**Godalming College**

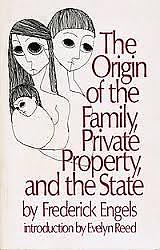
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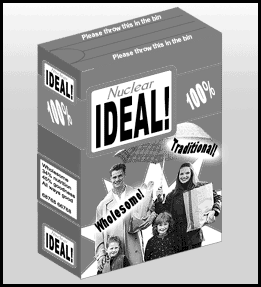
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**Sociology and Anthropology Department**

SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES OF THE FAMILY

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**WORKBOOK 1 (Paper 2)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Name: | Set: | Group: |

**The AQA Specification:**

Students are expected to be familiar with sociological explanations of the following content: the relationship of the family to the social structure and social change, with particular reference to the economy and to state policies

**This booklet:**

This booklet will give an overview of the ways in which Functionalists, Marxists, Feminists and Postmodernists view the family. The use of a textbook and revision book will really help reinforce the content of this booklet.

**If at any point you are unclear of any material it is VITAL that you discuss this with your subject tutor. You will need to keep this material for the A-Level exam next year.**

All the key terms you need to know feature at the end of this workbook. We recommend that you maintain your own key studies summaries, as covered within class, to aid your revision.

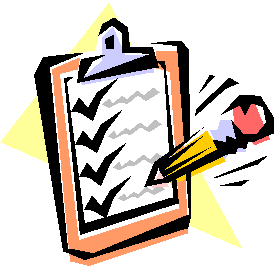
**Symbols**



Requires you to complete an activity, such as a quiz on Godalming Online



Requires you to make notes or complete a written task



Refers to an assessment

**Topics covered in this booklet:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Topic understood (tick)** | **Topic revised (tick)** |
| **Functionalism** |  |  |
| **New Right** |  |  |
| **Feminism** |  |  |
| **Marxism** |  |  |
| **Postmodernism** |  |  |

**Family and Households**



**What is the family?**

In pairs brainstorm in this box what you think the family is.

Definition:

**What is a household?**

In pairs brainstorm in this box what you think a household is.

Definition:

**Different forms of marriage, family and household types:Different forms of marriage:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type** | **Description** | **Most commonly found** | **Diagram** |
| Monogamy |  |  |  |
| Serial Monogamy |  |  |  |
| Arranged Marriages |  |  |  |
| Civil Partnership |  |  |  |
| Polygamy |  |  |  |
| Polygyny |  |  |  |
| Polyandry |  |  |  |

**Different forms of family and households:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type** | **Description** | **Diagram** |
| Nuclear Family |  |  |
| Extended Family |  |  |
| Classic extended family |  |  |
| Patriarchal Family |  |  |
| Matriarchal Family |  |  |
| Symmetrical Family |  |  |
| Reconstituted / Step Family |  |  |
| Lone-Parent Family |  |  |
| Beanpole Family |  |  |
| Gay / Lesbian Family |  |  |
| Single Person Household |  |  |

Can you think of any more family/ household types you can identify in modern Britain?

**Fill in the Blanks Activity:**

Using the tables you have just filled in fill in the blanks in the following passage. Each dash represents a word.

The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ means just the parents and the children, living together in one household. This is sometimes called a two-generation family, because it consists of two generations of parents and children. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is a grouping of all kin.

The extended family could be sub-divided into two groups. Firstly the **classic extended family** which consists of several related nuclear families or family members who live in the same household, street or area and who see one another regularly and secondly the **modified extended family** which consists of a group of related nuclear families, although may be living far apart, maintain close relations made possible by modern communications, such as car travel, phone, letters and e-mail. This is probably the most common type of family arrangement in Britain today.

The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is today largely a result of the rise in divorce rate, although it may also arise from the death of a partner or a simple lack of desire to get married or cohabit. Nine out of ten of these families are headed by women. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is one where one or both partners have been married previously, and they bring with them children of a previous marriage.

