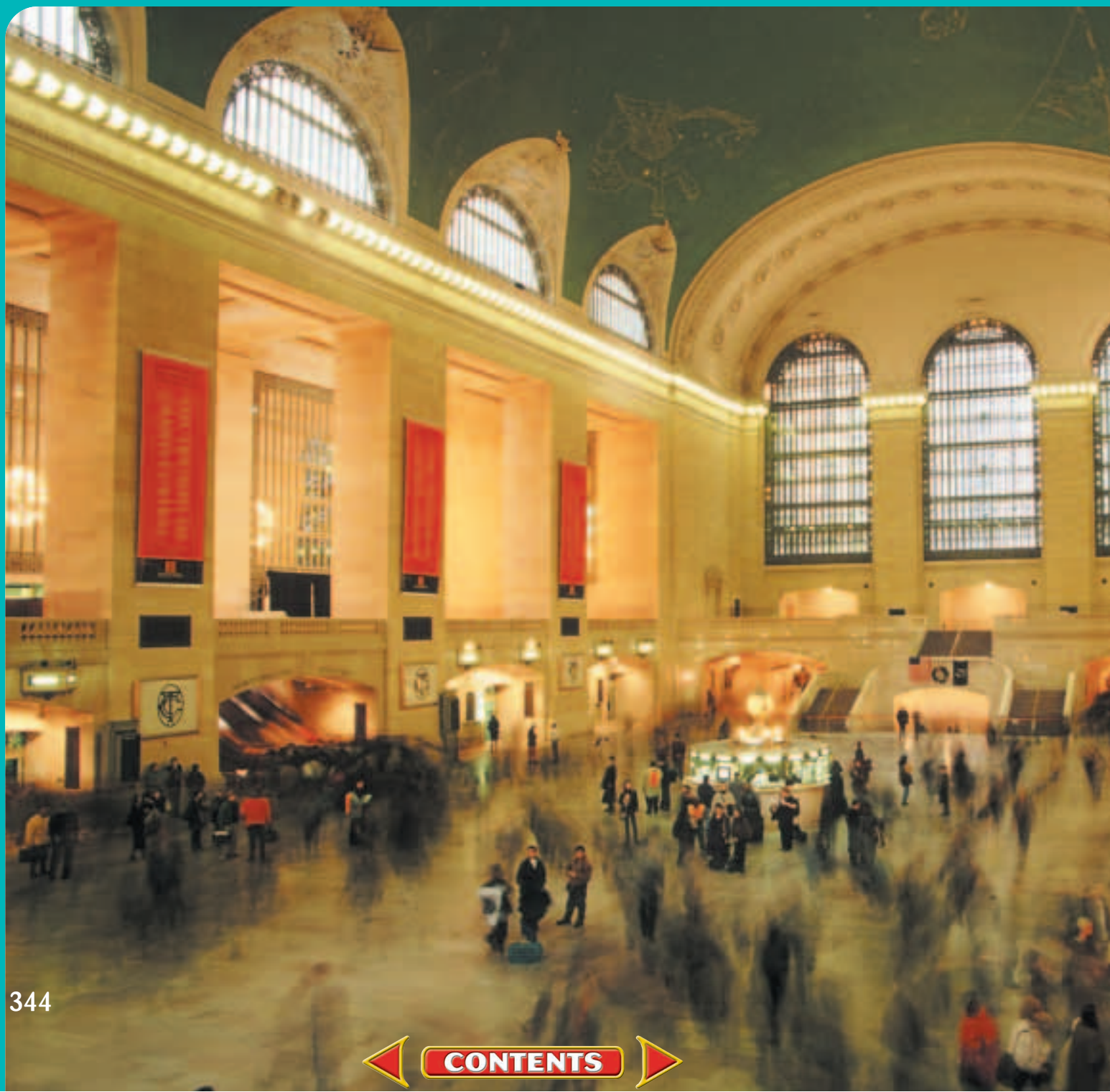
UNIT 4



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SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS



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Chapter 11

The Family



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USING Your Sociological Imagination

Test your knowledge about the American family by identifying the following statements as true or false.

1. About half of the couples in the United States who marry will divorce.
2. A new family structure develops after divorce.
3. High school sweethearts who marry have a less than 10 percent chance of being together twenty years later.
4. In more than half of all marriages, both the husband and wife work outside the home.
5. The divorce rate has been steadily climbing since 1960.

If you thought the first four questions were true and the last question was false, then you probably have a good sense of what is happening with marriage and families in the United States. It is true that the divorce rate is higher in the United States than in many other industrialized nations. However, recent data on divorce provide some grounds for optimism. Although the divorce rate rose dramatically from 1960 to 1985, the last fifteen years have actually seen a decline in the rate of divorce.

The next five chapters in this unit will look at family, education, economics, politics, religion, and sports. Sociologists refer to each of these as a *social institution*—a system of statuses, roles, norms and social structures that are organized to satisfy some particular basic needs of society. Chapter 11 focuses on the most important of these institutions—the family.

Sections

1. Family and Marriage Across Cultures
2. Theoretical Perspectives and the Family
3. Family and Marriage in the United States
4. Changes in Marriage and Family

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, you will be able to

- describe types of family structure and norms for marriage arrangements.
- compare and contrast views of the family proposed by the three major perspectives.
- outline the extent and cause of divorce in America.
- give an overview of family violence in the United States.
- discuss the future of the family in the United States.

SOCIOLOGY Online

Chapter Overview
Visit the *Sociology and You* Web site at soc.glencoe.com and click on **Chapter 11—Chapter Overviews** to preview chapter information.

CLICK HERE

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Section 1

Family and Marriage Across Cultures

Key Terms

- family
- marriage
- nuclear family
- extended family
- patrilineal
- matrilineal
- bilateral
- patriarchy
- matriarchy
- equalitarian
- patrilocal
- matrilocal
- neolocal
- monogamy
- polygamy
- polygyny
- polyandry
- exogamy
- incest taboo
- endogamy
- homogamy
- heterogamy

Section Preview

In all societies, the family has been the most important of all social institutions. It produces new generations, socializes the young, provides care and affection, regulates sexual behavior, transmits social status, and provides economic support.

Defining the Family

If asked to identify a family, most of us would say we know one when we see one. We are surrounded by families wherever we go, and most of us live in family settings. However, families come in all shapes and sizes, and defining the term *family* is sometimes difficult. Legally, the word *family* is used to describe many relationships: parents and children; people related by blood, marriage, or adoption; a group of people living together in a single household, sharing living space and housekeeping. Since the word *family*



If asked to describe this image, the first thought of most people would be that of a happy family.

does not have a precise meaning, many laws define the term when they use it. For example, zoning laws that set aside certain areas for single-family homes define family one way. Laws involving insurance, social security, or inheritance may define family in other ways. For sociologists, however, **family** is defined as a group of people related by marriage, blood, or adoption. While the concept of family may appear simple on the surface, the family is a complex social unit with many facets. Of all the social institutions, the family has the greatest impact on individual behavior.

family
a group of people related by marriage, blood, or adoption

The family we are born into, or the family of birth, is called the *family of orientation*. It provides children with a name, an identity, and a heritage. In other words, it gives the child an ascribed status in the community. The family of orientation "orients" (or directs) children to their neighborhood, community, and society and locates them in the world.

The *family of procreation* is established upon marriage. **Marriage** is a legal union between a man and a woman based on mutual rights and obligations. (Marriages between two persons of the same sex have been ruled legally invalid by U.S. courts.) The marriage ceremony signifies that it is legal (officially sanctioned) for a couple to have offspring and to give the children a family name. The family of procreation becomes the family of orientation for the children created from the marriage.

marriage
a legal union based on mutual rights and obligations

nuclear family
family structure composed of one or both parents and children

Two Basic Types of Families

There are two basic types of families. The **nuclear family**, the smallest group of individuals that can be called a family, is composed of a parent or parents and any children. The **extended family** consists of two or more adult generations of the same family whose members share economic resources and live in the same household. Extended families may also contain close relatives, such as grandparents, children, grandchildren, aunts, uncles, and cousins.

extended family
two or more adult generations of the same family whose members share economic resources and a common household



Why would sociologists not call these relatives an extended family?

"The family is the essential presence—the thing that never leaves you, even if you have to leave it."

Bill Buford
writer

How did family structures develop? As discussed in Chapter 5, the development of agriculture and industry shaped society. These developments also shaped family structure.

In the earliest societies, hunting and gathering were the primary family activities. Small bands of nuclear families followed herds of animals and changing seasons, moving around constantly, never staying long in any one place.

When humans domesticated animals to help with tilling the soil and cultivating crops (about ten thousand years ago), they no longer needed to be mobile to maintain a food supply. Families began to farm, settle down, and establish roots. Large families were needed to plow and harvest. The growth of family farms encouraged the development of the extended family. Agriculture became the basis of the economy, and the extended family was essential for successful farming.

As societies moved from agricultural economies to industrialized ones, the extended family was slowly replaced by the nuclear family. Large families were no longer needed to work on the farm. Industrial and postindustrial economies favor the nuclear family that has fewer mouths to feed and that is easier to move (Goode, 1970; Nydeggar, 1985).

Patterns of Family Structure

Whether nuclear or extended, families behave in similar ways across cultures. These patterns of behavior relate to inheritance, authority, and place of residence.

patrilineal
descent and inheritance is passed through the male line

matrilineal
descent and inheritance is passed through the female line

bilateral
descent and inheritance are passed equally through both parents

patriarchy
the pattern in which the oldest man living in the household has authority over the rest of the family members

matriarchy
the pattern in which the oldest woman living in the household has authority over all other family members

Who inherits? Determining who becomes head of the family—for purpose of descent—and who owns the family property—for inheritance—are extremely important to families. Three arrangements are used.

- In a **patrilineal** arrangement, descent and inheritance are passed from the father to his male descendants. The people of Iran and Iraq and the Tikopia in the western Pacific live in patrilineal societies.
- In a **matrilineal** arrangement, descent and inheritance are transmitted from the mother to her female descendants. Some Native American tribes, such as the Pueblo peoples of the Southwest, are matrilineal.
- In some societies, descent and inheritance are **bilateral**—they are passed equally through both parents. Thus both the father's and mother's relatives are accepted equally as part of the kinship structure. Most families in the United States today are bilateral.

Who is in authority? Similar patterns govern authority in a family.

- In a **patriarchy,** the oldest man living in the household has authority over the rest of the family members. We see this in many countries around the world, such as Iraq and China. In its purest form, the father is the absolute ruler.
- In a **matriarchy,** the oldest woman living in the household holds the authority. So rare is matriarchal control that controversy exists over whether any society has ever had a genuinely matriarchal family structure.

- With **equalitarian** control, authority is split evenly between husband and wife. Many families in the Scandinavian countries and in the United States follow the equalitarian model.

equalitarian
family structure in which authority is evenly shared between the husband and wife

Where do couples live? Where newly married couples set up their households also varies from culture to culture.

