

# Sociology GCSE

## Unit 3:

# Families

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## 2.2 Assessments

Paper 1: The sociology of families and education	+	Paper 2: The sociology of crime and deviance and social stratification
<p><b>What's assessed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The sociology of families</li> <li>• The sociology of education</li> <li>• Relevant areas of social theory and methodology</li> </ul> <p>Students will be expected to draw on knowledge and understanding of the entire course of study to show a deeper understanding of these topics.</p>		<p><b>What's assessed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The sociology of crime and deviance</li> <li>• The sociology of social stratification</li> <li>• Relevant areas of social theory and methodology</li> </ul> <p>Students will be expected to draw on knowledge and understanding of the entire course of study to show a deeper understanding of these topics.</p>
<p><b>How it's assessed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes</li> <li>• 100 marks</li> <li>• 50% of GCSE</li> </ul>		<p><b>How it's assessed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes</li> <li>• 100 marks</li> <li>• 50% of GCSE</li> </ul>
<p><b>Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section A has two multiple choice questions followed by a range of short and extended responses.</li> <li>• Section B has two multiple choice questions followed by a range of short and extended responses.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section A has two multiple choice questions followed by a range of short and extended responses.</li> <li>• Section B has two multiple choice questions followed by a range of short and extended responses.</li> </ul>

### Assessment Objectives:

AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of sociological theories, concepts, evidence and
AO2	Apply knowledge and understanding of sociological theories, concepts, evidence and methods.
AO3	Analyse and evaluate sociological theories, concepts, evidence and methods in order to

## Families unit:

Content	Students should be able to;	RAG
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Differing views of the functions of families.</li> <li>Parsons functionalist perspective on primary socialisation and the stabilisation of adult personalities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identify, describe and explain the functions of families (sexual, reproductive, economic and educational)</li> <li>describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on the functions of families (functionalist, feminist and Marxist).</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How family forms differ in the UK and within a global context.</li> <li>The work of the Rapoport on family diversity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students should be able to identify, describe and explain various family forms (nuclear, extended, reconstituted, lone parent, single sex)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Different views of conjugal role relationships.</li> <li>The feminist perspective of Oakley on the idea of the conventional family.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identify, describe and explain joint and segregated conjugal roles</li> <li>describe and explain the domestic division of labour in both traditional and contemporary families</li> <li>demonstrate their understanding of issues that impact on conjugal role relationships within the contemporary family including decision making, money management, dual career families, child rearing and leisure activities</li> <li>describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on conjugal role relationships (functionalist, feminist and Marxist)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changing relationships within families.</li> <li>How relationships within families have changed over time.</li> <li>The theory of the symmetrical family and the principle of stratified diffusion developed from the functionalist perspective of Willmott and Young.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identify, describe and explain how relationships within families have changed over time (preindustrial, industrial and contemporary/modern)</li> <li>identify, describe and explain contemporary family related issues, the quality of parenting, the relationships between teenagers and adults, care of the disabled/elderly and arranged marriage</li> <li>describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on changing relationships within families (functionalist, feminist and Marxist)</li> <li>describe the key ideas of Willmott and Young.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Different criticisms of families (isolation and unrealistic idealisation, loss of traditional functions, lack of contact with wider kinship networks, the status and role of women within families, marital breakdown, dysfunctional families).</li> <li>The work of Zaretsky on developments in families from a Marxist perspective &amp; Delphy and Leonard's feminist critique of families.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identify, describe and explain different criticisms of families</li> <li>describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on these issues (functionalist, feminist and Marxist)</li> <li>describe the key ideas of Zaretsky on families</li> <li>describe the key ideas of Delphy and Leonard on families.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changes in the pattern of divorce in Britain since 1945 and the consequences of divorce for family members and structures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identify, describe and explain the pattern of divorce in Britain since 1945 using relevant statistical data</li> <li>explain reasons for the rise in divorce since 1945 including: changes in the law, changes in social attitudes and values, secularisation, changes in the status of women in society</li> <li>describe the consequences of divorce for family members (husband and wife, children and extended family) and the increase in the numbers of lone parent families</li> <li>describe, compare and contrast a variety of sociological perspectives on these issues (functionalist, feminist and Marxist).</li> </ul>	

## How to answer questions:

### 2 x 1 mark questions:

For questions with four responses only **one** answer per question is allowed.


For each answer completely fill in the circle alongside the appropriate answer.


CORRECT METHOD



WRONG METHODS



If you want to change your answer you must cross out your original answer as shown. 

If you wish to return to an answer previously crossed out, ring the answer you now wish to select as shown. 

### 2 x 3 mark questions:

“Describe... or; Identify and describe **one**...”

Top answers will show: ‘a coherent description with few inaccuracies, and will demonstrate good knowledge and understanding.

How to answer a 3 mark question:

- Identify and describe the answer in detail
- Give an example; try to use key words throughout your answer
- Make sure you have linked your answer to every part of the question, including any key words.

AO1 = 3 marks

### Item

Be sure to study items carefully. Pay extra attention to things such as dates and who conducted the research, as this will be crucial to answering the next couple of questions, which will test how well you have read the item. You could be asked about the type of research methods that the researcher as used, strengths or weaknesses of the research or even to identify trends, patterns or make observations.

The three questions that follow an item in the exam will expect you to have the ‘context’ of this item in mind. This means the circumstances or background of the research. Try to refer to it whenever you can!

### 1 x 2 mark questions:

“From **Item A**, examine **one**...” (this question is testing how well you can read and analyse an Item)

How to answer a 2 mark research question:

- Analyse (study) the item and identify a strength or weakness of the research being used.
- Suggest evaluate (weigh up) why this should be seen as a possible strength or weakness.

AO3 = 2 marks

## **4 x 4 mark questions:**

“Identify and explain **one**...as referred to in **Item A** or; Identify and describe... or; Identify **one**...” (this is a paragraph answer linked to the Item)

Top answers will show: ‘a relevant factor/trend/research method identified and an appropriate, detailed and well-developed description offered with a clear application to the context’.

How to answer a 4 mark question:

- Identify and explain the answer
- Develop your answer further
- Give an example
- Make sure you have linked your answer to every part of the question, including any key words.

AO1 = 1 mark, AO2 = 3 marks

## **2 x 12 mark questions:**

“Discuss how far sociologists agree that...” (mini essay answers)

Top answers will show: ‘an appropriately developed critical analysis and evaluation of the relevant evidence and/or theory. Good application of relevant knowledge and understanding to the issues raised by the question with few if any inaccuracies or omissions. A wide range of specialist terms used with precision. A good knowledge and understanding demonstrated in a coherent and logically structured argument’.

You are being assessed on four things:

1. Sociological knowledge (AO1: 4 marks)
2. Your ability to apply knowledge of theories, research and methods (AO2: 4 marks)
3. Your ability to evaluate sociological theories and concepts, remember to evaluate “how far” (AO3: 4 marks)
4. Your ability to write clearly and coherently, spelling well and using specialist terms accurately (for over 9 marks)

How to answer a 12 mark question:

- Write an introduction; focus on the question and explain what it’s asking. Explain any key terms
- Develop your ‘for’ answer; give at least two reasons, use a sociological perspective on the issue and any evidence.
- Develop your ‘against’ answer; give at least two reasons, use a sociological perspective on the issue and evidence.
- Give a conclusion, explicitly addressing the issue of “how far”.

AO1 = 4, AO2 = 4 marks, AO3 = 4 marks

## What is a family

It is hard to define 'a family' as they all look different, here is a simple definition:

*'A married couple and their **dependent** children who live together'.*

The following tries to explain the increasing **family diversity** (variety) in the UK today:

*'Two or more people linked by birth, marriage, civil partnership, adoption or **cohabitation** based on long-term relationships'.*



## Types of family in the UK

**The Nuclear families:** consist of a father and mother and their children. It contains just two generations and they love together in the same household. They may be married or cohabiting.

**Same sex families:** gay or lesbian couple live together with their child or children (by adoption or surrogate and Surrogate). There has been a rise of this family in recent years thanks to the Same-sex Adoption Act 2002, Civil Partnership Act 2004, and Gay Marriage Act 2014. Plus, the social stigma of gay people is disappearing & there is more secularisation (people aren't as religious).

**Extended families:** are either extended vertically so three generations (grandparents) living together under the same roof or nearby. Or they are extended horizontally so two generations such as aunts and uncles living under the same roof or nearby. Modified Extended families is used to explain when members live apart geographically but remain in regular contact.

**Beanpole families:** many generations of children, parents, grandparents and sometimes great-grandparents but they have each only had a small amount of children so the 'family tree' is long and thin and resembles a bean pole plant. This type of family is becoming increasingly popular in the UK, as people are having children later in life. This is certainly true in middle class families but not as much in working class families.

**Lone parent families:** are usually headed by women who may be single, divorced, separated or widowed, or they might have wanted to become a parent by choice. In 2015 only 10% of lone-parent families were headed by men.

**Reconstituted families:** are sometimes referred to as blended families or step-families. In these families one or more of the partners have a child or children from a previous relationship living with them, so at least one of the partners is a step-parent.

### KEY TERMS

**Family:** Two or more people linked by birth, marriage, civil partnership, adoption or cohabitation based on long-term relationships

**Family diversity:** different types of family structures that exist in Britain

**Dependent family members (or children):** people or children who depend on others within the family because of their age or disability

**Civil partnership:** when people of the same sex have their relationship registered so it is legally recognised (gave same rights as married people before gays could marry)

**Cohabitation:** partners who live together without getting married

**Beanpole families:** long and thin vertical family with lots of generations but very few children in each generation

**Blended families:** (see reconstituted families)

**Extended families:** families that include distant relatives such as grandparents or aunts and uncles

**Lone-parent families:** families with one parent because of divorce, death or choice

**Nuclear families:** families with parents who are married and have children

**Reconstituted families:** when two adults with children from previous relationships marry (or cohabit) to form a new family.

