. The husband says "I got the big account and came home to share the joy with my wife." He also asks her to explain to him what he did wrong as a husband – to explain why she's leaving. How do you feel about him in these scenes?

Film Guide: The Squid and the Whale

1. In your opinion, what would the best living arrangement have been for these two sons? Why?
2. Why did this marriage end? Who is most at fault?
3. In what negative ways does the divorce affect each son?
4. What could each parent have done to make their divorce easier on their sons?
5. What are each person's strengths and weaknesses as a parent?
6. Which parent is trying the hardest and how much progress does he or she make toward being a better parent?
10. In the end what does the older son come to understand about each of his parents?
11. When the mother is hiding her books under the young son's bed, what messages is she conveying to him?
12. How do each of these parents need to change for the good of their sons?
13. Which parent do you feel sorriest for and why?
14. How did you feel when the mom told her youngest son to go back to his dad's house because she needed to be alone with her boyfriend that night?
15. Why does the oldest son behave the way he does with his girlfriend?

COURSE EVALUATION - Dr. Nielsen First Year Seminar

What grade do you expect to earn in this course? _____

Rate each item on this scale

1- strongly disagree 2- disagree 3- neutral 4- agree 5- strongly agree

- ___ I learned to read more analytically
- ___ I learned to think more critically and to ask more important questions
- ___ I learned to write more clearly and effectively
- ___ I learned to speak more clearly and effectively
- ___ I learned to make a better argument or express my opinions more effectively
- ___ I learned to consider opposing viewpoints on controversial issues
- ___ I have become more comfortable talking or presenting my ideas in front of a group
- ___ I talked with other people outside of class about the topics in this course
- ___ The class was intellectually stimulating
- ___ I wish the class had been a little smaller
- ___ I learned a lot about the topic
- ___ I became familiar with the research on this topic
- ___ I learned how to use the library to prepare a research paper
- ___ I created a research reference file that I can build upon and use in other courses

Rate the course on the following

1= way too little 2= too little 3 = fine/acceptable 4= just right / excellent

- The workload in this class was _____
- The amount of class discussion was _____
- The amount I learned in this course was _____
- The chance to practice critical thinking was _____
- The chance to practice writing papers was _____
- The chance to do an oral presentation was _____
- The amount of required reading was _____
- Work that required library research was _____

Rate your professor on the following

1= very poor 2= below average 3= average 4= above average 5= excellent

- ___ met with me outside of class when I needed help
- ___ taught us specifically how to improve our writing
- ___ really cared about helping us improve our writing
- ___ responded promptly to emails or phone calls
- ___ made me feel comfortable in class
- ___ seemed to enjoy teaching our class
- ___ was clear about what she expected and how she would grade our work
- ___ was well organized
- ___ made the class entertaining and interesting
- ___ asked questions or presented ideas that really got me thinking

____ seemed concerned about how I was doing – offered to help if I needed it
____ was friendly and relaxed – not intimidating or aloof

Please write additional comments on the back if you have anything more you want to say about the course.

Name

Age

phone

Writing skills: How did your high school teachers rate your writing skills compared to other college bound students?

Outstanding above average average below average

Public speaking – How comfortable are you participating in class discussions, expressing controversial views or disagreeing with what other people's views?

What are you considering as possible majors or possible future careers?

Why did you sign up for this course? That is, why does this particular topic interest you?