- The **patrilocal** pattern, such as in premodern China, calls for living with or near the husband's parents.
- Residing with or near the wife's parents is expected under a **matrilocal** pattern. The Nayar caste of Kerala in southern India is an illustration of this type of arrangement.
- In the **neolocal** pattern (if finances allow) married couples establish residences of their own. This is the Euro-American model. Extended families, of course, have different norms.

patrilocal
refers to the pattern in which married couples live with or near the husbands' parents

matrilocal
refers to the pattern in which married couples live with or near the wives' parents

Marriage Arrangements

Mention a wedding and Americans commonly think of a bride walking down the aisle in a long white gown. She and the groom make vows that involve some form of loving, honoring, and (until recently, in some cases) obeying. In other cultures, the wedding ceremony looks very different. This is part of the ceremony among the Reindeer Tungus of Siberia:

> *After the groom's gifts have been presented, the bride's dowry is loaded onto the reindeer and carried to the groom's lodge. There, the rest of the ceremony takes place. The bride takes the wife's place—that is, at the right side of the entrance of the lodge—and members of both families sit around in a circle. The groom enters and follows the bride around the circle, greeting each guest, while the guests, in their turn, kiss the bride on the mouth and hands. Finally, the go-betweens spit three times on the bride's hands, and the couple is formally "husband and wife." More feasting and revelry bring the day to a close (Ember and Ember, 1999:310–311).*

neolocal
refers to the pattern in which newly married couples set up their own households

monogamy
a marriage consisting of one man and one woman



Although wedding ceremonies may vary, the basic social structures of marriage are common to all societies.

Whatever form it takes, the marriage ceremony is an important ritual announcing that a man and woman have become husband and wife, that a new family has been formed, and that any children born to the couple can legitimately inherit the family name and property.

What forms do marriage take? **Monogamy**—the marriage of one man to one woman—is the most widely practiced form of marriage in the world today. In fact, it is the only form of marriage that is legally

acceptable in the United States and in most Western societies. Some often-married people practice *serial* monogamy—having several husbands or wives, but being married to only one at a time.

polygamy
the marriage of a male or female to more than one person at a time

In contrast to monogamy, **polygamy** involves the marriage of a male or female to more than one person at a time. It takes two forms: polygyny and polyandry.

polygyny
the marriage of one man to two or more women at the same time

Polygyny is the marriage of one man to two or more women at the same time. An obvious example of polygyny is found in the Old Testament. King Solomon is reported to have had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines. Although common in earlier societies and still legal in India, parts of Africa, and much of the Middle East, polygyny is not practiced widely in any society today. However, in 1999 the Muslim Russian republic of Ingushetia legalized the practice of polygyny.

polyandry
the marriage of one woman to two or more men at the same time

Polyandry—the marriage of one woman to two or more men at the same time—is an even rarer form of marriage. It is known to have been common in only three societies: in Tibet, in parts of Polynesia, and among the Todas and other hill peoples of India (Queen et al., 1985). Where polyandry has existed, it usually has consisted of several brothers sharing a wife.

You have been introduced to a lot of new terms that relate to family structure and marriage arrangements. Figure 11.1 illustrates several of the characteristics of these family and marriage forms to help you understand and remember them.

Figure 11.1 Families/Marriages

This chart summarizes possible variations in family and marriage forms. Describe the general nature of the American family using terms from this table.

Nuclear Family Composition	parents and children
Extended Family Composition	parents, children, and other relatives
Inheritance	patrilineal (inherit through the father) or matrilineal (inherit through the mother) or bilateral (inherit through both)
Authority	patriarchal (father rules the family) or matriarchal (mother rules the family) or equalitarian (parents share authority)
Residence	patrilocal (couple lives with or near husband's parents) or matrilocal (couple lives with or near wife's parents) or neolocal (couple lives apart from both sets of parents)
Marriage Composition	polygyny (one husband, many wives) or polyandry (one wife, many husbands) or monogamy (one husband, one wife)

World View

Types of Marriages

Monogamy—the marriage of one man and one woman—is the only legal form of marriage in all industrial and postindustrial societies. It is also the only form of marriage allowed by law in the Western Hemisphere. However, in many African and southern Asian nations, where Islam is the predominant religion, polygyny—the marriage of one man to two or more women at the same time—is legal. This map shows the countries where monogamy and polygyny are legal forms of marriage.



Interpreting the Map

1. Suggest one or more reasons for the widespread presence of polygyny in Africa, Southwest Asia (the Middle East), India, and Southeast Asia.
2. Why do you think the caption explains that the map shows only the countries where polygyny and monogamy are legal forms of marriage?

Choosing a Mate

Suppose you came home from school one afternoon and your parents asked you to come into the living room to meet your future husband or wife. You might wonder if you had somehow been beamed to another planet. Similarly, you will probably never enroll in a college course entitled "Negotiating Dowries with Prospective In-laws," this being a skill not much in demand today. If, however, you assume that you have complete freedom of choice in the selection of a marriage partner, you are mistaken. All cultures and societies, including the United States, have norms and laws about who may marry whom.

exogamy
the practice of marrying outside one's group

incest taboo
a norm forbidding marriage between close relatives

Exogamy refers to mate-selection norms requiring individuals to marry someone outside their kind or group. (*Exo* is a prefix meaning "outside.") The most important norms relating to exogamy are called **incest taboos,** which forbid marriage between certain kinds of relatives. In the traditional Chinese culture, for example, two people with identical family names could not marry unless their family lines were known to have diverged at least five generations previously (Queen et al., 1985). In the United States, you are not legally permitted to marry a son or daughter, a brother or sister, a mother or a father, a niece or nephew, or an aunt or uncle. In twenty-nine states, marriage to a first cousin is prohibited. Furthermore, it is illegal to marry a former mother-in-law or father-in-law. Incest is almost universally prohibited, although exceptions were common among the royalty of ancient Europe, Hawaii, Egypt, and Peru. Even in these instances, most members of the royal families chose partners to whom they were not related by blood.

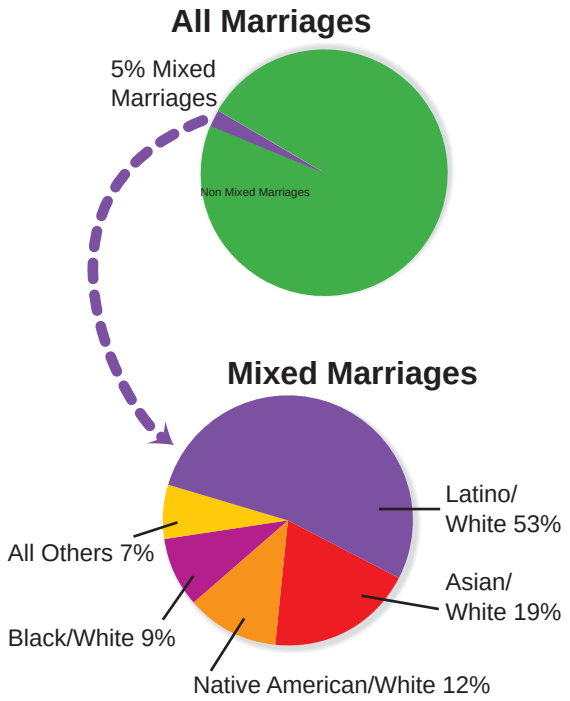


Figure 11.2 Mixed Marriages and Intergroup Married Couples in the United States.
Although only 5 percent of marriages in the U.S. are mixed, the number has quadrupled since 1980.

Source: American Demographics, Population Reference Bureau, 1998; Miliken Institute, 2001.

endogamy
marriage within one's own group as required by social norms

Endogamy involves mate-selection norms that require individuals to marry within their own kind. (*Endo* is a prefix that means "inside.") In the United States, for example, norms have required that marriage partners be of the same race. These norms are not as strong as they once were. Although they represent only five percent of all marriages in the United States, mixed marriages have quadrupled since 1980. Figure 11.2 shows the racial and ethnic breakdown of intergroup marriages today. Also, class lines are crossed with greater frequency because more Americans of all social classes are attending college together. Finally, norms separating age groups have weakened.

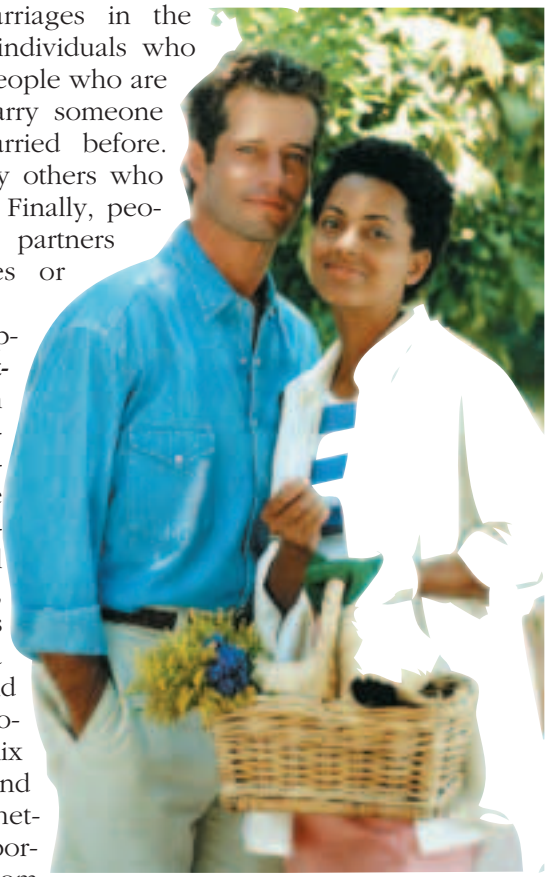
Norms encouraging (rather than requiring) marriage within a group usually exist. And people are most likely to know and prefer to marry others like themselves. For these reasons, people tend to marry those with social characteristics similar to their own. This tendency, the result of the rather free exercise of personal choice, is known as **homogamy.**

homogamy
the tendency to marry someone similar to oneself

For example, in spite of what fairy tales and movies often tell us, it is rare for the son or daughter of a multimillionaire to marry someone from a lower

class. Furthermore, most marriages in the United States occur between individuals who are about the same age. Most people who are marrying for the first time marry someone who also has not been married before. Divorced people tend to marry others who have been previously married. Finally, people tend to choose marriage partners from their own communities or neighborhoods.

Although it is still the exception in the United States, **heterogamy** is rising. In heterogamous marriages, partners are dissimilar in some important characteristics. More American marriages, for instance, are crossing traditional barriers of age, race, social class, and ethnicity. This trend results from several factors. America has become more racially and ethnically integrated, so that people have an opportunity to mix more freely. The television and film industries help foster heterogamy by the sympathetic portrayal of couples and families from different racial and social backgrounds. In addition, class lines are crossed with greater frequency, and norms separating age groups have weakened.



Are these two individuals in a homogenous or heterogamous relationship? Explain.

> Success in marriage is not so much finding the right person as it is being the right person.
>
> **Anonymous**

heterogamy
marriage between people with differing social characteristics

Section 1 Assessment

1. What is the difference between a nuclear and an extended family? Which type represents your household?
2. Why are nuclear families more common in industrial societies?
3. What is another term for the family of birth?
4. Indicate whether exogamy (Ex), endogamy (En), or homogamy (H) is reflected in each of the following situations.
   - **a.** Catholics are supposed to marry Catholics.
   - **b.** A father is not permitted to marry his daughter.
   - **c.** Members of the same social class marry.
   - **d.** A brother and sister are legally prohibited from marrying.
   - **e.** People tend to marry others of the same age.
   - **f.** Rich people marry other wealthy people.

Critical Thinking

5. **Synthesizing Information** Write a paragraph based on personal knowledge or experience that supports or refutes the idea that homogamy dominates American society.

Another Time

Courtship and Marriage Among the Hopi

Courtship and marriage customs among the Hopi Indians of the southwestern United States are quite different from those of the dominant U.S. culture.

Once the decision to marry is made by the young couple, the boy goes in the evening after supper to the girl's house and there states his intentions to her parents. If he is acceptable, he is told to go home and tell his parents about it. The girl then grinds cornmeal or makes bread, and carries it to the house of her prospective groom. At this time the mother of the boy may refuse the bread or meal, in which case the match is usually broken off. If, however, the food is accepted, it is given by the mother to her brothers and to her husband's clansmen, and the wedding plans go forward.

