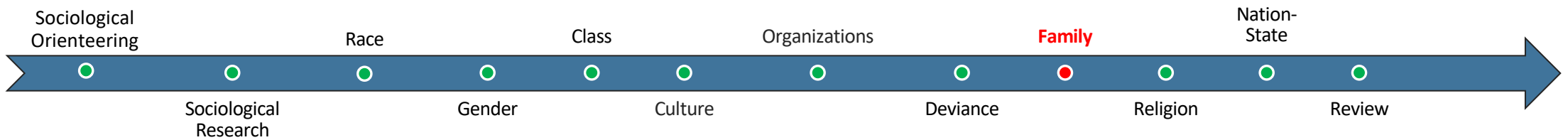


WEEK 9

Family

Dr Lou Antolihao
SC1101E Making Sense of Society



SC1101E MRT Line

MIND THE GAP

IDEAS

IDENTITIES

INTERACTIONS

INSTITUTIONS

Sociological
Orienteering

Race

Class

Organizations

Family

Nation-
State

Sociological
Research

Gender

Culture

Deviance

Religion

Review

Social Institutions

□ a stable pattern of social interaction organized to establish social order and preserve basic social values.

- complex social forms
- operate autonomously
- self-perpetuating
- exercise great influence on people

Institutions	Purpose
Family	reproduction, emotional support
Religion	transmit customs, values
Polity	allocate power, maintain social order
Economy	production and distribution of resources

A Typical Singaporean Family: AI-Generated

Singaporean family



A 'Singaporean family' according to Midjourney.

Ahh, a typical Singaporean family involves at least one male figure, a young daughter and senior parents (or grandparents). Most adults are also spectacled.

According to ChatGPT, Singaporean families are multi-generational, highly value education, respects the elderly and place "strong emphasis" on family bonding through shared meals. Sounds about right.

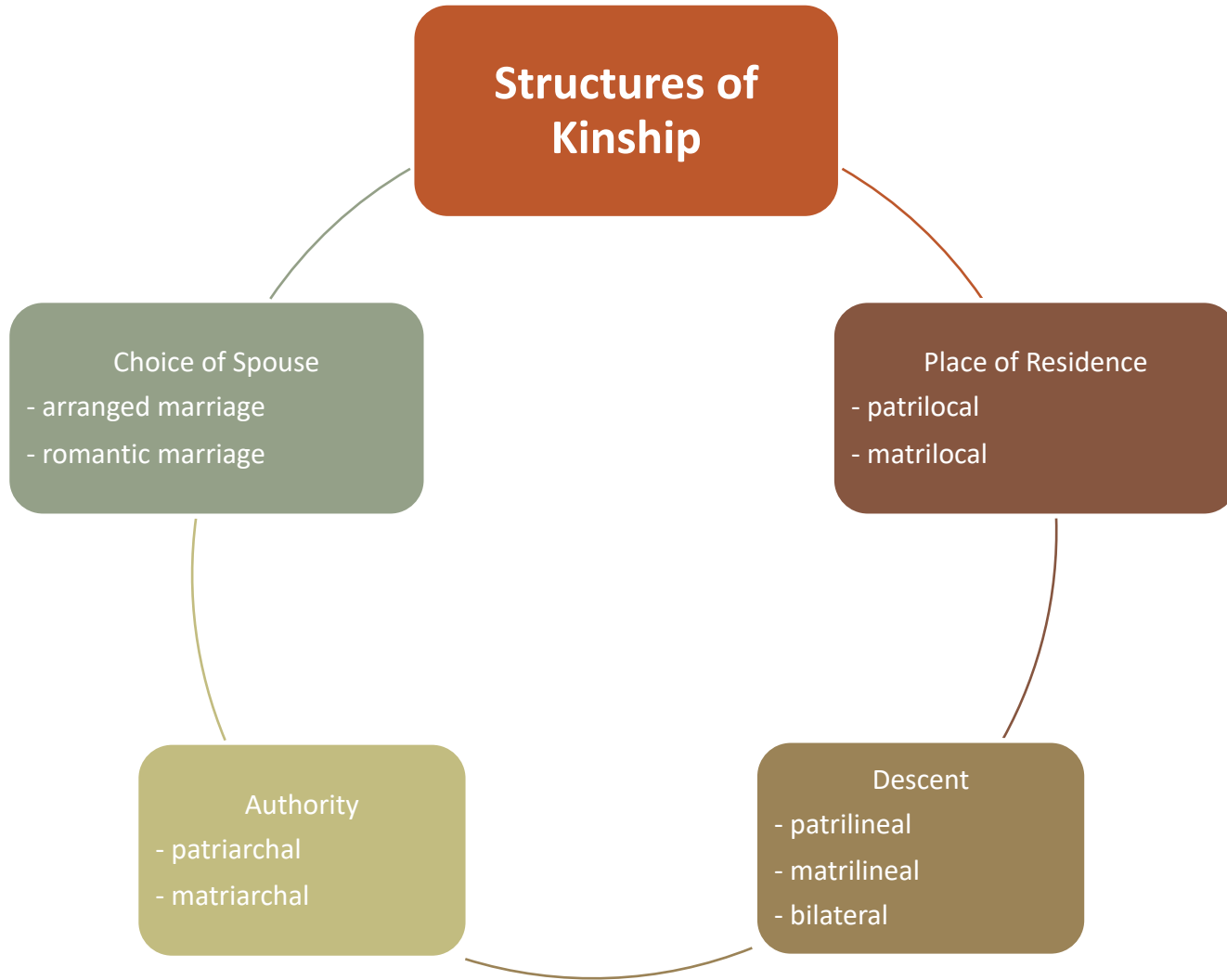
<https://sg.yahoo.com/news/ai-thinks-singaporeans-look-behave-080936980.html>

