

**The Evolving Family:  
Family Processes, Contexts, and the Life Course of Children**

**A proposal submitted to Cornell's Institute for the Social Sciences**

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## I. Specific Aims

Changes in the family and their consequences for the well-being of men, women, and children have been a central focus of research and of social policy for the last several decades, from President Clinton's emphasis on responsible parenting for non-resident parents to President Bush's focus on marriage. We propose to organize a research and policy working group on the Evolving Family, with a particular focus on marriage and fatherhood. This multi-disciplinary group will include senior and junior Cornell faculty, postdoctoral scholars, graduate students, and a select group of distinguished visiting scholars from disciplines including anthropology, biology, demography, economics, human development, policy analysis, psychology, sociology, and women's studies. The group will develop and participate in a weekly research seminar that will vet works-in-progress, develop collaborative projects, and produce research papers and policy briefs. The aim of the working group will be to put Cornell at the forefront of research on the family, the causes of family change, their broader impacts on society, and their impact on individual life course development of men, women, and children. The activities described as part of this project will contribute significantly to undergraduate and graduate education through mentoring, methodological training, and a distinguished speaker series. We will also capitalize on Cornell's outstanding resources for outreach through Cornell Cooperative Extension to translate the findings of our research into policy and to reach a community outside of Cornell. The ultimate goal of our project is to develop a core team of scholars who are interacting around the central theme of families. One tangible product resulting from the collaborations will be a proposal for a population center grant for longer-term infrastructure support that would be submitted to NICHD during the third year of the project. Population Center grants are very competitive, and institutions that are awarded these centers are generally regarded as the top institutions in the field. We believe that the activities described in this proposal will lead to the improved development of young tenure-track researchers in the social sciences and an enhanced reputation of Cornell social science in the broad and important area of the evolving family.

## II. Background and Significance

The dramatic increase over the last three decades in the number of children living in single parent households (or not living with both biological parents) has caused concern among researchers and policy makers alike. There is substantial consensus about the proximate causes of this phenomenon—specifically, high levels of divorce and increases in non-marital childbearing—but there is no real consensus about why these demographic trends have occurred, why childbearing is increasingly decoupled from marriage, and how to explain differences in the levels across race and socio-economic class. In a recent paper entitled “In Search of the Social Science Holy Grail,” David Ellwood (2003) writes

“The spread of single parent families has been both an intellectual challenge and a source of persistent frustration for social scientists. Some of the nation's most influential social theorists, including Gary Becker and William Julius Wilson, have sought to explain the change. These theories have led to a large body of empirical research, but there is still no consensus about why single parenthood spread, much less about why it spread much faster in some populations than others. The most widely cited empirical papers seem to be those that disprove various hypotheses. Indeed, it is only a slight exaggeration to say that quantitative social scientists' main contribution to our understanding of single parent families has been to show that *nothing* causes them to become more common. Yet they did.”

Similarly, there is a consensus among social scientists that children living in single parent households generally fare worse on a number of dimensions compared to children who grow up in intact households (McLanahan and Sandefur, 1994). However, there is little understanding about how family processes vary across different types of families and how these processes lead to different outcomes for children. Concern about these trends is a central feature of a number of recent policy initiatives including welfare reform, the

marriage tax, child support policy, and marriage promotion policies, but policy makers have had little guidance from research about the types of policies that might work to effect change. We propose to convene a diverse group of social scientists from different departments and disciplines and using different methodologies to address the causes of the evolving family and how family processes affect family and child well-being in different types of families.

Although children and single parent households had been a major topic of social science research for at least the last three decades, as the quote above from David Ellwood indicates, we still do not have the answers to some very basic questions. However, the research over the last several decades has laid the groundwork for making significant progress in the future by identifying the diversity of family types and gaps in our knowledge about how these different types of families operate. Recent research has documented increases in “non-traditional” family types, including single father families, step-parent families, and cohabiting families. In addition, it is now clear that family processes and the quality of the relationships between family members are central to understanding how families get together and stay together, the impact of these decisions on children, and how these processes and outcomes differ across family types.

This earlier research made it clear that more detailed data on families were needed, and the federal government responded by funding major new data initiatives. Since the mid 1990s a number of new data sets have become available that contain much more detailed information about families than was previously available. These data sets combine the advantages of demographic research, using large-scale nationally representative samples, with the advantages of ethnography and developmental psychology, using observational measures to gather detailed data on family processes and child outcomes. In addition, these new data sets have other features that greatly enhance social scientists’ ability to study the causes and consequences of single parenthood:

- Longitudinal data and better measures of event histories such as marriage, cohabitation, residence and living arrangements, and program participation;
- Better measures of family processes and family relationships based on observations or scales developed and tested by family scientists and psychologists;
- A greater variety of adult and child outcomes, including health, behavioral, social, cognitive, and emotional well-being;
- Better measures of social, peer group, and neighborhood contexts, including the ability to link individuals to the relevant social policies and community resources that may affect them;
- Better measures of the economic and social constraints and the possible choice sets available to families that affect the decisions they are able to make;
- The ability to measure biological and genetic influences (e.g., some studies collect bio-markers through saliva tests, while other studies explicitly over-sample families with adopted children, step-parents and other less common family types to increase the variation in the degree of genetic relatedness);
- Improved measures of childhood adversities that may have long-lasting impact on social, mental, physical and economic functioning through the transition to adulthood
- Qualitative interviews linked to survey data that allow researchers to generate hypotheses and better interpret survey results.

The hallmark of cutting edge research on the family is in the use of multiple methods to collect data on family behavior, relationships, and processes that is much more detailed than what was previously available. For example, two of the major data collection efforts funded by NICHD to study welfare reform—Fragile Families and Child Well-being Study and the Three City Study—use both quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to understand how welfare reform has affected family processes and child outcomes. The two studies also include direct observations of children and parent-child interactions using the methods of child development researchers.

A core part of this proposal will be coordinated research using some of these new data sets to examine family formation decisions, family processes, child outcomes, and fatherhood. The data sets we are planning to use are described in Appendix 2.

### III. Project Design

#### III.A. Structure of the Project Activities Across the Three Years

As specified by the call for proposals, this is a three year project. Here we briefly outline the structure of activities for the three years, and in later section we provide more detail about the specific activities. The first year is a planning year in which the group will meet on at least a monthly basis to develop plans for the second and third years. During the first year we will

- begin development of the web site,
- invite several outside scholars to consult with the project in its development stage,
- finalize the plans for visiting scholars and the distinguished speaker series,
- develop courses and other teaching activities,
- begin work on several research projects, especially where the topics overlap with existing collaborations
- flesh out the details of the research, seminar, and outreach activities that will take place during the second year.

It is expected that most of the activities in the project will occur during the second year. In the second year of the project we expect to have weekly seminars. Each seminar would either include a presentation of ongoing research by one of the seminar members, or we may assign a cutting edge paper written by someone outside of Cornell to be read and discussed by seminar participants. To ensure interactions across disciplines and methods, we would assign a seminar member from a different discipline than that of the presenter to develop a formal set of comments in response to the presentation. Once a month we expect to have a seminar presentation that would be accessible to the broader Cornell research community, and we would advertise that seminar more broadly. Once a semester we plan to hold a day and a half workshop on a topic that would focus on and integrate the work that was presented during the semester. We plan to invite scholars from outside of Cornell, as well as Cornell social science faculty, researchers, and students to participate in the workshop.

During this year we will also continue the specific research projects begun in the first year (more detail about the research is provided below). We expect to organize several research teams related to each project, and each team will set up their own schedules for working on the research.

