

S E C O N D E D I T I O N

Marriages and Families

CHANGES,
CHOICES,
AND
CONSTRAINTS



Nijole V. Benokraitis

SECOND EDITION

Marriages and Families

Changes, Choices, and Constraints

Nijole V. Benokraitis

University of Baltimore



PRENTICE HALL, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey 07458

*This book is dedicated to my husband, Vitalius;
to our children, Andrius and Gema;
to my mother, Ona Radavicius Vaicaitis;
and to my brothers, Casimir and John Vaicaitis*

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PREFACE

Polls and surveys show that Americans still believe in marriage and the family, and the issue of family values stimulates vigorous debate, from the campus to Congress. As the second edition of this book goes to press, however, our society faces some very serious family-related issues. Some, like the continuation of such programs as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), have become politicized. Others, such as the increase in domestic violence, have been highlighted by media attention. Still others, ignored by the media, raise troubling concerns: for example, the rising number of children born out of wedlock, especially to mothers who are poor and teenage mothers, the inability of many working families to rise above the poverty level, and the obstacles that divorced, remarried, and stepfamilies face.

Marriages and Families: Changes, Choices, and Constraints offers students a comprehensive introduction to these and other issues surrounding marriage and the family today. Although written from a sociological perspective, the book incorporates material from such other disciplines as history, economics, social work, psychology, law, and anthropology. Moreover, the research that supports this new edition—most of it from the 1990s—encompasses both quantitative and qualitative studies. Nationally representative and longitudinal data are supplemented with insights from clinical, case, and observational studies.

MAJOR THEMES AND ISSUES

Marriages and Families continues to be distinguished from other textbooks in several important ways. It offers comprehensive coverage of the field, allowing instructors to choose from a wide array of chapters that best suit their particular needs. It balances theoretical and empirical discussions with practical examples and guidelines. It highlights important contemporary changes in society and the family. It explores the choices that are available to family members, as well as the constraints that many of us do not

recognize. It examines the diversity of American families today, using cross-cultural and multicultural comparisons to encourage creative thinking about the many critical issues that confront the family of the twenty-first century.

Changes in the Contemporary Family

Changes that are affecting the structure and functioning of today's family inform the pages of every chapter of this book. In addition, several chapters focus on some major transformations in American society. Chapter 13 examines the growing cultural diversity of the United States, focusing on African American, Native American, Latino, and Asian American marriages and families. Chapters 6 and 7 look at Americans' changing attitudes toward sexuality and sexual behavior as evidenced, for example, in the results published in the 1994 survey by the University of Chicago's National Opinion Research Center. Chapter 18 discusses the ways in which the rapid "graying of America" has affected the lifestyles of grandparents, family members' roles as caregivers, and family relations in general. And Chapter 19 analyzes some of the changes in social policies that affect the family and speculates on the future of American marriages and families.

A Wider Array of Choices

On the individual level, family members have many more choices today than ever before. People feel freer to postpone marriage, to cohabit, or to raise children as single parents. As a result, household forms vary greatly, ranging from commuter marriages to those in which several generations live together under the same roof.

More and Often Tougher Constraints

Although family members' choices are more varied today, people also face greater macro-level constraints. Their options are increasingly limited by the policies of formal organizations like

the government. They are influenced by demographic changes, such as the rising number of recent immigrants and an increasingly diverse racial-ethnic population. And they are affected by medical, political, economic, religious, and military institutions. It is because modern families will continue to encounter dramatic changes that I have framed many discussions of individual choice within the larger picture of institutional changes and constraints.

Cross-Cultural and Multicultural Diversity

Because contemporary American marriages and families vary greatly in terms of structure, dynamics, and cultural heritage, discussions of gender roles, class, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation are integrated throughout this book. To further strengthen students' understanding of the growing diversity among today's families, I have also included a series of boxes that focus on families from many cultures. Both text and boxed materials are intended to broaden students' cultural knowledge and to encourage them to think about the many forms families may take and the ways in which family members may interact.

NEW FEATURES IN THIS EDITION

The first change many readers may notice is the new four-color format of this textbook. This change has not only enhanced the attractiveness of the overall design but has given more life and visual appeal to illustrations and photographs.

