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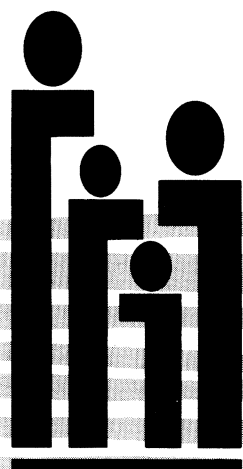
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family life education

Family Development's First Forty Years*

Evelyn Millis Duvall**

The history of family development and its interdisciplinary nature are reviewed. Variations as well as the universality of the family life cycle and developmental tasks are explored. Examples of the applications of family developmental concepts by a variety of practitioners in the family field are presented.

Why should I undertake a history of family development at this time? Many of you are better equipped in theory-building, research, and the history of family studies than am I. Most of you have academic settings where such endeavors flow more easily than in my idiosyncratic situation. But, I am one of the few survivors of those early days when family development was conceived, born, and named as a respectable member of family study. So, bear with me while I tell you about the olden days when the family development conceptual framework was very young.

At the end of World War II, American families were in disarray. Marriage on a weekend pass all too often was followed by a "Dear John" letter. Women are reluctant to leave jobs that had given them independence. Men, too, had changed; and the "crisis of reunion" was general as families struggled to establish themselves in the postwar economy.

President Truman responded by calling the First National Conference on the Family for 1948. His committee to plan the conference: Ernest Burgess, Lawrence Frank, and Margaret Mead, appointed me Organizing Secretary with headquarters in New York, where I enlisted the participation of 123 national agencies with central interests in the family. Concurrently, Reuben Hill and I were asked to prepare the working papers for the conference. Reuben and I had become visible as a creative team since our successful completion of the United States Armed Forces Institute college credit course in Marriage and the Family that ultimately was published as

When you Marry in 1945, one of the first functional marriage texts.

Reuben's stature as a family sociologist and my experience with family leaders across the country as I led workshops while organizing NCFR State Councils gave us access to leading family life specialists in many disciplines nationwide. We named seven teams to cover stages of the family life cycle from early marriage to the aging family and an eighth team on "Families in Crisis." These 23 national authorities in a variety of disciplines read like a Who's Who in the family field at that time. Each team was asked to write a four-section report on: (a) developmental tasks of children, (b) developmental tasks of mother and father, (c) challenges, hazards, crises and problems to be expected at each stage, and (d) implications for needed services.

The combined report, "The Dynamics of Family Interaction" (Duvall & Hill, 1948), 199 pages of mimeographed materials, were the working papers for the First National Conference on the Family, and in demand for many years after, as the framework for the first of six editions of *Family Development*

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(Duvall, 1957, 1962, 1967, 1971, 1977, 1985).

Interdisciplinary Family Research

It is the interdisciplinary nature of family development that has been responsible for its strengths and its struggles. Reuben's solid background in sociology gave family development its family life cycle dimension, while my training in human development allowed us to explore the potentials of developmental tasks of individual family members, and eventually in terms of family developmental tasks. We early found that terms and concepts familiar to sociologists are not easily grasped in all their nuances by child and human development professionals, and vice versa. So, we learned to define technical terms as we used them and wherever possible to use commonly understood terminology.

The National Council on Family Relations' first venture into interdisciplinary research (its Research Committee then was mostly sociologists) took place in August, 1945, when Ernest Burgess and I called into Chicago for a two-day conference, researchers known to be studying the family. The marked success of that brief conference led to a three-week Workshop on Marriage and Family Research in August, 1950.

As Secretary of NCFR's Committee on Marriage and Family Research, Reuben Hill gave us a faithful account of that first interdisciplinary family research workshop at the University of Chicago (Hill, 1951). We were a select group of 24 family scholars from a dozen states and, with consultants brought in for short periods, eleven disciplines with sociology and human development most numerous.

Interdisciplinary family study has proven itself in the intervening decades. Both on this continent and abroad, scholars from many fields now collaborate in family studies, as witness co-authored research reports in current journals.

