I. Marriage and the Family
A. The Family: Basic Concepts
   1. The family is a social institution, found in all societies, that unites individuals into cooperative groups that oversee the bearing and raising of children
      a. The family forms found throughout the world have several common factors for defining the family:
         • To be members of a family, individuals must be related to each other by blood or by marriage;
         • Family members reside permanently together, usually under a single roof,
         • Some family members are entitled to have sexual relations with other family members, and some members are expected to bear children, and
         • Considered as a whole, the family constitutes an economic unit
   2. Family System: Reflects society's solutions to certain basic issues such as controlling sexuality and pairing people off for reproduction
   3. In most societies, families are formed by marriage, a legally sanctioned relationship involving economic cooperation as well as normative sexual activity and childbearing, that people expect to be enduring
      a. Every society has rituals and laws that define a valid marriage.
         • In most societies, people marry for pragmatic reasons such as wealth or power.
         • In a minority of societies, (including the United States), people are expected to marry for love.
   4. Marriage and kinship. All societies have some system for creating marital units and kinship networks and the variety of kinship and families that may be found throughout out the world.
5. **Kinship patterns.** Families are structured around kinship, a social bond, based on blood, marriage, or adoption, that joins individuals into families. Kinship is important because:
   a. All societies must socialize children and transmit property, wealth, and power from one generation to the next and kinship facilitates these processes.
   b. Power follows kinship, as when the eldest son assumes responsibility for making family decisions or when the owner of a family business proclaims that his son or daughter will become the next chief executive officer.
   c. Kinship enables a society to perpetuate itself over time is through the creation of complex social bonds; marriage creates, for instance, affinal relationships that may unite hundreds (or even thousands) of people who otherwise would have no bonds among themselves.
   d. Kinship is a mechanism for placing individuals into a broader social network that helps to order social relationships.
   e. Traditional societies often are organized by elaborate family networks, but in industrial society members of the nuclear family are the center of each person's most important kin relationships.

6. The **family unit** consists of a social group of two or more people, related by blood, marriage, or adoption, who usually live together:
   a. The **family of orientation** is the family into which a person is born and from whom she/he receives early socialization.
   b. The **family of procreation** is a family in which people have adopt children of their own.

7. In practice, the definition of a family is becoming more inclusive, with many people accepting the concept of **families of affinity**, people with or without legal or blood ties who feel they belong together and who want to define themselves as a family.
B. The Family: Global Variations

1. The extended family is a family unit including parents, children, and also other kin. It is also called the consanguine family.
   a. The extended family is composed of two or more generations of kin who function as an independent social and economic unit.
   b. Relatively large unit composed of several related households, most often involving two or more generations.

2. Industrialization tends to promote the decline of the extended family and the rise of the nuclear or conjugal family, a family unit composed of one or two parents with their children.

3. Marriage Patterns
   a. Dimensions of marriage and the family. All societies must determine how to fit the man into the woman's family, and different societies have opted for different solutions.
   b. About three-fourths of all societies favor a form of marriage other than monogamy, but most of the world's population lives in monogamous societies.
      - Industrial societies favor monogamy, a form of marriage involving only two partners
      - Most pre-industrial cultures allow polygamy: a type of marriage uniting three or more people
        - Creates extended households composed of a woman or man with more than one marriage partner at the same time.
      - Polygyny: a type of marriage uniting one male to two or more females
        - Polygyny is practicable only among wealthy men who can afford to support more than one wife and the many children that multiple marriages produce.
      - Polyandry: a type of marriage joining one female with two or more males
        - Polygyny, group marriage, and polyandry are rare and occur only in unusual social circumstances
      - Endogamy: marriage between people of the same social category
      - Exogamy: marriage between people of different social categories
4. **Residential Patterns**
   a. In many societies, marriage unites kinship networks and the couple is expected to live with or near the kinfolk.
   
   b. **Patrilocality**: a residential pattern by which a married couple lives with or near a husband's family
      - A married couple lives with the kinfolk of the husband's father.
   
   c. **Matrilocality**: a residential pattern by which a married couple lives with or near a wife's family
      - A married couple lives with the kinfolk of the wife's mother.
   
   d. More common in industrial societies, **neolocality**, is a residential pattern in which a married couple lives apart from the parents of both spouses
      - A couple resides in their own, independent households apart from their relatives.

