**How do Sociologists study the family?**

* **Family**: A group of people who identify as being related to each other by marriage, blood, or adoption, and who share intimate relationships and dependency
  + Reproduction of a community and citizenry
  + Socialization and transmission of culture
  + Care of the young and old
  + Contribute to economy as consumers
  + Allocation of social roles
* **Marriage**: Culturally normative relationship usually between two individuals. There is economic cooperation, emotional intimacy, and sexual relations. Legitimized by law, religion, and cultural norms
* Monogamy: Person may only have one spouse at a time
* Polygamy: Person may have more than one marital partner at a time
* Polygyny: Man may have multiple wives
* Polyandry: Woman may have multiple husbands
* Serial monogamy: Practice of having more than one wife or husband, but only one at a time; characterizes patterns in the United States
* Endogamous marriage: Limited to partners who are members of the same social group
* Anti-miscegenation laws: Prohibit interracial sexual relations and marriage
* Families and the work of raising children
* **Extended Families**
  + One or more parents, children, other kin, several generations living in same household
* **Nuclear Families**
  + Parents living with biological children, apart from other kin

**Theoretical Perspectives on Families**

* **The functionalist perspective**
* Talcott Parsons: Family is a “Factory of personalities”
  + Women socialized into expressive roles
  + Men socialized into instrumental roles
  + Complementary roles are positively functional
  + Ensure cooperation rather than conflict
  + Status of family derived from male’s position
  + Supports adult’s emotional well-being
* **The feminist/conflict perspective**: Emerged from women’s movement of the 1970s
* Sexual division of labor: Dividing production by gender (men produce and women reproduce)
* Designating different spheres of activity, the “private” to women and the “public” to men
* Gives males privileged access to money, status, independence, and opportunity
* His marriage: Defines himself as burdened, constrained, while experiencing authority, independence, and right to sexual, domestic, and emotional services of wife.
* Her marriage: Defines herself as fulfilled though marriage, while experiencing dependence and subjugation to husband
* Stress indicators
  + Married women, unmarried men score highest
  + Unmarried women, married men score lowest
* **The psychodynamic feminist perspective**: Infants of both sexes form bond to mother
  + Mothers push sons away emotionally, who then develop “masculine” personalities
    - Drawn from society as father is absent
    - Develops as “non-femininity”
  + Mothers draw daughters in more closely, who then come to identify with mothers
    - Become “relational” seeking close bonds and defining themselves through relationships

**U.S. Families Yesterday and Today**

* Marriage and divorce in the United States
  + **Cohabitation**: Living together as a couple without being legally married
    - Harmful?
  + **Common law marriage**: A type of relationship in which partners live as if married but without marriage’s formal legal framework
  + Economic circumstances (rising student debt) influence decisions
  + Marriage market has shifted. Marriageable pool shrinkage

**Socioeconomic Class and Family in the United States**

* Social Class and child rearing
  + **Middle Class**: Concerted cultivation
    - Sense of entitlement, higher-skilled careers, and negotiate with people in authority
  + **Working Class**: Accomplishment of natural growth
    - Cultivates independence, lower-skilled jobs, and respect for authority and obedience
* Economy, culture, and family formation
  + 1965 Moynihan Report
    - Dysfunctions of the lower-class black family
    - Criticized as racist and sexist, despite attention to structural factors as well
  + William Julius Wilson (1987, 1996, and 2010)
    - Argues that structure and culture interact to create normative contexts for behavior
  + Edin and Kefalas
    - Highly value family, motherhood is achievable while marriage is not
* Family life in the middle class
  + Friedman’s competitive kid capital
  + Competing commitments leave parents rushed and stressed
  + Workplaces with “family-friendly” policies

**Globalization and Families**

* International Families and the Global Woman
  + Rising demand for highly skilled laborers
  + Low-skilled U.S. workers priced out
  + 70% of labor force without college degree
  + Flat/declining incomes