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Нижегородский государственный лингвистический университет
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СЕМЬЯ

СЕМЕЙНОЕ ПРАВО

Учебно-методические материалы

для студентов V курса

переводческого факультета

отделения права РФУ

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Учебно-методические материалы по теме «Семья. Семейное право» предназначены для студентов V курса переводческого факультета, изучающих английский язык в качестве второго иностранного языка на отделении права РФУ. Их целью является дальнейшее развитие и совершенствование речевых навыков и умений у студентов старшей ступени обучения.

Их можно также использовать на занятиях со студентами IV курса фак-та английского языка при прохождении темы «Семья».

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TRADITIONAL WEDDINGS

In Britain people get married either in church or in *a registry office*. In the US people often get married in a house, a garden, a park, a hotel, or in a wedding chapel as well as in church. Most people, when they think of a wedding, think of people getting married in church and the many customs that go with this type of wedding, called *a white wedding*. Even people who are not religious often want to have a traditional white wedding in a church.

The main people at the wedding

There are special names for some of the people in the wedding ceremony. The woman who is getting married is called the *bride* and the man is called the *bridegroom* or *groom*. The man has a male friend with him called *the best man* and the bride has some female friends called *the bridesmaids*. It is traditional for the bride to wear a long white dress and a *white veil* and to carry flowers in a *bouquet*. She is also supposed to wear ‘**something old, something new, something borrowed and something blue**’ because this will bring her luck. The groom wears a suit or sometimes a tuxedo /in the US/ or morning suit /in Britain/. Everyone else wears their *best clothes* and the women often buy hats specially.

Before the ceremony

The bridegroom is not supposed to see the bride on the day of the wedding until they meet in church and this is considered to be bad luck. The bridegroom arrives at the church first and waits inside, near *the altar* with the best man. The families of the bride and bridegroom, and the wedding guests, sit in rows in the church.

Just before the wedding ceremony begins, the bride arrives at the church in a car with her father. The car is usually an expensive car, such as

a Rolls Royce or a limousine, hired for the occasion and *decorated with ribbons*.

The ceremony

It is the custom for the bride's father to '*give her away*' (=officially to give her to the bridegroom). The bride and her father walk slowly up *the aisle* (= central passage) of the church, with the bridesmaids. People sometimes talk about '*walking up the aisle*' when they mean 'getting married'. When the bride and bridegroom are together at the altar *the priest* or *minister* begins *the wedding service*. The words that are said during the wedding service are very well known to most people. During the service the bridegroom gives the bride *a wedding ring* and says 'With this ring I thee wed' ('With this ring I marry you'). Sometimes the bride also gives a ring to the bridegroom in turn: "*Will you have this man/woman to be your wedded husband/wife?*" The bride and bridegroom each say '*I will*'. At the end of the ceremony, the priest or minister says: '*I pronounce you man and wife*' which means that they are *officially married*. The bride and bridegroom then *sign the register* (= a special book which is the official record of their marriage).

After the ceremony

Outside the church, the friends of the bride and bridegroom *throw confetti* (= small pieces of coloured paper or rice) *over them*. *Photographs* are usually *taken of* the bride and bridegroom and their families and friends.

The reception

After the photographs everyone usually goes to a hotel for *the wedding reception*, which is *a special meal* (wedding breakfast) and *party*

to celebrate the wedding. During the meal bride and bridegroom *cut the wedding cake* and give it to their guests. At the end of the meal there are *speeches*, usually *made by the bride's father, the bridegroom and the best man*. It is traditional for the best man to make a speech in which he talks about funny and embarrassing things that happened to the bridegroom in the past.

Before *the reception* ends the bride and bridegroom usually *drive away* to another hotel to spend their wedding night before beginning their *honeymoon* (= a holiday taken by people who have just got married). The car the couple drive away in has usually been decorated by their friends. There is often a sign saying 'just married' and sometimes tin cans are tied to the back of the car. Before she leaves, the bride *throws her bouquet to her friends to catch*. According to custom, the woman who catches it will be the next one to get married.

QUESTIONS AND TASKS

Exercise 1. Render the italicized words and expressions into Russian.

Exercise 2. Guided summary. Make up a summary of the above text by answering these questions:

1. What is the usual place for Britons and Americans to get married?
2. What are the main people at the wedding?
3. What is supposed to bring the bride luck?
4. What is supposed to bring them bad luck?
5. Who is to arrive at the church first?
6. What is the wedding ceremony like?
7. What usually happens after the ceremony?

Exercise 3. Group discussion. Compare the traditional wedding in Britain and the US with the one in Russia.

MARRIED LIFE IN GREAT BRITAIN

Marriage

The number of marriages in England and Wales fell by 20 per cent between 1986 and 1997: down from 347,924 to 278,975. The largest fall in marriages has been among those in which both partners were marrying for the first time: 220,372 in 1986 compared with 160,680 in 1996.

The proportion of adults who are married will fall from 55 per cent to 45 per cent by 2021. The average age of marriage continues to rise. In 1996 it was 29,3 years for **bachelors** (27,2 for **spinsters**), against 26,3 years in 1986 (spinsters 24,1). The average age in 1996 for all **bridegrooms** was 33.6, **brides** – 31,1.

In 1998 four-fifths of dependent children in Great Britain lived in a family with two parents, compared with nine-tenths in 1972.

The proportion of never-married women who **were cohabiting** in Great Britain has increased from 9 per cent in 1981 to 27 per cent in 1996/7.

Divorce

The recent peak in divorces in England and Wales was in 1993, with 165,018. By 1995 the number had fallen to 155,499, then rising to 157,107 in 1996. Seventy per cent of those in 1996 were to couples where the marriage had been the first for both parties.

In Scotland the peak was in 1994, with 13,133 divorces, dropping to 12,222 in 1997.

Almost one in four children born in 1979 is estimated to have been affected by divorce before reaching the age of 16.

In the past, families tended to stay together. They felt it was their duty to do this and that marriage was for life. Divorce was not socially acceptable. It was a commonly held view that a bad marriage was better than no marriage at all.

In Britain, as in many industrialized societies, there has been a steady rise in the numbers of divorces. The Second World War disrupted a lot of marriages, due to enforced separation and hasty marriages which were later regretted. Immediately after the war there were a record number of divorces and the proportion of marriages involving a divorced partner grew from 2% in 1940 to 32% in 1985.

Legal changes this century have made it much easier to get a divorce. The most dramatic change resulted from the **1971 divorce law**. The law stated that there needed to be only one reason for a **divorce petition** – the “**irretrievable breakdown of marriage**”. This was a much wider category than the previous ones of cruelty, **insanity**, **desertion** or **adultery**.

The change in the law had an immediate effect. In 1972 there were over 119,000 divorces in England and Wales and the rate has continued to rise. The total number in 1990 was over 153,000, around 2% higher than in 1989. Proposed laws may make divorce even easier.

Couples can now afford the legal side of getting and surviving a divorce more easily than at any time in the past. However, for many families it is still an economic disaster as well as being emotionally difficult.

Another possible reason behind the rise in **the divorce rate** is the changing attitude to marriage itself. The traditional Christian approach to marriage has been against divorce. As the Church becomes less influential in the UK, the view of marriage as a union for life has weakened. The

result is that **the break-up of a marriage** is seen as less of a normal crisis and more as a matter of personal happiness.

Perhaps the people most affected by a divorce are the children. According to current forecasts, about 20 % of children in Britain will experience family breakdown by the age of 16. There has been growing concern for such children, who are usually between the ages of five and ten. Recent laws indicated that first consideration should be given to the welfare of the children when making financial arrangements after a divorce.

If marriage is going through a troubled time, the partners may ask for help from the voluntary **counsellors** of an organization which is called “**Relate**” (formerly the *Marriage Guidance Council*).

List two possible reasons for the divorce rate rising sharply since the Second World War.

Birth and Death Rates

An average of 1.73 children per woman is born. Mothers giving birth are now, on average, three years older than in the early 1970s. In 1998 the mean age was 28.9 years. Women are having fewer children in their twenties – by the age of 30, women have an average of 1,9 children, compared with only 1.3 children for women who were born in 1967.

