

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

SIXTH EDITION



EVELYN MILLIS DUVALL

BRENT C. MILLER

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Preface

Because so much has happened in marriage and family life since the fifth edition appeared in 1977, this edition is new from beginning to end. In this edition current census data, some of them as yet unpublished, bring demographic profiles of American marriages and families into sharp focus. For these otherwise unattainable figures and many other kindnesses, we are grateful to a friend of many years, Dr. Paul C. Glick, who was with the Population Division of the U.S. Bureau of the Census until his retirement in mid-1981. In addition to recent census data, our revision is based on family studies reported in professional journals; academic, popular, and governmental publications; national polls of college students and adults; changing marriage and family laws and policies affecting families; and occasional case study excerpts.

The conceptual framework of earlier editions is fine-focused to present developmental tasks of individual family members and to examine basic family developmental tasks stage by stage throughout the entire family life cycle. This conceptual framework is enriched with the addition of two new chapters—one dealing with individual growth in the ability to love and the other exploring the development of heterosexual relationships that lead to marital commitment.

Transitions throughout the family life cycle are considered anew: couples marry; most become parents; their children grow through infancy, through preschool and school ages, and through adolescence and are launched into lives of their own as they leave home for college, for work, for military service, or for households of their own; middle-aged parents become grandparents, then aging couples as they live out their lives as family members until death separates them in the final transition.

New are fresh insights into pregnancy and childbearing; early infant- and child-parent interaction; contemporary adolescent life-styles, pressures, and challenges; living together before marriage; the many interlocking facets of divorce, remarriage, stepparenthood, and co-parenthood; research-based descriptions of America's minority families; the cultures of poverty and of affluence; and death in the family context.

Numerous tables bring together findings of many studies on a particular topic, sometimes contradictory and sometimes consistent, for easy access by teachers and students to relevant data. In a given area of study, bases for understanding both convergence and divergence of research findings are suggested. Figures highlight textual material, often put-

ting trends into sharp focus, and graphically present pertinent information. All sources are keyed in the text to specific references for each chapter.

As coauthor of this edition, the senior author chose Brent C. Miller, chairman of the Research and Theory Section of the National Council on Family Relations and active teacher of family relations at the university level. His many commitments made it impossible for him to write as much of the text as we had hoped, but he reorganized the first six chapters and carefully reviewed Chapters 7 through 17 for which Evelyn Duvall assumes major responsibility.

The coauthors acknowledge their common debt to Dr. Reuben Hill, who for years has guided their professional growth and continues to stimulate their thinking in family development theory, its research potentials, and its many unsolved problems that challenge us, our colleagues, and—we hope—our students.

Evelyn Millis Duvall
Brent C. Miller

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