

Stephen Hamilton

Web Bio

Information

Biography

Biographical Statement

Stephen F. Hamilton is Professor of Human Development and Associate Director of the Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research. His research on adolescent development and education emphasizes the interaction of school, community, and work during the transition to adulthood, especially in the contexts of work experience, experiential learning, community service, and mentoring relationships. A major portion of his responsibility includes developing and supporting 4-H youth development programs through Cornell Cooperative Extension.

His book, *Apprenticeship for Adulthood: Preparing Youth for the Future* (1990), a product of a Fulbright Senior Research Fellowship in Germany, helped guide the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994, as did the youth apprenticeship demonstration project that he and Mary Agnes Hamilton directed. Other research includes a study of how adults mentor high school interns and apprentices in workplaces, which included an experimental mentor training program. With Mary Agnes Hamilton he co-edited *The Youth Development Handbook: Coming of Age in American Communities* (2004). They recently completed an action research partnership with organizations in Latin America that support the transition to adulthood of vulnerable youth. Their current research is about fostering natural mentoring in small learning communities.

Upon his retirement in June 2015, Professor Hamilton will become President of the High Tech High Graduate School of Education, part of an innovative charter school organization in San Diego that is committed to social integration and achievement for all students.

Advisees and other students may contact Professor Hamilton via email: sfh3@cornell.edu.

Department Website Summary

Stephen F. Hamilton conducts translational research on institutions supporting the transition to adulthood of vulnerable youth in the US and Latin America, especially work, service-learning, community organizations, and mentoring relationships.

Teaching

Teaching and Advising Statement

My appointment is in research and extension. I rarely teach courses. As an advisor I strive to support students as they gain a sense of direction in their lives and select career goals and courses accordingly. When I mentor graduate students I encourage them to acquire a range of methodological tools and to discover and pursue the research questions that matter most to them.

Professional

Current Professional Activities

Named Senior Visiting Scholar at the High Tech High Graduate School of Education. High Tech High (HTH) is a charter school management organization in San Diego that operates 10 schools. It has created its own graduate school to train teachers and school leaders for its own and other schools. To earn master's degrees, they conduct action research related to their own practice. This helps to create an institutional culture in which research is embedded. It is one of several ways that HTH transmits its principles and practices to others. These efforts address a central issue in translational research: dissemination or diffusion of innovations.

Research

Current Research Activities

The transition to adulthood entails the assumption of new social roles. As a result, social institutions are critical to successful transition, especially family, school, workplace, and community. The worldwide demand for advanced education and training delays the transition to adult status for those young people fortunate enough to have access to the institutions providing them. Some of them participate in those institutions but still find their paths to adulthood blocked by the absence of jobs. Other young people make premature partial transitions by assuming some adult roles before they have the capacity to be economically self-supporting, most by becoming parents and/or working rather than attending school. These challenges reveal a growing "structural lag" between the institutions that should promote the transition to adulthood and the needs of contemporary youth. New and more effective institutions are needed. My research seeks "social inventions" or institutional innovations that can meet this need. Institutions that foster mentoring relationships and employment opportunities are of greatest interest. Goals are to understand these new and emerging institutions, contribute to their improvement, adapt and disseminate them, and assess their effectiveness.

Mentoring, a quasi-parental relationship between a young person and a caring adult outside the family, is a key feature of supportive institutions. A current project seeks to understand young people's access to natural mentoring, which adults act as mentors, and how to foster natural mentoring.

Extension

Current Extension Activities

As the youth development component of Cooperative Extension, 4-H draws on the resources of the land grant universities. I have assumed a new role as the member of the faculty responsible for research related to 4-H. This role includes leadership of efforts to ground New York State's 4-H program more firmly in research. Research in the fields represented in the Colleges of Agriculture and Life Sciences and of Human Ecology is the source of the 4-H program's content. Research in youth development and related fields guides the way in which the program operates. I direct a pilot project in Western New York: "Research for the Continuous Improvement of 4-H." With an experienced 4-H educator on a special assignment, we have engaged educators from four counties in identifying challenging issues, reviewing research related to those issues, planning action steps for improvement, and monitoring progress. Practitioner-friendly research briefs are important for this purpose. In addition, we have developed an Excel program that enables educators and stakeholders to review and analyze county enrollment data and to compare enrollment to county demographics. This reveals who is and is not involved in 4-H in each county and provides a baseline against which change efforts may be evaluated.

Another extension program has been undertaken on behalf of the New York State Education Department in support of what the Regents have now designated their Pathways Initiative. Following actions taken in the fall of 2014, high school seniors will now have an option of substituting an examination in a field of their choice for the Global Studies Regents examination that was previously required. One of those choices is a Career and Technical Education (CTE) examination from a list of approved examinations produced through a process that I led. A second round of that process is now underway to recommend additional high-quality CTE examinations.