The proportion of births outside marriage continues to rise, to 38 per cent in 1996 compared with 23 per cent in 1987 and 10 per cent in 1977.

The most popular names given to babies in 1997 were Jack and Chloe.

There were 629,746 deaths in the UK in 1997. Male **life expectancy** is 74,4 years, up 4,8 years in two decades. Female life expectancy is 79,7 years, an increase of 3,8 years.

The most common cause of death for women under 65 is breast cancer and for men coronary heart disease. **The death rate** is 10.7 per thousand population.

Discuss the main social changes in Britain in regard to marriage, divorce, birth and death rates.

The Family

Here are some words and phrases which describe potential problems in family life. What do they mean and what problems do you think they may cause? Read the text and find out.

Divorce working mothers latch key kids old people's homes

There are many different views on family life. Some people could not do without the support and love of their families. Others say it is the source of most of our problems and anxieties. Whatever the truth is, the family is definitely a powerful symbol. Turn on the television or open a magazine and you will see advertisements featuring happy, balanced families. Politicians often try to win votes by standing for 'family values': respect for parental authority, **stability** in marriage, **chastity** /'not taking part in wrong or unlawful sexual activity'/ and **care for the elderly**.

Sociologists divide families into two general types: the **nuclear family** and **the extended family**, which may include three or more generations living together. In industrialized countries, and increasingly in the large cities of developing countries, the nuclear family is regarded as normal. Most people think of it as consisting of two parents and two children. In fact, the number of **households** containing a nuclear family is shrinking year by year.

There are people who say that the family unit in Britain is in crisis and that traditional family life is a thing of the past. This is of great concern to those who think a healthy society is dependent upon a stable family life. They see many indications that the family is in decline, in such things as the acceptance of sex before marriage, the increased number of **one-parent families**, the current **high divorce rate** and what they see as a lack of discipline within the family. Some politicians blame social problems, such as drug taking and **juvenile crime**, on a **disintegrating** family life.

Concern that the family is in a state of crisis is not new in Britain. In the nineteenth century, many legislators and reformers were saying the same. It was also a concern between the two World Wars, and in the 1980s it became a continuous political issue.

There is no definition of a ‘normal’ family. Broadly speaking, the family is a group of people related by blood or law, living together or associating with one another for a common purpose. That purpose is usually **to provide shelter and food**, and **to bring up children**. The nature of the family keeps changing: there are a number of types of family that exist in a society at any one time.

**What do people consider to be ‘the normal family’ in your country?
Do you think there is an ideal family situation?**

Family Life In The Past

Many people think there was once a golden age in which the world was filled with happy families. The mother **ran the house**, and the father went out to work to bring back enough money for this ideal family to live its life. The family – mother, father and three or four healthy, happy children – would go out for an occasional treat. Roles were very clear for the parents and children. Discipline within the family unit was strong, and **moral**

standards were high. This image is the kind of family life people mean when they talk about ‘Victorian values’.

It is doubtful whether many families ever lived such a life, especially in Victorian times. Working hours were long for most families, and children were often poorly fed and badly clothed. The vision of a golden age is based perhaps on how we think perfect family life should be.

Some sociologists argue that the nature of the family is constantly changing and that there is no point in making comparisons with families of a generation ago. However, people continue to hope for a stable family life. Marriage has not gone out of fashion; although the number of divorces has increased, so has the number of divorced people who will marry again.

British Family Life In The 1990s

What is clear about Britain in the 1990s is that it is more socially acceptable to have **alternative life styles, relationships** and ways of bringing up children than it has ever been. It is also easier to remove oneself from an unhappy family situation. In most social groups, divorce is no longer seen as taboo. One-parent families are common. Many children are given more freedom when young; when they move away from home, they move earlier (usually at around 18), and go further. People experiment with relationships before **committing themselves to marriage** and there is greater acceptance of homosexual relationships. In Britain’s multi-cultural society there are many examples of different ways of living. Nowadays, their primary sexual characteristics – whether they are men or women – no longer seem to completely dictate what roles they should take in life.

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS:

1. Was there a 'golden age' of the family in your country?
2. What role do discipline and moral standards have in your country?
3. Do you have an equivalent of 'Victorian values'?
4. How does 'traditional' family life differ from British family life in the 1990s?
5. Is it the same in your country?

Working Mothers

Until relatively recently, most mothers in Britain did not take paid work outside the home. Sometimes women did voluntary work, especially those of the middle classes. However, most women's main (unpaid) labour was to run the home and look after their family. Whether they did this themselves or supervised other people doing it was a matter of class and money. By entering **the labour market**, women have now altered the face of family life. As the role of the woman in the family changed, so did the role of the man.

Equality At Work

Recent legal changes have given women new opportunities. In 1970, **the Equal Pay Act** attempted to stop discrimination against women in the field of employment. In 1975 **the Sex Discrimination Act** gave women the right to **maternity leave**.

In Britain today women take up 44 % of the workforce, and nearly half the mothers with children under five years old are in paid work. It is not common to find that the mother is the main **breadwinner**. The incentives for women to work or to return to work are increasing all the time, but there are still problems for women who want or have to work.

Although there is a greater acceptance of men taking more of an interest in **child care** and **domestic duties**, studies show that men's and women's roles have not changed as much as could be expected. In most families working women are still mothers, housekeepers and **income providers**. There is a stigma attached to the phenomenon of '**latch key kids**'. Society expects someone – usually the mother – to be there. Because of the difficulties of combining the mother role with the demands of a career, women's work also tends to be low-paid and irregular. It is illegal for an employer to discriminate against women with respect to compensation, terms and privileges of employment, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions.

Child Care

Britain is old-fashioned as regards maternity leave. If they do get maternity leave, women are often worried that, if they do not return to work quickly, they will lose their job and it is often very difficult for them to find another. **Paternity leave** – time off for the father – is rare, although it is becoming common in other European countries.

A big problem for working mothers in the UK is the low standard of child-care facilities for preschool children. Parents may employ a nanny to come to their home or to live with them. This is very expensive and only realistic for a small percentage of families. An alternative is **child-care centres** run by the local council, where a **child-minder** looks after children during the day in their own home. It is not always easy to get a place in one of these centres.

Once the child has reached school age, most women in Britain **work part time, to fit in with school hours**. However, this is not always possible for women who want a career. Recently there has been increasing

pressure on the Government to provide more money for state **day nurseries**, and on employers to establish **creches** in the workplace.

QUESTIONS AND TASKS:

1. Which of the following is most usual for men/women in Britain?
What about in your country?
paid work voluntary work unpaid labour part time work
2. Are men and women entitled to maternity leave or paternity leave in Britain? What are the arguments for the latter?
3. Children start school at 4 or 5 in Britain. What child-care facilities exist for preschool children in your country?
4. What are the Equal Pay Act and the Sex Discrimination Act?
5. Do similar acts exist in your country?
6. Write a paragraph about the problems facing working mothers in Britain.

Cohabitation and Marriage

Since the Second World War, there has been an increased acceptance of sex before marriage in Britain. Successive post-war generations are more likely to have had sex before marriage and are more likely to have sex with partners other than the one they eventually marry.

It is now acceptable in most social circles for people to live together before they are married – if they intend to get married at all. The numbers of couples cohabiting increased during the 1980s, becoming common as a living arrangement before marriage. Many people think that this is a useful way of ‘testing out’ a relationship before the commitment of marriage. In 1979 only 8 % of single women between the ages of 19 and 49 were cohabiting; in 1988 this figure had gone up to 20 %. There is no word in

English to describe the relationship of a cohabiting couple. People sometimes describe themselves as ‘partners’ or say that they have a live-in boyfriend or girlfriend.

As the number of couples living together has increased, so the marriage rate has decreased. Since the early 1970s, the number of people getting married has fallen steeply, and the proportion of women who are married fell for all age groups in the 1980s. In 1980, 64 % of all women aged 15 – 44 were married. Nine years later this figure had fallen to 55 %. Of the women who did get married in 1987, more than half had lived with their husbands before marriage.

