

For Immediate Release

Stephanie Coontz in person at Polish Club

Aberdeen, WA --Stephanie Coontz, internationally acclaimed author and lecturer, will be speaking in Aberdeen, Washington. Sponsored by The Grays Harbor Institute. Dr. Coontz provocative lecture, "What's Love Got To Do With It: The Historical Transformation of Marriage," is sure to explode cherished illusions about the past. The general public is invited to attend professor Coontz's lecture at the Polish Club, 823 West 1st, in downtown Aberdeen on 5 May 2006 at 7:30 pm. Tickets are \$7.50 and will be available at the door or by contacting a member of The Grays Harbor Institute through the group's web site, www.ghinstitute.org.

Audience members will be in for a spirited evening of discussion around a topic most people think they know all about but might have a thing or two to learn from the real expert. "Marriage today is held up as a blissful haven of love and friendship, sex and stability," Coontz said discussing the subject of her Aberdeen presentation. "We long for the gold standard, the traditional marriage, but marriage turns out to have a checkered past. This real look at what people think of as 'traditional' finally explains why so many people are so anxious about marriage."

Professor Coontz teaches history and family studies at The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington, is Director of Research and Public Education for the Council on Contemporary Families and a nationally known expert on marriage and family. She has appeared numerous times on national television, written for magazines and national newspapers and is a sought after speaker. She is the author most recently of the best-seller *Marriage, A History: From Obedience to Intimacy, or How Love Conquered Marriage* (Viking Press, 2005) which the *Washington Post* selected as one of the best books of 2005. The *Post* cites Coontz's book as one which "neatly, entertainingly and convincingly deconstructs a number of our most cherished and least examined beliefs about the bonds that tie men and women together, for better and for worse."

Marriage: A History builds on Professor Coontz path-breaking 1992 book, *The Way We Never Were*. That myth-shattering examination of two centuries of American family life banished the misconceptions about the

past that cloud current debate about "family values." "Leave It to Beaver" was not a documentary, Stephanie Coontz points out; neither the 1950s nor any other moment from our past presents workable models of how to conduct our personal lives today. Coontz warns that a consoling nostalgia for a largely mythical past of "traditional values" is a trap that can only cripple our capacity to solve today's problems.

Dr. Coontz's appearance is the second in The Grays Harbor Institute's bi-annual Speaker Series. Last October the Institute's first speaker, celebrated radical columnist Alexander Cockburn held an audience of more than 150 Harbor area citizens spellbound for over two hours with his witty, searing analysis of current events in the United States. According to Institute board member Anneka Van Doorninck of Copalis Beach, the Grays Harbor Institute, a federally recognized 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, seeks to bring to Southwest Washington prominent, nationally-known speakers, experts in a variety of topics from history, economics and science to sociology, philosophy and politics. The Institute's Speaker Series will go beyond just the presentation of factual information to encourage thought and conversation about important societal issues, ideas and questions of the day. "We want to offer new insights into familiar subjects," Van Doorninck said, "to actively engage the general public in our area using innovative formats and non-traditional ways of stimulating audiences while keeping ticket prices at a minimum in order to make our presentations available to the broadest audience possible."

For more information on Stephanie Coontz's appearance in Aberdeen check out the Institute's web site at www.ghinstitute.org.

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[For print media: A digital photo of Stephanie Coontz can be found on the Institutes web site.]

[For all media: If you need further information or a media pass to the lecture please call Gary Murrell, 360-533-8039 (home) or 360-580-5710 (cell).]