It remains popular with most families in contemporary Britain are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, where both husbands and wives or cohabiting partners are likely to be wage earners, and to share the housework and childcare. However Feminists would argue that men still dominate in the family and make most of the decisions and it therefore remains \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ family is a particular type of extended family which has become increasingly important in recent years. As the name implies, it is long and thin in structure, and there is greater interaction between generations. This is becoming more important partly as a result of increased life expectancy (especially for women) and partly through the impact of divorce and divided households. Concentration on single parent households by researchers may hide the existence of this further supportive network.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is the only legal form of marriage allowed in Britain. In modern Britain, most of Western Europe and the USA there are high rates of divorce and remarriage. And some people keep marrying and divorcing a series of partners. This term \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is sometimes used to describe these marriage patterns. This type of marriage has been described as ‘*one at a time, one after the other and they don’t last long!*’

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are those which parents organize the marriages of their children to try and ensure a good match with partners of a similar background and status. They are typically found among Muslim, Sikh and Hindu minority ethnic groups. However this custom in Britain is under pressure, as younger people demand greater freedom to choose their own marriage partner, as happens in wider society.

While marrying a second partner in Britain without divorcing the first one is a crime, in many societies it is perfectly acceptable to have more than one marriage partner at a time. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is a general term used to describe this form of marriage.

**FUNCTIONALISM**

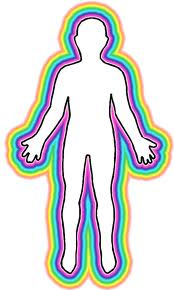
Functionalism is a **consensus theory** that argues that the family is beneficial for society. This is based on their concept of the organic analogy. Functionalists have offered important accounts of the family. Although their work regarded as providing a somewhat idealised account of family life, Functionalists have stressed the importance of family as the basis of **socialisation** in society.



**The Organic Analogy Primary Socialisation**

Define what is meant by this term

The family is seen by Functionalists as being the ‘heart of society’. What do you think they mean by this?



Other key concepts to define:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Norms |  |
| Values |  |
| Social Solidarity |  |

Functionalism has tended to stress:

Consider this work against the variety of family types in modern Britain – would functionalists regard all of these as functional?

* The nuclear family is **the best fit**
* the **universality** of the family in all known societies
* the **necessity of distinct conjugal roles** (roles between husband and wife)
* the importance of the **nuclear family** in society to fulfil these **functions**

**KEY FUNCTIONALIST THEORISTS**

**GEORGE MURDOCK: THE NUCLEAR FAMILY IS UNIVERSAL**

Some functionalist sociologists, most notably **George Peter Murdock**, asserted that the **nuclear** family must exist as an **institution** in all human societies (historically and cross-culturally). According to functionalists there are certain essential **functional prerequisites** (or basic needs) which must be fulfilled in every society for it to continue to exist. According to Murdock and others (such as New Right political thinkers), only the institution of the family can meet these needs adequately.

However, although most societies have some established arrangements for production, rearing and socialisation of children, this does not mean that these arrangements always or necessarily involve prime responsibility resting on the family or biological parents. Provide some details for the following examples:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The Nayar |  |
| Communes |  |
| The Kibbutz |  |
| Lone parent families |  |
| Gay and Lesbian Families |  |
| Foster Care and Children’s Homes |  |



What does the presence of these other types of family indicate about Murdock’s argument?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Murdock defines the **nuclear family** in a very specific way:

***"The family is a social group characterised by common residence, economic co-operation and reproduction. It includes adults of both sexes, at least two of whom maintain a socially approved sexual relationship, and one or more children, own or adopted, of the sexually cohabiting adults."***

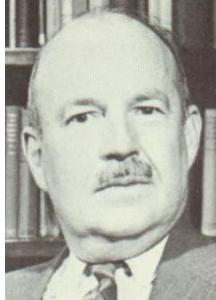
Do you see any problems with this definition? Does it “fit” the contemporary family in all aspects?

Murdock identified four principal functions that only the family can perform. Although other institutions may help fulfil these functions, the family must take the lead in providing them.

***(Complete these boxes from Sociology in Focus, 2nd Ed, page 66 in your own words)***

These four functions are:

|  |
| --- |
| sexual |
|  |
|  |
|  |
| reproductive |
|  |
|  |
|  |
| economic |
|  |
|  |
|  |
| educational |
|  |
|  |
|  |

**TALCOTT PARSONS: THE FAMILY AND ADAPTATION TO SOCIAL CHANGE**

The work of Talcott Parsons can be seen as the classic Functionalist position on the family and its relationship to the process of industrialisation.

According to Parsons, the family needs to adapt to society and will offer the ‘best fit’ available, meeting the needs of society as it changes and develops, rather than being universal.

