PARENTHOOD. The 1989 film was directed by Ron Howard and has a very large, ensemble cast headed by Steve Martin. There are a number of areas touched on in the film that are relevant for a social science class. It explores different kinds of families within a broader, extended family, and does so by examining relations between parents and children. What are parental obligations and expectations? How does one balance the demands of job and family? What constitutes good parenting? Can one identify good as opposed to flawed parents? To what extent do perceptions of one’s own parents’ failings make it easier to avoid similar failings with one’s own children? What are the relative roles of mother and father in raising children? How objective can one be in evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of one’s children? Is the job of parenting ever over? There are many poignant moments in the film but the social elements are presented with a light touch and much of the conclusions we draw come from the performances of the actors rather than the script [although the script is very good]. And this is, after all, a mass audience comedy. The ending is a bit strange. Think about whether you agree with those who say it is a cop-out or even deliberately anti-feminist.