Films for Use in Work-Family Courses

Authors:
Morgan Sharoff and Stephen Sweet

Source:

Description:
The films listed below have been shown in work-family courses.

9 to 5 No Longer (2008) – PBS Home Video
“A demographic change is affecting all Americans wherever they work and live: the rise of the flexible workforce. The global economy, increasing numbers of two-income families and the need for businesses to retain talent both in the executive suite and among low-paid workers are all having an impact on the way we work. This documentary, hosted by Bonnie Erbe, explores the latest innovations in workplace flexibility.” -Abstract

Affluenza (1997) - by John De Graaf (KTCS Seattle and Oregon Public Broadcasting)
"A one-hour television special that explores the high social and environmental costs of materialism and overconsumption." (Lonnie Golden, from Syllabus)

"BRATS: Growing Up Military is the first feature-length documentary about a hidden American subculture - a lost tribe of over 4 million children from widely diverse backgrounds, raised on military bases around the world, whose shared experiences have shaped their lives so powerfully, they are forever different from their fellow Americans." (review from http://www.tckworld.com/thebratsfilm - For more information, visit the site)

Chain of Love (2001) - by Marije Meerman (First Run/Icarus Films)
A film about the Philippines’ second largest export product - maternal love - and how this export affects the women involved, their families in the Philippines, and families in the West. (Rec. by Christine McKenna)
Website: http://www.frif.com/new2002/chain.html

CNN: Beyond The Glass Ceiling (orig. released 1992) - (Turner Home Ent.)
"Broadcast journalist and host of CNN's daily interactive town meeting Talk Back Live, Susan Rook, hosts the award-winning CNN special CNN: Beyond the Glass Ceiling. Females account for 50 percent of the nation's workforce. This film provides a critical and comprehensive look at the unwritten rules of discrimination against women in corporate America. Rook examines the real barriers, which keep half of the labor force from climbing to the top and reaching the upper echelons of U.S. companies. CNN: Beyond the Glass Ceiling is a serious account of this modern phenomenon." (review from Sally Barber, All Movie Guide)

Ending Welfare as We Know It (1999) - By Roger Weisber (Public Policy Productions)
“…follows six welfare mothers over the course of a year as they struggle to comply with New York work requirements, find reliable child care and transportation, battle drug addiction and depression, confront domestic violence, and try to make ends meet in the new era of welfare reform.” (abstract from filmmakers.com)

Escape from Affluenza (1998) - by John De Graaf (KTCS Seattle and Oregon Public Broadcasting)
“The solution-oriented sequel, profiling people and organizations that are reducing consumption and waste, choosing work that reflects their values and working to live in better balance.” (Lonnie Golden, from Syllabus)

**Fast Food Women** (1991) - by Anne Lewis (Appalshop Film & Video)

"Fast Food Women takes an inside look at the lives of the women who fry chicken, make pizzas, and flip burgers at four different fast food restaurants in eastern Kentucky. These women, mostly middle-aged and raising children, are often the sole income source for their families. They work for wages barely above the minimum wage, have trouble getting full-time hours because of their employers’ scheduling policies, and are without health care and other benefits. Analysis by Barbara Garson (author of The Electronic Sweatshop) of the way fast food jobs systematically dehumanize and devalue the worker is intercut with comments from human resources managers at the Druther’s chain. Scenes of women at work round out this incisive, sometimes troubling look at life on the other side of the counter. A useful introduction to economic conditions in contemporary America, Fast Food Women is recommended for discussion of the changing roles of women and the changing face of the American workplace." (Review from buyindies.com)


“Dan Foreman is headed for a shakeup. He is demoted from head of ad slates for a major magazine when the company he works for is acquired in a corporate takeover. His new boss, Carter Duryea, is half his age—a business school prodigy who preaches corporate synergy. While Dan develops clients through handshake deals and relationship, Carter cross-promotes the magazine with the cell phone division and Krispity Krunch, an indeterminate snack food under the same corporate umbrella. Both men are going through turmoil at home. Dan has two daughters, Alex, age 18 and Jana, age 16, and is shocked when his wife tells him she’s pregnant with a new child. Carter, in the meanwhile is dumped by his wife of seven months just as he gets his promotion. Dan and Carter’s uneasy friendship is thrown into jeopardy when Carter falls for, and begins an affair with Dan’s daughter Alex.” (Review from IMBD.com)

**It Was a Wonderful Life** (1993) - dir. Michele Ohayon

“...A riveting and powerful account of six women who are members of America’s growing “hidden homeless” population. Meet Josephine, Reena, Marie, Jeanette, Lou, and Terry. They are intelligent, articulate women who had secure, active and fulfilling lives until one day everything unraveled. Now living out of their cars or in cheap motels they exist entirely under the radar, too proud to go to shelters or receive public assistance.” (Review from docurama.com)

