

A N N U A L E D I T I O N S

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY



95/96

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY 95/96

Editor

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Cover illustration by Mike Eagle

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Twenty-First Edition

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To the Reader

In publishing ANNUAL EDITIONS we recognize the enormous role played by the magazines, newspapers, and journals of the *public press* in providing current, first-rate educational information in a broad spectrum of interest areas. Within the articles, the best scientists, practitioners, researchers, and commentators draw issues into new perspective as accepted theories and viewpoints are called into account by new events, recent discoveries change old facts, and fresh debate breaks out over important controversies.

Many of the articles resulting from this enormous editorial effort are appropriate for students, researchers, and professionals seeking accurate, current material to help bridge the gap between principles and theories and the real world. These articles, however, become more useful for study when those of lasting value are carefully collected, organized, indexed, and reproduced in a low-cost format, which provides easy and permanent access when the material is needed. That is the role played by *Annual Editions*. Under the direction of each volume's Editor, who is an expert in the subject area, and with the guidance of an Advisory Board, we seek each year to provide in each ANNUAL EDITION a current, well-balanced, carefully selected collection of the best of the public press for your study and enjoyment. We think you'll find this volume useful, and we hope you'll take a moment to let us know what you think.

The intent of *Annual Editions: Marriage and Family 95/96* is to explore intimate relationships as they are played out in marriage and family. It is also intended to reflect the changing face of the family. The purpose of this anthology is to bring to the reader the latest thoughts and trends in our understanding of the family, to identify current concerns as well as problems and possible solutions, and to present alternative views of family process.

The articles in this volume are taken from professional publications, semiprofessional journals, and popular lay publications aimed at both special populations and a general readership. The selections are carefully reviewed for their currency and accuracy. In some cases, contrasting viewpoints are presented. In others, articles are paired in such a way as to personalize the more impersonal scholarly information. In the current edition, approximately 70 percent of the articles have changed from the previous edition upon updating and responding to reviewers' comments. As the reader, you will note the tremendous range of tone and focus of these articles, from first-person accounts to reports of scientific discoveries or philosophical and theoretical writings. Some are more practical and applications-oriented while others are more technical and research-oriented.

This anthology is organized to cover many of the important aspects of marriage and family. The first unit looks at varied perspectives on the family. The second unit examines the beginning steps of relationship building as individuals go through the process of exploring and establishing connections. In the third unit, the means of finding and maintaining a relationship balance are examined. Unit four is concerned with issues of crises, and the ways in which these crises can act as challenges and opportunities for families and their members. Finally, unit five takes a positive view as it looks at families, now and into the future.

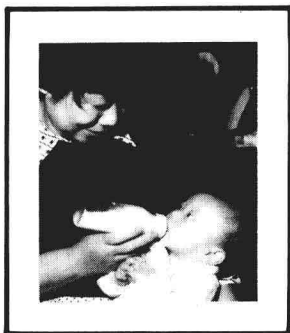
Instructors can use *Annual Editions: Marriage and Family 95/96* as a primary text for introductory marriage and family classes, particularly when they tie the content of the articles to basic information on marriage and family. It can also be used as a supplement to update or emphasize certain aspects of standard marriage and family textbooks. Because of the provocative nature of many of the articles in this anthology, it works quite well as a basis for class discussion about various aspects of marriage and family relationships.

I would like to thank everyone involved in the development of this volume. Special thanks go to Lisa Eckert for her contributions in developing and editing this anthology. I would also like to thank those who sent in article rating forms and comments on the previous edition as well as those who suggested articles to consider for inclusion in this edition. Finally, to all of the students in my Marriage and Family Interactions class who have contributed critiques of articles, I would like to say thanks.

Anyone interested in providing input for future editions of *Annual Editions: Marriage and Family* should complete and return the postpaid article rating form at the end of this book. Your suggestions are much appreciated and contribute to the continuing high quality of this anthology.



Kathleen R. Gilbert
Editor



Unit 1

Varied Perspectives on the Family

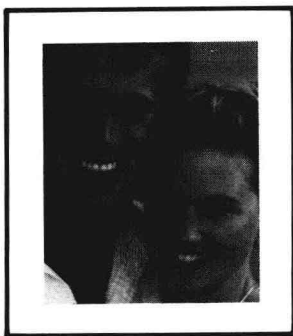
Six articles explore different views on where our images of family come from and how they are influenced by our life experiences as well as societal and cultural constraints.