After this event the girl returns home to grind more meal with the help of her kinswomen, while the boy fetches water and chops wood for his mother. In the evening after these chores are completed, the bride dresses in her manta beads and her wedding blanket. Accompanied by the boy, who carries the meal she has ground, she walks barefoot to his house. There she presents the meal to her prospective mother-in-law and settles down for a temporary three-day stay before the wedding. During this period the young couple may see each other, but they [do not become intimate].

At some time during the three-day period the groom's house is visited, or "attacked," by his paternal aunts, who break in on the bride and shower her with [abusive language] and often with mud. They accuse her of laziness, inefficiency, and stupidity. The boy's mother and her clanswomen protect the girl and insist that the accusations are unfounded. In spite of appearances all this is carried off in a good-humored way, and finally the aunts leave, having stolen the wood their nephew had brought his mother. The wood is used to bake piki, which is given to the mother, and thus all damages are paid for.

On the morning of the fourth day the marriage is consummated. On this occasion the girl's relatives wash the boy's hair and bathe him, while the boy's relatives do the same for the girl. The couple may now sleep together as man and wife, but they remain at the boy's mother's house until the girl's wedding garments are complete. These garments are woven by the groom, his male relatives, and any men in the village who wish to participate.



Contemporary Hopi Indians play traditional roles during a formal ceremony.

Source: Stuart A. Queen and Robert W. Habenstein, *The Family in Various Cultures,* 4th ed. (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1974, pp. 54–55, 56–58. Copyright 1952, © 1961, 1967, 1974 by J.B. Lippincott Company.) Reprinted by permission of Harper & Row, Publishers.

Thinking It Over

1. What do you think the staged "fight" with the groom's aunts signifies?
2. What are some of the advantages Hopi society gains by following these wedding customs?

Section 2

Theoretical Perspectives and the Family

Key Term

- socioemotional maintenance

Functionalism

For the functionalists, the family plays many roles, including socializing the young, providing social and emotional support, managing reproduction, regulating sexual activity, transmitting social status, and serving as an economic center. Let's look more closely at each of these functions.

How does the family socialize children? In addition to caring for an infant's physical needs, parents begin the vital process of teaching the child what he or she must learn to learn to participate in society. During the first year, the infant begins to mimic words and, later, sentences. During the second and third years, parents begin to teach the child values and norms of behavior. By being role models and through training and education, the family continues the process of socialization in each new stage of development.



What do functionalists believe about the roles associated with this father and daughter?

What is the socioemotional function of the family? Another major function of the family is **socioemotional maintenance.** Generally, the family is the one place in society where an individual is unconditionally accepted and loved. Family members accept one another as they are; every member is special and unique. Without this care and affection, children will not develop normally. (See Chapter 4, pages 109–114, on children raised in isolation.) They may have low self-esteem, fear rejection, feel insecure, and eventually find it difficult to adjust to marriage or to express affection to their own children. Even individuals who are well integrated into society require support when adjusting to changing norms and in developing and continuing healthy relationships. Here again, the family can provide socioemotional maintenance.

Section Preview

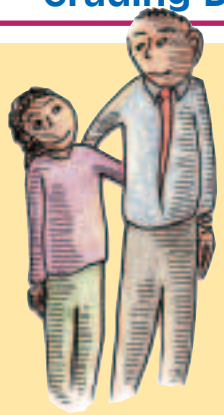
The family is the very core of human social life. It is not surprising that each of the major perspectives focuses on the family. Functionalism emphasizes the benefits of the family for society. The conflict perspective looks at the reasons males dominate in the family structure. Symbolic interactionism studies the way the family socializes children and promotes the development of self-concept.

socioemotional maintenance provision of acceptance and support

Figure 11.3 American Youths Grade Their Parents

In a national survey, Americans in the seventh through the twelfth grades were asked to "grade" their mothers and fathers. The results are shown below. The left-hand column lists various aspects of child rearing, and the remaining columns indicate the percentage of students who assigned each grade. For example, on the dimension "Raising me with good values," 69 percent gave their fathers an A, 17 percent a B, and so forth.

Grading Dad



Aspect of Child Rearing	Assigned Grade A	B	C	D	F
Raising me with good values	69%	17%	8%	4%	2%
Appreciating me for who I am	58	21	11	8	2
Encouraging me to enjoy learning	58	24	12	4	2
Making me feel important and loved	57	22	13	6	2
Being able to go to important events	55	22	13	5	5
Being there for me when I am sick	52	20	16	8	4
Spending time talking with me	43	24	19	10	4
Establishing traditions with me	41	26	15	11	7
Being involved in school life	38	24	19	12	7
Being someone to go to when upset	38	22	15	12	13
Controlling his temper	31	27	20	10	12
Knowing what goes on with me	31	30	17	12	10

Grading Mom



Aspect of Child Rearing	Assigned Grade A	B	C	D	F
Being there for me when I am sick	81%	11%	5%	2%	1%
Raising me with good values	74	15	6	3	2
Making me feel important and loved	64	20	10	5	1
Being able to go to important events	64	20	10	3	3
Appreciating me for who I am	63	18	8	6	5
Encouraging me to enjoy learning	59	23	12	3	3
Being involved in school life	46	25	13	10	6
Being someone to go to when upset	46	22	13	8	9
Spending time talking with me	43	33	14	6	4
Establishing traditions with me	38	29	17	10	6
Knowing what goes on with me	35	31	15	10	9
Controlling her temper	29	28	19	12	11

1. Based on this data, what conclusions would you draw about the closeness of families in America?
2. Select the three aspects of child rearing you think are most important, and compare the grade you would give your parent or parents on these aspects with the grades in this national sample.

Source: Ellen Galinsky, *Ask the Children* (New York: William Morrow & Co., Inc., 1999).

What is the reproductive function of the family? Society cannot survive without new members. The family provides an orderly means for producing new members, generation after generation. So important is this function that for many cultures and religions, it is the primary purpose for sexual relations. In many societies in developing nations the failure of a wife to bear children can lead to divorce. Residents of places such as the Punjab region of North India, for example, view children as an economic necessity. The significance of having children is also seen in the hundreds of rituals, customs, and traditions that are associated with pregnancy and birth in virtually all cultures around the world. (Later in the chapter, we look at the rise of marriages without children in the United States.)



What important functions are being fulfilled by this family?

How does the family regulate sexual activity? In no known society are people given total sexual freedom. Even in sexually permissive societies, such as the Hopi Indians, there are rules about mating and marrying. Norms regarding sexual activities vary from place to place. Families in a few cultures, such as in the Trobriand Islands, encourage premarital sex. Other societies, like those in Iran and Afghanistan, go to great lengths to prevent any contact between nonrelated single males and females. The United States has traditionally fallen somewhere between these two extremes. In the ideal culture in the United States, adolescents would abstain from sexual activity. In real culture, however, the abundance of sexual references directed at teens by the advertising and entertainment industries make abstinence very difficult and even seem undesirable. Clearly, we are sending a mixed message to young people today. One of the consequences of this cultural confusion is the increase in teenage pregnancies and the number of teenagers having abortions. But whatever the norms, it is almost always up to the family to enforce them.

How does the family transmit social status? Families provide economic resources that open and close occupational doors. The sons and daughters of high-income professionals, for example, are more likely to attend college and graduate school than are the children of blue-collar workers. Consequently, the children of professionals are more likely as adults to enter professional occupations. The family also passes on values that affect social status. The children of professionals, for example, tend to feel a greater need to pursue a college degree than their counterparts from blue-collar families. In these and many other ways, the family affects the placement of children in the stratification structure.

> “Home is the place where, when you have to go there, they have to take you in.”
>
> **Robert Frost**
> **American poet**

What is the economic function of the family? At one time, families were self-sufficient economic units whose members all contributed to the production of needed goods. Every family member would join in such tasks as growing food, making cloth, and taking care of livestock. The modern American family is a unit of consumption rather than production. Adult members—increasingly including working mothers—are employed outside the home and pool their resources to buy what they need. But the end result is the same. The family provides what is needed to survive.



Feminist Betty Friedan is the godmother of the American women's movement. Many conflict theorists study her writings.

Conflict Theory

Conflict theorists focus on the way family members compete and cooperate. Most family structure throughout history has been patriarchal and patrilineal. Women have historically and traditionally been considered the property of men, and the control of family members and property has typically passed through male bloodlines. This male dominance has been considered "natural" and "legitimate." Thus, most family systems have had built-in gender inequality.

How does conflict theory explain gender relationships in the family? According to conflict theorists, males are dominant and in control; females have traditionally been expected to be submissive helpers. In the traditional division of labor, males work outside the home for finances to support the family. Women remain at home to prepare meals, keep house, and care for the children. Women are unpaid laborers who make it possible for men to earn wages. With men having control over the money, the wives and mothers are kept in a dependent and powerless role. According to the conflict perspective, families in the past, then, have fostered social inequality.

How do the ideas of feminist writers fit with conflict theory? Writers and activists who organize on behalf of women's rights and interests have come to be called feminists. Many feminists today view the family from the conflict perspective. They believe that family structure is the source of the inequality between men and women in society. They point out that men have had control over women since before private property and capitalism existed. Women's contributions in the home (mother and homemaker) are not paid and are therefore undervalued in a capitalist society. Attempts by women to gain more power within the family structure can result in conflict.

Symbolic Interactionism

According to symbolic interactionism, a key to understanding behavior within the family lies in the interactions among family members and the meanings that members assign to these interactions.

How does the family help develop a person's self-concept? Socialization begins within the family. As family members share meanings and feelings, children develop self-concepts and learn to put themselves mentally in the place of others. Interactions with adults help children acquire human personality and social characteristics. Children develop further as they meet others outside the home.

According to symbolic interactionists, relationships within the family are constantly changing. A newly married couple will spend many months (perhaps years) testing their new relationship. As time passes, the initial relationship changes, along with some aspects of the partners' personalities, including self-concepts. These changes occur as the partners struggle with such problem issues as chores and responsibilities, personality clashes, and in-laws.

With the arrival of children comes a new set of adjustments. Parental views may differ on child-rearing practices, number of children desired, and education for the children. The situation is made even more complex by the new member of the family, who must also become part of the interaction patterns.

> "Children have more need of models than of critics."
>
> Carolyn Coats
> author for young adults

Section 2 Assessment

1. Match the following examples with the major theoretical perspectives: functionalism (F), conflict theory (C), symbolic interactionism (SI)
   - **a.** fathers "giving away" brides
   - **b.** having children
   - **c.** development of self-concept
   - **d.** newly married partners adjusting to each other
   - **e.** child abuse
   - **f.** social class being passed from one generation to another

Critical Thinking

2. **Finding the Main Idea** Select a memorable family experience (such as the Thanksgiving holiday) and interpret it from the viewpoint of one of the three major perspectives.

Figure 11.4 Focus on Theoretical Perspectives

Perspectives on the Family. Both functionalism and conflict theory are concerned with the ways social norms affect the nature of the family. Symbolic interactionism tends to examine the relationship of the self to the family. How might functionalism and conflict theory focus on the self?

Theory	Topic	Example
Functionalism	Sex norms	Children are taught that sexual activity should be reserved for married couples.
Conflict Theory	Male dominance	Husbands use their economic power to control the ways money is spent.
Symbolic Interactionism	Developing self-esteem	A child abused by her parents learns to dislike herself.









Sociology Today

Looking for Mr. or Ms. Right

This activity will give you some ideas for evaluating whether a current boyfriend or girlfriend is a good candidate for a successful long-term relationship.