Most of the teaching and outreach activities will also take place during year 2. We expect to offer one small and specialized seminar-type course each semester (at either the graduate or undergraduate level). We may offer one course during the first semester of the third year, as well. We will also contact the instructors of family-oriented courses that are already on the books to work with them about ways to incorporate our project into the material that they teach in their courses (more detail about teaching activities is provided below).

During the third year we will

- complete the research projects
- prepare papers and manuscripts for publication
- develop and submit a proposal for an NICHD population center grant

### **III.B. Research questions to be addressed in collaborative projects and the weekly seminar**

The full set of possible research questions related to the Evolving Family are too numerous to address in a three year project. Although we maintain a broad focus for activities that are designed to engage students and the wider Cornell community, we narrow our focus for the questions we will address during the weekly seminar and in collaborative research projects that we develop. Specifically, we propose to address two topics related to the evolving family: fatherhood and marriage, and the seminar will focus on one of these each semester.

We choose these two specific areas for a number of reasons. First, over the last several decades there have been major changes in each. As described above, marriage rates in the U.S. and other developed countries have fallen and age of first marriage has risen, cohabitation has increased, and childbearing is increasingly occurring outside of marriage. As more children are living apart from their biological fathers, the level of father's contact with their children has decreased. In addition, as women's labor market opportunities have increased, expectations of the father as the primary bread-winner have declined, and fathers are increasingly expected to take on other roles in the family.

Second, each of these demographic behaviors has been the focus of important policy initiatives. Welfare reform had the explicit goal of encouraging marriage, discouraging childbearing outside of marriage, and providing incentives for non-residential fathers to continue to support their children financially. Pilot projects to promote responsible fatherhood received a substantial amount of federal funding and these types of programs have been implemented in many communities. The pending welfare reform reauthorization bill contains more than \$300 million to support marriage education and other marriage promotion initiatives.

Third, new data, theories, and methods have recently been developed to advance our knowledge of marriage and fatherhood. For example, a series of activities sponsored by federal agencies in the mid-1990s culminated in the Conference on Fathering and Male Fertility: Improving Data and Research, which was held in 1997. This conference produced specific recommendations for changes in how information on fathers and male fertility should be collected. Two other NICHD sponsored activities to methodology and data collection were the workshop on "Counting Couples: Improving Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage, and Cohabitation Data in the Federal Statistical System, held in 2001 and the follow-up conference on "Measurement Issues in Family Demography," held in 2003. The purpose of these conferences was to describe why and how the measurement of family related demographic phenomena matters and to discuss and recommend how best to improve current data collection practices to more accurately depict family change and behavior.

The seminar topic we propose for the first semester of year two will focus on the role of fathers in family formation decisions and the contribution of fathers to family processes and child outcomes. The seminar will interweave perspectives from public policy, economics, sociology, anthropology, and biology. A lively and often heated public debate on the value of two-parent families—and more specifically on the value of the father in a family—has been underway in the U.S. for much of the last decade.

Despite this strong and persistent interest in fathers and concern about their absence in children's lives, we are far from understanding the complex ways in which fathers make contributions to their families and children. It is often assumed that the father's primary role is economic, but few researchers have attempted to ascertain the full dimensions and meaning of social and psychological fatherhood. How do fathers approach parenting as a social role, and how is their approach different from what the mother does? For example, how does the economic contribution of fathers affect families both directly and indirectly (e.g, through access to greater social capital)? What are the substantial contributions fathers make as nurturers, caretakers, and role models? How are these roles altered when their children live in female headed households due to divorce or nonmarital childbearing, or when children live only with their fathers, as is the case in a small but growing number of families? The evolutionary biology approach assumes that genetic

relatedness determines investment in children as an important fitness strategy. What social, economic, psychological, or other factors lead fathers to be more or less economically supportive of their children or involved as nurturant caretakers or role models?

In addition to its impact on children, fathering has direct consequences for the well-being and behavior of adult men and women. The close connection among family formation, childrearing, the acquisition of education, and labor market decisions for women has long been recognized. With the recent focus in the policy and research communities on the role of fathers in families, understanding the tradeoffs and complementarities between family life and market work takes on a central role in analyzing the transition to adulthood for men as well. Because both labor market opportunities (e.g., declining wages for low skilled men) and family structure (e.g., increases in non-marital births and non-resident fathering) have undergone major changes in recent decades, it is even more critical to understand the factors that affect the transition to fatherhood and the impact that decisions about fathering have on other aspects of men's and women's lives.

Beginning with this topic is appropriate, because it takes advantage of existing collaborations. A group of researchers at Cornell and outside of Cornell have begun to work together on the topic of fathers and families. This group (with Peters as the project director) recently submitted a program project grant proposal (P01) to NICHD entitled "Transition to Fatherhood." Several of the collaborators in the P01 proposal are either project team members (Waller), possible affiliate members (Dunifon, Joyner, Clarkberg) or possible visiting scholars (Hofferth, Sonnenstein). The P01 consists of four integrated projects that examine the following questions:

- What are the economic, policy, psychological, and sociological factors that influence the timing of biological fatherhood and the circumstances under which fatherhood occurs? What is the role of men in the timing and circumstances of sexual initiation, contraceptive use, pregnancy, and childbearing?
- What is the relationship between the transition to biological fatherhood and other transitions to adulthood, such as marriage, educational completion, and entry into the workforce?
- What are the determinants of responsible fathering, and, in particular, what is the role of family processes within and across generations?
- What are the social, economic, policy, relationship and individual factors associated with men having additional births after they have already become fathers, and what factors lead men to have additional births with more than one partner?
- What factors influence the timing and circumstances of subsequent fatherhood, including marital/cohabitation status, intendedness, multiple-partner fertility, rapid subsequent fertility, high parity fertility, or fertility in a high-conflict fragile relationship?

The team for the P01 Transition to Fatherhood proposal consists primarily of demographers, economists, and sociologists, and our evolving family project will add the perspectives of evolutionary biology and cultural anthropology.

How can approaches from biology (for example, evolution or physiology) contribute to these issues of fatherhood? The non-human animal world displays tremendous diversity with respect to fatherhood, including species with no paternal care, exclusively paternal care, and biparental care with nearly equal contributions from both parents. There is within-species variation as well, with some fathers contributing parental care under some circumstances but not invariably. The reasons why these different arrangements have evolved and why individual males make their particular tactical decisions are increasingly well understood. For example, some theories and models focus on the inherent genetic conflict between the two parents and view paternal care as the outcome of negotiations between the sexes. The hormonal and neurochemical basis of paternal care in non-humans (both as causes of the behavior and as consequences of engaging in fathering) are increasingly well explored, and some preliminary attempts have been made to see if the same kinds of mechanisms are at work in human fathers.

Cultural approaches may illuminate how men and women interpret changes in family formation, ideas about fatherhood, and shifting gender responsibilities at the ground level. The current state of fatherhood in the U.S. is characterized both by fathers' increased involvement and by their increased disengagement, resulting in both the popular "involved father" and "deadbeat dad" images (Furstenberg, 1988). Similarly, as the meaning of fatherhood becomes less certain, and fathers' practices are more disparate, no single model of fatherhood seems to be culturally dominant (Gerson, 1993). Rather, men and women may actively use a diverse cultural repertoire or "toolkit" of symbols, stories, and practices to make sense of fathers' obligation to their children and to organize "strategies of action" to care for them within particular socio-economic constraints (Swidler, 1986). Some evidence based on qualitative research in New Jersey indicates that low-income, unmarried parents express coherent standards of paternal responsibility that blend new ideas about involved fatherhood with more conventional ideas about guidance, role-modeling, and breadwinning. These standards are consistently invoked to evaluate unmarried fathers but do not center on economic provision—the foundation of the child support system. These findings suggest that social policies that support the breadwinning model may not be attuned to changes in fatherhood and family formation in low-income communities (Waller, 2002).

