Family Change, Inequality and Public Policy

Families have changed dramatically over the past half century in industrialized countries - with later family formation, declining fertility, high levels of divorce and instability, and greater family complexity. These changes have not unfolded evenly across population groups, with notable differences observed by socioeconomic status. This talk will explore changes in family patterns over recent decades, including differences by SES, and will highlight challenges and opportunities for public policies to support disadvantaged families and to nurture the development and wellbeing of children.

Professor Marcia (Marcy) Carlson, University of Wisconsin-Madison: Is a Professor of Sociology and Director of the Center for Demography and Ecology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her primary research interests center on the links between family contexts and the wellbeing of children and parents. Her recent work is focused on changing patterns of parenthood and family complexity, including differences by socioeconomic status. She has published in a range of demography, family and general social science journals. She is currently serving as Vice President of the Population Association of America, Treasurer of the Association for Population Centers, and Chair of the Board of Overseers of the Panel Study of Income Dynamics.