

# Research and Theory in Family Science

Randal D. Day  
Kathleen R. Gilbert  
Barbara H. Settles  
Wesley R. Burr



# Research and Theory in Family Science

*Edited by*

Randal D. Day

*Washington State University*

Kathleen R. Gilbert

*Indiana University*

Barbara H. Settles

*University of Delaware*

Wesley R. Burr

*Brigham Young University*



*Brooks/Cole Publishing Company*

**ITP™** *An International Thomson Publishing Company*

---

Pacific Grove • Albany • Bonn • Boston • Cincinnati • Detroit • London • Madrid • Melbourne  
Mexico City • New York • Paris • San Francisco • Singapore • Tokyo • Toronto • Washington

---

Sponsoring Editor: *Vicki Knight*  
Marketing Representative: *Hester Winn*  
Editorial Associate: *Lauri Banks Ataide*  
Production Editor: *Kirk Bomont*  
Manuscript Editor: *Bill Waller*  
Permissions Editor: *Elaine Jones*  
Marketing Team: *Carolyn Crockett and Jean Vevers Thompson*

Interior and Cover Design: *Roy R. Neuhaus*  
Interior Illustration: *Susan H. Horovitz and Lisa Torri*  
Art Coordinator: *Susan H. Horovitz*  
Indexer: *Do Mi Stauber*  
Typesetting: *Joan Mueller Cochran*  
Cover Printing: *Color Dot Graphics, Inc.*  
Printing and Binding: *Quebecor Printing Fairfield*

COPYRIGHT© 1995 by Brooks/Cole Publishing Company  
A division of International Thomson Publishing Inc.  
**ITP** The ITP logo is a trademark under license.

*For more information, contact:*

BROOKS/COLE PUBLISHING COMPANY  
511 Forest Lodge Road  
Pacific Grove, CA 93950  
USA

International Thomson Publishing Europe  
Berkshire House 168-173  
High Holborn  
London WC1V 7AA  
England

Thomas Nelson Australia  
102 Dodds Street  
South Melbourne, 3205  
Victoria, Australia

Nelson Canada  
1120 Birchmount Road  
Scarborough, Ontario  
Canada M1K 5G4

International Thomson Editores  
Campos Eliseos 385, Piso 7  
Col. Polanco  
11560 México D. F. México

International Thomson Publishing GmbH  
Königswinterer Strasse 418  
53227 Bonn  
Germany

International Thomson Publishing Asia  
221 Henderson Road  
#05-10 Henderson Building  
Singapore 0315

International Thomson Publishing Japan  
Hirakawacho Kyowa Building, 3F  
2-2-1 Hirakawacho  
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102  
Japan

All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transcribed, in any form or by any means — electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise — without the prior written permission of the publisher, Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, Pacific Grove, California 93950.

Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

#### Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Research and theory in family science / edited by Randal D. Day . . .

[et al.].

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-534-21780-x

1. Family. 2. Family—Research. I. Day. Randal D., [date].

HQ518.R43 1995

306.85—dc20

94-30436

CIP



We dedicate this book to our families, who support and provide the important meanings of life; to our students, whom we serve and in whom resides the future; and to our colleagues, who provide the professional hope that what we do has purpose.

---

# Contributors

**Suzanne Bartle**

Department of Family Relations and Human Development  
The Ohio State University  
Columbus, OH 43210

**Denise Ann Bodman**

Department of Family Resource and Human Development  
Arizona State University  
Tempe, AZ 85287

**Wesley R. Burr**

Department of Family Sciences  
Brigham Young University  
Provo, UT 84602

**Karen Price Carver**

Department of Human Development  
Washington State University  
Pullman, WA 99163

**Marilyn Coleman**

Department of Human Development and Family Studies  
University of Missouri-Columbia  
Columbia, MO 65211

**Kerry Daly**

Department of Family Studies  
University of Guelph  
Guelph, Ontario N1G 2W1

**Randal D. Day**

Department of Human Development  
Washington State University  
Pullman, WA 99163

