Families with Futures
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Family Studies into the 21st Century
Second edition

Meg Wilkes Karraker, PhD
University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, MN

Janet R. Grochowski, PhD
College of Saint Benedict and Saint John’s University,
St. Joseph and Collegeville, MN
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Janet R. Grochowski, PhD: After completing my Bachelor of Science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, I earned two terminal degrees at the University of Minnesota. The first included a dual major in Family Social Science and Health Studies. The second Doctorate of Philosophy is in Social and Philosophical Foundations of Learning with an emphasis on resilience. My research reflects an interdisciplinary preparation and boundless curiosity in the areas of family studies and health studies with special interest in youth and family resilience. Global education and determinants of family health are two major focal points of my most recent research.

In addition to coauthoring Families with Futures, I authored Families and Health (2010). I am honored by Health Education professionals with the Carl Knutson Health Education Award. Currently I hold the Marie and Robert Jackson Endowed Professorship position and serve as Chairperson of the Education Department at the College of Saint Benedict-Saint John’s University (CSB-SJU), St. Joseph, MN. Since 2009, I serve as director of the CSB-SJU International Teaching Externship program and teach undergraduate courses in effective learning strategies, global education, family studies, and health studies. I also serve as Professor Emerita of Family Studies at the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota.

This writing adventure deepened my appreciation not only for the efforts of family studies scholars and professionals, but also for the support from my own family. Although my parents, Edward and Gladys, died long before I reached adulthood, their love and encouragement continue to serve as beacons in my professional journey. Growing up in a stepfamily, where I was the second youngest of ten children, broadened my understanding of how family members need interdependence in order to negotiate family life changes and challenges.

My partner of over thirty years, Richard, is my best friend, love, and husband. His wise counsel, patience, and sense of humor are precious to me. Our children, Eric Grochowski and Emily Grochowski, have taught me the beauty and reward of loving and caring for others as well as the power of resilience in families. I dedicate my part of this book to you, Emily and Eric, as you begin your professional adventures and continue your world travels. Finally, I am fortunate to have an intelligent and insightful coauthor who also is my dear and steadfast friend. Meg, you have made this second edition writing experience enriching and enjoyable. Thank you.

http://www.psypress.com/families-with-futures-9780415885904
Meg Wilkes Karraker, PhD: I earned my Bachelor of Arts at Clemson University, my Master of Science at North Carolina State University, and my Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Minnesota, all in sociology with supporting course work in anthropology, psychology, international studies, and women’s studies. My current research examines social networks among civic, religious, and other organizations serving migrant women, children, and their families in the midwestern United States and in Rome, Italy. I am the author of *Global Families*, forthcoming in a second edition in 2012.

I teach undergraduate courses in sociological theory, gender, adolescence, and, of course, families and family studies. My present positions are of Professor of Sociology, Family Studies, and Women’s Studies and Family Business Center Fellow at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota. I am a recipient of my University’s Aquinas Scholars Honors Program Professor of the Year, am Past-president of Alpha Kappa Delta (the international sociology honor society), past Executive Officer for Sociologists for Women in Society, and serve as a program consultant for the American Sociological Association’s Department Resources Group.

As with all my professional work, I owe the greatest debt to my own family. I grew up in a military family, moving every three years to a different community in the United States and Germany. At each new location, my mother Mary settled my sister Jean and me into a new school and made the necessary connections for Girl Scouts, music lessons, and our beagle, while my father Herbert went about the business of a career in the United States Army. My father died in 2010 and my mother is living with Alzheimer’s disease, but my parents’ relationships with each other, with my sister and me, and later with my own family, continue to inspire me to examine the values and norms that contributed to family resilience over their own half century of marriage.

Mark Karraker, my husband of over thirty years, models the best a person can be in the roles of friend, spouse, and parent. Amelia Wilkes Karraker and Miriam Wilkes Karraker, lovely daughters and citizens of the world, are constant reminders that building supportive, respectful, dependable family relationships is worth every effort. Finally, everyone should have such a critical and creative colleague and affectionate and constant friend as I have found in you over the past two decades, dear Janet. Returning to write this second edition with you has been a consummate pleasure for me.

In 1993, Grochowski and Karraker co-founded the Family Studies Program at the University of St. Thomas, for which they both served terms as directors.
Preface

*Families with Futures*, the second edition, evolved from our desire to help family studies students and professionals stretch beyond popular, political, and academic paradigms to better understand and embrace the potential of families. Distinguished by its authentically interdisciplinary approach to family studies, this book provides a refreshing look at the field, incorporating theories and methods, the most current research on key family topics, straightforward discussion of critical social issues, and discussion of career opportunities in family studies.

We bring concepts to life by enriching cutting-edge scholarship with examples drawn from the everyday lives of real families. In a book notable for its breadth and timeliness, we pose contemporary questions, especially those related to family diversity and social change. This innovative approach to studying families engages and challenges readers to examine families and family relationships from a range of perspectives. We present families as confronting troubles but capable of resilience. We weave theory into the discussion, while keeping issues faced by families every day front-and-center. We encourage readers to actively engage concepts and principles through examples drawn from published family studies scholarship, but also mass media and organizations working on behalf of families.

This book is intended for both upper division undergraduate and lower division graduate courses in family studies, family ecology, or family science offered in a variety of departments including family and consumer sciences, human development, sociology, and psychology. *Families with Futures* is also of value to professionals seeking an up-to-date survey of the field.

Each chapter opens with a concise preview of the chapter content and includes tables and figures, both original and drawn from authoritative sources. We include boxes featuring academic scholars as well as professional practitioners, including Certified Family Life Educators (CFLEs). These authors represent a variety of disciplines — family studies, sociology, and psychology, but also anthropology, art, health, nursing and medicine, philanthropy, religion, sexuality, and social work. These boxes provide the student reader with a firsthand look at work in the field. Each chapter concludes with key terms and varied student learning activities that promote critical thinking through engaging questions and exercises, projects, and interactive web activities. The book concludes with a glossary defining the boldfaced key terms.
Families with Futures is genuinely interdisciplinary in authorship, scope of topics, and expert guest essays. Refreshing in its presentation of sound theoretical and ethical principles, Families with Futures explores not only contemporary scholarship but also a wide array of current issues. The writing is engaging and clear and each chapter offers interesting examples and provocative questions. These features, as well as the learning activities, provide readers with opportunities for critical thinking and thoughtful application to situations frequently encountered by families. In essence, Families with Futures cultivates the next generation of family studies scholars and professionals.

CONTENT OVERVIEW

The second edition of Families with Futures begins with a unit on the ART AND SCIENCE OF FAMILY STUDIES. Chapter 1 explores an expanding definition of family and the complexities created by immigration, race and ethnicity, and gender and sexual orientation. The second chapter presents family studies as a scientific discipline with a solid theoretical and methodological core that is anchored in ethics and social action.