**Same-sex families:** families with parents of the same sex

**Step-parent:** someone who is the parent of their partner's child but not biological parent

## Alternatives to the family

**Household:** This consists of either one person who lives alone or a group of people who live at the same address who share at least one meal a day or facilities such as a living room. This could be a person living on their own or students that live together in a shared house. A family household, however, is one in which family members live together.

**One-person households:** this has increased from 6.6 million in 2015 to 7.7 million in 2015 (29% of households). This is due to older people living longer, often women living on their own after their partner has died. But it's also due to younger people who:

- Remain single and childless throughout their lives
- Choose to live apart from their partner
- Are international migrants including students, who have moved to Britain to study
- Are divorced
- Live alone before marrying or cohabiting

**Friends:** some sociologists say that friends are becoming more important than family. In their research, Sasha Roseneil and Shelley Budgeon (2006) found that, among people who did not live with a partner, friends more than biological kin offered support to those who suffered mental health or emotional problems and they also picked up the pieces when love relationships came to an end.

However, others argue that people turn first to their family members before friends, it's just that friends are becoming more like family, rather than replacing them.

**Looked-after children:** In March 2015 local authorities (councils) looked after 69,540 in England, 60% were due to neglect or abuse. 75% are placed with foster carers, and others are placed in children's homes, sometimes homes that specialise in behavioural or emotional difficulties, or drugs and alcohol. Secure units are homes that accommodate children who have committed an offence, and these can restrict children's liberty (freedom).

**Residential care:** some older people live in institutions such as residential care and nursing homes. in 2011, 3.2% of people aged 65 and over lived in care homes.



### KEY TERMS

**Household:** one person who lives alone or a group of people who live at the same address who share at least one meal a day or facilities

**Kin:** relatives

**Looked after children:** when children are placed in children's homes or with foster carers

**One person household:** (lone person household): when a person lives on their own

**Residential care:** the institution older people or disabled people live in such as a nursing home

## How family and household settings change over the course of a lifetime

As people's situations and relationships change they will move between different family and household settings. The picture below explains this change through an example of a female as she passes through the stages of childhood, youth and adulthood, into older age.

- When she is born she may live with her parents in a *nuclear family*, her parents may later separate, leading to her living with her mother in a *lone parent family*. Her mother later marries again when she meets a new partner and he comes to live with them, she now lives in a *reconstituted family*.
- As a young adult, she may leave home to go to university, during which time she may live with friends in a shared *student household*. After university she may return home to save up for a flat of her own and when she can afford this she will live in a *one person household*.
- Later she meets a boyfriend and he moves in with her to create a *cohabiting family*, but when they later marry and have children she will once again live in a *nuclear family*. Finally when all the children have left home she will live in an *empty nest family* with just her partner.

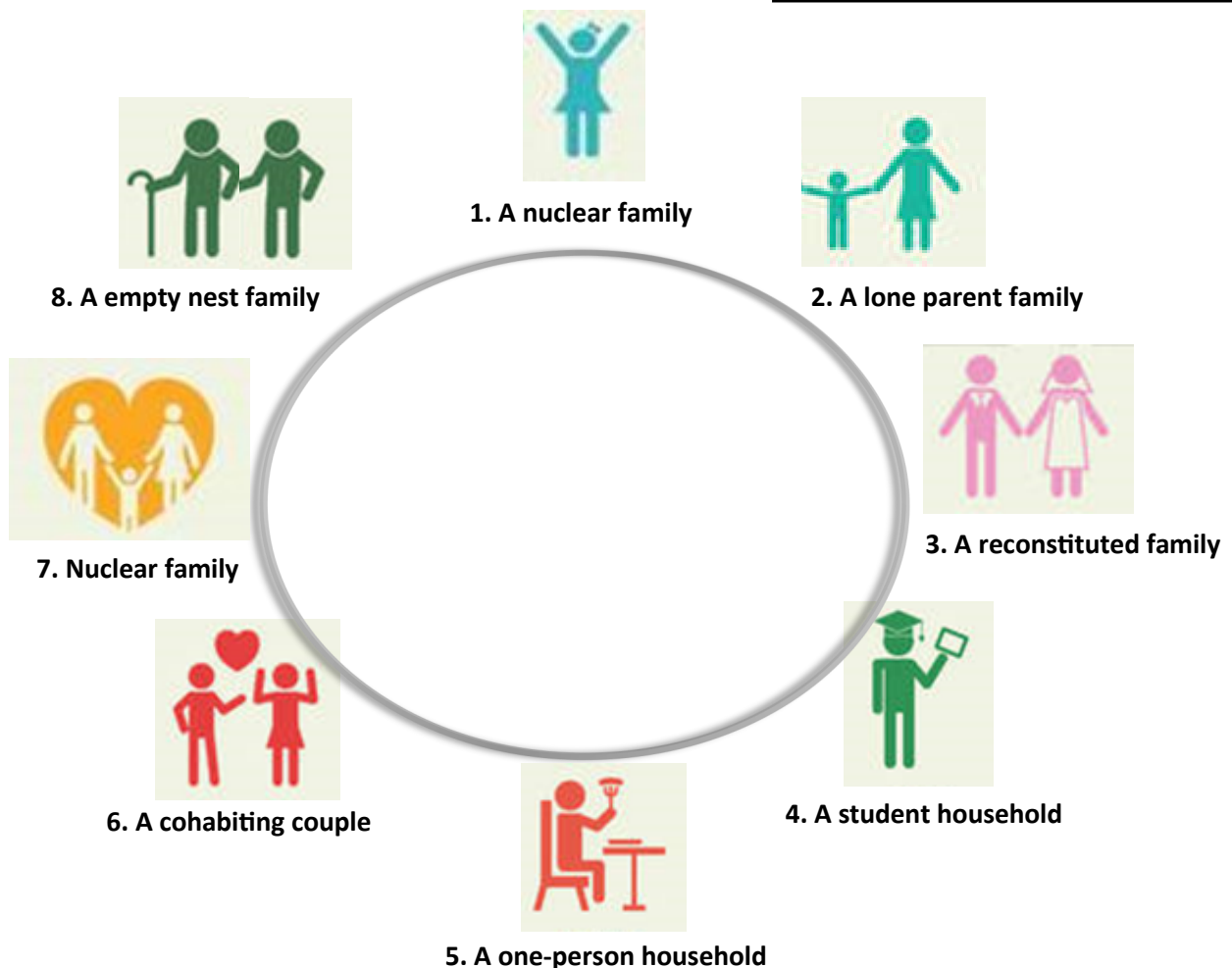
Significant events such as the birth of a child, marriage, separation, **divorce** and remarriage may mark important turning points in a person's life and this often leads to changes in their family or household settings.

When sociologists want to study people's change of household and family settings throughout the course of their life they often use longitudinal research methods.

### KEY TERMS

**Divorce:** the legal termination or ending of a marriage.

**Empty nest family:** a mature couple who live together after the children have left home.





## Family diversity

**Cultural diversity** means there are lots of families with different cultures living together in the UK.

### Migration

This has mainly come from **migration**—people coming into the country. In the 19th century migrants came from Ireland, after WWII there was migration from former colonies such as India and Pakistan, and parts of the Caribbean. This takes place alongside **emigration** as people leave Britain to settle abroad.

### Working mothers

In cultural diversity there are different family patterns, for example, African-Caribbean mothers don't tend to stop work when they have children, whereas Asian families tend to not work (Charles et al 2008). However, these patterns seem to be changing amongst second-generation migrants (their children).

### Multigenerational extended family

The 2001 **census** data shows that 10% of Bangladeshi and Pakistani households contained a multigenerational extended family (grandparents), whereas only 2% of White British and 3% of Black households did so.

### Traditional Asian families

Asian families are often seen as old-fashioned with low rates of lone-parent families and divorce but Qureshi et al (2015) says British Asian families are changing and lone-parent families are increasing.

Asian families are also often thought of as being male-dominated but Westwood and Bhachu (1998) suggest that these ideas are based on prejudice (prejudgements) as there are many ethnic differences between these families according to their religion and social class so people shouldn't generalise.

### Social class:

It is thought that working class families tend to be more male-dominated and middle class families are more egalitarian (or equal), but there is other evidence that suggests working class fathers are more involved in childcare than middle-class fathers.



Asian families: 10% have grandparents living with them

White families: only 2% have grandparents living with them



### KEY TERMS

**Census:** a survey taken every 10 years of the general public

**Cultural diversity:** Differences between people in society in terms of religion, ethnicity, social class etc.

**Egalitarian:** people are equal

**Emigration:** leaving a country to go to another

**Immigration:** moving into a country to live and work there

**Migration:** a person who has moved into a country to live and work there

## Family diversity—focus on key thinkers

Rapoport and Rapoport (wife and husband) in 1982 were pioneers in the field of family research with an interest in the issue of family diversity. They did not do their own primary research but instead analysed a number of secondary sources of research from sociologists such as the feminist Bott.

They argued that in the past there was one norm that everyone said family life should be like e.g. husband, wife and children. However, now people have the freedom to choose what type of family they live in and this reflects the needs & wishes in society.