Human Development: Patterns and Process

There are universal patterns of human development, within which all individuals grow each at his/her own pace. Individual development is programmed by unique genetic determinants within every cell of our bodies, while environmental factors impede or encourage each person's potentials

throughout life. Growth is most rapid in the early formative years as the body takes shape and the mind develops.

Critical Periods in Physical Development. Studies of prenatal development throughout this century have found precise scheduling of the appearance of the organs and functions in all embryos. Each organ has its definite time of emergence, which if missed, may never develop normally. A critical period is one in which a given part is genetically programmed for most rapid growth. The miracle of normality is dependent upon the faithful following of the genetic program for the sequence of development of the embryo and fetus.

At later stages of development from birth onward, there is great latitude within a predictable sequence of change and many individual, gender, racial, and cultural variations in the growth process throughout life.

Process of Personal Development. Studies of human development, from the observations of Freud and Piaget to the ambitious longitudinal studies in recent decades, concur on the process through which individuals grow through childhood, adolescence, and on into young, mature, aging, and aged adults. Knowledge of human development is both longitudinal and interdisciplinary. As one of the first Ph.D.s in Human Development, I passed examinations in anthropology, biology, child, adolescent and adult development, embryology, genetics, neurology, physiology, principles of counseling, psychiatry, psychology, and sociology. No wonder it took me so long!

Psychosexual Development. Significant insights into the process of personality development came out of Vienna in the late 19th century. Sigmund Freud gave us such therapeutic tools as dream interpretation, free association, psychoanalysis, and such helpful concepts as the ego, the id, the superego, the unconscious, and the step-by-step process of psychosexual development from birth through puberty.

Freud and Jung launched the psychoanalytic movement in the United States when they visited Clark University in 1908. At first many social scientists were reluctant to accept Freud's emphasis on the sexual bases of human behavior. But some, notably Burgess, Groves, Ogburn, Park, and Thomas, soon were using such psychoanalytic concepts as projection,

compensation, sublimation, and the cultural influences of personality in their work.

Psychosocial Development. Meanwhile, back in Vienna, Erik Erikson added his knowledge of new studies in child development, including those of Jean Piaget, to his work with Anna and Sigmund Freud. In time, Erikson "postulated a polarity of conflicting forces in every human being at each of eight stages of the universal life cycle" (Curti, 1980, p. 364). At each stage, Erickson saw conflict between the urge to grow and the tendency to resist growth as a crisis. Each crisis prepares the ego for further crises in an ongoing formation of the personality. When I met Erikson in January, 1954, I heard him say that human nature can best be studied in a state of conflict and another phrase I have found comforting ever since, "A crisis is not a misfortune." Erikson's "Eight Stages of Man" described in his *Childhood and Society* (1950, pp. 219-234) paralleled our use of developmental tasks throughout the human life cycle.

Cognitive Development. Jean Piaget found order in the way a child's thought emerges from interaction with the environment. He described nursing infants using their reflexes, muscles, and senses; by age four, he saw children forming intuitions; and by 9 or 10 years enabled to order things by length, then by weight, and finally by volume. I saw him illustrate this point on a platform at Cornell many years ago with a series of glass columns filled with water. His French was a bit fast for me, but his message was clear: A child learns to understand his world in a series of predictable and sequential stages. By 11 or 12 years a child begins to understand abstract concepts—the basis for the scientific method (Piaget & Inhelder, 1969).

Moral Development. Lawrence Kohlberg mapped moral development from the preschool years when a child obeys to escape punishment; through conforming to escape disapproval, blame, or guilt (the age for which varies widely); through to moral development in exceptional adults who conform to avoid self-condemnation. His studies find this sequential development not affected by cultural or religious orientation, except in the rate at which persons progress in their moral thinking. Middle-class children develop faster and farther than do lower-class youngsters in their moral thinking because middle-class families uphold



moral standards more conscientiously (Kohlberg, 1968, p. 30).

