

# MARRIAGES & FAMILIES

CHANGES, CHOICES, AND CONSTRAINTS

EIGHTH EDITION



MySocLab®

NIJOLE V. BENOKRAITIS

# Marriages & Families

**Changes, Choices, and Constraints**

**EIGHTH EDITION**

**Nijole V. Benokraitis**

*University of Baltimore*

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*To my husband, Vitalius.*





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# Preface

Welcome to the eighth edition of *Marriages & Families: Changes, Choices, and Constraints*! As in the past, a basic premise of this text is that information about family life can help us better understand the families in which we were raised and are forming ourselves. The significance of families extends beyond personal experience, however. Our marriages and families affect and are affected by larger social structures such as the economy, politics, education, religion, health care systems, and military organizations.

## Scholarly Work, Comprehensiveness, and Readability

This new edition incorporates information from almost 1,600 new books, scholarly articles, and reports. Providing students with the most up-to-date material and emerging issues on family behavior enhances their “pool of knowledge” (as one of my undergraduate sociology professors used to say) and helps them make better decisions in their everyday lives.

*Marriages & Families* offers students a comprehensive introduction to many issues facing families in the twenty-first century. Although written from a sociological perspective, the book incorporates material from other disciplines: history, economics, social work, psychology, law, biology, medicine, and anthropology. The material also encompasses family studies, women’s studies, and gay and lesbian studies, as well as both quantitative and qualitative studies. Nationally representative and longitudinal data are supplemented by insights from clinical, case, and observational studies.

Readability continues to be one of this textbook’s most attractive features. A major reason for this book’s success is that it discusses theories and recent studies in ways that students find interesting. As one of my students once said, “This is the first textbook I’ve had where I don’t count how many more pages I have to read while I’m still on the first page.”

In addition, faculty reviewers have consistently described the writing as “very clear” and “excellent.” According to one reviewer, for example, “The interesting anecdotes and quotes help to maintain the student’s interest while also providing realistic examples of the topic under discussion.”

## Continuity of Major Themes on the Contemporary Family

*Marriages & Families* continues to be distinguished from other textbooks in several important ways. It offers comprehensive coverage of the field, allowing instructors to select chapters that best suit their needs. It balances theoretical and empirical discussions with practical examples and applications.

The text highlights important contemporary *changes* in society and the family. It explores the *choices* that are available to family members and the *constraints* that often limit their choices. It also examines the diversity of U.S. families, using *cross-cultural* and *multicultural* material to encourage students to think about the many critical issues that confront the family of the twenty-first century.

## More Changes

Changes that affect the structure and functioning of today's families inform the pages of every chapter. In addition, several chapters focus on some major transformations in American society. Chapter 4, for example, examines the growing cultural diversity of the United States, focusing on African American, American Indian, Latino, Asian American, Middle Eastern, and interracial marriages and families. And Chapter 16 discusses how the rapid graying of America has affected adult children, grandchildren, and even great-grandchildren; family members' roles as caregivers; family relations in general; and the distribution of resources between the young and the old.

## More Choices

On the individual level, family members have many more choices today than ever before. People feel freer to postpone marriage, to cohabit, or to raise children as single parents. As a result, household forms vary greatly, ranging from commuter marriages to those in which several generations live together under the same roof.

As reproductive technology becomes increasingly sophisticated, many infertile couples and even menopausal women can now have children. With the growing acceptance of civil unions and same-sex marriages, many agencies, colleges, businesses, and state governments now offer same-sex couples more health, retirement, and other benefits than ever before.

Technological advances—such as the Internet, smartphones, and texting—have decreased our privacy, but they've also brought many family members together. People can contact one another quickly and relatively inexpensively, as well as gather information about their genealogy from many sources. In addition, sometimes people find a mate through online dating services.

## More Constraints

Family members' choices are more varied today than in the past, but we also face greater macro-level constraints. Government policies and legal institutions have a major impact on most families through tax laws, welfare reform, and even in defining what a family is. Because laws, public policies, and religious groups affect our everyday lives, I have framed many discussions of individual choices within the larger picture of the institutional constraints that limit our choices.

## Cross-Cultural and Multicultural Diversity in the United States

Contemporary American marriages and families vary greatly in structure, dynamics, and cultural heritage. Thus, discussions of gender roles, social class, race, ethnicity, age, and sexual orientation are integrated throughout this book. To further strengthen students' understanding of the growing diversity among today's families, I have also included a series of features that focus on families from many cultures as well as racial and ethnic groups within the United States. This material will encourage students to think about the many forms families may take and the different ways that family members interact.