On average, those who do choose to get married tend to marry later: the ages at which men and women marry for the first time have risen continuously in recent years. In 1990, it was 27 for men and 25 for women.

In 1990, 28% of children born in England and Wales were born outside marriage. In 1980, the figure was 11.8 %. One of the reasons for this change is that couples no longer feel compelled to get married if they have a child. By the end of the 1980s, the majority of births outside marriage were to cohabiting couples, not to single people.

Society used to be very cruel towards the teenage mother. Now families are more sympathetic, and hasty marriages because of an unplanned pregnancy are less common. There has also been a dramatic fall in the number of babies available for **adoption**, indicating that more babies are kept by the parent. The young mother is more likely to keep her child than 20 years ago, but the single parent still faces great economic problems.

One-Parent Families

One in seven families in Britain are single-parent families. There are several different types of one-parent family. Parents can be on their own because of the death of a partner, divorce, the break-down of live-in relationships, or births outside marriage to single people.

Fathers face particular problems as single parents. British society does not expect men to have their working life disrupted by the need to care for a sick child, for example. Men may have to fight for the right to look after their children – the mother is often presumed to have more rights to them.

In the majority of one-parent families it is the mother who is the single parent. Women are clearly at a disadvantage in a society where a state assumes a man will be the main breadwinner, and there are few opportunities for lone mothers to earn a good income while continuing to look after their children. A lone parent with a well-paid job may be able to pay for a nanny, but this is rare. Around 70 % of lone parents rely on **state benefits** as their main source of **income**. Although single-parent families are now accepted by society, the majority view is that two parents are almost essential for the stable upbringing of a child, as children need role models of both sexes.

QUESTIONS AND TASKS:

1. In this chapter the writer mentions:

- a) socially acceptable alternative life-styles;
- b) socially acceptable alternative relationships;
- c) socially acceptable ways of bringing up children.

2. What might these alternatives to the nuclear family be?

3. How socially acceptable are they in your country?

4. What is the major problem facing one-parent families?

Child Discipline

It is generally thought that in the 1960s and the start of what is called the ‘permissive society’, parents were much stricter with children. Nowadays people have a different attitude to parenting. One view is that children should be talked to and listened to, and they should be more involved in family decisions. In families like this, parents explain house rules instead of imposing them on the child. Hitting children is now frowned upon in most families. But sometimes ... parents **resort to law** to make their children obey.

Read the Text “SCRUFF JUSTICE” for an example of the parent’s applying to court.

I. Read the first three paragraphs of the text to find out why the teenager Simon Richards was arrested.

Police are called in as teenager refuses to tidy his bedroom

The next time teenager Simon Richards is told to tidy his room he won’t argue ... or he might get arrested.

This is what happened when the 18-year-old ignored his mother’s requests for him to clear up his mess. First, he locked himself in the garden shed as a protest. Then, after he refused to **budge**, Mrs. Richards summoned two police officers.

When Simon popped his head out of the shed an hour later he felt a firm hand on his shoulder. The following day he admitted **disorderly behaviour** in the local magistrate’s court and was **bound over** for three months. The result would win applause in homes throughout the country. It is a tale of the **gulf** between parents who want a tidy bedroom and a teenage rebel who needs his own space.

Order

The small room on the back of Richards' large semi-detached house has always been a source of disagreement between Simon and his mother.

Mrs. Richards, a mother of two boys and four girls, and her husband Desmond, are very strict. Simon must be home at 10.30 **sharp** every night. The children – four still live at home – are expected to help out with **household chores**. Being late for the family evening meal is unforgivable. But above all, everything should be in its place.

Much of it goes back to when Mrs. Richards was a girl. 'I was always taught to look after my own property. Simon can have his room as he wants it to a certain extent, but if it gets too untidy, then I get annoyed.'

Once a week, she grabs a bin bag and **puts on a brave face** before she enters Simon's room.

Then, among scattered clothes and foot-high piles of newspapers, she sometimes has to empty eight overflowing ashtrays and carry several mugs back to their place on the rack. 'It usually takes me quite a while **to get it straight**,' she complained.

But Simon said: 'I thought it was my own space, and that I could keep it as I wanted. Generally, I think it is tidy, but I know my idea of that is different from my mum's idea. I've always felt very comfortable in it so I thought it didn't matter.' But last week it did matter.

Mrs. Richards said: 'I told him to tidy his room and when he refused I said he might as well sleep in the shed. So he said he would.'

Sorry

Worn down by the battle between them, Carol decided there was only one thing to do – call the police. 'I wanted to give him a sharp shock to make him see my point of view. I didn't want them to arrest him, but they decided they had no choice. I do not regret doing it, although I am sorry for

hurting him because I love him very much. Most of the time you could not wish for a better son.’

But has the treatment worked?

Since the incident, Simon has redecorated his room and managed to keep it tidier. He said: ‘Going to court was not nice but I know Mum did it to make a point. I’ll be keeping the room tidy from now on – at least, as tidy as I know how.’

II. Now read the whole text fairly quickly to find out more about the story.

III. Discuss these questions with another student.

1. Do you think Simon’s mother did the right thing? Why?/Why not?
2. How do you think Simon felt when he was arrested?
3. Do you think he will keep his room tidy in future?

IV. Nine words or phrases that you may not know appear in bold type in the text. Study them carefully and think about what they could mean in the context. Below are nine explanations but they are not in the same order. Match each explanation to the correct word or phrase.

1. exactly (of time)
2. ordered by law to cause no more trouble
3. tries not to look as upset as she feels
4. move from a particular place
5. a serious lack of understanding
6. made tired and weak
7. small regular jobs around the house
8. make it tidy
9. causing trouble in public

V. Read the whole text carefully to answer the following questions:

1. *Simon was in the garden shed because:*

- A his mother had sent him there as a punishment.
- B he didn't want to be arrested by the police.
- C he wanted to show that he was angry with his mother.
- D he had locked the door by accident and couldn't get out.

2. *He was arrested*

- A when the police broke into the shed.
- B as soon as he looked out of the shed.
- C after he tried to fight with the police.
- D the next day when he admitted that he had behaved badly.

3. *How does the writer think that other parents would feel about the incident?*

- A They would be shocked by what Mrs. Richards did.
- B They would worry about the effect on Simon.
- C They would approve of Mrs. Richards' action.
- D They would criticise the police for arresting Simon.

4. *Mrs. Richards is very concerned about tidiness because:*

- A of the way she was brought up.
- B it's important in the house with six children.
- C otherwise she can never find anything.
- D she wants to impress the neighbours.

5. *How does Simon feel about being arrested?*

- A. He's ashamed of himself.
- B. He's very upset about appearing in court.
- C. He thinks it was an exciting experience.
- D. He doesn't blame his mother.

Family Size And Old Age

Family sizes fell in the 1970s and 1980s. This is partly because people have fewer children: in Britain most people have just two. But the main factor is the increase in the number of one-person households. A high proportion of men and women living alone have never married – there is no longer great pressure on people to do so. In the past a woman, especially, would not leave the family home until she was getting married and starting her own family. Now many children leave home at around 18. It is not unusual for young people to live alone or with friends.

There is also an increasing number of old people living alone. Critics say too many old people are neglected by their families. The homes of the nuclear family are often not big enough to take in any extra members. Old people may not want to move if their children now live in another town.

Answer the questions:

1. Why has the average size of a household in Britain dropped?
2. How does family life in Britain differ from your country?
3. Have the general attitudes to family life changed in your country?
4. If they have, do you think these changes are good?

Before you read the text “STATE OF THE UNION” do the following assignments:

Prediction. 1. **Discuss in pairs. What changes do you think there might have been in the following aspects of marriage during the last 50 years?**

- the age when people get married;
- the age when women have their first baby;

- whether mothers go out to work;
- who does the housework;
- who pays the bills.

