



# Families and Households Knowledge Organiser



## The Family, Social Structure and Change

**Marriage** refers to the legally or formally recognised union of two people as partners in a personal relationship.

**Divorce** refers to the legal dissolution of a marriage by a court or other competent body.

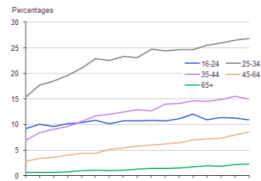
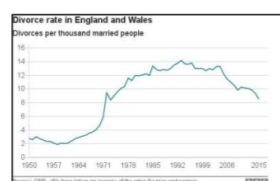
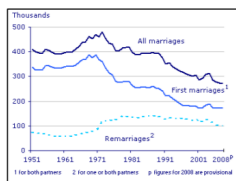
**Cohabitation** refers to two people living together in the same residence whilst also being part of an intimate romantic relationship.

**LAT (Living Apart Together)** couples are couples who are in a committed intimate relationship or marriage but live at separate addresses.

**Childbearing** - the process of giving birth to babies. A woman of childbearing age is of an age when women are normally able to give birth to children.

**Life course**—A culturally defined sequence of age categories that people are normally expected to pass through as they progress from birth to death.

### CURRENT TRENDS



Marriage is generally in decline although there are blips during baby boom eras. Number of remarriages is rising. Age of first marriage is also rising.

The divorce rate in recent years has been in decline overall but there has been an increase in divorce in the over 60's

Cohabiting couples are rising particularly in the 25-34 age range.

Social Changes- 'try before you buy'

Legal Changes- The Divorce Reform Act

Secularisation- decline in religion

Changing role of women- more women focussing on their career

Economic reasons- women are now more economically independent

Changes in the family- roles are now more equal

Postmodern reasons- The Pure Relationship (Giddens)



## The Family Functions, Morality and Social Policy

### Functionalism

**Murdock**— The four functions of the nuclear family : **education, economic, reproductive and sexual.**

**Parsons**— **Primary socialisation** and **Stabilisation of adult personalities**

**Evaluation:** X Down plays the role of conflict

X Out of date—women now go to work

X Ignores family diversity—other family types can perform these functions

### Marxism

**Engels**— The isolated nuclear family means that men are able to confirm when a child is theirs and can ensure that wealth stays within the family through **private inheritance**. This helps to maintain capitalism.

**Zaretsky**— **Unit of Consumption**— The family is targeted by advertisers to buy the products they have created by urging families to 'keep up with the Jones'.

**Evaluation:** X Ignores family diversity

X Ignores the positive effects that the family can have for its members

### Feminism

**Liberal Feminism**  
Families are slowly becoming more equal through changes in law and social attitudes. They do not believe that full equality has been achieved but the process is well underway.

**Marxist Feminism**  
They see the family as a tool of capitalism not men who oppress women. They see the family as oppressing women whilst supporting capitalism through reproducing the workforce, having to absorb the anger of men and being the reserve army of cheap labour.

**Difference Feminism**  
States that other feminist beliefs focus on the experience of women in a nuclear family however, not all families are unclear e.g. a Black woman may find her family provide a refuge from societal racism rather than it being a place of oppression or negativity.

**Radical Feminism**  
They believe that men are the enemy and marriage and family are the key institutions which allow patriarchy to exist. In order to gain equality patriarchy needs to be overturned. They argue that the family needs to be abolished.

**Evaluation:** LF- X Overstates the amount of progress that has been made. Women still have triple shift.

X MF- Women are no longer a reserve labour force as they have equal rights

## The New Right

The New Right see all families as unstable, but they argue that the nuclear family encourages self-sufficiency and self-reliance, reduces welfare expenditure (**Charles Murray**), encourages shared moral values and passes on morality to children.

**Evaluation:** X They exaggerate the decline of the Nuclear family.

X Most single parents are not welfare scroungers – most want to work but find it difficult to find jobs that are flexible enough so they can balance work and child care.

## Power and Control in the Family

### Gender Roles within Families & the Domestic Division of Labour

**Domestic Division of Labour** means the chores that are completed around the house such as cleaning, laundry, cooking, DIY & gardening.

**Instrumental Role**— The rational male role that is the breadwinner of the family and the disciplinarian of the family.

**Expressive role**— the emotional and caring role that is usually carried out by the female in the family. It includes childcare and most of the domestic labour.

### Why are Roles changing?

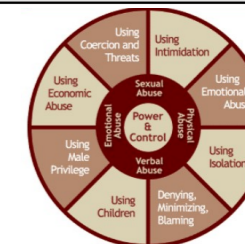
- ⇒ Economically Active women/mothers
- ⇒ Decline in the extended family
- ⇒ Weakening gender identities
- ⇒ Technology and living standards
- ⇒ Commercialisation of domestic labour

### Power, Resources and Decision-Making

Thinkers	Explanation
<b>McIntosh &amp; Barrett</b>	Men gain more from women's unpaid domestic labour and in allowance situations men do not give adequate financial recompense and it often comes with strings attached. Men often make the majority of the big decisions.
<b>Kempson</b>	Women in low income families will often go without in favour of making sure ends meet as they see money as family money. Men do not think this way.
<b>Pahl and Volger</b>	Allowance System – Men give wives a certain amount of money each week/month for family expenses, all excess belongs to them. Pooling – All money goes into a central pot and take joint responsibility for expenditure however men tend to earn more than women.

