

# **Sociology 428: Kuperberg and Stone**

## **Review**

- **Assignment 1**
- **Pescosolido et al. review**

## **Kuperberg and Stone**

- **One sentence summary?**
- **Multiple choice**
- **Differences with Pescosolido**

# **ASSIGNMENT 1**

About half have opened the assignment

Questions?

## **PESCOSOLIDO ET AL.: SUMMARY**

One line summary?

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Years in which civil rights protest were high and growing were years in which African American characters disappeared from children's books.

Social structure -> Popular culture

## **KUPERBERG AND STONE: OVERVIEW**

One line summary?

(difficult)

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One line summary?

(difficult)

Articles in the mass media about women who left work focused on three themes:

- (1) “Family First, Child-Centric,”
- (2) “The Mommy Elite,” and
- (3) “Making Choices.”

Descriptive, not causal. No  $x \rightarrow y$  relationship.

## **KUPERBERG AND STONE: 1**

*According to Kuperberg and Stone, how is previous research on motherhood in the media limited?*

Previous research has not included media directed at a general audience (53% correct)

“For these reasons, we make a point of expanding our analysis beyond women’s magazines to also include a broader set of publications that are aimed at both men and women.”

Advantages and Disadvantages of studying women’s magazines versus general audience?

Which should we choose to code?

## KUPERBERG AND STONE: 2

*The authors conducted a content analysis on which of the following:*

- Images in the most popular women's and men's magazines in the period from 1988 to 2003
- Images and text from parenting magazines from 1988 to 2003
- Text from widely circulated newspapers and magazines from 1988 to 2003 (94% correct)

Each of these 3 might have made a good sample; and there are several good examples of studies that looked at images. But Kuperberg & Stone ([like us](#)) use texts.

## KUPERBERG AND STONE: 3

*Susan Faludi coined the term "opt out revolution" in 1991.*

False (82% correct)

Susan Faludi uncovered many interesting things about the media's portrayal of women (especially her 1991 book *Backlash*), but it was Lisa Belkin's 2003 article in the *New York Times Magazine* that popularized the term "opt-out."

Later in the semester, we will look at excerpts from both Faludi and from Belkin.

What is "the opt-out revolution"?

How will we study the "opt-out revolution"?

## **KUPERBERG AND STONE: 4**

*How many articles did Kuperberg and Stone use in their content analysis?*

Answer: 51 (100% correct!)

Why is this so different from Pescosolido et al.?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of 51 versus 2400?

Why are we aiming for a high number?

## **KUPERBERG AND STONE: 4(B)**

How did Kuperberg and Stone select their 51 articles?

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How did Kuperberg and Stone select their 51 articles?

“Using the search engines LexisNexis, Readers’ Guide, and Academic Premier, we searched a variety of publications... To identify relevant articles in these publications, we experimented with several keywords, finding that *stay-at-home mom* was most useful and efficient for our purposes. We read brief summaries or, in some cases, the full text of articles identified using this keyword, and included only those that were clearly about women who had “opted out” as this characterization is typically understood, that is, women who had quit paid work and were now at-home mothers.

We also will use LexisNexis and experiment with keyword searches.

## KUPERBERG AND STONE: 5

*Which of the following was NOT a code for the women in the articles the authors analyzed?*

Woman's former occupation

Demographic characteristics

Husband's income (88% correct)

Activities at home

How are each of these related to mothers' employment / opt-out probability?

How might each help explain the trends in mothers' employment?

## KUPERBERG AND STONE: 6

*Kuperberg and Stone found that media accounts focused more heavily on women's feelings about motherhood, rather than the constraints they experienced in the workplace.*

True (100% correct!)

Stone's major contribution to these debates is that women who do drop out of employment often are escaping bad work situations even though they rarely talk about that unless asked.

We will code experiences of *both* working mothers and stay-at-home mothers about *both* work and family issues.

## **KUPERBERG AND STONE: 7**

*What proportion of mothers in the articles expressed exclusively positive feelings about becoming stay at home mothers?*

About half (94% correct)

"While affirming that the decision to become at-home mothers was their choice, only half of the 98 women expressed exclusively positive sentiments about quitting work."

Meaning about half expressed some negative feelings.

We will code *both* Benefits and Problems for stay-at-home mothers.

## **KUPERBERG AND STONE: 8**

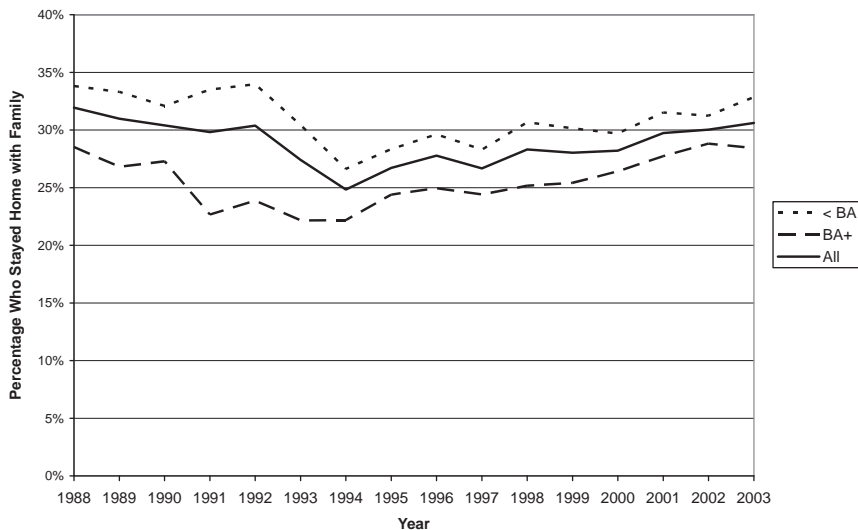
*Actual data from government surveys indicate that highly educated women are more likely to be in the labor force than women without a college degree.*

True (67% correct)

Check Figure 1. The BA+ line is below the <BA line -- which means that fewer college graduates stayed at home with family.

Why are college graduate women more likely to work than non-college women?

Should we also code the class position of the mothers in the articles?



**Figure 1: Rates of Opting Out among White Non-Hispanic Married Women Age 30–45 with Child Younger Than 6: 1988–2003**

NOTE: BA = bachelor's degree.

## KUPERBERG AND STONE: 9

*What best describes the trend in women's actual labor force participation from 1988 to 2003?*

Increase from 1988 to 1994, then a decline (19% correct)

The problem here is that Figure 1 plots the reverse: the trend in stay-at-home mothers, while the question asks about labor force participation rates.

This is the trend we will be trying to explain with our research.

## **KUPERBERG AND STONE: 10**

*Kuperberg and Stone show that when media stories about mothers opting out increased, the proportion of mothers who actually left work also increased.*

False (67% correct)

Kuperberg and Stone never actually track over time the proportion of stories about women opting out. Unlike Pescosolido et al., they have trend data only on the social structural trend (women's labor force participation) not on the popular culture trends. Their cultural data are only about averages across the whole period, not trends within the period.

This is an important difference from what we hope to do this semester.

## **KUPERBERG AND STONE: SUMMARY**

Differences with Pescosolido et al.:

- Descriptive, not causal analysis linking society – culture
- Small sample, not thousands
- Averages over entire period, not annual trends
- Rich (inductive) descriptions, not counts
  - Motherhood, not jobs
  - Mommy elite
  - Choices