2. The text is a magazine article about five women who married in different decades. Read the five sections quickly to see how far their experiences correspond with your ideas. Discuss any interesting points with a partner.

3. For questions 1-18 answer by choosing from the list of women (A-E) on the right below. Some of the choices may be required more than once.

Note: When more than one answer is required, these may be given in any order.

According to the article, which woman ...

- thinks it's important to avoid arguments? 1
- feels her marriage has improved with time? 2 3
- received a formal proposal of marriage from her fiancée? 4 .. 5 .. A Ivy Gould
- is more extrovert than her husband? 6 B Sally Graham
- had a restricted social life at the start of married life? 7 ...
- let her parents influence arrangements for the wedding? 8 9 . C Lady Vincent
- began married life with a large financial commitment? 10 D Amanda Russell
- emphasizes that she saw marriage as a lifetime commitment? 11
- had a wedding which departed from tradition in some way? 12 13
- has a husband who no longer does much housework? 14 ...
- disapproves of lavish weddings? 15 ... E Stephanie Walter
- was able to economize on wedding expenses? 16
- says she had no illusions about marriage from the start? 17
- had arguments with her husband about housework? 18

DISCUSSION POINTS: 4. Discuss the following statements with another student. Decide if you agree or not and say why.

1. It's a good idea for newly-married couples to live with their in-laws until they have saved enough money for a home of their own.
2. A husband should be a breadwinner and his career should come first.
3. A wife should be able to keep her own name if she wants.
4. It's out of date to promise to obey her husband.
5. Marriage partners should have separate bank accounts.
6. A couple's career interests should determine when they have children.

STATE OF THE UNION

A Ivy GOULD (The 40s)

Ivy married John Gould in 1947, when she was 23 and he was 26. He is now 73, and a retired engineer and she is 70, a former secretary. They have a daughter, Jayne, 41.

We lived in the same road, so we knew each other very well. Then when John came out of the airforce we met at a dance. John **proposed** at the same ballroom a few months later. He took me out on to the balcony and showed me a diamond ring. It was quite romantic.

I didn't want a big wedding, but my parents did, and in those days you did what they wanted. I'd done a tailoring apprenticeship, so I made my gown, all the bridesmaids' dresses and my going-away outfit. My parents had a big house, so we moved in with them and my grandmother. We had our own room but we shared the kitchen with Mum. It wasn't difficult. I stopped work when I got married; you did then. The man was supposed to

be the breadwinner and it was his job that mattered. Because it was such a large house, I had plenty to do. John didn't do any housework, but he's changed since he retired.

When you first get married you think it's going to be brilliant. I'm not sure it lived up to all my expectations at first but it has since. I do think young couples who **split up** in the early years must regret it later. John and I have given each other a lot of security.

B Sally GRAHAM (The 50s)

Sally married Gordon Graham on February 19, 1955, when she was 26 and he was 30. He is a retired insurance worker, 71, and she is 67, a former secretary. They have two children and two grandchildren.

We helped out with the cost of the wedding. We didn't have grand weddings then, and it horrifies me how much people spend today. Then marriage was a step you took for better, for worse, for ever. I didn't know anyone who was divorced. We spent time getting to know each other and becoming friends before we married.

I was always busy. Babies didn't have disposable nappies, so I had washing every day. There were no women's rights, but we didn't moan or groan – we just got on with it. Of course I gave up work; I didn't know anybody who worked when their children were small. My husband paid the bills – he was very much in charge – and gave me money each week to cover food and any make-up or stockings I wanted. We had friends in to play cards but we only went out on birthdays and anniversaries because there wasn't the money.

I think the 1950s were the best years to get married. It was before the explosion of everybody wanting to do their own thing. You can't do that without somebody suffering. We had to fit in and show consideration. And

I think we did, by and large. Certainly in my circle, our homes and families were everything.

C Lady VINCENT (The 70s)

Christine married Sir William Vincent in 1976, when she was 24 and he was 25. He is now 44 and an investment consultant and Christine, 43, is a novelist. They have three sons, Eddie, 17, Charlie, 16, and John, 14.

The house we wanted to buy was way beyond our means, so we decided that when we were married we would **put off having children** for three years. In the event I got pregnant a bit sooner than we'd planned but I was absolutely thrilled. I meant to go back to work after Eddie was born, but I couldn't face it.

I had three children in three years, and luckily with each baby William seemed **to get promotion**. But I was careful not **to become too obsessed with** the babies. You have to take care your husband isn't an accessory instead of a companion. We both hate rows. I could row with a stranger but never with the family; you say such hurtful things that can't be unsaid. William is so diplomatic; he's just **ace at quietly getting his own way** and I don't even realize until a week later. The only thing we really disagree about is driving. I'm more aggressive than William, who is so well-mannered he gives way too often. We **balance each other pretty well**. I'm **ebullient**, William's **reticent**; he's a pessimist, I'm a dreamer.

D A RUSSELL (The 80s)

Amanda Russell, a part-time designer, married Chris Gower, a market researcher, in 1982, when they were both 24. Now 37, they have two children, Imogen, 8, and Oscar, 5.

My parents wanted us to have a big party when we got married and I'm very glad we did. It was important to me, making the commitment, with all our friends and family there. I kept my own name. I always wanted

to get married and have children, but I didn't really see myself as an appendage. I don't want to be just Mrs. Something. But the children have Chris's name; it just seemed to be the way to do it.

I wasn't particularly interested in housework, but fortunately Chris didn't expect **an instant housewife**. We shared most of the chores, though I do most of them now because I'm the one at home. I worked until Imogen was 18 months old, then **gave up** completely when I was expecting Oscar. We decided bringing up children was an important job in itself.

I don't suppose anybody else would read our marriage as perfect. But after 13 we're still in love and we have a lot of mutual respect. I don't feel smug. I expected marriage to be quite hard work and it has been. It's almost like a job.

E Stephanie WALTER (The 90s)

Stephanie married Richard Walter in 1994, when she was 22 and he was 27. He is an insurance broker and she is a recruitment consultant.

I was the one who proposed to Richard, but when I said 'Let's get married', he told me to wait until I was asked. Six weeks later he proposed on one knee.

We dropped the promise in the marriage vows that I had to obey Richard; it's only a word but it's not a modern word and it's just not us. However, it never crossed my mind not to change my name; if you're not prepared to do that, why bother to get married?

We opened **a joint account** and now we each pay in half our wages, while the other half's our own, to do with as we wish. Housework was a novelty to start with, so I did everything – and Richard let me. It was my own fault but it really annoyed me in the end. We had a few **barneys** and now he does his share of most things.

They say it's the first year of marriage that is the hardest and I'd go along with that; it's difficult just learning to live together. But we argue a great deal less now; we've both mellowed. Eventually we'd like to have children, but not yet. Richard said he wanted to have them by the time he was 30, but now he's upped that to 35. It will depend on how my career is going. That's fairly important to me.

THE AMERICAN FAMILY

Before you read

1. Who lives in a typical American household?
2. What changes have occurred in the American family since the 1950s?
3. How have the traditional American values affected family relationships?
4. What are "family values"?

Family Structures

What is the typical American family like? If Americans are asked to name the members of their families, family structure becomes clear. Married American adults will name their husband or wife and their children, if they have any, as their "immediate family". If they mention their father, mother, sisters or brothers, they will define them as separate units, usually living in separate households. Aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents are considered "extended family".

The structure of the American family has undergone enormous changes since the 1950s. Traditionally, the American family has been a

nuclear family, consisting of a husband, wife and their children, living in a house or apartment. Grandparents rarely live in the same home with their married sons and daughters, and uncles and aunts almost never do.

In the 1950s, 70 per cent of American households were the “classic” American family – a husband, wife and two children. The father was the “breadwinner” (the one to earn the money to support the family), the mother was a “homemaker” (the one who took care of the children and did not work outside the home), and they had two children under the age of 18. If you say the word ‘family’ to Americans, this is probably the picture that comes to their minds.

