

Structural Functionalism

Sees the family as a social institution that performs certain essential functions for society. If these functions are not carried out then the family is said to be dysfunctional. The family is like our body that has different parts and each part has a different function.

Symbolic Interactionism

Subjective meanings are important because it is believed that people in families behave based on what they believe and not just on what is objectively true. Families are thought to be socially constructed through the interpretations of roles by the members in it.

Systems Theory

Individuals cannot be understood in isolation from one another, but rather as a part of their family, as the family is a whole unit. All members are impacted when one is. There are boundaries and rules.

Social Exchange Theory

Family choices are made through a process of negotiated exchanges between parties. This theory proposes that human relationships are formed by the use of a subjective cost-benefit analysis and the comparison of alternatives.

Conflict Theory

The family is an example of social inequality within a society. Family is a social arrangement often benefiting men more than women.

Feminism

Traditionally women and female children have been and continue to be in some cases disadvantaged in several respects within the nuclear family.

Post Modernism

Society has entered a new chaotic phase where there is no dominant family type and there are more opportunities and freedom to create family relationships which are more suitable for certain individuals. Old theories don't fit and need to be reworked or abandoned.

Queer Theory

Queer families and queer individuals should resist past definitions and constraints of "normal" so this means all things oppressively respectable and appropriate, especially norms pertaining to gender and sexuality and family life ex. mom and dad having to be female and male to be normal.