To the Reader

Topic Guide

Overview

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| ① | The Mything Link , Owen Edwards, <i>Town & Country</i> , June 1994.
What do we think of when we picture <i>the "perfect" family</i> ? Images from sources as varied as ancient Greek gods, great literature, and modern television shows act as the basis for our image of the ideal family. | |
| 2. | The New Crusade for the Old Family , Arlene Skolnick and Stacey Rosencrantz, <i>The American Prospect</i> , Summer 1994.
Family restorationists agree on the elements that lead to the <i>breakdown of the family</i> . Yet, their arguments may be overstated. Problems in the research that serves as the basis for their statements are discussed. | 8 |
| ③ | The New Family: Investing in Human Capital , David A. Hamburg, <i>Current</i> , July/August 1993.
<i>Working parents, single parents</i> , child care, families <i>separated from extended-family supports</i> , families in <i>poverty</i> , parents unprepared for parenting, and children unprepared for school are realities of today's family life. David Hamburg calls on us to respond in ways that <i>support and strengthen families</i> . | 14 |
| ④ | Children Are Alone , Peggy Orenstein, <i>New York Times Magazine</i> , July 24, 1994.
<i>Resiliency</i> is not a characteristic commonly associated with living in poverty. Peggy Orenstein depicts the lives of two girls surviving in a world of <i>uninvolved and problematic parents</i> and other adults. | 23 |
| 5. | The Ache for Home , Monica McGoldrick, <i>The Family Therapy Networker</i> , July/August 1994.
<i>Diversity in family life</i> , its benefits, and pitfalls are discussed in this essay. Monica McGoldrick describes her personal journey toward seeing those things that had been invisible to her as she grew up: <i>culture, gender, class, and race</i> . Suggestions on taking advantage of the richness of diversity are made. | 30 |
| 6. | Growing Up in Black and White , Jack E. White, <i>Time</i> , May 17, 1993.
Jack White discusses the societal factors that influence <i>images of self-identity</i> , particularly in young black children. Their view of themselves and their race comes from television, movies, and childrens' literature, which seductively "link everything beautiful and alluring with whiteness while often treating blacks as after-thoughts." | 36 |

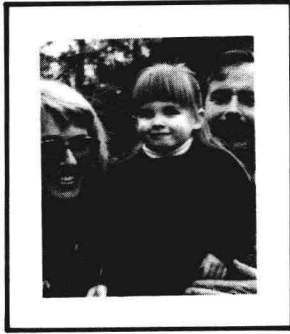


Unit 2

Exploring and Establishing Relationships

Eight articles address factors that influence the formation of close relationships, both romantic and generative.

Overview	38
A. <i>EMOTIONS AND RELATING</i>	
7. Sizing Up the Sexes , Christine Gorman, <i>Time</i> , January 20, 1992.	40
Why are females better at reading others' emotions and motives? Why are males better map-readers? The answers to these and other questions about male-female differences combine biology and environment.	
8. Love: The Immutable Longing for Contact , Susan Johnson with Hara Estroff Marano, <i>Psychology Today</i> , March/April 1994.	44
A deep and abiding need for connection underlies a life-long desire for love in close relationships. Attachment theory explains the varied nature of how we act on this powerful force.	
9. What Makes Love Last? Alan AtKisson, <i>New Age Journal</i> , September/October 1994.	49
What are the keys to long-term relationships ? One of the keys is in how the couple handles disagreements. Validating , volatile , or conflict avoiding interactional styles can all contribute to relationship longevity.	
B. <i>FINDING A PARTNER</i>	
10. Choosing Mates—The American Way , Martin King Whyte, <i>Society</i> , March/April 1992.	56
Based on soaring divorce rates and other indicators of trouble in American marriages and families, many wonder if the " youth-driven " dating system for finding Mr. or Ms. Right is part of the problem. Martin Whyte traces the history and features of the American dating and mate-selection process.	
11. The Mating Game , <i>U.S. News & World Report</i> , July 19, 1993.	63
From Romeo and Juliet to Tristram and Isolde to Julia Roberts and Lyle Lovett, not much has changed in the mating game, according to scientists. The chemistry of attraction , the dances of intrigue , assessment, and negotiation and the patterns of male and female arousal and behavior are age-old.	
C. <i>THE NEXT GENERATION</i>	
12. Cahl Jooniah , Ian Brown, from <i>Man Medium Rare: Sex, Guns, and Other Perversions of Masculinity</i> , Penguin USA, 1994.	67
Ian Brown provides a lighthearted look with serious overtones at what men experience during their wife's pregnancy .	
13. Adapting to Adoption: Adopted Kids Generate Scientific Optimism and Clinical Caution , Bruce Bower, <i>Science News</i> , August 13, 1994.	73
Adoptive families often struggle under the weight of being seen as more troubled than birth families. Bruce Bower provides evidence from behavioral research that indicates that adoptive families have some unique problems, but adoptive children are not substantially different from children raised in birth families.	
14. The Family Circle , Bruce A. Baldwin, <i>USAir Magazine</i> , September 1993.	76
Adding a child to the family complicates a couple's life. Bruce Baldwin provides suggestions for the couple on how to build on their family strengths .	