The second section, FROM RISK TO RESILIENCE, begins with Chapter 3 around the theme that resilience is a series of dynamic relational processes influenced by interacting determinants families can use to adjust and adapt to expected and unexpected life events. Chapter 4 is unique in family studies texts, providing an entire chapter on family health, including integrative medicine, transdisciplinary approaches, interactive determinants of family health, and current health-care policy. Chapter 5 offers a candid and affirming presentation of sexual intimacy from the biological through the social–cultural to the political.

The third section, FAMILY LIFE COURSES, encompasses six chapters. Chapter 6 explores early trajectories of family relationships: being single, attraction and selection, dating, and cohabitation and how people carve out meaningful family relationships in a world of social networking. Chapter 7 explores the civic, economic, and moral functions of marriage traditions and laws, distinctions between civil marriages and civil unions, premarital education programs, and prenuptial agreements. Chapter 8 examines family in the broader meaning of kinship and community and challenges represented by child care, boomerang kids, the sandwich generation, and grandparenting. Taking the perspective that family conflict is a natural part of family life but violence is not, Chapter 9 addresses child maltreatment, intimate partner violence, same-sex couple violence, sibling violence, child-to-parent abuse, elder abuse, and consequences of mass violence (war and terrorism) on families. In Chapter 10 we focus on decoupled families, including those shaped by desertion, separation, divorce, and death of a partner, as well as re-coupled families. The final chapter in this section offers an economic profile of American families, as well as stress associated with economic challenges, and work–family linkages including women’s employment and household labor.

We conclude Families with Futures, second edition, with a chapter that weaves together family policy, family science, and family well-being and a discussion of family life education and challenges to the next generation of family studies scholars.

NEW TO THIS EDITION

This second edition was built around the most current review of research and theory on the family, both published in print and online, and includes all updated statistical data. Adopters of the first edition will note new or increased coverage in this edition, including:

http://www.psypress.com/families-with-futures-9780415885904
• immigrant and transnational families in the twenty-first century
• family resilience as a dynamic relational process
• physiology, psychology, and sociology of intimacy and sexuality
• effects of recent health and other policy decisions on families
• shifting cultural views of civil marriages and unions for gay and lesbian couples
• care-giving in families, especially in later life.

This second edition includes online Student and Instructor Resources. That site provides a hotlink to the National Council on Family Relations' (NCFR's) Code of Ethics, plus an outstanding, just-updated Guide to Resources in Family Studies prepared by Jan Orf, a reference librarian with decades of experience in this area. In addition, the site includes the chapter previews and key terms, a detailed chapter outline, and a special feature, “Breaking News,” that provides hotlinks to and critical questions regarding current family events for students. Instructors will find Power Point slides including lecture notes, chapter outlines and key terms for each chapter, and multiple choice and short essay test questions.
Acknowledgments

First, our great thanks go to the battalion of family studies scholars who substantially enriched this work by contributing original writings based on their areas of expertise. Their names and biographies accompany their contributions throughout this book.

We launched this second edition of *Families with Futures* with a valuable set of critiques from Dr. Mary Ann Adams of The University of Southern Mississippi as well as two anonymous reviewers. Our work also benefited from timely editing, fact checking, and suggestions from Kylee Joosten Jacqlyn Pavek. Toward the end of the project Cameron Beman and Lucas Gitar offered feedback on the narrative. Editors from the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John’s Writing Center also offered valued encouragement and suggestions. Lisa Dochniak, Susan Price, and Danette Roach of O’Shaughnessy-Frey Library at the University of St. Thomas assisted in checking references. Mark Karraker extended occasional but necessary technical support.

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Please note that the order of authorship in this work is purely arbitrary.
PART I
The Art and Science of Family Studies
Chapter 1
The Changing World of Families

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter Preview

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  Family as a Social Construct
  Demography and Change
  Migration and Transnational Families
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  Sexual Orientations
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The Significance of Families
  The Importance of Families for Individuals
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A Twenty-first Century Reconstruction of Family
  Families in Decline or Families in Transition?
  Families as Resilient Strategic Living Communities

The Interdiscipline of Family Studies
  Core Disciplines of Family Studies
  The Art and Science of Family Studies

Key Terms

Learning Activities
CHAPTER PREVIEW

What is a family? Throughout Families with Futures we extend the conventional definition of family as a group of individuals related by blood, marriage, or adoption and sharing the same household. Our twenty-first-century definition of family includes fictive kin and others who play significant roles in the lives of family members.

Our definition reflects changes in family demographics, including mortality and fertility, as well as migration and the increasing importance of transnational families. Likewise, understanding families requires understanding the increasing diversities of race and ethnicity, including the circumstances of multiethnic families, as well as the complex meanings of gender, sex, and sexual orientation (including transgender) orientation. Furthermore, we recognize that the intersections among these boundaries form a matrix of domination. Our discipline requires sensitivity to family diversity and requires that we confront ethnocentrism and romantic illusions about “the way we never were.”

The experience of family profoundly affects us on individual, community, and global levels. Whom we choose to exclude is as important as whom we choose to include in our definitions of family. Grochowski’s concept of strategic living communities reflects the dynamic, evolving, and fluid nature of these critical social systems.

Finally, in Families with Futures we reflect the shift in family studies from a deficit-centered to a strength-centered focus. Such an emphasis on family resilience acknowledges that every family has limitations and vulnerabilities, but that families are best seen as complex systems with the potential not only to adapt and survive but even to change and thrive in response to challenges. This is the interdisciplinary art and science of family studies.

SHIFTING CONCEPTS OF FAMILY IN A DIVERSE WORLD

At the turn of the millennium, the Jefferson Foundation released a report that strongly supported the connection between the families of President Thomas Jefferson and those of his slave Sally Hemings. Genetic evidence indicates that Jefferson fathered five and perhaps six of Hemings’ children (Clark 2006). So, does a genetic link make a family? During Jefferson’s time, couplings between masters and female slaves were common, yet the offspring of such matches had no legal claim to descent or inheritance and certainly no claim to freedom from slavery.

The Jefferson Foundation report was prompted in part by conflict between Hemings’ black descendants seeking burial in the Jefferson family plot and white descendants of Thomas Jefferson who opposed them. Clark (2006:8) cites oral history among Hemings’ descendants regarding the existence of great affection and loyalty between Sally and Thomas . . . preferential treatment for Hemings and her children . . . [and freedom for] all of Sally’s sons, along with her brother.

In his will, Jefferson elected not to free Sally Hemings, but this may have been a calculation assumed to be in Sally’s best interest based on her advanced age (Clark 2006; Graham 1961).