The call for proposals suggests that research projects supported by the ISS initiative can be independent (with a forum for later synthesis) or interdependent (coordinated research on a specific project). Our proposed research will have both interdependent and independent components. Because of the P01, some of the proposed research on fathers is already designed to be interdependent, answering a well-specified set of questions using multiple data sets. However, other research questions will be derived from ongoing interests of Cornell faculty, so we expect that some of the work on those topics will be independent rather than interdependent.

The second major (and intersecting) theme that we focus on in the second semester of year two is **the changing meaning of marriage and sexual partnerships across the life course**, from adolescence to early adulthood, through middle age. In the developed nations of the Northern hemisphere, there has been a rapid and continuing transformation in the presence and stability of marriage in adult life. Up to 40% of all children born in the U.S. will experience the divorce of a parent during their childhood (Bumpass, Raley, and Sweet 1995). Taken together, these trends have and will continue to have an influence on the expectations that younger people develop about the stability of marriage and the probability that their own will remain stable. Adults who were raised by single and divorced parents report in surveys that they are more hesitant about marriage and commitment than their peers (Thornton and Young-DeMarco 2000).

Marriage, however, remains highly valued by Americans. Most Americans aspire to marry, and believe that it is beneficial to happiness, health, and well-being (Waite and Gallagher 2000). Yet it is possible that the bar for marriage has risen: as it has become more valued, people view it more seriously, and use cohabitation as a kind of "trial" for marriage so that they can ultimately reject partners who do not appear likely to meet their needs for emotional and economic security (Smock 2000). In addition, same-sex couples are now pursuing the right to marry in order to claim the legal (as well as emotional) benefits of marriage. Thousands of same-sex marriages have taken place this year in California, Massachusetts, and New York.

The core group assembled for this project will analyze historical trends and alternative theoretical approaches toward understanding current trends in marriage, cohabitation, and related roles in life as parent and worker. Many economic and sociological theorists point to a series of changes in modern economies such as globalization that have produced more job insecurity for workers as well as increased the educational attainment necessary to prosper. These trends contribute to delayed marriage (Oppenheimer, Kalmijn and Lim 1997) and increased marital instability (Cherlin 1992). In the late adolescent and early adult years ("emerging adulthood") the uncertainty of career and job opportunities may have made economic independence from parents more difficult to achieve. This theoretical approach emphasizes the analysis of trends in large demographic and economic datasets or analyses of individual life courses in longitudinal

datasets that span the adolescence and early adulthoods of young people entering the labor market (e.g. the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth; Panel Study of Income Dynamics; and others).

Theorists who take a cultural analytic approach point to the rise of an excessive type of individualism, the lives of individuals. According to this view, marriage is viewed as a means toward gaining individual happiness rather than promoting or producing social goods – well-socialized children, maintenance of family wealth, and obligations to support dependents at both ends of the life span (see Swidler, 1980). Others theorists point to social democratic, civil rights, and justice which has transformed the meaning of marriage and its role in movements that have affected the expectations of women and sexual minorities for full social participation and legal protection. For example, one of the leading undergraduate textbooks on family life in the United States (A. Cherlin, *Public and Private Families*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 2002) speculates that civil rights and justice movements have combined with contemporary notions of individualism to produce a widely-influential social movement that has increasingly personalized marital decision making while also producing tolerance for other people's choices. Typically, such explanations are approached via ethnographic study or field research using qualitative methods, although there are also some well-known quantitative analyses of attitudinal changes across time (Thornton and Young-DeMarco 2001).

One area of agreement in all three of these social science approaches is that contemporary Americans and western Europeans perceive that in regard to marriage and sexual partnerships they have many more allowable behavioral choices. Marriage has transformed from an institution that is perceived as symbolizing life-long social responsibility to family of origin, marital partner, family of origin, children, and aging parents – a bedrock of social continuity -- into a voluntary emotional commitment that may end within a short span of time.

There is a remarkable convergence of social science interest in family altruistic behavior and marriage/pair-bonding with research currently being conducted in evolutionary biology. The premise of the evolutionary biological approach is that natural selection has produced human capacity for flexible decision-making “rules of thumb” that come into play to enhance fitness behaviors (such as mating strategies, timing, etc.). These flexible rules give rise to different but predictable behaviors depending on differing social circumstances and the perceived pay-offs for exercising fitness – pair-bonding and rearing children.

For example, marrying (and presumably having children) might be perceived as having a different type of pay-off for those with more resources versus those with lower resources, and the perceived pay-off leads to a different type of fitness (or adaptive) strategy (Moen and Wethington 1992). It has long been observed that marriages tend to occur among mates of equal economic and social resources (marital similarity, or homogamy). Women with more economic and educational resources would view marriage as a good investment if it preserves economic standing and provides a stable financial milieu for raising children who would achieve equal financial and educational standing. Marrying “down” risks the future “fitness” of any children from that union.

#### Specific Questions to Be Addressed:

We believe changes in the meaning of marriage have been profound and we intend to examine the following sets of questions, using a variety of theoretical and analytical approaches:

- Cultural change in the meaning of marriage. Of particular interest is motivation for cohabitation and delayed marriage and the increasing ambivalence about the value of marriage toward living a full and successful adult life. Has the increasing ambivalence reduced the well-described “bonus” in well being usually seen for people who marry? The first part of this question is best approached through qualitative study. For example, Maureen Waller has been collecting qualitative data that is relevant to this question through her interviews of some of the participants in the Oakland site of the Fragile Families and Child Well-being Study. In addition, Wendy Manning, who has indicated an interest in participating in this

project as a visiting scholar, has collected qualitative data on cohabitation as part of her NICHD funded grant “The Meaning of Cohabiting Unions in the U.S. We can use these data to investigate how people use culturally available ideas about marriage to explain their decisions about cohabitation and marriage. The second part of the question can be approached through analysis of longitudinal datasets that follow young people through early adulthood and marital formation (e.g. the National Longitudinal Study of Youth; National Survey of Families and Households; the National Comorbidity Survey; the National Survey of Daily Experiences; Midlife in the United States).

- The changing role of pair-bonding and marriage in the lives of younger people. This includes: a) documenting the extended period of economic dependence on parents, especially for non-college-bound youth; b) replacement of marriages by cohabitation at critical junctures in the life course (early adulthood; second and third sexual partnerships), including social class differences in the propensity and motivation for cohabitation and marriage. These questions will be approached through quantitative analysis of existing longitudinal datasets.
- The role of civil rights and justice movements in transforming marriage. Multiple questions may be addressed here, including: a) growing prominence of work and career in the lives of women with implications for investing in marriage as a strategy to enhance fitness; b) increasing tolerance of sexual partnerships between gays and lesbians and their current struggle for legal recognition of those partnership; c) larger number of inter-racial, inter-ethnic, and inter-faith sexual relationships and marriages, along with their contributions to diversities in families and family life. For these questions, we will combine qualitative approaches with quantitative approaches.
- Implications for society and policy. Questions we would like to address are: a) inequalities in the accumulation of advantages across the life course associated with the propensity to marry and remain married through critical adult earning years; and b) institutional and policy lag in response to changes in marital behavior. The first question will be addressed using quantitative analyses of pre-existing datasets; the second through a focused archival policy analysis.