5. **Descent** refers to the system by which members of a society trace kinship over generations. It tells people who their relatives are and specifies their rights and obligations with respect to each other.
   a. **Patrilineal Descent** is a system tracing kinship through males
      - In societies dominated by men, lineage and inheritance usually pass through the man's side of the family.
   
   b. **Matrilineal Descent** is a system tracing kinship through females
      - In some instances, lineage and inheritance pass through the mother's side of the family.
   
   c. Industrial societies usually display **bilateral descent**, a system tracing kinship through both females and males
      - In societies, including the United States, lineage and inheritance pass through both sides of the family.

6. Virtually all family systems worldwide are **patriarchies**
   a. **Power**
      - **Patriarchy**: A family system in which a man (usually the husband or the eldest male) has the most power.
      - **Familism**: A pattern of family closeness, traditionalism, and male dominance (oftentimes found in "minority families").
      - **Matriarchy**: A family system in which women hold most of the power.
      - **Matricentric (matrifocal)**: A family system in which women hold most of the power.
      - **Egalitarianism**: Refers to reduced power differences between husbands and wives and between parents and children.
C. Theoretical Analysis of the family

1. Functions of the family: Structural Functional Analysis
   a. Socialization
   b. Regulation of sexual activity through the incest taboo, a cultural norm forbidding sexual relations or marriage between certain kin
   c. Social placement
   d. Material and emotional security
   e. Critical evaluation:
      • This approach demonstrates why society could not exist without the family
      • It pays little attention to the fact that other institutions can provide key familial functions
      • It ignores the diversity of family life in the US
      • It overlooks the problems of family

2. Inequality and the family: Social Conflict Analysis -- Family structure promotes inequality in several ways
   a. Because property is inherited through the family, it perpetuates class inequality
   b. The family is generally patriarchal, perpetuating gender inequality
   c. Endogamous marriage also perpetuates racial and ethnic inequality
   d. Critical evaluation: This approach fails to account for the existence of family problems in non-capitalist societies

3. Constructing Family Life: Micro-level Analysis (Symbolic Interactionist Perspective)
   a. Symbolic interactionism emphasizes that the family is socially constructed and hence always changing
   b. Family life can also be analyzed using social exchange theory
   c. Critical evaluation: These perspectives ignore the fact that family life is similar for people affected by any given set of structural and cultural forces
D. Stages of family life

1. Courtship and romantic love
   a. Courtship. Cupid's arrow is not random and people tend to choose spouses of the same race, ethnicity, religion, and social class because:
      • Propinquity. Physical nearness constrains romantic love for the simple reason that people cannot fall in love unless they meet, and they are unlikely to meet if they are far apart.
      • Ethnicity and race. In general, members of racial and ethnic groups marry within their group.
      • Values. American culture supports endogamy (the custom of marrying within one's own status, class, race, religion, tribe).
      • Homogamy: the practice of selecting a mate with similar social background characteristics.
      • All societies promote homogamy, marriage between people with the same social characteristics
      • Heterogamy: the practice of selecting a mate with different social background characteristics.

2. Arranged marriages are common in pre-industrial cultures

3. Romantic love. Romantic love is more highly valued as a basis for marriage in contemporary societies with weaker extended family ties and less valued in traditional societies where kinship networks reinforce the relationship between marriage partners.
   a. Romantic love syndrome: the selection of a mate based on love rather than kinship.
   b. Romantic love provides an incentive to marry and to form families.
   c. Romantic love is a source of support in times of stress.
   d. When spouses are in love, they become committed primarily to each other rather than to their families of orientation.
   e. With industrialization, romantic love becomes a central criterion in mate choice (perfect for individualistic society)

4. Settling in: Ideal and real marriage. Newly married couples often have to scale down their expectations

5. Child rearing has changed since industrialization. Children are now seen as economic liabilities rather than assets. Families with two working parents often experience particularly difficult problems in child rearing

6. Marriages between the elderly usually stress companionship. Retirement and the death of a spouse disrupt families in later life
E. US Families: Race, Class, and Gender
   1. **Social Class** heavily influences partner's expectations regarding marriage
   2. **Ethnicity** and **race** also strongly affect the family
   3. Women and men experience marriage differently, with men clearly benefiting more than women (Jesse Bernard)

F. Transitions and problems in the family
   1. **Marital dissolution.** About half of all American marriages now end in divorce after seven years. The divorce rate has risen rapidly this century and at present about half of all couples are expected to divorce.
      a. Teenagers are especially prone to separation or divorce because
         - They have short courtship and may not know each other very well,
         - They often are financially insecure,
         - Inexperienced in worldly matters,
         - Immature in their social relationships.