From the list on the right, (and on a separate sheet of paper), list the ten most important qualities to you. (Number 1 as the most important, number 2 the next most important, and so forth.) Then fold your paper in half. In the right-hand column, either have your partner fill out the questionnaire or rank the characteristics yourself according to how you think your partner would.

Evaluating Your Responses. Which of the items listed on the right do you think are the most important in predicting marital success? According to research, the last seven items (17–23) are the most important. High compatibility between you and your partner on these seven characteristics would probably increase your chances of marital success. A low degree of matching does not, of course, ensure an unhappy marriage or a divorce, but it does suggest areas that may cause problems in the future.

Adapted from the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Colorado State University.

I am looking for a partner who . . .

	Partner	Self	
1.	_____	_____	is honest and truthful.
2.	_____	_____	is fun to be with.
3.	_____	_____	is of the same educational background.
4.	_____	_____	will take care of me.
5.	_____	_____	wants to have children.
6.	_____	_____	communicates well with me.
7.	_____	_____	will share household jobs and tasks.
8.	_____	_____	is a good friend with whom I can talk.
9.	_____	_____	is of the same religious background.
10.	_____	_____	makes decisions.
11.	_____	_____	earns good money.
12.	_____	_____	is physically attractive.
13.	_____	_____	is in love with me and I with him/her.
14.	_____	_____	encourages me to be my own person.
15.	_____	_____	has interests like mine in making money and having fun.
16.	_____	_____	makes me feel important.
17.	_____	_____	is faithful.
18.	_____	_____	shares mutual interests in home, children, romantic love, and religion.
19.	_____	_____	has had a happy childhood with happily married parents.
20.	_____	_____	is emotionally mature.
21.	_____	_____	is prepared to support a family.
22.	_____	_____	is interested in waiting to marry until age twenty-two or older.
23.	_____	_____	wants a six-month to two-year engagement period.

Doing Sociology

Do you think that the qualities listed in the questionnaire are relevant to you in choosing a wife or a husband? Why or why not? Are there characteristics more important to you and your friends? Explain.

Section 3

Family and Marriage in the United States

Key Terms

- divorce rate
- marriage rate

Section Preview

Modern marriages are based primarily on love, but there are many reasons for marrying—and as many reasons for divorce. Although the American family provides social and emotional support, violence in this setting is not uncommon. Child abuse and spousal abuse are serious problems in too many American families.

The Nature of the American Family

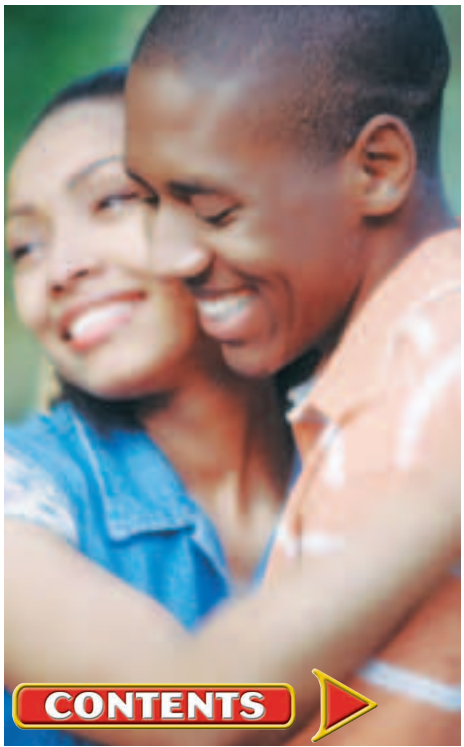
The United States is a large, diverse society. Describing the "typical" family might be impossible. There are, however, more similarities than differences among American families. As the various ethnic groups blend into life in the United States, their families tend to follow the American pattern described below.

- Families are nuclear (a household contains only a set of parents and their children).
- Families are bilateral (they trace lineage and pass inheritance equally through both parents).
- Families are democratic (partners share decision making equally).
- Families are neolocal (each family lives apart from other families).
- Families are monogamous (each includes only one husband and one wife at a time).

Romantic Love and Marriage

To Americans, it's like the old song—"Love and marriage go together like a horse and carriage." In a recent poll of the American public, 83 percent of both men and women rated "being in love" as the most vital reason to marry.

The relationship between love and marriage is not always viewed in this way. Among the British feudal aristocracy, romantic love was a game of pursuit played outside of marriage. Marriage was not thought to be compatible with deeply romantic feelings. In ancient Japan, love was considered a barrier to the arrangement of marriages by parents. Among Hindus in India today, parents or other relatives



In the United States today, the norm is for love to precede the marriage vows. Not all societies share this norm.

CONTENTS

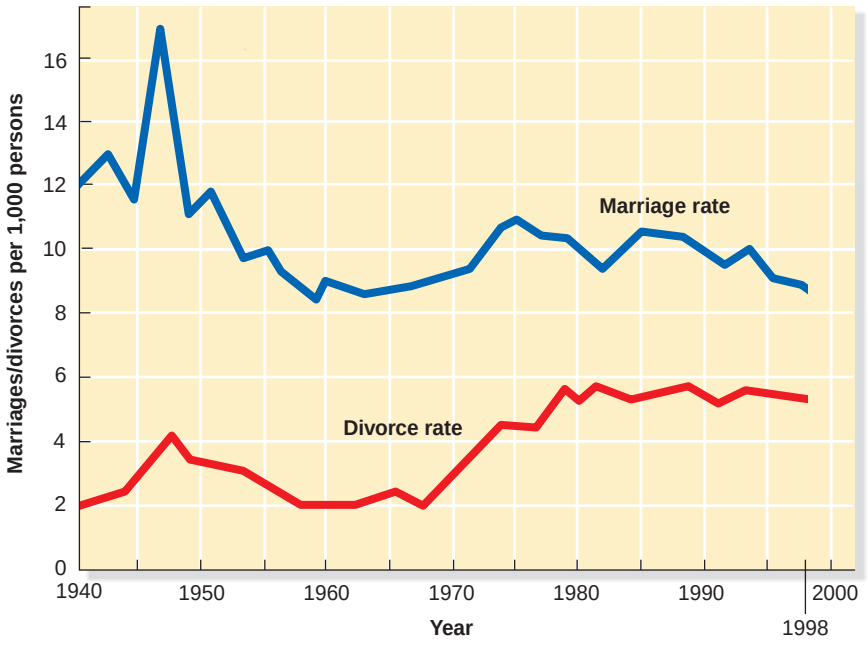


Figure 11.5 Divorce and Marriage Rates: 1940–1998.
Can you apply what you learned in history to interpret this chart? (a) What happened in the mid-1940s that caused the dramatic rise in marriage rates during this period? (b) Why do you think the marriage rate dropped so low in the 1950s? (c) What are some possible reasons that the divorce rate peaked in 1980?

Source: National Vital Statistics Reports 47, 1999.

are expected to find suitable mates for the young. Criteria for mate selection include caste, wealth, family reputation, and appearance. Love is not absent in Hindu marriages, but love follows marriage rather than the other way around (Cox, 1999).

While romantic love is almost always stated as a condition for marriage in modern societies, it is seldom the only condition. People marry for many reasons, and romantic love may be only one of many reasons. A person may marry to enter a powerful family or to advance a career. One of the strongest motivations for marriage is conformity. Parents expect their children to marry after a certain age and worry about them—perhaps even pressure them—if their children remain single very long. Peers are another source of pressure. Since well over 90 percent of all adults in the United States do marry, conformity must certainly be a motivating factor.

Americans typically believe that a marriage that is not based on romantic love cannot last. It is more accurate to say that a marriage based only on romantic love is almost sure to fail. While love may be a good start, it is only the beginning. For a marriage to last, a couple must build a relationship that goes beyond romantic love (Crosby, 1985).

marriage rate
the number of marriages per year for every one thousand members of a population

The **marriage rate**—the number of marriages per year for every thousand members of the population—has fluctuated, in the United States, since 1940. As shown in Figure 11.5, the marriage rate peaked at over 16.0 immediately following World War II. Since then, the marriage rate, with ups and downs, has been cut in half.

Divorce

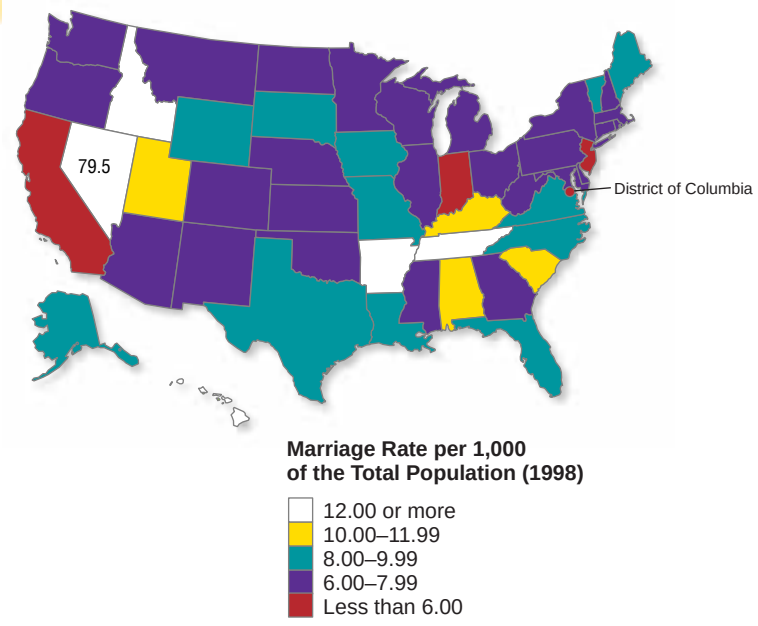
divorce rate
the number of divorces per year for every one thousand members of the population

The **divorce rate** is the number of divorces per year for every one thousand members of the population. Except for a peak and decline after World War II, the divorce rate in the United States increased slowly between 1860 and the early 1960s. A dramatic increase occurred over the next twenty years, when



Marriage Rates

As noted in the text, the U.S. marriage rate overall has declined dramatically since 1940. Variation in the marriage rate among individual states is interesting. The lowest marriage rate occurs in New Jersey. Nevada has far and away the highest marriage rate.



Interpreting the Map

1. Create a chart comparing the marriage rate in your state with other states, keeping in mind that the national average is just over 8.0. Pose a question for your classmates to answer describing their reaction to your state's position in the marriage rate ranking.
2. Would you expect the divorce rates of states to be correlated with their marriage rates? Make a prediction before looking up the divorce rates for comparison. Report your findings to the class.

Source: PRIMEDIA Reference Inc., 1998.

the divorce rate more than doubled (from 2.2 percent in 1960 to 5.3 percent in 1981). Since then, the rate has leveled off. In fact, it has declined slightly since 1985. (See Figure 11.5 on page 364.)

What are the causes of divorce? Both personal and societal factors influence why people divorce. At the individual level, these factors include:

- the age of the people when they married. The later the age upon marriage, the lower the chance of divorce.
- how many years the partners have been married. The longer the marriage, the lower the chance of divorce.
- the nature and quality of the relationship. The more respect and flexibility exists between the partners, the lower the chance of divorce.