While it is clear from the discussion above that the topics of fatherhood and marriage have many areas of overlap and interconnection, we pay particular attention to several cross-cutting themes that are relevant to both.

- What are the differences in opportunities, constraints, behavior, and outcomes by race, ethnicity, and social class?
- How do family processes and investments in children differ across family types, and how do these behaviors affect child outcomes? The domains of child outcomes we will examine include economic, cognitive, socio-emotional, behavioral, and health.
- What are the interactions between family processes and child investments and the social context/culture? What is the impact of different social, educational, and neighborhood environments on family processes and child outcomes? How do family processes and investments interact with the resources that are available in communities? The developmental literature has suggested that children are most influenced by family environment during early childhood, but that school, neighborhood, and peer interactions become increasingly important influences as children reach adolescence. These contexts and interactions may also influence the cultural repertoires children will later draw upon when making decisions about marriage, family formation, and parenting arrangements.
- How does biology affect behaviors and outcomes (e.g, the propensity to marry, monogamy, committed fatherhood, and investments in children)?
- How have changes in marriage and fatherhood investment had an impact on the transition to adulthood and family formation behavior of subsequent generations?
- How do social policies affect marriage and family formation, family processes, father involvement, and child outcomes?

### **III.C The Research Team, Affiliates, and Visiting Scholars**

The disciplines that have traditionally contributed to the study of the family include anthropology, demography, economics, psychology, and sociology. In addition, as research has documented the biological origins of behavior, the field of biology has become increasingly important in understanding the family. We have put together a core group that has expertise in all of these areas. In this proposal we have also emphasized the importance of diversity of methods. This team reflects a breadth of methods including quantitative analysis of secondary data, survey design and collection of primary data, experimental methods, observational methods, qualitative and mixed methods and ethnography. Below we describe the contributions that each of our team members makes to the project.

#### Qualifications of the proposed seminar leader.

**Elizabeth Peters** is Professor of Policy Analysis and Management at Cornell and an economic demographer who has published extensively on topics related to marriage, divorce, child support policy, welfare reform, and father involvement. Her work has appeared in prestigious journals such as the *American Economic Review*, *International Economic Review*, *Demography*, *Annual Review of Sociology*, the *Journal of Family Issues*, and the *Journal of Human Resources*. She has received numerous competitive research grants from federal agencies including NICHD, the Department of Health and Human Services (ASPE and the Child Care Bureau), and the Department of Labor. Peters has a long history of multi-disciplinary collaborations, co-authoring with colleagues in economics, law, psychology, and sociology. For the past 10 years she has been a partner in the NICHD sponsored Family and Child Well-being Network, a group of scholars across universities and disciplines, that was established, in part, to bridge the gap between social science research on the family and public policy. As described above, Peters recently submitted a program project grant (P01) to NICHD on the Transition to Fatherhood. This P01 is an outgrowth of research collaborations that began among members of the NICHD Family and Child Well-being Network, and it involves scholars from six different research institutions or universities (Cornell, Maryland, Johns Hopkins, Illinois, North Carolina, the Urban Institute, and Child Trends). In addition to illustrating Peters' ability to lead this type of large scale and diverse research project, the topic of fatherhood is also central to the types of questions we propose to examine as part of the ISS seminar. If both the P01 and ISS proposal are successful, the synergies across the two activities would be beneficial to both.

#### Other Core Team Members.

**Elizabeth Adkins-Regan** is a biological psychologist, animal behaviorist, and behavioral neuroendocrinologist (currently chair of the Department of Psychology and a member of the Department of Neurobiology and Behavior). She is interested in hormonal and neural mechanisms underlying the social behavior and social relationships of animals, especially birds. What makes her research and expertise relevant to the proposal theme is that her current major focus is the avian analogs of some of the human phenomena encompassed by the proposal theme. These include sexual partnerships (not only those between males and females, but also those between males or between females), mate fidelity, and the influence of adult male presence on juvenile development. She does experimental work testing hypotheses about (a) the formation and maintenance of male-female pairbonds in birds that form pairs that last for the life of the birds, (b) factors influencing matings with extra-pair birds, (c) developmental processes (including adult male presence) responsible for preferences for pairing with opposite- or same-sex birds, (d) processes responsible for the developmental shift in the attachment objects of juveniles from the family members to potential pairing partners, and (e) hormonal stress responses to separation of a pair and their role in preventing "divorce." Humans are but one animal species and many human behaviors and tendencies are not unique but are found elsewhere in the animal world. The richest and deepest understanding of humans includes an appreciation for this broader biological context. Some of the conceptual tools that have led to insights about animal relationships might be useful for thinking about humans. Some hypotheses about humans (for example, those that attempt to explain diversity in human sexual orientation by positing biological factors, or

those that examine stress endocrinology in relation to relationship decisions) can be informed by experimental research with animals.

**Stephen Emlen** is the Jacob Gould Schurman Professor of Behavioral Ecology in the Department of Neurobiology and Behavior. As an evolutionary biologist, he has spent over 25 years studying the behavior and ecology of animal species that live in societies that are structurally similar to those of various human societies. As a proponent of the viewpoint that findings from animal studies can be informative to an understanding of human families, he will bring to the proposed collaboration the evolutionary perspective that is often missing in the social sciences.

Much of Emlen's research, teaching, and outreach activities are directly relevant to the Evolving Family Project. His research interests revolve around understanding the adaptive significance of social behaviors in animals. He is particularly interested in the juxtaposition of cooperation and conflict in social groups comprised of close genetic relatives (i.e. families). His work blends the development of conceptual theory with empirical testing of the assumptions and predictions of competing hypotheses. Emlen has lectured extensively on human mating systems, the evolution of families, and an evolutionary perspective on human family dynamics (i.e. interactions among family members). His new course 'Evolutionary perspectives on human behavior' (BioNB 327) includes topics such as courtship, marriage, parenting, and the human family. Recent publications and lectures reflect his growing interest in evolving families and human mate choice. Among them are "An evolutionary theory of the family" (PNAS, 1995), "The evolutionary study of human family systems (Social Science Information, 1997), "From cooperative birds to dysfunctional families" (Pittsburgh Eminent Biologist Lecture Series, 2000), "Cognitive processes underlying human mate choice" (with Peter Buston, PNAS, 2003), and "Birds 'R' Us: Chronicles of an Avian Anthropologist" (Wilson Ornithological Society, 2004).

Both Emlen and Adkins-Regan will participate in the project half time. Their research expertise complements one another. Between the two, the project will have the full time involvement of a scholar who will bring the evolutionary and socio-biology perspective to the project.

**Kathryn March** is an Associate Professor in Anthropology and Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. She has worked on questions of anthropology, gender and social change in Himalayan Asia since 1973. Her present interests in the political and economic pressures on local ethnic communities have evolved directly from earlier commitments to understanding how society and culture interact through time, and how individual people's lives are framed within these contexts, with particular reference to gender, women's lives, and social justice. In approaching these issues, she attends most carefully to language and ritual, broadly conceived. Most of her evidence is drawn from interviews, life histories, and personal stories to explore how people talk about what concerns them. In addition, she is interested in the different ways in which people relate their own experiences and reflections to larger cultural and esthetic frameworks, such as those of ritual, religion and song. March contributes the important perspective of cultural anthropology to our Evolving Family Project. In addition, she is particularly interested in how the experience of immigration influences marriage and father involvement, especially in Asian families.