   2. **Explaining marital dissolution.** Several factors have influence marital dissolution.
      a. **Society.** In a nuclear family system, marital dissolution requires that only two people disentangle their relationship.
         - Individualism is on the rise
      b. **Stress.** The nuclear family is vulnerable to many stresses.
         - Many of today's marriages are stressful
      c. **Falling out of love.** In industrial societies people are expected to marry for love people may fall out of love and the couple may conclude that there is no longer any reason to be married.
         - Romantic love often subsides
      d. **Women's changing roles.** Financial security used to be a major reason for staying married but when women enter the labor force, they gain some financial independence.
         - Women are now less dependent on men
      e. Divorce is more socially acceptable
      f. Divorce is legally easier to accomplish
3. **Domestic violence.** Domestic violence comes in many forms, but they all involve the abuse of one family member by another.
   a. **Family violence** is the emotional, physical, or sexual abuse of one family member by another
      - Violence against women includes spouse battering and marital rape, problems which are receiving increased attention in modern society
      - Violence against children is also a widespread problem
   b. **Spouse abuse.** Women are victims of abuse more often than men, but wives kill their husbands about as often as husbands kill their wives.
      - There are significant class differences in spouse abuse:
        - Lower- and working-class men leave visible traces of their violence while middle- and upper-class men do not
        - When domestic violence occurs, lower-class families are more likely than middle- and upper class families to call the police.
   c. Abused wives often stay with their abusive husbands:
      - Out of fear of retribution
      - Because they have no place go
      - Because many abused wives have been reduced to a state of psychological dependence
      - Because they have been socialized into playing the part of the victim.
   d. Physical violence may reflect the extent to which violence within a culture is an acceptable means of dealing with problem, as well reflect the tensions and stress that accompany social change within a society.
   e. Courtship is often marked by abuse, abuse also occurs among dating couples.
   f. Most divorced people do remarry, often creating **blended families**
      - The *blended* or *reconstituted* family is a family in which spouses and their children from former marriages live together as a single nuclear family.
      - **Blended Families:** Consist of a husband, wife, children of previous marriages, and any children from the new marital union (Brady Bunch).
      - The *binuclear* family is a family in which each divorced parent establishes a separate household and the children spend time in both.
G. **Alternative Family forms**

1. **Serial monogamy.** American culture and law permits a person to have more than one spouse, but at different times; consequently, the typical American man will marry more women over his lifetime than the typical man living in a polygamous society.

2. **The single-parent family.** In 1993 there were 10.9 million single-parent families, the second most common family type after the traditional family.
   a. Becoming a single parent adversely affects women more than men: women experience a decrease in their standard of living while men experience an increase.
   b. Approximately one-third of all families with children live below the federal poverty line, and one-fifth of those impoverished families consist of a single mother and her children.

3. **Gay male and lesbian families.** Many homosexuals are now establishing family units and in some places new laws permit a gay or lesbian couple to declare publicly and legally that they are "domestic partners" who have many of the same rights as any married couple.

4. **Cohabitation.** Cohabitation is now popular, especially among the young, most of whom expect eventually to marry their partner.
   • Unmarried people share living quarters.

5. **Independent living.** One of the fastest growing segments of the American population consists of people who live by themselves. This increase in singlehood has several causes.
   a. The trend among young people to postpone marriage.
   b. Increase in longevity: when a spouse dies after decades of marriage, the survivor may not have anyone to live with, or may prefer to live alone.
   c. As divorce has increased, so too has the number of persons living alone.
   d. More women than men live alone because women live longer than men, and because divorced women are less likely to remarry.