Longitudinal Studies of Human Development. Study of populations of children and youth, repeatedly observed, measured, and tested over the years, has been a major thrust of human growth and development research. Longitudinal child growth and development research dating back to 1920 were reviewed by Kagan in 1964: Terman's studies of genius; Stolz's and Jones' adolescent study; Bayley's growth research; MacFarlane's guidance study; the Child Research Council's study in human development; Sontag's work at Fels Research Institute; Anderson's child to adult research at Minnesota; Stuart's work at Harvard; Escolona and Murphy's coping studies at Menninger Foundation; and Thomas' behavioral development work at NYU School of Medicine.

Caroline Zachry (1940), chairman, *The Study of Adolescents*, published one of 17 reports of its findings. By the mid-1940s the Yale Clinic in Child Development published precise age-gradient behaviors for each year of childhood (Gesell, Ilg, Ames, & Bullis, 1946). I heard Frances Ilg, pediatrician on Gesell's staff, say that war wives would write their sailor husbands, "If you want to know what your child is like, look on page 243." Thurstone (1955) found ages at which children reach 80% of their full potential in intelligence (age 8), verbal comprehension at 18, and word fluency at 20. Sanford's (1962) longitudinal study of college students found ego development at 80% of maturity by age 18.

More than 1,000 longitudinal studies of persons repeatedly studied through phases of their development had been published by the early 1960s. Bloom (1964) reviewing these data could predict when children would achieve 50 percent of their mature development in seven characteristics from height at age 2 to reading comprehension at age 10.

Beginning in 1951, all 6th grade children in the "River City" population of 45,000 were studied in school, home, and community until most of them were 20 years old. University of Chicago social scientists conducted the many-faceted research for nine years until 1960 (Havighurst, Bowman, Liddle, Matthews, & Pierce, 1962). One of many intriguing findings was "the more avenues for development in the community, the greater is the prob-

ability that every person will develop competence in some constructive direction" (p. 165).

Life-span development and life course patterns have been frequent emphases in recent years by psychiatrists, psychologists, sociologists, and other social scientists (see Baltes & Brim, 1979, 1980; Imhof, 1986; Rossi, 1984; Sorensen, Weinart, & Sherrod, 1986; Viorst, 1986).

The Family Life Cycle

The first conceptualization of the family life cycle is lost in antiquity. Lemo Dennis Rockwood (personal communication, 1948) at Cornell told of finding in a Boston antique shop, a yellowed old poster depicting the family life cycle from the cradle to the grave in ten-year periods. In 1902, Benjamin Rowntree published his study of poverty in York, England, finding families poor when children were young, relatively well-off as sons became wage-earners, and ending in poverty in old age.

American sociologists began to use the family life cycle in their family studies in the 1930s (Sorokin, Zimmerman, & Galpin, 1931; Kirkpatrick, Cowles, & Tough, 1934; Blackwell, 1942). Howard Bigelow (1953), computing annual costs of supporting families through their first forty years, found peak expenses during the launching stage of the family life cycle. Lansing and Kish (1957) using data from the Survey of Consumer Finances concluded, "we believe that the life cycle should be adopted more widely as an independent variable to be used in place of/ or parallel to age" (Lansing & Kish, 1957, p. 518); a view not shared by Nock (1979) or Spanier, Sauer, & Larzelere, (1979).

In November, 1946, for a multidisciplinary conference on Housing for Family Living, my committee diagrammed a four-stage family life cycle: "the early years of marriage, the crowded years with small children, the peak . . . teen years, and the later years after all children have been launched" (Gutheim, 1948, pp. 11-14).

Core concepts for patterns of interaction in families came from the work of Bates (1956, p. 314) defining a "role (as) part of a social position consisting of a more or less integrated set of norms forming the same position." For instance, the wife/mother occupies a position in her family in which she plays such roles as caring for her husband, children, and household; according to norms (expectations of her cul-

ture). More recently *family careers* are seen as the product of interacting family member careers. Rodgers (1973) sees them as having: (a) individual-psychological, (b) group-interactional, and (c) societal-institutional facets (see also Aldous, 1978).

In 1972, I took a writing course from Jan de Hartog, whose *The Fourposter* had delighted audiences for years. I remember his telling us that its theme portraying a family throughout its career was "a natural" in drama.