**Maureen Waller** is an Assistant Professor of Policy Analysis and Management who has used qualitative and mixed-method techniques to examine issues of marriage, fatherhood, and social policy in low-income communities. Trained as a cultural sociologist, she has since had the opportunity to participate in innovative social science projects, and to work in research settings, that cross disciplinary boundaries. Her current research draws on longitudinal survey data collected from unmarried mothers and fathers as part of the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study, and qualitative data she conducted with a sub-sample of parents in the survey, to examine early transitions in these family relationships. Some of this work examines how parents' expectations about marriage and divorce (as well as the socio-economic factors that underlie these

perceptions) influence their decision to marry their child's other parent, to form a cohabiting union, or to dissolve the relationship within the first five years of their child's birth. This research also investigates how relationships between mothers and fathers, their socio-economic circumstances, and policy environments affect fathers' ability to establish and maintain emotional and economic ties with their children. Waller's current work builds on research published in *My Baby's Father: Unmarried Parents and Paternal Responsibility* (Cornell University Press, 2002). For this research, Waller also conducted intensive interviews with unmarried mothers and fathers whose children receive welfare to examine collective beliefs about paternal responsibility, how parents express these beliefs through informal practices, and how these beliefs and practices conflict with the assumptions and regulations of the child support system.

**Elaine Wethington**, Associate Professor in the Departments of Human Development and Sociology and co-Director of the Cornell Gerontology Research Institute, is a medical sociologist, specializing in the sociology of mental health and illness. Her work relates to the theme of the proposal in several different ways. First, breakdowns in family and sexual relationships are powerful sources of stress in individual's lives, and research shows that they are more likely than other equally severe events to provoke episodes of clinically significant mental illness. However, family relationships and the quality of those relationships are also powerful "buffers" when individuals are under stress that originates outside the family. In addition, recent changes in family structures in the U.S. and the diversity of these changes across social groups are associated with concomitant changes in the relative mental and physical health in social groups, most notably among adolescents and young adults. As a co-investigator on the *National Comorbidity Survey 2*, a longitudinal study of mental health and illness among a representative sample of 5000 Americans (funded by the National Institutes of Drug Abuse, P.I. R. C. Kessler, Harvard University Medical School), Wethington plans to extend her work on mental health to broader questions about the interplay of family formation and dissolution and mental health. Wethington also contributes to the methodological breadth of the group by bringing expertise and extensive experience in the collection of primary data. She has a particular specialty in studying daily stress processes, and has directed or co-directed three large studies using daily questionnaires or interviews to study stress processes (including the *National Survey of Daily Experiences*). These studies, all of which focus on processes and stress and support within families have resulted in multiple published papers (co-authored with Niall Bolger and David Almeida) in the *Journal of Marriage and Family* and the *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*.

Wethington teaches HD/SOC 250 *Families and the Life Course*, the undergraduate foundation class in family and life course studies in both the Department of Human Development and the Department of Sociology. The class would provide a venue for translating the work we accomplish in the institute into exciting educational opportunities for undergraduates at Cornell. Each year, the course attracts 250-280 students, from all of the undergraduate colleges.

#### **Cornell Affiliates and Other Team Members Yet to be Determined.**

As outlined above, our proposed team provides a broad range of expertise across disciplines (anthropology, biology, demography, economics, human development, policy analysis, psychology, and sociology) and across methods. We also have participation from faculty in several of the colleges across Cornell (and we would expect that the general competition to fill the remaining slots on the core team would broaden that representation further), and the team includes assistant, associate, and full professors.

There are a few important areas, however, that the current team does not cover. One of those areas is racial and ethnic diversity in families. We are fortunate that David Harris' research expertise is in the area of race and ethnicity, stratification, and public policy. As director of ISS, he would participate in any project that is chosen, so, in essence, we get this expertise as a fortunate bi-product. In addition, we have invited Linda Burton at Penn State and Ron Mincy at Columbia, scholars who have made important contributions on racial and ethnic diversity of families to participate in our project, but we have not yet heard back from them about their availability during the AY 05-06.

Another area where there is little expertise in the current team is an international perspective. Kathryn March does work in the developing world, specifically, Nepal, but it would also be useful to get expertise from someone who does work on families in Europe or other parts of the non-US. developed world. There are a number of European data sets with detailed information about family behavior, processes, and outcomes that could be analyzed to provide a cross-national comparative perspective (e.g., the German socio-economic panel, GSOEP, and several British data sets). This is an area that we would hope to fill through the general competition for the additional 5 slots on the core research team, or through faculty with affiliate status, or through visiting scholars.

In addition, the current team does not include scholars from law or political science. Given the importance of the political rhetoric surrounding these topics and the involvement of the courts in family issues such as the legalization of gay and lesbian marriages, we would hope to involve scholars to reflect these perspectives.

There are a number of Cornell faculty with interest and expertise in the area of the family, but who we were not able to include among the core team of five. If the “Evolving Family” project is chosen, some of these faculty may compete to be in the final core of ten, while others may be able to participate in an affiliate status. We list these faculty and their areas of research expertise below.

#### **NAMES DELETED FROM PUBLIC VERSION OF PROPOSAL**

#### **Visiting Scholars**

During the last month our project team members contacted family research scholars outside of Cornell from a variety of disciplines to see if they might be interested in visiting Cornell during AY 2005-2006 to participate in our project (see Appendix 4 for the letter that solicited their participation). There was a great deal of enthusiasm for the project among those whom we contacted. We received positive responses from 13 scholars, ranging from tentative to more firm commitments. Vita of the 13 and several explicit letters of commitment are included as Appendix 5. Here we briefly list those who indicated an interest in our project. Note that two of those who expressed an interest (Hofferth and Sonnenstein) are already collaborators in the Transition to Fatherhood P01 described above. Their participation will facilitate the work in this Evolving Family project that is related to the Transition to Fatherhood P01. Two others on the list below (Morgan and Bianchi) are PI's of the project “Designing New Models for Explaining Family Change and Variation,” which is a \$3.3 million project funded by NICHD to help identify promising approaches to set the stage for the next generation of research and data collection on the family. Having two of the PIs of this important NICHD project collaborate in our Cornell Evolving Family Project has several benefits. It allows Cornell researchers to have input into a major NICHD project that will have important implications for the type of research on the family that will be done over the next several decades. In turn, it provides the Cornell project with expertise from leading scholars on family research. The list below also includes three former Presidents of the Population Association of America (Bianchi, McLanahan, and Morgan) and two current directors of NICHD funded Population Centers (Bianchi and Manning). Their involvement will give this project high visibility among major players in the area of family and population research.