**The family has two key functions**

As other institutions have developed and changed over time, so the family has lost functions to them. The pre-industrial family was multi-functional – it functioned as a unit of production, but took on a wide variety of other roles. Where the family used to care for its members in time of sickness, so specialised medical institutions have taken over, where it used to provide education and training and social placement so mass education has emerged.

The family is left with two functions, however, that no other institution could adequately fulfil. These are what Parsons calls “basic and irreducible2:

|  |
| --- |
| **The primary socialisation of children** |
| **The stabilisation of adult personalities** |

**The family retains a need for a sexual division of labour**

Part of the stabilisation of adult personalities includes the need to have a **sexual division of labour**, whereby the husband and wife have different roles, allowing them to support each other.

Explain these roles below:

**Instrumental role**

**Expressive role**

Because both of these needs are best served by family members, a **sexual division of labour** within the family is useful. This creates and reinforces traditional gender roles, based upon biological factors. Although, in pre-industrial society both men and women were home – centred and involved in the production process, with industrialisation home and work divided and this created a public and private sphere. A fundamental division was created between the domestic world and the world of work, between men’s roles and women’s.



**Parsons’ theory is often called ‘warm bath theory’. Find out what he means by this:**

[](http://www.google.co.uk/imgres?um=1&hl=en&biw=1280&bih=901&tbm=isch&tbnid=pHBUl0sxha4_eM:&imgrefurl=http://blogs.bath.ac.uk/mres-student/2011/10/27/bath-time-blue-sweatshirt/&docid=D3s2POowkLRCwM&imgurl=http://blogs.bath.ac.uk/mres-student/files//www/vhosts/bathblogs/wp-content/blogs.dir/926/files/2011/10/bubble-bath.jpg&w=400&h=400&ei=P1O-T7TyFo2o8QPBzv0s&zoom=1&iact=hc&vpx=674&vpy=495&dur=645&hovh=225&hovw=225&tx=119&ty=126&sig=115085309556256377766&page=2&tbnh=166&tbnw=170&start=20&ndsp=25&ved=1t:429,r:2,s:20,i:186)

**Why might others be critical of the ‘warm bath theory’?**

**The nuclear family is the ‘best fit’ for society**

According to Parsons, pre-industrial society was characterised by the **extended family**, but as a direct result of industrialisation, this was replaced by the isolated nuclear family. (i.e. the nuclear family was caused by industrialisation). The **isolated nuclear family** is seen as **‘best fitting’** the needs of an industrial economy (i.e. that it is particularly suited to an industrial society). Young and Willmott and Fletcher would also support the view that the classic extended family has largely disappeared and a privatized nuclear family or some form of modified extended family has emerged.

****

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Pre-Industrial Society** | **Industrial Society** | **Modern society** |
|  |  |  |

Parsons argues the isolated nuclear family allows for geographic and social mobility. What does he mean by these concepts?

* **Geographical mobility**
* **Social mobility**

**Summary**

Complete the passage on Godalming online and then fill in the correct answers below using these key words

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| adapt | industrialisation | discontents | instrumental |
| stripped | extended | nuclear | sexual |
| expressive | positive | New Right | determinism |
| Leach | workforce |  |  |

Functionalist theory has stressed the fit between the family and society and the need for the family as an institution to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to wider social changes. Over the period of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, this change has occurred in the structure, functions and relationships involved in the family unit. Structurally, the family has changed from an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to a predominantly \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ family unit. This meets the needs of the economy for a mobile, flexible\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. It has lost functions to other more specialised institutions, such as healthcare systems or the education system. And, with the separation of work and home, the family has reinforced the need for a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ division of labour, with men fulfilling \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ needs in the workplace\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_women \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ needs in the home.

Critics have criticised the functionalist view as too conservative. They show that the modern family is a far more diverse structure than functionalists allow. Some are keen to point out that, far from being \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of functions, the family has gained some new ones. Feminists particularly tend to reject the biological \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_of functionalism, with men as breadwinners and women as homemakers. Most of all, critics reject the overly \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_view of the family that functionalists seem to adopt – the family is not always a happy place to be.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ argues the nuclear family has become isolated and inward looking, leading to emotional stress because members expect too much from each other. The family, he argues, is ‘the source of all our \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_’

Functionalist theory, nevertheless, remains influential with political parties and has informed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ thinking about the family.

