



Families as Relationships

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The field of family studies has recently seen the development of a more specialized focus on the character of particular relationships. The nature of these relationships may take many forms but typically involves individuals who view themselves as a unit with a long-term commitment to continue their relationship. Traditionally, at least in western societies, families are defined in terms of two parents living together with responsibility for rearing their children. However, these so-called nuclear families are becoming a rarer phenomenon. Single-parent families, childless couples, lesbian or gay male couples are also all represented in the broad mix of relations referred to as families. Each of the chapters in this book deals with a primary relationship issue. These include:

- * issues of early marriage
- * how young relationships become enduring relationships
- * parent and child relations
- * conflict between partners
- * the interface between work and family life
- * marital quality and maintenance
- * divorce and its impact on the family
- * aging and older families

This volume provides a useful reference for professionals whose research and/or clinical practice focuses on family relationship issues. This book is also intended for advanced students in the areas of sociology, close relationships and family sciences. Families as Relationships is one of a series of paperbacks dedicated to the study and application of processes by which individuals relate to each other in social and family settings. Each book provides an expanded and up-to-date version of a section in the original Handbook of Personal Relationships (second edition) edited by Steve Duck.

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