**Suzanne Bianchi**, Professor of Sociology and Director of the Maryland Population Research Center, University of Maryland

**Phil and Carolyn Cowan**, Professor and Adjunct Professor, Department of Psychology, University of California, Berkeley

**Paula England**, Professor of Sociology, Stanford University

**Frank Furstenberg**, Zellerbach Family Professor of Sociology, University of Pennsylvania

**Sandra Hofferth**, Professor, Department of Family Studies, University of Maryland

**Bobbi Low**, Professor, School of Natural Resources and Environment, and Associate Director of the Population-Environment Dynamics Program, University of Michigan

**Shelly Lundberg**, Castor Professor of Economics and Director of the Center for Research on Families, University of Washington

**Wendy Manning**, Professor of Sociology and Director of the Center for Family and Demographic Research, Bowling Green State University

**Sara McLanahan**, Professor of Sociology and Public Affairs and Director of the Bendheim-Thoman Center for Research on Child Wellbeing, Princeton University

**Robert Moffitt**, Professor, Department of Economics and Department of Population and Family Health Sciences, Johns Hopkins University

**Phillip Morgan**, Professor of Sociology and Principle Investigator of the NICHD Project on Family Change, Duke University

**Freya Sonenstein**, Professor, Department of Population and Family Health Sciences, and Director of the Center for Adolescent Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, Johns Hopkins University

### **III. D. Outreach to the Broader Cornell Community and Beyond**

IIID.1. Formal Classroom Activities. As part of this project we will also develop a number of teaching activities. Potential student interest in the study of families is evidenced by the 77 courses at Cornell that contain the word family in the course description. Ten courses contain the word family in the title of the course, itself (5 grad and 5 undergrad), but three of these courses are not currently being offered. Most of the family courses currently offered have titles that reflect a fairly broad coverage of material on the family, so there is room to offer a more specialized class to a small number of students at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. One such topic could be the role of fathers in families. Another topic might relate to non-traditional families or vulnerable families and welfare reform. The types of intellectual and teaching activities to engage the Cornell community can be illustrated by an initiative that was undertaken in 1995 in response to the publication of the *Bell Curve* by Herrnstein and Murray. As part of that initiative Steve Ceci and Elizabeth Peters co-taught a course on the psychological and economic foundations of the *Bell Curve* book. The course also included a small section for an extra course credit in which undergraduate students could do empirical research on questions related to the *Bell Curve* book. In addition, eminent scholars from outside Cornell were brought to campus to lecture in the class and to present a public lecture to the broader Cornell community. We imagine offering similar types of courses and public lectures on topics relevant to the evolving family.

The new freshman year book project at Cornell presents another opportunity for getting students involved in research and public policy on the family. During orientation week new students attend a large symposium and also participate in small groups to critique a specific book that is chosen for that year. There are also tie-in events such as multidisciplinary lectures by Cornell faculty. Possible books related to the family include the classics *Tally's Corner* by Elliot Liebow and *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* by Adam Smith. Other more contemporary books on the topic include *There Are No Children Here* by Alex Kotlowitz, the anti-Utopian novel *Women on the Edge of Time* by Marge Piercy, *Animal Dreams* or *Pigs in Heaven* by Barbara Kingsolver, and *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant* by Anne Tyler. If the Evolving Family project is chosen, we would contact the Provost's office to suggest a way to connect our project with the freshman year reading project.

IIID.2. Public Lectures. In the second year, we will sponsor a distinguished speaker series. The speaker series will be formally connected to undergraduate courses such as Introduction to Sociology (SOC 101 and RSOC 101), Families and the Life Course (HD/SOC250), Risk and Protective Factors in Childhood and Adolescence (HD353), Demography and Family Policy (PAM371), and Evolutionary Perspectives on Human Behavior (BioNB327) and to any courses that the project team might develop (see above). As we explore potentials for collaboration across Cornell we will add to this list of classes; many of those we hope to attract to this partnership teach related courses in the social sciences, biological sciences, and the

humanities. Some of the distinguished speakers could be the visiting scholars that are participating in our project.

In addition to academics and researchers, we plan to bring to campus prominent people from the policy world who are interested in families. For example, former Vice-President Al Gore is involved in Family Re-Union, a series of annual conferences designed to bring current research to bear in developing new policies to strengthen families. He was also the primary initiator of President Clinton's responsible fatherhood efforts. There have been some preliminary conversations with some of Gore's staff about the possibility of him visiting Cornell. Similarly, former Attorney General, Janet Reno is interested in family policy issues. Reno is currently a Rhodes Professor. She has spent two weeks in each of the last two years at Cornell, and in 2003 chaired a panel on family policy research in HD/SOC 250, Families and the Life Course. The upcoming academic year is her last year as a Rhodes scholar. According to her faculty sponsor, Karl Pillemer, participation in an activity relating to the Evolving Family project would fit very well with the kinds of projects Reno hopes to foster. Another person who might be appropriate is Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader-Ginsberg. Like Jane Reno, Bader-Ginsberg is a Cornell alumnae, which increases the chances that she could be convinced to come to Cornell to participate in an activity related to the Evolving Family Project. NYS Senator Hillary Clinton also has strong interests in the family. Prominent policy people from the other side of the political spectrum that we could invite include Wade Horn, Former President of the National Fatherhood Initiative and currently Assistant Secretary for the Administration on Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and Ronald Haskins, former Chief of Staff for the Republican majority House Ways and Means Committee and currently a scholar at the Brookings Institute.

Cornell has several mechanisms available to facilitate visits and involvement of people such as the ones mentioned above. Both the Rhodes Professorship and the University Professorship bring prominent people to Cornell to visit for a period of time. The general process for these two professorships is that faculty nominate someone, and a selection committee makes the choice among the various nominees (note that the nomination process for the Rhodes professorship is currently undergoing some modifications, so the exact process that will be in effect in the future is not known at this time).

### IIID.3. Extension and Outreach Beyond Cornell

The project will extend the campus-based teaching of courses, seminars, and workshops to reach a broader group of participants. These may include Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) professionals in family and youth development, other community-based professionals working with families and youth, and community government elected and appointed officials. For example, one of the major requests from extension educators is more research on families and family related issues. The departments of Policy Analysis and Management and Human Development already maintain substantial outreach efforts in this area through CCE. In addition, a number of faculty in these departments, including Peters and Wethington, engage in research translation for the general public through outlets such as the Bronfenbrenner Life Course Center and the Cornell Institute for Translational Research on Aging.

Outreach may be facilitated through video conferencing, video taping of presentations and/or development of web-based materials. Student involvement can be enriched by experiential opportunities with CCE. Students may contribute to the development of popular educational materials or assist in developing community education activities based upon the project's output. Students' work may be guided by one of several existing CCE Program Work Teams. The teams are led by a CU faculty member and an off-campus extension professional and include other CCE professionals and external stakeholders such as not for profit leaders and state and local department and agency representatives.

### Dissemination Capabilities

CCE professionals are experienced in convening local community forums that include satellite downlink or video conference presentations. Project presentations could be linked to CCE office locations. CCE has

video conference facilities in over 20 locations throughout New York. Alternatively, workshop or seminar presentations may be made available to CCE and other professionals, and the public at large via the [WWW](#). We will establish a web site for the project through ISS that will help other researchers, students, policy makers, and alumni connect to our own work and to useful resources on the web. Fact sheets and policy briefs will be available for downloading. CCE maintains mailing and contact lists for various audience groups interested in family, children and youth well-being. URL addresses for project resources can be publicized in extension mailings and releases.

#### IIID.4 Connections Between this Project and Other Projects/Institutions at Cornell and Beyond

The core group for this proposal is connected to a number of research centers and policy groups, and those connections can facilitate our outreach to different constituencies at Cornell and beyond. Wethington is a former acting director of the Bronfenbrenner Life Course Center (BLCC) and director of the Pilot Study Core of the Cornell Institute for Translational Research on Aging. Peters and Waller are also affiliates of the BLCC. The group also has connections to the Center for the Study of Inequality and the Population and Development Program. As discussed earlier, there are also strong connections to three large scale research projects. One is the Transition to Fatherhood P01 that is currently under review at NICHD. The second is the Family Change Project currently funded by NICHD that is represented by two scholars who have agreed to participate in our Evolving Family project. The third is the Fragile Families and Child Well-being Study, where Waller headed up the Oakland site for that project prior to coming to Cornell.