Rapoport and Rapoport identify five types of diversity in families in Britain, these are:

1. **Organisational diversity:** there are differences between families in the way they are structured, e.g. the way they organise their domestic division of labour (how tasks within the home are divided) and their **social networks** such as their extended family. Families can be: Conventional (nuclear) families, **Dual-worker families**, One-parent families or Reconstituted families
2. **Cultural diversity:** families differ in their cultural values and beliefs. Different minority ethnic groups such as those of Cypriot, South Asian and African-Caribbean heritage illustrate this diversity in beliefs and values. These differences between families in their beliefs and values affect their **lifestyles** and ideas about **gender roles**, the domestic division of labour and **childrearing**, education and work.
3. **Social class diversity:** a family's social class position affects what resources are available to them. Working-class families tend to favour more traditional role relationships between husband and wives. Whereas in some middle-class families, roles may be unequal because of the demands of the husband's career even when the couple value more equal roles. Social class also affects childrearing such as the way parents discipline their children. For example, discipline is more physical among working-class parents.
4. **Life-course diversity:** this relates to the stage in the family life-cycle that a particular family has reached. Newlyweds without children are at a different stage to retired couples whose adult children have left home. Families at a specific stage in the life-cycle develop lifestyles that reflect their circumstances. For instance, families with young children often have similar concerns and issues to deal with. Their concerns are not the same as those of families at other stages in the family life-cycle such as retired couples.
5. **Cohort diversity:** this refers to the particular period in which a family passes through different stages of the family life-cycle. For example, the **stigma** attached to divorce has reduced over time, so younger couples may find it easier to get divorced today.

Since Rapoport and Rapoport first examined family diversity in the 1980's, diversity has increased. For instance, there are more same-sex families, this increase is due to factors such as changes in social attitudes, changes in the law (e.g. Civil Partnership Act 2004 and Gay Marriage Act 2014) and developments in reproductive technology (e.g. IVF or surrogacy).



### KEY TERMS

**Social networks:** a network of relatives and friends

**Dual-worker families:** both adults partners work in paid employment

**Lifestyles:** the way people live, including their leisure and work patterns. Lifestyle is influenced by factors such as religion, age, income & social class.

**Childrearing:** bringing up children

**Gender roles:** the behaviour expected of people based on their gender & associated with masculinity & femininity.

**Social stigma:** the shame or disgrace attached to something. E.g. having a child out of marriage was a source of shame for women in the past.

**Life-course:** the stages that an individual passes through over their lifetimes e.g. childhood, teenager etc., or the course of a family's life over time e.g. from a nuclear to an empty nest family.

## Families across the world

### Communes:

These were popular during the 1960/70's. A commune is where a group of people share living accommodation, possessions, wealth and property. They vary quite a bit but usually each adult has their own room and young children share a room.

Members of the commune often make decisions together and try achieve equality between women and men & children.

Communal households may be based on shared political or environmental beliefs. Karl Marx envisaged everyone living in communes in his 'communist society' after capitalism.

### Kibbutzim:

The original kibbutzim were settlements set up by Jewish settlers in Palestine, Israel around 100 years ago. Over 2% of Israel's population still live in Kibbutzim. A kibbutz consists of a group of people who live together communally and value equality and cooperation between members. They tend to work on their land, producing their own food and materials.

Originally, all children lived and slept separately from their parents in the children's quarters. They were looked after by 'kibbutz mothers' and saw their biological parents for a few hours every day. This has changed, however, and on some kibbutzim children now live with their biological parents up to the age of 15 years, when they move to the teenagers' houses.

Each family has its own apartment but meals are usually eaten in the communal dining hall. All children born in the same year are raised and educated together, spending the day in the children's houses. In longer-established kibbutzim, multigenerational families exist.

### One-child family policy in China:

Across the world, government policies on families can differ quite a lot. In an attempt by the Chinese authorities to control population growth, couples in China who lived in cities were by law allowed to have just one child. If the couple did have a second child, they could face fines, demotion or dismissal from work. This policy, introduced in 1979, was seen as cruel and unfair by people in many countries.

In China it is better to have a boy because the males look after their own family in old age, whereas the girl will marry and look after the male's parents. This led to many aborting or even killing their babies when they found out they were female.

In January 2016, this policy came to an end. Although families still need a birth permit from the government, allowing them to have a second child or face having to have a forced abortion, married couples can now request to have two children.

China's ageing population, together with one of the lowest birth rates in the world, prompted the change in policy. China now needs more young people to provide the workforce of the future and to look after aging relatives.

### KEY TERMS

**Ageing population:** the population over the retirement age is gradually increasing

**Birth rate:** the number of live births per 1000 of the population per year

**Commune:** a group of people who live together and share possessions, wealth and property

**Cross cultural study:** a study that shows how different family forms, household arrangements and personal relationships exist in different cultures

**Kibbutz:** a group of people who live communally in settlements in Israel and who value equality and cooperation between kibbutz members



## Functionalist perspective on families

All functionalists in the 1940's and 50's viewed the nuclear family in a positive way and as a necessary part of society. Like Durkheim, they focussed on the role and functions of the nuclear family in modern industrial society.

Individuals and society have certain needs that must be met if society is to function smoothly. The nuclear family performs several essential functions that meet the needs of individuals and society as a whole. This all keeps society functioning like a well-oiled machine.

### George Murdock (1949)

G.P. Murdock argues that the nuclear family carries out four vital functions that are essential for society and for individuals:

#### 1. The sexual function:

Society needs a way of controlling sexual activity. In a nuclear family, the husband and wife live together and have a sexual relationship that is approved of in society. The nuclear family controls the sexual behaviour of the married couple, helps to continue their relationship and binds them together.

#### 2. The reproductive function:

Society needs new members if it is to survive over time. The nuclear family has an important role in this through procreation and childbearing. It has the main responsibility for bearing, rearing and caring for children.

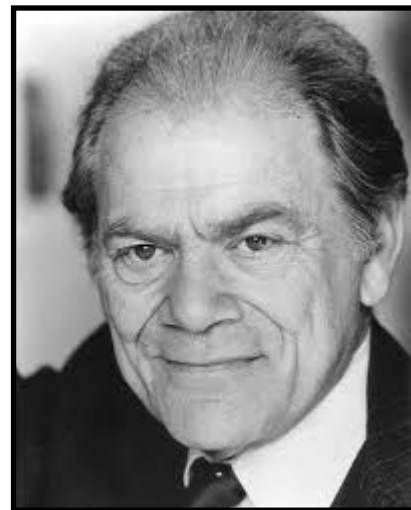
#### 3. The economic function:

Society needs to ensure that there is a way of providing people with economic support e.g. shelter, food and clothes, and the nuclear family fulfils this **economic function** or need. Murdock argues that the nuclear family is based on a **sexual division of labour** between the husband and wife, e.g. the husband can deal with the hard tasks such as house building, while the wife can perform the lighter tasks such as preparing food.

#### 4. The education (socialisation) function:

Society needs to make sure that new members such as children learn its culture. Through the process of **socialisation** within the nuclear family, parents have the main role in teaching and disciplining their children.

Murdock argues that the nuclear family is universal—it exists in every known society. No society has found an alternative structure that could perform these four functions so well. From this, Murdock concludes that the nuclear family is an inevitable part of society—it is bound to occur.



**George Murdock's Universal Residual Functions**

George Murdock (1949) conducted a survey of 250 societies and claimed there are four **universal residual functions** of the family:

- sexual
- economic
- education
- reproductive

(by education he really meant socialisation)

4

#### KEY TERMS

**Economic function:** from a functionalist perspective this is the function the family carries out by providing its members with financial support, food and shelter

**Sexual division of labour (or domestic division of labour):** the division of tasks such as housework, child-care and DIY between men and women in the home

**Socialisation:** the way people learn the culture, norms and values of society

## Functionalist perspective on families—Focus on key thinkers

### Talcott Parsons (1956)

Talcott Parsons was an American sociologist who was one of the key contributors to functionalist views on the family. He examined the family in the USA and argued that the nuclear family has become more **isolated** or separated from the wider world.

Parsons argues that, over time, the family has gradually lost some of its functions as they have transferred from the family to other structures in society. E.g. schools now provide education, workplaces provide jobs and money, and shops provide clothes.

However, the nuclear family is still important. The warm bath analogy shows that the family is a place of refuge—being part of a family is like stepping into a warm bath. The father's role (instrumental) and mother's role (expressive) compliment one another as they provide physical and emotional needs.

To Parsons there are two basic and vital functions that all families perform in all societies:

#### 1. Primary socialisation of children:

The nuclear family functions as an **agency of socialisation**. Through the process of primary socialisation in families, children learn the culture of their society. By absorbing this culture, they become members of society. The family is so important because it socialises children so that they learn and accept society's shared values and roles. This helps maintain the stability of society.

#### 2. Stabilisation of adult personalities:

The nuclear family functions as an agency of personality stabilisation. Everyday life outside the family can be stressful for adults and can put them under pressure. However, the husband and wife support each other emotionally and sexually and this relieves the pressure. In this way, the family plays a role in maintaining the emotional stability of adults. It is a safe haven away from the stresses of daily life.

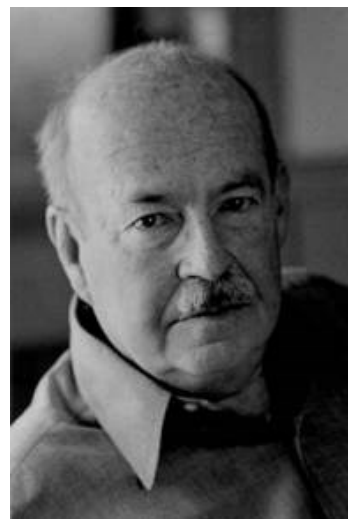
Furthermore, by living with children, parents can express and act out the childish elements of their own personality. This also helps to keep adult personalities stable.

### Criticisms of Parsons

- Parsons' research focusses on middle-class families and ignores social class diversity and **ethnic diversity**.
- Parsons ignores alternatives to the nuclear family such as communes or kibbutzim that could fulfil the two functions quite easily.
- Parsons gives an idealised view of families. His **idealisation** ignores **dysfunctional families** in which, for example, child abuse and domestic violence occur. The picture he paints does not match the reality of family life.