What is a Family?

- ❑ is a social institution that binds people together through biological, cultural, legal affinities.
- ❑ Related terms:
 - **Household** - the physical and socio-economic units consisting of individuals who live together in the same residence and share resources.
 - nuclear family, extended family
 - collective household, institutional households (dormitories, barracks, etc.)
 - **Kinship** – the pattern of relationships that connects an individual to others through consanguinity and affinity.
 - primary (parents, siblings), secondary (grandparents, niece, cousins) tertiary (grand-aunts, second-degree cousins)
 - **fictive kins** – adoption of non-relatives into kin-like relationships (godparents)



Hoi An, Vietnam



Marriage

- The socially sanctioned union between individuals who are bound by intimacy, economic cooperation, and shared goals.
- Kinship is founded on marriage.

The Functions of the Family



Traditional houses, Hmong village
Northern Thailand

- Regulates sexual activity (e.g., social order)
- Reproduction (e.g., maintain population)
- Economic cooperation (Lecture 7, division of labor)
- Primary **socialization** (Lecture 6, Culture)
- Care and emotional support
- Confer **status** (Lecture 5, Class)

Family and Inequality



A woman from the Karen tribe prepares food for her family (Chiang Rai, Thailand).

□ Society as site of conflict and power struggle

- the family reflects the inequality in wealth and power found within society.
- Maintain and foster social divisions – people tend to marry someone from the same social category (endogamy).

□ Family and Gender Inequality

- Women's oppression resulting from capitalist exploitation of women through their roles in the family (Marxist feminism).
- Oppression of women through 1) domestic labor and 2) sexuality/reproduction (radical feminism)
 - Other issues: contraception, abortion, legislation of domestic violence
 - Control over one's body as essential to women's liberation

❑ IDENTITIES (and inequalities)

- cooking and **mothering** (gender role)
- working-class black parents (Wanda & Marquan)
- poor black mother (Flora, Ruth), married Latina mother (Claudia)
- married middle-class white mother (Greely, Elaine)