#### III.E. Third Year Products

The ultimate goal of our project is to develop a core team of scholars who are interacting around the central theme of families. This multi-disciplinary group will work together on several specific research questions (described above) to produce scholarly papers. We expect the work to result in a number of published articles and an edited book or special volume of a journal such as the *Journal of Family Issues*, the *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, or *Demography* (we would be talking to publishers and editors during the first and second years of the project to see what types of outlets are most likely). Because of the cross-fertilization of different disciplines and different methods afforded by the project team's interactions, the resulting research is likely to be much richer than work resulting from a single disciplinary perspective. We also expect that the concentrated intellectual activity in this area will put Cornell at the forefront of research on the family.

Another tangible product to come from the third year of activities will be a proposal for a population center grant (R21 or R24) for longer term infrastructure support that would be submitted to NICHD. Through these R21 and R24 awards, NICHD provides funding for infrastructure to facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration and support activities broadly relating to population issues (seminar series, support for small internal grants, data and computing resources, etc.). These grants are very competitive, and institutions that are awarded these centers are generally regarded as the top institutions in the field.

Over the past several years a small group of Cornell social science faculty have met to talk about the possibility of applying for an NICHD population center grant (Peters was one of the leaders of that effort). As part of exploring the feasibility of this idea, we held monthly seminars. Attendance at these seminars was good, ranging from about 15-30 students and faculty. A serious impediment to a successful application for a population center is the fact that demographers and family scholars at Cornell are scattered across campus among many different departments and colleges. This dispersion makes it logistically difficult to develop and show evidence of the types of interaction and activities that are a necessary first step for winning an NICHD population center.

We believe that the ISS sponsored project would foster the kinds of collaborations, projects, and activities that are necessary to winning an R21 or R24 population center. Specifically, population center proposals need to identify one or more themes or areas of expertise relating to population and demography, and the

research agenda developed in this proposal would be a large part of that theme. The activities in the first two years of the proposal will facilitate the integration of Cornell researchers with an interest in demography broadly defined, so that by year three we will have a core "team" of scholars who are interacting around the central theme of families. The outside scholars we bring in will both help in developing that theme and give us insight into what the key players in the NICHD world of research are thinking about. Also, since a population center should be built around multiple funded projects, the first two years will be important in helping Cornell researchers develop and submit those proposals.

In sum, we believe that the activities described in this proposal will lead to long term collaborations across disciplines and departments and to the development of an infrastructure to support research on the family. This, in turn, will result in the enhanced reputation of Cornell social sciences in the broad and important area of the evolving family.

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## APPENDIX 1: Proposed Budget for Evolving Family Project

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## APPENDIX 2: Databases for Evolving Family Project

Study	Purpose	Design	Sample	Periodicity	Topics Covered
<b>Fragile Families and Child Well-Being Study (Fragile Families)</b>	To learn about the conditions and capabilities of new unwed parents.	Longitudinal design following a representative panel of mostly unwed parents (includes both mothers and fathers). Families drawn from 20 cities selected based on welfare and child support policies and labor market strength.	A hospital-based sampling procedure is used to enroll 4,700 families including 3,600 unmarried couples and 1,100 married couples.  <u>Respondents:</u> Mothers and fathers age 15+	In several waves of data collection from 1998-2000, parents were interviewed after the birth of their child. Follow-up interviews with both parents took place when the child was 12 and 30 months old, and further interviews are scheduled for 48 months.	Family characteristics, child well-being and fathering, parent-parent and parent-child relationships, fathers, demographics, family support, environment and programs, health and health behavior, education and employment, income, incarceration, child care, and child abuse.
<b>National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health)</b>	This study assesses the health status of adolescents, and also looks at the causes of their health-related behaviors by focusing on the environments in which they live. It focuses on forces that influence adolescent's behavior such as families, friendships, romantic relationships, peer groups, schools, neighborhoods, and communities.	Longitudinal study of a nationally representative sample of adolescents. Derived from stratified sample of US schools from 80 communities spanning grades 7-12 in 1994.	12,105 adolescents selected to complete the school questionnaire, and chosen for the in-house survey. African Americans with a college-educated parent, Chinese, Cuban, Puerto Rican, and disabled adolescents over-sampled.  <u>Respondents:</u> Baseline Survey: Respondents age 11-20 in 1994.	Data were collected for Wave 1 in 1994-1995, and for Wave 2 in 1996. A third wave was collected in 2002, with future waves to be decided.	<u>School Survey:</u> Demographic characteristics of the adolescent; education and occupation of parents; household members and information on other adolescents in the household; risk-related behaviors; activities with male and female friends; school grades and relationship with other students and teachers; expectations for the future; mental, physical and emotional health; involvement in extracurricular activities. <u>In home Survey:</u> Relationship information about household members; nonresident biological parents; activities and relationships with parents and siblings; religion; tobacco, alcohol and drug use; physical limitations; sexual behavior and contraceptive use; employment and earnings; daily activities; academics and experiences in school; friends, romantic, and sexual partners, delinquent behavior; physical development and pregnancy history; self-esteem, self-efficacy, and experiences with suicide.
<b>National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, 1997 (NLSY97)</b>	Provides information about youth making the transition into the labor market and into adulthood, career and family formation.	Longitudinal study following a national representative sample of youth ages 12-16.	Sample consists of 8,984 youth. Includes two sub-samples; the cross-sectional sample and the supplemental sample. The cross-sectional sample consists of 6,748 youth intended to be nationally representative of non-institutionalized youth aged 12-16 in 1997. The supplemental sample consists of 2,236 Black and Hispanic youth.  <u>Respondents:</u> Respondents age 12-16 in the first round of data collection (1997).	First round of interviews conducted February to September of 1997, and continues annually.	Family background; socio-economic status; community; attitudes towards self; health, fertility, risky behaviors (drug and alcohol use, other criminal activity, sexual behavior and attitudes); peer relationships; program participation; schooling experiences; aptitude and interests; training experiences; and labor market behavior.

Study	Purpose	Design	Sample	Periodicity	Topics Covered
<b>National Survey of Families and Households (NSFH)</b>	A survey focused almost exclusively on family issues that would permit not only the testing of competing hypotheses concerning a variety of aspects of the American family, but also the description of the current state of the family.	Longitudinal survey of adults living in American households in 1987	A nationally representative sample of American households was drawn and a random household member aged 19 or older was selected from each eligible household to be the "main" respondent. Persons under 19 were eligible to be interviewed if they were: 1) currently married; or 2) if no one 19 or older was resident in the household. In addition to the main respondent, certain others, such as spouses, cohabiting partners or certain children were also interviewed. There are oversamples of ethnic minorities, one-parent families, families with step-children, families containing children with no parent in the household, cohabitators, and recently married persons.	Respondents were interviewed three times: in 1987-1988, 1992-1994 and 2000-2001.	Current household composition, household history (co-residence with parents, stepparents, grandparents), marriage and cohabitation history, social background of first spouse, reasons why spouse absent, fertility history, fertility intentions, characteristics of children, social background (parental education etc.), education history, military service history, employment history, income/assets/debts, household division of labor, well-being, role performance, social participation, social support, religion, divorce and separation experience, feelings about marriage and cohabitation, cohabitation relationship characteristics and quality, married couple relationship characteristics and quality, things to consider when considering having a(nother) child, parenting, children living elsewhere, and relationships with children.
<b>National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, 1979 (NLSY79)</b>	Assesses the educational, training, employment, and family experiences of young men and women.	Longitudinal study of a nationally representative sample of young men and women age 14-21.	Sample of 12,686 young men and women, as well as 8,395 children born to female respondents as of 1998. Includes three sub-samples. <u>Cross-sectional sample</u> : Intended to be representative of the non-institutionalized civilian population of American youth (born in 1957 through 1964). <u>Supplemental sample</u> : Intended to represent civilian Hispanics, Blacks, and economically disadvantaged Whites. <u>Military sample</u> : Intended to represent young Americans (born 1957 through 1961) serving in the military, in order to enable civilian/military analyses.  <u>Respondents</u> : 14-22 year old when first surveyed in 1979.	Administered annually, starting in 1979, then biennially since 1994.	Family formation and dissolution, childbearing, child care, socioeconomic status, labor force experience, education and training; cognitive, affective and social development of children.