## What's New in the Eighth Edition?

As past users know, a top priority of each new edition of this textbook is to thoroughly update national data and to provide the results of groundbreaking research that addresses the diversity of marriages and families. Because my major goal is to make each edition better than the previous one, I have revised all the chapters to reflect the latest theory and research, and I have updated examples throughout *Marriages & Families*. Specifically, new, updated, and expanded coverage includes the following:

### Chapter 1: The Changing Family

- Updates the demographic changes that characterize U.S. families, how technology affects families, the impact of popular culture, myths about the family, and growing ethnic diversity
- Offers new material on polygyny in other societies

### Chapter 2: Studying the Family

- Updates material on online surveys, evaluation research, and scientific dishonesty
- Presents a new discussion on content analysis, 2010 census strengths and limitations, social desirability bias, and introduces the concepts *probability* and *nonprobability samples*

### Chapter 3: The Family in Historical Perspective

- Expands and updates the section on “The Family Since the 1960s”

### Chapter 4: Racial and Ethnic Families: Strengths and Stresses

- Updates the material on immigration, social class, health and economic well-being, and the model minority
- Offers new data on the foreign-born population, Arab Americans, the prevalence of interracial/interethnic marriages, and introduces the concept of *colorism*
- A **new feature** (“The Changing Face of the Midwest”) examines how recent immigrants are revitalizing many small towns

### Chapter 5: Socialization and Gender Roles

- Includes new material on gender stereotypes, and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) majors
- Updates the analysis of global male violence, gender inequality across cultures, socialization, and gender roles at home and in the workplace, politics, education, and religion
- Introduces three new concepts: *gender ideology*, *gender script*, and *role model*
- **Two new features** are presented: “Should Children’s Toys Be Gender Neutral?” and “Male Violence: The World’s Worst Countries to Be a Woman”

### Chapter 6: Love and Loving Relationships

- Updates the material on biological perspective of love, exchange theory of love, jealousy, love in long-term relationships, and love in other cultures
- Includes new material on Facebook friends, narcissism, stalking, and cyberstalking

## **Chapter 7: Sexuality and Sexual Expression throughout Life**

- Updates the discussion of sexual scripts, girls' hypersexualization, female genital mutilation/cutting, casual sex, societal reactions to lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgender people (LGBTs), sex throughout life, sexual infidelity, and socially transmitted diseases (STDs)
- Provides new data on Kinsey's sexuality continuum, the "sexy babes" trend, early puberty and sex, Supreme Court decision on violent video games, LGBT prevalence, sex during the middle and later years, and why many parents don't talk about sex
- A new feature is provided: "What Are Some of the Myths about Sex and Sexual Response?"

## **Chapter 8: Choosing Others: Dating and Mate Selection**

- Provides recent data on traditional dating, hooking up, mail-order brides, online dating, speed dating, mate selection across cultures, arranged marriages, and breaking up
- Has new discussions of stayovers, attitudes about romance and interracial marriage, changes in black–white dating behavior, demographic characteristics of dating violence, how technology facilitates date violence, and interfaith, interracial, and interethnic marriages

## **Chapter 9: Singlehood, Cohabitation, Civil Unions, and Other Options**

- Updates the discussion of civil unions, states where same-sex marriages are legal, gives insights into why more Americans are living alone and why young people are postponing marriage
- Updates the material on who cohabits, why, and the benefits and costs of cohabitation

## **Chapter 10: Marriage and Communication in Intimate Relationships**

- Provides a current discussion of why marriage rates are falling, prenuptial agreements, same-sex marriages, how marriage affects health, what couples fight about, and the U.S. Supreme Court decision on same-sex marriage
- Offers new data on marriage by race and ethnicity, what purchases spouses hide, and the negative effects of communication problems
- Introduces the concept *validation*
- A new feature is presented: "Are Diamond Engagement Rings Losing Their Shine?"

## **Chapter 11: To Be or Not to Be a Parent: More Choices, More Constraints**

- Updates the material on what it costs to raise a child, U.S. and global birthrates, nonmarital childbearing, why birth rates have decreased, reasons for infertility, why people are postponing parenthood, domestic/international/transracial adoption, medical and high-tech solutions to infertility, abortion rates, and decreasing abortion services
- Introduces the concept *egg freezing*
- Offers new data on fathers and postpartum depression, why many teens don't use contraception, adoption by same-sex partners, and unintended pregnancy

## **Chapter 12: Raising Children: Promises and Pitfalls**

- Updates the material on ideal versus realistic parenting, whether spanking works, social class and parenting, parenting in same-sex families and over the life course, boomerang children, child care, and foster care
- Offers new data on how same-sex and opposite-sex parenting differ, bed-sharing, and the impact of electronic media on children's well-being
- Introduces two new concepts: *maternal gatekeeping* and *medicalization*

## **Chapter 13: The Economy and Family Life**

- Revises and updates discussions of globalization, offshoring, unions, how the economy affects families, women's labor force rates, two-income families, and inequality in the workplace
- Introduces the concept of *glass escalator*
- A new feature is included: "Some Perks and Perils of Telecommuting"

## **Chapter 14: Domestic Violence and Other Family Health Issues**

- Updates material on intimate partner violence (prevalence, severity, variations by age, gender, race/ethnicity, and social class), child maltreatment effects, elder mistreatment, substance abuse, obesity, depression, suicide, and other family health problems
- New data and discussion of women who abuse men, violence among same-sex partners, and smoking as a major health problem
- Introduces the concept *polyvictimization*

## **Chapter 15: Separation, Divorce, Remarriage, and Stepfamilies**

Faculty who have used previous editions of *Marriages & Families* will notice that I have merged Chapters 15 and 16. I did so because the four topics—separation, divorce, remarriage, and stepfamilies—are interrelated, and I wanted to avoid repetition as well as decrease the number of chapters in the textbook.

- Offers new data on divorce among racial-ethnic groups, same-sex couples, and how and why remarriage rates vary among racial ethnic groups
- Updates the material on divorce, remarriage rates, the effects of social class and the economy on divorce, how divorce affects adults and children, who pays and gets child support, the cumulative effect of divorce, and the diversity and demographic characteristics of stepfamilies

## **Chapter 16: Families in Later Life**

- Updates life expectancy rates in the United States compared with other countries, old-age-dependency ratio, dementia and Alzheimer's, why many people are postponing retirement, the rise of custodial grandparents and multigenerational households, physician-assisted suicide, widowhood, caregivers, and recipients
- Introduces a new concept: *durable power of attorney for health care*
- Provides new data and discussions of aging diversity by race and ethnicity, why disability rates have increased, and the rising competition for scarce resources between the young and the old

# Features in the Eighth Edition

I have maintained several popular features such as the Data Digest and the “author’s files” quotations based on my students’ comments and class discussions.

## Data Digest

I introduced the Data Digest in the second edition because “all those numbers” from the Census Bureau, empirical studies, and demographic trends often overwhelmed students (both mine and others). Because this has been a popular feature, I’ve updated the U.S. statistics and have included information about other countries. The Data Digest that introduces each chapter provides students with a thought-provoking overview of current statistics and trends and makes “all those numbers” more interesting and digestible.

The first question from my students is usually “Will this material be on the exam?” Not in my classes. I always saw the Data Digest as piquing student curiosity about the chapter rather than providing a lot of numbers to memorize. Some instructors tell me that their students have used the Data Digest to develop class presentations or course papers.

### DATA DIGEST

- The “**traditional**” family (in which the husband is the breadwinner and the wife is a full-time homemaker) declined from 40 percent of all U.S. households in 1970 to 20 percent in 2010.
- More than 14 million American **singles ages 30 to 44 have never been married**, representing 24 percent of all people in that age group.
- The U.S. **median age at first marriage** is the highest ever recorded: 28.7 years for men and 26.5 years for women.
- On average, **first marriages that end in divorce** last about eight years.
- The percentage of **children under age 18 living with two married parents** fell from 77 percent in 1980 to 64 percent in 2012.
- **Children make up 24 percent of the population**, down from a peak of 36 percent in 1964.

Sources: Kreider and Elliott, 2009; Kreider and Ellis, 2011; Tavernise, 2011; Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 2012; U.S. Census Bureau, 2012; U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2012; Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2012; U.S. Census Bureau News, 2012.

## Material from Author’s Files

Faculty who reviewed previous editions of *Marriages & Families*, and many students as well, liked the anecdotes and personal experiences that illustrate sometimes abstract theories and concepts. In this new edition, I weave more of this material into the text. Thus, I include many examples from discussions in my own classes (cited as “author’s files”) to enliven theoretical perspectives and abstract concepts.

## Pedagogical Features

The pedagogical features in *Marriages & Families*—ranging from the “Since You Asked” items to features in each chapter—have been designed to capture students’ attention and to help them understand and recall the material. Each has been carefully crafted to ensure that it ties in clearly to the text material, enhancing its meaning and applicability.

## Learning Objectives

Learning objectives are new to this edition of *Marriages & Families*. Each chapter begins with learning objectives that indicate what students should know after reading the material. The learning objectives are reinforced with specific questions at the end of each chapter that unite the topics, help students gauge their comprehension, and signal what topics they might have to reread.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After you read and study this chapter you will be able to:

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Compare the manifest and latent functions of dating.  | 8.1 |
| Outline the characteristics, benefits, and costs of traditional and contemporary dating patterns. | 8.2 |
| Describe five strategies for meeting dating partners.   | 8.3 |
| Compare three mate-selection theories.  | 8.4 |
| Describe some of the mate-selection differences across cultures.                                  | 8.5 |
| Describe the prevalence of dating violence, and explain why it occurs and its consequences.       | 8.6 |

## MAKING CONNECTIONS

- Return to *Table 2.1* (p. 36) for a moment. Does this model illustrate your family of orientation? What about your family of procreation? If not, how have the stages you've experienced been different?
- Why does your family behave the way it does? Which theory or theories seem to be the most useful to you in answering this question? Why?

## STOP AND THINK . . .

- Have you ever participated in an online survey? Why or why not?
- So far, there are no established federal guidelines for online surveys. Should there be such guidelines? Or should respondents be responsible for reading the fine print and deciding whether or not to participate?

## Since you asked . . .

- Has technology strengthened or weakened our family relationships?

## Encouraging Students to Think More Critically

All editions of this textbook have prodded students to think about themselves and their families in the “Ask Yourself” features. Because of their popularity, especially in sparking lively class discussions, I’ve expanded two features (“Making Connections” and “Stop and Think”) that were introduced in the sixth edition:

### Making Connections

At several points in each chapter, these items ask students to link the material to their own lives by relating it to a personal experience, by integrating it with studies discussed in the chapter, or by “connecting” with classmates who might be sitting next to them in class.

### Stop and Think

These critical thinking questions are at the end of features throughout the textbook. The purpose of these items is to encourage students to reflect about current topics, both personally and compared with other cultures.

### Since You Asked

Each chapter has between eight and ten questions that introduce an important idea or concept or preview a controversial issue about families and marriages. Many of these questions are similar to those that my students have raised in class or online discussions.

### Applying What You’ve Learned

This series of features emphasizes the connection between research findings and students’ own attitudes and experiences. The material, both new and revised, asks students to apply what they’re reading to their own personal situations and to consider how to improve their decision making and current relationships.

#### Applying What You’ve Learned

#### Am I Prejudiced?

All of us, whether we realize it or not, sometimes have strong positive or negative feelings about other racial-ethnic groups. Answer the questions in this quiz as honestly as possible. After you finish, look at the key.

| Usually True             | Usually False            |  | Usually True             | Usually False            |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. Latino men have a more macho attitude toward women than do other men.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. African Americans, both women and men, are more likely to commit crimes than are members of other racial-ethnic groups, including whites. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. Don’t trust Arab Americans. Some are decent, but most want to spread Islam and aren’t loyal to the United States.                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. Asian American business owners are greedier than other business owners.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. There are some exceptions, but most Latinos don’t succeed because they’re lazy.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. The majority of Asian Americans tend to be shy and quiet.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. Most Asian Americans aren’t as sociable as other people.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. Most whites are simply more capable than other groups—especially African Americans and Latinos—in doing their jobs.                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

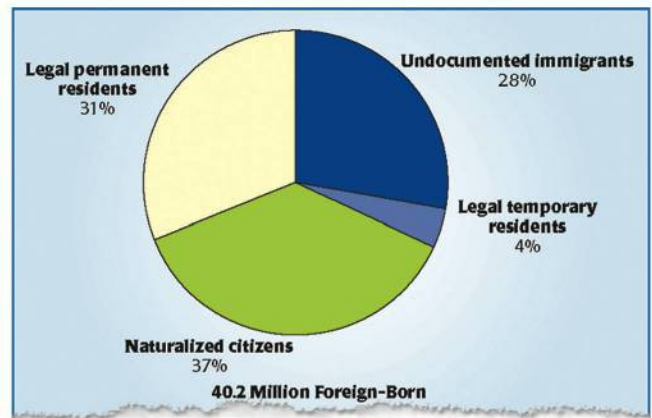
**KEY TO “AM I PREJUDICED?”**  
Of these eight items, the higher your score for “usually true,” the more likely that you’re prejudiced and stereotype racial-ethnic groups. The purpose of this quiz is to encourage you to think how you feel about people outside your immediate circle.  
Sources: Based on material in Godfrey et al., 2000; Lin et al., 2005; and Esposito and Mogahed, 2007.

### Informative and Engaging Illustration Program

Most chapters contain figures that, in bold and original artistic designs, demonstrate concepts such as the exchange theory of dating, romantic versus lasting love, and theories of mating, as well as presenting descriptive statistics in innovative and visually appealing ways.

## Figures and Tables

Many students tend to skip over figures and tables because they're afraid of numbers, they don't trust statistics (see Chapter 2), or the material seems boring or complicated. Regardless of which textbooks I used and in *all* the courses I taught, I routinely highlighted some of the figures in class. As I tell my students, a good figure or table may be more memorable than an author's explanation. To encourage students to look at data, I have streamlined many figures.



**FIGURE 4.2** Legal Status of the U.S. Foreign-Born Population, 2010  
Source: Based on Passel and Cohn, 2011.

## Key Terms and Glossary

Important terms and concepts appearing in boldface type within the text are defined in the margins where they first appear. All key terms and their definitions are repeated in the Glossary at the end of the book.

**hormones** Chemical substances secreted into the bloodstream by endocrine glands.

## Thought-Provoking Features

Reflecting and reinforcing the book's primary themes, three groups of features focus on the changes, choices, and constraints that confront today's families. A fourth group of features illustrates racial-ethnic families in the United States and cross-cultural variations in other countries. The other two series of features help students assess their own knowledge and gain insights about family life.

**CHANGES FEATURES** show how marriages and families have been changing or are expected to change in the future. Some of them are historical, some are anecdotal, and some are empirically based. For example, a feature in Chapter 9, "Why Do Americans Favor or Oppose Same-Sex Marriages?" examines some of the beliefs and attitudes that fuel continuing debates on same-sex marriage.

### Changes Why Do Americans Favor or Oppose Same-Sex Marriages?

Homosexuality and especially same-sex marriages are among the most controversial issues in America, dividing friends, families, and religious communities. Here are some of the beliefs and attitudes that fuel the debates.

| Same-sex marriage should be legal because . . .   | Same-sex marriage should not be legal because . . .   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Attitudes and laws change. Until 1967, for example, interracial marriages were prohibited.</li><li>Gay marriages would strengthen families and long-term unions that already exist. Children would be better off with parents who are legally married.</li><li>It would be easier for same-sex couples to adopt children, especially children with emotional and physical disabilities.</li><li>There are no scientific studies showing that children raised by gay and lesbian parents are worse off than those raised by heterosexual parents.</li><li>Every person should be able to marry someone that she or he loves.</li><li>Same-sex marriages would benefit religious organizations both spiritually and emotionally and bolster membership.</li><li>Gay marriages are good for the economy because they boost businesses such as restaurants, bakeries, hotels, airlines, and florists.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Interracial marriages are between women and men, but gay marriages violate many people's notions about male-female unions.</li><li>Children need a mom and a dad, not a gay/lesbian couple.</li><li>All adopted children—those with and without disabilities—are better off with parents who can provide heterosexual gender role models.</li><li>There are no scientific studies showing that children raised by gay and lesbian parents are better off than those raised by heterosexual parents.</li><li>People can love each other without getting married.</li><li>Same-sex marriages would polarize church members who are opposed to gay unions and decrease the size of congregations.</li><li>What's good for the economy isn't necessarily good for society, especially its moral values and religious beliefs.</li></ul> |

Sources: LaFraniere and Goodstein, 2007; Masi, 2008a; Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, 2008a; Semuels, 2008a; Bennett and Ellison, 2010; Olson, 2010; Sprigg, 2011.

**STOP AND THINK . . .**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Many states have passed laws that limit marriage to a man and a woman. Do you agree or not?</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What other reasons can you add for each side of the debate?</li></ul> |
|---|---|



**CHOICES FEATURES** illustrate the kinds of decisions families can make to improve their well-being, often highlighting options of which family members may be unaware. For example, one feature in Chapter 12, “Is Spanking Effective or Harmful?” shows that parents have more choices than spanking to discipline their children.

## Choices

### Is Spanking Effective or Harmful?

So far, 31 nations have passed laws that prohibit the corporal punishment of children (Durrant and Ensom, 2012). The United States isn't one of them. In fact, a large majority of Americans support spanking (see Data Digest).

A study that examined 14 European nations found that the countries that prohibit children's physical punishment have a much lower number of child maltreatment deaths than the countries that don't have such laws. Initially, many Swedes opposed anti-spanking laws, predicting that the children would run wild. Instead, youth crime rates, drug use, and suicide rates decreased (Straus, 2007; Gracia and Herrero, 2008).

In the United States, some spanking advocates maintain that spanking is effective, prepares children for life's hardships, and prevents misbehavior. They contend that spanking is acceptable if it's age appropriate, doesn't injure the child physically, and is used selectively to teach and correct behavior rather than as an expression of rage (Trumbull and Ravenel, 1999; Larzele

researchers have offered a number of reasons for not spanking or hitting children:

- **Physical punishment sends the message that it's okay to hurt someone you love or someone who is smaller and less powerful.** A parent who spansks often says, “I'm doing this because I love you.” Thus, children learn that violence and love can go hand in hand and that hitting is an appropriate way to express one's feelings (Hunt, 1991).
- **No human being feels loving toward someone who hits her or him.** A strong relationship is based on kindness. Hitting produces only temporary and superficially good behavior based on fear (Marshall, 2002).
- **Physical punishment is often due to a parent's substance abuse rather than a child's misbehavior.** Parents who abuse drugs are often ineffective caregivers because intoxication impairs their decision-making abilities. They're

and using drugs instead of caring for their children (Straus, 2007, 2008).