At least 70 percent of *Marriages and Families* has been revised to incorporate new research, recent surveys, and current examples and illustrations from the media. And largely in response to students' comments, I've created several entirely new features: the *Data Digest* that begins each chapter, the author's files quotations, and the Taking Action sections at the end of each chapter.

Data Digest

Complaints by students (both mine and others') that they are sometimes overwhelmed by "all those numbers" made me think about how to make Census Bureau data, the findings of empir-

ical studies, and demographic trends more interesting and digestible. The *Data Digest* that introduces each chapter not only provides students with a thought-provoking overview of current statistics and trends but makes this material more accessible.

Material from the Author's Files

Many instructors who reviewed the first edition of *Marriages and Families*, and many students as well, liked the anecdotes and personal experiences with which I illustrated sometimes "dry" theories and abstract concepts. In this new edition I weave more of this sort of material into the text. Thus, many examples from discussions in my own classes are included (cited as "from author's files") to help bring theoretical perspectives and concepts to life.

Taking Action

A common question from my own students has been, "Can't we *do* something about [issue X]?" And sometimes students have asked me for practical information: for example, "How can I find a good child care center?" or "Can anyone help my sister get out of an abusive marriage?" In response to these needs, I've created a new end-of-chapter section called *Taking Action*. It tells students how to get information (usually free) on particular topics; how to get personal assistance—such as counseling or therapy—for themselves or others; how to contact organizations that deal with specific problems; and how to find campus speakers who can address many of the issues discussed in the book.

In most of my courses I require students to undertake applied projects, such as becoming politically involved on a family-related issue or volunteering research services to nonprofit family agencies. Thus the *Taking Action* sections also suggest ideas for course projects that my students have enjoyed working on, either individually and collectively.

Finally, because electronic mail subscriptions for contemporary discussion lists are becoming so widely available at reasonable or no cost to students, I've also included E-mail addresses for new and established lists that discuss the workplace, family research, aging, sex, gender, sexual orientation, and many other family-related topics.

PEDAGOGICAL FEATURES

The pedagogical features in *Marriages and Families* have been designed specifically to capture students' attention and to facilitate their understanding and recall of the material. Some of these features are familiar from the first edition, but many are new. Each has been carefully crafted to ensure that it ties in clearly to the text material, enhancing its meaning and applicability.

Original and Lively Illustration Program

A picture, they say, is worth a thousand words. So are a good diagram, an eye-catching figure, and an appealing graphic. Every chapter of this book contains entirely new figures that, in bold and original artistic designs, present such concepts as the exchange theory of dating, romantic versus lasting love, and theories of mating and that present simple statistics in innovative and visually appealing ways.

More than half the photographs are new. Again we have taken great care to select informative photographs that illustrate the text. A number of boxes now contain photographs, and scattered throughout the book are large silhouetted photographs that enliven images of the family.

Topical Box Series

Of the 102 boxes in *Marriages and Families*, almost half are entirely new to this edition. Reflecting and reinforcing the book's primary themes, three categories of boxes focus on the changes, choices, and constraints that confront today's families. A fourth category discusses cultural differences, and a fifth explores critical issues in family life. Self-assessment quizzes that help students evaluate their own knowledge and acquire insights make up the sixth type of box.

- **Changes boxes**—some historical, some anecdotal, and some empirically-based—show how marriages and families have been changing or are expected to change in the future. For example, a box in Chapter 14 shows how the role of the working mother has evolved over the years.
- **Choices boxes** illustrate the kinds of decisions families can make to improve their well-being, often highlighting options that

family members may be unaware of. In Chapter 11, for instance, a box shows how to increase the probability of having healthy babies.

- **Constraints boxes** illustrate some of the obstacles that limit our options. They highlight the fact that although most of us are raised to believe that we can do whatever we want, we are often constrained by macro-level socioeconomic, demographic, and cultural factors. For example, a box on the ten biggest myths about the African American family reveals some of the stereotypes that African American families confront on a daily basis.
- **Cross-Cultural/Multicultural boxes** illustrate the richness of varying family structures and dynamics, both within the United States and in other countries. For example, one box contrasts the American style of dating with arranged courtship and marriage in Muslim societies.
- **Critical Issues boxes** focus on emerging or unsolved problems that many families are facing now or will probably encounter in the near future. For example, one box shows how our tax structure imposes a "marriage penalty."
- **Ask Yourself** New to this edition, this series of self-assessment quizzes not only encourages students to think about and to evaluate their knowledge about marriage and the family but helps them develop guidelines for action, both on their own and others' behalf. For example, "If This Is Love, Why Do I Feel So Bad?" helps the reader evaluate and make the decision to leave an abusive relationship.

