

## Study Questions on Readings About Women and Economics

### Feminization of Poverty:

| Pearce, "Fem of Poverty: Update" FF, 290-97

| Newman, "Middle-Class Women in Trouble" FF, 319-23

- What does the term "the feminization of poverty" mean?
- List at least 6 causes of "the feminization of poverty."
- What statistics are so outrageous you want to put them on a bumper sticker?

| Weitzman, "The Divorce Law Revolution" (X)

- What are the good and bad points of no-fault divorce laws, as far as women are concerned? What has been the ultimate outcome for women and children?
- What does the history of no-fault divorce laws teach us about how the system works?
- What are some of the most important statistics in this article?
- What lessons for your life does this article teach?
- What legal/political issues do no-fault divorce laws impact? What kinds of political issues does this article make you think you need to support?

| Gutis, "Family Redefines Itself, and Now the Law Follows" FF, 378-80

| Entry in "Family" from *The Feminist Dictionary* by Kramarae and Treichler

- What are some of the recent changes in the legal status of the family?
- What is our culture's definition of the family? How does it differ from other definitions?
- According to the feminists, what is *wrong* with the nuclear family?
- Can you construct a feminist continuum from these articles? What is the moderate feminist position on the family as opposed to the radical feminist one?
- What strains are now being placed on the nuclear family? What direction is "the family" moving towards?

## **Economic Sexism and Racism:**

### **| Women Count--Count Women's Work" FF, 288-90**

- What is women's work; What do women do in the world?
- Should women's work be counted? What would happen if we did that?

### **| "The Wage Gap," RCG, 234-8**

- What causes the wage gap between men and women?
- List some of the myths about pay equity that this article debunks
- What are some of the most important statistics in these articles?

### **| Mantsios, "Class in America," RCG, 202-15**

- What are some of the major myths about class in America? How does he debunk those myths?
- List elements of people's lives determined by class. Where does class difference impact people the most-- where do they feel their class?
- What is your class identification and why?
- What are the relationships between class and gender and race?

### **| Jensen, "Welfare: Exploding the Stereotypes" RCG 242-48**

- What are some of the basic stereotypes about welfare mother that she is debunking?
- What are some examples of blaming the victim in traditional attitudes about welfare?
- How have things changed for women on welfare in the last 20 years?
- What do current welfare benefits ignore/ neglect?
- What does she think are the purposes behind attitudes towards welfare?
- What is the relationship between welfare and abuse of women?
- How radical do you think this article is?

### **| Newman, "What Scholars Can Tell Politicians about the Poor, RCG 249-52**

- What myths about poverty does this article outline and debunk?
- Why are more younger people poorer?

### **| Wilkerson and Greshman, "The Racialization of Poverty" FF 297-304**

### **| Brewer, "Black Women in Poverty:"FF 371-8**

- What causes black women to be unwed and on welfare
- Historically, what differences have there been between public programs for white and black women?
- What factors were left out of proposals for welfare reform by Moynihan et al? How many of these factors are still left out of contemporary welfare reform?
- What's wrong with idea of "national service"