As Clark reminds us in the case of Jefferson and Hemings, qualifying the nature of intimate, emotional connections among individuals is an even more difficult task than fathoming biological or legal connections. Just who is family matters a great deal for families like the descendants of Sally Hemings and Thomas Jefferson and for society, leaving the definition of family as highly contested.
Family as a Social Construct

As part of a study of how single mothers view themselves and their lives, we invited a sample of single mothers to sketch their families. At first they drew the expected figures: fathers and especially mothers; parents and children; aunts, uncles, and cousins. However, when we asked them to add additional individuals who might not fit the conventional definition of family but who were nonetheless important to their family life, these women often included close friends and near neighbors. Then, when we asked them to remove individuals who did not fit their own definition of family, many quickly excluded some individuals to whom they or their children were related by blood or marriage. For example, more than a few of the women we interviewed excluded the mother of their child’s father, even if the child’s father was involved in their children’s lives (Karraker and Grochowski 1998).

Clearly then what a family is or should be is open for discussion. In social science terms, our definitions of family are socially constructed. First, each of us lives within a family—or, more correctly, a series of families—over our lifetime. Hence, we derive our understanding of family through lived experience, including contact with kin and friends. We also draw understandings of family from economic, educational, governmental, religious, and other institutions.

For example, cultural agents such as television, YouTube, and other media offer impressions of functional (and perhaps more often dysfunctional) families. Some primary schools persist in holding events such as “Donuts for Dads” or “Muffins for Moms” when some or even many students may not live with a father, may live with two (lesbian) mothers, or may live with grandparents.

Probably no institution holds faster to conventional definitions of family than religion. Witness the efforts of some religious organizations to influence social policy around who can and cannot be considered married, not only in their own faith traditions but in society at large. For example, in September 2010 the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis mailed a compact disc to Catholics in Minnesota, encouraging them to assist in efforts to keep marriage a union between a man and a woman (KSTP News 2010).

Still, legal definitions of family are changing. For example, in April 2010 President Barack Obama signed a directive that effectively redefines family for gay men and lesbians in committed relationships. Most hospitals (i.e., those receiving any federal funds) must now extend family visitation rights to the partners of gay men and lesbians and must respect patients’ choices about who may make critical health-care decisions when they cannot do so for themselves (Shear, 2010). Later the same year the United States Labor Department issued regulations ordering businesses to extend equal rights to gay and lesbian employees who require unpaid time off to care for newborn or adopted children (“Gay Employees to Get Family Leave Rights” 2010).

How then shall we define this entity that possesses such significance for the potential happiness and survival of individuals, the well-being of communities and nations, and the very survival of humanity? Certainly, a family is more than the U.S. Census Bureau’s definition for household—two or more people who share a residential unit (excluding barracks, dormitories, prisons, or other group quarters). We argue throughout this text that even the Census Bureau’s definition of family as two or more people who are related by blood, marriage, or adoption and who live together does not adequately encompass the meaning of family in the twenty-first century.

The classic anthropological and sociological definition of the family was coined by George Peter Murdock (1949). Based on study of data on over 250 societies, Murdock defined family in terms of common residence, economic cooperation, and reproduction. However, traditional definitions such as Murdock’s are based on assumptions that fail to represent the diverse nature of family arrangements in the twenty-first century.

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Even Murdock’s focus on common residence, economic cooperation, and reproduction is contentious. Couples with children separate or divorce, leaving the children residing with a custodial parent. Are those children and non-custodial parents not still a family? Couples in a commuter marriage may pursue employment in one city, traveling sometimes long distances to spend time with spouses in another city on weekends or holidays. Are those couples not a family? Many families launch daughters and sons to employment or higher education and thus cease to share a domicile. Yet those living arrangements do not preclude strong emotional, legal, and other family ties. Are they not families?

Likewise, prenuptial agreements, unpaid child support, and spouses who maintain individual autonomy over their finances all challenge the assumption of economic cooperation. Families may also be formed through adoption, foster parenting and relationships with fictive kin—people to whom we are not related by blood or marriage yet with whom we have significant emotional and other relationships (Stack 1974). Certainly some of the new birth technologies (discussed in Chapter 5) negate Murdock’s assumption about the reproductive foundation of family.

Gerson (1991:57) points to a “growing social and ideological cleavage between traditional family forms and the emerging alternatives.” Definitions of families as residential, economic, and reproductive units promote bias and misunderstanding of the depth and potential of families. In Families with Futures we explore families in a way that stretches the canvas to allow room for a more diverse picture. We challenge you to embrace a more inclusive approach to defining families in family studies.

**Demography and Change**

A journalist (Footlick 1990:14) writing on the state of the American family during the last decade of the twentieth century argued:

> The American family does not exist. Rather, we are creating many American families, of diverse styles and shapes . . . We have fathers working while mothers keep house; fathers and mothers both working away from home; single parents; second marriages bringing together people from unrelated backgrounds; childless couples; unmarried couples, with and without children; gay and lesbian parents. We are living through a period of historic change in American family life.

Many of the brush strokes in the changing portrait of American families can be traced to large-scale changes in the population characteristics—the demography—of American society. Demographers often focus on three key areas: mortality, fertility, and migration.

For example, Americans are living longer. Life expectancy at birth climbed from 70.8 years in 1970 to 78.3 in 2010 (U.S. Bureau of the Census 2009c). This means that couples who marry in their late twenties potentially face another five or even six decades “till death do us part.” While the life expectancy is more than five years longer for females than for males (U.S. Bureau of the Census 2009b), the material quality of those last years for women is fraught with particular hazards in a society in which women continue to earn less than men. Finally, a striking number of American women are remaining childless—20 percent today, compared to 10 percent 30 years ago. Those who do become mothers are having fewer children—an average of 1.9 today, compared to 3.1 30 years ago (Dye 2008). In Chapter 9, we will consider the new challenges that demographic factors such as increasing longevity and decreasing fertility place on any kind of intergenerational family safety net for society’s oldest members.
Migration and Transnational Families

America is often said to be a nation of immigrants. Approximately 31,108,000 individuals, one out of every nine persons surveyed for the 2000 Census, was foreign-born (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2003). In 2001, the most recent year for which statistics are available, 1,064,000 immigrants were admitted to the United States. This translates into an average immigration rate in the preceding decade (1991–2000) of 3.4/1,000 population. That rate is considerably higher than the 1930s and 1940s, when the decade average was below 1.0/1,000 population. The migration rate for 1991–2000 was lower than for the first decade of the twentieth century, when it was 10.4/1,000.

Quite likely many of you reading Families with Futures hold fast to your own histories involving immigration. You tell stories of daughters and sons who made the trip from Ireland in the nineteenth century to work as domestics and laborers. You share stories of those who left central Europe in the first half of the twentieth century fleeing anti-Semitism and the oncoming Holocaust. You reveal stories of grandparents and parents who fled Southeast Asia in the years following the Vietnam War. You recount your own childhood passages from Africa seeking asylum. Some of you unveil stories of Native American journeys across history and distance. Along the way, these different waves of immigrants founded colleges and universities, churches and charities, corporations and whole communities. Along with everything else, your ancestors founded families.

