Problems in the Family
Family

- A kinship system of all relatives living together or recognized as a social unit, including adopted persons
Monogamy

- Marriage between two partners; the only legal form of marriage in the United States

- **Serial monogamy**
  - A succession of marriages in which a person has more than one spouse over a lifetime but is legally married to only one person at a time
Polygamy

- Marriage in which there are more than two spouses
- **Polygyny** - Concurrent marriage of one man with two or more women
- **Polyandry** - Concurrent marriage of one woman with two or more men
- **Bigamy** - The criminal offense of marrying one person while still legally married to another
Same-Sex Relationships

- 1996 federal Defense of Marriage Act defined marriage as union between one man and one woman & denied federal recognition of same-sex marriages. Found unconstitutional in 2013
- 19 states - CA, CT, DE, HI, IA, IL, ME, MD, MA, MN, NH, NJ, NM, NY, OR, PA, RI, VT, and WA - & Washington, D.C. recognize same sex marriage

In 14 states, judges issued rulings in favor of freedom to marry; AR, CO, FL, ID, IN, KY, MI, OK, TX, UT, VA and WI (still in the courts)
- Three states offer broad protections short of marriage. CO allows civil union, NV recognizes domestic partnership. WI has more limited domestic partnership.

44% of the U.S. population lives in a state with the freedom to marry for same-sex couples
- 46% of the U.S. population lives in a state with either marriage or a broad legal status such as civil union or domestic partnership
- 48% of the U.S. population lives in a state that provides some form of protections for gay couples
- 2,042 same-sex couples are living in Idaho, representing 3.5 same-sex couples per 1,000 households.
- 2001 the Netherlands became the first country to offer legal marriage to same-sex couples
- 2003 Belgium became the second country to legalize same-sex marriage and was followed by Canada and Spain., South Africa, Norway, Sweden, Iceland, Portugal, Argentina, Denmark, France, and Brazil
Households

- **Family household**
  - 2 or more persons related by birth, marriage, or adoption who reside together

- **Nonfamily household**
  - May consist of one person who lives alone, two or more people as roommates, or cohabiting heterosexual or homosexual couples
Changing Patterns in U.S. Families and Households

- Delayed childbearing
  - Between 1981 and 2003, the birthrate for women ages 40–44 more than doubled
  - First-birth rates for women ages 30 to 34, 35 to 39, and 40 to 44 increased from 2002 to 2003, by 7%, 12%, and 11%, respectively
Changing Patterns in U S Families and Households

- Increased heterosexual and same-sex cohabitation
  - Nationally, 9% of coupled households are unmarried partner households
  - From 1960 to 2000 the number of cohabiting unmarried couples skyrocketed
Domestic Partnership & Civil Union

- Cohabiting couples granted legal entitlements such as health insurance benefits and inheritance rights
- Most states now recognize domestic partnerships for both same sex and opposite sex couples
- Rights and obligations vary by state
Number of Unmarried, Cohabitating Couples of the Opposite Sex
A new family form: Living apart together

- Family scholars have identified an emerging family form, living apart together (LAT) relationships.
- Couples may choose this family form for a number of reasons, including the desire to maintain a measure of independence and avoid problems that may arise from living together.
- Actress Helena Bonham Carter and director Tim Burton, who have been in a relationship since 2001 and have a son together, are a “living alone together” couple. They live in adjoining houses in London.
Changes in U S  Families and Households

- *Increased divorce and blended families*
- More than one-quarter (28 percent) of U S  adults have been divorced; among 50- to 64-year-olds, 45 percent have been divorced
- *Increased employment of mothers*
  - Employment of married women with children under age 18 rose from 24% in 1950 to 40% in 1970 to 71% in 2007
% of births to unmarried women by race and Hispanic origin: U.S., 2005

- Total percentage of births to unmarried women: 36.8%
- Non-Hispanic white: 24.5%
- Non-Hispanic black: 69.3%
- Hispanic: 46.4%
- American Indian or Alaska Native: 62.3%
- Asian/Pacific Islander: 15.5%
Changes in U S  Families and Households

- Increased single-parent families
  - From 1970 to 2003 the proportion of single-mother families grew from 12 to 26% and single-father families grew from 1 to 6%
  - 16% of children living with single fathers and 9% of children living with single mothers also live with their parents’ partners
Cohabitation