**Mark Fine**

Department of Psychology  
University of Dayton  
Dayton, OH 45469

**Larry Ganong**

Department of Human Development and Family Studies  
University of Missouri-Columbia  
Columbia, MO 65211

**Kathleen R. Gilbert**

Department of Applied Health Science  
Indiana University  
Bloomington, IN 47405

**Kip W. Jenkins**

Institute of Religion  
University of Idaho  
Moscow, ID 83871

**Robert Keim**

Department of Human Family Resources  
Northern Illinois University  
DeKalb, IL 60115

**Geoffrey K. Leigh**

Department of Human Development and Family Studies  
University of Nevada, Reno  
Reno, NV 89557

**Linda Matocha**

College of Nursing  
University of Delaware  
Newark, DE 19716

**Patrick C. McKenry**

Department of Family Relations and Human Development  
The Ohio State University  
Columbus, OH 43210

**D. Eugene Mead**

Department of Family Sciences  
Marriage and Family Therapy Graduate Program  
Brigham Young University  
Provo, UT 84602

**Colleen I. Murray**

Department of Human Development and Family Studies  
University of Nevada, Reno  
Reno, NV 89557

**David H. Olson**

Department of Family Social Science  
University of Minnesota  
St. Paul, MN 55108

**Dennis Orthner**

Human Services Research Laboratory  
Department of Social Work  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
Chapel Hill, NC 27599

**Gary W. Peterson**

Department of Family Resources and Human Development  
Arizona State University  
Tempe, AZ 85287

**Peggy Quinn**

Department of Social Work  
University of Texas at Arlington  
Arlington, TX 76013

**Barbara H. Settles**

Department of Individual and Family Studies  
University of Delaware  
Newark, DE 19716

**Suzanne K. Steinmetz**

Department of Sociology  
Indiana University  
Indianapolis, IN 46202

**Karen Schmid**

College of Social Sciences  
St. Cloud State University  
St. Cloud, MN 56303

**Jay D. Teachman**

Department of Human Development  
Washington State University  
Pullman, WA 99163

**Linda J. Wark**

Department of Family Relations and Human Development  
The Ohio State University  
Columbus, OH 43210

---

# Preface

As the study of the family continues to grow and mature, knowledge about family processes builds. This text is designed to provide advanced students with substantive information about those processes. It is written to target those students who are interested in further exploring the family realm. We assume that readers have had an introductory course in family science.

When we gave instructions to the authors about writing their chapters, we asked them to focus more on processes within the family realm than on larger issues or on individuals within the family. The text is written from the perspective that between the larger social world and the individual psychological world is a unique small group, the family. We assume that activities and processes occur within families that may not be found elsewhere. We also assume that by studying these activities and processes, students will better learn how to intervene in family problems as they make their way into the workforce.

This text was reorganized many times. As the editorial team struggled with how to present the material, it became clear that the usual ways of organizing a family text were not working. Family texts are usually organized along a developmental trajectory—beginning with engagement and proceeding to love, marriage, children, marital problems, and death. Instead, this book is organized around family *processes*, so that the advanced student can begin to explore the theories and research about the “interior” of families. These processes are presented within the larger contexts in which families

live and work. Additionally, these processes are explored in the context of a variety of family challenges.

In Part I, we explore four contexts within which families thrive—larger societal value systems, ideologies about connectedness, gender formulations, and cultural difference.

In Part II, we examine the theoretical and scientific approaches used by family scientists as they try to understand family interaction.

In Part III, we give the reader a more in-depth view of the processes families use as they move through their days, solve problems, and make life’s decisions. We analyze how family members communicate, parent, and resolve sexual problems.

Part IV presents several topics relating to family changes. The authors were challenged not simply to make a compendium of all that is known about a topic, but instead to discuss the topics from a systemic viewpoint and to illuminate processes the families use in periods of crisis.

Finally, two chapters about the field of family science are included in Part V to stimulate discussion about what a person does when he or she wants to work in this field.