Traditionally, early waves of immigrants to the United States were led by unattached men, or by men who left their families behind while they secured a place in the new country. Once settled, some of these men sent for wives and families left behind or secured a bride through negotiations with a marriage broker from their home community. However, as immigrant groups moved beyond residential ghettos one of the best indicators of their assimilation into the dominant society was intermarriage that transcended national, religious, ethnic, or even racial boundaries. Today women represent a growing proportion of migrants worldwide, a shift that Anthias and Lazaridis (2000) refer to as the feminization of migration. In some areas—e.g., the Philippines, Sri Lanka (Seager 2003)—women are even beginning to outnumber men.

In Divided by Borders, Dreby (2010) tells the sometimes heroic and often heartbreaking story of tens of thousands of Mexican women and men who leave children behind while they seek economic security for their families in the United States. Yoshikawa (2011) describes the situation of four million children born in the United States being raised by undocumented parents and those parents’ constant fear of discovery and deportation, which limits their social contacts and restricts their participation in public programs that might benefit their children.

By no means are all or even most of these migrant families undocumented. For example, the parents of one of our students were born and spent most of their lives in a small town in central Mexico. They immigrated to the United States, where they and their two children are now American citizens. Our student tells us that each summer he travels back to his parents’ hometown, where he reconnects with grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins, as well as friends from his parents’ childhoods. He can describe the geography, society, and relationships of his family’s hometown as well as he can that of his family’s adopted hometown of St. Paul, Minnesota.

While honoring the sacrifice and adversity, commitment and intensity of these family relationships, we also need to recognize that migrant families are increasingly transnational families (Karraker 2009). Transnational families are those whose members may move from one country to another, legally documented or not, often making border crossings multiple times during a lifetime. Thus transnational families span borders, as they “act, decide, feel, and express identities across social networks that traverse two (or more) societies, often simultaneously” (Karraker 2008:8).
Race and Ethnicity

The student we described is a member of one kind of twenty-first-century transnational family. He also identifies himself as Hispanic. His first language at home was Spanish and he and his family live a life grounded in traditions and customs of his Mexican heritage.

Race remains among the most powerful forces shaping the image and opportunities of American families today. Consider the data presented in the previous section on longevity and fertility. The life expectancy among black Americans is 73.8, more than five years less than that for whites. The average Hispanic woman will have 2.3 children, rather than the average of 1.9 for white women (Dye 2008). However, race and ethnicity are more complicated than these statistics might suggest. For example, second-generation Hispanic women have fewer children than Hispanic women who either were foreign-born or are third-generation (i.e., those who were themselves born of native-born Hispanic parents). Finally, the differences by almost any demographic feature vary enormously by state, with states with concentrations of racial or ethnic minorities falling to the bottom on quality of life indicators such as family poverty. In fact, Lareau (2010:5) has noted that “the power of social class is often obscured by the visibility of race.”

According to the most recent Census (2010), almost eight out of 10 Americans consider themselves white, approximately one out of eight considers themselves black or African American, and almost one out of 20 Americans considers themselves Asian. Persons who consider themselves of Hispanic or of Latino origin can be of any race and, at over 15 percent, that group constitutes the largest racial or ethnic minority in the United States.

Family structure differs markedly by race and ethnicity. For example, although half of all Americans are married and living with their spouse, the percentage is highest among Asians (59 percent) and lowest among blacks (31 percent). Likewise, blacks are the least likely to have ever been married (46 percent never married), followed by Hispanics (37 percent) (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2010j; see Table 1.1). These race and ethnic differences are associated with demographics, life chances, and even culture, which we will consider in the third unit on Family Life Courses, when we explore mate selection, conjugal relationships, parenting and kin relations, ‘uncoupling’ situations, and economic influences.

Beginning with the 2000 Census, Americans could identify themselves as belonging to one race or to more than one race. These multiethnic categories, while making discussion of race and ethnic differences a bit more complicated, undoubtedly give a much more meaningful picture of how

Table 1.1 Marital Status by Race and Hispanic Origin, 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Total Number</th>
<th>Married Spouse Present (%)</th>
<th>Married Spouse Absent (%)</th>
<th>Widowed (%)</th>
<th>Divorced (%)</th>
<th>Separated (%)</th>
<th>Never Married (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All races</td>
<td>240,032</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>194,288</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic (may be of any race)</td>
<td>33,440</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>37.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>28,906</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>46.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian alone</td>
<td>10,773</td>
<td>59.0</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Americans see themselves and their families. Hamilton McCubbin, Professor and Director of Research in Social Work at the University of Hawaii, and his colleagues (McCubbin et al. 2010c) are among scholars beginning to address the unique challenges multietnic families face regarding development, identity, and resilience.

For example, Dalmadge (2000), a white woman married to a black man with whom she has biracial children, describes a racialized society in which educational, religious, and residential systems remain segregated and in which institutions have low tolerance for racial ambiguity, yet also provide no language to describe biracial identity. Dalmadge argues that the meaning of being biracial is evolving, but that the United States has yet to recognize itself as a society where multiracial individuals and families are a part of the norm.

Family scholars are recognizing that racial and ethnic identities are continuously being constructed, hence the conceptual discourse on colorism, including skin color gradients. We are increasingly attuned to the lives of families around race, ethnicity, and immigration, studying not only inequality and socioeconomic mobility, but also interracial romantic relationships and the racial socialization of children. Family scholars are also increasingly drawn to critical race theories, frameworks which acknowledge the central place of race and racism in society and the reproduction of social systems that oppress families of color (Burton et al. 2010).

Gender

We are amused when, upon hearing of the birth of a child, someone asks, “What is it?” While we are quite sure the questioner is not asking if the infant is plant or animal, the question reveals much about the importance of gender as a master status in American society.

Serious scholarly debate regarding the use (or misuse) of the terms gender and sex in sociology, psychology, health studies, and other disciplines dates at least to the last quarter of the twentieth century (e.g., Gould and Kern-Daniels 1977). Unfortunately, these terms have not always been used consistently in marriage and family textbooks or even in the *Journal of Marriage and Family* (Laner, 2000). In her review essay “Reconceptualizing Gender,” Baber (2010:88) reminds us that, although thinking about gender in family studies and other fields has become increasingly sophisticated and nuanced . . . even after three decades of active attention there is little consensus about what gender is, where it is located, the actual usefulness of such a concept, or whether it can be reconceived to better address social inequalities.