Unlike functionalists, Marxists are critical of the nuclear family and see it as functional for capitalist society. For example, one of its functions is to socialise children into accepting the values of capitalism. In this way, it serves the interests of capitalism.

Many feminists see the family as oppressive. They argue that nuclear families imprison women in their own homes, tied to children and housework.



#### KEY TERMS

**Agency of socialisation:** a social group or institution responsible for carrying out socialisation, e.g. family or education etc

**Dysfunctional families:** a family where functions such as providing emotional support are not being carried out. E.g. domestic violence or child abuse

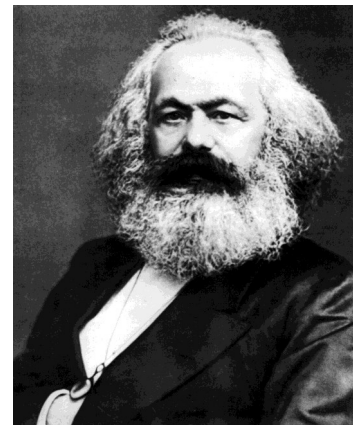
**Isolated (or isolation):** the idea that the nuclear family has become more isolated or separated from the wider family

**Idealisation:** showing the nuclear family as the idea type of family to live in

## Marxist perspective on families

The Marxist perspective is critical of the nuclear family as an institution, it thinks that instead of the family meeting the needs of individuals, as functionalists believe, it actually only helps capitalism continue. For example:

- The bourgeoisie (who own the means of production and the land and factories) are able to pass on their wealth to family members.
- Working class people will learn to accept their lower status in the capitalist society through socialisation.



## Eli Zaretsky (1979) — focus on key thinkers

Before the industrial revolution Eli Zaretsky says that the family all worked together on farms or in the early stages of the textile industry—the family was a ‘unit of production’.

After the rise of capitalism and the industrial revolution led to a split between family life and work. As a result the family and the **economy** are now seen as two **separate spheres** but this is an illusion:

- Family = the private sphere
- Work = the public sphere



Women became responsible for the family and for the emotional well being of the family. Women now had to keep a home going to be a refuge against the harsh conditions of work and society. Zaretsky believes that the family cannot meet all people’s emotional and social needs, all it can do it cushion them from the harsh affects of work.

The family serves the interests of capitalism in several ways:

- Zaretsky says the family has an economic function. Women are housewives and mothers and carry out unpaid labour within the home such as childrearing, cleaning and cooking. For men to keep working they rely on women doing this unpaid work. But it is devalued because it is seen as separate from the public sphere where profit is made.
- Through the family each social class is reproduced; the bourgeois family passes down its private property to the next generation, and the proletarian family reproduces the labour force by having children that will become workers.
- The family helps capitalism continue. Families buy and consume the products they need and want, and by doing this they enable the bourgeoisie to make their profit. The family becomes a ‘unit of consumption’ instead.

Only socialism (a society without social classes) can end the separation of family and public life and fulfil people’s needs.

## Criticisms of the Marxist approach to families

- Many people actually see family life as satisfying and seek to get married and have children.
- Feminists argue that Marxists only see the family as a nuclear family—men go to work, women stay home—but the family is much more diverse nowadays.
- Some feminists believe female oppression is linked to **patriarchy** of male domination and not capitalism and they question whether patriarchy would disappear with socialist economy.

### KEY TERMS

**Economic function:** from a Marxist point of view the family has an economic function because women carry out unpaid domestic labour such as cooking and cleaning

**Economy:** a system based on money that allows goods and services to be produced and consumed. E.g. capitalism or socialism

**Separate spheres:** the split between the private world of home and the public world of work.

## Feminist perspective on families

Like Marxists, feminists are critical of the family as an institution and see it as being negative for women. Feminists think that much of differences between men and women are actually **socially constructed** through primary socialisation.

The term **canalisation** describes the way parents channel boys to wear blue and play with boys toys, and girls to wear pink and play with girl toys. Girls may watch the mother cleaning and ironing and assume these are a woman's role, while boys may help the father with DIY and think this is the man's role. In this way, families are preparing children for their gender roles in a male-dominated society.

## Christine Delphy and Diana Leonard—focus on key thinkers

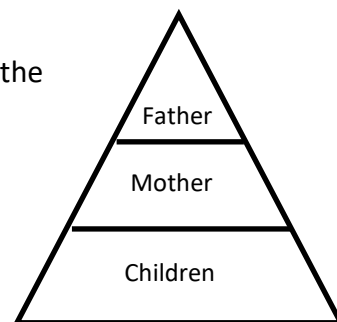
Delphy and Leonard define housework as unpaid work done by women. Housework means the cooking and cleaning but also the other less visible work women do for their husbands and families such as booking holidays, buying Christmas presents etc.

Cleaners in schools and offices, for example, get paid for their work but housework is unpaid because the tasks are done for the husband within a particular relationship.

The family is based on a **hierarchy** (a system that ranks people like a pyramid). The husband is at the top and other family members are lower. The husband provides for his wife and gets to control her labour for his own use. All of a wife's time may be used up by her husband but she still has no money of her own. Even when women have well-paid, fulltime employment, they still do most of the domestic work and childcare.

Family relationships involve economic exploitation—men use and benefit from the unpaid work of women within families. Wives are exploited in terms of:

- The way their labour is used by their husbands
- Their work not being valued
- Their financial dependence on their husbands
- Their subordinate (lower) position within the family



Delphy and Leonard argue that the family is **patriarchal**. Families maintain men's domination over women and children. In this way, patriarchal families keep patriarchy going in society.

### KEY TERMS

**Canalisation:** the way parents channel their children's interests into toys, games and other activities that are seen as appropriate for their gender

**Hierarchy:** a system that ranks people like a pyramid

**Social construct (social construction):** patterns of behaviour based on the norms and values of society e.g. masculinity and femininity are social constructed by people in society

**Patriarchy:** male power, authority and dominance over women

**Patriarchal families:** families in which men hold power and authority



## Conjugal roles and relationships in the past

Conjugal roles means the domestic roles of married or cohabiting partners e.g. who does what in the house. Conjugal relationships are just the relationship between married or cohabiting partners.

Feminist, Elizabeth Bott identifies two different types of conjugal roles:

Segregated conjugal roles and relationships (separate roles)	Integrated conjugal roles and relationships (joint roles)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is clear separation of labour in the household, with tasks divided into male and female tasks</li> <li>• The husband and wife spend little of their leisure time together. They have separate interests and their own friends out side of the home.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The husband and wife do not have a rigid division of household tasks, and share many tasks.</li> <li>• The husband and wife spend much of their leisure time together. They have separate interests.</li> </ul>

## Who would do these jobs?



In the early 20th century conjugal roles were segregated. The married women was expected to take the main responsibility for housework and childcare, the expressive role, while their husband was the main breadwinner, sometimes called the instrumental role.

However women's roles differed according to their social class. In addition to housework and childcare, many working class women also had to go out to work or take on paid work from home, such as taking in laundry in order to survive. Middle class women were not expected to take on paid work, her work was to supervise the household employees such as the maid and the nanny etc. All families were male dominated and men were expected to provide for the family.

**KEY TERMS**

**Conjugal roles:** the domestic roles of married and cohabiting partners

**Conjugal relationships:** the relationship between a married or cohabiting couple

**Expressive role:** the caring and nurturing role in the family. Parsons sees this as women's natural or biological role.

**Instrumental role:** the breadwinner role in the family. Parsons sees this as a male's role

**Integrated conjugal roles:** roles that are shared equally between married and cohabiting partners

**Joint conjugal roles:** domestic roles that are divided or shared in an equal way between married or cohabiting partners

**Segregated conjugal roles:** domestic roles of married or cohabiting partners which are separated out of divided in an unequal way



## Symmetrical family

### Young and Willmott (1973)— focus on key thinkers

Young and Willmott are influenced by the functionalist perspective. They published research findings that suggest the 'symmetrical family' had become the typical family form in Britain.



In a symmetrical family:

- The roles of the husband and wife were less segregated (less separate) than in the past and there was more equality between the partners. In a symmetrical family the women still carries out the housework and childcare, but men spent an equal amount of time on home related tasks such as DIY and were more likely to help with housework and childcare. They each made a similar contribution to the home.
- The couple and their children were more home-centred than in the past. They spent much of their leisure time together and, with developments in technology, more of their entertainment was home-based. Also, relationships between partners were warmer and more caring.
- The extended family counted for less and the nuclear family for more. The nuclear family became more separated from the extended family.
- The husband and wife had more of a financial partnership. Decision-making, including decisions on how money was spent, was more shared.

## The principle of stratified diffusion

Young and Willmott examined changes in family life since the second half of the 19th century. They developed the principle of stratified diffusion as a general guide to these changes. According to this principle, many social changes (for example, in values and attitudes) start at the top of the social class system and work downwards. Changes in family life, for instance roles becoming more symmetrical, filter down from the middle class to working class families. Or another example is physical forms of punishment—middle classes stopped smacking first, and this has filtered down to working class families.

## Explaining the move to symmetry

Some sociologists have tried to explain the move towards symmetry:

- The rise of feminism since the 1960's has had an impact on gender roles. Feminism has influenced women's attitudes towards education and work and has led them to reject the traditional housewife role.
- More effective forms of contraception mean that women can decide whether to have children, when and how many. Women can combine motherhood with paid employment and a career.
- As a result of their increased participation in paid employments many women are financially independent and now have more freedom, equality and status, both inside and outside the home.
- People's interest in home life has increased, for example in DIY and home improvements. Technological developments have created opportunities for home-based leisure pursuits e.g. computer games, DVDs and satellite television. Consequently, men are now more likely to spend time at home and become more involved with their family.

