Family Socialization
Defining Families

• Traditional Explanation
  • Social unit of people related through marriage, birth, or adoption who reside together in sanctioned relationships, engage in economic cooperation, socially approved sexual relations, and reproduction and child rearing

• Contemporary Explanation
  • Primary group of people—usually related by ancestry, marriage, or adoption—who form a cooperative economic unit and care for any young who consider their identity to be attached to the group; and are committed to maintaining the group.
Family Structure

• The *nuclear family* is comprised of one married couple residing together with their children.

• *Extended families* are the whole network of parents, children, and other relatives who form a family unit.

  • Extended families are common among the urban poor because they develop a cooperative system of social and economic support.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perspectives of the Family</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Functionalism</strong></td>
<td>Meet the need to socialize children and reproduce new members.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Conflict Theory</strong></td>
<td>Reinforce and support power relations in society.</td>
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## Perspectives of the Family

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Feminist Theory</th>
<th>Reflect the gender hierarchies in society.</th>
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<td>Symbolic Interaction</td>
<td>Emerge so people can meet basic needs and develop relationships.</td>
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Changes in the Family

- Since 1960 the amount of adults (between the ages of 35 – 44) who were married has gone down drastically
  - Divorce rates in the United States close to 50%

- Cohabitation
  - Some families deciding to live together and function as a family without formalizing process
    - Especially popular in Northern European societies
Change in Divorce Rates

Divorce rates

Source: Monthly Vital Statistics Reports
Impact of Family Structure on Society

• Divorce rates lead to negative views of marriage
  • Leading to less people wanting to get married in the first place
  • Increasing attractiveness of cohabitation
    • Increased disengagement from religious influences lead to less emphasis on the religious institution of marriage

• Higher involvement by extended family as extended families dissolve

• Changing definition of norms of what makes up a family
  • The new “normal” is not the same as the what it meant previously