Family scientists need to use these terms correctly. Sex is the biological term, e.g., female or male. Gender is the social term, referring to characteristics assigned by social groups to one sex or the other, e.g., feminine or masculine. Yet even that distinction fails to address the situation of individuals who may be born with ambiguous genitalia (“hermaphroditic” [sic]) or genotype (e.g., XXY), an intersex condition that is medically recognized. Intersex should not be confused with transexual or transgender individuals who are born with typical female and male anatomies, but feel that they are in the “wrong body” sexually. Those transsexual or intersex individuals may or may not elect to undergo hormonal and surgical intervention in order to achieve more typical correspondence between their physiology and their internal gender identity. Our discipline is only beginning to address transgender and intersex individuals and their family and other intimate relationships.

One thing is clear: Gender frames family life in complex, powerful ways, a point that is addressed when we discuss feminist theory in Chapter 2. For example, egalitarian gender role attitudes are associated with decreased fertility intentions among women, but increased fertility intentions and

http://www.psypress.com/families-with-futures-9780415885904
marital stability among men. Single men with egalitarian attitudes are more likely to cohabit, more likely to intend to have a child, and less likely to divorce than men with traditional attitudes. Women with egalitarian attitudes are both less likely to intend to have a child and to actually have a child than women holding traditional attitudes (Kaufman 2000).

Other research likewise demonstrates the significance of attitudes to gender in determining family outcomes. For example, a study of Iranian immigrants to the United States found that men were significantly more traditional than women on attitudes to premarital sex, marriage, and the family, even after adjusting for respondents’ age (Hojat et al. 2000). This discrepancy may help to explain the high rate of marriage dissolution among Iranian immigrants.

**Sexual Orientations**

Perhaps nothing reveals the rigidity of definitions of family more than attitudes to unions formed by gays and lesbians. Unlike marriages, which require civil licenses, cohabiting couples—regardless of sexual orientation—are not systematically recorded in a reliable way. In the late 1970s the U.S. Census Bureau formed the acronym POSSLQ for “persons of the opposite sex sharing living quarters.” The term never caught on, and counting cohabitating couples continues to challenge demographers.

Estimating the number of same-sex couples living together is particularly challenging. For example, some gay or lesbian couples, including some who do not live in one of the states that recognize conjugal unions between gay men or lesbians, respond to Census questionnaires as “married with spouse present.” By best estimates, same-sex couples represent less than one percent of all cohabitating couples (O’Connell and Loftquist 2009).

These gay and lesbian couple households are not limited to large urban areas. Gay male or lesbian couples have formed households in nearly every county in every state and the District of Columbia. Further, a large number of same-sex couples are raising children. In the last Census, 167,000 gay or lesbian couples reported that they had children 15 or younger living with them (U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000a).

While the number of countries around the world that recognize same-sex marriage, civil unions, and domestic partnerships is growing, most legal systems do not recognize same-sex partners as married or same-sex parents and their children as families. We will consider same-sex marriage, civil unions, and domestic partnerships when we turn to marriage and other conjugal unions in Chapter 7.

As a relatively new area of family study, research on gay and lesbian relationships is subject to criticism that samples are limited by race, ethnicity, culture, and class, and by the scarcity of observational or longitudinal studies. However, emerging research indicates that families of gays and lesbians are more similar to than different from families of heterosexual couples (Biblarz & Savci 2010). For example, Patterson (2000) found that the relationships of lesbian and gay couples are just as supportive as heterosexual couples and that homes created by lesbian and gay couples are just as conducive to positive psychosocial growth as homes created by heterosexual couples.

In this century, stereotypes and stigma of same-sex families may serve to advance certain ideological agendas, but will do little to enhance the well-being of spouses and partners, parents and children. Future studies of all families need to evolve from what is “wrong” to what are the “strengths” in families.

**Family Diversity and Ethnocentrism**

A growing body of scholarship illuminates the extent to which the multiple boundaries we have examined here—immigration, race and ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation—intersect to shape
roles and statuses in family and other social institutions. For example, while immigrants have often been readily identifiable by their language, dress, and other cultural attributes, today race and ethnicity are even more complicated. Immigrants from Africa, Asia, and Central and South America are sometimes pushed into pre-existing racial and ethnic categories with black, Asian, and Hispanic Americans who have long lived in the United States. Thus, we can see how social positions around country of origin can intersect race and ethnicity.

Collins (1990) characterizes this multisectionality as a matrix of domination. Understanding oppression (and, we would argue, identity) in terms of interlocking systems of immigration and race and ethnicity, as well as gender, sexualities, and other social locators is one of the challenges facing family studies scholars in the twenty-first century.

Yet simplistic, ethnocentric images of the normal American family are pervasive in American culture. Such images prescribe the structure of families and embody values and norms that direct family relationships, while excluding many families as deviant, or at best a variation (Baca Zinn 2001).

Such ethnocentric bias can be absorbed by families themselves, as when images of the American family shape how children see their parents. For example, in a study of Korean and Vietnamese immigrants, Pyke (2000:251) found that adult children perceived their parents as “unloving, deficient, and not normal” when compared to American parents. Interestingly, the same adult children were critical of the high individualism in American families, especially with regard to care of elderly parents. Ethnocentrism prevents us from understanding what it means to be a member of a family and how to best support families in our communities.

The Handbook of Family Diversity (Demo, Allen and Fine 2000) and published positions by the Inclusion and Diversity Committee of the National Council on Family Relations exemplify growing consideration for diversity in family studies. We are moving beyond the usual categories to include not only race and ethnicity but also colorism and country of origin, gender as well as sexual orientation, poverty but also employment status, along with geographical location, body size, veteran status, and other less common social addresses. We are moving toward understanding of what Lewis, Henderson, and Strand (2010:8) call the many “social addresses” of families.

At the end of the twentieth century, the Journal of Family Psychology devoted an entire issue to examination of cultural variations, both similarities and differences, in families. In his editorial remarks, Parke (2000) specifically focused on the strengths of families from different cultural, ethnic, and racial groups. In doing so, he signified a break from earlier weakness or deficit models of the family and focused attention on the strengths of diverse families. He noted not only the existence of differences between groups but also differences within groups as families. In addition to testing the generalizability of assumptions about family processes, consideration of the diversity of families serves as a basis for providing culturally sensitive programs and services and formulating socially responsible policies. We charge you, the next generation of family studies scholars, with casting a critical eye toward how our discipline and society define family and include the full range of possibilities represented in family.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FAMILIES

The Importance of Families for Individuals

Being able to marry can contribute significantly to the emotional and economic well being of couples. Living with married parents provides a number of benefits and protections to children.
Society benefits when people choose to marry... promoting the emotional and economic well-being of adults; enhancing the capacity of parents to promote the well-being of children; and promoting stable relationships.

(Wald, 2001:1)

Thus, individuals and their families adapt a multitude of structures to meet the biological, emotional, financial, and other needs of family members. While we might take issue with Wald’s emphasis on marriage rather than a broader conceptualization of long-term commitment between intimates, data from the *General Social Survey* reveals that the quality of family and other interpersonal relationships is important for personal happiness (Aldous and Ganey 1999).