Sociologists are most concerned with how larger forces in society affect marriages. There are four main factors. First, the divorce rate rises during economic prosperity and goes down when times are hard. This is probably

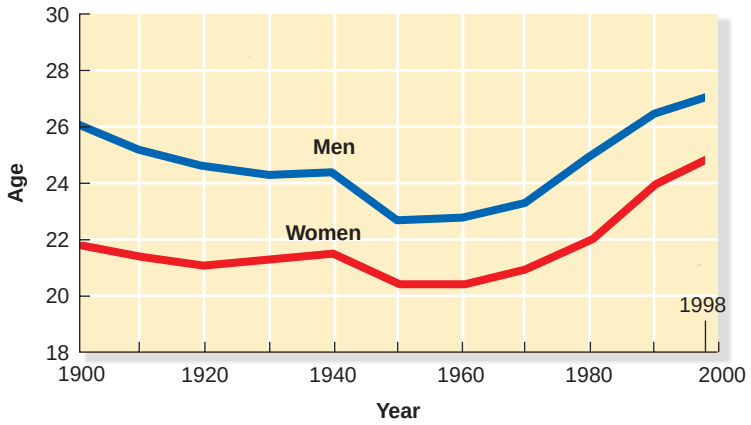


Figure 11.6 Median Age at First Marriage. *This figure shows changes in the median age at first marriage in the U.S. since 1900. The marrying age for both men and women has been on the increase since the 1960s. How might this trend affect the future divorce rate?*

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, March 1998.

> No matter how many communes anybody invents, the family always creeps back.
>
> **Margaret Mead**
> **anthropologist**

because people are more likely to make changes and take chances when they are not worried about basic survival.

Second, the rise in the divorce rate after 1960 followed the growing up of the baby-boom generation. Baby boomers did not attach a stigma to divorce the way earlier generations did and so were more likely to leave unhappy marriages than to stay.

Third, the increasing financial independence of women means they are more willing to end bad marriages. They are not as dependent (especially if there are no children) upon the husband's willingness to support an ex.

Fourth, American values and attitudes about marriage and divorce are changing. Society is much more forgiving of divorce and remarriage. Women, especially, are no longer "punished," as they were in the past, for leaving a marriage.

What does the future for marriage look like? For several reasons, there is a good chance that the recent decline in the U.S. divorce rate may continue:

- The average age at first marriage in the United States is increasing. (See Figure 11.6.) We know that the later people marry, the less likely they are to divorce. (Mature individuals have more realistic expectations about their mates and have fewer economic and career problems.) This trend is likely to continue well into the twenty-first century.
- The average age of the population of the United States is increasing as baby boomers grow older. This exceptionally large generation set records for divorce in the late 1960s and 1970s. Baby boomers now range in age from the mid thirties to the early fifties, which removes them from the age bracket that produces the highest divorce rates.
- American couples are having fewer children, and the children are spaced farther apart. This reduces pressure on marriages.



Tragically, violence has been a pattern of some family relationships throughout history.

Family Violence

Americans have traditionally denied the existence of widespread violence in the family setting. Violent behavior has in the past mistakenly been associated mostly with lower-class families. Part of the reason for this attitude was the fact that the first research in this area used law enforcement and public medical records. Because the police and hospitals dealt mostly with the lower classes (middle and upper classes had lawyers and private doctors), the statistics were skewed toward the lower class. We are learning that domestic violence occurs at all class levels.

Is violence in the family common? Although the family provides a safe and warm emotional haven, it can in some cases be a hostile environment. Family violence, or domestic violence, affects all members of the family—children, spouses, and older people. Celebrated trials during the 1990s brought increased public attention to the issue of domestic violence. For more than a year, media focus was centered on the trial of football superstar O. J. Simpson, accused of the murder of his former wife Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman. Evidence presented during the trial indicated that Simpson had abused her when they were married. In another high-profile case, the wealthy Menendez brothers were convicted of the murder of their parents. (Trial evidence indicated that the brothers had been abused as children.)

According to a national survey, almost one-quarter of adults in the United States report having been physically abused as children. In most cases, physical violence involves a slap, a shove, or a severe spanking. However, kicking, biting, punching, beating, and threatening with a weapon are part of abusive violence as well. Furthermore, according to estimates, one of every four girls and one in ten boys are victims of sexual aggression, either within the home

Country	Reported Abuse
	Industrialized Countries
Canada	**29%** of ever-married/common law–partnered women report being physically assaulted by a current or former partner since the age of sixteen.
New Zealand	**20%** of women report being hit or physically abused by a male partner.
Switzerland	**20%** of women report being physically assaulted.
United Kingdom	**25%** of women had been punched or slapped by a partner or ex-partner in their lifetimes.
United States	**28%** of women report at least one episode of physical violence from their partner.
	Asia and the Pacific
Korea	**38%** of wives report being physically abused by their spouses in the last year.
Thailand	**20%** of husbands acknowledge physically abusing their wives at least once in their marriage.
	Middle East
Egypt	**35%** of women report being beaten by their husbands at some point in their marriage.
Israel	**32%** of women report at least one episode of physical abuse by their partners during the last twelve months; 30% report sexual coercion by their husbands in the last year.
	Africa
Kenya	**42%** of women report ever being beaten by a partner; of those, 58% report that they were beaten often or sometimes.
Uganda	**41%** of women report being beaten or physically harmed by a partner; 41% of men report beating their partners.
	Latin America and the Caribbean
Chile	**26%** report at least one episode of violence by a partner, 11% report at least one episode of severe violence, and 15% of women report at least one episode of less severe violence.
Columbia	**19%** of women have been physically assaulted by their partners in their lifetimes.
Mexico	**30%** report at least one episode of physical violence by a partner; 13% report physical violence within the last year.

Figure 11.7 Events of Domestic Violence against Women in Selected Countries. *Levels of domestic violence against women clearly vary from country to country.*

Source: World Health Organization, 1997.

or outside (Heller, Kempe, and Krugman, 1999; Pryor, 1999). Reported child sexual abuse in the United States has skyrocketed in recent years. Between 1976 and 1997, the number of reported child abuse cases rose from 662,000 to over 3 million. Statistics collected nationally indicate that 47 out of every 1,000 children are reported annually as victims of child maltreatment (Wang and Daro, 1998). Child sexual abuse goes beyond physical contact. Some children are forced into pornography or are made to view pornography in the presence of the abuser. What's worse, the abuser is usually someone the child trusts—a parent, friend of the family, child-care giver, brother.

At least four million women are battered by their husbands annually, probably many more. Over four thousand women each year are beaten to death. The extent of physical abuse is underestimated in part because three-fourths of spousal violence occurs during separation or after divorce, and most research is conducted among married couples.

Is abuse always directed against women? Husband abuse is frequently overlooked in studies of physical abuse. Although marriages in the United States are generally male dominated, it seems there is equality in the

use of physical violence. One set of researchers found that almost one-third of the husbands in their survey had acted violently against their wives and that wives were almost as likely to have used physical violence against their husbands. Other studies also show that husbands and wives assault each other at about the same rate. Much of the violence committed by women, however, involves self-protection or retaliation, and as a category, females are not as violent as males (Gelles, 1997).

Is abuse always physical? Family violence is not limited to physical abuse. Verbal and psychological abuse are also a part of many families. Psychologists report that the feelings of self-hate and worthlessness that are often the effects of abuse can be as damaging as physical wounds. And more than nine million children in the United States suffer from neglect, a condition of being ignored rather than abused.

What is the most common form of family violence? Probably the most frequent and most tolerated violence in the family occurs between children. This *sibling violence* appears to be prevalent and on the rise. Abuse among siblings may be based on rivalry, jealousy, disagreements over personal possessions, or incest. Although it declines somewhat as children get older, it does not disappear.

Little is known about abuse of elderly people, because less research has been done in this area. Abuse of older people usually takes the form of physical violence, psychological mistreatment, economic manipulation, or neglect. Estimates of elder abuse range from 500,000 to 2.5 million cases annually (Gelles, 1997). Some observers fear that abuse of older people will increase as baby boomers age and the population grows older.



Abuse directed against the elderly in nursing homes has been a recent concern of social activists.

Section 3 Assessment

1. Choose the word from each pair that best describes the typical American family.
   - **a.** nuclear or extended
   - **b.** patrilineal or bilateral
   - **c.** neolocal or matrilocal
   - **d.** polygynous or monogamous
2. Identify three factors discussed in the text that are associated with divorce.

Critical Thinking

3. **Making Predictions** What is your prediction for the divorce trend in the United States in 2050? Use information in this section to support your answer.

> All happy families resemble each other; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.
>
> **Count Leo Tolstoy**
> **Russian writer**

Tech Trends

Technology and the Family

According to many experts, the influence of technology is just as far-reaching in the home as in the office. Activities in the home are changing dramatically because of recent technological innovations.

Because more American families are living farther from relatives, more are using the Internet to stay in touch with each other. Birth announcements, reunion plans, gift registries for weddings, and funeral arrangements are now being shared with families and friends on-line (Bulkeley, 1997). Although somewhat impersonal, these social connections may reduce social isolation and friction in families.

Many, however, see a darker side to new technology for the family. For example, one critic offers this concern: "If we wish to raise our children as androids who respond to Internet packets rather than parental guidance, I can't think of a better way to do that than to put computer networks in homes" (Wingfield, 1998:R23).

Another critic believes that high-tech home equipment like cable television, the Internet, and video games increasingly rules the lives of American families. Children who spend a great deal of time alone with these technological wonders are deprived of frequent and intense social contact with other children, their parents, and other adults in the neighborhood. Consequently, the current generation of children could very well be the first to grow up with highly deficient social skills. Offering indirect support for this conclusion is the fact that almost three-fourths of Americans say they do not know their neighbors. The number of Americans who admit they have spent no time with the people living next to them has doubled in the last twenty years (Quintanilla, 1996).



The computer, to an even greater degree than the television, is being credited with isolating family members.

Technology can also separate, socially, those family members who use the new technology from those who do not. For example, some couples who depend on web pages to inform their relatives of family news have found that some family members cannot share in this information. Older members of the family who do not have access to the Internet often feel cut off from the rest of the family (Bulkeley, 1997).

Analyzing the Trends

A dark picture of the Internet has been presented in this feature. Think of some positive consequences of this technology for the family. Discuss two of them.

Section 4

Changes in Marriage and Family

Key Terms

- blended family
- adolescents
- dual-employed marriages
- cohabitation
- boomerang kids

Section Preview

Many new patterns of marriage and family living have emerged in the United States. They include blended families, single-parent families, child-free families, cohabitation, same-sex domestic partners, and families with boomerang children. In spite of these new arrangements, the traditional nuclear family is not going to be replaced on any broad scale.

Blended Families

The relatively high divorce rate in the United States has created the **blended family**—a family formed when at least one of the partners in a marriage has been married before and has a child or children from the previous marriage. This type of family can become extremely complicated (Ganong and Coleman, 1994; Barnes, 1998). Here's an example: A former husband (with two children in the custody of their biological mother) marries a new wife with two children in her custody. They have two children of their own. The former wife also remarries a man with two children, one in his custody and one in the custody of his former wife. That former wife has remarried and has had a child with her second husband, who has custody of one child from his previous marriage. The former husband's parents are divorced, and both have remarried. Thus, when he remarries, his children have two complete sets of grandparents on his side, plus one set on the mother's side, plus perhaps more on the stepfather's side (Cox, 1999).

Blended families create a new type of extended family, a family that is not based strictly on blood relationships. As the example above shows, it is possible for a child in a blended family to have eight grandparents. Of

blended family
a family formed when at least one of the partners in a marriage has been married before and has a child or children from a previous marriage



Americans knew the "Brady Bunch" family long before the term blended families became common.

course, not all blended families are this complicated. But about 40 percent of households in the United States contain biologically unrelated individuals.

Many blended families are successful, especially if they make adjustments during the first few years. Children from previous marriages, however, are one factor in the higher divorce rates among second marriages (Baca Zinn and Eitzen, 1998).