**NEW RIGHT PERSPECTIVES OF THE FAMILY**

**Approach to Society**

* New Right theorists are concerned that the issues raised by functionalist theory of society and the family are being neglected in contemporary society
* They especially focus on the idea of the traditional family as the “best fit” for society, and the way that failure to provide this basic building block of society may lead to social dislocation and even collapse
* Society now is too dependent upon the Welfare state and, in fact, too tolerant of diversity where this may be detrimental.
* There is a need to re-establish a value consensus and to support the modern family – this is a conservative political view

**New Right Views of the family**

Charles Murray (1989) argued the traditional family is under threat. Murray says that welfare benefits are too high and create a 'culture of dependency' where an individual finds it easy and acceptable to take benefits rather than work. This creates an 'underclass'.

He is critical of welfare support for single parents who have more children than they can afford, leading to other problems such as criminality.

Dennis (1993) believes that the loss of control from traditional families has led to a loosening of social bonds and an increase in crime

* Men have become marginalised
* Boys may lack adequate role models (Such explanations were common in the media after the riots of 2011)

****Almond (2006) believes that the liberalisation of divorce laws undermines the idea of marriage as a lifelong commitment and that the recognition of civil partnerships for gay and lesbian couples will indicate to people that families are no longer seen as preferable to other living arrangements

If New Right theorists feel that the traditional family unit is under threat, what might be done to rectify this?

Evaluation of the New Right view

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Positives | Negatives |
|  |  |

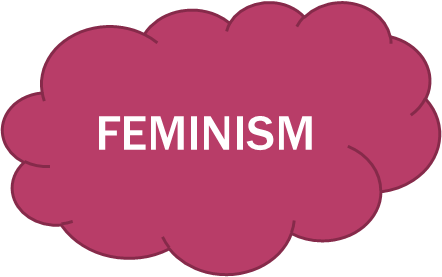
**FEMINISM**

Feminists, like Marxists, are critical of society. They argue that most societies are based on patriarchy (male domination). There are **three broad perspectives** that we are concerned with at AS. These are Liberal, Marxist and Radical feminism.

*N.B. the views of Feminists are dealt with in more detail in the Gender Roles booklet*

****

**What do you think of when you hear the word feminism?**

**

**What is second wave feminism?**

**What is patriarchy?**

**What are the main points of oppression according to feminists (give examples)?**

**1)**

**2)**

**3)**

**4)**

|  |
| --- |
| **Liberal feminists**  Liberal feminists tend to be generally optimistic about the family. They focus on the inequality of roles within the family that is based on learned gender stereotypes, through the processes of **manipulation** and **canalisation** (**Oakley**). Liberal feminists hold that in the latter part of the 20th century there have been significant improvements in the roles of women. Political and legal changes like the Equal Pay Act, the Sex Discrimination Act and divorce laws have enforced this. Social changes have also seen men arguably become more involved in the home and with child care.  **Liberal feminists have the most popular support although other feminists may feel that change has not gone far enough and that not all women have benefited equally from the changes that have occurred.**  **http://school.discoveryeducation.com/clipart/images/pencil.gif**  **Ann Oakley** |
| ***What are meant by the following Ann Oakley’s following terms:***  **Canalisation**  **Manipulation**  **Do you agree that this is what happens with gender socialisation?** |

**Insert the year for the following legal changes related to gender equality**

**Sex Discrimination Act**- prevented employers from discriminating against people based on their gender

**Equal Pay Act-** meant that men and women had to be paid the same amount for doing the same job.

**Equality Act**- combined the main elements of Sex Discrimination and Equal Pay Act alongside other anti-discrimination laws