**Juggling Work and Family** (2001) - by Hedrick Smith (Films for the Humanities and Sciences)

"Juggling Work and Family focuses on the increasing tensions between workplace expectations and family needs. The traditional family with a stay-at-home mother and working father has been replaced by the growing number of single parents and dual-career couples. In this fast-paced new economy, Americans are feeling the stress of working more and have less time than ever for their family. This program looks at how working parents in various occupations across the country are trying to reconcile work and family conflicts. The program explores how companies and unions are seeking to ease the work-family conflict with child care centers, subsidies, and alternative work schedules that include part-time work, job-sharing, and telecommuting. Experts analyze the problems, address solutions, and pose the question: what else can be done?” – Abstract


“Charles Prince may have grown up with his father in the family shoe business, but he never thought that he would take his father’s place. Yet, the untimely death of his father places him in that position, only to learn that Price & Sons Shoes is failing. While in despair at his failed attempts to save the business, Charles has a chance encounter with a flamboyant drag queen cabaret singer, Lola. Her complaints about the inadequate footwear for her work combined with one of Charles’ ex-employees, Lauren, lead to a suggestion to change the product to create a desperate chance to save the business: make men’s fetish footwear.” (Review from IMBD.com)

**Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter** (1980) - dir. Connie Field (Clarity Films)
"The U.S. entry into World War II created an unprecedented demand for new workers. After whirlwind training, women found themselves doing "men's work" and they did it so well that production levels rose despite the military call-up of millions of male workers. When the war was over, Rosie wanted to stay. But neither the structure of the American economy nor the dominant view of women's place in society sustained such hopes. This story is told by the women themselves -five former "Rosies" who movingly recall their histories working in Detroit, Los Angeles, New York and San Francisco during the war. Their testimony is interwoven with rare archival recruitment films, stills, posters, ads, and music from the period which contrast their experiences with the popular legend and mythology of Rosie the Riveter." - Abstract

Maid in America (2003) - by Anayansi Prado, prod. Kevin Leedingham (Impacto Films)
An intimate look into the lives of three Latina immigrants working as nannies and housekeepers in Los Angeles, three of the nearly 100,000 domestic workers living in that city today. (Rec. by Christine McKenna) Website: http://www.wmm.com/filmcatalog/pages/c664.shtml

Modern Times (1936) - by Charlie Chaplin (Warner Home Video, orig. released 1936)
"A devastating satire on the effects of mass production on the lives of factory workers. Shows Charlie as a factory worker, jailbird, night watchman, and a singing waiter. Primarily a silent film with music and sound effects, but voices emanate from TV sets and radios." - Abstract

Roger and Me (1989) – by Michael Moore (Dog Eat Dog Films)
"Ex-journalist Michael Moore’s blistering, satirical documentary about the closing of the General Motors plants in Flint, Michigan in the mid-1980s. This move, which eliminated 33,000 jobs and left the one-industry town destitute, was a particularly bitter tragedy, considering that Flint was the town that gave birth to General Motors during the post-war boom era of the 1950s. The film revolves around Moore’s dogged attempts to gain an interview with Roger Smith, the elusive and well-insulated head of GM and the man responsible for the layoffs. While tracking the eponymous Roger, Moore takes time out to record the devastation of Flint and the desperate, often unintentionally hilarious attempts of citizens and the city fathers to deal with the catastrophe.” (Review from rottentomatoes.com)

The Life and Times of Rosie The Riveter (1980) – dir. Connie Field
"The manpower shortage of World War II necessitated the entry into the workplace of millions of women, many of whom had previously been denied employment on the basis of their gender. Most of these women took jobs in defense plants, thus were given the en masse nickname “Rosie the Riveter” ... The 60-minute documentary The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter combines black and white newsreel footage with color-filmed interviews of five “Rosies”: Wanita Allen, Gladys Belcher, Lyn Childs, Lola Weizel, and Margaret Wright. Disinclined to parrot the wartime propaganda concerning female defense workers, these women tell it like it was: harassment, discrimination, the whole shooting match. Despite any and all deprivations, the “Rosies” remain proud of their wartime accomplishments, both immediate and long-ranging.” (Review from answers.com)