Yet, in reality, in the 1990s, only 8 percent of American households consist of a working father, a stay-at-home mother, and two children under 18. An additional 18 percent of households consist of two parents who are both working and one or more children under the age of 18 living at home. That means that a total of only 26 percent of households in the United States consist of two parents and their children. The remaining households in the United States consist of the following: 30 percent are married couples without children; 8 percent are single parents and their children; 11 percent are unmarried couples and others living together. And, perhaps most startling, in 25 percent of the households, there is someone living alone.

What has happened to the traditional American family, and why? Some of the explanation is **demographic**. In the 1950s, men who had fought in World War II had returned home, married, and were raising their families. There was a substantial increase (or ‘boom’) in the birth rate, producing the ‘baby boomers’. A second demographic factor is that today young people are marrying and having children later in life. Some couples now choose not to have children at all. A third factor is that people are

living longer after their children are grown, and they often end up alone. And, of course, there is a fourth factor – the high rate of divorce. But numbers alone cannot account for the dramatic changes in the family. Understanding the values at work in the family will provide some important insights.

The Emphasis On Individual Freedom

Americans view the family as a group whose primary purpose is to advance the happiness in individual members. The result is that the needs of each individual take priority in the life of the family. In contrast to that of many other cultures, the primary responsibility of the American family member is not to advance the family as a group, either socially or economically, nor is it to bring honor to the family name. This is partly because the United States is not an aristocratic society.

Family name and honor are less important than in aristocratic societies, since equality of opportunity regardless of birth is considered a basic American value. Moreover, there is less emphasis on the family as an economic unit because the American family is rarely self-supporting. Relatively few families maintain self-supporting family farms or businesses for more than one generation. A farmer's son, for example, is very likely to go on to college, leave the family farm, and take an entirely different job in a different location.

The American desire for freedom from outside control clearly extends to the family. Americans do not like to have controls placed on them by other family members. They want to make independent decisions and not be told what to do by grandparents or uncles or aunts. For example, both American men and women expect to decide what job is best for them as

individuals. Indeed, young Americans are encouraged by their families to make such independent career decisions.

What would be best for the family is not considered to be as important as what would be best for the individual.

Marriage And Divorce

Marriages are not “arranged” in the United States. Young people are expected to find a husband or wife on their own; their parents do not usually help them. In fact, parents are frequently not told of marriage plans until the couple has decided to marry. This means that parents have little control, and generally, not much influence, over whom their children marry. Americans believe that young people should fall in love and then decide to marry someone they can live happily with, again evidence of the importance of an individual’s happiness. Of course, in reality this does not always happen, but it remains the ideal, and it shapes the views of **courtship** and marriage among young Americans. Over the years, the value placed on marriage itself is determined largely by how happy the husband and wife make each other. Happiness is based primarily on companionship. The majority of American women value companionship as the most important part of marriage. Other values, such as having economic support and the opportunity to have children, although important, are seen by many as less important.

If the couple is not happy, the individuals may choose to get a divorce. A divorce is relatively easy to obtain in most parts of the United States. Most states have “no-fault” divorce. To obtain a “no-fault” divorce, a couple states that they can no longer live happily together, that they have “irreconcilable differences”, and that it is neither partner’s fault.

The divorce rate rose rapidly in the United States after the 1950s, but it has leveled off by the 1990s. Approximately one out of every two marriages now ends in divorce. Often children are involved. The great majority of adult Americans believe that unhappy couples should not stay married just because they have children at home, a significant change in attitude since the 1950s. Most people do not believe in sacrificing individual happiness for the sake of the children. They say that children actually may be better off living with one parent than with two who are constantly arguing. Divorce is now so common that it is no longer socially unacceptable, and children are not embarrassed to say that their parents are divorced. However, sociologists are still studying the long-term psychological consequence of divorce.

CATCHING UP

Divorces per 100 marriages 25 years ago and at last report

	1970	Latest
UNITED STATES	42.3	54.8
SWEDEN	23.4	44.1
DENMARK	25.1	44.0
ENGLAND, WALES	16.2	41.7
CANADA	18.6	38.3
FRANCE	12.0	31.5
HUNGARY	25.0	31.0
NETHERLANDS	11.0	28.1
GREECE	5.0	12.0
ITALY	5.0	8.0

/USN & WR Basic Data – The Population Council, June 1995/

Four Stages Of Marriage Relationships

The idea of equality also affects the relationships between husbands and wives. Women have witnessed steady progress toward equal status for themselves in the family and in society at large. According to Letha and John Scanzoni, two American sociologists, the institution of marriage in the United States has experienced four stages of development. In each new stage, wives have increased the degree of equality with their husbands and have gained more power within the family.

Stage I: Wife as Servant to Husband

During the 19th century, American wives were expected to be completely obedient to their husbands. As late as 1850, wife beating was legal in almost all the states of the United States. Although both husbands and wives had family duties, the wife had no power in family matters other than that which her husband allowed her. Her possessions and any of her earnings belonged to her husband. During the 19th century, women were not allowed to vote, a restriction that in part reflected women's status as servant to the family.

Stage II: Husband-Head, Wife-Helper

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, opportunities for women to work outside the household increased. More wives were now able to support themselves, if necessary, and therefore were less likely to accept the traditional idea that wives were servants who must obey their husbands. Even though the great majority of wives chose not to work outside the home, the fact that they might do so increased their power in the marriage. The husband could no longer make family decisions alone and demand that the wife follow them. The wife was freer to agree with her husband and to insist that her views be taken into account in family decisions.

Even though the wife's power increased, the husband remained the head of the family. The wife became his full-time helper by taking care of his house and raising his children. She might strongly argue with him and sometimes convince him, but his decision on family matters was usually final.

This increase in equality of women in marriages reflected increased status for women in the society at large and led to women's gaining the right to vote in the early 20th century.

The husband-head, wife-helper marriage is still found in the United States. Economic conditions in the 20th century, however, have carried most marriages into different stages.

Stage III: Husband-Senior Partner, Wife-Junior Partner

During the 20th century, more and more wives have taken jobs outside the home. In 1940, for example, only 14 percent of married women in the United States held jobs outside the home. In the 1990s, more than 60 percent do. When married women take this step, according to Scanzoni, their power relative to that of their husbands increases still further: the wife's income becomes important in maintaining the family's standard of living. Her power to affect the outcome of family decisions is greater than when her duties were entirely in the home.

Although she has become a partner, however, the wife is still not an equal partner with her husband, since his job or career still provides more of the family income. He is, therefore, the senior partner and she is the junior partner of the family enterprise. Even though she has a job, it has a lower priority than her husband's. If, for example, the husband is asked to move to advance his career, she will give up her job and seek another in a new location.

In the United States today, many marriages are probably the senior-partner/junior-partner type, since the majority of women have jobs outside the home. The main reason seems to be that it has become increasingly difficult for families to maintain their standard of living on just one income. It is also due to the desire of American women for greater economic opportunity.

Stage IV: Husband-Wife Equal Partners

Since the late 1960s, a growing number of women have expressed a strong dissatisfaction with any marriage arrangement where the husband and his career are the primary considerations in the marriage. By the end of the 1970s, for example, considerably less than half of the women in the United States (38 percent) still believed that they should put their husbands and children ahead of their own careers. In the 1990s, most American women believe that they should be equal partners in their marriages and that their husbands should have equal responsibility for child care and household chores.

In an equal partnership marriage, the wife pursues a full-time job or career that has equal importance to her husband's. The long-standing division of labor between husband and wife comes to an end. The husband is no longer the main provider of family income, and the wife no longer has the main responsibilities for household duties and raising children. Husband and wife share all these duties equally. Power over family decisions is also shared equally.

The reality of life in the United States is that although most American women now have an equal say in the decisions affecting the family, they generally earn less than men for the same work. Also, most women are still spending more time taking care of the children, cooking, and cleaning house than their husbands are. Many women are resentful because they feel

like they have two full-time jobs – the one at work and the one at home. In the 1980s, women were told they could ‘have it all’ – fast-track career, husband, children, and a clean house. Now, some women are finding that lifestyle exhausting and unrewarding. Some young women are now choosing to stay at home until their children start school, but many others who would like to cannot afford to do so.