- **Spanking can be physically damaging.** Spanking can injure the spinal column and nerves and even cause paralysis. Some children have died after mild paddlings because of undiagnosed medical problems such as a weak lower spinal column that can't withstand a blow (American Academy of Pediatrics, 1998).
- **Physical punishment deprives the child of opportunities to learn effective problem solving.** Physical punishment teaches a child nothing about how to handle conflict or disagreements (Straus, 2010).

#### STOP AND THINK

- When you were a child, did your parents spank you? Did the spanking change your behavior?
- Should the United States ban spanking? Or would such laws interfere with parenting decisions?

## Constraints

### Some Reasons for the Rising U.S. Inequality

Multiple factors have increased the inequality gap. Some social analysts contend that many Americans are in financial trouble because, over the past decades, we've shifted from a “culture of thrift” to a “culture of debt” (Brooks, 2008: 19). Others argue that our economic crisis is due, largely, to **corporate welfare**, an array of direct subsidies, tax breaks, and other favorable treatment that the government has created for businesses. For example,

- American taxpayers are paying \$12.2 trillion for the federal government's bailing out of mismanaged financial institutions. The executives of the companies still receive multimillion-dollar annual salaries and benefits (“Adding up . . .,” 2011; Milder and Green, 2012; Sparshott, 2013).
- Corporate income tax rates in the United States decreased from 53 percent in 1952 to 11 percent in 2010. In contrast, the tax burden of an average employee ranges from 33 percent to 41 percent (Anderson et al., 2011; Buffet, 2011).
- Some corporations pay no taxes at all. In 2010, General Electric—the nation's largest

corporation—reported worldwide profits of \$14.2 billion, received a federal tax benefit of \$3.2 billion, paid its top CEO almost \$12 million, and spent almost \$42 million to lobby Congress for tax breaks (Anderson et al., 2011; Kocieniewski, 2011; Lublin, 2011; see also Niquette, 2011).

The Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movement began in mid-2011 in New York City's Wall Street financial district. The protestors' slogan, “We are the 99%,” referred to the growing U.S. income inequality between the richest 1 percent and the rest of the population.

Why was the movement short-lived? Americans think that the richest 20 percent control about 59 percent of the wealth, but the real number is closer to 84 percent. Not understanding our nation's extreme wealth disparity helps explain why people aren't demanding greater economic equality (DeGraw, 2011; Norton and Ariely, 2011).

Second, 43 percent of Americans believe that the rich are more intelligent and hardworking than the average person (Parker, 2012). Such attitudes ignore the importance of inherited wealth,

but reinforce the belief that hard work brings success.

Third, in both 1990 and 2012, 63 percent of Americans said that the country benefits from having a rich class of people (Newport, 2012; see also Trumbull, 2012). Such attitudes may be reflecting many Americans' hopes that they, too, will be wealthy someday, or many Americans don't see the connection between structural economic inequality and their own financial situation (Norton and Ariely, 2011).

#### STOP AND THINK . . .

- Some executive recipients of corporate welfare—such as Bill Gates, Warren Buffet, and businessman George Soros—have donated billions of dollars to improve education, health care, and human rights in the United States and other countries (Whelan, 2011). So, does corporate welfare benefit taxpayers?
- Do you believe that hard work brings success?

**CONSTRAINTS FEATURES** point out some of the obstacles that limit our choices. These features highlight the fact that although most of us are raised to believe that we can do whatever we want, we are often constrained by macro-level socioeconomic, demographic, and cultural factors. For example, a feature in Chapter 13, “Some Reasons for the Rising U.S. Inequality,” shows that many Americans are struggling to survive economically not because they have low educational levels and lack motivation, but because of other economic factors such as corporate welfare, a surge of low-paying jobs, and offshoring.

**CROSS-CULTURAL AND MULTICULTURAL FAMILIES FEATURES** illustrate the diversity of family structures and dynamics, both in the United States and in other countries. For example, a feature in Chapter 6, “Modern Arranged Marriages in India,” contrasts the American open style of dating with arranged courtship and marriage in India.

## Cross-Cultural and Multicultural Families

### Modern Arranged Marriages in India

In India, the majority of marriages are arranged by parents or elders: “There has never been any room for romantic marriage in Indian society on the line of Western societies” (Singh, 2005: 143). Arranged marriages help maintain social and religious traditions, preserve group solidarity, and can augment a family's reputation and financial assets (Nesteruk and Gramescu, 2012).

There are variations in different regions and social classes, however. Educated, upper-middle-class women are allowed to marry whomever they want, but many opt for arranged marriages. One young woman explained: “Love is important, but it's not sufficient.” She reportedly happily married to a man whom she had met just three times before their engagement. In most cases, children can reject undesirable candidates (Lakshmanan, 1997; Epstein, 2010).

A young Indian American has convinced her parents to let her

instead of having an arranged marriage. She says, however, “In college, I just could not understand why anyone would marry someone without falling in love first. But as I've seen [my parents'] love grow over the years, I have had a deeper appreciation for their arranged marriage” (Luhar, 2013).

Why do arranged marriages persist in much of India? Why do people end up with a good partner because parents and relatives seem to do a good job in choosing mates. Also, arranged marriages offer stability because the couple's families stand behind them: “If the relationship between the couples is about to go haywire . . . parents of both spouses make concerted efforts to resolve the crisis” (Singh, 2005: 144).

Arranged marriages also persist because of family ties. Even financially independent couples usually live with the husband's parents. As a result,

similar backgrounds and compatibility with in-laws are more important in India than in the West. The advantage is considerable family support if a marriage runs into trouble. These may be some of the reasons why India has one of the lowest divorce rates in the world (Epstein, 2010).

#### STOP AND THINK . . .

- Why are arranged marriages less fragile than marriages based on love?
- In arranged marriages, factors such as social class and religion are more important than romantic love or physical attraction. If Americans endorsed arranged love, do you think that our divorce rates would decrease? Why or why not?

## APPLYING WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED FEATURES

ask students to think critically about research findings on a personal level. Such reflections should stimulate students to challenge common misconceptions about family life and to improve their own decision making and relationships. For example, a feature in Chapter 14, “Some Warning Signs of Intimate Partner Abuse,” asks students to consider whether they or other family members recognize some of the signs of abuse before it actually occurs.

### Applying What You've Learned

#### Some Warning Signs of Intimate Partner Abuse

There are numerous clues for potential IPV. How many of these red flags do you recognize in your or your friends' relationships?

- **Verbal abuse:** Constant criticism, ignoring what you say, mocking, name calling, yelling, and swearing.
- **Sexual abuse:** Forcing or demanding sexual acts that you don't want to perform.
- **Disrespect:** Interrupting, telling you what you should think and how you should feel, putting you down in front of other people, saying ugly things about your friends and family.
- **Isolation:** Trying to cut you off from family and friends, monitoring your phone calls, reading your e-mail or text messages, controlling where you go, taking your car keys and cell phone.
- **Emotional neglect:** Not expressing feelings, not giving compliments, not respecting your feelings and opinions.
- **Jealousy:** Very possessive, calling constantly or visiting unexpectedly, checking the mileage on your car, not wanting you to work because “you might meet someone.”
- **Unrealistic expectations:** Expecting you to be the perfect mate and meet his/her every need.
- **Blaming others for problems:** It's *always* someone else's fault if something goes wrong.
- **Rigid gender roles:** Expecting you to serve, obey, and always stay home.
- **Extreme mood swings:** Switching from sweet to abusive and violent in minutes or being very kind one day and very vicious the next.
- **Cruelty to animals and children:** Killing or punishing pets brutally, expecting children to do things that are far beyond their ability or tease them until they cry.
- **Threats of violence:** Saying things such as “I'll break your neck” and then dismissing them with “I didn't really mean it” or “Everybody talks like that.”
- **Destruction of property:** Destroying furniture, punching walls or doors, throwing things, breaking dishes or other household articles.
- **Self-destructive behavior:** Abusing drugs or alcohol, threatening self-harm or suicide, getting into fights with people, causing problems at work (such as telling off the boss).

## ASK YOURSELF

### If This Is Love, Why Do I Feel So Bad?

If you often feel bad about your relationship, what you're experiencing may be control, not love. Controllers use whatever tactics are necessary to maintain power over another person: nagging, cajoling, coaxing, flattery, charm, threats, self-pity, blame, insults, or humiliation.

In the worst cases, controllers may physically injure and even murder people who refuse to be controlled. As you read this list, check any items that you've experienced. Individually, the items may seem unimportant, but if you check off more than two or three, you may be dealing with a controller instead of forging your own choices in life.

- My partner calls me names: “dummy,” “jackass,” “whore,” “creep,” “bitch,” “moron.”
- My partner always criticizes me and makes even a compliment sound like a criticism: “This is the first good dinner you've cooked in months.”
- Always right, my partner continually corrects things I say or do.
- My partner withdraws into silence, and I have to figure out what I've done wrong and apologize for it.
- My partner is jealous when I talk to new people.
- My partner often phones or unexpectedly comes by the place where I work to see if I'm “okay.”
- My partner acts very cruelly and then says I'm too sensitive and can't take a joke.
- When I express my opinion about something, my partner doesn't respond, walks away, or makes fun of me.
- My partner says that if I ever leave, he or she will commit suicide and I'll be responsible.
- When my partner has a temper tantrum, he or she says it's my fault or the children's.
- My partner makes fun of my weight, clothes, or appearance.
- Whether my partner is with me or not, she or he is jealous of every minute I spend with my family or other relatives or friends.
- My partner throws things at me or hits, shoves, or pushes me.