The Occupation: A Film About the Harvard Living Wage Sit-In (2003) - dir. Maple Raza and Pancho Velez (EnMasse Films)
"During the time that the university's endowment tripled and it enjoyed a more than $100-million budget surplus, it busted unions and cut the pay and benefits of its lowest paid and most vulnerable workers. Students organized a living-wage action which culminated in an occupation of the president's building and national attention to their cause. It became part of a national movement on university campuses for living wages for non-faculty workers. These kids fought the Man--and they won!" (Review from ifilm.com)

Stolen Childhoods (2003) - by Galen Films and Romano Productions
"Stolen Childhoods is a feature length documentary on child labor. The story is told in the words of laboring children, their parents, and the people working daily to help them. Children share their experiences of exploitation and their hopes for better life and future... Filmed in seven countries; Brazil, India, the United States, Mexico, Indonesia, Kenya and Nepal, stolen childhoods examines the cost of child labor to the global community, probes the causes of this complex phenomenon and recommends actions that can be taken to eliminate this gross human rights violation in our lifetime" - Container.
"Fact-based story about the sexual harassment suit filed by Anita Hill (Regina Taylor) during the appointment trials of Clarence Thomas (Delroy Lindo) for the Supreme Court during the George Bush presidential administration. The film gives both parties a fairly even presentation and does not try to assess blame. It does, however, show a lot of background political maneuvering that took place, particularly on the part of Kenneth Duberstein (Mandy Patinkin), an administrative spin doctor." (Review from Amazon.com)

The Farmer's Wife (1998) - by David & Nancy Sutherland (David Sutherland Productions, Inc. and FRONTLINE with Independent Television Service (ITVS)).  
"Acclaimed filmmaker David Sutherland takes us deep inside the passionate, yet troubled, marriage of Juanita and Darrel Buschkoetter, a young farm couple in rural Nebraska facing the loss of everything they hold dear. Part 1 of 'The Farmer's Wife' recounts the moving story of Juanita and Darrel's romantic love affair and begins the journey to the core of their emotional struggles, which have pushed their marriage to the brink. Darrel and Juanita tell their own story, in their own words, without the intrusion of a narrator. It unfolds before our eyes, as it is happening. In Part 2 of 'The Farmer's Wife,' the camera focuses on the rhythms of everyday life on the Buschkoetters' farm. We follow Juanita, Darrel, and their three girls through days reminiscent of a forgotten, simpler time in America. In September, an early frost destroys thirty percent of their crop. Darrel must go to work at a nearby farm for seven dollars an hour and does his own farming at night. Juanita cleans houses while trying to get a college degree so Darrel can stay home and farm, but Darrel worries that if she goes off the farm she'll find something she likes better. By Christmas, they are dead broke and unsure of their future. In the concluding episode of 'The Farmer's Wife,' Darrel finally harvests the bumper crop he had dreamt about his whole life. But Darrel has to go to work for another farmer to make enough money to feed his family, and the stress and exhaustion cause him to explode. In December, Juanita cleans houses for a week--it has a deep and profound effect on Darrel. Two months later, the marriage that had seemed almost doomed is miraculously transformed. Through counseling, Darrel learns to deal with his anger and undergoes extraordinary personal growth. Now he is the at-home parent, farming and caring for his three daughters. Juanita, who has earned a college degree, works at a respected crop insurance company in town, helping other farmers." (review from PBS.org)

"Originally telecast as a two-hour entry in the A&E cable documentary series Investigative Reports, Nickel and Dimed in America is based on the similarly titled best-seller by Barbara Ehrenreich. The program chronicles the struggle of America's "working poor" to make ends meet in an increasingly (and often prohibitively) expensive society. Emphasis is placed upon five workers, most of them single parents, trying to survive on salaries ranging from six to seven dollars hourly. Much of the air time is given over to the ongoing debate about increasing the national minimum wage and improving the working conditions of those in the lowest financial brackets. Nickel and Dimed in America was first broadcast in 2002."  (Hal Erickson, All Movie Guide)

With Babies and Banners (1978) - by Lorraine Gray, prod. Lyn Goldfarb, Ann Bohlen (New Day Films)  
"The victory of the Great General Motors Sit-Down Strike in Flint, Michigan, in 1937 was the key to the success of the CIO's drive for industrial unionism. The now classic With Babies and Banners presents the untold story of the women--the working women, wives, mothers and sisters--who became the backbone of the strike. Forty years later, nine of these women reunite and dramatically show the relevance of their experience for working men and women today." (Review from www.newday.com)

Women, war and work: shaping space for productivity in the shipyards during the Second World War (1994) - by Victoria O'Donnel and Paul Monaco (KUSM-TV Montana Public Television)  
"Documents the growth and demise of Vanport City, Oregon, a community built to house workers for the Kaiser shipyards during WWII and subsequently dismantled after the war." - Abstract