Juggling two careers and family responsibilities can be as difficult for men as it is for women, especially if there is truly an equal division of duties. American fathers are often seen dropping the kids off at the baby sitter’s or taking a sick child to the doctor. Some businesses are recognizing the need to accommodate families where both parents work. They may open a day-care centre in the office building, offer fathers ‘paternity leave’ to stay home with their new babies, or have flexible working hours. Unfortunately, these benefits are still the exception. While young couples strive to achieve equality in their careers, their marriages, and their parenting, society at large still lacks many of the structures that are needed to support them.

The Role Of The Family In Society

The American ideal of equality has affected not only marriage but all forms of relationships between men and women. Americans gain a number of benefits by placing so much importance on achieving individual freedom and equality within the context of the family. The needs and desires of each member are given a great deal of attention and importance. However, a price is paid for these benefits. American families are less stable and lasting than those of most cultures. The high rate of divorce in American families is perhaps the most important indicator of this instability.

The American attitude toward the family contains many contradictions. For example, Americans will tolerate a good deal of instability in their families, including divorce, in order to protect such values as freedom and equality. On the other hand, they are strongly attached to the idea of the family as the best of all lifestyles. In fact, the great majority of persons who get divorces find a new partner and remarry. Studies show consistently that more than 90 percent of Americans believe that family life is an important value.

What is family life? We have seen that only 26 percent of the households are the “typical” American family – a father, mother and children. Many of these are really “step families”, or “**blended** families”. Since most divorced people remarry, many children are living with a stepmother or stepfather. In a “blended” family, the parents may each have children from a previous marriage, and then have one or more children together. Such families often result in very complicated and often stressful relationships. A child may have four sets of grandparents instead of two, for example. Blending families is not easy, and, sadly, many second marriages fail.

In addition to traditional families and blended families, there are a number of single parents, both mothers and fathers (more mothers), raising their children alone. Many of the single mothers are divorced, but some have never married. Indeed, by the mid 1990s, a startling one-third of all new babies were born to single mothers. Sometimes single parents and their children live with the grandparents for economic and emotional support. There are all sorts of arrangements. In recent years, some gay and lesbian couples have created family units, sometimes adopting children, and some have sought to have single-sex marriages recognized by law. The definition of “family” has become much broader in the 90s. The majority of

Americans would now define it as “people who live together and love each other.”

Sociologists and psychologists tell us that the family is the best place for children to learn moral values and a sense of responsibility. Beginning in the early 1990s, experts began to voice concern over what was happening to many children in America. Today, the state of the American family is frequently discussed, not only by experts but by the press, elected officials, and the general public. The majority of Americans believe that the institution of the family and “family values” are both in deep trouble, and they are asking the schools to provide more moral education than in the past. But if you ask Americans how their own families are, most will tell you they are generally happy with their family life.

The Role Of The Child

The American emphasis on the individual, rather than the group, affects children in a contradictory way. On the one hand, it may cause them to get more attention and even have more power than they should. On the other hand, because most children have mothers who are working outside the home, they may not get enough attention from either parent. Worse yet, parents who feel guilty for not having enough time with their children may give them more material things to compensate for the lack of attention. Studies show that both parents are now spending less time with their children, due to work habits and a busy lifestyle.

In general, American families tend to place more emphasis on the needs and desires of the child and less on the child’s social and family responsibilities. In the years since World War II, so much stress has been placed on the psychological needs of children that the number of experts in this field has increased enormously. Child psychologists, counselors, and

social workers are employed to help children with problems at school or in the family. Many books on how to raise children have become best sellers. Sometimes these books offer conflicting advice, but almost all of them share the American emphasis on the development of the individual as their primary goal.

Some Americans believe that the emphasis on the psychological needs of the individual child have been carried too far by parents and experts alike. Dr. Benjamin Spock, the most famous of the child-rearing experts, finally concluded that “what is making the parent’s job most difficult is today’s child-centered viewpoint.” Many conscientious parents, said Spock, tend to “keep their eyes exclusively focused on their child, thinking about what he needs from them and from the community, instead of thinking about what the world, the neighborhood, the family will be needing from the child and then making sure that he will grow up to meet such obligations.” Although Americans may not agree on how best to nurture and discipline their children, they still hold the basic belief that the major purpose of the family is the development and welfare of each of its members as individuals.

The Relationship Of Parent And Child

The relationship of parent and child is created by legitimate birth or by adoption. A birth is considered legitimate when a child is conceived or born after the marriage of its parents and in certain states when the parents marry after the birth of the child.

The duty of parents to give their children love, affection and kind treatment has been established by social usage and public opinion.

Both parents are entitled to the custody of their children unless there is a disruption of the family. The court will then award custody to one with

reasonable visitation to the other. when deprived of custody or visitation, relief is obtained by means of a writ of habeas corpus.

The obligation to support the children rests primarily upon the father. If the father is incapacitated, dead or has deserted, this duty devolves upon the mother.

There is a trend now developing to bring the parents into court to answer for the delinquent acts of their children. In the states in which parents are liable for the willful and malicious acts of their children, damages may be assessed against the parents from \$ 250 to \$ 500.

Equality In The Family

Along with the American emphasis on the individual freedom, the belief in equality has had a strong effect on the family. Alexis de Tocqueville saw the connection clearly in the 1830s. He said that in aristocratic societies inequality extends into the family, particularly to the father's relationship to his children. The father is accepted as ruler and master; the children's relations with him are very formal, and love for him is always combined with fear. In the United States, however, the democratic idea of equality destroys much of the father's status as ruler of the family and lessens the emotional distance between father and children. There is less formal respect for, and fear of, the father. But there is more affection expressed toward him. "The master and constituted (legal) ruler have vanished," said de Tocqueville; "the father remains".

What de Tocqueville said of American fathers and children almost two centuries ago applies to relations between parents and children in the United States today. There is much more social equality between parents and children than in most aristocratic societies or societies ruled by centuries of tradition. This can be witnessed in arguments between parents

and children, and in the considerable independence granted to teenagers. In fact, some Americans are worried that there is too much democracy in the home. Since the early 1960s there has been a significant decline in parental authority and children's respect for their parents. This is particularly true of teenagers. Some parents seem to have little or no control over the behaviour of their teenage children, particularly after they turn 16 and get their drivers' licenses.

On the other hand, Americans give their young people a lot of freedom because they want to teach their children to be independent and self-reliant. American children are expected "to leave the nest" at about 18, after they graduate from high school. At that time they are expected to go on to college or to get a job and support themselves. By their mid-20s, if children are still living with their parents, people will suspect that something is "wrong". Children are given a lot of freedom and equality in the family so that they will grow up to be independent, self-reliant adults. Today, however, many young people are unable to find jobs that support the lifestyle they have grown up with, and they choose to move back in with their parents for a time. These young people are sometimes called "boomerang kids", because they have left the nest once but are now back again.

Women's Rights

Women in the United States have equal legal rights with men as guaranteed them by the United States and the state Constitutions.

The 14th Amendment of the US Constitution states: "All persons born or naturalized in the US and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the US and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the US nor shall

any state deprive any person of life, liberty or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws”.

The 19th Amendment of the US Constitution states: “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the US or by any state on account of sex”.

Certain states require a married woman to declare herself as a “feme sole” independent of her marital status to enable her to carry on a business on her own.

Under common law, a surviving husband, in the event of the death of his wife is entitled to an interest in the property and the land she owned. Thus her right to sell or convey her property requires that her husband join an agreement? To any sale.

She has the right to bear children and the refusal on the part of her husband to have children may be the basis for a claim of abandonment by him of his marital obligations. She has the right to support in accordance with the financial capacity of her husband and his failure to do so may also subject him to court action.

Family Values

In Values and Public Policy, Daniel Yankelovich reports on surveys done on family values. There are 11 points that a majority of Americans agree are family values. Yankelovich classifies six of them as “clearly traditional”:

- respecting one’s parents;
- being responsible for one’s actions;
- having faith in God;
- respecting authority;
- married to the same person for life;

- leaving the world in better shape.