❑ INTERACTIONS

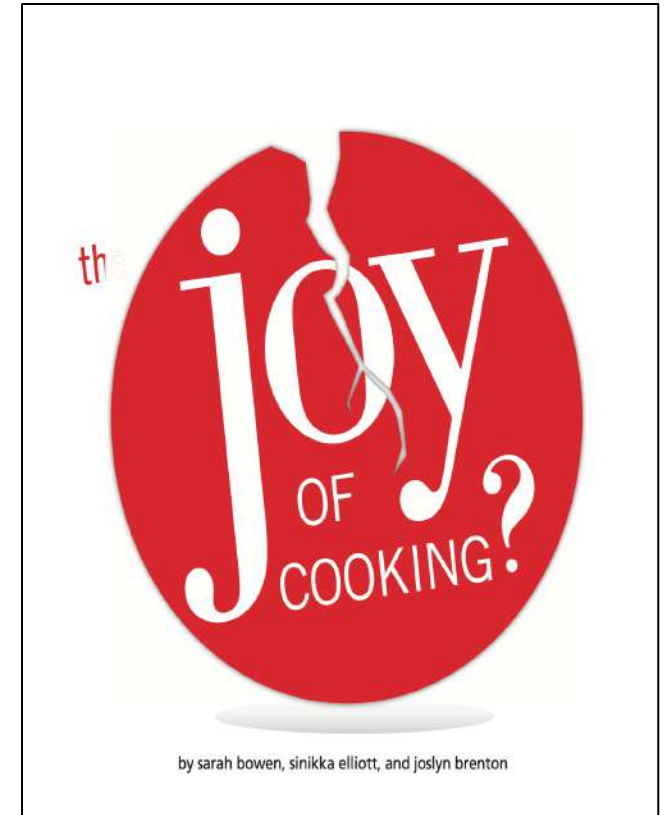
- 4th of July celebration
- fast food corporations (typical working-class employers)
- food fights

❑ INSTITUTIONS

- “reforming the food system passes through **the kitchen**”
- food and public health (to fight obesity and other problems)
- home-cooked meal as “the ideal of the healthy, productive citizen”

❑ ISSUES (social change)

- the emphasis on home cooking ignores the time pressure, financial constraints and feeding challenges that shape the family meal
- this **emerging standard** is not realistic but rather elitist and moralistic



A Date with your Family

a 10-minute film that was produced in 1950 to primarily teach young people the types of manners and socializing that should transpire over a family meal. It is full of stereotypical views of each character that promotes the nuclear family as the ideal in the post-war era.

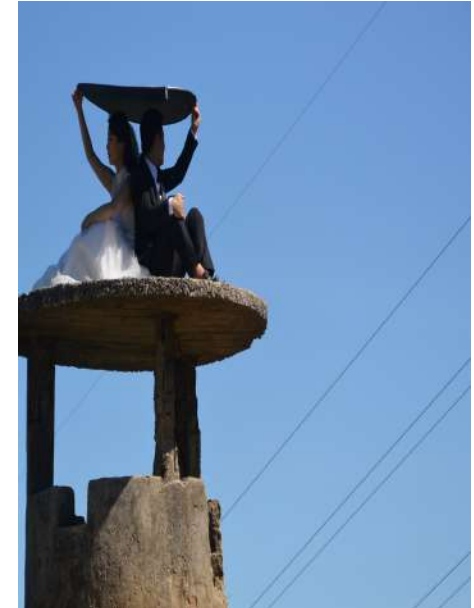


https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Hh4M4vipAo

The Ideal Family?

❑ Industrialization eroded the importance of extended families and weakened the influence of traditions, which resulted in the rise of the **nuclear family**.

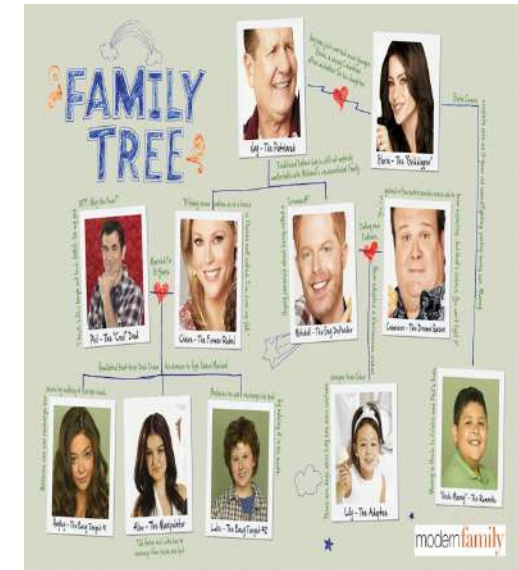
- ❑ Nuclear family as based on **marriage**.
- Consists of husband, wife and their children.
 - The only recognized familial form in many societies.
 - Originating within among the Western middle-class, the nuclear family came to represent modernity and normality (suited an industrial economy).



