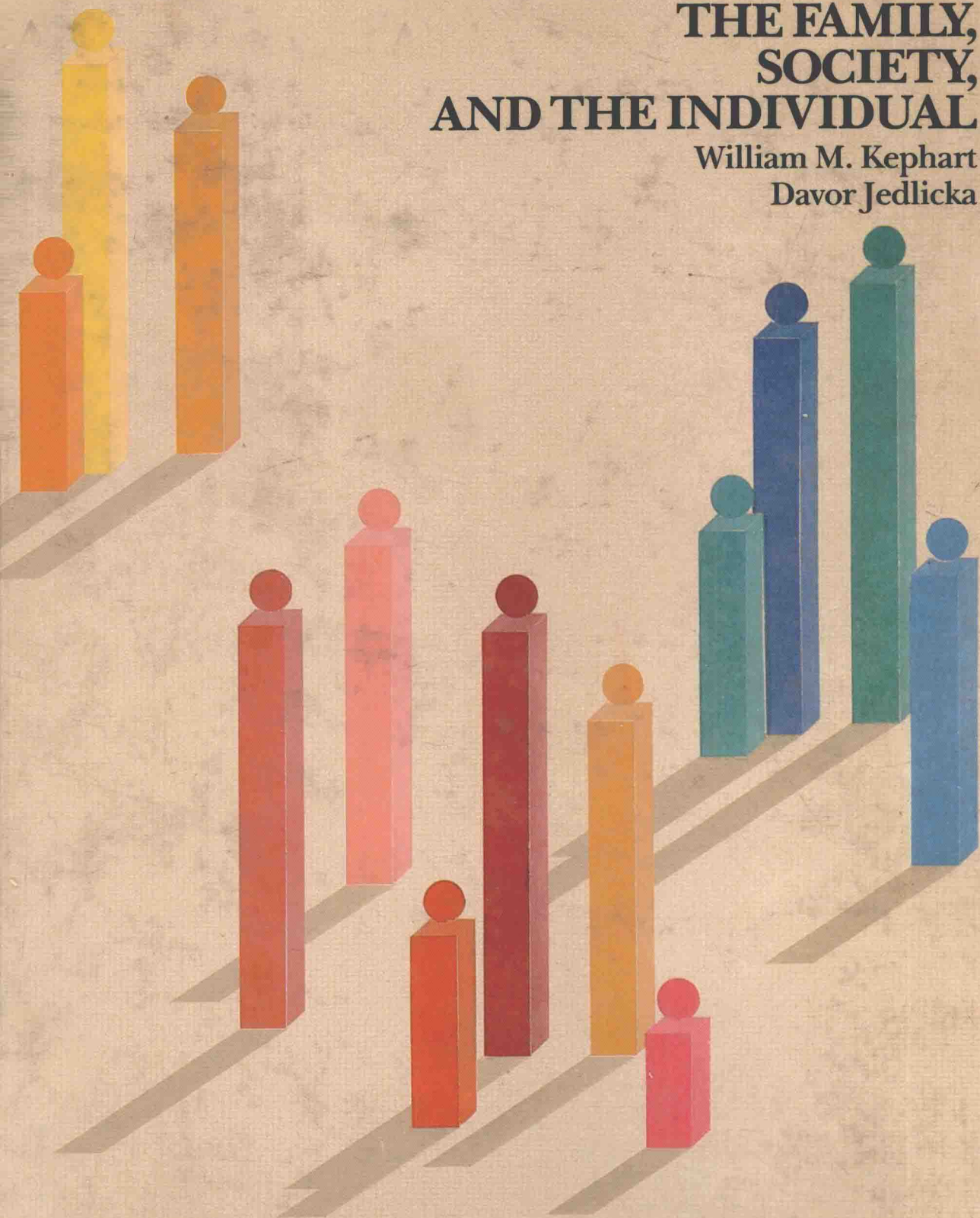


Sixth Edition

THE FAMILY, SOCIETY, AND THE INDIVIDUAL

William M. Kephart
Davor Jedlicka



THE
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SOCIETY,
AND THE
INDIVIDUAL

Sixth
Edition

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Preface

The Family, Society, and the Individual, now in its sixth edition, has been used at close to one thousand colleges and universities. Students and faculty have identified three principal features: a clear writing style with frequent use of meaningful examples, topical coverage that reflects the latest findings in the broad range of the family field, and consistently interesting material.