### KEY TERMS

**Principle of stratified diffusion:** the idea that social changes such as values and attitudes start at the top of the social class system and work downwards

**Symmetrical family:** a family form in which partners carry out different tasks but each makes a similar contribution within the home

## Symmetrical family

Feminists such as Ann Oakley (1974) reject the idea of the symmetrical family. Oakley is not convinced by the quality of Young and Willmott's evidence. For example, they regard a husband who washes up at least once a week as 'helpful in the home'. In Oakley's own research, she found little evidence of symmetry and even women in paid employment still had the major responsibility for the housework.

Scott and Clery (2013) argue that although people's attitudes may have changed, in most cases women usually still do the laundry and men do the DIY.

Scott and Clery also show that over the last 30 years there has been a big increase in women working in the labour market (jobs outside of the home). Nowadays there are far more **dual-earner households** in Britain than male-breadwinner households. Many women now work a **double shift** by doing a paid job as well as most of the housework and caring for the family.

Scott and Clery argue that gender inequalities in the home make it difficult to achieve equality in the workplace. Women's responsibilities for the family e.g. looking after children when they're ill or not being able to work late, mean that they cannot compete on equal terms with men in paid employment.

## The changing role of fathers in families

Caroline Gatrell studied heterosexual couples in full-time employment and found that fathers were doing a lot more than their own fathers ever did. However, she said this sometimes caused tensions as the mother didn't want to give up her maternal role. Other women said that even when the fathers did more they tended to avoid the 'boring jobs' like ironing. Women said that if men wanted to divide 'parenting time' more equally, they should also divide housework equally.

## Power and decision making in families

One way of studying power in relationships is to look at who makes the decisions. Young and Willmott (1973) found that decision making, including decisions on how money was spent, was becoming more of a shared activity. However, feminists such as Delphy and Leonard (1992) argue that the family is hierarchical and patriarchal, it is always based on male dominance over women.

Jan Pahl (1989) interviewed 102 married couples in Kent and found that men still were more likely to be dominant in decision-making. Couples were more likely than 30 years ago to share decisions on how the household income is spent, but she found still many marriages where the wife had little access to money.

## Power and domestic violence within families

Domestic violence can be seen as another form of power and control in a relationship. There is some disagreement about the extent of domestic violence. Victim surveys such as the Crime Survey for England and Wales indicate that domestic violence is often not reported to the police. Male victims are often reluctant to report female partners being violent. Some don't report it because they think the police can't do anything.

However, the statistics have increased over the years but this may be due to increased reporting rather than an actual increase.

Feminists argue that this highlights why functionalists are wrong about the family being a positive, safe haven for its members. Feminists argue that family life does not always function in ways that contribute to members' well being.



### KEY TERMS

**Double shift:** many women work two shifts by doing a paid job and also most of the housework and caring for the family

**Dual earner household:** a household where two adults work in paid employment

## Conventional families

### Ann Oakley (1982)—focus of key thinkers

Oakley studies families from a feminist approach. She points out that the conventional family (nuclear family) is no longer the norm, according to the statistics. However, despite this the conventional family is still a powerful idea in society. Central ideas include:

- Family members have different roles based on their age, occupation and gender.
- Women are expected to work inside the home without pay, while men are expected to work for pay outside the home.

Oakley identifies social class differences in people's views on gender roles. Working class couples are more likely to hold a traditional view of gender roles than middle-class couples.

#### The strains of conventional family life

In Oakley's view, people expect conventional family life to bring them happiness. However, beneath the surface, there are strains. For example, mothers based in the home may experience depression, or dissatisfaction with housework. Men may experience health problems linked to the stress of being the family breadwinner.

#### Financial inequality in conventional families

Oakley argues that, in a conventional family, one aspect of inequality is the woman's dependence on the man's wages. The man's economic power is linked to his income from paid work. This power increases when children are young and mothers care for them full time. During this period, women lack income and they become dependent on men's economic power.

When married women work outside the home, they tend to be concentrated in low-paid, part-time jobs. Their wages may be spent on household bills, while men keep a greater proportion of their wages for themselves.

#### Signs of change?

According to Oakley, some groups, particularly among educated middle classes, are exploring other ways of living. There is an increase in dual-worker families and lone-parent families. However, norms are not changing across all social groups. One reason is that conventional families teach their children the same patterns.



#### KEY TERMS

**Conventional family:** a nuclear family—married couple with one or a small amount of children, living together

**Gender roles:** the behaviour expected of people based on their gender, linked to masculinity and femininity.



## Parent-child relationships in the past

During the 19th century middle class children were often looked after by a nanny, whereas working class children, especially boys, were expected to work in paid employment from an early age.

The 1841 census show that more boys than girls worked around Lancashire, particular in the textile industry, where many were employed as cotton mill workers. From the 1851 census 37% of boys and 20% of girls aged 10-14 worked. Many girls worked unpaid at home, for example housework and childminding, but this was not officially recorded.

Poverty may have prevented many parents from sending their children to school, well into the 20th century many working class parents saw education as a barrier to them working. They sent their children out to work as soon as they could and relied on their income. However, following the Education Act of 1918, all children had to attend school until the age of 14 years.

Young and Willmott argue that only then did 'childhood' come to be officially recognised as a separate stage in human life.



## Parent-child relationship's today

Some sociologists argue that parents are becoming less authoritarian (less strict). There is less emphasis on discipline and obedience and more emphasis on individual freedom. Children are now listened to and taken seriously. They have rights and can make decisions about parents' separation and divorce.

Prior and Trinder (2004) say middle class families are more likely to have relationships where parents involve the children in decision-making.

Today relationships are more 'child-centred' and focus on the needs of the child. The relationships are emotionally closer and warmer. The average family size has decreased so children get more attention from their parents. At the same time both parents often now work and leave children at nurseries for sometimes most of the working week.

Young people are now much more dependent on their parents financially for longer as the school-leaving age has increased to 18 and their working hours are restricted by law. Youth unemployment also makes it difficult for young people to achieve independence, this can cause conflict and stress within families.

However, sociologists such as Scott (2004) question this view as children as dependent. For example, many children still help out with housework or in the family business, and children of immigrant parents may have to translate for their parents.

## Relationships with the wider family

Young and Willmott (1957) studied family life in Bethnal Green in East London during the mid 1950's. They found that many young couples lived with one set of parents and so there were many extended families. Family ties were strong and 43% of daughters said they'd seen their mother within the last 24 hours.

However, in later research (1973) they found this had changed and the nuclear family had become separated from the extended family. This could be to do with **geographical mobility** (moving to another area) or women being in more full-time work so they see less of each other. As a result the wider family is becoming less important in people's lives.

On the other hand Charles et al. (2008) found that in Swansea mothers and daughters were still central to **kinship relationships** (family ties). E.g.

- Grandparents were regularly involved in caring for their grandchildren, which enabled younger women to return to work after maternity.
- Fathers often helped their adult children with home improvements
- Adult children (particularly women) were involved in caring for their parents

In 2002 over two-thirds of married children lived close enough to see their parents at least once a week, although this wasn't the same for brothers and sisters. Charles et al found that geographical distance affected the type of support they could give but didn't eliminate it. Middle-aged parents and grandparents also helped with financial support to, for example in loans to buy houses.

## Life expectancy, beanpole families and the sandwich generation

Life expectancy at birth (the average number of years a newborn baby may be expected to live) has increased.

Denscombe (1997) shows that life expectancy in the fifth century was around 33 for men and 27 for women.

Data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) shows that life expectancy in the UK in 2014 was 79 for men and 83 for women. This has been because of the NHS, developments in medicine and nutrition.

The UK has an ageing population, there is now a smaller proportion of children and an increasing proportion of older people.

In beanpole families there will be more pressure on women to look after the older and younger generations. These women are part of what has been described as the 'sandwich generation', because they are sandwiched in-between the younger and older generations. Some grandmothers may provide childcare for their grandchildren and also look after their frail elderly parents.

## Boomerang children

Boomerang children are young people who leave home, for example to go to university, and return to live with parents later. Young adults may be more likely to leave home and return during a global financial crisis or because of affordable housing is not available.

### **KEY TERMS**

**Geographical mobility:** moving house from one area to another

**Kinship relationships:** relationships between people based on blood, marriage or adoption

**Life expectancy at birth:** the average number of years a newborn baby may be expected to live

## Changes in the family structure

### Reconstituted family changes

When parents separate, children often stay with their mother and so the majority of step-parents are a biological mother and a step-father. According to data from the census, the number of reconstituted families fell from 631,000 to 544,000 between 2001 and 2011. Possible reasons are:

- The average age at which women have their first baby is increasing. Children are now more likely to be born to older couples, who are less likely to split up.
- Some lone parents may live alone but be part of a couple where the partner is a step-parent to their children. They are 'living apart together'. This example is a reconstituted couple but would not be counted as such in the census data.

### Dual worker families

In 2013, 72% of married or cohabiting mothers with dependent children in the UK were in paid employments. As a result there has been an increase in dual-worker and **dual-career families**.

### Lone parent families

Lone parent families have risen remarkably since the 1970's but recently it's stopped around the 23% mark. Some lone parent families come about because of separation and divorce, but others are when a single woman has a baby by herself. Around 90% of children live with mothers, rather than fathers.

Although nearly a third of white British children tend to live in a lone-parent family, Afro-Caribbean's have a higher average of around 50%. Asian communities are lower than both of these groups.

However, Qureshi et al (2015) points out that lone-parent families among British Asians is now rising, by 2011, these figures were 11% for British Indian families, 17% for British Pakistani families and 16% for British Bangladeshi families.

### Explanations for the increase in lone-parent families

- The increase in divorce: many lone parent families are headed by divorced women. However, if they then form new partnerships, with their children, they become part of blended families
- Changing attitudes: it is now more socially acceptable for single women to have children without a partner. They can use new technologies to become single mothers by choice.
- New Right see the increase as part of the decline in moral standards in society. They see single-parent families as part of an **underclass**—a group in society who depend on welfare benefits.