- Actors Goldie Hawn and Kurt Russell have been in a committed cohabiting relationship for over 31 years.
- Their child Wyatt has been raised in a stable, loving family with his mother and father; the couple has grand-children as well.
The Marital Decline Perspective

According to the marital decline perspective:

1. Personal happiness is more important than marriage and family obligations
2. The decline in lifelong marriage and the increase in single-parent families have contributed to poverty, delinquency, substance abuse, violence, and the erosion of neighborhoods and communities

Impact of Divorce on Income of Families with Children

1993 Average Annual Income

- Before Divorce: $43,600
- After Divorce: $25,300

Family Status

Source: Corcoran and Chaudry, unpublished research paper, Survey Research Center, University of Michigan, May 1994.
The Marital Resiliency Perspective

- Includes the following beliefs:
  1. Poverty, unemployment, poorly funded schools, discrimination, and the lack of basic services are more serious threats to the well-being of children and adults than the decline in married two-parent families.
  2. Divorce provides a second chance for happiness for adults and an escape from dysfunctional and aversive home environments for many children.
Structural Functionalist Perspective

- Family performs functions that help society:
  - Replenishes population
  - Socializes children
  - Provides emotional and physical care for its members
Conflict Perspective

- Focuses on how social class and power influence marriages and families
- Racial and ethnic differences in families are related to the lower socioeconomic status of racial and ethnic minorities
Symbolic Interactionist Perspective

- Concerned with social meanings and definitions of divorce, single parenthood, and cohabitation
- As meanings become less negative, behaviors become more common
- When family members label each other, they may act according to label
Violence and Abuse

- Globally, 1 in 3 women has been subjected to violence in an intimate relationship
- 1 in 5 U.S. women has been assaulted by an intimate partner during her lifetime
- Assaults by women against their male partners tend to be acts of retaliation or self-defense
Patterns of Partner Violence

1. **Common couple violence** refers to occasional acts of violence arising from arguments that get “out of hand.”

2. **Intimate terrorism** is violence that is motivated by a wish to control one’s partner and involves violence, economic subordination, threats, isolation, verbal and emotional abuse, and other control tactics.

3. **Violent resistance** refers to acts of violence that are committed in self-defense.

4. **Mutual violent control** is a rare pattern of abuse that is a battle for control in the relationship.
Nonfatal Intimate Partner Victimization Rate by Marital Status
Effects of Domestic Violence

- Each year, intimate partner violence results in nearly 2 million injuries and more than 1,000 deaths
- Many battered women are abused during pregnancy, resulting in a high rate of miscarriage and birth defects
- Psychological consequences include depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts and attempts, lowered self-esteem, and substance abuse
A pattern of abuse in which a violent or abusive episode is followed by a makeup period when the abuser expresses sorrow and asks for forgiveness and “one more chance,” before another instance of abuse occurs.
Child Abuse

- The physical or mental injury, sexual abuse, negligent treatment, or maltreatment of a child younger than age 18 by a person who is responsible for the child’s welfare.

- Neglect: A form of abuse involving the failure to provide adequate attention, supervision, nutrition, hygiene, health care, and a safe and clean living environment for a minor child or a dependent elderly individual.
Types of Child Maltreatment

- Neglect: 62.8%
- Physical abuse: 16.6%
- Sexual abuse: 9.3%
- Emotional/psychological abuse: 7.1%
Rates of Child Abuse and Neglect by Race and Ethnicity, 2005

- African American
- American Indian/Alaska Native
- Pacific Islander
- White
- Hispanic
- Asian
Shaken Baby Syndrome

- When the caretaker, most often the father, shakes the baby to the point of causing the child to experience brain or retinal hemorrhage, most often occurs in response to a baby, who typically is younger than 6 months, who won’t stop crying
- Battered or shaken babies are often permanently handicapped
Elder Abuse

- Physical, psychological and financial abuse, or neglect including failure to provide health and hygiene needs, unreasonable confinement, isolation, lack of supervision and abandonment of the elderly
- Although the most common form of elder abuse is neglect, elders are also victims of physical violence
Factors Contributing to Intimate Partner and Family Violence

- **Cultural Factors**
  - Violence in the family stems from our society’s acceptance of violence as a means of solving conflicts

- **Acceptance of Corporal Punishment**
  - Many mental health professionals and child development specialists argue that corporal punishment is damaging to children
  - Children who experience corporal punishment display more antisocial behavior, are more violent, and have an increased incidence of depression as adults
Factors Contributing to Intimate Partner and Family Violence

- **Community Factors**
  - Community factors that contribute to violence and abuse in the family include social isolation and inaccessible or unaffordable community services, such as health care, day care, elder care, and respite care facilities.