Unit 3

Finding a Balance: Maintaining Relationships

Fifteen articles consider the complex issues related to keeping a relationship going. From marriage to parent/child relationships and in our sibling relationships and the "grand" alliance, relationship maintenance requires thought and commitment from members.

Overview

78

A. MARRIAGE AND OTHER COMMITTED RELATIONSHIPS

15. **What's Happening to American Marriage?** Norval D. Glenn, *USA Today Magazine* (Society for the Advancement of Education), May 1993. 80

High **divorce rates** . . . declining **remarriage rates** . . . people **waiting longer** to get married—is marriage **no longer valued**, or are married people **less happy**? The answers are complex and **reflect changes in the expectations, values, and experiences** of today's Americans.

16. **Peer Marriage**, Pepper Schwartz, *The Family Therapy Networker*, September/October 1994. 83

What is the nature of a marriage when the couple creates a **truly egalitarian relationship**? In this article, Pepper Schwartz reports her sometimes surprising findings on the benefits and drawbacks of peer marriage.

17. **Receipts from a Marriage**, Margaret K. Ambry, *American Demographics*, February 1993. 88

Although it is common for married couples of all ages to look at each other and ask, "**Where does our money go?**" Margaret Ambry says couples at different marital stages spend their money very differently. From a **childfree** stage through the **parenting** stage to an **empty nest stage**, **spending habits shift**. You may be surprised how and why.

18. **Staying Power: Bridging the Gender Gap in the Confusing '90s**, Melinda Blau, *American Health*, May 1994. 94

Melinda Blau explores how to have a 1990s relationship in a world that is structured for the traditional. **Breaking out** of the **stereotypical husband/wife**, mother/father roles is discussed.

19. **But What Do You Mean?** Deborah Tannen, *Redbook*, October 1994. 97

Do **men and women speak the same language**? Linguist Deborah Tannen provides a list of seven controversial traps couples may face and methods of avoiding them.

20. **Saving Relationships: The Power of the Unpredictable**, Barry L. Duncan and Joseph W. Rock, *Psychology Today*, January/February 1993. 100

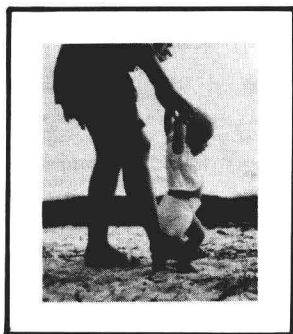
Relationships, like small engines or teams, **run smoothly until something or someone changes**. Any one change causes effects, often leading to other changes. **Predictability and unpredictability, action and reaction**; blame, hurt, and silence can kill relationships. This article applies **systems thinking** to saving relationships.

B. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PARENTS AND CHILDREN

21. **Vanishing Dreams of America's Young Families**, Marian Wright Edelman, *Challenge*, May/June 1992. 105

Young **families**, according to this article, are having more than the usual uphill struggle as they get established in **jobs**, marry, start a family, and buy a house. Marian Wright Edelman argues that every child is entitled to a fair start, a healthy start, and a head start in life.