What major problems face blended families? Sociologists point to three major problems facing blended families—a lack of money, stepchildren's dislike of the new spouse, and uncertainty about roles played by stepparents.

- **Money difficulties.** Financial demands from both the former and present families generally result in lower incomes in stepfamilies. Remarried husbands are often legally obligated to support children from their previous marriages. Second wives may resent losing the income spent on children from a previous marriage.
- **Stepchildren's antagonism.** Hoping for a reunion of their original parents, stepchildren may try to derail the new marriage. Even five years after divorce, about a third of stepchildren continue to strongly disapprove of their original parents' divorce. This is especially true for teenagers, who can be very critical of their stepparents' values and personalities.
- **Unclear roles.** The roles of stepparents are often vague and ambiguous. A stepchild often doesn't consider a parent's new spouse as a "real" father or mother. It is also not clear to stepparents or stepchildren how much power the new spouse really has. Issues involving control and discipline reflect power struggles within the family, especially with teenagers involved.

SOCIOLOGY Online

Student Web Activity
Visit the *Sociology and You* Web site at soc.glencoe.com and click on **Chapter 11—Student Web Activities** for an activity on blended families.

CLICK HERE

Single-Parent Families

Over one out of four American families is a single-parent family. By far the greatest proportion of these households are headed by women. Only 10 percent of children living with one parent are in a male-headed household.

Why do women head the vast majority of single-parent households? Although courts today are more sensitive to the fathers' claims, women in all social classes are still more likely to win custody of their children in cases of separation and divorce. Unwed mothers or women



A debate exists over the appropriateness of celebrities choosing to be single mothers.

abandoned by their husbands and/or the fathers of their children make up a large part of poor single-parent households. Finally, poor women marry (or remarry) at a very low rate.

Though significantly fewer, there is an increasing number of well-educated, professional women who head single-parent households. With the stigma of unwed motherhood declining, more affluent unmarried women are *choosing* to have children and to care for them alone. These women have the economic resources to support an independent family. Finally, well-educated women are adopting higher standards for selecting husbands (Seligmann, 1999).

What are the effects of single-parent families on children?

Approximately 30 percent of America's children (defined as people under the age of eighteen) live in households with one parent. African American and Latino children are more likely than white children to live with only their mothers because of high divorce and out-of-wedlock birth rates, and lower rates of marriage and remarriage (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1998a). Figure 11.8 shows how the number of never-married and single parents increased among African Americans and Latinos from 1970 to 1998. In general, the chances are increasing that American children will live at least part of their youth in a fatherless home.

Adolescents (persons from the ages of twelve to seventeen) who live with one parent or with a stepparent have much higher rates of deviant behavior, including delinquency, drug and alcohol abuse, and teenage pregnancy, than adolescents living with both natural parents (Dornbush et al., 1985; Popenoe, 1999). A national sample of twelve- to seventeen-year-olds indicates that arrests, school discipline, truancy, running away, and smoking occur more often in single-parent and stepparent families, regardless of income, race, or ethnic background.

These figures do not point to a lack of concern in single parents as much as they show the built-in problems of single parenting. Single working parents must struggle to provide their children with the time, attention, and guidance that two parents can give. Because the single mother typically makes little money, she has added financial problems. Finding good child care and adequate housing in a suitable neighborhood is often very difficult.

adolescents
youths from the ages of twelve to seventeen

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Online UPDATE

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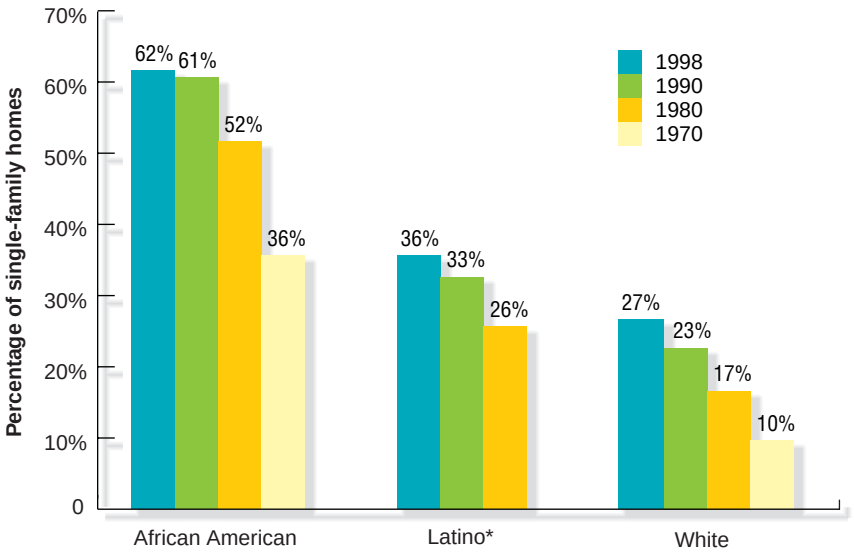


Figure 11.8 Percentage of Single-Parent Families: 1970–1998. *This graph compares the percentage of African American, Latino, and white families that have never married or have one parent. What generalization can you make from this data?*

*Note: Latino data not available for 1970.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1998.



About one-fifth of couples today remain childless. In this an upward or downward trend?

Childless Marriages

In the past, married women without children were seen as failing to fulfill their "duty" as wives. In fact, in many religions, the inability to have children is still one of the few allowed reasons for divorcing a woman. Historically, married childless women were pitied and looked down upon, and single women rarely achieved respectability outside the role of "spinster aunt."

Why are some married women now choosing not to have children? Around 19 percent of American women who have ever been married do not have children in 2000, compared with about 15 percent in 1970 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000d). It is unclear if this upward trend will continue. Today, the reasons married women give for choosing not to have children are varied. Social stigmas against childless married women are disappearing. It is no longer automatically accepted that having children is the primary reason for marriage. Some women have elected to pursue personal or career goals instead. Other people, both men and women, have basic moral issues about raising children in what they consider to be an immoral world. Sometimes, having children is put off so long that it becomes hard for couples to make the adjustment to raising a family. Finally, it is important to remember that not all couples without children have chosen to be that way. Physical or psychological problems keep some couples from having children.

Are marriages happier with or without children? The answer to this question generally depends upon the couple's decision about having children. Among childless couples who want children, marital happiness is generally lower than for married couples with children. However, research shows that couples who by choice have no children appear to be happier and more satisfied with their marriages and lives than couples with children (Cox, 1999).

Dual-Employed Marriages

dual-employed marriages marriages in which both spouses work outside the home

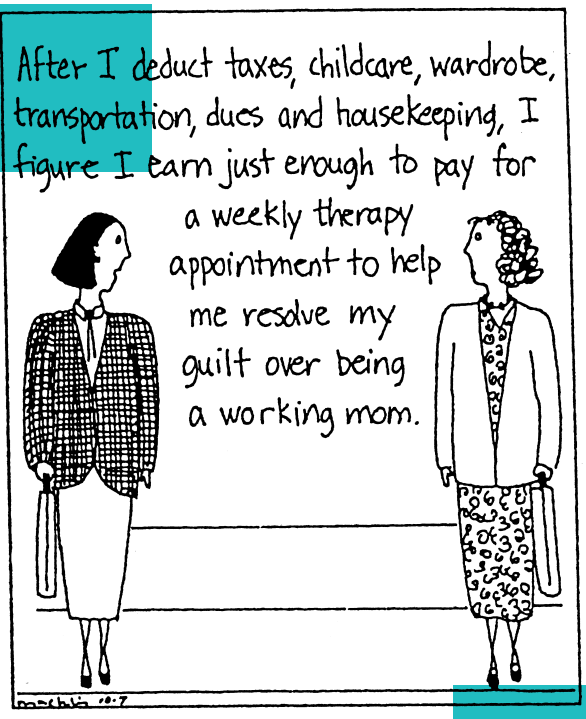
In families where both parents are working outside the home, special strains are put on the marriage. Women in these **dual-employed marriages** are apparently expected to handle most of the household and child-care responsibilities in addition to their full-time jobs.

What are drawbacks to the dual-employed family? Because they must combine employment with child care and household tasks, married working women work about fifteen hours more a week than men. Sociologist Arlie Hochschild calls this home- and child-based work "the second shift." Although men spend an average of four to six hours per week in household and child-care duties, women bear the larger burden.

In addition to this greater workload, women in dual-employed marriages must cope with role conflict. They are torn between the time requirements of

their jobs and their desire to spend more time with their children and husbands. Feelings of guilt may arise from not being able to meet all expectations of wife, mother, and breadwinner.

Men in dual-employed marriages are generally unwilling to assume household responsibilities equal to those of their wives. Even so, they feel the negative effects of role conflict and excessive demands on their time. In addition, having an employed wife, particularly if she earns more, may not fit with men's images of themselves as providers.



A functionalist might suggest that this mother's economic function is clashing with her socioemotional function.

Is there a positive side to dual employment? Dual employment offers advantages as well as disadvantages. On balance, the effects of employment on the psychological well-being of women have been beneficial (Moen, 1992; Crosby, 1993; Cox, 1999). Working outside the home provides a wider set of social relationships and greater feelings of control, independence, and self-esteem. Employment also appears to provide a social and emotional cushion for women when their children leave home. Compared with women who do not work outside the home, employed women tend to have more outlets for self-expression (Adelmann et al., 1989; Wolfe, 1998). If a mother prefers working outside the home, other family members often benefit from her employment. With two incomes, there is more money to spend for purchases that raise the standard of living. Sons and daughters of working mothers also benefit in noneconomic ways. Daughters of working mothers are more likely to see themselves as working adults, as capable of being economically independent, and as benefiting from further education. Sons are more likely to choose wives with similar attitudes toward education and employment.

For men, benefits of a dual-employed marriage include freedom from the responsibility of being the sole provider, increased opportunity for job changes, and opportunities to continue education. Men with employed wives can share the triumphs and defeats of the day with someone who is in the same situation. If their wives are happier working outside the home, husbands enjoy a better marital relationship. Those husbands who take advantage of the opportunity can form a closer relationship with their children by being more active parents (Booth and Crouter, 1998).

Cohabitation

Cohabitation—living with someone in a marriagelike arrangement without the legal obligations and responsibilities of formal marriage—has been a widely discussed alternative to traditional monogamy for some time. In fact, the number of American adults cohabiting increased from about one-half million to over seven million between 1970 and 2000. According to a nationwide

cohabitation
a marriagelike living arrangement without the legal obligations and responsibilities of formal marriage

Focus on Research

Survey Research: Spanking and Antisocial Behavior

Like many children in the United States, you probably experienced spanking and other legal forms of physical corporal punishment from your parents. In the mid-1980s, research revealed that over 90 percent of parents used corporal punishment on young children, and more than half continued its use during the early teen years. Although high, this rate of corporal punishment was less than in the 1950s (99 percent) and the mid-1970s (97 percent). The rate has declined further since 1985, but nearly all American children still experience some form of corporal punishment.

The use of corporal punishment to correct or control the behavior of children is widely accepted in American culture. "Spare the rod and spoil the child" is a warning deep in our national consciousness. However, Straus and his colleagues (1997) present evidence contradicting the notion that corporal punishment improves children's behavior.

