

---

**BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

---

NAME: Shannon Cavanagh

eRA COMMONS USER NAME: scavanagh

POSITION TITLE: Associate Professor, Department of Sociology

---

**EDUCATION/TRAINING**

---

INSTITUTION AND LOCATION	DEGREE	Completion Date MM/YYYY	FIELD OF STUDY
University of Maryland, College Park, MD	B.A.	05/1992	Sociology
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC	M.A.	05/2001	Sociology
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC	Ph.D.	12/2003	Sociology
University of Texas, Austin, TX	Postdoctoral Fellowship	08/2006	Demography & Human Development

**A. Personal Statement**

As a family demographer with NICHD-funded postdoctoral training in human development, my research focuses on the ways American families change over time as well as reflect and contribute to growing levels of social inequality. NIH funding has been foundational to my research at Texas and I expect it will continue as such over the next five years. I am presently revising an NICHD-PDB grant to be submitted in October. This R21 grant will explore the associations among family instability, maternal health, and child health. In addition to rigorous cutting edge quantitative data analysis exploring these associations, I will conduct in-depth interviews with mothers of young children in an effort to understand the linked lives of mothers and children, the intergenerational transmission of health, and ways family instability gets under the skin to shape maternal and child health. Qualitative methods are ideally suited to analysis of the mechanisms and processes that underlie socially-patterned linkages found in quantitative analyses. Moreover, findings from these interviews will be used to create measures for future NIH-funded data collection efforts concerning family change and population health. My research cuts across two of the two of the PRC's primary research areas: 1) Family Demography and Intergenerational Relationships and 2) Population Health. I am the Assistant Training Director of the PRC, responsible for recruiting and selecting PRC predoctoral trainees, organizing course offerings, and assisting in the professionalization of trainees. I also sit on the committee that selects NICHD-funded predoctoral and postdoctoral trainees. I am also an active participant in the PRC working group engaged in research on families (FAMDEM). The PRC has played a vital role in my development as a population scientist. As a junior scholar, I received critical mentoring and guidance through the PRC Summer Boot Camp conducted by the Development Core. As the PI of grants from NIH and NSF, I rely heavily on the expertise and support of the Administrative Core to both submit and manage awards. The Scientific and Technical Core has been instrumental to the success of data collection supported by these grants, in terms of both design and execution.

**B. Positions and Honors****Positions and Employment**

1993-1998	Research Associate, The Urban Institute, Washington, DC
1998-2000	Research Assistant, Glen H. Elder, Jr., Department of Sociology, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NC
1998-2000	Teaching Assistant, Department of Sociology, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NC
2001	Instructor, Department of Sociology, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NC
2002-2003	Research Assistant, <i>National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health: Survey 2000</i> (NICHD 3 P01 HD031921), Kathleen Mullen Harris, PI, Carolina Population Center, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NC
2003-2006	Postdoctoral Fellow, Population Research Center and Department of Human Ecology, The University of Texas at Austin, TX
2003-Present	Faculty Research Associate, Population Research Center, The University of Texas at Austin, TX

- 2006-Present Faculty Affiliate, Center for Women's and Gender Studies, The University of Texas at Austin, TX
- 2006-2011 Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, The University of Texas at Austin, TX
- 2011-Present Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, The University of Texas at Austin, TX

### **Other Experience and Professional Memberships**

- 1999-2003 NICHD Predoctoral Trainee, Carolina Population Center, University of North Carolina, Preceptor: Kathleen Mullan Harris. Supported by NICHD training grant *Population Research Training* (5 T32 HD007168), Amy Ong Tsui, PI
- 2004-2007 NICHD Kirchstein Postdoctoral Research Fellow, *Family Structure and Socio-Emotional Well-Being* (NICHD 5 F32 HD046185), Population Research Center, The University of Texas, Faculty Sponsor: Aletha C. Huston
- Present Member, American Sociological Association, Population Association of America, Society for Research on Adolescence
- Present Reviewer, *American Sociological Review*, *Demography*, *Journal of Family Issues*, *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, *Social Forces*, *Social Problems*, *Sociology of Education*, *Sociological Perspectives*, *The Sociological Quarterly*, *Child Development*.

### **Honors**

- 2003-2004 Recipient, Youth and Adolescent Dissertation Award, The Henry A. Murray Research Center, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Studies, Harvard University, MA
- 2006-2007 New Faculty Fellowship, Center for Women's and Gender Studies, University of Texas
- 2007 Dean's Fellowship, University of Texas at Austin
- 2015 Raymond Dickson Centennial Endowed Teaching Fellowship
- 2015 Signature Course Essential; Elements Award: Excellence in Teaching Contemporary Content

## **C. Contributions to Science**

**Partner instability and child development.** Scholars have long been concerned about the significant of family structure and child wellbeing. For most of the 80s and 90s, family structure was captured with static measures at a point in time, missing a significant amount of instability in children's family environment. With the support of my NIH-supported individual postdoctoral fellowship and subsequent R03 grant, I constructed a set of prospective measures of family change and helped develop the conceptual model that underlies scholarship related to partner instability. This early work helped set the foundation for the study of family instability, broadening the way we think about how families evolve, what these changes mean for parenting and other family processes, and how these evolving family contexts shape the social and academic behavior of children.