As Brother Sean Moffett, the former executive director of a residential program that serves migrant children from across the globe, writes in Box 1.1, families are with us, even when the unit is fractured.

**Box 1.1 Children of Suffering Families**

*Patrick Sean Moffett, CFC, PhD*

Children travel with their families, even when they travel alone. So do adults. Family members constitute a very real force that extends beyond time, geography, and even death. Emotions, imperatives, cautions, fears, blessings, curses, approbations, and corrections echo even from a distant past and invade present thoughts, feelings, and actions. I hear my mother’s voice, see my father’s smile, recall my brother’s challenge, and resonate with my sisters’ concern. Faced with a decision, I have little doubt about what they would approve, what they would not want to accept.

Separation is part of life; it is often a gradient for growth. Life is full of those moments when frighteningly, or delightedly, we are on our own. The remarkable experience is the discovery of our unique capacity to pull from seemingly nowhere the resources to do what needs to be done.

For a growing number of the world’s children, separation from their families of origin is an event they will face in early adolescence. Television images projected by satellite into the most remote and depressed areas of the globe reveal another world of possibilities. Young adventurers, some legally, most clandestinely, find their way onto foreign shores in a search for refuge from wars, political pressures, or economic oppression or simply in the hope of finding a chance in life.

Excursions into the Balkans to retrace the journeys of such youngsters revealed conditions that have promoted modern-day versions of indentured servitude and even slavery. Loving parents were thrilled to know that their son or daughter was still alive. When asked if they would welcome home the prodigal child, they became intensely uneasy. How does a mother acknowledge her deepest hurt, the belief that it would be best that her son, her daughter, not return? As one mother tearfully expressed, “Those people want him to be bad. They are still around. They will take him away again.”

We found that the contact with the family, as brief as it had been, became a most significant factor in our relationships with the youngsters. Openings to new depths of sharing, of confidence, of identification and transference became increasingly evident in case conferences and staff supervision sessions.
Many of the youngsters had perceived themselves as responsible for the family of origin: Find a job, earn the money to send home to take care of younger sisters and brothers. Only word from home could release these boys and girls from unrealistic goals. The dos and don’ts, the hopes and expectancies emerging from earlier images of significant others had become obstacles to discernment and growth.

Court mandates, the conditions of foster or adopting parents, even the expressed wishes of the individual will not cancel the resilient psychological presence of the family of origin. Projects aimed at self-awareness or the accompanying of a child or an adult call for interventions expansive enough to accommodate all who insist on being part of the journey.

Patrick Sean Moffett, CFC, PhD is a member of the Congregation of Christian Brothers, a psychologist, President Emeritus of Boys’ Towns of Italy, Inc., and former Chief Executive Officer of the Girls’ Town and the Boys’ Towns of Rome. Brother Sean is the current Principal of Archbishop Curley Notre Dame High School in Miami, Florida.

The Consequences of Families for Communities

We appreciate Miller and Browning’s (1999:596) definition of the significance of family for communities.

[Family] is a cohesive system of customs and rituals that regulates the relationship between partners and relationships between the couple, the extended family, and the community.

The comedic and tragic idiosyncrasies of family life are a staple of literature. In Box 1.2 Freymeyer and Johnson note some of the often humorous particularities of Southern families.

Box 1.2 Southern Families

Robert H. Freymeyer, PhD and Barbara E. Johnson, PhD

One of our northern-born friends met her southern husband while attending Ole Miss. Her southern-born-and-bred in-laws always considered her the Yankee outcast until she gave birth to the couple’s first child and son on Confederate Memorial Day! Then she became part of their southern family.

This story illustrates how distinctiveness characterizes the culture of the American South. The South’s heritage and its political and geographical separation have led to the development of unique social patterns and institutions, including the family. In spite of recent changes, our research shows that southerners still hold distinct norms and values about marriage and family and form family units different from those found in other regions.

Southern states, notably Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, and Kentucky, have the highest marriage rates. Southerners value marriage and family as social institutions. For example, southerners express more disapproval of cohabitation before marriage and more frequently view homosexual, premarital, teenage, and extramarital sexual relations as always wrong. Kin networks also provide social support. A majority of southerners report spending a social evening

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with relatives at least several times a month; and according to 2000 Census data, southern grandparents take more day-to-day responsibility for their grandchildren than grandparents living in other regions.

Southern families exhibit traditional gender role expectations in continuity with their patriarchal heritage. Historically, southern men served in the role of strong, respected family providers and disciplinarians in a culture that emphasized defending the family’s (especially the woman’s) honor. More southerners continue to see women’s primary roles as childbearing and rearing, not labor force participation. Southerners believe better outcomes occur if the man achieves outside the home, earns the family income, and runs the country. Furthermore, southerners express more concern than nonsoutherners about a working woman’s ability to develop a close maternal relationship with her children. A southern woman’s place continues to be as socio-emotional leader in the home.

Southerners also socialize their children differently than nonsoutherners. While both groups want children to learn to think for themselves, southerners are more likely to list obedience as the most desired characteristic for children to learn. Additionally, almost three-fourths of Southerners, compared to approximately half of nonsoutherners, believe a good, hard spanking is sometimes necessary for discipline. Southerners’ desire to protect and set rules for their children also demonstrates this authoritarian view on child rearing. Southerners, for example, hold more conservative views on distributing birth control information to teenagers and about permitting sex education in the schools.

In recent years, the South’s economic and social structure has become more similar to that found elsewhere in the United States. The South also has experienced considerable immigration. Yet southerners maintain many distinctive attitudes and behaviors, and southern families continue to differ in structure and function from those found elsewhere in the United States. Since the family is one of the most important socializing agents in our culture, the uniqueness of Southern families should persist for generations, as suggested by our friend’s experience.

Robert H. Freymeyer, PhD is Professor of Sociology and Director of Undergraduate Research at Presbyterian College. Barbara E. Johnson, PhD is Professor of Sociology at the University of South Carolina Aiken. This husband–wife team has conducted several studies on the southern family and the effects of recent migration on the family.

The significance of family—however it is defined—runs through all societies, providing an institutional framework that insures parenting and caring necessary for the persistence of communities and whole societies. This complex structure must negotiate the challenges of change on macro-societal levels (e.g., cultural shifts, political demands) as well as on micro-societal levels (e.g., health issues, lifespan changes). In essence, for communities and nations, the concept of family holds the promise of stability in a rapidly changing world.