The other five are “a blend of traditional and newer, more expressive values”:

- giving emotional support to other members of the family;
- respecting people for themselves;
- developing greater skill in communicating one’s feelings;
- respecting one’s children;
- living up to one’s potential as an individual.

The ideal of the American family is group cooperation to help achieve the fulfillment of each individual member, and shared affection to renew each member’s emotional strength. Families can be viewed as similar to churches in this regard. Both are seen by Americans as places where the human spirit can find refuge from the highly competitive world outside and renewed resources to continue the effort. Although in many cases churches and families do not succeed in the task of spiritual renewal, this remains the ideal of church and family in America.

NEW WORDS

Demographic – ‘statistics /figures/ and other information about the population of an area and the changes over time /includes information on age, income, marriages, divorces, and so on/

Priority – ‘having the position of most importance; the matter that has first place and therefore must be considered first.

Courtship – the time two people spend getting to know each other and deciding if they want to marry.

Irreconcilable differences – ‘differences people cannot agree about; having such different opinions that people cannot solve their problems.

Contradictory – ‘involving evidence or facts that seem to contradict each other /seem to speak against each other/’; two facts that seem opposite yet both are true.

Compensate – ‘to make up for; to provide some payment as a loss’.

Counselor – ‘a person who has studied psychology and is trained to help people with their personal problems’.

Conscientious – ‘trying hard to do the right thing’.

Nurture ‘to care for and feed; to provide love, guidance, education for children so that they can be healthy; to take care of a person’s physical or emotional needs’.

Vanish – ‘to disappear completely’.

Resentful – ‘having feelings of anger; feeling that one is not being treated fairly’.

Exhausting – ‘extremely or completely tiring; making a person so tired that she or he cannot function normally’.

Juggling – ‘trying to keep several objects up in the air at the same time; trying to do several activities at one time’.

Stable – ‘firm and strong; unchanging’.

Blended – ‘mixed together; combined to make something new’.

Refuge – ‘a safe place’.

A. Vocabulary Check

Complete the sentences using words or phrases from New Words list.

1. Many _____ American mothers would like to stay at home with their young children, but they have to work to make ends meet.
2. _____ a career and family responsibilities is very stressful and often leaves little time for people to relax and enjoy life.

3. Many young mothers who work have an _____ lifestyle __ they work all day at their jobs and then come home and work nights and weekends to take care of their families and homes.
4. Women whose husbands do not help with housework and child care may become very _____ .
5. Most Americans would probably agree that fathers, as well as mothers, should be able to _____ their children.
6. Sometimes a demanding career can be a _____ , even though a parent would like to have more time to spend with the children.
7. Parents who do not have enough time for their children may feel guilty and then try to _____ by giving their children material gifts.
8. The value of individual freedom may produce _____ results – children may have more power and get more consideration of their needs and desires, while they really get less of their parents' time.
9. _____ families may be a source of stress, as parents try to cope with raising each other's children as well as their own.
10. Some families choose to visit a _____ to get help with their problems.
11. Couples who have _____ may be able to get a divorce quite easily and quickly.
12. In the United States, _____ is the time that young people in love get to know each other better and decide if they want to get married.
13. Although marriage is not very _____ in the United States, most Americans still believe that it is an important institution in society.
14. Families have traditionally provided an important _____ from the competitive stresses of American society.
15. _____ studies show that young Americans are now waiting longer to get married and have children.

16. In spite of all its problems, the institutions of marriage and the family will certainly never _____ .

B. COMPREHENSION CHECK

Write T if the statement is true and F if it is false according to the information in the chapter.

____ 1. Most Americans picture the traditional “classic” family as a married couple with two children.

____ 2. The majority of American households still consist of this “classic” family.

____ 3. One American household in four now consists of someone living alone.

____ 4. “Baby boomers” are young people who are in their twenties.

____ 5. Americans believe that the family exists primarily to serve the needs of its individual family members.

____ 6. Americans usually consider what is best for the whole family first and what is best for them as individuals second.

____ 7. Most Americans believe that marriages should make both individuals happy and if they cannot live together happily, it is better for them to get a divorce.

____ 8. Although Americans believe in democracy for society, they generally exercise strict control over their children, particularly teenagers.

____ 9. American parents generally think more about the individual needs of their children than they do about what responsibilities the child will have to the society as a whole.

____ 10. The amount of equality between husbands and wives has remained pretty much the same since de Tocqueville visited the United States in the 1930s.

___11. If an American wife works outside the home, she is likely to have more power in the family than a married woman who does not work.

___12. In the husband-senior partner, wife-junior partner type of marriage, the husband and wife both work, have equal power and influence in making family decisions, and divide the family duties equally.

___13. In most American families, the father does just as much housework and child care as the mother.

___14. Having faith in God and respecting authority are two of the traditional American family values.

___15. Although one out of every two marriages end in divorce, Americans still believe strongly in the importance of marriage and the family.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How would you describe the typical family in your country? Who lives in a household? Do several generations usually live together? How many children are there? What do you think is the ideal number to have? what are the roles of the family members? How much freedom do teenagers have? when can a teenager get a driver's license? Would you give your children the same amount of freedom as you had as a teenager?
2. Which type of marriage is most common in your country? Which of the four types do you think is the best for men? For women? For the children? Which type of marriage does your family have? which do you think is the ideal? Why?
3. In your country, what do people have to do to get a divorce? What happens to people who divorce there? How are they treated? Do they usually remarry? If two people are unhappy, should they get a divorce? What if they have children? Under what circumstances would you get divorced?

4. Should mothers with small children work? In your country, who takes care of the children of working mothers? Are there day-care centers? Do other members of the family do the baby-sitting? What was your experience growing up? Did you have a baby sitter? Would you leave your child in a day-care center?
5. If there is true equality between the sexes, husbands should be able to choose to stay at home while their wives go to work. Do you agree? Do "househusbands" exist in your country? Can men nurture children as well as women can? Would you ever want this kind of relationship?

D. CLOZE SUMMARY PARAGRAPH

This paragraph summarizes the chapter. Fill in each blank with any word that makes sense.

The traditional American family _____ undergone many changes since _____ 1950s. Now only 26 per cent _____ American households consist of _____ and their children. Americans _____ the primary purpose of _____ family is to advance _____ happiness of individual family _____. This stress on individual _____ means that (1) unhappy marriages _____ end in divorce, and (2) _____ emphasis is placed on _____ needs of the child _____ on the child's responsibility _____ others. The American belief _____ equality results in democratic _____ within the family, both _____ parents and children and _____ husbands and wives. American _____ have progressed through four _____, from the wife as _____ servant, to the wife _____ a completely equal partner _____ her husband. The role of _____ wife within the family, _____ her equality with her _____, have increased as women _____ taken jobs outside the _____. Unfortunately, this emphasis on _____

freedom and equality has _____ stress on the American _____. Half of all marriages end _____ divorce, and when parents _____ again, blending two families _____ be difficult. Also, when _____ parents work, there is _____ enough time for the _____. However, in spite of _____ problems, Americans still believe _____ family values, and they _____ the family as a _____ from their competitive society.

E. Small Group Discussion

Many Americans have pets that they consider to be part of the family. Some studies have shown that owning a pet lowers a person's blood pressure and helps to reduce stress. Do you have a pet? Are pets popular in your country? What are advantages and disadvantages of having a pet? Share your experiences with pets with others in your group.

F. Ask Americans

Interview several Americans of different ages and ask them about their families. Ask each one the following questions, and record their answers.

1. Who are the members of your family? Name them and indicate their relationship to you (mother, father, sister, etc.).
2. Who lives in your household? Where do your other relatives live?
3. How often do you see your parents? Your grandparents? Your sisters and brothers? Your aunts, uncles, and cousins? Do you write or telephone any of them regularly?
4. What occasions bring your relatives together (birthdays, holidays, weddings, deaths, trips)? Have you ever been to a family reunion?
5. Do you feel you have a close family? Why?
6. Who would you ask for advice if you had a serious personal problem?
7. Who would take care of you if you became ill?