As you read and study about the family in this text, we invite you to comment directly to us about the issues we raise. It is our intention that there be a second edition of this text, and we would very much like to hear from you about topics not covered (and we know there are many), issues not raised, applications that can be made,

and ways to improve this material. In a way, we are asking you (and teachers as well) to help think through what “ought” to be taught to upper-division students who are preparing for work in the family and human service arena. We would appreciate your ideas and feedback.

## Acknowledgments

No project can be done in isolation. First, we wish to thank the authors who contributed to this volume. Without their hard work and patience, the project would have not succeeded. As this text took shape over the course of several years, it became clear to us that it was taking on a life of its own, becoming somewhat different from the image with which we began. That image changed, in many cases, as the result of reactions from reviewers and the chapter authors. We were pushed to make the product better and more usable than it originally would have been.

We are also in debt to the National Council on Family Relations, especially the Family Science section.

Over the course of the development of this text, chapters have been part of presentations at several NCFR meetings. The session format used by the council has been very useful in providing feedback.

The Teaching Family Science Conference also provided a forum in which aspects of this chapter were discussed and reworked. The chapters by Karen Schmid, Peggy Quinn, Philip Osborne, and Robert Keim emerged from discussions at this conference.

We are indebted to our departments, which have provided technical support and assistance. Brooks/Cole has also been a consistent and helpful sponsor of this project. We are appreciative of the work of Vicki Knight, who assisted us through this process.

Finally, we’d like to thank the reviewers who critiqued the manuscript: Douglas A. Abbott, University of Nebraska-Omaha; Bernita Quoss, University of Wyoming; and Jane Rysberg, California State University, Chico.

*Randal D. Day  
Kathleen R. Gilbert  
Barbara H. Settles  
Wesley R. Burr*



---

# Research and Theory in Family Science

# Brief Contents

<b>I Families in Contexts</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11 Communication in Families</b>	<b>171</b>
1 Families in Transition: Changing Values and Norms <i>Dennis Orthner</i>	3	12 Families and Sexuality <i>Colleen I. Murray / Geoffrey K. Leigh</i>	186
2 Autonomy and Connectedness in Families <i>Gary W. Peterson</i>	20	13 Parenting Processes <i>Denise Ann Bodman / Gary W. Peterson</i>	205
3 Gender Interactions in Families <i>Peggy Quinn</i>	42	<b>IV Challenges and Choices for Families</b>	<b>227</b>
4 Multicultural Family Science <i>Karen Schmid</i>	54	14 Reproduction in Families <i>Kerry Daly</i>	229
<b>II Theories and Research in Family Science</b>	<b>71</b>	15 Families and Health Crises <i>Linda Matocha</i>	243
5 Using Theories in Family Science <i>Wesley R. Burr</i>	73	16 Violence in Families <i>Suzanne K. Steinmetz</i>	255
6 Family-Systems Theory <i>Randal D. Day</i>	91	17 The Process of Divorce <i>Linda J. Wark / Suzanne Bartle / Patrick C. McKenry</i>	270
7 A Functional Analysis of Family Behavior <i>D. Eugene Mead</i>	102	18 Remarriage and Stepfamilies <i>Larry Ganong / Marilyn Coleman / Mark Fine</i>	287
8 The Science of Family Science <i>Karen Price Carver / Jay D. Teachman</i>	113	19 Family Loss and Grief <i>Kathleen R. Gilbert</i>	304
<b>III Understanding Family Processes</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>V Family Science at Work</b>	<b>319</b>
9 Family Systems: Understanding Your Roots <i>David H. Olson</i>	131	20 The Parenting Experts <i>Philip Osborne</i>	320
10 Families in Everyday Life <i>Barbara H. Settles</i>	154	21 Careers in Family Science <i>Robert Keim</i>	334