22. **When Parents Disagree**, Nancy Samalin with Patricia McCormick, *Parents*, September 1992. 112
Although experts advise that effective **parenting involves "a united front,"** Nancy Samalin acknowledges that this is not always possible. She does, however, encourage parents to avoid criticizing each other in front of the children and offers practical suggestions for mediating parents' differing approaches to child management.
 23. **Ten Worst Discipline Mistakes Parents Make . . . and Alternatives**, James Windell, *Bottom Line/Personal*, November 30, 1992. 115
Disciplining children can be a frustrating task. James Windell points out the worst mistakes parents make in disciplining their children and provides advice on disciplining children positively.
 24. **Of Super Dads, and Absent Ones**, Marilyn Gardner, *Christian Science Monitor*, October 7, 1993. 117
Fathers in the 1990s face many pressures to be involved in their children's lives. Marilyn Gardner depicts the **struggles men go through** in trying to be more accessible to their children.
 25. **Single Parents and Damaged Children: The Fruits of the Sexual Revolution**, Lloyd Eby and Charles A. Donovan, *The World & I*, July 1993. 120
This comprehensive review of **sociocultural changes** in sexual attitudes and behaviors over the last 30 years focuses on teenage sexual activity and consequences. Pointing out the **failures of efforts** to reduce out-of-wedlock births, it concludes with more questions than answers about **future costs** and **possible solutions**.
 26. **The Family Heart**, Robb Forman Dew, *Good Housekeeping*, June 1994. 126
Robb Forman Dew candidly presents one **mother's account** of her experiences when her son came "out of the closet." In a heartwarming, insightful, and most importantly, an honest way, this mother talks about the steps she went through to gain an **understanding and acceptance** of the fact that her **son is gay**.
 27. **"I Don't Sweat the Small Stuff Anymore,"** Jan Goodwin, *Ladies' Home Journal*, May 1994. 129
By opening their home to **foster children who tested positive for HIV** (the virus that causes AIDS), this **family learned a lesson** about themselves and society. Jan Goodwin tells what one family has done to help children nobody else wants.
- C. **OTHER FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS**
28. **Siblings and Development**, Judy Dunn, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, February 1992. 132
It is surprising that, although siblings grow up in the same family, they are often very different from each other. One major reason is that **siblings may not experience the "same" family** due to parents' differential treatment of their children. The "Mom always liked you best" perception leads to differences between siblings as well as **sibling rivalry**. Sibling differences arise not only because of **parental treatment** but because of the ways siblings treat each other.
 29. **Places Everyone**, Stephen Harrigan, *Health*, November/December 1992. 136
Benjamin Spock is reported to have said, "No two children have the same parents." This selection considers evidence for and against the hypothesis that the different experiences stemming from being a **firstborn, second born**, etc., result in distinctive and predictable **personality types**.



Unit 4

Crises – Challenges and Opportunities

A wide variety of crises, normative and catastrophic, are detailed in the fifteen articles. Ranging from broad cultural factors impacting on families to the intimate crises of infidelity, divorce, and death, the articles provide accounts of devastation and hope.

Overview	140
A. FAMILY UNDER SIEGE	
30. Endangered Family , <i>Newsweek</i> , August 30, 1993.	142
This controversial report synthesizes the analysis of the endangered black family and revisits, after two generations, the discussion that caused profound divisions between advocates of public policy and supporters of individualistic or community and family-based approaches to social and economic change and well-being.	
31. White Ghetto? Carroll Bogert, <i>Newsweek</i> , May 30, 1994.	147
The culture of poverty , with high rates of teenage pregnancy and welfare dependence , is not unique to any single race or ethnic group. Policymakers seem unable to agree on the cause or solutions for debilitating aspects of this culture , regardless of the racial or ethnic background of the poor.	
B. FAMILY VIOLENCE	
32. Helping Children Cope with Violence , Lorraine B. Wallach, <i>Young Children</i> , May 1993.	150
“ Children who grow up in violent communities are at risk for pathological development because growing up in a constant state of apprehension makes it difficult to establish trust, autonomy, and social competence.”	
33. After He Hits Her , Jane H. Wolf-Smith and Ralph LaRossa, <i>Family Relations</i> , July 1992.	156
According to the authors’ analysis of interviews with 50 battered women, “interactional dynamics” affect the likelihood that abuse will continue. Understanding a continuum of behaviors including the abusers’ “aligning actions,” the victims’ “honoring” (or rejecting) of these disclaimers, and their contribution to a “hitting license” appears important in reducing violence .	
34. Where Do We Go from Here? An Interview with Ann Jones , Gloria Jacobs, <i>Ms</i> , September/October 1994.	162
Battery is a major health problem for women. What should the focus be in ending this violence? In this essay, Ann Jones, a leading author on this topic, is interviewed regarding the need to change public attitudes and reform batterers rather than focus on the behavior of the battered women.	
C. SEXUAL ISSUES AND INFIDELITY	
35. Sexual Desire , <i>U.S. News & World Report</i> , July 6, 1992.	168
Too little or too much—either is problematic. Sex therapists confirm that HSD/hypoactive sexual desire (little or no interest in sex) and CSB/compulsive sexual behavior (near to uncontrollable obsession with sex) are extremes that represent today’s number one sexual problem. Unfortunately, causes appear complex and treatments are not always effective.	
36. Beyond Betrayal: Life after Infidelity , Frank Pittman III, <i>Psychology Today</i> , May/June 1993.	173
Although most first affairs are accidental and unintended, some people, according to the author, planfully and regularly violate their marital vows. With commonly believed myths about infidelity and a typology of infidelities, Frank Pittman exposes the realities of this often-damaged script.	

D. THE STRESS OF FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

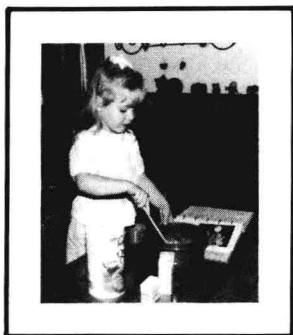
37. **The Myth of the Miserable Working Woman**, Rosalind C. Barnett and Caryl Rivers, *Working Woman*, February 1992. 180
A number of myths about working women are dispelled in this informative article. The media have portrayed **working women** as stressed, unhealthy, and unable to cope with both working and **family responsibilities**. Recent research, on the contrary, indicates just the opposite seems to be true.
38. **Caregiving: Continuities and Discontinuities in Family Members' Relationships with Alzheimer's Patients**, Catherine Chesla, Ida Martinson, and Marilou Muwaswes, *Family Relations*, January 1994. 184
What impact does daily care of a family member suffering from Alzheimer's Disease have on **family members providing that care**? This report looks at ways in which the relationship remains **continuous, continuous but transformed, and discontinuous**.
39. **The Long Road Back: A Daughter Deals with Her Mother's Stroke**, Patricia K. Lynch, *Family Circle*, May 17, 1994. 191
Patricia Lynch provides moving insight on the **mother-daughter bond** through the care she is providing to her stroke-affected mother.

E. DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

40. **Family Values: The Bargain Breaks**, *The Economist*, December 26, 1992–January 8, 1993. 193
For centuries, **marriage** has been a "**bargain between men and women**" (and society). This article discusses several trends that contribute to people, especially women, viewing marriage as a **bad bargain**. However, the alternatives—cohabitation, bearing children out of wedlock, and divorce—are also bad bargains, especially for women and children.
41. **Lessons from Stepfamilies**, Virginia Rutter, *Psychology Today*, May/June 1994. 196
At least in part because of their greater complexity, stepfamilies serve as a testing ground for the makings of **successful relationships**. Such issues as **myths of remarriage**, the difficulties of **coparenting**, **divided loyalties**, and the need for **acceptance** are addressed by Virginia Rutter.
42. **The Myths and Misconceptions of the Stepmother Identity**, Marianne Dainton, *Family Relations*, January 1993. 202
"**Hansel and Gretel**," "**Cinderella**," and "**Snow White**," three of the Brothers Grimm's most familiar fairy tales, have something in common: a **wicked stepmother**. According to Marianne Dainton, this myth and its flip side, **the myth of instant love**, are detrimental to stepmothers and blended families.

F. LOSS AND BEREAVEMENT

43. **Solace and Immortality: Bereaved Parents' Continuing Bond with Their Children**, Dennis Klass, *Death Studies*, July/August 1993. 208
This is a discussion of how bereaved **parents** cope with the loss of their deceased **children**. Through therapy, classes, and support groups, parents learn to deal effectively with their pain and grief.
44. **Sibling Survivors: How Losing a Brother or Sister to Cancer Can Recast a Child's Destiny**, Elizabeth DeVita, *The Washington Post*, January 19, 1993. 217
Often the **forgotten victims of loss**, the lives of **siblings** are forever altered by the loss of a brother or sister.



Unit 5

Families, Now and into the Future

Four articles look at means of establishing and/or maintaining health and healthy relationships in families.

Overview	222
45. Trace Your Family Tree: Charting Your Relatives' Medical History Can Save Your Life , Ruth Papazian, <i>American Health</i> , May 1994.	224
How important is knowing your family's health history ? Research shows an extremely high number of diseases are hereditary. Learning how to chart your family health tree now could save your life later.	
46. Happy Families: Who Says They All Have to Be Alike? Susan Chollar, <i>American Health</i> , July/August 1993.	229
The quality of relationships, the level of conflict, and a willingness to acknowledge and work on problems are more significant factors in the health and happiness of families than the number of parents or the resemblance to the nostalgic Cleavers or Nelsons.	
47. Family Matters , Lance Morrow, <i>Town & Country</i> , June 1994.	232
Are all families, as the common belief states, at least a little bit dysfunctional? In this article, Lance Morrow, defends the functional families ; they should be looked at as dynamic systems , evolving to meet the needs of their members and the forces of society.	
48. Rituals for Our Times , Evan Imber-Black and Janine Roberts, <i>New Age Journal</i> , September/October 1992.	236
Families develop rituals for any number of reasons: to heal broken relationships , honor rites of passage , celebrate triumphs , mourn losses . Rituals provide connection and membership to family members and can be incorporated throughout the life of the family.	
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Topic Guide