The Gravity of Families for Humanity

In the 1970s a soft drink company popularized a song that began, “I’d like to teach the world to sing in perfect harmony . . .” The jingle, widely promoted on radio and television, was accompanied by a picture of a large circle of people of apparently diverse nationalities holding hands. That image evoked a sense of a world in which everyone is part of one family and that we are in this together.
If only the leap from this image to reality were as simple as a song. In Box 1.3 Barbara Larney, a sociologist who was herself a child living in Germany during World War II, gives testimony to those effects in the last century.

The devastating effects of war, terrorism, and other forms of mass destruction on children and families have already been horribly demonstrated in the first decade of the twenty-first century. When we speak of globalization, the talk most easily turns to economic and political networks and conflicts among nations (Karraker 2008). Family studies requires a more broadly inclusive concept of family, one that considers cultural as well as economic and political networks, and one that views families in not only multicultural but also transnational and even global terms.

Box 1.3 Family Effects of Being a Child during War

Barbara Elden Larney, PhD

A life course analysis of 55 in-depth interviews of a snowball sample of volunteers from the 1934–1939 German birth cohort living in Germany during World War II documents that the experiences of war during childhood have a significant impact on families of origin and families formed when the children reach adulthood. Participants reported experiencing bombings, destruction of homes, loss of possessions, and death of parents and other loved ones. Most participants had vivid memories of air raids, searching for dead family members, and dodging shells, enemy fire, and fire storms. As national borders shifted, many children became refugees.

Eighty percent of fathers and some mothers were temporarily or permanently absent. The presence or absence of the fathers altered the economic situation of the families. Families where the father did not return from war were much more likely to report financial problems. This changed the role of the children, often necessitating children’s contribution to the family income.

The presence or absence of fathers also influenced the educational pattern of sons. Of the 25 male participants, only six continued education after the mandatory age 14; the others chose to work and learn trades. Sons in families where the fathers remained at home during the war were three times more likely to follow the patterns of their father’s education.

The quality of relationships within the family was also significantly altered. The families of soldiers who returned after the war were disrupted twice, once when the father left and again when he returned. During the fathers’ absence, mothers and children often had very close relationships. Upon the fathers’ return, the children frequently had to yield their dominant places and confront new issues of loyalty, leadership, abandonment, and, in some cases, jealousy. Still, three-fourths of the participants described the present and past relationships with their parents in positive terms. However, participants whose fathers were absent during the war but eventually returned were much more likely to describe relationships with their mothers in negative terms.

War also created a legacy of silence. Two-thirds of the participants never or very seldom talked with their fathers about the war. Even fewer of the participants discussed with them the parent’s role during the Third Reich, even though most of these participants suspected their parent’s role had been benign. Furthermore, 80 percent of the participants indicated they had never or very seldom talked with their siblings about the Nazi era. Over half indicated they had never or very seldom discussed World War II or the Third Reich with their own children.

Unlike earlier research which found a shift toward the value of family for those facing severe hardship (Elder 1974), this research found that values shifted away from the family and altruism
to purely personal interests among those with the most severe war experiences. Perhaps having a limited amount of adversity in early life results in increased reliance on the family, while severe adversity results in an increased tendency towards self-centered interests.

Barbara Elden Larney, PhD, a sociologist, grew up during and after World War II in Germany. She admits to being haunted by those experiences even today and acknowledges their profound impact on her life. Her research was partially funded by a Peace Scholar Award of the United States Institute of Peace.

A TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY RECONSTRUCTION OF FAMILY

So, what is a family? In the previous pages of this first chapter of *Families with Futures* we have moved toward a more inclusive picture of family than that offered by either the Census Bureau or early social scientists. Shifting the conversation from a nice, neat definition of family is not easy. Are these new, more inclusive definitions of family another way of saying that the family is under siege?

Families in Decline or Families in Transition?

Cultural, demographic, economic, social, technological, and other changes affecting families are sources of personal uncertainty and social tension. During the twentieth century American society experienced dramatic shifts in women’s and children’s employment, the social compact between workers and the workplace, the role of government in mandating and enforcing civil rights, opportunities for sexual expression, and technological advances. Each of these changes in turn touched virtually every aspect of social life, including the family.

At the end of the last century Sussman, Steinmetz, and Peterson (1999:2–3) asserted:

. . . it no longer makes sense to use nuclear families as the standard against which various forms of the family (e.g., divorced families, single parent families, and stepfamilies) are measured . . . families are constantly changing and adapting to meet the current and emerging demands of a dynamic society . . . change and diversity are the norm.

Compared to previous generations, Americans in the twenty-first century are dramatically more likely to delay marriage or never marry at all and to cohabit before marriage. Young adults are more likely to return to living with parents after a time away. Gay and lesbian relationships are more evident in virtually every community. The number of births to unmarried women as well as the number of divorces slowed dramatically in the last decades of the twentieth century, but more children are growing up in a family with only one parent, still almost always the mother. An increasing number of grandparents are raising their grandchildren. These changes reflect important cultural shifts, including the organization of gender roles in society and the lower importance and certainty of marriage as a source of economic stability. At the same time we have witnessed growing economic inequality among American families (Bianchi and Casper 2000; Teachman, Tedrow, and Crowder 2000).
Some of the recent changes in the family have not been all that striking. The most dramatic changes in family composition occurred in the 1970s, and the rate of changes in family composition has slowed considerably, with little appreciable change since the mid-1990s. Bianchi and Casper (2000:1) observed that trends during the second half of the twentieth century point to a “quieting of changes [or at least the pace of change] in the family.” They saw little change during the 1990s in the proportion of two-parent or single-mother families or in the living arrangements of children, young adults, and the elderly. Even the rapid growth in unmarried cohabitation has slowed, and the divorce rate has declined in the last two decades.

Historian Stephanie Coontz (1992) chose *The Way We Never Were* as the title of her book about the romance that surrounds American views of family. Sociologist Arlene Skolnick (2001:45) argues that we need to move beyond the “nostalgia and moral panic” that often grip discussions on the state of the family. She sees the massive changes facing families today not as springing from moral decay or some deep flaw in the American character. Rather, because of the demographic, economic, and social changes that have transformed America and other advanced industrial countries in the twentieth century.

Wisdom and experience tell us we cannot go backwards. In the face of these changes and lifespan demands, family arrangements that worked in earlier centuries or even during the first half of the twentieth century respond less effectively to challenges facing families today. Those who are pessimistic and cynical when viewing the family in society are trying to frame the present (and perhaps even craft the future) using old lenses. We do not advocate a naive view of the family or a reckless approach to family studies. Rather we challenge readers not to take the easy path of using nostalgia to define present and future families. Yes, we can learn from the past, but we must not be limited or confined by clouded lenses.

### Families as Resilient Strategic Living Communities

Families come in myriad configurations which can effectively organize intimate life to enable people to communicate, solve problems, and sustain one another (Goldenberg and Goldenberg 2008). Grochowski’s (1997b) concept of strategic living communities expands the conventional definition of family to all members who offer one another intimacy in a long-term committed relationship. Much like creative artists, families need to define themselves in terms of who they are, how they feel, and what they want. Such families deserve support and encouragement in all their rich variety, rather than rigid definitions and limiting stereotypes.