This edition of *The Family, Society, and the Individual* contains a wealth of new material because family texts must change—even as the family field itself changes—if they are to retain their relevance and vitality. Minority families and experimental family organization now receive even more appropriate attention. Because they rank as one of our largest and fastest-growing ethnic groups, a comprehensive description of the Mexican-American family has been included. A relatively unexplored dimension of the black family—its Afrocentric heritage—has also been added. And in the experimental realm, the Rappites have been superseded by the highly successful Koinonia commune.

Some of the other new topics covered are augmented family functions, serial monogamy, international mate selection and marriage, the new double standard, computerized dating, the stepfamily and related problems, and expanded marital role arrangements. The challenge, of course, has been how to make the various changes without impairing the flow and readability of the basic book. These

have always been the benchmarks of *The Family, Society and the Individual*, and we are confident that they remain so.

By its very nature, the family is the province of many disciplines: sociology, anthropology, psychology, religion, home economics, law, and so on. And while *The Family, Society, and the Individual*, Sixth Edition, is basically sociological in orientation, it is also interdisciplinary. It is not, however, a sourcebook of unrelated facts. We have tried, rather, to mold the various reference and research information into a unity—the story of the human family. Our purpose is to tell that story as effectively as possible and in keeping with the best traditions of a liberal education. We also hope that students will gain a better understanding of themselves.

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This edition of *The Family, Society and the Individual* has been substantially strengthened by the suggestions and comments of a number of both users and nonusers of the text. Special thanks, in this regard, are due to:

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Contents

in Brief

Preface xv

PART ONE

CULTURAL SETTING 1

- CHAPTER 1 Introduction: The Study of the Family 3
- CHAPTER 2 Cross-Cultural Patterns 20
- CHAPTER 3 Historical Perspective 47
- CHAPTER 4 The American Family Heritage 72

PART TWO

AMERICAN FAMILY VARIETIES 97

- CHAPTER 5 Experimental Family Organization 99
- CHAPTER 6 Ethnic Varieties: Religion and National Origin 129
- CHAPTER 7 The Black Family 161
- CHAPTER 8 Social Class Variations 185

PART THREE

PREMARITAL BEHAVIOR PATTERNS 209

- CHAPTER 9 Mate Selection Theories 211
- CHAPTER 10 Patterns of Mate Selection 227
- CHAPTER 11 Modes of Mate Selection 239
- CHAPTER 12 Premarital Sexual Attitudes and Behavior 261

PART FOUR

MARITAL INTERACTION AND
THE FAMILY LIFE CYCLE 285

- CHAPTER 13 Marital Adjustment 287
- CHAPTER 14 Parent-Child Interaction 312
- CHAPTER 15 Divorce and Remarriage 338
- CHAPTER 16 The Middle and Later Years 360

PART FIVE

THE FAMILY AND SOCIAL CHANGE 381

- CHAPTER 17 The Changing Status of Women: Women's Rights
and Women's Liberation 383
- CHAPTER 18 Some Alternatives to Family Living 405
- CHAPTER 19 Family Strengthening Programs 428

Appendix: The Physiological Basis of Marriage 445

Index of Authors 461

Index of Subjects 469

Contents

in Detail

Preface xv

PART ONE

CULTURAL SETTING

1

CHAPTER 1 Introduction: The Study of the Family 3

The Individual-Societal Perspective 4

The Family Functions 7

Our Present Family System: Weaknesses and Strengths 13

Summary 18

Questions 18

CHAPTER 2 Cross-Cultural Patterns 20

The Forms of Marriage 22

Consanguine Versus Conjugal Emphasis 28

The Incest Taboo 30

Courtship 32

Extramarital Sex Relations 38

<i>Nonmarital Sex Behavior</i>	39
<i>Divorce</i>	43
<i>Summary</i>	43
<i>Questions</i>	44
<i>Selected Readings</i>	44

