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Friends are the families we choose for ourselves: towards the democratisation of relationships

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Viv Burr University of Huddersfield

- Women and the family
- Changes in family forms
- Friendship
- Democratisation of relationships (Giddens)
- Implications for women's selfhood

Women in relationshipNancy Chodorow (1978)

Patriarchy and the family
Anthony Giddens (1999)
Social structure and sense of self

- Changes in family forms
- Cheal (2000)
- Sasha Roseneil (2004a):

 "the hegemony of the the conventional family is experiencing significant challenge"
- The family in television'Cultural fantasies' (Denzin, 1987)

Friends

So no-one told you life was gonna be this way
Your job's a joke, you're broke, your love life's D.O.A.
It's like you're always stuck in second gear
When it hasn't been your day, your week, your month, or
even your year

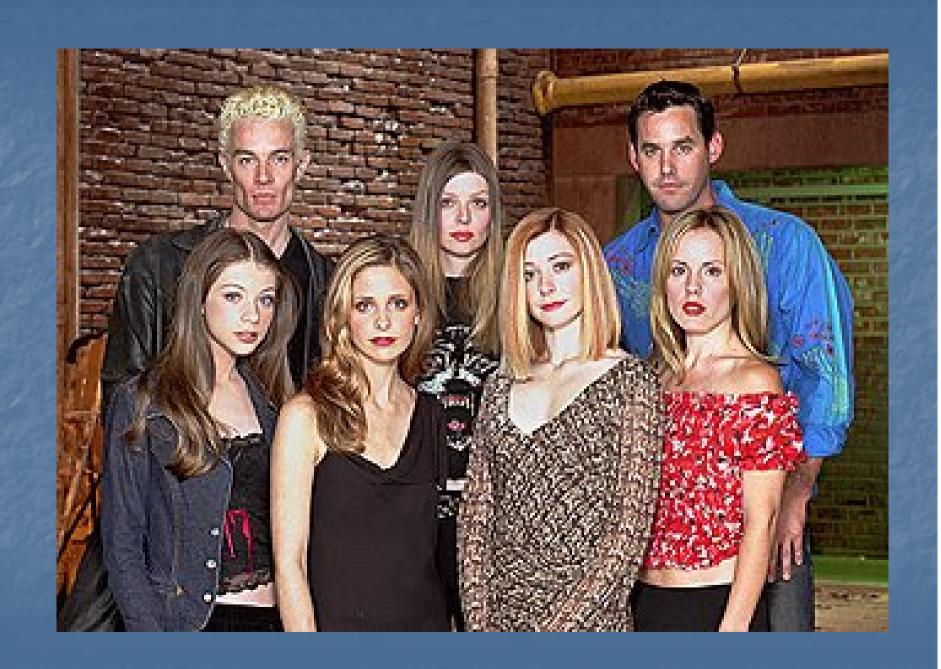
Chorus

I'll be there for you
(When the rain starts to pour)
I'll be there for you
(Like I've been there before)
I'll be there for you
('Cause you're there for me too)

BUTTE VAMPIRE SLAYER

Buffy: the premise

- Sunnydale, California: The 'Hellmouth'
- The Slayer (the 'Chosen One')
- Buffy Summers
- Watcher (Rupert Giles)
- Willow, Xander, Tara, Anya, Dawn, Spike.



'Family' (5.6)

Mr Maclay: 'we know how to control herproblem.'

'Family'

Maclay: The girl belongs with her family. Hope

that's clear to the rest of you (...)

Buffy: You wanna take Tara out of here

against her will (...) You just gotta go

through me

Dawn: And me (...)

Xander: You're dealing with all of us.

(...)Shot of Giles, Dawn, Buffy, Willow, Tara, Xander and Anya all standing together.

Spike: 'Cept me.

Maclay: We're her blood kin- who the hell are

you?

Buffy: We're family.

- 'Alternative' families- the down side
- instability
- uncertainty
- roles and responsibilities unclear

- A better alternative?
- 'Normal Again' (6.17)



Normal Again



Normal Again

- Deacon and Williams (2004):
 'the choices people make are morally informed responses to changes in their circumstances, rather than simple expressions of individual choice or lifestyle.'
- Carol Smart (2004): transformation of relationships
- Angela Phillips: importance of media

Conclusion

Friends: the new family?

Berry Mayall (2000) ESRC Children 5-16 project

"Children spoke of friendships in terms of support: 'telling each other everything', 'being there for you'."

Buffy quote: