

Handbook of Marriage and the Family

Edited by
Marvin B. Sussman
and
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**Handbook of
Marriage and the Family**

To Reuben Hill

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Foreword

The lucid, straightforward Preface of this *Handbook* by the two editors and the comprehensive perspectives offered in the Introduction by one of them leave little for a Foreword to add. It is therefore limited to two relevant but not intrinsically related points vis-à-vis research on marriage and the family in the interval since the first *Handbook* (Christensen, 1964) appeared, namely: the impact on this research of the politicization of the New Right¹ and of the Feminist Enlightenment beginning in the mid-sixties, about the time of the first *Handbook*.

In the late 1930s Willard Waller noted: "Fifty years or more ago about 1890, most people had the greatest respect for the institution called the family and wished to learn nothing whatever about it. . . . Everything that concerned the life of men and women and their children was shrouded from the light. Today much of that has been changed. Gone is the concealment of the way in which life begins, gone the irrational sanctity of the home. The aura of sentiment which once protected the family from discussion clings to it no more. . . . We want to learn as much about it as we can and to understand it as thoroughly as possible, for there is a rising recognition in America that vast numbers of its families are sick—from internal frustrations and from external buffeting. We are engaged in the process of reconstructing our family institutions through criticism and discussion" (1938, pp. 3–4).

In the postwar period, the constraints on research on marriage and the family did seem to be relaxing. Thus, about thirty years after Waller's first celebration of the growing freedom and four years after the first *Handbook*, Reuben Hill, in a talk at the twenty-fifth birthday of the American Association of Marriage Counselors, summarized the then-current status of marriage and family research and noted that, after many years of being hazard, it was now safe. Textbooks no longer had to deal primarily with ancient or exotic families because "to analyze the contemporary family dispassionately would offend the prevailing moral sentiments. It was thought a violation of the sanctity of the home and made researchers open to censorship from agents of the social order" (1968, p. 21). As recently as the 1930s, researchers had lost their jobs for disturbing the innocence of the young by studying courtship on campus. But now family research was free; free at last. It was no longer necessary to hide the fact that many families were sick; that there were such things as violence in the family; that not all families rode on sleighs to grandmother's house for Thanksgiving dinner. But again, such freedom was still precarious. Even studying ancient or exotic families was becoming less and less safe.

There is a long history of opposition to the uses to which research on marriage and family can be intrinsic to the ambience in which academic research must be carried on. Such opposition may rise and fall, take on varying issues to attack, and wax and wane in its impact. In the period since Christensen's *Handbook of Marriage and the Family* (1964) appeared, two aspects of the ongoing opposition deserve attention. One is that the opponents of the standard research and teaching tradition in academia are now more sophisticated, more educated; the other is that they are now politicized.

Until recently, the opposing sides were widely disparate in sophistication. Education, knowledge, science, and research were on the side of those whom John Scanlon called the Progressives. Conviction and commitment were on the side of those whom he called the Conservatives. In recent years, the Conservatives have been going to college; they have become exposed to research of all kinds and have

¹I am using the overall term *New Right* even though it is not a homogeneous entity but rather a congeries of groups that may disagree on specific issues though they agree on others. It includes, among other groups: Falwell's Moral Majority (more than half of whom do not even share his religious fundamentalism, 30% being Catholic, and a substantial number Jewish or Mormon); Evangelicals; Christian Voice; several fundamentalist Baptist Fellowships; and even an Orthodox Presbyterian group (D'Souza, *Washington Post*, 1984).

learned a vocabulary with which to state their case. They have become more knowledgeable research-wise, better armed to meet their opposite numbers with self-confidence. They are no longer the "Bible Belt booboisie" that H. L. Mencken had had so much fun with. They are now in a position to draw up a Family Protection bill that targets exactly the results of academic research that goes into textbooks. The researchers have armed them. They have become like the Jesuit who is trained to know his opponents' arguments as well as they do and to be prepared to state them even better.

The other great difference between present and past Conservatives is that today they are highly politicized. Political activism, once forbidden as a sin, has now become a duty; it is non-activism that has become a sin. As recently as 1965, a year after the first *Handbook*, one of their leaders, the Rev. Jerry Falwell, still believed that the Bible forbade political activism. Preachers were called soul-winners, not politicians. Preparing for the imminent end of the world was more pressing than gaining more political power. But in the 1960s and 1970s there was a radical change of heart among the New Right. They felt that the power structure in our society, including universities and the intelligentsia, was controlled by the Progressives. In part, the kind of research reported in the Sussman and Steinmetz *Handbook*, for example, chapters on nontraditional family forms, voluntary childlessness, single-parent families, and divorce, supplied them with their grievances.

In time, they learned the game of politics and played it to the hilt. It was no longer possible for the good Christian to stay out of politics. Of the several issues that concerned them, the most relevant here are those having to do with the family. Thus, in the 96th Congress, Senator Paul Laxalt introduced a Family Protection Act (S. 1808) aimed at restoring "the historical [read traditional] family." Among its 35 major provisions was one that would prohibit federal support for "any program that teaches children values that contradict demonstrated community beliefs or textbooks that denigrate, diminish or deny the historically understood role differences between the sexes" (X 13550). That bill was not passed but similar ones could be expected to be introduced in the future.²

In the 1980 NCFR program, Reuben Hill assessed some of the expectable consequences for family research of the new political climate. He saw a "pulling back" to "safer ground" and asked what did this "winding down" portend for family research in the eighties. "There will be an expedient retreat and regress, in the face of economic restrictions. . . . Leaving large-scale national studies to the better financed research bureaucracies, individual scholars will turn to exploratory descriptions of families in transition using small, local samples" (Hill, 1981, pp. 256–257).

Reuben Hill was not one to be pessimistic. He was reassuring. "We can make a virtue out of poverty, if that is what we face in the 1980's" (p. 256). Much of the small-scale, intimate, exploratory research "generates more discoveries per hour expended than large scale quantitative verification or experimentally designed studies in laboratories" (p. 256).

This insight ties in with the second point mentioned at the beginning of this Foreword: the rise of the Feminist Enlightenment in the mid-to-late 1960s *pari passu* with renaissance feminism. A considerable amount of the research in renaissance feminism was directed toward this kind of research and it did "generate more discoveries per hour expended" than large-scale studies in which human beings are transformed into "variables" and in which we learn a great deal more about "variables" than about marriage or families.

Jacqueline Wiseman (1980) reminded family researchers of a major missed cue: "Family theorists and researchers did *not* predict the onset of what we now term 'the sexual revolution,' a tidal wave of change in the mores of intimate behavior. Neither the women's liberation movement nor the gay liberation movement appears to have been reflected in our crystal ball. Rather, these phenomena had to be studied after they came into existence" (p. 263).

According to Scanzoni, "There was little or nothing in the 1960's body of research and theory. . . that would have stimulated analysts to move in this direction. Instead, the move was stimulated by happenings in the 'real world'—in particular the revival of feminism" (1983, pp. 237–238). He sees this inability of family theory to anticipate these changes as "indicative of the apparent irrelevance of that theory" (p. 238). And he challenges family scholarship to get with it (p. 238). A brief glance at the way some of the family textbooks were dealing with the women's movement and feminism may help to explain why they did not anticipate their renaissance. Family sociologists did not approve of them. The treatment of the

²In 1984, a group of parents appealed to the Department of Education under an amendment to a 1978 education act, authored by Orrin Hatch, that called for parental consent before children could take part in federally funded activities including, among other such activities, research surveys. Under that amendment anything that was designed "to reveal information about . . . sexual behavior and attitudes . . . or to elicit critical appraisals of family members" was forbidden. Letters by parents to schools disapproved of participation in "role reversal" and "open-ended discussion."

women's movement or feminism in the 1920s and 1930s was either simply a straightforward historical sketch as a "won" case, as in Groves' 1934 or Baber's 1939 texts, or ignored as in Waller's 1938 text. In the 1940s textbooks, such as Burgess and Lock (1943) and Bossard (1948), the effects of war and depression on the status of women began to be included.

The 1964 *Handbook* appeared too early to catch the "tidal wave of change," as Wiseman called it, that was already beginning to sweep over the country. Panos D. Bardis paid his respects to the emancipation of women and specified it as one of the seven main changes in the American family. He was not implying that complete sexual equality had been achieved (1964, p. 457);³ this was still a male-centered world and many women preferred it that way.

In broad strokes, then, the trajectory had been one in which the textbooks in the first years after 1920 reported the end of the women's movement now that its major goal of achieving the suffrage had been reached and gave it mainly historical attention and a hopeful prognosis. Textbooks of the 1930s and 1940s were beginning to tip in a negative direction vis-à-vis feminism as its implications began to come clear, a trend which became more marked in the babyboom 1950s. The toting-up of pros and cons in the early 1960s tended to emphasize the cons for both women themselves and for society as a whole. It was a period when it was not at all clear what new role configurations were called for by all the new challenges of the times. The term *chaotic* was sometimes used in textbooks to describe the situation; chaotic, but also *déjà-vu*. Even the so-called sexual revolution had been in the textbooks a long time.

But just as the New Right was different from the prepoliticized Right of the past, so was the feminism emerging in the 1960s different in one major respect from that of the past. Women in the 1960s and 1970s were learning how to participate in the creation of knowledge. They were learning the skills of research, such as how to formulate the relevant questions and how to go about getting the data to answer them. Until then the creation of human knowledge had been an exclusively male prerogative. Now women could share in this powerful privilege.

This *Handbook* directly confronts the politicalization of the New Right and the Feminists Enlightenment in its authorship, subject matter, and in the arrangement of its chapters. First, a complete section is devoted to the diversity in life styles that are presented as viable alternatives to the traditional family and not as deviant or aberrant cases. This would not have been possible, regardless of the editor's persuasion, had there not existed extensive, empirically based research on these topics. Second, in Christensen's *Handbook* only three of the 26 chapters were authored by women. In the Sussman and Steinmetz *Handbook*, one of the editors and 23 of the 42 authors and/or coauthors are women. Equity is a standard-bearer for scholars who view and write their observations of marriage and family systems and behavior. Such internalization of the value of equity in the deep psyches of family scholars is a harbinger of transformations of the layer body politic in the process of becoming. A critical mass of creative and sensitive professionals now exists, whose perceptions of reality are not limited by tunnel vision; and who are advocates of gender options, quality families, and quality family life.

JESSIE BERNARD

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³The other six were: individual choice of mate based on romantic love; decline in parental authority; reduced family size; emphasis on child welfare; decline in the economic, educational, religious, recreational, and protective functions of the family; and prevalence of various forms of disorganization.

Preface

The Handbook of Marriage and the Family represents the combined talents of scholars from such fields as demography, history, psychology, social work, social psychology, and sociology who have been chosen because of their expertness as researchers and theoreticians of marriage processes and family systems. When attempting to define an area for inclusion in a publication, the perspectives of authors, editors, and publishers become considerations.

The handbook has been in development over nine years, beginning in 1977. Dr. Steinmetz joined the project in 1980 and contributed substantially in enlarging the concept and scope of the project. Chapter subjects were determined, authors were sought, and the authors' interests and skills with the subject matter were fine-tuned. The publisher gave us a free hand to proceed, with appropriate feedback regarding intellectual and contractual matters during the years of preparation.

The basic concept of the volume is for each chapter to contain a succinct synthesis of the best work done in the topical area. Authors have been encouraged to take advantage of their authorship by introducing new and stimulating ideas that students and scholars of family systems can critique and research. A handbook has a future. It is a sourcebook, referred to constantly, for the factual, theoretical, and empirical data that substantiate the analyses and postures of the author in a given methodological, substantive, or theoretical area. The *Handbook* is a compendium of ideas and authoritative sources, and it is a historical document. As history, it omits works completed after the chapters are written. This is not a serious limitation but a condition inherent in a large-scale publication. The power of a handbook is established by the robustness of its ideas, which stimulate the creative juices to develop new perspectives and patterns of viewing and studying families and their sociocultural milieus.

The Handbook of Marriage and the Family is the first comprehensive compendium to present "state of the art" chapters on a wide range of topics since Christensen's classic handbook (1964). This handbook is both similar to and different from Christensen's seminal work. Topics that are absent from the Christensen handbook, such as family power or family violence, now require an entire chapter to provide adequate coverage of factual data, complex theories, and matching methodologies. Christensen devoted four chapters to theory: institutional, structural-functional, interactional-situational, and developmental. We have chosen to combine these conceptual frameworks into one chapter, and we have devoted one chapter to the exposition of newly evolving/nontraditional theories. This approach was taken not to undermine the presentation and discussion of family theories but because of the availability of excellent edited volumes devoted to theory (Aldous, 1978; Rogers, 1973; Nye & Berardo, 1981; Burr, Hill, Nye, & Reiss, 1979a,b).

A similar decision based on the plethora of excellent research and methodology books resulted in a single chapter's being devoted to methodology rather than five chapters' examining separate dimensions of methodology.

Chapters devoted to new topics reflect the great difference of scholars' views of families in the 1980s from those in the 1960s, with recognition given to the diversity of family lifestyles. Five chapters that represent the growth and development of theory and research center on evolving family structures: experimental family forms, singlehood, voluntary childlessness, the single-parent family, remarriage, and reconstituted families. In the 1960s, these topics were usually discussed within the social context of abnormal or aberrant behavior.

Five chapters on power, violence, divorce, work, and sex roles represent a recognition of the interface between societal (structural) external forces and family (interpersonal) interactions as found in research and theoretical studies. Marital power, family violence, and divorce are not new phenomena, but in the past two decades, family scholars have addressed these areas as legitimate and important ones in order to

understand the full range of family dynamics. Because a majority of contemporary American families have dual earners, the impact of the labor force and sex-role renegotiation for families has become a major concern. Therefore, the need for a comprehensive review of research in these areas became evident.

However, a handbook, regardless of its level of comprehensiveness, cannot be all things to all people. This handbook was prepared for use by scholars interested in a state-of-the-art review of a wide range of marriage and family topics. In the future, we can expect that an awareness of new social problems will foster research in areas only briefly touched on here.

Any project such as this handbook is shaped by the philosophy of the editors and the contributors. Perhaps our philosophy is best exemplified by the organization of this handbook.

The first section, "Family Perspectives and Analyses," provides a foundation of knowledge for students. The seven chapters supply the tools and perspectives for understanding marriage and family structures and processes. The inclusion of a chapter on families in the future is consistent with a section that also contains historical and comparative perspectives.

In the second section, "Diversity in Family Life," diversity is used in its broadest sense to represent not only the nontraditional forms of marriage and families but also ethnicity, social stratification, work, and religion, which cut across all family forms.

Perhaps our inclusion of the chapter on divorce in the section on "Life Cycle Processes" best represents our concept that divorce is no longer viewed as pathological; rather, it is a normal part of the life cycle process, along with socialization, human sexuality, the development of gender roles, fertility, and family relationships in the later years.

Our final section, "Family Dynamics and Transformation," focuses on power, stress, and violence, dynamics that have a critical impact on marriage and family life, as well as on institutions that can inhibit or foster change, that is, the law, social policy, family life, education, and marital and family therapy.

As we initially noted, many changes have occurred in the scope and intensity of marriage and family research, theory, and application during the decades since a handbook was first published (Christensen, 1964). We hope that our handbook will encourage continued growth and exploration in the field.

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INTRODUCTION

From the Catbird Seat

OBSERVATIONS ON MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

Marvin B. Sussman

In the September 4, 1985, issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* there appeared an article on "Major Trends in Research: 22 Leading Scholars Report on Their Fields." Sociologist Sheldon Stryker resonated on the traditional macro/micro perspectives that have split the sociological enterprise into two camps, and the new emergent direction of linking macro processes with individual behavior. One presumes that a further extension of this direction would be the nexus between the networks of primary groups, such as families with large-scale systems, institutions, and organizations. Implied in Stryker's analysis of new directions is the search for meaning. How do individuals, family units, and their networks impact, influence, handle, neutralize, and adapt with larger social structures and the reciprocal impact of macro upon micro systems?

Another portentous happening according to Stryker is the increase in scholarly writing and research using a life-course perspective. Life stage, timing, transition, trajectory, change, and movement, and the use of now available longitudinal data are some of the components of this research paradigm that is seeking an understanding of the similarities and differences in behavior.

This brief report in the prestigious *Chronicle* should be of comfort to the family scholar. Even if it is not recognized by the body politic of sociology that these new directions have long been advocated and researched by students of the family, and that the concepts, processes, and methods endemic to macro/micro linkages and life-course analysis have been successfully employed, we should feel the power of this recognition. The marriage and family field has existed far too long in a strokeless economy. We stand now to be recognized, rewarded, and empowered.

Suggesting other new directions for research and scholarly work on marriages and the family is my primary task. The rationale for these trends and future directions is based on a set of assumptions, observations, and meanings given to marriage as a process and to the family as a primary group.

From primordial times families have been rooted in the legal and moral orders of their societies. The definition and concept of family as an interaction system of primary relationships, with reproductive and nurturing functions, exist in tandem with legal definitions of family. The legal family is established by the act of marriage. The parties in matrimony sign a contract that establishes their rights, responsibilities, and obligations and that defines the positions of wife/husband, parent/child, grandparents, in-laws, other immediate relatives, extended kin, and affines (Sussman, 1975a,b; Weitzman, 1981).

Within all cultures and in all times law is an all inclusive controlling system that sets the outer limits of permissible behavior to be engaged in by families and its members. It is primarily a latent system. It is difficult to realize the tremendous constraining power of law until one has a "legal problem," such as obtaining a divorce, going through probate on the death of a family member, damaging another person's car after one's insurance has expired, witnessing a crime, being sued for slander, or other anticipated and unexpected events (Sussman, 1983a).

The laws governing marriage and the family relationships are complex and conclusive in establishing the rights, responsibilities, and obligations of marital partners who are forming a bond by the act of marriage. The state has taken the position that it is an interested third party in what otherwise could be described as a private transaction between two persons who are formulating a contract in order to create a family (Jeter & Sussman, 1985).

The issuance of a marriage license and the taking of a blood test are but the tips of the legal iceberg in which the depths of the legal issues are only examined when the marriage turns sour and the partners seek either an annulment, separation, or divorce (Kitson & Sussman, 1977). A relatively small number of

couples who marry in the United States every year realizes the full implications of their solemn commitment to each other in which their main source of information is the mass media. Even legal scholars are unaware of the profundity of regulations, obligations, responsibilities, and privileges the law establishes for both parties entering matrimony.

Marriage and family laws have generally been highly discriminatory of women who enter into marriage. The women are treated generally in the same class as children, paupers, the mentally incompetent, and the mentally retarded. Until recently, the law has viewed women to be no better than indentured servants unable to take care of their own resources or having the ability to make sound judgments. The removal of existing prejudicial laws to women and other minorities will take aeons. Spurred on by the gender revolution and other events that indicate we are in a radically changed society are the forces that are facilitating this rapid recodification of law to provide equal justice for women and other oppressed and underclass persons (Weitzman, 1981).

The family conveys to its members status and position in the society and provides for the orderly transmission of resources over generational time. Our inheritance system provides for such transfers from testators to heirs and legatees (Sussman, Cates, & Smith, 1970). Inheritance is imbedded in legal and sociological doctrines of "natural law," testamentary freedom, distributive justice, "best interests" of family members and the state, the symbolic expression of closeness and intimacy, and the persistence of family lines over generational time.

In a study of 1,234 respondents from 651 randomly selected family units in Cuyahoga County, Ohio, in 1967, persons who comprised the population were heirs or legatees or were about to inherit property, equity, and other resources under the condition of intestacy. It was found that testamentary freedom was exercised within the tradition of the natural law (Sussman *et al.*, 1970). Testators felt a moral obligation to convey status and resources to family members, kith and kin, following encrusted cultural patterns—the paramount filial obligation being to care for one's own. Such behaviors in face of a disinheritance rate of less than 2% in this study had the tacit approval of the state. The state's interest is that individuals do not become wards or dependents of the state, thus increasing the welfare burden for taxpayers. Testamentary freedom (i.e., the right to convey title to persons of one's choice) was exercised within the family and kin network. Charitable contributions were made only after adequate economic provisions were made for family and kin. Testators gave fair shares to their surviving kin based on previous gifts conveyed to children and relatives and services provided by family members to them during the final stages of life. Such "distributive justice" was exercised in cases of intestacy, where no will existed. Those who stood to inherit under the Ohio statute of intestacy and succession elected not to take their fair share but allocated irrevocable rights to their portion to the family caretaker, usually the surviving spouse or child who provided the testator with nurturance and care in the final months or years of life (Sussman *et al.*, 1970).

Two critical family-legal issues emerged from this study. The first is that the inheritance of economic resources is of lesser importance than the bonding of generational ties through the gifting of family heirlooms, goods, and other remembrances. The lesser importance given to economic transfers by heirs and legatees was partially due to the *inter vivos* generational transfers, those which are made during the lifetime of the testator. Also recipients of transfers averaged 55 years of age and were established in their life-styles. Monies and properties transferred were reinvested, thus providing for the chain of generational transfers in a future time. No radical shift in work or family trajectories occurred.

The high significance attributed by inheritors to receiving family heirlooms, goods, and other remembrances is their expression of a lifetime relationship with the deceased. Such conveyances, often of insignificant monetary value, are a symbolic representation of the spiritual, nurturing, and caring relationships internalized in the deep consciousness of these family members and their ancestors.

Such bondings need to be examined in the context of current economic theories that postulate cost/benefit analysis as the most probable explanation. This is a view I held prior to undertaking the research just reported. I believed that the economic transfer was the principal test of generational continuity. One could measure the true meaning and significance of generational relationship by the amount of equities bequeathed and received. This is not the case. The power of these symbolic representations with past generations reinforces the primacy of generationally linked family connections and continuities in a modern urban society.

It is hypothesized that *inter vivos* transfers, those gifts of monies, properties, goods, heirlooms, and services that pass from the living older generations to the younger, far exceed in value and relational importance the conveying of equities at probate. The extent, type, and quantity of such generational transfers, expressive of the informal economy in modern complex societies, have not been studied. Such transfers, which are part of the interlocking family-support system, are the lifelines of generational

continuity. Serial reciprocity is invoked. Within family transfers from the older to the younger generation conditions expectations of support when independent living of the elderly is problematic. The working of this critical family informal economic system begs for conceptualization and study.

The law and the legal system have clearly defined the family and have established the rules of marriage and the rights and responsibilities of family members. The law establishes the legitimate status of the family, such as the rights of those to inherit, to receive welfare, and to obtain social security survivor benefits. The law favors the nuclear family, consisting of a husband and wife living in a separate household with their offspring apart from either spouse's set of parents. There is no compelling reason or legal doctrine to establish this as the ideal form. Rather, it is the preferred one because the courts view the traditional nuclear unit to be best suited to express the interests of the state and to promulgate the doctrine of "the best interests of the child." Furthermore, social scientists have speculated that the small-sized nuclear family is best suited to meet the requirements and demands of an industrial society. The cultural wave that worshiped the interchangeable part had to wrench individuals from cottage industries and the family hearth in order to fit them into the developing factory system. Geographic mobility was required because industries were located in areas where it was best for the development and the production of goods at least cost. Hence, the large-scale move of peoples from the farms, villages, and towns to the larger cities where industrialization in its early period experienced near cataclysmic development (Litwak, 1960a,b).

The need for workers to be free to move was real and probably cost efficient for the emergent factory system. The work system began to consume more and more families with the increasing dependency on the new industrial order.

Studies on the history of the family suggest, however, that the nuclear family always existed in preindustrial societies (Bane, 1976; Sussman, 1959). Living side by side with nuclear families were extended, single-parent, three- and four-generational, and blended families. The incidence of divorce compared to today's rate was less, but the incidence of family breakup due to death (largely the consequence of excessive childbearing), Indian wars, and disease produced an inordinate number of single-parent and blended families—those that were created by remarriage. Three- and four-generational households, particularly in rural areas, were in existence. Also found in reasonable numbers were extended families in which individual units had separate households but were tied together in economic, social, ritual, and political undertakings.

A careful mapping of family units of yesteryear and today finds that all forms in existence currently were present in the beginning settlements of society in the United States. The difference is the numbers found in each of the categories of the nuclear-intact household, the single-parent family, the blended family, the extended family, the three-generational family, the dual job, and other structures. In the preindustrial period, there were fewer nuclear units, single-parent, dual-job, and childless couples. Other major differences are in the society's allocation of power and authority to the adult male head of the household regardless of the family form, the birthrate of women of fertility-bearing age, and the family size. Families in early American society were large, childbearing was excessive with attendant high morbidity for women, and men had life and death control over their spouses and children (Hess & Sussman, 1984; Hareven, 1982; Sussman, 1978).

The demographers' population pyramid in the 1980s has been reshaped to resemble a nuclear missile with the smoothing out of cohorts to almost similar in size, becoming almost equal from age day 1 to age 50, and narrowing slightly after age 50 to form the cone of the missile. This configuration is a consequence of a severely lowered fertility rate that resulted in zero population growth after the baby boom of World War II, the increased standards of health of the American people that enabled more and more older adults to survive the trauma of retirement from jobs and to live until their eighties and nineties, and the increased availability of human services to sustain long-term care within families or in institutions (Glick & Norton, 1977; Shanas & Sussman, 1981; Riley, 1979; Uhlenberg, 1979).