This topic guide suggests how the selections in this book relate to topics of traditional concern to students and professionals involved with the study of marriage and family. It is useful for locating articles that relate to each other for reading and research. The guide is arranged alphabetically according to topic. Articles may, of course, treat topics that do not appear in the topic guide. In turn, entries in the topic guide do not necessarily constitute a comprehensive listing of all the contents of each selection.

TOPIC AREA	TREATED IN:	TOPIC AREA	TREATED IN:
Abortion	25. Single Parents and Damaged Children	Communication (cont.)	16. Peer Marriage 18. Staying Power 19. But What Do You Mean? 20. Saving Relationships 22. When Parents Disagree 35. Sexual Desire 41. Lessons from Step-Families 46. Happy Families: Who Says They All Have to Be Alike?
Abuse	23. Ten Worst Discipline Mistakes Parents Make . . . and Alternatives 32. Helping Children Cope with Violence 33. After He Hits Her 34. Where Do We Go from Here?	Culture	1. Mything Link 5. Ache for Home 6. Growing Up in Black and White 18. Staying Power 26. Family Heart 30. Endangered Family 32. Helping Children Cope with Violence 46. Happy Families 47. Family Matters 48. Rituals for Our Times
Adolescence	4. Children Are Alone 10. Choosing Mates—The American Way 25. Single Parents and Damaged Children 44. Sibling Survivors	Dating/Mate Selection	8. Love: The Immutable Longing for Contact 9. What Makes Love Last? 10. Choosing Mates—The American Way
Adoption	13. Adapting to Adoption	Divorce	2. New Crusade for the Old Family 15. What's Happening to American Marriage? 36. Beyond Betrayal 40. Family Values
Aging	17. Receipts from a Marriage 38. Caregiving 39. Long Road Back 45. Trace Your Family Tree	Family Systems	5. Ache for Home 14. Family Circle 16. Peer Marriage 26. Family Heart 28. Siblings and Development 29. Places Everyone 39. Long Road Back 41. Lessons from Step-Families 46. Happy Families 47. Family Matters 48. Rituals for Our Times
Beliefs	1. Mything Link 5. Ache for Home 6. Growing Up in Black and White 16. Peer Marriage 26. Family Heart 27. I Don't Sweat the Small Stuff Anymore 39. Long Road Back 43. Solace and Immortality 44. Sibling Survivors 47. Family Matters 48. Rituals for Our Times	"Family Values" Conflict	2. New Crusade for the Old Family 3. New Family Investing in Human Capital 30. Endangered Family 31. White Ghetto? 40. Family Values 47. Family Matters
Biological Bases	7. Sizing Up the Sexes 8. Love: The Immutable Longing for Contact 37. Sexual Desire 45. Trace Your Family Tree	Gender Roles	7. Sizing Up the Sexes 10. Choosing Mates—The American Way 11. Mating Game 12. Cah! Jooniah 16. Peer Marriage 18. Staying Power 19. But What Do You Mean? 20. Saving Relationships 33. After He Hits Her 34. Where Do We Go from Here? 37. Myth of the Miserable Working Woman 42. Myths and Misconceptions of the Stepmother Identity
Children and Childcare	3. New Family Investing in Human Capital 4. Children Are Alone 6. Growing Up in Black and White 8. Love: The Immutable Longing for Contact 13. Adapting to Adoption 14. Family Circle 16. Peer Marriage 21. Vanishing Dreams of America's Young Families 23. Ten Worst Discipline Mistakes Parents Make . . . and Alternatives 27. Single Parents and Damaged Children 27. I Don't Sweat the Small Stuff Anymore 30. Endangered Family 32. Helping Children Cope with Violence 42. Myths and Misconceptions of the Stepmother Identity 43. Solace and Immortality 44. Sibling Survivors 46. Happy Families 47. Family Matters		
Communication	7. Sizing Up the Sexes 8. Love: The Immutable Longing for Contact 11. Mating Game		