---

# Contents

## PART I

### Families in Contexts 1

#### CHAPTER 1

### Families in Transition: Changing Values and Norms *Dennis Orthner* 3

#### Changing Family Values and Beliefs 4

- The Value of Marriage versus Independence 4
- Individualism versus Collectivism 5
- Commitment versus Autonomy 6
- Nurturance versus Narcissism 7

#### Values Revolution versus Evolution 8

- Changing Family Norms 8
- The Revolution in Family Norms 11
- An Interpretation of Family Change 12
- Institutional Transition: The Fourth Wave 14
- Toward Family Adaptation 15
- Implications for Policy and Family Sciences 16

#### Discussion Questions 17

#### Additional Resources 17

#### References 17

## CHAPTER 2

### Autonomy and Connectedness in Families *Gary W. Peterson* 20

#### Understanding Autonomy and Connectedness 20

#### Individualism and Collectivism in Society 21

#### The Special Qualities of Families 22

Families Are Unique 22

The Structure of Families 24

#### Conceptions of Autonomy and Connectedness in the Social Sciences 25

The Psychoanalytic View 25

The View of Object-Relations Theory 26

Identity, Self, and the Family 27

Attachment Theory 28

Social Competence 29

Family Therapy 31

#### A Family-Science View of Autonomy and Connectedness 33

#### Conclusions for Family Science 34

#### Discussion Questions 37

#### Additional Resources 38

#### References 38

C H A P T E R 3

Gender Interactions in Families 42  
*Peggy Quinn*

Family and Gender: Forty Years of Change 42  
The 1950s 42  
The 1960s 43  
The 1970s 44  
The 1980s 46  
Conclusion 46

Concepts and Controversies 47  
Roles 47  
Communications 48  
Power 49

Conclusion 51

Discussion Questions 51

Additional Resources 51

References 52

C H A P T E R 4

Multicultural Family Science 54  
*Karen Schmid*

Relevance of Ethnicity in Family Science 54  
Definitions of Ethnicity 54  
Life Cycle 55  
“Minority” Groups 55  
European Americans 56  
Bicultural or Multicultural Families 56  
Ethnic Identity 56  
Multiculturally Sensitive Practice 57  
Value Frameworks 57  
Ethnicity and Change 58

The Ecology of Ethnicity 59  
Benefits of Multiculturalism 59

Factors Distinguishing Nondominant Ethnic Families 59  
Racism and Poverty 60  
Status of Particular Nondominant Ethnic Groups 60

Cultural Diversity in Family-Science Practice 61  
Five Approaches to Multiculturalism 61  
Research on Nondominant Ethnic Families 62

Impact of Multiculturalism on Family Science 63  
Family Stress 63  
Adaptation 63  
Family Systems 64  
Definition of Family 65

Discussion Questions 66

Additional Resources 66

References 66

P A R T I I

Theories and Research in Family Science 71

C H A P T E R 5

Using Theories in Family Science 73  
*Wesley R. Burr*

Six Important Aspects of General Theories 73  
Theories Answer Questions about “What Is Going On” 73  
Theories Are in the Minds of Scientists 74  
Theories Give Us Power 74



The Search for One Integrating Theory is Futile 74  
Usefulness Rather Than Truth  
Is What Matters 75  
Theories Give Us Perspectives 75

Family-Systems Theory  
Randal D. Day 91

The Nonpositivistic Assumption	92
Systems Theory in Family Science	93
Origin	93
The Family as Ecosystem	94

- Assumptions, Terms, and General Principles 94**
  - System 94
  - Patterns and Process 94
  - Wholeness 95
  - Interdependence 95
  - The Symptomatic Family Member 95
  - Boundaries 95
  - Equifinality 97
  - Morphogenesis and Morphostasis 98
- Critiques of Family-Systems Theory 99**
- Discussion Questions 100**
- Additional Resources 100**
- References 100**