Demographic Dimensions. Current census figures provide a vital dimension to what actually happens in families, and when it happens. Paul C. Glick (1947, 1955, 1957, 1977), for years with the United States Bureau of the Census, a dedicated demographer with a solid family orientation, has made invaluable contributions to family development for more than forty years. His census data on (a) age at first marriage for men and women, (b) parents' ages at birth of first and last child, (c) parents' ages at marriage of first and last child, and (d) mean ages at death for American men and women, can be augmented by age of first child's school entrance at 6, age of becoming a teenager at 13, and husband's age at retirement at 65, to give us the length of time typically spent in each stage of the family life cycle.

Duvall (1957) first diagrammed each of eight stages of the family life cycle by length of time typically spent in each stage, using then current census data. In 1962, Rodgers published his doctoral research in which he proposed including the youngest child as well as the eldest as Duvall had done. A theoretical improvement, Rodgers' 24-stage family life cycle did no better than Duvall's eight-stage schema in his replication of Lansing and Kish's research (Hill & Rodgers, 1964, p. 191).

Glick has traced family development through five cohorts of American women born in the 1880s, the 1900s, the 1920s, the 1940s, and the 1950s. The resulting chart of the median age at marriage, birth of first and last child, marriage of the last child (leaving the parents in an "empty nest"), and death of the first spouse (widowhood) provides an 80-year perspective of such trends as the increasing delay of marriage on the part of women and the married pair's longer time together after their last child has married (Glick, 1977, pp. 5-13).

Recent changes in marriage, divorce, and living together have been detailed by Paul Glick and Arthur Nor-



ton, (1979), and in frequent updating in professional and lay publications. Increases in single parent families (due to high rates of separation and divorce and more unmarried girls having babies) are receiving considerable professional and mass media attention. Demographers predict that current high levels of one-parent families are likely to persist, but not necessarily to increase (Norton & Glick, 1986).

Theoretically, the single-parent family passes through the same life cycle stages with most of the same responsibilities as the two-parent family. The big difference is in the absence of the second parent to carry his/her (most absent parents are men) share of family tasks in support, child-rearing, companionship, and gender modeling. (Reuben Hill [1986, p.28] summarizes, "The differences in paths of development of single-parent and two-parent families are seen primarily, not in stages encountered, but in the *number*, *timing*, and *length* of the *critical transitions* experienced.")

Family Life Cycle Variations. Families vary and family life cycles vary from any modal pattern. Joan Aldous (1978) points out that stages of the family life cycle follow no rigid pattern and are neither descriptive nor prescriptive of family life cycles in general. Examples are numerous. The young adult who remains at home prolongs the launching stage and shortens the parents' empty nest period. Some couples marry earlier or later than mean ages. Death may prematurely end the family life cycle, or death of a first-born set the parents back into an earlier stage of their family life cycle.

Families go through more stages now than formerly. Until the 20th century, so many mothers and fathers died before their last child married that the middle years of marriage did not show up in census calculations. Only relatively recently has there been recognition of the specificity of childhood (Aries, 1962), puberty, and adolescence (Demos & Demos, 1969). In great-grandfather's time, a boy typically left school at age 14, got a job, and became a man, without having been an adolescent. Norton (1983) reports it is age generational differences more than any other factor that influence the time and frequency of family life cycle events.

There are more older married couples now that death no longer separates spouses so soon (Busse & Maddox, 1985). In 1954, Ruth Albrecht found 49 percent of the college

students she studied had a mean of seven antecedents still living. She predicted then that with increased longevity, five- or six-generation families were likely in time.

Divorcing and remarrying pairs pose problems. However, Norton's (1980, p. 68) census data comparisons of divorced and never-divorced mothers found, "Despite life-cycle variations related to education, race, and/or marital history differences, there is a great deal of consistency of patterns of change into the timing of life-cycle events."