TOPIC AREA	TREATED IN:	TOPIC AREA	TREATED IN:
Health Concerns	12. Cahl Jooniah 27. I Don't Sweat the Small Stuff Anymore 34. Where Do We Go from Here? 38. Caregiving 39. Long Road Back 45. Trace Your Family Tree	Poverty	2. New Crusade for the Old Family 4. Children Are Alone 21. Vanishing Dreams of America's Young Families 30. Endangered Family 31. White Ghetto?
Infidelity	11. Mating Game 35. Sexual Desire 36. Beyond Betrayal	Pregnancy/Childbirth	12. Cahl Jooniah 14. Family Circle
Intimacy/Romantic Love	5. Ache for Home 7. Sizing Up the Sexes 8. Love: The Immutable Longing for Contact 9. What Makes Love Last? 10. Choosing Mates—The American Way 11. Mating Game 12. Cahl Jooniah 15. What's Happening to American Marriage? 16. Peer Marriage 20. Saving Relationships 35. Sexual Desire 36. Beyond Betrayal 40. Family Values 46. Happy Families	Race/Ethnicity	4. Children Are Alone 5. Ache for Home 6. Growing Up in Black and White 21. Vanishing Dreams of America's Young Families 30. Endangered Family 31. White Ghetto?
Laws/Governmental Roles/Policy	2. New Crusade for the Old Family 3. New Family Investing in Human Capital 21. Vanishing Dreams of America's Young Families 25. Single Parents and Damaged Children 31. White Ghetto? 34. Where Do We Go from Here? 40. Family Values	Remarriage	41. Lessons from Step-Families 42. Myths and Misconceptions of the Stepmother Identity
Marriage	9. What Makes Love Last? 10. Choosing Mates—The American Way 14. Family Circle 15. What's Happening to American Marriage? 16. Peer Marriage 17. Receipts from a Marriage 36. Beyond Betrayal 37. Myth of the Miserable Working Woman 40. Family Values 41. Lessons from Step-Families 46. Happy Families 47. Family Matters	Sex/Sexuality	7. Sizing Up the Sexes 11. Mating Game 16. Peer Marriage 20. Saving Relationships 25. Single Parents and Damaged Children 35. Sexual Desire 36. Beyond Betrayal
Parents/Parenting	6. Growing Up in Black and White 8. Love: The Immutable Longing for Contact 12. Cahl Jooniah 14. Family Circle 16. Peer Marriage 17. Receipts from a Marriage 21. Vanishing Dreams of America's Young Families 22. When Parents Disagree 23. Ten Worst Discipline Mistakes Parents Make . . . and Alternatives 24. Of Super Dads and Absent Ones 25. Single Parents and Damaged Children 26. Family Heart 41. Lessons from Step-Families 42. Myths and Misconceptions of the Stepmother Identity 43. Solace and Immortality 46. Happy Families 47. Family Matters	Siblings	28. Siblings and Development 29. Places Everyone 44. Sibling Survivors
		Single Parent Homes	3. New Family Investing in Human Capital 24. Of Super Dads and Absent Ones 30. Endangered Family 31. White Ghetto?
		Values	1. Mything Link 5. Ache for Home 6. Growing Up in Black and White 10. Choosing Mates—The American Way 14. Family Circle 15. What's Happening to American Marriage? 16. Peer Marriage 22. When Parents Disagree 25. Single Parents and Damaged Children 26. Family Heart 40. Family Values 44. Sibling Survivors 46. Happy Families 47. Family Matters 48. Rituals for Our Times
		Work and Family	3. New Family Investing in Human Capital 14. Family Circle 16. Peer Marriage 21. Vanishing Dreams of America's Young Families 37. Myth of the Miserable Working Woman

Varied Perspectives on the Family

What is a family? How do you know? How do you know you are doing it right? One's image of family is a powerful combination of personal experience and images to which one is exposed. This image informs decision making and interpersonal interaction throughout one's life and has far-reaching impacts. On an intimate level, it influences individual and family development as well as relationships both within the family and without. On a broader level, it affects social policy and programming.

In many ways, this image can be positive. It can act to clarify one's thinking and facilitate interaction with like-minded individuals. It can also be negative, as it can narrow one's thinking and limit one's ability to see the value of other ways of carrying out the functions of family, simply because these ways are different. In this case, interaction with others can be impeded because of contrasting views. People who have ways of behaving that are different from one's own may be seen as "them" in an "us and them" mentality.