#### KEY TERMS

**Dual-career families:** a family in which two adults have careers

**Underclass:** a group whose norms and values are different from the rest of society. Can mean someone who is in poverty and on benefits.

## Marriages around the world

**Monogamy:** In the UK marriage is based on monogamy—being married to just one person at a time. It is backed by law and the Christian religion so people have to divorce before they can marry someone else. **Bigamy**—marrying when already married to another person is a criminal offence.

**Serial monogamy** occurs when a divorced person enters into a second marriage, then divorces, then marries, then divorces and so on. Marriage isn't necessarily considered to be a lifelong commitment.

**Polygamy:** Polygamy occurs when a person has more than one husband or wife at the same time. Although it is illegal in Britain, it is accepted elsewhere. There are two forms:

**Polygyny:** occurs when a man have two or more wives. In some Mormon traditions in the 19th century in the USA they thought it was ordained by God. A minority of Muslim men are allowed up to four wives, but only if the first wife approves and has it written into her marriage contract.

**Polyandry:** occurs when a woman has more than one husband, this is less common but has been known to happen in Tibet and some brothers have married the same wife in China.

**Arranged marriage:** This is not the same as forced marriage, parents find partners they consider to be suitable but it is ultimately the young person's decision to consent. Garrod (2005) notes that arranged marriages are traditional in many communities such as India, Pakistan and Bangladesh



## Changing patterns of marriage

**The decline in the number of marriages:** the number of marriages in the UK peaked in 1972 at 480,000. Since then, the overall number of marriages has fallen, and in 2011 there were just 286,000

**People are getting married later:** compared with the 1970's, people are now putting off marriage until they are older. This is linked to increased education and employment opportunities and a changing attitude towards premarital sex.

**Civil partnerships and same-sex marriages:** since the Civil Partnership Act 2004 came into effect same sex couples could have their relationships legally recognised and have the same benefits of married people. The same-sex Marriage Act was introduced in 2014, which has made the number of civil partnerships drop from 6,276 to 1,683.

**Increase in cohabitation:** the proportion of cohabiting couples has doubled over the last 20 years, with cohabiting couples with children attending to be much younger than married couples with children. Cohabiting couples tend to be from a white British background. For some cohabiting isn't expected to develop into a long-term relationship, for others it's an alternative to marriage or to save up for marriage. The high cost of weddings may come second to a couple saving up for a mortgage.

**Increase in births outside of marriage:** during the 1970's births outside of marriage became commonplace, rising to 44% of all births in 2006. This has changed a lot since the stigmatisation and disapproval of 'illegitimate babies' of the 1950's. Much of the increase is the result of cohabiting partners, for example in 1986, around 1/10 babies were born to unmarried parents who lived together. By 2014, this proportion had increased to 1/3 babies.

### KEY TERMS

**Monogamy:** being married to just one person at a time

**Serial monogamy:** when a divorced person enters into a second marriage, then divorces, then marries, then divorces and so on.

**Polygamy:** when a person has more than one husband or wife at the same time

**Polygyny:** when a man have two or more wives at the same time

**Polyandry:** when a woman has more than one husband at the same time

**Arranged marriage:** parents find partners they consider to be suitable but it is ultimately the young person's decision to consent

## Changing patterns of divorce

A divorce is the legal ending of a marriage. In general the number of divorces per year has risen since 1945, although there have also been decreases.

### Explaining the increase in the divorce rates:

**Changes in the law:** have made divorce easier, quicker and cheaper to obtain. The Divorce Reform Act 1969 allowed divorce on the grounds of 'irretrievable breakdown of marriage' as a result of separation, desertion, adultery or unreasonable behaviour. This made it easier for people to get divorced.

1984 allowed couples to request divorce after just a year, rather than wait three years previously. And legal aid became available, meaning people who couldn't afford lawyers could still get representation paid for by the state. However, this availability became limited in 2013.

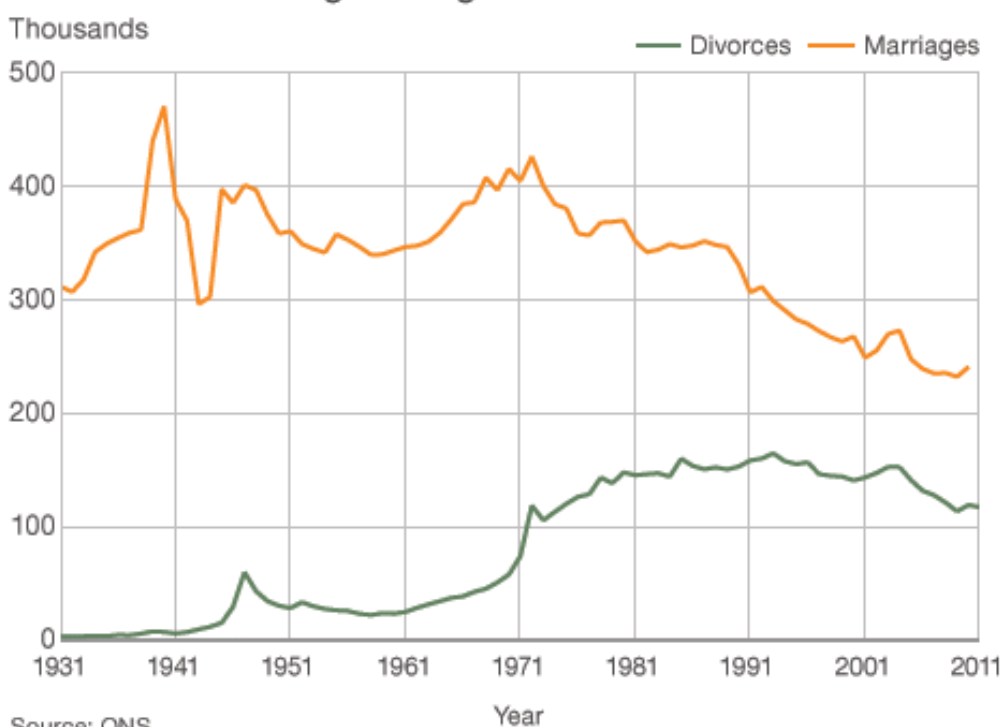
**Changing social attitudes:** since the 1960's liberal attitudes about divorce have changed public opinion so it is no longer stigmatised and is now socially acceptable.

**The impact of the secularisation process:** secularisation means the idea that religion is losing its influence in society. Not as many people now go to church on a Sunday and rather than a church wedding many people prefer to have a civil ceremony in a registry office. There is therefore less of a religious barrier to getting divorced.

**Changes in the status of women in society:** In the 1950's, many women in **empty shell marriages** were tied to their husband through economic dependence because they were at home looking after children and not working. Nowadays women tend to work and so they have their own economic independence and financial security so they feel they can leave their husband if they wish. Also, with the availability of welfare benefits, mothers with young children will be looked after. However, women with young children can still experience financial hardships after divorce, it is still often easier for the male to walk away from a marriage than a woman.

**Influence of the media:** the popular media, (such as pop music, magazines and soap operas) tend to emphasise the importance of 'romantic love' in relationships. As a result individuals have high expectations of marriage. These **expectations** may not match the daily realities of married life and this may lead to more people getting divorced.

## Divorce and marriage in England and Wales



### KEY TERMS

**Empty shell marriage:** when a couple continue to live together even though the marriage has broken down (sometimes this is for the sake of the children)

**Expectations:** hopes and beliefs about what married life should be like

**Secularisation:** in the influence of religion in society decreases

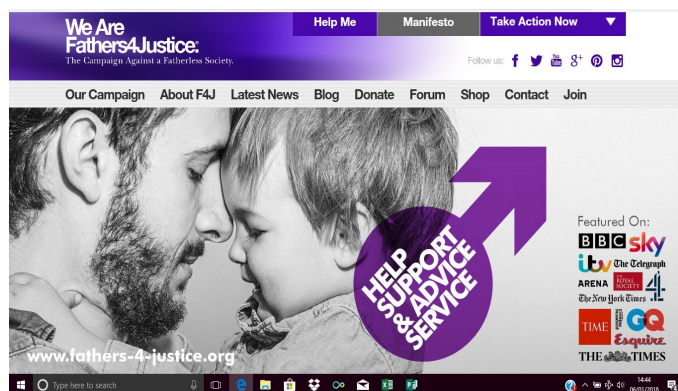


## Consequences of divorced

**Changes to family structure:** more divorces creates more reconstituted families, and this can be a strain on family members, for example children have to adapt to a step-father or children that have step-siblings or half-siblings. However, there may be more people around to give more support and love. Because around 90% of children live with their mother estimates suggest that between 1/3 and 1/2 of fathers lose all contact with their children over time.

**Relationship breakdown and emotional distress:** conflict doesn't finish with divorce as there may be disputes around parenting and property such as money, houses etc. This may mean the relationship with the father suffers.

Pressure groups such as Fathers4Justice (F4J) aim to draw attention to the cause of fathers and their treatment following separation and divorce. For example F4J point out that fathers do not have a legal right to contact with their children, in fact they argue there are more laws to protect animals than there is to protect fathers. This also means that the father's parents often suffer not seeing the children also.



Pryor and Trinder note that emotional support can be lost for men if friends and family situations change, although mothers do tend to keep their own support networks.

**Financial hardship:** after assets such as property and money are divided up, people's financial circumstances often change and lone-parent families with dependent children can be at risk of poverty. They can also face the difficulty of juggling the demand of a job and home life.