- Crosnoe, Robert, Kate Chambers Prickett, Chelsea Smith, and Shannon Cavanagh. 2014. Changes in Young Children's Family Structures and Child Care Arrangements. *Demography* 51:459-483.
- Cavanagh, Shannon and Aletha Huston. 2006. Family Instability and Children's Early Problem Behavior. *Social Forces* 85: 575-605.
- Cavanagh, Shannon and Aletha Huston. 2008. The Timing of Family Instability and Children's Social Development. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 70: 1258-1269.

**Pubertal timing in the lives of girls.** Puberty is one of the few universals in early development, producing change throughout the body. Given the social value attached to the female body, puberty's significance often extends beyond the physiological to include many other, non-physical changes in life. Much of the scholarship on puberty has been done by psychologists. My work brought a sociological lens to this scholarship and explore the ways notions of gender, the body, and social context come together to shape how girls negotiate adolescence and the transition into adulthood.

- Cavanagh, Shannon. 2004. The Sexual Debut of Girls in Early Adolescence: The Intersection of Race, Pubertal Timing, and Friendship Group Dynamics. *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 14: 285-312.
- Cavanagh, Shannon, Catherine Riegle-Crumb, and Robert Crosnoe. 2007. Early Pubertal Timing and the Education of Girls. *Social Psychology Quarterly* 70: 186-198.

**Love, Relationships, and Union Formation.** Demographers have long studied union formation behaviors and factors that contribute to the onset of relationships. My contribution to this literature includes a focus on individual characteristics and contexts that are less visible in demographic research but are highly salient in

social life. Building on my earlier work on pubertal timing, I considered the longer term implications of earlier romantic involvement and disrupted educational trajectories by explore how an early transition in late childhood may be linked with earlier and more unstable romantic unions in adulthood. As another example, my research on online dating builds on theories of assortative mating to consider how unions form in an online market. Online dating is now the modal way by which people meet partners. Together, these papers expand the reach of demographic concepts and helps ensure our theories about unions remain timely.

- Cavanagh, Shannon. 2011. Early Pubertal Timing and Union Formation Behaviors of Young Women. *Social Forces* 89:1217-1238.
- Kreager, Derek, Shannon Cavanagh, John Yen, and Mo Yu. 2014. Where Have All the Good Men Gone? Gendered Interactions in Online Dating. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 76, 2, 387-410.

**Adolescent Development.** Consistent with the life course perspective, adolescent health, academic functioning, and social development can be foundational for later stages of the life course. Moreover, aspects of adolescent health are shaped by family history, peer relationships, and the broader context within which young people develop. With funding from NICHD and other sources, I have explored ways peer relationships condition biosocial processes, immigration status, and family structure history during this life stage. I have also explored the degree to which more or less stable families are clustered within schools and how this clustering conditions the way young people's own family structure history shapes her academic success. Together, this research deepens our understanding of this life stage.

- Cavanagh, Shannon and Paula Fomby. 2012. School Context, Family Instability, and the Academic Careers of Adolescents: The Role of Family Instability within Schools. *Sociology of Education* 85:81-97.
- Marteleto, Leticia J., Shannon Cavanagh, Kate Prickett, and Shelley Clark. 2016. Instability in Parent-Child Coresidence and Adolescent Development in Urban South Africa. *Studies in Family Planning*, 47(1), 19-38.
- Cavanagh, Shannon, Sarah Crissey, and R. Kelly Raley. 2008. Family Structure History and Adolescent Romance. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 70: 698-714.

#### **Link to Published Work in MyBibliography:**

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/myncbi/1RlzebxwLQnAv/bibliography/49649925/public/?sort=date&direction=descending>

#### **D. Research Support**

##### **Ongoing Research Support**

2014-IJ-CX-0025 (R.L. Crosnoe, PI)

01/01/15-12/31/16

National Institute of Justice

*Family Instability and Exposure to Violence in Childhood and Adolescence*

The purpose of this proposed project is to leverage data from the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods and federal data bases (e.g., U.S. Census) to examine the degree to which past and contemporaneous family structure changes predict greater and increasing exposure to violence among children and adolescents, with special attention to variability according to their parents' histories of incarceration and the social, economic, and cultural resources of their neighborhoods.

Role: Co-Principal Investigator

Responsibilities: Collaborating with students on quantitative analyses and paper-writing; overseeing coding and analyses of qualitative data; handling some administrative responsibilities.

##### **Completed Research Support**

SES-1424111 (R.L. Crosnoe, PI)

08/15/14-07/31/16

National Science Foundation

*Transitioning into Adulthood during the Great Recession*

The purpose of this project is to track changes in young adult socioeconomic attainment and family formation before, during, and after the Great Recession, explore diversity in these over-time changes across diverse local economic contexts and sociodemographic populations, and compare the U.S. case to corresponding historical trends in Canada using the in the National Longitudinal Study of Youth 1979-Young Adult Survey and National Longitudinal Study of Children and Youth.

Role: Co-Principal Investigator

Responsibilities: Collaborating with students on quantitative analyses and paper-writing; overseeing coding and analyses of qualitative data.

R01HD055359 (R. Crosnoe, PI)

06/01/08-07/31/13

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

*Race/Ethnicity, Poverty, and the Connection between Child Health and Early Education.*

This project draws on two national datasets (Fragile Families and the Child Wellbeing Study and NICHD SECCYD) to examine how early health problems disrupt academic achievement in ways that reproduce race and economic inequality. It also looks to key family, pre-school, and school factors that may block this.

Role: Co-Investigator

Responsibilities: Collaborating with students on quantitative analyses and paper-writing; overseeing coding and analyses of qualitative data; coordinating two project sites; handling administrative responsibilities and reporting.