## ASK YOURSELF FEATURES

are self-assessment exercises that encourage students to think about and evaluate their knowledge about marriage and the family. They help students develop guidelines for action, either their own or on another's behalf. For example, the feature in Chapter 6, “If This Is Love, Why Do I Feel So Bad?” helps students evaluate their current situations and make the decision to leave an abusive relationship.

# Supplements

The supplement package for this textbook is exceptional. Each component has been meticulously crafted to amplify and illuminate materials in the text.

**INSTRUCTOR'S RESOURCE MANUAL WITH TESTS** Revised by Henry Borne of Holy Cross College in Indiana and Ann Marie Kinnell at the University of Southern Mississippi, each chapter in the manual includes the following resources: chapter learning objectives, chapter overview, lecture suggestions and classroom discussions, activities, and multimedia resources. Designed to make your lectures more effective and to save preparation time, this extensive resource gathers together the most effective activities and strategies for teaching your Marriage and Family course.

Also included in this manual is a test bank of approximately 2,000 multiple-choice, true/false, short-answer, and essay questions. Additionally, each chapter of the test bank includes a ready-made 10-item quiz with an answer key for immediate use in class.

The Instructor's Resource Manual with Tests is available to adopters at [www.pearsonhighered.com](http://www.pearsonhighered.com) and through the MySocLab website for *Marriages & Families, 8e*.

**MYTEST** This computerized software allows instructors to create their own personalized exams, to edit any or all of the existing test questions, and to add new questions. Other special features of this program include random generation of test questions, creation of alternate versions of the same test, scrambling question sequence, and test preview before printing. For easy access, this software is available within the instructor section of the MySocLab website for *Marriages & Families, 8e*, or at [www.pearsonhighered.com](http://www.pearsonhighered.com).

**POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS** You have the option in every chapter of choosing from Lecture and/or Line Art presentations. The Lecture PowerPoint slides follow the chapter outline and feature images from the textbook integrated with the text. The Line Art PowerPoint features all the art, organized by chapter, available in a PowerPoint-ready format. They are available to adopters at [www.pearsonhighered.com](http://www.pearsonhighered.com) and through the MySocLab website for *Marriages & Families, 8e*.

## MySocLab™

MySocLab is an easy-to-use online resource that allows instructors to assess student progress and adapt course material to meet the specific needs of the class. This resource enables students to diagnose their progress by completing an online self-assessment test. Based on the results of this test, each student is provided with a customized study plan, including a variety of tools to help him or her fully master the material. MySocLab then reports the self-assessment results to the instructor as individual student grades as well as an aggregate report of class progress. Based on these reports, the instructor can adapt course material to suit the needs of individual students or the class as a whole.

MySocLab includes several exciting new features. *Social Explorer* provides easy access to census data from 1790 to the present. You can explore the data visually through interactive data maps. *MySocLibrary* contains numerous original source readings with discussion questions and assessment exercises.

Contact your local Pearson Education representative for ordering information, or visit [www.myfamilylab.com](http://www.myfamilylab.com).

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# About the Author

Nijole V. Benokraitis, professor emerita of sociology at the University of Baltimore, taught the Marriage and Family course for almost 25 years. Professor Benokraitis received a B.A. in sociology and English from Emmanuel College in Boston, an M.A. in sociology from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and a Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Texas at Austin.

Being a strong proponent of applied sociology, Professor Benokraitis required her students to enhance their knowledge through interviews, direct observation, and other hands-on learning methods. She also enlisted her students in community service activities such as tutoring and mentoring inner-city high school students, writing to government officials and other decision makers about specific social problems, and volunteering research services to nonprofit organizations. See [www.allmysoc.com](http://www.allmysoc.com) to find out more about Dr. Benokraitis's background, and selected publications and professional activities. Professor Benokraitis and her husband, Dr. Vitalius Benokraitis, have two adult children, Gema and Andrius.

The author looks forward (and always responds) to comments on the 8th edition of *Marriages & Families: Changes, Choices, and Constraints*. She can be reached at [nbenokraitis@ubalt.edu](mailto:nbenokraitis@ubalt.edu).

# The Changing Family



Listen to Chapter 1 on [MySocLab](#)

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After you read and study this chapter you will be able to:

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| Explain how traditional and contemporary definitions of family differ.  | 1.1 |
| Describe five family functions and two marriage rules that are similar worldwide.                                 | 1.2 |
| Describe five ways families differ worldwide.   | 1.3 |
| Describe five myths about families and distinguish between functional and dysfunctional myths.                    | 1.4 |
| Describe three perspectives on why families are changing.   | 1.5 |
| Explain how U.S. families have been changing in terms of demographic characteristics and racial-ethnic diversity. | 1.6 |
| Explain how macro-level constraints affect families' micro-level choices.   | 1.7 |
| Explain why multicultural, cross-cultural, and global perspectives are important in understanding families.       | 1.8 |