CHAPTER 3 Historical Perspective 47

<i>Family Life Among the Hebrews</i>	47
<i>The Greco-Roman Period</i>	51
<i>The Early Christian Influence</i>	56
<i>The Family During the Middle Ages</i>	60
<i>The Renaissance and the Reformation</i>	66
<i>Summary</i>	69
<i>Questions</i>	69
<i>Suggested Readings</i>	70

CHAPTER 4 The American Family Heritage 72

<i>Early Hardships</i>	73
<i>Courtship</i>	76
<i>Marriage</i>	81
<i>Position of Women</i>	84
<i>Children</i>	86
<i>Nonmarital Coitus</i>	88
<i>Summary</i>	92
<i>Questions</i>	92
<i>Selected Readings</i>	93

PART TWO

AMERICAN FAMILY VARIETIES

97

CHAPTER 5 Experimental Family Organization 99

THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY 100

<i>Social Organization</i>	102
<i>Economic Communism</i>	104

<i>Mutual Criticism</i>	106
<i>Complex Marriage</i>	108
<i>The Eugenics Program</i>	111
<i>The Breakup</i>	114

KOINONIA PARTNERS 116

<i>The Experiment</i>	117
<i>Struggle for the Survival</i>	119
<i>Organizational Structure and Leadership</i>	120
<i>The Extended Family</i>	124
<i>Summary</i>	126
<i>Questions</i>	127
<i>Selected Readings</i>	128

CHAPTER 6 Ethnic Varieties: Religion and National Origin 129

THE OLD ORDER AMISH FAMILY 129

<i>Life Style</i>	130
<i>Amish Homes</i>	134
<i>Courtship</i>	137
<i>Marriage</i>	139
<i>Family and Kinship</i>	141
<i>"Our Way of Life"</i>	143

THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN FAMILY 145

<i>The First Generation</i>	146
<i>Later Generations</i>	149
<i>Change and Continuity</i>	154
<i>Summary</i>	157
<i>Questions</i>	158
<i>Selected Readings</i>	159

CHAPTER 7 The Black Family 161

<i>The African Heritage</i>	163
<i>Slavery</i>	164
<i>Political Process and Family Life during Reconstruction:</i> <i>1865–1880</i>	173
<i>Urbanization and Segregation</i>	177

<i>Black Family Strengths</i>	178
<i>Summary</i>	181
<i>Questions</i>	182
<i>Selected Readings</i>	182

CHAPTER 8 Social Class Variations 185

<i>The Upper-Class Family</i>	186
<i>The Middle-Class Family</i>	192
<i>The Lower-Class Family</i>	199
<i>Summary</i>	205
<i>Questions</i>	206
<i>Selected Readings</i>	206

PART THREE

PREMARITAL BEHAVIOR PATTERNS 209

CHAPTER 9 Mate Selection Theories 211

<i>Parents' Influence on Mate Choice: Socialization Theory</i>	212
<i>The Exchange Theory of Mate Selection</i>	215
<i>Availability of Partners: The Demographic Squeeze Theory</i>	218
<i>Other Theories of Mate Selection</i>	219
<i>Summary</i>	224
<i>Questions</i>	224
<i>Selected Readings</i>	225

CHAPTER 10 Patterns of Mate Selection 227

<i>Age Patterns at Marriage: An Application of the Exchange Theory</i>	228
<i>Is There a Best Marrying Age?</i>	229
<i>Racial Patterns of Marriage</i>	230
<i>Religion and Intermarriage</i>	233
<i>Social Class Patterns of Mate Selection</i>	235
<i>Summary</i>	236
<i>Questions</i>	237
<i>Selected Readings</i>	237

CHAPTER 11 Modes of Mate Selection 239

- Stimulus-Value-Role Theory* 240
- The Dating System* 243
- International Mate Selection Networks* 247
- Computer Dating* 251
- Other Modes of Mate Selection* 254
- Romantic Love* 255
- Summary* 258
- Questions* 258
- Selected Readings* 259