Is the Family Life Cycle Universal? Families around the world differ enormously. Yet there is mounting evidence of universality of the family life cycle (Hareven, 1974). A study of 18th century Austrian peasants found a developmental cycle in family life (Berkner, 1972). Anthropologists' findings of life cycles of increasing and decreasing complexity in families throughout history affirm the universality of family development (Goody, 1962). Although the timing and duration of family life cycle stages vary widely, families everywhere try to conform to norms present in all societies in what is expected at each life cycle stage.

Mollie and Russell Smart (1975) found the family life cycle helpful in their study of New Zealand families. Morioka (1967) found family life cycles in China, Japan, and the United States. Dorothy Dyer (1971) used the eight-stage family life cycle in her study of Sioux family development among tribal native Americans. She reports "predictable patterns of change and growth as the family develops, matures, and ages" (p.1).

Paul Glick's (1977; Spanier & Glick, 1980) calculations of family life cycle changes from 1890 to the present have been replicated in Belgium, Canada, India, Japan, Sweden, and other countries. In reviewing such international and intercultural research, Reuben Hill (1986, p. 20) concludes, "Looking at the findings, one is struck more with the similarities in phasing of the family life cycle among the several societies than by the dissimilarities." As interdisciplinary family life cycle research continues cross-culturally, much more may emerge about the ways families progress through their life cycles.

You and I know that this sketchy review of the history of the family life cycle does not do justice to the thousands of scholars throughout this century who have contributed to the

growing body of knowledge about its development. But perhaps this suffices to remind us that more than forty years ago the family life cycle concept united productively with that of developmental tasks, to which we now turn our attention.

Developmental Tasks

Developmental tasks are growth responsibilities everyone faces from birth to life's end. They arise from physical maturation, personal motivation, and societal expectations at every stage of life. Developmental tasks are cumulative with each completed task introducing the next in a sequence that must be accomplished in order for the individual to develop normally and find approval and happiness. They form the ongoing step-by-step process by which personality matures and remains productive.

When I returned to the University of Chicago in 1941 to complete my Ph.D. in Human Development, I came fresh from seven years' professional work with teenagers and their parents to find the full-scale study of adolescents underway on campus with such national leaders as Erik Erikson, Margaret Mead, Daniel Prescott, Fritz Redl, Carl Rogers, and Caroline Tryon augmenting the faculty in Human Development. Its Chairman, Robert J. Havighurst (1948, 1950, 1952, 1972), wrote the classic *Developmental Tasks and Education* still in use today.

The developmental tasks concept then being formulated satisfied my search for a frame of reference to replace "urges," "drives," or "impulses" that portrayed young people as "puppets on invisible strings of their glands," as one writer put it. It was better than long lists of youth's "needs" with implications that teenagers were but empty cups for society to fill. The developmental tasks concept put the responsibility for life's tasks upon the individual youth, with the assistance of significant adults. And, it could be expanded for the entire life span, as has been done in subsequent years.

In sum, a developmental task is a thrust from within the individual to narrow the discrepancy between his present behavior and what he might become. The push to change usually comes from within the person, but may be evoked by others' demands and expectations. It receives its direction from the cultural definition of what is expected of such an individual at his stage of development.

The Teachable Moment and the Principle of Readiness. When the body



is mature enough, the culture is pressing for, and the individual is striving for some achievement, the teachable moment has come. It is at the convergence of these three origins of developmental tasks that a person is most ready for the next step in his development. The *principle of readiness* is well established in child and human development. Ability to know what persons at various stages of development are, or soon will be, ready for is of paramount importance to educators, therapists, and parents.

Sequence of Developmental Task Operations. A developmental task is accomplished through a predictable sequence of interrelated operations: (a) *perception* in which an individual sees possibilities for more mature behavior; (b) *identity formation* in which a person forms new conceptions of himself; (c) *resolution of conflicting forces*; and (d) *motivation*. For example, a small boy sees older boys riding their bicycles (perception). He envisions himself as a bike rider (identity formation). He copes with his mother's fear of his falling versus the encouragement of his peers (resolution of conflicting forces). Finally, he is motivated enough to practice becoming a bike rider. Similar sequences of operations occur in all of us as we undertake new developmental tasks throughout life. Even young adolescents can identify tasks they are working on at any given time (Dales, 1955; Tryon, 1940).

