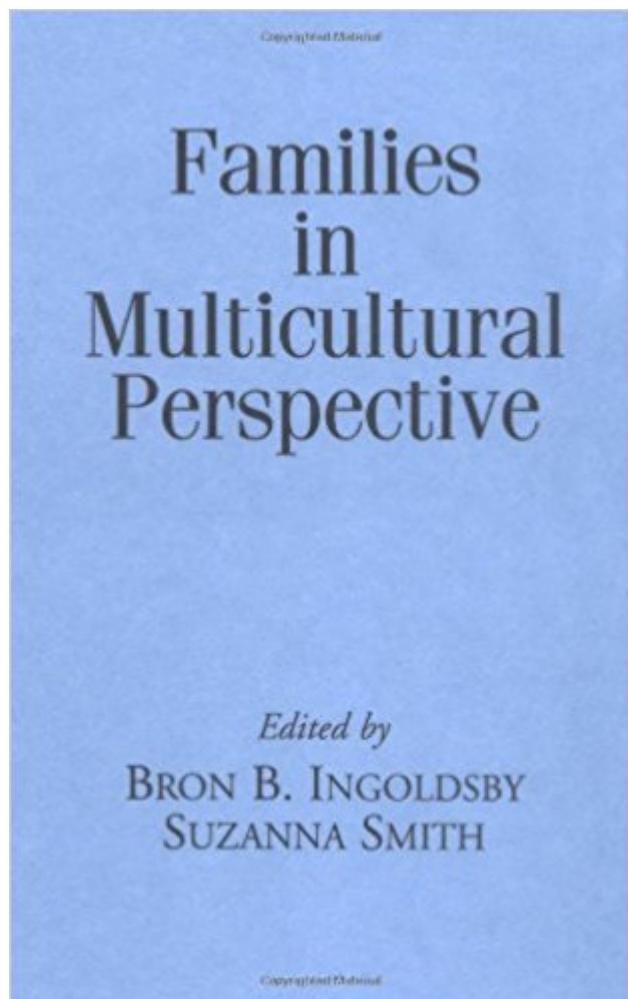


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Families In Multicultural Perspective



Synopsis

Crossing geographic, cultural, and historical boundaries, this volume explores the diversity of the world's families, emphasizing the importance of understanding and valuing them within their own cultural contexts. Covering contemporary Third World as well as Western families, this excellent teaching text addresses topics essential for developing a multicultural perspective. The book begins with background information on family theories and comparative research methodology, along with an overview of the history of the family and gender relations in the Western world. This is followed by chapters on family variation, which explain research on the origin, functions, and universality of the family; kinship terminology and how kinship affiliation affects such issues as postmarital residence patterns; and the diversity of marital structure (plurality of husbands and/or wives) and how culture and economy affect these patterns. The book then examines the life cycle of the family and highlights similarities and differences across time and culture in the areas of mate selection, wedding practices, marital adjustment, childhood socialization, divorce, and care for the elderly. Important contemporary issues seldom covered in earlier works--including gender, class structure, racial discrimination, and poverty--are covered in detail. An ideal text for comparative family courses, this readable and up-to-date volume includes exercises (as well as exercise guidelines for instructors) developed to challenge students' existing viewpoints and offer new ways of looking at the world's families. Families in Multicultural Perspective is also an important resource for anyone interested in understanding and appreciating the diversity of family forms, processes, and experiences.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"The coverage is comprehensive--issues of mate selection, marital structure and breakdown, kinship patterns, child socialization, gender, and social inequality are all comprehensively discussed from a number of perspectives....Ideological viewpoints are deliberately contrasted so that readers can appreciate the strength (and weaknesses) of each and thus reach their own conclusions about the validity of different perspectives....A good text and a salutary reminder for those working in the family relations area as to the diversity of families throughout the world as well as the inaccuracy of many of our stereotypes about families in other cultures. It is certainly a text that I will recommend to my students." --Robin Goodwin in *Contemporary Psychology*"Ingoldsby and Smith have compiled a new text that allows instructors to lead discussions on differences between cultures using the family as the primary unit of comparison....This text provides a bank of exercises for the student, guidelines for the instructor, and an appendix for selected international comparisons." --Dona Schneider in *Soc. Sci. Med.*42:12"Family in Multicultural Perspective is a good, basic, comparative text on families in the modern world...." --Rosalyn Benjamin Darling, Dept of Sociology, Univ of Pennsylvania in *Disabilities Studies Quarterly*"Families in Multicultural Perspective is a well-written, fascinating broad brush-stroke treatment of the world's families. This well-documented tome, written from a North American perspective, places families in historical and cultural context in a way that introduces the reader to factors contributing to the rich diversity of family life found around the globe. At the same time, the reader gains a sense of patterns of behavior that unite us as humans. Theoretical frameworks are interwoven throughout to describe and explain similarities and differences in family behavior. Cross-cultural research advantages and limitations are explained. The result is a very readable and interesting text for those who want to gain a broader understanding of the diversity of the world's families." --Ramona Marotz-Baden, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Health and Human Development, Montana State University-Bozeman"Family in Multicultural Perspective is the most comprehensive and up-to-date comparative family text currently available. Editors Ingoldsby and Smith have done a masterful job of collecting and integrating the works of an impressive group of scholars, all experts in their respective areas. Ingoldsby and Smith are at the forefront of new ways of thinking about family diversity. Other texts, which attempt to provide a multi-cultural perspective, tend to focus on culture first and family second, and organize content by culture. This text focuses on family first, and organizes

multicultural content in ways that correspond more closely to the theoretical and empirical literature on the family. Indeed it makes a unique contribution to the literature by integrating the cross-cultural family focus into topics traditionally considered important in family courses at the college and university level. Family diversity is presented in the context of foundations such as family theory and research methods, conceptual frameworks such as family development over the life cycle, and contemporary concerns such as social inequality, gender and class stratification, racism and poverty. Instructors of family courses at the university level should find this approach to be very helpful. It should also make the text appropriate for traditional family courses as well as for specialized courses which focus more narrowly or exclusively on cultural diversity. Families in Multicultural Perspective makes a unique contribution to the family diversity literature by focusing on theory and research methods as well as cultural differences. Each theory provides another theoretical or conceptual framework for understanding diversity in families. And diversity in families provides a good test of the generalizability of theory. There is little doubt that readers will be left with a greater appreciation for family science as well as for family diversity around the world. Reviewing this book has been a pleasure. I look forward to its publication in the near future, and expect to be using it myself." --John W. Engel, Ph.D., Professor and Chairman of Family Resources at the University of Hawaii

Bron B. Ingoldsby, Ph.D., is Professor and Chair of the Department of Family Science at Ricks College in Rexburg, Idaho. He has published numerous articles on cross-cultural family topics and is an associate editor for the Journal of Comparative Family Studies and Family Science Review. Suzanna Smith, Ph.D., is Associate Professor of Human Development and Family Relations at the University of Florida. Her research focuses on gender, work, and family issues for rural households confronting major social, economic, and environmental changes.

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