The counting of numbers and the making of future projections about the size, shape, and form of the population, which is the basic intent of demographic analysis, are critical for determining policies and legislative programs for different segments and cohorts of the population. Demographic analysis is essential for reasonable planning of the use of current and potential resources. For example, with regard to the current growth of the population aged 65 and over demographers report that, by the year 2010, at least one out of five persons will be over the age of 65, with the largest increase seen among those 75 and older. The magnitude of this development, assuming that catastrophic conditions will not prevail and that the society will not develop a policy of genocide, indicates the need to develop the necessary institutional and other support systems to provide adequate care and protection of this growing population of vulnerable elderly. These demographics, along with pressure from those lobbying for the aged (such as the Grey

Panthers or the American Association of Retired Persons) have prompted legislative changes that extend the work life of the individual to age 70. The replacement rate through reproduction may provide an insufficient number of individuals in the working ages to produce enough goods and services to be able to pay the tremendous costs of support for retired and disabled populations (Sussman & Pfeifer, 1985).

In their analysis of the types, incidence, and prevalence of family structures over time, demographers provide new ways to perceive and think about families. Steinmetz (1974) presents convincing evidence of the sexual bias in the collection of demographic data by the Census Bureau since the beginnings of census taking. In the census of 1800, women who were housewives or who lived in their parents' homes were considered to have "no occupation." The census in 1940 included part-time employed women and those working in family businesses as participants in the labor force. Designating women as heads of households or co-heads did not occur until 1980, even though an increasing number of women (three million in 1971) had a larger earned income than their husbands (Steinmetz, 1974).

The changing demographic profile and the late recognition of women as economic contributors to families, with the subsequent availability of new statistical data, offer the family scholar exciting research possibilities. With the newly collected census data, it is now possible to undertake a more accurate mapping of family types, structures, and households. To date such analyses of varied family forms and household composition used multiple-data sources, and the conclusions were derived primarily from speculative inferences (Ramey, 1978; Sussman, 1971). Studies of women's social and occupational mobility compared to men's, the determination of the accurate socioeconomic status of the family unit, and the examination of family and work trajectories and their consequences for marital health and family well-being are critical and feasible investigations.

The nonpyramid shape of the demographic profile in the 1980s indicates that there is a continuous formation of new family forms and living arrangements. The prospects for the twenty-first century are for family systems in forms conducive to the consequences of the zero population growth rate of the World War II baby boom cohort. Low-fertility parents who might be in search of scarce relatives to assist them, when they are in need, will find few caretakers available in the years 2010 to 2020 when they reach late adulthood. New "like-family" units will be required in increasing numbers (Streib & Hilker, 1980; Sussman, 1984). The expected growth of institutional care facilities will be less than the need because of decreased support from federal and state legislatures and the administrative branches of Government. The increasing acceptance of the notion that smaller, homelike environments for those in need of care is superior to institutional arrangements, especially for the elderly, will support the quest for caretaking families where individuals may not be related by blood or marriage. Family researchers have the rare opportunity to observe the genesis of these emergent forms, their growth and development, as an alternative living arrangement, functioning in complementarity with legal families and institutional forms of care.

Family historians have been successful in using demographic analysis over time to demonstrate changes as well as the persistence and stability of family forms and patterns. Intensive probing of documents and the use of record-linkage techniques to gather data systematically have substantiated the findings that, in historical times, multiple family forms were in existence (Hareven, 1974, 1977, 1978; Bane, 1976; Chudacoff, 1975; Goode, 1963, 1964; Greven, 1970; Modell & Hareven, 1973). In the early history of the United States extended families engaged in help, exchange, support, and connecting. These same patterns can be found in today's urban environments. The number of family members living in a single household has decreased since the seventeenth century. Today, however, most individuals have family members living nearby (Shanas, 1979a,b, 1980; Sussman, 1983b). The result is an optional support system that has essentially the same functions found among seventeenth- and eighteenth-century families. Working-class families in the earlier period struggled to maintain themselves as self-sustaining economic units. Many families resorted to taking in boarders and roomers in order to replace their own members who formerly contributed to the family but had left to set up their own households. These boarders and roomers, who were largely immigrants or migrants, contributed to the family economy, and many became "like" family and were treated as family members (Model & Hareven, 1978).

