

Robin Simon

Professor of Sociology at Wake Forest University

Winston-Salem, NC, US

Simon has conducted groundbreaking research regarding the impact of parenthood on adults' happiness and health.

Description

Following the publication of her study, *The Joys of Parenthood Reconsidered*, Robin Simon was interviewed by media outlets across the country including *Newsweek*, CBS' *60 Minutes*, NBC's *Today Show*, and NPR's *Wait, Wait Don't Tell Me*. Her research revealed that adults with children are not happier than adults without children.

Simon also received nationwide attention for another study that revealed counterintuitive findings: young men are more vulnerable than young women to the ups and downs of romantic relationships. She is currently studying the emotional benefits of marriage for functionally disabled adults, the emotional well-being of menopausal women and has a new study out on sex, anger and depression. She is working on a National Science Foundation funded project on cross-national variation in the impact of parenthood on happiness. She is also studying the emotional benefits of marriage for functionally disabled adults. Simon serves on the editorial boards of *Social Psychology Quarterly* and the *Sociology of Mental Health*.

Topics

Social Relationships and Health, Parenthood and Happiness, Gender Emotion and Mental Health, Women and Depression, Romantic Relationships

Affiliations

Social Psychology Quarterly (Journal) : Editorial Board, *Sociology of Mental Health* (Journal) : Editorial Board

Education

Indiana University

Ph.D. Sociology

Indiana University

M.A. Sociology

University of Massachusetts

B.A. Sociology

Media Appearances

'Women are just better at this stuff': is emotional labor feminism's next frontier?

The Guardian

2015-11-08

Robin Simon, a sociology professor at Wake Forest University, turned the tables on herself and said that as a female professor, she was expected to be much more emotionally aware and available in and out of the classroom than her male colleagues.

"Students expect more emotion in women," she says, with female professors not just expected to be chirpy in the classroom (especially with the rise in student-evaluation-related employment), but also sometimes doubling up as therapists and faculty-politics peacekeepers...

How having children robs parents of their happiness

PostMagazine

2015-09-20

Indeed, comparing happiness levels between parents and non-parents within a country, and then between countries, can serve as a sort of global barometer. In a study currently under review, sociologist Robin Simon, of Wake Forest University, in the US, and her colleagues looked at 22 countries and found that the happiness gap in the US between those with and without children is wider than in the majority of the other countries studied, where provision for parents is often more generous.

"Having kids in the US is brutal," Simon says. "The federal government requires that workplaces give six weeks maternity leave, but there is no requirement that it is paid. We just don't do anything to assist parents." ...

Parents who share child care duties share a better sex life, study shows

Chicago Tribune

2015-08-24

Robin Simon, a professor in the department of sociology at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, N.C., said the findings fall right in line with what she would have expected.

"This isn't surprising at all," she said. "These findings are supported by decades of research that has examined the mental health outcomes among parents who split up chores equitably. And any way you look at it, by every measure, studies have consistently found that egalitarian marriages end up making for more satisfying relationships." ...

Weight-loss may help bladder control

The San Diego Union-Tribune

2015-07-15

"Marriage is a source of purpose and meaning and security that offers a big psychological and social boost," Robin Simon, a professor in the department of sociology at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, told HealthDay News. "It's very clear, even when compared with unmarried co-habitators who live together in a committed relationship." ...

Same-sex marriage offers couples psychological benefits, experts say

U.S. News & World Report

2015-06-25

Robin Simon, a professor in the department of sociology at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, N.C., agreed.

"Marriage is a source of purpose and meaning and security that offers a big psychological and social boost," she said. "It's very clear, even when compared with unmarried co-habitators who live together in a committed relationship. Yes, those couples do better than single folks. But married people do the best on all measures of psychological well-being, which is, of course, a main reason why the LGBT community wants marriage."...

Articles

Clarifying the relationship between parenthood and depression

Journal of Health and Social Behavior

Unlike other major adult social roles in the United States, parenthood does not appear to confer a mental health advantage for individuals. However, while research has examined parental status differences in emotional well-being, relatively little is known about variations in emotional distress among parents...

Gender and Emotion in the United States: Do Men and Women Differ in Self-Reports of Feelings and Expressive Behavior?

American Journal of Sociology

US emotion culture contains beliefs that women are more emotional and emotionally expressive than men and that men and women differ in their experience and expression of specific emotions...

Revisiting the Relationships among Gender, Marital Status, and Mental Health

American Journal of Sociology

Three decades ago, Gove introduced his sex-role theory of mental illness, which attributes women's higher rates of psychological distress to their roles in society. Central to his hypothesis is that marriage is emotionally advantageous for men and disadvantageous for women. This article revisits this topic with data from the National Survey of Families and Households...

Gender, multiple roles, role meaning, and mental health

Journal of Health and Social Behavior

This paper examines gender differences in the consequences of combining spouse, parent, and worker roles for mental health. I suggest that work and family roles have different meanings for males and females, and that differences in the meaning of these roles may be partially responsible for why the mental health advantages of holding multiple roles are fewer for women than for men...

Parental role strains, salience of parental identity and gender differences in psychological distress

Journal of Health and Social Behavior

Although past research indicates that women's higher levels of psychological distress can be accounted for by their greater exposure and vulnerability to role-related stress, the social psychological factors contributing to female vulnerability have not been fully identified. This paper applies identity theory to the phenomenon of gender differences in distress among parents..

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