|  |
| --- |
| **Marxist Feminists**  Focus on the oppression of women, rooted in the family and linked to capitalism. The position of women in the family is seem as a major prop to Capitalism. Marxist feminists have taken on the insights of **Zaretsky** and, much more importantly, **Engels** to produce their own critique of the family.  As **Breughal** indicates, women offer a reserve of free labour. Historically there has been an emphasis on the need for women to work in the home on the important tasks of socialising the young, or supporting their men. If the society needs women to work they are often encouraged into employment. It is not a surprise, therefore, that women dominate casual and part-time work in the labour market, and that, even when employed full-time, that they earn around 80% of male wages. This is simply the logic of capitalism. These women can be hired and fired by employers at their requirements and needs; it is the family that facilitates this.  **Fran Ansley (Marxist feminist)**  C:\Users\dak.GODALMING.000\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\0DMP7LMO\MC900311294[1].wmf**The “Haven” of the Home**  **Fran Ansley** has taken the idea of Zaretsky and the failure of the home to act as an effective haven from the everyday oppression of capitalism further. Men exploit women in the traditional family just as they, in turn, have been exploited in the workplace. She sees the emotional support that the woman gives her husband after a hard day at work in the capitalist system as a **safety valve**. Ansley describes the role of women both graphically and memorably.  **What does Ansley’s concept of the safety valve remind you of?**  **Why is it different to the previous idea we have seen?**  C:\Users\dak.GODALMING.000\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\ZPT8Q59G\MC900030281[1].wmfThe husband comes home from a hard day at work, and lets out his frustrations on his wife. She soothes him, tends to him and makes him feel better. He feels better and goes back to soak up another frustrating and boring day at work.  Ansley says: *“****When wives play their traditional role as takers of shit, they often absorb their husbands’ legitimate anger and frustration at their own powerlessness.”***  The wife is basically the sponge to soak up the negativities of a capitalist system for the male worker. Marxist feminists thus reiterate the concern of other Marxists that the Functionalist ideas of the supportive role of the family in society fails to address the problem from all points of view within the family unit.  **Barrett and McIntosh (Marxist feminists)**  In their work ‘The anti – social family’ argue that there is a strong ideology that supports the nuclear family (this has become known as the **ideology of familism**). They suggest that it destroys life outside the family by presenting all alternatives as shallow and lacking in meaning.  **What do you think they mean by the idea of the family being anti-social?** |

|  |
| --- |
| **Radical Feminism**  Radical feminists see the domination of women as th**e most fundamental and universal form of domination.** The family as an institution is important in maintaining male power. Jessie Bernard argues ‘being a housewife makes women sick’, because they get fewer benefits out of it than men. Radical feminists do not believe that men will voluntarily surrender patriarchal privileges. **Delphy and Leonard** argue that the family is a hierarchical and patriarchal institution through which men dominate and exploit women. They suggest that there are 57 different forms of unpaid service which women carry out **Millet** argues relationships of domination by men and women don’t just happen at a societal level but are occurring within the home. She argues ‘patriarchy is the most pervasive ideology of our culture, its most fundamental concept of power’. The family reinforces this. Firestone sees the basic biology of childbirth as an issue, which allows women to be controlled by men when they are at their most vulnerable.  **Ultra radical feminists** are pessimistic about the possibility of reforming the family. They believe the patriarchal monogamous family must be abolished and alternative ways of living together must be encouraged. Some are lesbian separatists, others look at communal living as a possible alternative  Radical feminists believe patriarchy is built into the structure of society. Any changes that have happened to redress male domination, in terms of legal changes (like the Equality Act 2010) have only served to maintain patriarchy in the family. For example **Dunscombe and Marsden** argue that although women are now taking on more paid employment as a result of legal and social changes they have ended up doing what they call a ‘**triple shift’**. This is where women are now working, but still carry the burden of doing most of the housework and emotional work of childcare. **Greer** asserts many relationships between men and women in all spheres of life in contemporary society remain highly patriarchal and exploitative.  **Why do radical feminists receive more negative attention than other types of feminist?** |

**Evidence for the radical feminist view**

The 2001/02 British Crime Survey (BCS) found that there were an estimated 635,000 incidents of domestic violence in England and Wales. 81% of the victims were women and 19% were men. Domestic violence incidents also made up nearly 22% of all violent incidents reported by participants in the BCS (Home Office, July 2002)

**What support could this statistic provide for the radical feminist argument?**

**What problems can you see with this data?**

**Violence in Families-** the dark side of the family (using the article at the end of this booklet) answer the following questions

1. What does the article find to be problematic about the use of the term “***domestic violence***”?
2. Why is there a preference for the term “***domestic abuse***” rather than “***domestic violence***”?
3. What problems can you identify with the replacement of the term “***domestic violence***” with “***domestic abuse***”?

PHYSICAL

VERBAL

**ABUSE**

EMOTIONAL

SEXUAL

PSYCHOLOGICAL

**The British Crime Survey is a victim survey carried out annually by government to supplement official crime statistics. It has been replaced by the Crime Survey for England and Wales and a separate survey for Scotland. See:** [**http://www.crimesurvey.co.uk/**](http://www.crimesurvey.co.uk/)

**“Box 3” Data from 2011/2012 survey**

With regard to sexual and domestic violence, the 2011/12 survey showed there were 536,000 victims of sexual assault in the last year and 2.0 million of domestic abuse. Although the estimated levels of domestic abuse experienced in the last year were lower than those in the 2004/05 CSEW (the baseline for this measure) there has been no statistically significant change since 2008/09.

