



# **Unhitched: Love, Marriage, and Family Values from West Hollywood to Western China (NYU Series in Social and Cultural Analysis)**

*Judith Stacey*

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*Judith Stacey, 2012 winner of the Simon and Gagnon Lifetime Achievement Award presented by the American Sociological Association.*

A leading expert on the family, Judith Stacey is known for her provocative research on mainstream issues. Finding herself impatient with increasingly calcified positions taken in the interminable wars over same-sex marriage, divorce, fatherlessness, marital fidelity, and the like, she struck out to profile unfamiliar cultures of contemporary love, marriage, and family values from around the world.

Built on bracing original research that spans gay men's intimacies and parenting in this country to plural and non-marital forms of family in South Africa and China, *Unhitched* decouples the taken for granted relationships between love, marriage, and parenthood. Countering the one-size-fits-all vision of family values, Stacey offers readers a lively, in-person introduction to these less familiar varieties of intimacy and family and to the social, political, and economic conditions that buttress and batter them.

Through compelling stories of real families navigating inescapable personal and political trade-offs between desire and domesticity, the book undermines popular convictions about family, gender, and sexuality held on the left, right, and center. Taking on prejudices of both conservatives and feminists, *Unhitched* poses a powerful empirical challenge to the belief that the nuclear family—whether straight or gay—is the single, best way to meet our needs for intimacy and care. Stacey calls on citizens and policy-makers to make their peace with the fact that family diversity is here to stay.

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