A Functional Analysis of  
Family Behavior     *D. Eugene Mead* 102

**Functional Analysis** 102

**Principles of Reinforcement** 103

**Selection and Behavior** 105

**The Individual Family Member as a Carrier of Histories** 105

Phylogenetic History 106

Ontogenetic History 106

Cultural History 107

**The Family as a Verbal Community** 107

Verbal Behavior 107

Rule-Governed Behavior 108

**The Family Verbal Community as a Socially Constructed Reality** 109

**The Benefits of Applying Functional Analysis to Family Behavior** 110

Discussion Questions 111

Additional Resources 111

References 111

C H A P T E R 8

The Science of Family Science  
*Karen Price Carver / Jay D. Teachman* 113

Induction and Deduction 113

    Causation and Association 114

    Objectivity and Ideology 114

Conceptualization and Measurement 115

    Measurement of Concepts 115

    Reliability and Validity 116

    Variables and Units of Analysis 117

Research Design and Data Collection 118

    Survey Design 118

    Experimental Design 119

    Ethnography 120

Statistical Techniques 121

    Hypothesis Testing and Statistical Inference 121

    Univariate, or Descriptive, Statistics 121

    Bivariate and Trivariate Statistics 122

    Multivariate Statistics 123

Future Direction of Family-Research  
    Methods 126

Discussion Questions 126

Additional Resources 126

References 127

P A R T I I I

Understanding  
Family Processes 129

C H A P T E R 9

Family Systems:  
Understanding Your Roots  
*David H. Olson* 131

Cohesion, Adaptability, and  
Communication 131

The Circumplex Model: A  
Relationship Map 132

    Dynamic Balance of Cohesion  
        and Adaptability 132

    Balanced versus Extreme Families 134

    Balanced Families and Communication Skills 134

    Accounting for Cultural and Ethnic Diversity 135

Marital and Family Togetherness  
(Cohesion) 135

Relationship Adaptability 137

Circumplex Types as Illustrated  
by the Movies 138

*The Great Santini*: Rigidly Enmeshed 138

*Ordinary People*: Rigidly Disengaged 139

*Shoot the Moon*: Chaotically Disengaged 139

*Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*:  
        Chaotically Enmeshed 140

Dynamic Changes in Family Types 140

    Change in a Marriage over Time 140

    Changes in Early Marriage 142

<b>Cohesion across the Family Life Cycle</b>	<b>144</b>
<b>Adaptability across the Family Life Cycle</b>	<b>144</b>
<b>Common Problems in Marital and Family Systems</b>	<b>145</b>
<b>A Premarital Couple and Their Families of Origin</b>	<b>146</b>
Kathy's Family Is Structurally Enmeshed	146
Jim's Family is Flexibly Disengaged	146
Jim and Kathy: Two Types of Ideal Marriage	148
<b>Using the Circumplex Model in Treatment</b>	<b>148</b>
Family Diagnosis	148
Family Treatment	149
<b>Describing Your Family</b>	<b>150</b>
<b>Discussion Questions</b>	<b>152</b>
<b>Additional Resources</b>	<b>152</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>152</b>

---

## C H A P T E R 1 0

---

<b>Families in Everyday Life</b>	<b>154</b>
<i>Barbara H. Settles</i>	
<b>Background of the Study of Daily Life</b>	<b>154</b>
Home Economics and Rural Sociology	155
Psychology and Anthropology	156
<b>Newer Developments in the Study of Daily Life</b>	<b>157</b>
Marriage and Family Therapy	157
Further Research on Home and Family Life	158
<b>Diversity in Families and Daily Life</b>	<b>159</b>
<b>Structuring and Scheduling of Activities</b>	<b>159</b>

Impact of Resources	160
Habits and Routines	160
Models and Methods for Managing Routines and Habits	162
Planning and Implementing Action in Family Life	164

<b>Discussion Questions</b>	<b>167</b>
<b>Additional Resources</b>	<b>167</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>167</b>