Complementary and Conflicting Developmental Tasks in the Family. Developmental tasks of family members are complementary when they mutually support one another. Just as naturally at times, the developmental tasks of two or more family members conflict. Normal friction between members of a family often is due to diverse developmental strivings at critical periods of their development. At times in any marriage, the developmental tasks of husband and wife are in conflict. Sibling rivalry and support are both to be expected (Goetting, 1986). A mother has a unique relationship with each of her daughters (Fischer, 1986); a father, with his sons and his in-laws.

Family interaction rarely remains static. Now unified, now atomized, each family lives out its own unique history in pulsing, throbbing rhythms and ever-changing emotional climates. As Ernest Burgess recognized in 1926, each family is "an arena of interaction personalities.

Family Developmental Tasks

The First National Conference on the Family outlined developmental tasks of children, mothers, and fathers throughout the family life cycle (Duvall and Hill, 1948). Two years later our Interdisciplinary Workshop on Marriage and Family Research first conceptualized family developmental tasks through the family life cycle. Eleanor Godfrey, fresh from work with Talcott Parsons, defined family developmental tasks as "those that must be accomplished by a family in a way that will satisfy (a) biological requirements, (b) cultural imperatives, and (c) personal aspirations and values, if a family is to continue to grow as a unit" (Hill, 1951, p. 22).

Basic Family Tasks. Every family has certain basic tasks essential for its continuity as a family. These are: (a) providing physical care; (b) allocating resources; (c) determining who does what; (d) assuring members' socialization; (e) establishing interaction patterns; (f) incorporating and releasing members; (g) relating to society through its institutions; and (h) maintaining morale and motivation.

Each family undertakes its basic tasks at every stage of its family life cycle in its own ways. As long as a family functions well, it is free to live as it will. When basic tasks are not adequately accomplished, society steps in. Relatives; friends; and welfare, police, fire, and health departments may intervene to supplement, correct, or take over those family tasks that must be accomplished to protect family members and society as a whole.

Most American families function satisfactorily most of the time (Bauer, 1986). When society must invade a family, it tends only to be until the family can stand on its own feet again. Welfare is a good example. A longitudinal study of American families by the Institute for Social Research in 1987 found one in four Americans living in a family that needed welfare assistance at least once in a 10-year period. The typical spell of welfare lasts less than 5 years, until the family crisis that precipitated it such as death, divorce, or unemployment, has been worked through (Duncan, 1987).

Crises and Critical Transitions. Family crises (e.g., unemployment, critical or chronic illness, death, divorce, and remarriage) shake a family out of its usual ways of functioning. These unexpected crises are in addition to the normal, to-be-expected

critical transitions in every family's development. Rapoport (1963) first listed them as the crises of getting married, first parenthood, launching children, and retirement. Critical transitions occur just before each stage of the family life cycle as a family mobilizes itself to take the next step in its development.

Family crises and critical transitions call for focusing family attention on new family developmental tasks until roles appropriate for the new status are undertaken. Because of the dynamic importance of critical transitions, professional interest today is not only *when* each stage of the family begins but especially *what a family goes through* as it moves from one stage to the next.

Family crises, critical transitions, and developmental tasks reflect the family's time in history. Economic, social, scientific, and international events call for family adaptations in any given era. Those of us who survived the Great Depression of the 1930s, two great world wars, and periods of undeclared war and uneasy peace know how deeply touched are families by social upheaval. Each generation of every family is uniquely impacted. Even when they share a common social event, they experience it at different stages of their life cycles.

Coping with Family Stress. Ruth Cavan and Katherine Ranck (1936) were colleagues of mine when they did their longitudinal study, *The Family and the Depression*. They found, as did Angell (1936), that well-organized families weathered even severe losses, while disorganized families suffered severe disruption. Earl Koos (1946) and I both were working with Lawrence K. Frank while Koos interviewed troubled tenement families in New York. His "profiles of trouble" diagrammed how some families recovered to the level (or above) where they had been before the trouble hit, while others dropped to lower levels of functioning (pp. 107-111). Hill (1949) used this model in his "roller-coaster" portrayal of family reaction to crisis in his *Families under Stress*, and in subsequent work on family stress. These tools have been further sharpened by Hill and others in family crisis theory and research ever since.