Education

Education

Ed.D. 1975 - Harvard Graduate School of Education - Learning Environments

M.A.T. 1969 - Harvard Graduate School of Education - Social Studies

B.A. 1967 - Swarthmore College - History

Courses

Websites

Related Websites

<http://youthinsociety.cornell.edu>

<http://www.human.cornell.edu/che/bio.cfm?netid=sfh3>

<http://www.actforyouth.net/>

Administration

Administrative Responsibilities

Associate Director for Youth Development, Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research

Publications

Selected Publications

Hamilton, S.F. (in press). Translational research and youth development. *Applied Developmental Science*.

Hamilton, M.A. & Hamilton, S.F. (in press). Seeking social inventions to improve the transition to adulthood. *Applied Developmental Science*.

Hamilton, S.F. (2014). On the 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 43: 1008-1011.

Hamilton, S.F., & Hamilton, M.A. (2014). Natural mentoring: Social capital to build human capital. *Unterrichtswissenschaft*, 42(3), 206-223.

Hamilton, S.F., Northern, A.N., & Neff, R. (2014). Strengthening 4-H by analyzing enrollment data. *Journal of Extension*, 52(3) (electronic journal article # 3FEA7) <http://www.joe.org/joe/2014june/a7.php>.

Hamilton, S.F., Chen, E.K., Pillemer, K., & Meador, R.H. (2013). Research use by Cooperative Extension educators in New York State. *Journal of Extension*, 51(3) (electronic journal article # 3FEA2) <http://www.joe.org/joe/2013june/a2.php>.

Hamilton, M.A., Hamilton, S.F., Bianchi, L. & Bran, J. (2013). Opening pathways for vulnerable young people in Patagonia. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 23(1), 162-170.

Hamilton, S.F., & Hamilton, M.A. (2012). Development in youth enterprises. *New Directions for Youth Development*. (134, Summer) 65-75.

Hamilton, S.F., & Hamilton, M.A. (2010). Building mentoring relationships. *New Directions for Youth Development* (126, Summer) 141-144.

Hamilton, S.F., & Hamilton, M.A. (2009). The transition to adulthood: Challenges of poverty and structural lag. In R.M. Lerner & L. Steinberg (Eds.), *Handbook of*

adolescent psychology (3rd ed.) Volume 2, *Contextual influences on adolescent development*, pp. 492-526. New York: Wiley.

Bradshaw, C.P., Brown, J.S., & Hamilton, S.F. (2008). Bridging positive youth development and mental health services for youth with serious behavior problems. *Child & Youth Care Forum*, 37(5-6) 209-263.

Hamilton, M.A., & Hamilton, S.F. (2008). A precarious passage: Aging out of the child-only caseload. *Applied Developmental Science*, 12(1) 10-25.

Hamilton, S.F. (2008). Research-based Outreach: Albert Bandura's Model. *Journal of Extension* 46(1) (electronic journal Article Number 1FEA2)
<http://www.joe.org/joe/2008february/a2.shtml>

Bradshaw, C.P., Brown, J.S., & Hamilton, S.F. (2006). Applying positive youth development and life-course research to the treatment of adolescents with serious behavior problems. *Journal of Addictions & Offender Counseling*, 27(1) 2-16.

Hamilton, S.F. (2006). Youth development and prevention. *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice*. Supplement, November, S7-S9 (commentary).

Hamilton, S.F., Hamilton, M.A., Hirsch, B.J., Hughes, J., King, J. & Maton, K. (2006). Community contexts for mentoring. *Journal of Community Psychology* 34 (6) 727-746.

Benson, P.L. Scales, P.S., Hamilton, S.F., & Sesma, A., Jr. (2006). Positive youth development: Theory, research and applications. In W. Damon & R.M. Lerner (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology*, Volume 1, *Theoretical models of human development*. New York: Wiley.

Hamilton, S.F., & Hamilton, M.A. (2006). School, work, and emerging adulthood. In J.J. Arnett & J.L. Tanner (Eds.), *Emerging adults in America: Coming of age in the 21st century*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Hamilton, M.A., & Hamilton, S.F. (2005). Work and service. In D.L. DuBois & M.J. Karcher (Eds.), *Handbook of youth mentoring*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hamilton, S.F., & Hamilton, M.A. (2004). Contexts for mentoring. In R.M. Lerner & L. Steinberg (Eds.) *Handbook of adolescent psychology*. New York: Wiley.

Hamilton, S.F., & Hamilton, M.A. (Editors) (2004). *The handbook of youth development: Coming of age in American communities*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Darling, N., Hamilton, S., Shaver, K.H. (2003). Relationships outside the family: Unrelated adults. In G.R. Adams & M.D. Berzonsky (Eds.), *Blackwell handbook of adolescence*.

Darling, N., Hamilton, S.F., Toyokawa, T., & Matsuda, S. (2002). Naturally occurring mentoring in Japan and the United States: Social roles and correlates. *American Journal of Community Psychology* 30: 245-270.

Hurrelmann, K., & Hamilton, S.F. (Editors) (1996). *Social problems and social contexts in adolescence: Perspectives across boundaries*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Hamilton, S.F. (1990). *Apprenticeship for adulthood: Preparing youth for the future*. New York: Free Press.