Study	Purpose	Design	Sample	Periodicity	Topics Covered
<b>National Comorbidity Survey 1 &amp; 2</b>	To estimate the incidence and prevalence of major mental and substance abuse disorders in the United States and to examine their relationship to environmental factors such as life and childhood history, lifetime and recent role transitions, stressful life events and other adversities, personality, health conditions, and disability.	Two wave longitudinal design following a U.S. sample of 15-54 year olds. Younger subjects (15-24) were over-sampled for the follow-up study 10 years later.	National sample of 48 contiguous states, representing all major urban areas, other urban SMSAs, and rural census tracts. Face to face interviews conducted by trained interviewers. Respondents: randomly selected from household, aged 15-54.	The first wave of data collection was completed in 1990-1992; 5887 (out of 8098) subjects were selected to receive the full battery of questions on life and childhood history, lifetime and recent role transitions, stressful life events and other adversities, and health conditions and disability. The second wave was completed in 2000-2003, with 83% of the 5887 taking part.	Episodes of mental disorder and substance abuse; service utilization for episodes of distress and substance abuse; self-reported impact of disorders and substance abuse on health, work, and other role enactments; personality; recent mood; childhood abuse; marital quality; social support from friends and family; employment history, work characteristics, and demands; physical health, chronic health conditions, and health behavior; stressful life events and difficulties; education; income and financial adequacy; ethnicity and race; religious participation and beliefs; childhood economic history; employment and mental health histories of subject's parents.
<b>Midlife in the United States</b>	To examine the quality of life and pro-social activities of American adults aged 25-74 and to examine their relationship to environmental factors such as life and childhood history, lifetime and recent role transitions, stressful life events and other adversities, personality, perceptions of control and mastery, social responsibilities, health conditions, and disability.	Telephone and self-administered survey of a national sample of Americans aged 25-74.	National telephone sample of 48 contiguous states, representing all major urban areas, other urban SMSAs, and rural census tracts. Telephone interviews conducted by trained interviewers; respondents were asked to commit to completing two self-administered surveys in subsequent 6 weeks. Respondents: randomly selected from household, aged 25-74. Estimated response rate is 80%.	The data collection was completed in 1995-1996; 4240 respondents. About half of the respondents took part in four different follow-up studies on specific topics (see the National Survey of Daily Experiences, below). The second full wave of data collection is underway in 2004.	Episodes of depression and anxiety; service utilization for episodes of distress and substance abuse; personality; recent mood; childhood abuse; marital quality; social support from friends and family; employment history, work characteristics, and demands; physical health, chronic health conditions, and health behavior; stressful life events and difficulties; education; income and financial adequacy; ethnicity and race; religious participation and beliefs; childhood economic history; employment and mental health histories of subject's parents.
<b>National Survey of Daily Experiences</b>	To estimate the incidence and prevalence of daily stressors and hassles in the United States and to examine their relationship to daily mood, health problems, and prosocial behavior.	Random follow-up survey to the Midlife in the United States study. Short-term longitudinal design; brief interviews nightly on 8 continuous days.	Follow-up to the Midlife in the United States Study. National sample of 48 contiguous states, representing all major urban areas, other urban SMSAs, and rural census tracts. Face to face interviews conducted by trained interviewers. Respondents: participants in the Midlife in the United States study, randomly selected. Estimated response rate is 78%.	The data collection was completed over 1996-1997; 1023 participants completed at least two days of interviews in their designated week. Interviews were conducted in "flights" of 40 subjects per week. Each subsequent flight began after the last was completed, thereby insuring that the flights began on different days of the week.	Mood and minor health problems; self-reported impact of mood or substance use on daily activities; selected indicators of time use (housework, commuting, employment, sleeping, activities with children); social support given and received; charitable contributions and other prosocial behavior; daily hassles (interpersonal stressors, work demands, household problems, instances of discrimination, and stressors involving other people).

## **APPENDIX 3: Letters of Commitment and CV of Cornell Scholars**

#### APPENDIX 4. Letter to Non-Cornell Scholars Soliciting Interest in Participation

Dear ---,

I'm writing to ask if you might be interesting in coming to Cornell for some part of AY 05-06 to work with Cornell social science faculty on a multidisciplinary project on the Evolving Family. Some monetary compensation would be available, and the duration of your visit could range from a week to a month, a semester, or a year. Details would be worked out later, but if you might be interested in working with us, I would need a letter indicating your potential interest prior to June 1.

Let me give you a few details that are relevant to this request. First, Cornell has decided to put some major resources into making the social sciences here more visible to the outside world. As part of this effort Cornell's Institute for Social Science (ISS) has solicited proposals from groups of faculty to undertake projects on topics of major importance (the call for proposals is attached to give you some ideas of the structure that the ISS envisions). On the basis of a 4 page pre-proposal, the project on the Evolving Family, that I am heading up, is one of three that was selected for further consideration (see attached). The final selection will be made in June on the basis of an expanded proposal that I am in the process of putting together. As part of that proposal I need to identify several prominent non-Cornell faculty who might be willing to spend some time in residence at Cornell during the AY 05-06 year to participate in this enterprise.

The core group from Cornell includes demographers such as myself, sociologists such as Maureen Waller and Elaine Wethington, a cultural anthropologist (Kathryn March), and evolutionary biologists (Stephen Emlen and Elizabeth Adkins-Regan). There will be other Cornell social scientists who will be involved with the project, but at this stage, all participants have not yet been determined. We expect this to be an eclectic and interdisciplinary group. While much of the group will be traditional quantitative demographers, we expect the project to include scholars using a variety of methods and from a variety of perspectives.

The exact activities that will be undertaken as part of the project are still being fleshed out. If this proposal is chosen to go forward, we will continue to refine the plan during the next academic year. However, some tentative decisions have been made. Specifically, the subthemes of the proposal will be related to fatherhood and marriage (probably focusing on one of these each semester). Intellectual interactions will involve a weekly seminar (non-Cornell researchers would attend these while in residence) and 2 workshops (about a day and a half each) that attempt to integrate and synthesize the work that was accomplished during each semester. Some of the work will involve collaborative efforts among scholars doing coordinated analyses of one specific question, while other work may be independent research that provides different perspectives that contribute to the theme of the evolving family.

Since so many details are yet to be resolved, I recognize that it would be difficult to make a firm commitment to come to Cornell. However, if the general outline above (and described in more detail in the attachments) and the possibility of spending some time at Cornell appeals to you, I would appreciate a letter or return email indicating your interest in our project. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this in more detail, please contact me by email or phone (607-255-2595).

I look forward to hearing from you.

Liz

## **APPENDIX 5. Letters of Interest and CV of Potential Visiting Scholars**