

Family Diversity

An Introduction

Typical nuclear family?

- Leach (1967)
 - The “cereal packet image”
- But
 - plurality of household and family types are found in contemporary society
 - Idea of “typical” family is misleading



Changing Households in Britain

- Decline of nuclear family
 - 38% 1961 to 23% 1998 (Social Trends, 1999)
- Increase in single person households
 - 11% 1961 to 28% 1998 (Social Trends, 1999)
- Increase in single-parent households
 - 2% 1961 to 7% 1998 (Social Trends, 1999)

Types of Diversity

- Rapoport & Rapoport (1982)
 - 5 types of diversity
 - Organisational diversity
 - Family structure
 - Household type
 - Patterns of kinship
 - Division of labour

Types of diversity (cont.)

- Cultural diversity
- Class diversity
- Life cycle diversity
 - Stage in the life-cycle of the family
- Cohort diversity
- Eversley & Bonnerjea (1982)
 - Regional diversity

Conclusion

- No such thing as the typical family

Further Reading

- Sociology for AS-Level pp.53-4
- Sociology Themes and Perspectives (5th Ed.) – Haralambos & Holborn pp.537-540
 - Similar section in 4th edition
- Sociology in Focus pp.251-256