CHAPTER 12 Premarital Sexual Attitudes and Behavior 261

- Trends in Premarital Sexual Activity: The Old Double Standard* 263
- Responsibility of Contraception: The New Double Standard* 265
- Inducements to Premarital Intercourse* 267
- Constraints on Premarital Intercourse* 274
- Premarital Pregnancy* 278
- Summary* 281
- Questions* 281
- Selected Readings* 282

PART FOUR

MARITAL INTERACTION AND THE FAMILY LIFE CYCLE
285

CHAPTER 13 Marital Adjustment 287

- Marital Power Determinants* 288
- Marital Role Arrangements* 291
- Night People and Morning People* 295
- The Effect of Children on Marital Happiness* 298
- Sexual Adjustment and Maladjustment* 299
- Wife Abuse* 301
- Some Proposed Solutions for Marital Maladjustment* 302
- Summary* 309

<i>Questions</i>	309
<i>Selected Readings</i>	310

CHAPTER 14 Parent-Child Interaction 312

<i>Historical Statement</i>	313
<i>The Freudian Impact</i>	315
<i>Research Findings on Freudian Theory</i>	319
<i>The Child-Rearing "Pendulum"</i>	320
<i>Parent Education</i>	323
<i>Child Abuse</i>	325
<i>The Permissive Versus the Restrictive Philosophy</i>	327
<i>Sex Education</i>	331
<i>Summary</i>	334
<i>Questions</i>	335
<i>Selected Readings</i>	336

CHAPTER 15 Divorce and Remarriage 338

<i>Divorce in the United States: An Overview</i>	339
<i>The Fault System of Divorce</i>	342
<i>The No-Fault System</i>	344
<i>Causes of Divorce</i>	345
<i>Grounds for Divorce</i>	349
<i>Children and Divorce</i>	350
<i>Remarriage</i>	352
<i>Stepfamilies</i>	354
<i>Summary</i>	356
<i>Questions</i>	357
<i>Selected Readings</i>	357

CHAPTER 16 The Middle and Later Years 360

<i>Marriage as Development</i>	363
<i>The Empty Nest</i>	364
<i>The Later Years</i>	365
<i>Social Support Networks for the Elderly</i>	367
<i>Sex and the Aged</i>	372
<i>Widowhood</i>	375
<i>Summary</i>	377
<i>Questions</i>	377
<i>Selected Readings</i>	378

PART FIVE

THE FAMILY AND SOCIAL CHANGE

381

CHAPTER 17 The Changing Status of Women: Women's Rights
and Women's Liberation 383*Changes in Courtship* 384*Changes in the Sex Mores* 391*The Women's Rights Movement* 393*Sociological Aspects of Women's Liberation* 399*Effect on Marriage* 400*Summary* 402*Questions* 402*Selected Readings* 403

CHAPTER 18 Some Alternatives to Family Living 405

Staying Single 405*Cohabitation* 410*Swinging* 416*Communes* 421*Summary* 424*Questions* 424*Selected Readings* 425

CHAPTER 19 Family Strengthening Programs 428

The Family Court Movement 428*Marriage Counseling* 431*Marriage Enrichment Programs* 434*Family-Life Education* 437*Other Programs* 439*The Future* 441*Questions* 443*Appendix: The Physiological Basis of Marriage* 445*Index of Authors* 461*Index of Subjects* 469

PART

1

Cultural Setting

1

Introduction: The Study of the Family

The pursuit of happiness through lasting love and affection. These words surely reflect one of the most important values in American life. Traditionally, all the signposts on the road to that affectional happiness pointed to marriage. And while there were hurdles and obstacles to overcome, they were relatively uncomplicated. On the surface, at least, the will of most couples apparently prevailed.

Today, the impediments appear to be more complicated. Social change, it would seem, has made life more complex. We will identify relevant aspects of that change for students who seek a better understanding of themselves and their families. Such understanding could be a shock absorber for the “future shock” that may well be upon us, as Toffler predicted nearly two decades ago.¹

¹Alvin Toffler, *Future Shock* (New York: Random House, 1970).