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“Offers American parents a new, hopeful—if at times unsettling—sense of how we might better love, respect, and care for our children.”

—Ann Swidler, University of California, Berkeley



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# Not Under My Roof

## Parents, Teens, and the Culture of Sex

Amy T. Schalet

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For American parents, teenage sex is something to be feared and forbidden: most would never consider allowing their children to have sex at home, and sex is a frequent source of family conflict. In the Netherlands, parents aim above all for family cohesiveness, often permitting young couples to sleep together and providing them with contraceptives. And there, teenage pregnancies are far less frequent than in the United States. Drawing on extensive interviews with parents and teens, *Not Under My Roof* offers an unprecedented, intimate account of the different ways that girls and boys in both countries negotiate love, lust, and growing up.

Tracing the roots of the parents' divergent attitudes, Amy T. Schalet reveals how they grow out of their respective conceptions of relationships, gender, autonomy, and authority. She provides a probing analysis of the way family culture shapes not just sex but also alcohol consumption and parent-teen relationships. Avoiding caricatures of permissive Europeans and puritanical Americans, Schalet shows that the Dutch require self-control from teens and parents, while Americans guide their children toward autonomous adulthood at the expense of the family bond.

“Schalet’s insightful analyses—grounded in history, sociology, and adolescent development—provide a roadmap for normalizing sexuality and guiding social policy. Taking adolescent sexuality out of the darkness of the back seat and into the light under the family roof has the power to transform adolescent and adult sexuality and family relations.”—John Santelli, MD, Columbia University

**Amy T. Schalet** is assistant professor of sociology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. She is available for interviews. Please contact Carrie Olivia Adams [cadams@press.uchicago.edu](mailto:cadams@press.uchicago.edu) / 773.702.4216 for more information.

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