Key Terms and Glossary

Important terms and concepts are boldfaced and defined in the text and listed at the end of each chapter. All key terms and their definitions are repeated in the glossary at the end of the book.

Additional Reading

For faculty and students who seek additional information on particular topics, each chapter ends with a list of books in the area of marriage and the family, including some classics and many scholarly journals. Each list usually also includes a few entries from the popular press,

such as self-help titles, contributions by well-known journalists and policy makers, or books that have generated public debate on marriage and family issues. To reflect the diversity of thought about marriages and families today, these bibliographies include material by and about members of both sexes and many racial-ethnic groups.

NEW AND EXPANDED TOPICS

In *Part I, "Marriage and the Family in Perspective,"* three chapters deal with defining and studying marriages and families as well as the evolution of American families from colonial days to the present. I discuss a number of new topics: the effect of politics on family-related research, as exemplified by the National Institutes of Health's 1994 recommendation that women and minority members be included in medical research (Chapter 2); and the impact of the Great Depression and World War II on the family (Chapter 3). These chapters also expand and update material on family research by women and people of color and changes in the male provider role.

The development of gender roles and the ways in which women and men learn to love and to express love and sexuality are the focus of *Part II, "The Individual and the Developing Relationship."* New topics include gender schema theory (Chapter 4), stalking behavior and biological theories of love (Chapter 5), the role of popular culture in shaping our images of sex and sexuality (Chapter 6), celibate spouses and sexuality and the elderly (Chapter 7). In these four chapters expanded and updated materials include changes in men's social roles (Chapter 4), love and intimacy in Asia and the Middle East (Chapter 5), sexual scripts, homosexuality, bisexuality, and sex education (Chapter 6), sexual behavior in adolescents and in young adults, and STDs and HIV/AIDS (Chapter 7).

In *Part III, "Individual and Marital Commitments,"* I focus on the micro-level and macro-level variables that influence when, whom, and whether we will marry. New topics include the filter theory of mate selection, so-called serious casual dating, and Latina rites of passage (Chapter 8); the "marriage penalty" and older never-marrieds (Chapter 9); and "married singles," interracial marriages, gay and lesbian "marriage," and marital rituals and customs (Chapter 10).

I've updated and expanded materials on cross-cultural dating (Chapter 8); cohabitation, Latino and African American singles, and gay and lesbian couples (Chapter 9); and social-class differences and families of color (Chapter 10).

The decision to have or not to have children and the broad range of parent-child relationships are the subjects of *Part IV, "Parents and Children."* I introduce new material on genetic engineering and on the reasons for male infertility (Chapter 11); on the pros and cons of bonding with one's infant, spanking as a form of discipline, and absentee fathers (Chapter 12); recent immigration and undocumented workers, backlash against immigrants, and California's Proposition 187 (Chapter 13). Expanded and updated are discussions of abortion, international adoptions, and foster homes (Chapter 11); the father's role in child rearing (Chapter 12); and Native American cultures and their recent entrepreneurial efforts (Chapter 13).

Part V, "Conflicts and Crises," deals with some of the major economic and interpersonal problems that families confront today. New topics include moonlighting; part time and overtime work; unemployment; violence in the workplace; the daddy penalty; pregnancy discrimination laws, and the benefits and limitations of the Family and Medical Leave Act, as well as an entire new section on the family and the workplace (Chapter 14); the consequences of family violence, violence against "out-of-town" brides in immigrant families, violence against women in many cultures, a comparison of the battered woman and the incarcerated prisoner, and an explanation of family violence based on conflict theory (Chapter 15). I have updated and expanded material on homelessness and sexual harassment in the workplace (Chapter 14); battered husbands, why battered women do not leave their husbands, the abuse of steroids, and anorexia (Chapter 15); phases of separation, child custody arrangements, and divorce mediation.