### Consequences of Unequal Power—Dark side of the Family

- ◆ Domestic abuse
- ◆ Neglect
- ◆ Bullying





# Families and Households Knowledge Organiser



## The Nature of Childhood



### Childhood as a social construct

Sociologists point to two pieces of evidence to support the idea that childhood is a social construction:

- ⇒ Cultural differences (child soldiers)
- ⇒ Historical Differences (Aries 'Medieval' paintings)

### The Development of Childhood

#### NEIL POSTMAN - THE DISAPPEARANCE OF CHILDHOOD

-Children having the same rights as adults, disappearance of children's traditional unsupervised games, growing similarity of adult & children's clothing & children committing 'adult crimes'. e.g. James Bulger case.

#### JENKS - CHILDHOOD IN POSTMODERNITY

-Childhood is not disappearing, just changing to adapt to a postmodern society. Parents are now: very protective over their child's partner, they encourage focus on career & when children move out often still check up on them.

### MARCH OF PROGRESS VIEW VS THE CONFLICT VIEW

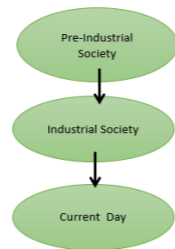
**The MOP view argue that Childhood has improved dramatically** over the last few centuries, and in the western world it is the best it has ever been due to:

- ⇒ Child Labour Laws
- ⇒ Medical Improvements
- ⇒ Compulsory Education
- ⇒ Specialist Child Facilities
- ⇒ Child Protection Laws

Sue Palmer: Toxic Childhood

The conflict view argues that not ALL children have the same experience of childhood due to:

- ⇒ Class— it is estimated that 4.2 million children in the UK are living in poverty. Only 1.2 million children are eligible for free school meals according to DfE.
- ⇒ Gender — Gender socialisation and gendered childhoods lead to differences in education achievements for boys and girls
- ⇒ Ethnicity — Institutional racism in schools means black pupils are more likely to be excluded than other ethnic groups.



**Social Construct=** an idea that has been created and accepted by the people in a society'.

## Demographic Trends and Family Life

**Birth Rates**—the number of live births per thousand of the population per year. There has been a long term decline in birth rate since 1900 due to:

- ⇒ Changes in positions of women
- ⇒ Decline in infant mortality rate
- ⇒ Children have become an economic liability
- ⇒ Child centeredness 'quality over quantity'

**Ageing Population**—where the average age of the population is rising. There is a growing number of the older population, and a declining number of the younger population.

Over the last 5 years, there has been an increase of over 65's by **1 million**.

### Effects of an ageing population:

- ⇒ Public services
- ⇒ One person pensioner households
- ⇒ Dependency ratio = The **dependency ratio** is a measure showing the number of dependents, aged zero to 14 and over the age of 65, to the total population, aged 15 to 64.

**Migration**—The movement of people from place to place. There are **PUSH** and **PULL** factors that may effect why a person moves from one country to another.

**Death Rates** -The number of deaths per 1000 of the population per year. Less % of people are dying each year due to:

- ⇒ Improved nutrition
- ⇒ Medical improvements
- ⇒ Environmental improvements
- ⇒ Other social changes e.g. decline of dangerous jobs such as mining.

**Life expectancy** - refers to how long on average a person born in a given year can be expected to live.

As death rates have fallen, life expectancy has increased, for example:  
 A male born in 1900 would be expected to live to 50, a female to 57.  
 A male born in 2003 can be expected to live to 76.9 years, a female 81.2

It is important to note that despite a country having an 'average life expectancy' – life **expectancy can differ between gender, class, and even regionally**.

**Globalisation** is the increasing interconnectedness of the world, barriers between societies are disappearing. Globalisation can effect migration, family structure and policy.

## Social Policy and the Family



	1980 – 1990's – Conservative Policies	1997 – 2010 – New Labour Policies	2010 Onwards – Coalition Policies
Aim	The New Right had a lot of influence during this time so the main aim of policies were to strengthen the traditional Nuclear family, emphasizing the self help and reliance. Reduced welfare payments	Silva & Smart – Favoured Dual earning families but also emphasizes the heterosexual nuclear family and for parents to take responsibility for their children. Some support for alternative family types.	Inconsistent policies on the family due to conflict between two camps of MP's Hayton: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modernists who accept diversity</li> <li>• Traditionalists who favour a New Right view.</li> </ul>
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established Child Support Agency 1993</li> <li>• Made illegitimate children have the same rights as those born to wedded parents.</li> <li>• Children's Act 1989</li> <li>• Married Men's Tax Allowance</li> <li>• Section 28</li> <li>• Back to Basic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parenting Orders</li> <li>• Longer Maternity Leave</li> <li>• Working families tax credit</li> <li>• The New Deal</li> <li>• Civil Partnerships</li> <li>• Unmarried Couples adoption</li> <li>• Sexuality Discrimination Laws</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removed Couples penalty.</li> <li>• Shared Parental Leave</li> <li>• Equal Marriage Act</li> </ul>