Partnering, Cohabitation   
& Marriage

**Seminar 5**

*Learning Goal (Begin with the End in Mind): I will see that partnering in 2014 is more complex. Changing attitudes, behaviours & ensuing trends including immigration, economics and wars impact this. Today in North America, relationships are less stable & are more diverse & fluid. Intimacy reflects more equity & greater choice. Regardless of the changes marriage is still universal, and signals the beginning of a new family unit.*

**Tasks**

1. Read… Partnering, Cohabitation, and   
   Marriage p. 95 -131 by Sue Wilson
2. Use any or all of the reading strategies VIP,  
   *Highwriting*, and APE to answer at least three of   
   the questions. Identify these with an \* beside them.

**Terms - Minds On**

individualism conjugal boomerang kids revolving door

exchange theory cohabitation pure relationships plastic sexuality

sexual liberation 60s 70s sexual revolution 2010s homogamy endogamy

sexual autonomy auto eroticism exogamy mating gradient

marriage market marriage squeeze hooking up speed dating

computer mediated relationships gating features arranged marriages

selective hypothesis experience hypothesis marry up

**Summary**

Write a five sentences summary of this chapter. Try to be as comprehensive as you can in these five sentences. Include as much of the key information as possible. There will be a prize for the best one! NOTE: Do this first so you don’t forget, it is worth marks on its own.

**Discussion Questions - Action**

1. I know we have already looked at and talked about the many changes to family life in Canada over the last 50 years, briefly list the ones mentioned in the first two and a half pages that are related to partnering and marriage.
2. How does having an intimate partner affect the development of a young adult?
3. Why are individualistic societies more likely to emphasize romantic love over collectivist?
4. Which came first the chicken or the egg? Is love a cause for relationship development or an outcome derived from an intimate relationship? Explain how both could be true. Also, explain why the latter can be used to help understand at least in one way, how arranged marriages might be successful.
5. According to Cherlin do we only marry for love?
6. Even though China has been among the cultures that have arranged marriage, why do Dion and Dion think that this may change?
7. What does Gidden mean by a “pure relationship”? What are the pros and cons of these?
8. What is Jamieson saying about this shift to “pure relationships”? What is the difference between public discourse (dialogue or talk) and private relationships?
9. When it comes to sexual mores, describe the differences between the over and under 50 crowd. What does Rubin think is at the heart of these changes?
10. What is the connection between contraception development and availability and plastic sexuality?
11. Describe the differences between the sexual revolution of the 1960s and 70s and the revolution of the 2010s. What has the current revolution caused in Castell’s opinion? Include information from the bottom of page 72 and the top of page 73 to answer this part. [Hint APE might work well for this question]
12. What are the demographics included for relationship homogamy or endogamy? Which factors seem to be linked to the higher levels of marital satisfaction? Which seem to be less connected? Why is sharing the same religion particularly helpful?
13. Why is exogamy also important – so much so that incest is clearly a taboo in many if not all cultures?
14. If romance dictates that we look for our one true match or soul mate, what does the exchange theory propose? Lists costs and benefits that may come into play when finding a mate.
15. Compare and contrast the traits that young males and young females ranked in order of preference, in the University of Kent study. According to Townsend and Levy how do each differ when it comes to appearance? Apparently this is true in all cultures. What might that mean for straight women and gay men? What about lesbians?
16. Who are more likely to marry up, men or women? What are the consequences for undereducated men and highly educated women?
17. What is a marriage squeeze? Read excerpt from Macleans on the women shortage. What are the concerns regarding sex selected abortion, if male babies are preferred?
18. Who is most likely hooking up? Why?
19. Internet connections can work for some, and others find them less promising. Look up Instagram Bye Felipe, read over and comment. Warning – these are explicit and offensive, pass if you prefer.
20. What are the four stages in the acceptance of cohabitation as proposed by Kiernan? In Canada, what role do cultural and religious beliefs play in this?
21. Why are cohabitating relationships less stable?
22. While many propose that arranged marriages are quite successful, what did Ralston discover when interviewing South Asian immigrant women about their expectations for their children?
23. What does Cherlin mean about the deinstitutionalization of marriage? How do we know it is still valued in Canadian society?
24. What does selective hypothesis and experience hypothesis say about the lack of stability for marriages that follow cohabitation?
25. What are the various reasons for Canadians living single?
26. According to Kurdek, there are five dimensions of relationships and differences in how same sex marriages and cohabiting gay or lesbian relationships experience these. Describe Kurdek’s study, findings and conclusions, in detail.
27. What is the Modernization of Benefits and Obligations Act? Why is this helpful? Why is it not enough?
28. According to Wilson, what are predictors of marital happiness or success? What factor(s) are not?

**Reflection Questions - Consolidation**

1. Do you think romantic love is biological or a social development?
2. According to Cherlin we marry for love among other things, what are these other things?
3. Are “pure relationships” possible? Can they be sustained?
4. Do you agree that the changing double standard, and women being more involved in sex, has caused a shift in overall views and actions? If so why? What do you think the connection is?
5. “Marriage is the only family relationship we swear is forever and the only one that we swear is exclusive; yet is the one relationship that is least likely to be either exclusive or forever” What do you think McGoldrick meant by this? What do you think?