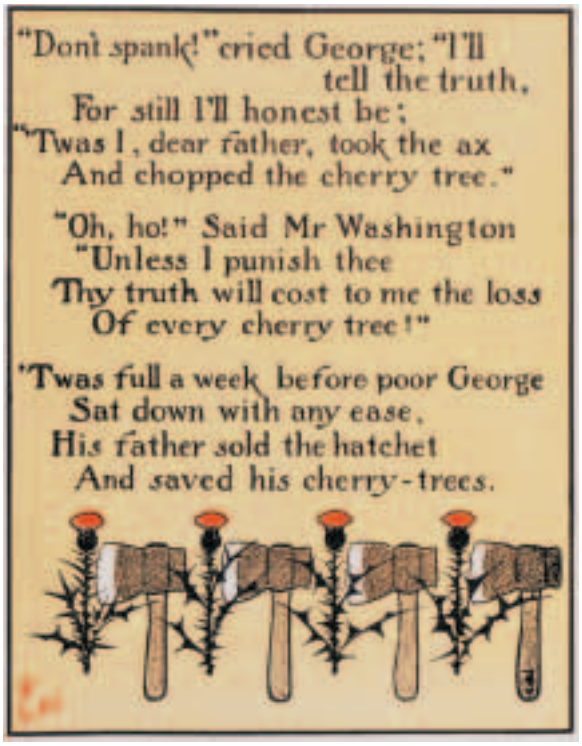
These researchers used data from interviews with a sample of over eight-hundred mothers of children aged six to nine years in a national study. (This was a longitudinal study, one that follows respondents over a period of time.) This study compared parents' use of corporal punishment with antisocial behavior in children. The study defined corporal punishment as "the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child to experience pain, but not injury, for the purpose of correction or control of the child's behavior" (Straus, Sugarman, and Giles-Sims, 1997:761). Slapping a child's hand or buttocks and squeezing a child's arm are examples. A measure of antisocial behavior was based on the mothers' reports of their children's behavior: "cheats or tells lies," "bullies or is cruel or mean to others," "does not feel sorry after misbehaving," "breaks things deliberately," "is disobedient at school," and "has trouble getting along with teachers."

Since this was a longitudinal study, information on the frequency of parents' use of corporal punishment was collected *before* reports on subsequent antisocial behavior. Contrary to common expectations, Straus found that the higher the use of corporal punishment, the higher the level of antisocial behavior two years later.

At the end of their report, the authors move from being strictly social scientists to making a practical child-rearing recommendation. Straus

and his colleagues suggest that the reduction or elimination of corporal punishment could lower antisocial behavior in children. In addition, given research indicating a relationship between antisocial behavior in childhood and violence and other crime in adulthood, society at large could benefit from abandoning the use of corporal punishment in child rearing. They state it this way:

> *Thus, because almost all American children experience [corporal punishment] in varying degrees, our findings suggest that almost all American children could benefit from a reduction or elimination of [corporal punishment]. Moreover, considering research showing that [antisocial behavior] in childhood is associated with violence and other crime as an adult, society as a whole, not just children, could benefit from ending the system of violent child-rearing that goes under the euphemism of spanking (Straus, Sugarman, and Giles-Sims, 1997).*



Spanking as a corrective for bad behavior was a norm in the past, as evidenced by this popular 1899 woodcut.

Working with the Research

1. Does a link between childhood corporal punishment and antisocial behavior surprise you? Explain.
2. Suppose that you are on a panel reporting on child rearing to the President of the United States. Using the Straus study as a model, describe the study you would conduct on a possible relationship between childhood corporal punishment and adult crime.
3. How do you anticipate these children will discipline their children later in life?
4. Describe what you think would be more effective means of discipline.
5. Do you think that social science evidence such as this has affected teacher disciplining behavior in schools? Will it? Should it? Explain.



survey, over one-fourth of adults in the United States have cohabited (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1998a).

Cohabitation has risen among people of all ages and marital statuses, particularly among the young and the divorced. By 2000, about 53 percent of all unmarried-couple households were maintained by someone under thirty-five years of age and about forty-one percent involved at least one child under age fifteen.

Is cohabitation a workable alternative to marriage? Research reports on cohabitation are not encouraging. Only about 25 percent of cohabitating couples stay together more than four years, reflecting a lower level of certainty about commitment than is true in married couples. This lack of commitment is probably an important reason for the lower satisfaction among cohabiting couples than among married couples (Nock, 1995). Another factor is the higher rate of abuse among cohabiting women than among married, divorced, or separated women.

Cohabitation has not fulfilled the promise of providing good experience for future marriage (Cox, 1999). Cohabitation does not appear to improve the quality of later marriage. Couples who cohabited have shown lower marital adjustment than couples who had not lived together. Finally, premarital cohabitation is associated with a higher risk of divorce (Brown and Booth, 1996).

Same-Sex Domestic Partners

Because of the social stigma that surrounds homosexuality, it is impossible to know precisely what proportion of the American population is homosexual. The Institute of Sex Research, founded by Alfred Kinsey, estimates that homosexuals constitute about 10 percent of the U.S. population (13 percent of the males, 5 percent of the females). Although estimating the number of cohabiting same-sex couples is difficult, the number is known to be increasing, both on college campuses and in the general public. It may have been in recognition of that increase that Vermont passed a bill in April of 2000 recognizing "civil unions" for same-sex partners. Same-sex couples united in civil unions would qualify for the same state benefits as married couples (and be held to the same burdens upon breakup). Same-sex unions are certain to remain a controversial issue confronting U.S. culture for many years to come.



While marriage is still a thriving institution, more people today are embracing the single life.

Single Life

An increasing number of Americans are choosing to remain single rather than to marry. More than 26 million Americans over the age of fifteen now live alone, an increase of nearly 150 percent since 1970. Although many of these people will eventually marry, an increasing percentage will remain single all their lives (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000d).

Why are more Americans choosing to live alone? Remaining single has always been a choice that has carried a stigma in the United States. Historically, society frowned on men and women who did not marry. It was seen as a form of deviance. England started taxing bachelors at the end of the seventeenth century and Missouri followed suit in 1820. The stigma attached to remaining single has faded over the past two decades, however. More single Americans are choosing to remain unmarried, pursuing careers or raising children from a former marriage.

Will the current trend toward remaining single continue? It is too early to predict whether the increase in singlehood will lead to a decline in marriage at all ages. Although singlehood is an increasingly popular alternative to traditional marriage, people are not necessarily rejecting marriage. The implication is that many young adults wish to expand the period of "freedom" after leaving home and are unwilling to rush into the responsibilities of early marriage and parenthood.

> "A majority of colonial Americans probably spent some time in a stepfamily."
>
> **Stephanie Coontz**
> **social historian**

Boomerang Kids

The boomerang is a weapon that, when thrown, returns in a wide arc to its point of origin. The term **boomerang kids** is being applied to young adults who either leave home and return or stay at home and live with parents. American adults aged eighteen to thirty-four have a much higher probability of living in their parents' home than Americans of the same age thirty years ago. More than one-fourth of adults eighteen to thirty-four years old now live with their parents (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1996a).

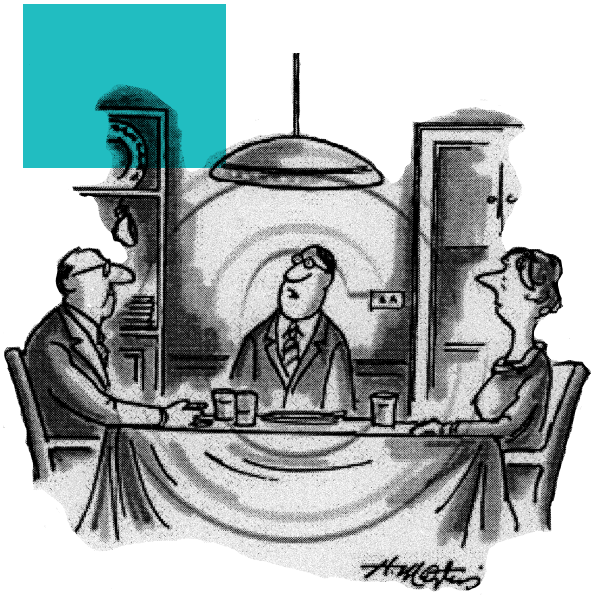
boomerang kids
adult children who return to the home of origin or who continue to live with parents

Why are more adult children returning home? Increasing numbers of adult children are living with their parents for several reasons. Because young adults are marrying later, more stay at home longer. In addition, more are continuing their education and find living at home the best solution to the problem of supporting themselves and paying school expenses. Many young adults return home even after completing their education because the high cost of living outstrips their earning capacity. Also, since parents tend to give their children a home after a failed marriage, the high divorce rate is increasing the proportion of young adults living at home.

What are some consequences of the boomerang effect? Costs associated with education, day-to-day living, and perhaps even a grandchild or two can create financial strain for older parents whose adult children live with them. Many parents complain that their adult children do not share in expenses or help around the house. The children's presence robs their parents of privacy and may prevent them from developing relationships with spouses and friends. It is not surprising that higher marital dissatisfaction among middle-aged parents is associated with adult children living at home.

Adult children who find themselves in this situation suffer as well. Adult children who have returned home have normally been forced by circumstances to do so. They are likely to be having difficulties balancing school and work, making their way economically, forming a family, or surviving the aftermath of a divorce. They know the burden they represent. In addition, returning home usually means giving up some freedom.

In spite of these problems, most families appear to adjust well to the return of older children (Mitchell and Gee, 1996). This is especially true when the returning older child is able to help with expenses and household duties.



"Can't I just stay here with you and Mom? I don't like what I've seen of the real world."

The thoughts of a boomerang kid. Mom and Dad are not buying it, are they?



Belief that the family will continue is found even in the most futuristic views.

Looking Forward

In early 2000, Darva Conger and Rick Rockwell were big news. This couple, who had never met before, married as part of a television contest called "Who Wants to Marry a Multimillionaire?" Most Americans shook their heads, wondering if this event marked the final stages of deterioration of the family. While this was truly a bizarre media event, thankfully, it is not representative of the state of the American family.

What is the future of the American family? If the frequency of marriage and remarriage is any indication, the nuclear family is not disappearing. Over 90 percent of men and women in the United States marry sometime during their lives. Although many Americans have been experimenting with alternative living arrangements, the nuclear family still remains the most popular choice (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000). Contrary to a long-standing fear, many Americans are not avoiding marriage permanently. They are simply postponing it or sampling it more often.

The American family is changing, however. So-called traditional households—those with a husband–wage earner, wife–homemaker, and two children—today account for less than one-fourth of all American households, compared with over 60 percent in 1950. This proportion is not expected to grow. Continued increases are expected for other family lifestyles, such as the dual-employed family and the single-parent family. The question, then, is not whether the family will survive. The question is what forms will the family take.

Whatever else happens, the trend toward more working parents is likely to continue. This trend promises increased strain for parents, children, and society. We have already discussed problems for parents associated with balancing work and home responsibilities. A reduction in close and continuous parental care for children during their early developmental years is another important consequence. Also, as more parents work, parental supervision of children and teenagers declines (*Starting Points,* 1994; Popenoe, 1999; Popenoe, Elshtain, and Blankenhorn, 1996).

Section 4 Assessment

1. How does a blended family differ from a nuclear family?
2. Which group is increasing more rapidly: the number of white single-parent families or the number of African American and Latino single-parent families? What reasons are offered for this?
3. Is your family a dual-employed family? How do the cultural values of your parents affect their economic behavior?
4. Is it true that Americans today are married for a smaller proportion of their lives than were Americans of previous generations?

Critical Thinking

5. **Making Predictions** Some people believe that in the future the nuclear family will be a reality for only a minority of Americans. Do you agree or disagree? Explain.

Chapter 11 Assessment

Summary

Section 1: Family and Marriage Across Cultures

Main Idea: In all societies, the family has been the most important of all social institutions. It produces new generations, socializes the young, provides care and affection, regulates sexual behavior, transmits social status, and provides economic support.