In Chapter 3 we elaborate on the guiding principle behind *Families with Futures*: Families possess capabilities of great resilience. We ask why, when faced with adversity or change, do some families not only survive but thrive, while others with similar attributes succumb? Our question reflects a shift in the study of families from describing what is wrong to seeking what works in families.

Resilience is at the heart of our view of families as strategic living communities. Families can be strategic. They are capable of resilient change through complex adaptive structures. Families are living. They are organic, evolving, and dynamic. Families are communities. They are composed of interdependent members interacting with outside systems. This paradigm emphasizes the competence and potential of families and inspires family professionals to help families explore how they may survive, heal, and thrive even against devastating odds.
THE INTERDISCIPLINE OF FAMILY STUDIES

Core Disciplines of Family Studies

Many academic programs in family studies are housed in schools of human ecology, some of which grew out of old home economics programs. Figure 1.1 demonstrates that contemporary family studies is a complicated conglomerate, drawing not only on traditional foundations in social science (e.g., sociology, psychology, economics, anthropology), but also on history, communication, and some of the newer academic disciplines which apply social scientific methods to specific areas of family life. Theology and religious studies have long had vested interests in families. We are coming to appreciate the symbiotic relationship between families and education. Political science, especially through the examination of law and public policy, is also an important stakeholder in family studies.

Social workers, gerontologists, and child development specialists have always held the family as a primary unit of analysis. Epidemiologists, nurses and other medical professionals, and public health professionals have more recently arrived at the realization that families play a key role in achievement and maintenance of the individual’s well-being and intervention in cases of disease and risk. Some family studies programs have found a place for business scholars in light of the succession and family dynamics involved in family businesses.

Fig. 1.1 The interdisciplinary nature of family studies.

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Finally, in the second half of the twentieth century, growing awareness of the accelerating speed and depth of change prompted the emergence of a new discipline, future studies. The field of future studies does not attempt to predict the future (like fortunetellers and prophets). Rather, future studies can assist individuals and organizations, communities and societies, as well as families in visualizing their preferred futures. Futurists invite us to visualize what could be and contemplate what we are willing to do to achieve our preferred futures. The title of our book is quite intentional.

The Art and Science of Family Studies

From family studies’ inception in the 1920s, the discipline was premised on the belief that science could contribute to the understanding of family relations, which could in turn advance the quality of family life and society (Burgess 1926). On the eve of the new millennium, in his Presidential Address to the National Council on Family Relations, Bill Doherty (2000:319) called for “a new model for thinking about the relationship between researchers, practitioners, families, and communities.” Doherty advises family professionals to shift from viewing ourselves as service providers through whom knowledge about families “trickles down” from scientists to citizens. Instead he advocates that family professionals need to be collaborators with researchers, practitioners, and families themselves to understand and promote family well-being (Figure 1.2).

In “A Conscious and Inclusive Family Studies,” Allen (2000) argues that the theories, methods and areas of investigation in family studies should reflect the diversity of families. Furthermore, she believes that family scholars should acknowledge, confront, and integrate our own subjective experiences into our research. Allen contends that our responsibilities to readers, students, selves, and the families we study require us to consider how intersections define family diversity: age, class, gender, race, and sexual orientation.

Fig. 1.2 An integrated model of family studies.
Family scholars in the twenty-first century must move beyond often narrow definitions of family toward what Daly (2003) has called “theories families live by.” As we begin our journey through Families with Futures, we invite you to consider what the dynamic, interdisciplinary conceptualizations of family we have explored in this chapter mean in terms of your future professional experience, the lives of families with whom you study and work, and your own families.

**KEY TERMS**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deficit-centered focus</th>
<th>Matrix of domination</th>
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<td>Demographics</td>
<td>Resilience</td>
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<td>Ethnocentrism</td>
<td>Sex</td>
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<td>Family</td>
<td>Sexual orientation</td>
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<td>Family studies</td>
<td>Strategic living communities</td>
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<td>Fictive kin</td>
<td>Strength-centered focus</td>
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<td>Gender</td>
<td>Transgender</td>
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<td>Household</td>
<td>Transnational families</td>
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**LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

1. Review the findings of the Research Committee of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation (available at www.monticello.org). Why is the relationship between President Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings of interest to family scientists?
2. Politicians, religious leaders, and others lay claim to be “pro-family.” What does “pro-family” mean to you? (We will return to this question in the last chapter.)
3. Surf the websites of U.S. Bureau of the Census (www.census.gov), the Population Reference Bureau (www.prb.org), the United Nations Programme on the Family (http://social.un.org/index/Family.aspx), and the World Health Organization (www.who.int). These objective and timely sources of information on American and world demographic trends serve as a rich source of data and other information on families and households, children and youth. How does each define family?
4. Do the families you know reflect the demographic shifts presented in this chapter concerning life expectancy and fertility? What do these shifts portend for your family around such issues as child and elder care?
5. Using the touchstone indicator of intermarriage, how assimilated are the immigrant groups represented in your community? For example, have Norwegians married Swedes? Have Christians married Muslims? Have Africans married African Americans?
6. Of the sources of family diversity discussed in this chapter, which one is the easiest for you to reconcile with your own experiences and beliefs? Which is the hardest for you to reconcile?
7. Family Diversity Projects (www.familydiv.org) is a non-profit organization devoted to educating employees, students, parents, teachers, politicians, religious leaders, communities, and the general public about family diversity. Its website provides information on articles, books, and (at the time of this publication) a traveling multimedia exhibit on families in all their variety.
8. Does your favorite news source—print or electronic—depict the family as being in decline or in transition? Identify a news item that depicts families as resilient strategic living communities.
9. Which of the disciplines in Figure 1.1 express your major or other primary interests in family studies? In which additional areas would you like to develop your family studies skills?

10. Visit the website of the National Council on Family Relations (www.ncfr.org). As the premier interdisciplinary organization serving family scholars and practitioners, NCFR’s website offers a wealth of resources for every family studies professional.

11. Replicate the exercise we used in our study of single mothers, sketching your own family. You can be as elaborate or as simple as you like, using digital photographs or just stick figures to represent family members. First include individuals who meet the conventional definition of family: husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister, as well as any extended relations such as grandparents, aunts and uncles, and cousins. Next add any individuals who do not fit a conventional definition, but who are family to you nonetheless. Finally remove any individuals who fit a conventional definition, but who are not family in your lived experience. Explore the quality of these family relationships further. For example, if you want to specify those to whom you feel close or distant, or with whom you have a warm or chilly relationship, you might use blue or red colors. How might you denote relative positions of power and privilege?