



Marriages and Families in the 21st Century: A Bioecological Approach

Tasha R. Howe

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Marriages and Families in the 21st Century provides an in-depth exploration of a traditional field of study using a new and engaging approach. The text covers all the important issues—including parenting, divorce, aging families, balancing work and family, family violence, and gender issues—using a bioecological framework that takes into account our status as both biological and social beings. Using this lens, which emphasizes the individual's interactions with a series of larger systemic influences—from family, peers, neighbors and teachers, to schools, media, institutions and culture—the book creates a cohesive overview of modern family life and helps students visualize the complex influences affecting all people in families. It also examines the state of modern families using a strengths-based approach, which allows students to evaluate the health and functioning of a family considering the biological and cultural milieu in which it exists, rather than on its observable structure or appearance alone.

Individual chapters cover historical and cultural trends and also explore the biological, personal, and social forces that shape individuals and families. Each chapter investigates the wide diversity of human relationships and integrates discussions of ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, and gender seamlessly into the main narrative. In addition, the book explores recent research in neuroscience, medicine, and biopsychology to examine how family relationships are shaped by and also influence individuals' biological functioning.

An accessible writing style coupled with numerous student-friendly pedagogical features help readers come to a multi-layered understanding of "what makes families tick," while also challenging them to reevaluate their own assumptions and experiences.

Key features:

- Uses a bioecological model that takes into account our status as both biological and social beings
- Employs a strengths-based approach that focuses on family processes rather than structure in evaluating families' optimal health and happiness
- Incorporates discussion of neuroscience, medicine, and biopsychological research throughout
- Explores a wide diversity of family relationships, integrating issues of ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, and gender
- *Focus on my Family* boxes profile real families who wrote essays in their own words about their diverse experiences
- *How Would You Measure That?* sections emphasize students' critical thinking and analysis of research design and conclusions
- Helps students analyze their own families' strengths and attempt to build on those through psychometrically sound self-assessments and *Building Your Strengths* exercises
- Engaging and accessible writing style incorporates contemporary, real-world examples with important theory and research
- Instructor's manual, test bank, PowerPoint lecture slides, and useful web links, as well as Student flash cards and self-test questions, available upon publication at www.wiley.com/go/howe

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