Section 2: Theoretical Perspectives and the Family

Main Idea: The family is the very core of human social life. It is not surprising that each of the major perspectives focuses on the family. Functionalism emphasizes the benefits of the family for society. The conflict perspective looks at the reasons males dominate in the family structure. Symbolic interactionism studies the way the family socializes children and promotes the development of self-concept.

Section 3: Family and Marriage in the United States

Main Idea: Modern marriages are based primarily on love, but there are many reasons for marrying—and as many reasons for divorce. Although the American family provides social and emotional support, violence in this setting is not uncommon. Child abuse and spousal abuse are serious problems in too many American families.

Section 4: Changes in Marriage and Family

Main Idea: Many new patterns of marriage and family living have emerged in the United States. They include blended families, single-parent families, child-free families, cohabitation, same-sex domestic partners, and families with boomerang children. In spite of these new arrangements, the traditional nuclear family is not going to be replaced on any broad scale.

SOCIOLOGY Online

Self-Check Quiz
Visit the *Sociology and You* Web site at soc.glencoe.com and click on **Chapter 11—Self-Check Quizzes** to prepare for the chapter test.

Reviewing Vocabulary

Complete each sentence using each term once.

a. monogamy
b. polyandry
c. polygyny
d. exogamy
e. endogamy
f. homogamy
g. patrilineal
h. blended family
i. dual-employed marriage
j. boomerang kids

1. _____ is a family formed with children from a previous marriage.
2. The marriage of one woman to two or more men at the same time is called _____.
3. The marriage of one man to two or more women at the same time is called _____.
4. _____ are young adults who live with their parents.
5. A marriage in which both partners work for pay is called _____.
6. _____ is the marriage within one's own group as required by social norms.
7. The marriage of one man to one woman is called _____.
8. The tendency to marry someone similar to oneself is called _____.
9. _____ is the practice of marrying outside of one's group.
10. _____ is the arrangement in which descent is traced through the father.

Reviewing the Facts

1. Sociologists define three types of family structures. List and describe those structures.
2. In addition to providing a warm and loving atmosphere that fulfills social and emotional needs, what are the other vital functions of the family?

CLICK HERE
CONTENTS

3. How would conflict theorists describe the family?
4. What is the most widely practiced form of marriage around the world today?
5. Who are the victims of family violence?

Thinking Critically

1. **Analyzing Information** According to Hochschild's *second shift* explanation, gender equity in the home does not exist. Why do men, on average, still do less housework than women? Do attitudes about masculinity have anything to do with this? Do women naturally feel inclined to do the housework, given their role as nurturers and caretakers? How might gender stereotypes contribute to inequality in the household?
2. **Making Inferences** One of the characteristics of families is that family members spend time together. As people grow busier and busier, however, spending time together becomes more difficult. Predict the future: twenty years down the road, what do you think will be a typical amount of family time? Do you believe family time will disappear, or do you think family members will always make time for each other, no matter what? Explain your views.
3. **Making Inferences** A prominent sociologist who studies marital relationships says that he can predict with 95 percent accuracy whether a newly married couple will fail or succeed in their marriage. He has newlyweds attend a retreat and perform a series of tasks, videotaping each couple's interactions as they work on projects together. At the end of the weekend, he tells the couples what he observed and what it could mean for the future of their marriages. Remember, his accuracy rating is 95 percent.
   a. What do you think he looks for while he watches couples' interactions?
   b. Do you believe his approach is ethical?
   c. If you had the opportunity as a newlywed, would you attend this retreat? Why or why not?
4. **Analyzing Information** Research on never-married individuals shows that they believe their marriages will be ideal. However, research on married couples suggests that their expectations of marital bliss don't last very long. Why do you think people have expectations of marriage that do not seem to reflect what marriage is really like? Areas to explore might include portrayals of marriage in movies and on TV.
5. **Summarizing Information** Use a chart like the one below to summarize the view of the family as proposed by the three theoretical perspectives.

Sociological Perspective	View of the Family
Functionalism	
Conflict Theory	
Symbolic Interactionism	

Sociology Projects

1. **Family Characteristics** On a piece of paper, rate your family members based on the following characteristics. Use a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest (weakest) and 5 being the highest (strongest).
   - spending time together
   - expressing appreciation for each other
   - dealing with conflict
   - communicating with one another
   - spiritual wellness
   - commitment and follow-through

   You can total your scores and divide by 6 to come up with a mean value for your family. After completing the activity, you may want to discuss your results with family members to see if they agree with your evaluation or share your perspectives. Are there other characteristics that are more important to your family than the ones on this list?

CONTENTS

2. **Divorce** The text listed several reasons why couples divorce. Working with a classmate, brainstorm several additional factors contributing to divorce (for example, no-fault divorce laws in some states). Give at least one reason why each of these factors has caused an increase in divorce over time. After you have come up with a list of at least five factors, discuss with your partner what would happen if the factors were eliminated (for example, if conditions allowing divorce were made stricter). Do you think these changes would improve society? Why or why not? Be prepared to present your findings to the class and to argue your position.
3. **Research Project** Divide a sheet of paper into three columns, labeled A, B, and C. In column A, write the number of children in your immediate family. In column B, write the number of children in your father's immediate family (include siblings that are no longer living). In column C, write the number of children in your mother's immediate family. One student should collect all the papers and tabulate the results. Has the number of children in the families represented in your class decreased since your parents' generation? Prepare a graph of the similarities or differences.
4. **The Second Shift** To see whether the second-shift explanation applies to your family, conduct the following experiment over the course of one week. Write down the number of hours you see your mother (or stepmother) doing housework each day. Then write down the number of hours your father (or stepfather) spends working in or around the house. In class, compile the numbers logged by all your classmates. Is the second-shift explanation valid for your class? (If you are living in a single-parent family, keep track of the number of hours of housework performed by that parent, but not by any children in the household.)

Technology Activity



1. Using your school or local library and the Internet, research family violence over the last 30 years—1970 to 1980; 1980 to 1990; 1990 to Present. Create a graph to show statistically the frequency of reported incidents of violence. In your own words, using correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and terms learned in this chapter, write an essay that summarizes your graph. In the essay, consider reasons or changes in society that you believe influence the frequency of reported incidents of family violence. Consider the impact, if any, of hotlines and Public Service Announcements regarding family violence. Determine whether the information that you have found on reported incidents is correct and complete. Support your decision with at least two reasons.

Chapter 11



Enrichment Reading

Life Without Father

by David Popenoe

"Fathers should be neither seen nor heard," Oscar Wilde once wrote. "That is the only proper basis for family life." With each passing year, American society has increasingly become an immense social testing ground for this proposition. Unfortunately for Wilde's reputation as a social analyst, to say nothing about the health of our society, the results have proved highly unsupportive. American fathers are today more removed from family life than ever before in our history. And according to a growing body of evidence, this **massive erosion of fatherhood** contributes mightily to many of the major social problems of our time. . . .

The print pages and airwaves have been filled with discussions of fatherhood in recent decades. Yet most discussions have focused on just one issue—how to get fathers to share their traditional breadwinner role and take up a new (for them) child-care-provider role. The call from younger women has been loud and clear: We need a new conception of fatherhood, a "new father," one who will help equally in the home just as women now strive to help equally in the workplace; one who will share the **"second shift"** with his mate.

The father's role—what society expects of fathers—has indeed changed enormously in recent years. Fathers are expected to be more engaged with their children and involved with housework—if not nearly as much as most women would like, certainly far more than the past generation of fathers would have thought possible.

This role change has been highly positive in most respects. But with all the concentration on "role equality" in the home, the larger and more **ominous** trend of modern fatherhood has been mostly overlooked. We have been through many social revolutions in the past three decades—sex, women's liberation, divorce—but none more significant for society than the startling emergence of the absent father, a kind of **pathological counterpart** to the new father.

While the new father has been emerging gradually for most of this century, it is only in the past thirty years that we have witnessed the enormous increase in absent fathers. In times past, many children were left fatherless through his premature death. Today, the fathers are still alive and out there somewhere; the problem is that they seldom see much, if anything, of their children.

The main reason for contemporary father absence is the dramatic decline of marriage. . . . What this means, in human terms, is that about half of today's children will spend at least a portion of their growing-up years living apart from their fathers.

As a society, we can respond to this new fatherlessness in several ways. We can, as more and more of us seem to be doing, simply declare fathers to be unnecessary, superfluous. This is the response of "single parents by choice." It is the response of those who say that if daddies and mommies are expected to do precisely the same things in the home, why do we need both? It is the response of those who declare that unwed motherhood is a woman's right, or that single-parent families are every bit as good as two-parent families, or that divorce is generally beneficial for children.

In my view, these responses represent a human tragedy—for children, for women, for men, and for our society as a whole. . . . Fathering is different from mothering; involved fathers are **indispensable** for the good of children and soci-

ety; and our growing [trend in] national fatherlessness is a disaster in the making. . . .

No one predicted this trend, few researchers or government agencies have monitored it, and it is not widely discussed, even today. But its importance to society is second to none. Father absence is a major force lying behind many of the attention-grabbing issues that dominate the news: crime and delinquency; premature sexuality and out-of-wedlock teen births; deteriorating educational achievement; depression, substance abuse, and alienation among teenagers; and the growing number of women and children in poverty. These issues all point to a **profound deterioration** in the well-being of children. Some experts have suggested, in fact, that the current generation of children and youth is the first in our nation's history to be less well-off—psychologically, socially, economically, and morally—than their parents were at the same age. Or as Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan has observed, "the United States . . . may be the first society in history in which children are distinctly worse off than adults."

Along with the growing father absence, our cultural view of fatherhood is changing. Few people have doubts about the fundamental importance of mothers. But fathers? More and more the question is being raised, are fathers really necessary? Many would answer no, or maybe not. And to the degree that fathers are still thought necessary, fatherhood is said by many to be merely a social role, as if men had no inherent biological predisposition whatsoever to acknowledge and to invest in their own offspring. If merely a social role, then perhaps anyone is capable of playing it. . . .

The decline of fatherhood and of marriage cuts at the heart of the kind of environment considered ideal for childrearing. Such an environment, according to a substantial body of knowledge, consists of an enduring two-parent family that engages regularly in activities together, has many of its own routines and traditions, and provides a great deal of quality contact with their parents' world of work. In addition, there is little concern on the part of children that their parents will break up. Finally, each of these ingredients comes together in the development of a rich family subculture that has lasting meaning and strongly **promulgates** such family values as responsibility, cooperation, and sharing. . . .

What the decline of fatherhood and marriage in America really means, then, is that slowly, insidiously, and relentlessly our society has been moving in an ominous direction—toward the devaluation of children. There has been an alarming weakening of the fundamental assumption, long at the center of our culture, that children are to be loved and valued at the highest level of priority. Nothing could be more serious for our children or our future.

Source: Excerpted from David Popenoe, *Life Without Father* (New York: The Free Press, 1996), pp. 1–2, 14.

What Does it Mean?

indispensable
absolutely necessary

massive erosion of fatherhood
great numbers of fathers not present in the home

ominous
dangerous; darkly threatening

pathological counterpart
diseased opposite

profound deterioration
very great decline

promulgates
teaches

second shift
work to be done at home

Read and React

1. Briefly state the main point of Popenoe's reading. Is he correct? Is he too pessimistic? Explain.
2. Explain why Popenoe thinks that Oscar Wilde's statement that "fathers should be neither seen nor heard" is wrong. Do you think Wilde was wrong? Why or why not?
3. Discuss the reasons Popenoe gives for the decline of the father's presence in the contemporary American family.
4. According to Popenoe, nothing could be more serious for children than the trend he sees toward "life without father." Why do you agree or disagree?