1. Outline the key findings in the article on the work of

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Davidson (1995) |  |
| Health Trends (1992) |  |
| Brown (1990) |  |
| George (1992) |  |
| MORI (1994) |  |
| Walker (1979) |  |

**Q. What does this article show us about the ‘dark side’ of the family?**

**Q. How does this article counter the arguments of Radical feminists?**

**Q. How does this article counter the arguments of Functionalists?**

**Activity**

Using your current knowledge of feminism (and the extension reading on p.278-281) complete the following:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strengths of feminism (state which type of feminism you are referring to)** | **Weaknesses of feminism (state which type of feminism you are referring to)** |
|  |  |

**MARXISM**

**View of Society**

Marxist theory has challenged pre-existing **consensus** accounts of social life, like Functionalism.

Marxists focus upon how the capitalist system, based on social class, social inequality and social conflict, shapes wider society. Marxists argue that society does not benefit all of its members. Rather society operates to benefit the rich and powerful (bourgeoisie) over the poor (proletariat).

It has concentrated on a number of specific issues, especially around

* the importance of the economic basis of society
* issues of class power and domination
* a dynamic theory of history based upon class struggle

Marxism is very critical of consensus theories, like Functionalism, which neglect the issues of power and control in society.

For Marx economic forces are the basis of all human existence. They provide the “base” or infrastructure, on which all other elements of human society (the “superstructure”) rests.

All human history is best understood, ultimately, in economic terms.

|  |
| --- |
| **There are 5 key points to note about Marxism** |
| **1.** |
| **2.** |
| **3.** |
| **4.** |
| **5.** |

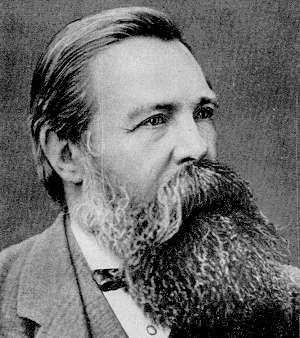
|  |
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| **Draw a representation of the Marxist view of society** |



What problems can you see with viewing society in this way?

**The role of the family in society, according to Marxists**

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| 1. **Ideological** |
| 1. **Economic** |
| 1. **Political** |

**Three Marxists – Friedrich Engels, Eli Zaretsky and Louis Althusser**

1. **Friedrich Engels – The origins of the Family, Private property and the State**

Friedrich Engels was a friend of Karl Marx writing in the mid 19th Century and collaborated on several works, most notably the Communist Manifesto of 1848. He attempted to trace the evolution of the family, by looking at how changes to the social economic system had influenced the nature of family life.

Engels believed that in the early stage of human development, the era of primitive communism, the means of production were communally owned and the family unit as we understand it did not exist. He argued that this era was characterised by sexual promiscuity, with no rights of one person over another/

Engels argued that human relationships have developed through a number of stages, which included polygyny, (a man having more than one partner) until it reached the monogamous nuclear family, but that each stage was largely patriarchal. Each stage involved a greater degree of restriction on sexual relations for women. He argues that it was with the emergence of private property and of the need to own and inherit it that the monogamous nuclear family developed. (i.e. it emerged with Capitalism)

He maintained that this form of family and marriage had been developed to solve the problem of the inheritance of private property from father to son. Males held ownership of property and there was a need to ensure the legitimacy of the male heir and therefore the sexual continence of the mother of the man’s children. In an era before DNA testing, no-one could be 100% sure of this. The monogamous family gave a greater level of such control. Engels argued that the State developed several laws to protect these systems of private property and monogamous marriage. However, he also acknowledged the existence of a dual standard and the possible infidelity of bourgeois men which did not threaten this patrilineal inheritance. Engels model of historical change can be challenged on several fronts, especially his attempt to predict the future and overgeneralise about the past.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PRIMITIVE COMMUNISM** | **ANCIENT ECONOMY** | **FEUDAL ECONOMY** | **CAPITALIST ECONOMY** | **DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT** | **THE FUTURE: COMMUNISM** |
| Hunter-gatherer societies - no need for private property | Agriculture means private property - economy based on the ownership of human beings | Agriculture means private property - economy based upon the right to work the land exchanged for labour power | The Industrial Revolution still has the need for private property - economy based upon wages exchanged for labour power | Period of revolutionary change - the minority of capitalists are overthrown and workers seize the means of production | No need for private property as everyone’s needs are served through communal ownership |
| No family unit |  | FAMILY |  |  | No need for Family |