Finally, *Part VI, "Changes and Transitions,"* examines some of the recent changes in family life and social policy and speculates on how the family will fare in the future. I introduce new discussions of the stability of remarriages, the intricacies of intergenerational relationships in merged households, the characteristics of successful remarried families and stepfamilies (Chapter 17); depression, helping a child grieve the death of a family member, and housing options for the elderly (Chapter 18); and the issue

of family values (Chapter 19). I have expanded and updated the material on the distribution of resources (e.g., prenuptial agreements) when two families merge; remarriage and stepparenting among racial-ethnic families (Chapter 17); minority children living with grandparents (Chapter 18); and the dying process and controversies over welfare (Chapter 19).

SUPPLEMENTS

The supplements package for this textbook is of exceptional quality. From the *Instructor's Manual* to the *Themes of the Times*, each component has been meticulously crafted to amplify and illuminate materials in the text itself.

Instructor's Resource Manual This manual offers learning objectives, chapter outlines, teaching tips, suggestions for classroom activities, topics for class discussion, written assignments, lists of audiovisual and software resources, and *Study Tips*. The manual includes suggestions for relating specific clips from the *Video Library* to particular chapters and topics in *Marriages and Families*.

Test Item File This test bank contains 1900 multiple-choice, true-false, and essay questions that are page-referenced to the text.

Prentice Hall Custom Test Prentice Hall's new testing software program permits instructors to edit any or all items in the *Test Item File* and add their own questions. Other special features of this program, which is available for Dos, Windows, and Macintosh, include random generation of an item set, creation of alternate versions of the same test, scrambling question sequence, and test preview before printing.



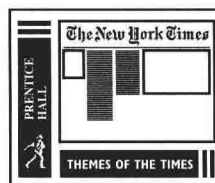
ABC News/Prentice Hall Video Library for Marriage and the Family

Video is the most dynamic supplement you can use to enhance a class, but the quality of the video material and how well it relates to your course still make all the difference. Prentice Hall and ABC News are now working together to bring you the best and most comprehensive video ancillaries available in the college market.

Through its wide variety of award-winning programs—"Nightline," "Business World," "On

Business," "This Week with David Brinkley," "World News Tonight," and "The Health Show"—ABC offers a resource for feature and documentary-style videos related to the chapters in *Marriages and Families: Changes, Choices, and Constraints*. The programs have extremely high production quality, present substantial content, and are hosted by well-versed, well-known anchors.

Prentice Hall and its authors and editors provide the benefit of having selected videos and topics that will work well with this course and text and include notes on how to use them in the classroom.



The New York Times Supplement The *New York Times* and Prentice Hall are sponsoring *Themes of the Times*, a program designed to enhance student access to current information relevant to the class-

room. Through this program, the core subject matter provided in the text is supplemented by a collection of timely articles from one of the world's most distinguished newspapers, *The New York Times*. These articles demonstrate the vital, ongoing connection between what is learned in the classroom and what is happening in the world around us. To enjoy the wealth of information of *The New York Times* daily, a reduced subscription rate is available. For information, call toll-free: 1-800-631-1222.

Prentice Hall and *The New York Times* are proud to co-sponsor *Themes of the Times*. We hope it will make the reading of both textbooks and newspapers a more dynamic, involving process.

Transparency Acetates Taken from graphs, diagrams, and tables in this text and other sources, over 50 full-color transparencies offer an effective means of amplifying lecture topics.

Study Guide This supplement for students offers chapter outlines and summaries, definitions of key concepts, self tests, applied exercises for each chapter of the book, and *Study Tips*.

Study Tips Appearing in both the *Study Guide* and the *Instructor's Manual*, this useful essay offers students a guide to effective studying. Topics include how to prioritize study materials, how to take good class notes, and how to test yourself and review as you read a textbook.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A number of people have made researching and writing *Marriages and Families: Changes, Choices, and Constraints* an enjoyable experience. First, I would like to thank my students. Their lively exchanges during and outside of class shaped my thinking about the joy and pain of marital, family, and other interpersonal relationships. In addition, their insightful comments and questions helped me refocus much of my research and writing. Tanvir Ahmed, Christine Howard, Natasha Bias, Marcy Plimack, Renita Richardson, and Judy Shaw also provided valuable research assistance, and I am especially grateful to Deborah Dougherty for volunteering to do some of my time-consuming computerized searches and data entry.