Industrialization caused a separation of work from the living place as family members were now employed in factories, and service industries became increasingly dependent economically on the growing industrial system. As in the past, large numbers of families continued as production units, with some of their members working in the factories, creating thereby a multieconomic system. As a unit, families contributed to the production of goods and services while, at the same time, they used the wages of those persons working in factories to augment their living standards.

Family historians have provided evidence that this working-class family made great use of an "informal" economy whereby the members produced and exchanged goods and services for each other. They

maintained a solidarity and a strong support system influencing decisions regarding the education and jobs of other family members and they developed skills and strategies that affected the individual's participation in the outside world.

The contrary image of an isolated nuclear family, child centered, autonomous, independent, and reserved, stemmed more from portrayals of middle- and upper-class families who were creating and controlling the patterns of industrial development. These families had the resources to afford a very private position. Concomitant with their marriage to the new industrial order and the promises of the new ideology, they were able to promulgate values befitting their high positions in the emerging social class system in the United States and other industrial societies. These middle- and upper-class families became the governing elites, and their life-styles were to be copied and emulated if one was to achieve status and power in society.

Careful research has led to the rejection of the grand theory of linear change in family behavior. Industrialism did not trigger the creation of a nuclear-family form. There was no evolutionary process involved, because nuclear units, along with extended and single parent and other types, existed coterminously in the preindustrial period.

Early historical analyses attempted to reconstruct the history of mankind, using evolution as the major concept whereby one form of family evolved out of another (Parsons & Bales, 1955; Weber, 1947; Zimmerman & Cervantes, 1960). This evolutionary focus is the essence of current theories of change and modernization; however, the contrary conclusion is derived from the work of family historians. Families have adapted and changed selectively in different life sectors, such as work and education, while still maintaining patterns of family life. This procedure occurs in highly sophisticated urbanized environments as it did in preindustrial societies.

Family historians have established what a number of sociologists have emphasized; namely, that there is a reciprocal influence between family systems and societies, organizations, and institutions. Families are not passive entities to be acted on and controlled. Families do take the initiative in effecting changes in the value systems, policies, and practices of organizations and institutions; they are active agents in dealing with outside systems and assist members to meet the normative demands of the more powerful bureaucratized systems.

Another view is that families have little influence over the powerful industrial order and can be detrimental to effective operations of a modern society. Industrial organizations and today's multinational corporations are perceived as requiring individuals to rid themselves of family obligations, especially those that would constrain their mobility and impose the family will over their individual will (Kahl, 1968; Parsons & Bales, 1955; Smith & Inkeles, 1966). In acceding to family control, members would be restrained in their efforts in the industrial system and would eventually partake in the system's largesse which is endemic to the successful production of goods and services. The further assumption is that the family would be a small unit. In the process of adapting and becoming absorbed by large-scale organizations, the family would change its habits, values, tastes, and aspirations. It would begin to measure its success as a modern family by the goods, wealth, and education it acquired.

Such theories are embedded in the concept of modernity and are of limited value to family social scientists, because they assume that family members are subordinate to the more powerful industrial organizations and institutions. Hence it is more comfortable to talk about the modernization of individuals rather than of families, because families are viewed to be insignificant units that always seem to have problems and that are shorn of their historic basic functions.

Soon after World War II, family sociologists began to question the dominance of functional theory which stipulated that the family was a small and fragile unit and limited in its contacts with kin; and therefore, most family units in industrial society were isolated, easily torn by conflict, and limited in their social supports. The major prerequisite for survival of the nuclear unit was its ability to adapt and accommodate the normative demands and power of larger social organizations. In one of the first studies of divorce and its consequences for women, Goode (1956) suggested that where there were social supports women and their offspring adjusted far better when such help was available from friends, family, and kin. No specific effort was made to measure the quality or quantity of such support, but it was strongly indicated that such assistance made a difference. In a study done as a doctoral dissertation and published in 1951, I indicated that in the urban culture of New Haven, Connecticut, there were strong intergenerational connections and that the leave taking of children from the family of orientation did in no way destroy the continuities existing between parents, children, and grandchildren. I noted that for parents in their mid 40s and 50s services and transfers of equities were occurring from parents to children. A variety of exchanges occurred between parents and their adult children, including the provision of services on a regular basis, especially when families lived close to one another, and the great use of