**Remarriage:** this seems to be declining, for example, between 1995 and 2000, 19% of all marriages were all remarriages. However, in 2013, this figure was 15%. Divorced people remarry because:

- Just because people are rejecting their spouse doesn't mean they're rejecting the institution of marriage, people still hope to succeed in a marriage.
- Divorcees with young children may want a partner to help them raise their children.
- People may remarry for companionship and love.
- In the past, marriage was a source of status, particularly for women. While this is not true today, in many ways marriage remains the norm.

**Functionalist views on divorce:** how is divorce functional for society? Parson's shows that divorce can contribute to the stability of society, the increase is not necessarily a threat to marriage as an institution, but is a reflection on the higher values people now put on marriage. Many people remarry suggesting that marriage is still important and necessary to maintain a stable society.

**Marxists views on divorce:** divorce is the inevitable conclusion when partners have to compete for resources and power within a marriage, the stress that results could explain why the divorce rate among the working class is higher. Hart argues that divorce rates have been brought about by the changes to the economy (1976), the economy has demanded a need for women to work as well as do household duties, causing a double shift for women. Women then become more financially independent as they earn their own money.

**Feminist view of divorce:** divorce is the result of men not wanting to relinquish power and resources to the woman. They are not necessarily against marriage but they generally see it as favouring men, new divorce laws now allow women to leave violent or empty shell marriages. Most divorces are initiated by women, showing that women are no longer prepared to put up with this, and some say it proves marriages are patriarchal.

## Summary of Families unit

Page	Content
6	<p><b>What is a family:</b> Family is now diverse so a definition could be: <i>Two or more people linked by birth, marriage, civil partnership, adoption or cohabitation based on long-term relationships</i></p> <p><b>Types of family:</b> Same sex: 2004 Civil Partnership &amp; 2014 Gay Marriage Act, secularisation &amp; less social stigma Extended: horizontal (aunts/uncles) or vertical (grandparents) living together under one roof Beanpole: long &amp; thin – many generations but only having few children. Mostly just m.class Lone parent: 90% headed by women who may be single, divorced, separated or widowed Reconstituted: blended families/step-families–partners have children from previous marriage</p>
7	<p><b>Alternatives to the family:</b> Household is defined as: <i>one person who lives alone or a group of people who live at the same address who share at least one meal a day or facilities such as a living room.</i> One-person households: increased from 6.6m to 7.7 in 20 years, now 29% of households, due to older women after partner dies, but also single or divorced people &amp; international student Friends: Roseneil &amp; Budgoun found for those that don't live with partners, friends, rather than biological kin, offered more support to those suffering emotional or mental health problems Looked-after children: local authorities look after 70,000 children; 75% are placed with foster carers, others in children's homes. Secure units are for those who have committed an offence Residential care: in 2011 3.2% of over 65's live in residential care homes or nursing homes.</p>
	<p><b>Life course diversity – family &amp; household change over a lifetime:</b> E.g. start in a nuclear when young, parents' divorce so reconstituted, shared household at uni, cohabitation with boyfriend later, then they marry, but empty nest as kids leave etc.</p>
9	<p><b>Family diversity:</b> Cultural diversity: lots of families with different cultures living together in the UK Migration: people came to UK from former colonies: India &amp; Pakistan, &amp; Caribbean Working mothers: Afro-Caribbean mothers still work after kids, but Asian mothers don't work Multi-generational extended family: 10% of Asian families live with grandparents, 2% of white Traditional Asian family: Asian families are thought to be traditionally male dominating &amp; not divorce but Qureshi said this is based on prejudice; there are many differences between them Social class: it is thought that w.class families are more male-dominating &amp; m.class are more egalitarian (equal) but other evidence suggests w.class fathers are more involved with kids</p>
10	<p><b>Family diversity: Rapoport &amp; Rapoport</b> Pioneers in family research, used secondary research. People can choose their family type Organisational diversity: differences in the structure e.g. how domestic tasks are performed Cultural diversity: differences in values &amp; beliefs affect lifestyles, gender roles &amp; childrearing Social class diversity: w.class favour traditional roles &amp; physical discipline, m.class equal roles Life-course diversity: people live in different family types at different stages in the life-cycle Cohort diversity (life cycle diversity): families from different historical periods think differently</p>
11	<p><b>Families across the world:</b> Communes: group of people share living accommodation but also possessions and wealth too Kibbutzim: a commune in Israel where Jews work together on the land to produce food One-child policy in China: law from 1979-2006, this led to families aborting &amp; killing baby girls</p>
12	<p><b>Functionalist perspective on families: George Murdock</b> The nuclear family meets the needs of individuals and performs essential functions that keep society functioning like a well-oiled machine (or like Durkheim's organic analogy)</p> <p><b>Four functions of the family:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sexual function: husband and wife have an approved sexual relationship which binds them</li> <li>2. Reproductive function: the nuclear allows for bearing, rearing &amp; caring for each generation</li> <li>3. Economic function: nuclear is based on a sexual division of labour; breadwinner &amp; mother</li> <li>4. Education (socialisation) function: parents teach socialisation to children</li> </ol> <p>Murdock argues the nuclear family is universal &amp; inevitable – it exists in every known society</p>
13	<p><b>Functionalist perspective on families: Talcott Parsons</b> American sociologist. Nuclear family is a refuge – it's like stepping into a warm bath. The family has become separated &amp; it's lost some of its functions to other structures e.g. schools now provide education. But it is still important as it provides two main functions:</p> <p><b>Two functions of the family:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Primary socialisation of children: they learn the culture of their society &amp; learn to accept society's shared values and roles. This helps maintain the stability of society</li> <li>2. stabilisation of adult personalities: life can be stressful for adults, but the husband &amp; wife support each other emotionally &amp; sexually, which relieves the pressure. It is a safe haven</li> </ol>

14	<p><b>Marxist perspective on family: Eli Zaretsky</b>  Family used to work on together on farms in rural times so was a 'unit of consumption'  But capitalism created a split between 'family = private sphere' and 'work = public sphere'  Family has an economic function – women carry out unpaid labour of housework  The bourgeoisie can pass down money to next generation through the family  Family helps capitalism continue – they consume products that make bourgeoisie profit</p>
15	<p><b>Feminist perspective on family: Delphy and Leonard</b>  Differences between men and women are socially constructed through canalisation  Family is based on a hierarchy and women are financially dependent on men  Family involves economic exploitation of women as unpaid labour such as housework  Family is patriarchal</p>
16	<p><b>Conjugal roles: Feminist Elizabeth Bott</b>  Segregated conjugal roles (separate): separate household tasks &amp; separate friends &amp; interests  Integrated roles (joint): no division of task, they spend much of their leisure time together  In early 20<sup>th</sup> c women's social class determined their roles: w.class also had to do paid work, while m.class tended to have nannies. However, all families were male dominated.</p>
17	<p><b>Symmetrical family: Young and Willmott (influenced by functionalism)</b>  Research showed a move towards symmetrical families being norm, away from extended  Equal amount of time on home tasks, leisure time together, relationships were warmer  Decision making and money were being shared  Reasons: feminism, contraception, women's financial independence, changes in technology  Principle of stratified diffusion e.g. symmetrical roles filtered down from m.class to w.class</p>
18	<p><b>Other feminist ideas of the family</b>  <b>No symmetry: Feminist Ann Oakley</b>  Rejects the idea of symmetrical families: their evidence regards husbands who wash up at least once a month as being 'helpful in the home'.  <b>No symmetry: Scott &amp; Clery</b>  Women now take on a 'double-shift' by doing a paid job &amp; housework  Women's responsibilities at home e.g. if child sick, creates inequalities at work  <b>Changing role of fathers: Caroline Catrell:</b>  Men do more than their fathers but mothers sometimes don't want to give up maternal role  fathers avoid boring jobs like ironing, dividing parenting time meant also dividing housework  <b>Decision making: Jan Pahl</b>  Young and Willmott were right that some couples are more likely than 30 years ago to share decisions, but Pahl's research found in many marriages the wife had little access to money  <b>Power and domestic violence:</b>  Victim surveys show that domestic violence is not normally reported to the police  Male victims don't expect the police to do anything  Statistics have increased over years but this due to more reporting rather than actual increase  Feminists say this is why functionalists are wrong about family being positive and safe</p>
19	<p><b>Conventional families: Feminist Ann Oakley</b>  Conventional, nuclear family is no longer the norm, although it is still a powerful idea  Working class are more likely to hold traditional view of gender roles than middle class  People expect conventional family to bring them happiness but it actually brings strains  In conventional families women are dependent on men's wages when looking after children  There are increases of dual worker families in middle classes but this is not happening in all classes as conventional families tend to teach their children the same patterns</p>
20	<p><b>Parent-child relationships in the past:</b>  Whereas middle class children were looked after by a nanny, working class worked in factories. They couldn't go to school as they brought money into the family  1918 Education Act said all children had to attend school until age of 14  <b>Young &amp; Willmott:</b> 'childhood' then became officially recognised as a separate stage in life  <b>Parent-child relationships today:</b>  Some argue parents are becoming less authoritarian (less strict) &amp; they have far more rights  <b>Prior and Trinder:</b> middle class parents are more likely to involve children in decision-making  Today families are smaller sized and are more 'child-centred' and warmer  Younger people are more dependent on their parents financially as staying in school until 18  <b>Scott</b> disagrees: they are dependent; doing housework or translating for immigrant parents</p>
21	<p>Relationships between wider family:  <b>Young and Willmott:</b>  Bethnal Green study in London in 50's – extended families strong, couples living with parents  By 70's nuclear separated from extended due to geographical mobility &amp; women working  Charles et al:  Disagrees: Swansea study show mothers &amp; daughters had strong kinship (family) ties</p>