|  |
| --- |
| **Summarise the key points of Engels argument here:** |

|  |
| --- |
| **What problems can you see with Engels’ theory?** |

1. **Eli Zaretsky – Personal Life and Capitalism (1976)**

Zaretsky studies far more recent developments in the family than Engels, writing at the end of the twentieth rather than the nineteenth century He argues that the family in modern industrial society creates a division between ‘the private life of the family’ and the ‘public world of the economy’.

Zaretsky argues that industrial societies, where work was alienating, the family stood in stark contrast. He argues that the family was therefore idealised and “put on a pedestal” as it “stood in opposition to the terrible anonymous world of commerce and industry.” It was seen to provide satisfactions that were not available in the sphere of work, particularly men who could feel they were the ‘King of their Castle’ at home. To this extent, as with the functionalists, the family offers support necessary in an otherwise difficult world.

However, Zaretsky argues that this notion of the family as a safe haven from the stresses of life fails. Ultimately it is not able to meet the burdens placed upon it. It cannot meet the demands of being the only refuge from a ‘brutal society’ and is unable to fulfil all the personal and psychological needs of its individuals. He sees that although it might function to cushion the effects of capitalism it actually serves to support and maintain the system.

For Zaretsky the family’s support of Capitalism includes the free labour provided by housewives, who (re)produce future workers and socialise children into accepting their position in society. He also sees it as a key unit of consumption (as do the functionalists) maintaining the system through its use of the products of capitalism.

For Zaretsky, the possibility of genuine fulfilment within the family for all of its members will only come with the end of the separation between private and public life through the creation of communism, a political and economic system where the means of production are shared and no one group is dominant.

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| **Summarise the key points of Zaretksy’s argument here:**  **Problems with Zaretsky’s argument:** |

1. **Louis Althusser**

Althusser, a French Marxist, claimed that a range of formal and informal agencies of social control are necessary to maintain capitalism. Althusser argued that if people were simply forced to co-operate with capitalism, that they would eventually reject the system. Therefore Althusser argued that people are manipulated into loving the system so that they find it harder to challenge it. He described these two mechanisms as the **Repressive state apparatus (RSA)** such as the police and the army and **the Ideological state apparatus (ISA)** such as the family, where parents socialise children into accepting a false class consciousness (the failure of members to recognise inequalities in the class system). Althusser argued that capitalism is maintained by carefully manipulating people into accepting an unfair system as well as using force to control them.

**Evaluation of Marxism**

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| --- | --- |
| **Strengths of Marxism** | **Weaknesses of Marxism** |
|  |  |

Using this booklet and the material on page 270-277 of your AQA textbook, outline the key similarities and differences between Functionalist and Marxist theories of the family. Try and think of at least 4 points for each.

Differences

Similarities

**Postmodern theories of the family**

**Approach to studying society**

|  |
| --- |
| **What are the main views of Postmodernists to studying society?**  http://school.discoveryeducation.com/clipart/images/pencil.gif |

**What evidence could we give for the family being a unit of choice?**

**Postmodern views of the family**

* Post modernists accept the idea that families in the UK are diverse (they vary massively).
* They believe that there is not – and could not be a necessary single family type, as argued by Functionalists.
* Variation is accepted as normal - families vary both in their structure (who’s in the family) and by the roles and relationships on the inside (how the members relate to each other).

**Key post modernist theorists:**

Alan and Crow-The family passes through a lifecycle- we are not in one type of family all the time.

Our families are based on choice- we choose how to live and what the relationships are like.

Beck and Beck-Gernsheim- because of individualisation (where individuals, not communities choose how to live) choice is a part of our everyday lives.

Giddens (not really a postmodernist, but never mind) - There is far more focus on love and commitment rather than assuming clear-cut roles. Confluent love- we choose who we want to be with because of love not because we need status

**Personal life perspective**

Using pp.194-196 of the Webb textbook make notes on this perspective:

As we have seen, there are major differences between functionalist, Marxist and feminist theories of the family. However, the personal life perspective argues that they suffer from two weakenesses:

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Summarise the sociology of personal life’s approach

Give examples and explain how the perspective takes a wider view of relationships than just the traditional ‘family’ relationships based on blood and marriage.