8. What obligations and responsibilities do you feel you have toward your family?
9. What duties and responsibilities do you believe a child has toward his or her family?
10. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 as “most important”, how important are the opinions of the members of your immediate family concerning:
 - whom you marry;
 - where you live;
 - where you go to school;
 - what job you take;
 - how you spend your money.

G. Ask Yourself

Do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? Put a check under the number that indicates how you feel.

+2 = Strongly agree

+1 = Agree

0 = No opinion

-1 = Disagree

-2 = Strongly disagree

+2 +1 0 -1 -2

1. Arranged marriages are better than marriages where the couples have met and dated on their own.
2. It is very important for my family to approve of the person I marry.
3. If my parents disapproved of my choice, I would still marry that person if we were

- very much in love. _____
4. A woman's place is in the home. _____
- 5 Married women with small children
should not work. _____
6. Men should be able to be "househusbands"
and let their wives work to support them. _____
7. Husbands and wives should share equally
the work of taking care of the house and
the children. _____
8. Unhappy couples should stay married for
the sake of the children. _____
9. Married couples who choose not to have
children are selfish. _____
10. Equality between a husband and wife
causes divorce. _____

Read the above statements to several Americans, and ask them if they agree or disagree. Compare your answers with theirs.

H. Proverbs and Sayings

Ask Americans to explain these proverbs and sayings to you. Then ask them for other examples of sayings about men, women, children, or the family.

1. The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.
2. As the twig is bent, so grows the tree.
3. That child is a chip off the old block.
4. A man may work from sun to sun, but a woman's work is never done.
5. Behind every successful man, there is a woman.
6. Blood is thicker than water.

I. Think, Pair, Share

Working mothers often feel that they have two full-time jobs – one outside the home, for which they get paid, and the other inside the home, for which they do not get paid. The job at home is being “household manager”. Most working American women still have the major responsibility for managing the household – cooking, cleaning, shopping, and seeing that the children are cared for – even if their husbands help them with some of the household duties. What do you think husbands with working wives should do around the house? Should married women work? What if they have children?

Write your answers to these questions and discuss them with your partner. Then share your answers with another pair of students.

J. SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING

It is sometimes difficult for young people to find someone to marry. Young adults are expected to find their own husbands or wives themselves, but it is often difficult for them to meet others, especially if they are not in college. Families play a very minor role in getting young people together. Some young adults have turned to computer dating or putting advertisements in the newspapers. These new services are designed to help people meet “Mr. or Mrs. Right.” Men and women are asked to fill out questionnaires about themselves – their interests, hobbies, likes and dislikes – and they also indicate the qualities they are looking for in a husband or wife. Couples are then matched by the computer, and each person receives a list of names of people to contact for a date.

Imagine that you are writing an ad for the newspaper or explaining to a computer service what kind of person you would like to meet (and

perhaps marry). What things about yourself would be important for your date to know? What qualities would you want your date to have?

Write an ad describing yourself and the kind of person you would like to meet, or choose one of the following composition topics:

1. Qualities I Want My Husband/Wife to Have.
2. The Pros and Cons of Computer Dating.
3. How to Find the Perfect Mate.
4. Courtship in My Country.
5. The Real Me.

VOCABULARY

ACCOUNT (a joint ~) is a statement of money received and paid out by a bank, which belongs to both spouses.

AN ACE at (doing) sth. is a person of the highest skill in some activity.

ADOPTION is the act of adopting children = taking someone else's child into the family for ever and to take on the full responsibility in law of a parent.

ADULTERY is sexual relations between a married person and someone who is not their husband/wife; *to commit* ~.

BACHELOR is an unmarried man.

TO BALANCE EACH OTHER is to reach a state in which opposite or competing features are evenly matched.

BARNEYS are noisy quarrels.

BENEFITS (state ~) are money provided by the government to people who need it, esp. those who are sick or unemployed.

BIRTH RATE is the number of births for every 100 or every 1000 people in a particular year in a particular place.

BREAD-WINNER is a person in a family whose wages provide what the family needs to live on.

BREAK-UP/DOWN OF MARRIAGE is a failure, an end of a marriage.

BRIDE is a woman about to be married, just married or recently married.

BRIDEGROOM is a man about to be married, just married or recently married.

CHASTITY is the condition of being sexually chaste and of having a very pure and innocent attitude to sex. =euph. for virginity.

CHORES (HOUSEHOLD ~) are regular and necessary pieces of work about the house /the daily chores of cleaning, cooking and shopping.

COHABITATION is the act of a man and woman living together as husband and wife, with all of its consequent rights and obligations.

COMMIT ONESELF TO MARRIAGE is to take full responsibility.

COUNSELLOR is a lawyer (AmE); someone who is paid to listen to people's problems and provide support and advice (Br.E).

TO COURT (of a man) is to visit and pay attention to a woman he hopes to marry; *a courting couple*.

CRECHE is a place, provided at a place of work, where babies and small children are cared for while their parents work. Creches are sometimes provided at sports centres and events such as conferences, but they are still quite rare; day-care center, nursery /AmE/

DEATH RATE is the number of deaths for every 100 or every 1000 people in a particular year in a particular place.

DESERTION is the act of leaving one's family, esp. with the intention of never returning.

DIVORCE is the official ending of a marriage, esp. as declared by the court of law.

DIVORCE RATE is the number of divorces for every 100 or every 1000 people in a particular year in a particular place.

EBULLIENT is 'full of life, happiness, eager excitement'.

EQUAL PAY ACT is a law in Britain which says that men and women should get equal pay for doing equal work and should have the same conditions of employment.

FIANCE is the person to whom one is engaged.

To GIVE BIRTH is to bear a child.

HONEYMOON is a holiday taken by people who have just got married.

HOUSEHOLD is all the people living (together) in a house.

INCOME is money which one receives regularly, usu. as payment for one's work or interest from investments.

IN-LAWS are one's relatives by marriage, esp. the father and mother of one's husband/wife.

INSANITY is madness.

LATCH KEY KIDS are children whose parents are often not at home and who therefore return esp. from school to an empty house.

LAVISH weddings are very generous ones.

LIFE EXPECTANCY = **expectation of life** is the average number of years that a person is expected to live.

MAGISTRATES' COURT is the lowest court in England and Wales where magistrates hear and decide on less serious criminal cases, e.g. stealing, or decide if there is enough evidence for a more serious criminal case to go to a higher court. Over 90 % of all criminal cases are heard in magistrates' courts, which are open to members of the public.

MATERNITY LEAVE is time that a mother spends away from work immediately before or after the birth of her baby. It is taken with permission from the employer and usu. with part or full pay. In Britain, the law says that women who have worked for an employer for more than six months must be given maternity leave with some pay by the employer. In the US, maternity leave is decided by the employer, but many employers do not allow very much.

PATERNITY LEAVE is time off work for the father of a new baby to help with its care. Very few British or American employers give paternity leave.

PETITION (a divorce ~) is an official letter to a court of law, asking for consideration of one's case.

PROMOTION is an advancement in rank or position.

TO PROPOSE is to make an offer of marriage. In Britain and the US it is the custom for a man to propose to a woman. The man is supposed to kneel in front of the woman and ask her to marry him. On the 29th of February (the last day in February in a leap year), however, a woman may by custom propose to a man. These customs are not followed as much as they used to be.

RECEPTION (wedding ~) is a large formal party.

REGISTRAR is a person who is in charge of official records, esp. in a registry office.

REGISTRY OFFICE is an office (esp. in Britain) where marriages can legally take place and where births, marriages and deaths are officially recorded.

RELATE is a British organization which helps those who have problems with relationships such as marriage.

RETICENT is the one who doesn't express as much as it is known or felt.

SEPARATION is a formal agreement by a husband and wife to live apart.

SPINSTER is an unmarried woman, usu. one who is no longer young and/or seems unlikely to marry.

TO SPLIT UP is to separate, end a friendship or marriage.

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