## C H A P T E R 1 1

---

<b>Communication in Families</b>	<b>171</b>
<i>Kip W. Jenkins</i>	
<b>Definition of Communication</b>	<b>172</b>
<b>Perspectives on Family Communication</b>	<b>172</b>
The Mechanistic Perspective	173
The Psychological Perspective	174
The Interactional Perspective	176
The Pragmatic (Systemic) Perspective	177
<b>Blending the Perspectives: The Basic Elements of Family Communication</b>	<b>179</b>
Shared Family Meanings	180
Communication Messages	180
Communication Patterns	180
Communication Processes	182
<b>Future Directions in Family Communication</b>	<b>183</b>
<b>Discussion Questions</b>	<b>184</b>
<b>Additional Resources</b>	<b>184</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>184</b>

---

## C H A P T E R 1 2

---

**Families and Sexuality***Colleen I. Murray / Geoffrey K. Leigh* 186**Theoretical Perspectives on the Study of Family Sexuality** 187

Life-Span Perspective 188

Sexual Scripts 188

Family Systems 189

**Family Processes** 189

Family Functioning 189

Communication 190

Family Scripts 191

Power and Hierarchy 191

Subsystems 192

Patterns and Rituals 192

**Challenges to the Traditional Views** 193

Sexuality from a Purely Problem-Oriented Approach 193

Sexuality outside of Family and Relationship Contexts 195

Feminist Contributions 196

Power of Biology and Abdication of Responsibility 197

**Where Do We Go from Here?** 198

General Challenges 198

Challenges in Education 199

Challenges in Research 199

**Discussion Questions** 200**Additional Resources** 200**References** 200

---

## C H A P T E R 1 3

---

**Parenting Processes***Denise Ann Bodman / Gary W. Peterson* 205**A Systems View of Parent/Child Relations** 206

A Systems View of the Larger Social Context 206

The Family as a System Encompassing Parent/Child Relations 207

Family Paradigms and Parent/Child Relations 208

**Love in the Parent/Child Relationship** 210

The Development of Love between Parents and Children 211

**Parental Guidance and Authority** 212

The Parental, or Executive, Subsystem 212

Parental Guidance 213

Difference versus Similarity in Parental Guidance 215

Parental Authority as Perceived Competence 216

Children's Guidance and Authority: The Other Side of the Coin 217

**Communication** 218

Functions of Communication in the Parent/Child Relationship 219

**Discussion Questions** 222**Additional Resources** 222**References** 223



## P A R T I V

## Challenges and Choices for Families 227

## C H A P T E R 1 4

### Reproduction in Families 229

*Kerry Daly*

#### Reproduction and Family Definition 229

- Infertile Families 230
- Adoptive Families 230
- Reproductive Technologies 231

#### Reproduction in a Sociohistorical Context 232

#### Reproduction and Gendered Experience 234

- The Biological Argument 234
- The Sociohistorical Argument 234

#### Reproduction in a Technological Age 237

#### The Changing Family 239

#### Discussion Questions 240

#### Additional Resources 240

#### References 240

## C H A P T E R 1 5

### Families and Health Crises 243

*Linda Matocha*

#### Impact of Illness on the Family 243

- Diagnosis and Its Meaning to Family Members 244
- The Patient/Caregiver Relationship 244
- The Patient's Symptoms 245
- The Passage of Time 245

#### Who Are the Family Caregivers? 245

#### Effects of Providing Care on Family Caregivers 247

- Physical Effects 247
- Psychological Effects 248
- Sociological Effects 249
- Economic Effects 250
- Spiritual Effects 250

#### Dealing with the Health-Care System 251

- Health-Care Professionals 251
- Health-Care Institutions 252

#### Discussion Questions 252

#### Additional Resources 252

#### References 252

## C H A P T E R 1 6

### Violence in Families 255

*Suzanne K. Steinmetz*

#### The Dynamics of Family Violence 256

#### Personality Characteristics 257

#### A Sociocultural Perspective 258

#### A Social-Psychological Perspective 260

- Power 260
- Control 261
- Sexual Equality and Social Status 262
- Intergenerational Transmission of Violence 262
- Patterns of Communication 263

#### A Case Study of Family Violence 264

#### Discussion Questions 266

#### Additional Resources 266

#### References 266