- **Individual and Family Factors**
  - Men who witnessed their fathers abusing their mothers and women who witnessed their mothers abusing their fathers are more likely to be abusive.
  - Individuals who were abused as children are more likely to report being abused in an adult domestic relationship.
Strategies for Preventing Violence and Abuse

- **Primary prevention**
  Strategies that target general population

- **Secondary prevention**
  Strategies that target families at risk of violence and abuse

- **Tertiary prevention**
  Strategies that target families that are experiencing abuse or neglect
Primary Prevention Strategies

1. Public education and media campaigns
2. Parent education to teach parents realistic expectations about child behavior and methods of discipline that do not involve corporal punishment
3. Reducing stress by reducing poverty and unemployment, providing housing, childcare, nutrition, medical care, and educational opportunities
Secondary Prevention Strategies

- Parent education programs
- Parent support groups
- Individual counseling
- Substance abuse treatment
- Home visiting programs
Tertiary Prevention Strategies

- Abuse Hotlines
- Shelters for battered women and children
- Court orders of protection
- Treatment for abusers
Effective Discipline Techniques: Alternatives to Spanking

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<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Be a positive role model</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Set explicit rules and certain, age-appropriate consequences</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Encourage and reward good behavior</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Create charts</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Give time-outs</td>
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Family Preservation Programs

- In-home interventions for families who are at risk of having a child removed from the home because of abuse or neglect
Social Factors Contributing to Divorce

- Changing family functions (today, function of marriage is intimacy and love)
- Economic autonomy of women
- Increased work demands
- Dissatisfaction with marital division of labor
- Liberalized divorce laws
- Increased individualism
- Increased life expectancy
## Factors That Decrease Women’s Risk of Separation In the First 10 Years of Marriage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>% Decrease</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual income over $50K</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having a baby 7 months or more after marriage</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marrying over 25 years of age</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having an intact family of origin</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religious affiliation</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>13</td>
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Effects of Divorce on Children

- If marital conflict is high, parental divorce may improve emotional well-being of children.
- Many negative effects are related to economic hardship associated with divorce.
- In most cases, children adapt to divorce, showing resiliency, not dysfunction.
Marriage Education

- Marriage education includes various types of workshops, classes, and encounter groups that:
  - Teach relationships skills, communication, and problem solving
  - Convey that sustaining healthy marriages requires effort
  - Convey the importance of having realistic expectations of marriage, commitment, and a willingness to make personal sacrifices
Covenant Marriage and Divorce Law Reform

- In 1996, Louisiana passed the Covenant Marriage Act
- Couples can choose a standard marriage contract that allows a no-fault divorce or a covenant marriage, which permits divorce only under condition of fault or after a two-year separation
- Only 3% of couples in states with covenant marriage laws have chosen the covenant marriage option
Divorce Mediation

- A process in which divorcing couples meet with a neutral third party (mediator) who assists the individuals in resolving issues such as property division, child custody, child support, and spousal support in a way that minimizes conflict and encourages cooperation.
Birthrates for Teenagers, United States, 1990-2005
Birth Rates (Per 1,000) of U S Teens, by Race and Hispanic Origin, 2007

- All Races: 40.4%
- Non-Hispanic white: 26.0%
- Non-Hispanic black: 60.9%
- American Indian or Alaska Native: 52.7%
- Asian/Pacific Islander: 16.9%
- Hispanic: 81.5%
Teenage Pregnancy Prevention

- **Sex Education**
  - Under the Bush administration support for “abstinence-only” education programs expanded
  - Abstinence-only programs have not been shown effective in preventing teenage pregnancy
  - Texas has the third highest teen birth rate in the nation -- 50% higher than the national average, yet 94% of Texan students receive abstinence-only sex education. Texas is also the nation's largest recipient of abstinence-only funds, totaling more than $18 million
Teen Pregnancy Prevention

- Computerized infant simulators, such as the one pictured here, are used in parenting education as well as teenage pregnancy-prevention programs