McCubbin and Patterson (1982) saw the "pile-up" of family stressors and strains as important in predicting family adjustment over the family life cycle. David Olson, Hamilton McCubbin, and associates (1983) studied



1,140 couples and 412 of their adolescents in normal families throughout the United States to find how families cope with specific strains across the family life cycle. They pinpointed frequent stressors by period when each occurred and found which families coped best with them. They concluded that high levels of marital and family strength may serve a preventive function in helping families avoid strain as well as cope with stress. Their most recent summary (Olson, Lavee & McCubbin, in press) reports that family cohesion, seen as emotional bonding of family members to one another, is associated with relatively low levels of strain and high levels of a sense of well-being.

Generational Support. The Minnesota study of 312 generationally linked families (Hill, Foote, Aldous, Carlson, & McDonald, 1970) brought new awareness of the mutual support given and received by older and younger generations in families. The myth of the vulnerable little family, isolated from generational support, has been completely shattered by this and other longitudinal family studies.

Ted Caplow's team replicated the Lynds' classic Middletown studies of 1929 and 1937. Despite the rapid social change over more than fifty years, it is continuity more than change that characterizes Middletown's families. Grown children are more like their parents than members of their own generation. They see more of their relatives than their closest friends; and most of them express affection for their parents throughout their lives (Caplow, Bahr, Chadwick, Hill, & Williamson, 1982). Parent-adult child solidarity research across six dimensions is challenging (Bengtson, Cutler, Mangen, & Marshall, 1985); as is the Kulis' (1987) study of how intergenerational mobility influences relationships between elderly parents and their adult children.

The Gerontological Society of America's *Ties that Bind* reports interdependence of generations in families: "Families share a wide range of intergenerational relationships and resources . . . as part of their care-giving and care-receiving interchange" (Kingson, Hirshorn, & Cornman, 1986, p. 51). This is especially encouraging now when increasing numbers of old people need long-term care, when more women are employed, and when there is a decreasing proportion of two-parent households, all of which affect the ability of families to care for their infirm elders.

Gunhild Hagestad (1984) has found continuity of parent-child relationships into adulthood. And, a study of 2,044 members of three-generation families finds parental attitudes significantly predict grown children's orientations. Further, "evidence of significant influence upward through the generations suggests that the family may act as an agent of social change" (Glass, Bengtson, & Dunham, 1986, p. 696). It seems that family developmental tasks have a multigenerational dimension that makes a positive contribution to the strength of families and of society.

Cultural and Social Class Factors. American families are a polyglot mix of black, white, red, and yellow peoples of first, second, third, and more generations from all regions of the world in all walks of life. Many families maintain their own ethnic, racial, and religious cultures with pride in their roots and values. This makes for great differences in family developmental tasks and the ways in which families go about accomplishing them.

My doctoral research (Duvall, 1946), comparing mothers in four social classes from "Back of the Yards" to Chicago's affluent Northshore, found middle- and upper-class mothers more than lower class, concerned with the development of their children and themselves. In 1949, Elder explored traditional and developmental conceptions of fatherhood; and in 1954, Connor, Johannis, and Walters investigated intrafamily conceptions of father, mother, and child in another sample. Recently, middle-class mothers are found to be more individualistic in their parenting than are those of lower social strata (Reilly, Entwistle, & Doering, 1987). In 1965, Chilman reminded us that children in poor families have poor impulse control, low self-esteem, and poor interpersonal relationships compared to socially successful children.

Culture sets norms for family development tasks, here as everywhere else. Every society makes demands upon its members, so differences in individual and family developmental tasks are inevitable. Despite all the differences between families around the world, and throughout time, family development is common to all humans. All families everywhere form, grow, mature, and eventually dissolve. It is this universality that accounts in part for the wide usage of the family development conceptual framework.