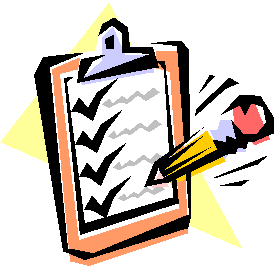
**Evaluation of Postmodern/Personal Life Perspective approaches**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|  |  |

Complete the online quiz ‘match the theory to the statement’- to be found in the family theory section ‘quizzes’

**PERSPECTIVES REVIEW**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **FUNCTIONALISM** | **MARXISM** | **RADICAL FEMINISM** | **LIBERAL FEMINISM** |
| View of society |  |  |  |  |
| The role of the family in society *i.e.,. what does the family do for society as a whole?* |  |  |  |  |
| Gender / marital roles within the family  *i.e.,* |  |  |  |  |
| Key theorists/  Sociologists for this theory- *try and think of 2-4 for each* |  |  |  |  |
| Evaluation of the theory using the other perspectives studied |  |  |  |  |

Formative Assessment

**Key terms**

All of these words will be covered in the course of this workbook. You should define these key terms in your own words to ensure your understanding. Wherever possible use an example to illustrate the term.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **KEY TERM** | **DEFINITION** |
| Function |  |
| Dysfunction |  |
| Functional Prerequisite |  |
| Value consensus |  |
| Norms |  |
| Values |  |
| Institution |  |
| Ideology |  |
| Sexual Division of Labour |  |
| Instrumental |  |
| Expressive |  |
| Universal |  |
| Geographical Mobility |  |
| Social Mobility |  |
| Industrialisation |  |
| Consensus |  |
| Materialist |  |
| Capitalism |  |
| Macro theory |  |
| Micro theory |  |
| Underclass |  |
| Canalisation |  |
| Manipulation |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**Exam questions:**

10 mark outline questions

Outline and explain two functions of the family [10]

Outline and explain two ways that feminists believe that the family oppresses and exploits women [10]

10 mark apply questions

*Item A: Capitalist society is based on a wealthy capitalist class exploiting the labour of a propertyless working class in order to extract a profit. However, to obtain their profit, capitalists must sell what has been produced and this requires people who are willing to buy it. For capitalism to continue, the proletariat must be persuaded to accept their exploitation. Capitalists also need to retain control of their wealth in order to maintain their privileged position.*

Applying material from Item A, analyse two functions that the family may perform for capitalism [10]

20 mark (using Item B)

**Example 1**

*Item B: Despite their disagreements, functionalist, Marxist, and feminist approaches to the family share certain similarities. They are all structural approaches: they see the family as a structure that performs certain functions- although they disagree about what these functions are and who benefits from them. Similarly, they all assume that by ‘the family’ we mean the conventional nuclear family. Other sociologists reject this structuralist approach. For example, the personal life perspective takes a bottom up view that focuses on people’s meanings and how they themselves what counts as ‘family’. [Webb]*

Applying material from Item B and your knowledge, evaluate the usefulness of structural approaches to our understanding of families and households [20]

**Example 2**

*Item B: Some sociologists claim that the small, home centred nuclear family is ideal for socialising children into the norms and values of society and provides a stable background for both children and their parents. Some politicians go further and argue that the increasing breakdown of such family units is at least partly responsible for such social ills as delinquency and other forms of anti-social behaviour, together with rising rates of depression. [Garrod revision book]*

**Applying material from Item B and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that the traditional nuclear family best serves the interests of its members and of society as a whole [20]**

**Example 3**

*Item B: Many functions that were once carried out by the family, such as the welfare of its members, have been taken over by other agencies such as the medical profession and social services. However, the family still performs some essential functions, such as socialising children and producing the next generation. [Garrod revision book]*

**Applying material from Item B and your own knowledge, evaluate the view that the state has taken over most of the functions of the family [20]**

**Example 4**

*Item B: Marxists believe that an important role of the family in capitalist society is to socialise members into accepting the ideas of the ruling class and adopting values such as obedience to authority. The role of women is also seen as important, as they raise the next generation of workers, but their domestic labour is unpaid. [Garrod revision book]*

**Applying material from Item B and your own knowledge, evaluate the Marxist view of the role of the family in capitalist society [20]**