



# Not Under My Roof: Parents, Teens, and the Culture of Sex

*Amy T. Schalet*

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**Not Under My Roof: Parents, Teens, and the Culture of Sex** Amy T. Schalet

Winner of the Healthy Teen Network's Carol Mendez Cassell Award for Excellence in Sexuality Education and the American Sociological Association's Children and Youth Section's 2012 Distinguished Scholarly Research Award

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, where teenage pregnancies are far less frequent than in the United States, parents aim above all for family cohesiveness, often permitting young couples to sleep together and providing them with contraceptives. 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 the self, 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.

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