Family Development in Use

Family therapists tell us that they know something of what to expect of new clients when they first meet, if they know three things: (a) the relationship of the person(s) to others at home, (b) stage of their family life cycle, and (c) their cultural and ethnic orientation. So, too, others in the helping professions (doctors, nurses, social workers, and educators at all levels) find family development helpful in anticipating and understanding current concerns of those they serve.

Illustrations from current professional practice are many. NCFR's Committee on Standards and Certification has a framework for life span family life education (Arcus, 1987). Textbooks with a family development focus for primary, secondary, college, and adult education are abundantly available. Gerontologists report which family members give and receive help within the generations of families (Aldous, 1987; Aldous, Klaus, & Klein, 1985; Shanas, 1973; Shanas, 1980). Family research teams organize their studies by stages of the family life cycle as Olson and McCubbin (1983) have demonstrated so productively.

Psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, and other professionals of the Association of Psychiatric Centers of America (Duvall, 1987) gave their 1987 award for our family contributions to mental health. Community programs designed to help family members with their developmental tasks have been quietly at work for many years (Hardy, 1965; Hummel & Smith, 1959). Schools increasingly use our conceptual framework in their work with students and teachers (Johnson, 1976), as have religious programs of the various faiths for many years.

In 1987, the sixth edition of *Marriage and Family Development* (Duvall and Miller, 1985) was translated into Indonesian, extending our family leadership in Japan, Korea, Taiwan, The Philippines, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, and India. This has continued ever since 1954, when we led family development conferences and seminars throughout Southeast Asia, as we had already done in the Caribbean area and through Scandinavia.

The *American Journal of Nursing* gave its 1977 Book of the Year Award to our fifth edition of *Marriage and Family Development* (1977) in recognition of its usage in schools of nursing nationally. The American Academy of General Practice cites our work in upgrading



physicians' family orientation, and one of its members (Medalie, 1979) details physicians' use of our basic concepts. The Cooperative Extension Service of USDA has recognized our training of their 4-H and adult leaders in youth and family development over four decades.

Now the University of South Florida at Sarasota has established an endowed Chair in Family Development with continuity in perpetuity, guaranteed under the State of Florida's Eminent Scholars Act. NCFR participates in this ongoing program of seminars, workshops, conferences, professional training, and this Distinguished Lectureship.

Research and Theory Potentials

Family development is unique among frameworks for family study in: (a) its family life cycle dimension that provides a basis for study of families over time; (b) its emphasis on the developmental tasks of individual family members and of families at every stage of their development; (c) its built-in recognition of family stress at critical periods in development; and (d) its recognition ever since 1947 of the need for services, supports, and programs for families throughout their family life cycles. These contributions to family study merit the further refinement of the family development conceptual framework's underlying premises.

Family development's interdisciplinary origins and accretions have resulted in confused and incomplete theory. Professional agenda for the next 40 years might clarify concepts into a more coherent unity of individual life-span development with family development than we have currently. Today's promise could become tomorrow's better design for the study of interaction between family members, between the generations, between families, and with society through its institutions.

Family development bristles with questions to be explored. Its many hypotheses call for validity testing. For instance, does success with family developmental tasks bring success with later tasks (Magrabi & Marshall, 1965)? What precisely are the effects of our many subcultures upon their family developmental tasks? How can the dynamic elements of critical transitions be caught qualitatively and quantitatively? Are family developmental tasks multigenerational? . . . in what ways? . . . when? . . . in which families?

Emerging realities of American family life call for extensive research in

family development. For instance, how can separated, divorced, remarried, redivorced, and rebled families best be seen through their checkered careers? What about the family life cycles of single parent families (Hill, 1986)? . . . of teenage mothers? . . . of gay couples and their kin? . . . of families in communes? . . . How does increased longevity affect family developmental tasks? . . . When and under what circumstances can family stress be anticipated? . . . prepared for? . . . given community and generational support? . . . influence family policy nationally?

Each of us has our own time in history. Mine gave me personal contact with the great early scholars in our field and a role in conceptualizing family development from its inception. Yours offers the more exacting task of formulating sound theory and conducting the studies that may someday culminate in family development's full maturity.

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