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the best editors in the publishing industry. She has suggested interesting graphics, inundated me with newspaper and book clippings, and provided me with comments that have made this textbook much more readable. She's helped me balance my feminist perspective and "tell it like it is" style with my respect both for objectivity and for the diversity of my audience. She has facilitated the work on appendixes and has supervised the artwork and photo selections. I am indebted to Ginny for her probing questions, intelligent suggestions, and insightful comments throughout this project. Even when I felt grumpy and stressed out over deadlines, Ginny was always patient and tactful and maintained her sense of humor.

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Gary Moore, Associate Professor of Public Health at the University of Massachusetts, turned my rough sketches and ideas into wonderful, original artwork that students will truly enjoy. Gary has managed to illustrate concepts and statistics so innovatively that students who are usually tempted to avoid figures will find themselves studying the graphs and charts with interest.

Last, but not least, I thank my family for their unfaltering support, understanding, and encouragement. Among other things, my husband, Vitalius, and our son, Andrius, have given me innumerable hours of assistance with hardware and software problems. Gema, our daughter, has helped me choose some of the photographs for this edition and enabled me to keep my work in perspective by insisting that I hike with her and play racquetball with Vitalius as well. A word of thanks, too, to my brother, Casimir, for providing long-distance technical advice.

The reactions of faculty and students to the first edition of this book have helped me enormously in preparing this second edition. I hope instructors and students will be equally responsive to this new edition.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nijole V. Benokraitis, professor of sociology at the University of Baltimore, has taught the Marriage and Family course for 15 years and says it's her favorite class, although her courses in Racial and Ethnic Relations, Gender Roles, and Introductory Sociology run a very close second. Professor Benokraitis, who received her doctorate in sociology from the University of Texas at Austin, is a strong proponent of applied sociology and requires her students to enhance their study of course topics through interviews, direct observation, and other hands-on methods of learning. She also enlists her students in community-service activities, such as tutoring and mentoring inner-city high school students, writing to government officials and other decision makers about specific social problems, and volunteering research services to nonprofit organizations.

Professor Benokraitis, who immigrated to the United States from Lithuania with her family when she was six years old, is bilingual and bicultural. She is coauthor of *Modern Sexism: Blatant, Subtle, and Covert Sex Discrimination* (which has been translated into Japanese) and *Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity: Action, Inaction, and Reaction*, and is coeditor of *Seeing Ourselves: Classical, Contemporary, and Cross-Cultural Readings in Sociology*. She is currently working on a reader on subtle sex discrimination as well as on a reader to accompany *Marriages and Families: Changes, Choices, and Constraints*. Professor Benokraitis has published numerous articles and book chapters on such topics as institutional racism, discrimination against women

in government, fathers in two-earner families, displaced homemakers, and family policy. Her current research interests include domestic violence and intergenerational conflicts in stepfamilies.

Professor Benokraitis has served as both chair and graduate program director of the University of Baltimore's Department of Sociology and has chaired numerous university committees. She has also been a faculty advisor to Alpha Kappa Delta, the sociological honor society, and the Sociology Club. The recipient of grants and fellowships from many institutions, including the National Institutes of Mental Health, the Ford Foundation, the American Educational Research Association, the Administration on Aging, and the National Endowment for the Humanities, Professor Benokraitis has also received several faculty research awards at the University of Baltimore. She has for some time served as a consultant in the areas of sex and race discrimination to women's commissions, business groups, colleges and universities, and programs of the federal government, and she has made several appearances on radio and television, most recently as a panel member on a PBS program on gender communication differences.

Professor Benokraitis lives in Maryland with her husband, Dr. Vitalius Benokraitis, a computer scientist, and their two children, Gema and Andrius. Gema, a communications graduate of Towson State University, is a talented amateur photographer and an avid competitive cyclist. Andrius is a computer science major at Virginia Polytechnic Institute.

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