This unit is intended to meet several goals with regard to perspectives on the family: (1) to sensitize the reader to the sources of beliefs about what the family should be and the ways in which family roles should be carried out, (2) to show how different views of the family can influence attitudes toward community responsibility and family policy, (3) to show how views that dominate one's childhood can influence awareness of alternative ways of structuring family life and the individual's sense of self.

The first article, "The Mything Link," asks the reader to consider the mythology of the family and the sources of these myths. The next three articles confront dramatic

examples of the changing face of the family. The first two address broad societal responsibilities for these "new" families and their members. The third, "Children Are Alone," looks at what happens if intervention is inadequate or nonexistent. Peggy Orenstein provides a touching look at the lives of two teenaged girls growing up in a demanding world of limited support.

The next two articles look at the ways in which images of family can be restrictive and possibly harmful. In "The Ache for Home," family therapist Monica McGoldrick describes her personal journey toward awareness of culture, gender, class, and race, all of which had been "invisible" to her as she grew up. "Growing Up in Black and White" looks at the societal factors that influence images of self-identity, particularly in young black children. Unless they are countered by images that encourage these children to value themselves, these factors can do serious damage to the self-images of these children.

Looking Ahead: Challenge Questions

What is your image of family? How closely does it match an image of the perfect family? What are the sources of these images?

If you had the power to propose a government program to support today's families, what would it be?

What type of intervention would you propose to help children growing up in troubled families and in a dangerous world?

How would you go about expanding your ideas of what is acceptable in terms of family relationships and family roles? How far do you think you should go in this?

Unit 1



The Mything Link

Where does our notion of "the perfect family" come from? Heaven knows: It incorporates everything from the Greek gods to the Brady Bunch.

Owen Edwards

The ancient Greeks were onto something, I think, envisioning their gods as one big scrappy family. To those of us hearing their stories more than 2,000 years later, at least, the cast and dynamics seem entirely familiar: Zeus, the all-powerful father, given to fits of temper yet a bit of a bumbler, a compulsive philanderer who endlessly risked the wrath of his wife; Hera, a powerful matriarch ever ready to make things hot for him and his earthly friends; and the brothers—Poseidon, always off somewhere fishing, and lonely Hades—both running branches of the family business and quick to disapprove of Zeus and his brood. Among them were all manner of kids, legitimate and otherwise, real gods and demis, spoiled and neglected, wreaking havoc in a thousand legendary ways. It may be a stretch to picture Zeus coming back from a trip to earth, peeling off his swan suit and calling out, "Hi, honey, I'm home," but it's not so hard to imagine those who listened raptly to Homer's poetry tuned in to "Dallas of the Deities," "Immortal-something" or "Mt. Olympus 90210." The gods may have been movers and shakers on an unimaginably grand scale, but it was their oh-so-familiar family life that made mere mortals care so passionately about their lofty goings-on.

Imagine someone dropping onto a psychiatrist's couch and saying, "I'll talk about anything except my family." As Ross Perot might say, end of story. Family life is the common thread of human existence, and the meaning of family is central to any search for ourselves. Most of us experience the world first as the small, sheltering universe of our families. Those unlucky enough not to get off to such a start often spend their lives looking for what they imagine to be the equivalent, with unpredictable results (think of

the murderous misfits of the Manson family). Even those who ultimately find the universe of the loving family too constricting and break away run the risk of endlessly looking back, reflexively gilding already golden memories. Though we may in the end spend years busily rejecting mom and dad or blaming our siblings for their tormenting ways, few can break entirely free of what can only be called blood yearnings. Because whatever it is or has been in reality, family life remains the great Arcadian dream.

One of the ways we go on dreaming this dream in the face of waking realities is to invent mythical families, or invest real families with a mythical status. These surrogates, be they the Kennedy clan or the Brady Bunch, serve our ritual needs, providing us with family scandals and feuds at no risk of embarrassment to ourselves, and letting us study—at a safe distance—how families ought or ought not to behave. They are loved, and sometimes loathed, with a public passion driven by the implausible notion that somewhere the perfect, wart-free *It's a Wonderful Life* family actually exists, and might, but for an accident of timing, include us.

Whether we know it or not, most of us are looking for dream families most of the time. Some years ago, shortly after arriving on a small island in the Mediterranean, I saw a handsome couple walking with their arms around the shoulders of their beautiful teenage children. Instantly, I decided they were the perfect family; they seemed so intimately knit, and though I had no complaint about my own family, I could never remember either of my parents behaving with such egalitarian intimacy toward me and my brother. When I had dinner with them a few nights later, the French surgeon, his painter wife and their two charming and gift-