21	<p>Grandparents looked after children to let mothers go back to work, fathers helped adult children with home improvements, and adult children looked after elderly parents</p> <p>Geographical distance affected type of support they gave but didn't eliminate it e.g. loans</p> <p>Life expectancy, beanpole families and sandwich generation:</p> <p>Life expectancy has increased – in the 5th century it was around 27 years for women</p> <p>In 2014 it was 83 years for women</p> <p>UK has an ageing population – there's now a smaller proportion of children &amp; more elderly</p> <p>Beanpole families – more pressure on women to look after younger &amp; older generations</p> <p>Sandwich generation – grandmothers look after grandchildren &amp; their elderly parents</p> <p>Boomerang children</p> <p>Children leave home for uni, but move back in with parents after as no affordable housing</p>
22	<p><b>Reconstituted family changes</b></p> <p>Census: reconstituted families fell from 631,000 to 544,000 in 10 years because women are having babies later so less likely to split up, and some partners 'live apart together' (so these wouldn't be counted in census)</p> <p><b>Dual worker</b></p> <p>In 2013, 72% of married/cohabiting mothers with dependent children in UK were in working</p> <p><b>Lone parent:</b></p> <p>Lone parent families rose a lot from 70's but now stopped around 23%. 90% are women.</p> <p>A third of white children, half of Afro-Caribbean, &amp; Asian is rising &amp; is now a fifth</p> <p>Reasons for increase: divorce, it's more sociably acceptable, &amp; New Right ideas of underclass</p>
23	<p><b>Marriages around the world:</b></p> <p>Monogamy: in the UK being married to just one person at a time. It is backed by law</p> <p>Bigamy: marrying when already married to another person. It is a criminal offence in the UK</p> <p>Serial monogamy: married person divorces &amp; marries again, then divorces &amp; marries again etc</p> <p>Polygamy: when someone has more than one wife or husband at a time. Illegal in UK.</p> <p>Two types of Polygamy:</p> <p>Polygyny: when someone has more than one husband e.g. Mormons or Muslims</p> <p>Polyandry: when someone has more than one wife e.g. China with one child policy</p> <p>Arranged marriage: not forced marriage – parents pick partners but it's still child's decision</p> <p><b>Changing patterns of marriage:</b></p> <p>The decline in the number of marriages: number of marriages in UK have fallen since 1970's</p> <p>People are getting married later: changing attitudes to premarital sex &amp; job opportunities</p> <p>Civil partnerships gave same rights as marriage, but have fallen since same-sex marriage 2014</p> <p>Increase in cohabitation: either trial marriage or alternative. No's have doubled in 20 years.</p> <p>Increase in births outside of marriage: stigma of 'illegitimate babies' gone. 44% of all births</p>
24	<p><b>Changing patterns of divorce</b></p> <p>Divorce means: <i>a legal ending of a marriage.</i></p> <p>Changes in the law: 1969 Divorce Reform Act; 'irretrievable breakdown of marriage' so easier</p> <p>Changing social attitudes: liberal attitudes have made it sociably acceptable &amp; stigma has gone</p> <p>The impact of the secularisation process: interest in religion has gone so no religious barrier</p> <p>Changes in the status of women: women are now economically independent as they work</p> <p>Influence of the media: idea of 'romantic love' gives people expectations that aren't realistic</p>
25	<p><b>Consequences of divorce</b></p> <p>Changes to the family structure: reconstituted families put strain on children having to adapt, estimates suggest between 1/3 and 1/2 of all fathers lose contact with children over time</p> <p>Relationship breakdown &amp; emotional distress: Fathers4Justice argue there are no rights for men after divorce, Prior &amp; Trinder not men often lose friends and support networks</p> <p>Financial hardship: after property &amp; money are divided up there is risk of poverty, especially for single-parent families with dependent children, juggling demands of a job and home life.</p> <p>Remarriages: Remarriages seem to be falling, from 19% in 2000 to 15% in 2013. Divorced people remarry because: they still believe in marriage, to help raise children, companionship</p> <p>Functionalist views on divorce: Parsons says remarriages show that people still value the importance of marriage, and it can be important in maintaining a stable society.</p> <p>Marxist views on divorce: divorce is the inevitable when both partners have to compete for resources &amp; power within a marriage, marriage is created by the bourgeoisie &amp; so it is based on inequality between the two partners. This explains the higher divorce rate of the w.class</p> <p>Feminist views of divorce: divorce is the result of men not wanting to give up their power and resources to the woman. Marriage is patriarchal but 1967 Divorce Act allowed women to leave violent or empty shell marriages. This shows why most divorces are initiated by women</p>

## Summary of key thinkers for families unit

	Perspective	Research method	Key ideas	Connects with
<b>Parsons</b>	Functionalist	Work of other sociologists	Two key functions of the family: Primary socialisation – children are taught the shared norms and values of society Stabilisation of adult personality – family relieves stress of life, like a ‘warm bath’	Functions of families; functionalist perspective
<b>Zaretsky</b>	Marxist	Work of other sociologists	The family serves capitalism through: Women’s unpaid labour Passing on of advantage in families e.g. inheritance Unit of consumption	Functions of families; Marxist perspective; economic function of families
<b>Delphy and Leonard</b>	Radical feminist	Work of other sociologists	Family is patriarchal because: Women are exploited economically – labour is used by their husbands 2. Family is hierarchical – men are at the top Patriarchal family reflects patriarchal society	Functions of families; feminist perspective
<b>Oakley</b>	Feminist	Work of other sociologists	Analyses the ‘conventional family’ finding: Women are expected to do unpaid work IDEA of the conventional family is powerful People expect happiness, by nuclear family can be stressful 4. Middle class – more family diversity	Nuclear families; conjugal roles; family diversity; feminist perspective on families
<b>Rapoport and Rapoport</b>	NA	Work of other sociologists	Pioneers in researching family diversity. 5 types: Organisational – structure of families Cultural – cultural/religious differences Social class – class differences Cohort – historical differences Life course – differences in life cycle of the family	Family diversity; changes in family structures
<b>Young and Willmott</b>	Functionalist	Survey; face-to-face structured interviews	Found the family was becoming more symmetrical – similar but not identical roles, equal contribution to household work, and shared decision making and friends. Home-centred. Principle of stratified diffusion: changes in family life start with higher social classes and trickle down	Changes in family structures; conjugal roles

## Basic texts for family unit—from specification:

### Families Delphy C and Leonard D, *Familiar Exploitation*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1992

Writing from a feminist perspective Delphy and Leonard emphasise the importance of work. In their view it is men, rather than capitalists as such, who are the prime beneficiaries of the exploitation of women's labour. They believe that the family has a central role in maintaining patriarchy; the family is an economic system involving a particular set of labour relations in which men benefit from and exploit the work of women. Women are oppressed because their work is appropriated within the family eg when wives have paid employment outside the home they still have to carry out household tasks which are not equally shared with their male partners.

### Oakley A, 'Conventional families' in Rapoport et al. (eds), *Families in Britain*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982

Writing from a feminist perspective, Oakley addresses the idea of the conventional family which she defines as 'nuclear families composed of legally married couples, voluntarily choosing the parenthood of one or more children'. She explores the power of this idea, including its origins and explanations; reviews contemporary research; examines the 'strains' of being conventional and social control. Her paper predates civil partnerships and same sex marriages; however, she concludes that 'there are signs that official stereotypes are being felt to be increasingly archaic and that ... certain groups in the community may be moving towards a more open appraisal of other ways of living – both in and without families'.

### Parsons T, 'The social structure of the family' in Anshen R N (ed.), *The Family: its Functions and Destiny*, New York, Harper and Row, 1959

Writing from a functionalist perspective Parsons held the view that the American family retained two basic and irreducible functions which are common to all families in all societies, these are the primary socialisation of children and the stabilisation of adult personalities eg to give and receive emotional support. Later authors have criticised his work as presenting an idealised picture of family life centred on the middle-class experience.

Texts continued...

Rapoport R and Rapoport R N, 'British families in transition' in Rapoport et al. (eds), *Families in Britain*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982

Pioneering family researchers working in both Britain and America, they described five different aspects of family diversity: organisational (eg internal divisions of domestic labour), cultural (beliefs and values), class (eg how the family's position in the social class system affects the availability of resources), life course (stage in the family life cycle) and cohort (historical period). Their work predates the emergence of gay and lesbian households as a more open and accepted feature of society.

Willmott P and Young M, *The Symmetrical Family*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1973

Writing from a functionalist perspective and based on a large scale social survey (nearly 2,000 people were interviewed in Greater London and surrounding areas) Young and Willmott used the term symmetrical family to describe the Stage 3 (home centred) nuclear family. In such families 'symmetry' refers to the similar contributions made by each spouse to the running of the household eg shared chores and shared decisions. Conjugal roles are not interchangeable but they are of equal importance, an arrangement that they found to be more common in working class families; they advanced the theory that this reflected the nature of work as often boring and uninvolved leading manual workers to focus on family life. The 'Principle of Stratified Diffusion' is the theory that what happens at the top of the stratification system today will diffuse downwards tomorrow. The 'managing director family' (Stage 4) cited in their research was work-centred rather than home-centred, with the wife responsible for home and children. The theory has been criticised by feminists who saw little evidence of either 'symmetry' or a move towards Stage 4 amongst working class families.

Zaretsky E, *Capitalism, the Family and Personal Life*, London, Pluto Press, 1976

Writing from a Marxist perspective Zaretsky takes the view that modern capitalist society has created an illusion that the 'private life' of the family is separate from the economy. Zaretsky does not believe that the family is able to provide for the psychological and social needs of the individual. Whilst cushioning the effects of capitalism it perpetuates the system and cannot compensate for the general alienation produced by such a society. He believes that the family has become a prop to the capitalist economy (eg the system depends on the domestic labour of housewives who reproduce future generations of workers) whilst also serving as a vital unit of consumption. In his view only socialism will end the artificial separation of family and public life, and make possible personal fulfilment.