



ENJOYING TRIP TO FRANCE — The 1992 Summer NCWC Sorbonne Study Abroad Program students visited the Vaux-le-Vicomte Chateau in France on a tour included as part of the program. Plans have already been announced for this summer's trip. (Contributed photo by Karine Sparrow-Ginter.)

Broken homes put burden on many college students

By KAREN NEUSTADT

(CPS) — Sorry, Dan Quayle, but the "Leave it to Beaver" traditional family fantasy doesn't exist in the '90s, and college students, many of them coping with complicated stepfamilies or extended families, don't comprehend the concept.

By the time a teen reaches college, his or her parents may have divorced at least once, tied the knot twice, and some have said "I do" three times.

Stepmoms, stepdads, and stepsiblings are a growing part of college life, and some mental health experts say students are paying an emotional price for their parents' lifestyles.

"I observe that there is a great deal of pain in people who come from divided and blended families," said Jeane B. Lee, a mental health counselor at Mississippi State University near Starkville. "They sense that their parents' allegiance is divided, and they are dangling without a good support system."

Lee said college-age students often feel betrayed by divorced parents and complain that they are caught in the cross-fire of a relationship that is never peaceful.

"People who share children are never really divorced," Lee said.

"Children in college have not outgrown their need for supporting parents, and they grieve their losses."

Often a second marriage can become more strenuous than the first.

"I see many new stepmothers who are jealous of college-age daughters who are close to their dads," she said. "And I often see the natural parent under a great deal of stress and anxiety because they are trying to make everyone happy."

While some college students have been dealing with stepfamilies for years, others have to face the breakup of their families while they are in school.

"Often students go into a tailspin, and feel helpless to deal with the situation," said Joyce Brothers, a nationally known psychologist who studies family and marriage issues.

"You would think it would not affect them much, because they have started independent lives, but this is just not the case," she said.

She described the dilemma of the college student caught up in a family breakup as having "one foot at home and one foot in the world."

Students can feel deep anger at parents who use them as pawns

against their partners. Brothers suggested that students take advantage of campus counseling centers as a source of temporary support.

"It's a very unexpectedly difficult time. It blind-sides you," she said, noting that people are more concerned with the younger children in the family and don't think about the emotional needs of the college-age children.

The psychologist recommends that students call home frequently during divorce to reassure themselves that family members are doing well.

Brothers also said college-age children often do not feel love toward a new stepmother or stepfather, and the best they can expect is to establish a friendship.

College students suffer enough stress without the additional burden of parental divorce and family problems, said Joseph Sundram, project director at the Institute of HeartMath, an independent research center in Torrance, Calif.

"Young people out of broken families need to understand that, at the beginning of their adult lives, maturity is about emotional and mental self-management, and without that, no external success will ever offer balance, fun, or fulfillment," he said.

Wesleyan offers students chance to study abroad

This spring and summer bring exciting opportunities for Wesleyan students to expand their horizons by traveling and studying abroad.

Karine Sparrow-Ginter, coordinator of foreign languages and study abroad, announced an eight-day trip May 8-15 highlighting the cultural heritage of Mexico. She will also conduct the second annual N.C. Wesleyan Summer Study at the Sorbonne in Paris, France, from June 29 until Aug. 10.

While the programs are especially enticing for foreign language students, there are no prerequisites and no minimum language ability, nor do students have to be currently enrolled in a language class at Wesleyan. Free tutoring will be provided for beginning French students who participate in the program in Paris.

The program in Mexico will include three nights of hotel accommodations in Mexico City, one night in Taxco, and three nights in Acapulco. Special excursions will include a sightseeing tour of Mexico City, an excursion to the pyramids of Teotihuacan, a visit to the basilica of Guadalupe, and a panoramic tour of Cuernavaca and Taxco. Students will also have sufficient free time to enjoy the beaches of Acapulco.

Students who participate in the Sorbonne program will enjoy five days of orientation to Paris before they begin their language classes at the Sorbonne. After taking a placement test, students will be placed into a class at their own level of ability in French, from absolute beginning to advanced.

Students will attend class at the Sorbonne for two hours each morning for four weeks in addition to ten extra hours of phonetics classes. The course earns three hours of Wesleyan credit in addition to a certificate from the Sorbonne, one of the oldest and most prestigious universities in the world.

Students in the Sorbonne program may also register for up to six additional hours of credit. While the course at the Sorbonne is taught by Sorbonne professors, Sparrow-Ginter will teach a French civilization course and a

French theatre course.

The civilization course emphasizes the history of France along with its art, architecture, and decorative arts. An important part of the course is visiting the museums, monuments, and chateaux of the Paris region.

Students in the theatre course will attend approximately 10 plays at the famous Comédie Française and at other theatres of Paris. Plays will be selected which give a representative sampling of different periods of French theatre, from classical to modern. Discussions of the plays will take place before and after each performance.

Last year 17 students participated in the first Wesleyan program in Paris. Students from UNC-Chapel Hill, the College of William and Mary, Meredith College, and Barton College enrolled in Wesleyan as visiting students in order to participate in the program. They were joined by NCWC students Levent Adam, Paul Batigne, Muriel Damiani, Debbie Oster, and Christy Skojec.

This year Wesleyan students will be joined by visiting students from American University, William and Mary, UNC-CH, N.C. State University, UNC-Greensboro, and East Carolina University.

Students in the French program will reside in a student Foyer in the Latin Quarter of Paris, a short walk from the Sorbonne and across the street from the beautiful Luxembourg Gardens.

The building includes a rooftop terrace with a beautiful view of Paris, a party room, a music room, a piano room, a cafeteria where breakfast is served, classrooms where the civilization and theatre classes will meet, and hotel services.

Two optional excursions will be offered for students in France: a weekend in Normandy and a week-long tour of the south of France, Italy, and Switzerland.

Interested students should inquire at the Foreign Language Center, Pearsall 272, or call Professor Sparrow-Ginter at 985-5186. Deposits on both programs should be made by March 26, she said.