Wedding Photo Shoot
Hoi An, Vietnam

Family to Families: Types of Family Structures

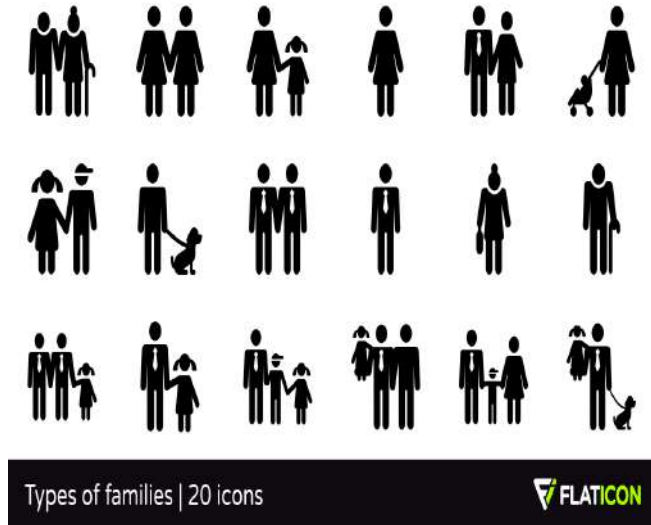
- ❑ Extended families (3G)
- ❑ **Cohabitation** – couples living together without being married and who may have children together.
 - Reasons: cultural norms, alternative to marriage
 - Consequences: redefinition of kinship, inheritance, new legislation (welfare, entitlements).
- ❑ Single parent family
 - seen as a result from the breakdown of families, increasingly seen as a family option
- ❑ step-family, blended families
- ❑ **same-sex marriage**
 - Legal in 26 countries, want long-term relationship, children
- ❑ transnational families, multi-ethnic families



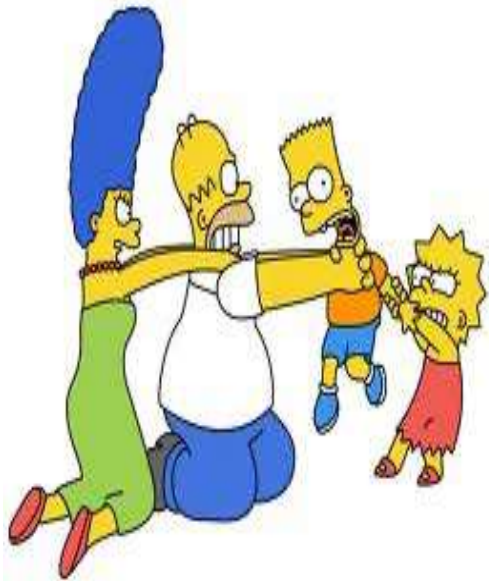
➤ **Post-industrialisation and liberalism gave rise to “the families of choice”.**

A Society without Families?

- Imagine a society without families.
 - How would the basic needs of people in that society addressed?
 - How would the children be cared for, how would training and values be instilled?
 - Who would fulfill the child's needs for love and care?
 - What type of adults would this society create?



The End of the Family?



❑ The Rise of Individualism

- incentives to marriage and family have diminished (access to intimacy and support)
- costs have increased (wedding, housing, etc.)
- the opportunity costs for women (double-shift, autonomy)

❑ Many functions of family have been eroded

- education, skills training
- care centers for elderly and children
- decline of the family as a site of production, division of labor

Families and the State



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cDbD_JSCrNo

FB: <https://www.straitstimes.com/world/europe/in-iceland-stakeholders-keep-ears-close-to-ground>

The Social Construction of Families

□ Families and the State

- socialization (citizenship as a set of values)
- social order

□ Families and the Economy

- consumer culture (dining, entertainment, travel, etc.)
- McDonald's Family Playdate (family life as fun, eating out as part of a “healthy” lifestyle)

□ The influence of other “family-makers”

- religion, mass media, etc.



Source: macdonalds.com.ph

Conclusion



No such thing as 'the family' (single, timeless, homogeneous entity)



Families have been structured in many ways, and diversity of familial forms have been increasing.



Other institutions compete with the family while simultaneously working for its continuity.