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The contemporary plurality of family forms¹

1. Introduction

The concept of "reconstituted family" refers to a specific type of family in contemporary society. Yet in a broader perspective, we may even say that in our time *the* family is being "reconstituted". While in their everyday lives people experience structural difficulties in creating the kind of family they would like to live in, they also have a desire to explore, to experience and to define for themselves and for others the "social" meanings of family. At the same time, we observe an enormous rise in concern for the family and in activities by private groups, by the professions, by social agencies and by the state, aimed in general at the family. It may well be said that never before in the history of Western society have so many people been engaged in debating what the family is and what it should be.

Over the last three decades, most Western societies have witnessed to varying degrees a decline in the number of children in families, larger proportions of couples or of women who decide to remain childless, and an historically rising number of divorces, remarriages, and redivorces. There are women who want a child, but do not wish to live with their child's father, as well as lesbian and gay couples with children, who also claim to be families. As a result, we have become increasingly aware of a plurality of family forms or types. But historians tell us that almost none of these family forms is really new, except for some forms resulting from progress in reproductive medicine, which are small in number, although their symbolic significance may be great, especially since they threaten the ancient principle of "mater semper certa est".

Historically new, however, is the general, even popular knowledge that there is a diversity of family forms, combined with claims of accepting this diversity, refraining from advocacy of a notion of "normality" and, consequently, recognizing many forms of families without reservation. The challenges for the social sciences are obvious, particularly for family sociology. Like most schools of contemporary sociology, including both theoretically and empirically oriented ones, family sociology pays attention to the social relevance of different systems and categories of knowledge. It should thus be well-prepared to make significant contributions to a rational discourse on the family going well beyond the boundaries of academia.

Such a task requires that we direct our attention both to contemporary "family rhetoric" and to empirical data about how the family is experienced in different segments of the population. It is recommended that we examine the interplay between behavior and knowledge, both popular and scientific. Indeed, as a general point of departure, we suggest that the concept of "family plurality" be used in referring to both contemporary changes in behavior *and* conceptions on the family. These two kinds of change influence one another reciprocally, contribute to the development of the specific role of the family within processes of societal development at large, and simultaneously affect ongoing struggles over the social recognition and political structuring of family forms.

I will assert that the sociologist's role is not to take a stand on the struggle over a "politically correct" definition of the family, be it "progressive" or "conservative". Nor would I wish to accept the claim that "we should not define the family" (Bernardes 1991). Rather, I see our task as one of striving to create a set of concepts and propositions which will take into account the plurality of family forms, notions and perspectives found in everyday life. Thus, one task of contemporary family sociology is to identify the dimensions of the concept of family and its neighboring concepts and to explore their

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semantic and pragmatic space. This requires that we involve ourselves with what could be labeled "conceptual propaedeutics" as part of the analysis of "family rhetoric". This is the focus of this paper.

2. The diversity of concepts and of perspectives

a) A sample of terms

insert overview 1 here!

Overview 1 displays some of the concepts which are introduced and used in recent scholarly and popular (non-fictional) publications on the family. This list is not exhaustive and cannot be so. It should, however, suffice to indicate the semantic space in which contemporary typological boundaries of the family are located. Schematically, three dimensions can be distinguished. First, the types and ways of founding families (Nos. 1, 2), second, the characterizations of important tasks in everyday life (Nos. 3-8) and, third, the phases of family biographies, including newly 'reconstituted' families (family reconstitution) (Nos. 9-12). The list also includes designations which aim at an historical characterization of the contemporary family or of one of its significant forms (No. 13-16). If an aspect is emphasized, this is based on the (largely implicit) assumption that the emphasized state of affairs is constitutive for family behavior and the understanding of the family and also affects other dimensions of the family.

Ignoring older terms, the list provides more recent labels. Traditional forms, such as, for example, family formation through "adoption", are not presented separately. Also omitted is the type "single-parent family", which plays a major role in the contemporary discussion, since the concept is widely known to be ambiguous. It refers to the foundation of families by unmarried mothers, as well as to family forms which arise after the death of a partner or after divorce. In rare cases individual persons may also adopt children. In the case of unmarried mothers, it must additionally be distinguished whether they live with their child's (or children's) father, or with another partner, or with the child (or children) alone.

The meanings of many concepts can be inferred from the labels employed to illustrate them. Thus, clarifications can be kept simple. Gross et al. (1990), and Hoffmann-Riem (1988), refer to the new possibilities which have been created by reproductive medicine. The resulting forms are marked by third-party participations in the process of family foundation. Hoffmann-Riem presents, drawing on the insights of adoption research, the significance of this form of family formation for the "identity" of the child and its parents. Von Trotha (1990) points to new relational patterns which result, as a consequence of cohabitation, for in-law-relationships between generations. The terms suggested by Peuckert (1989), and other scholars (No. 6), refer to forms arising from the circumstance that large numbers of women are pursuing their own careers. Characteristic here is the emphasis on the form of marriage or partnership. Beck (1986), and Gergen (1991), point out that "relationships" in contemporary families are "precarious" and therefore require constant attention. Dychtwald/Flower (1989) stresses that new tasks arise for families in the course of their biography. Thus, similar to businesses, families must continually create new organizational patterns (matrices) for themselves.

It is no coincidence that many designations refer to "reconstituted families". Attention is called to the successive marriages which, as shown by Furstenberg (1988), are in part due to the specific significance of marriage for the American middle class. Ley and Borer (1992), and other authors as well, speak of "successive families" as a collective term for a variety of forms of "reconstituted families". Bernstein (1988) is more precise in this regard: she suggests using the term to refer only to families including children from earlier partnerships along with the offspring of the current relationship.

A number of authors attempt to draw upon the historical context of the family. Supported by insights from family therapy, Buchholz (1990), writes about a more or less "marginal" type: families formed by militant members of the "1968 Movement" who clearly reject traditional marriage and family concepts. Shorter (1989) draws attention to the effects of changed sexual behavior, especially in marriages characterized by a hedonistic orientation and emphasis on an understanding of the relationship as based on reciprocal exchange (as opposed to love). Hoffman-Nowotny (1989) uses the term "hybrid family" to refer to a contemporary family in which two relational patterns collide: that

of "Gesellschaft" ("society"), within the marriage, and that of "Gemeinschaft" ("community"), between parents and children. Dizard & Gadlin (1990: 23) center their label "minimal family" around the following analysis: "The modern family is the result of the interplay between a growing economy that seeks to stimulate steadily expanding consumption and individuals whose personal lives are increasingly predicated upon egalitarian and democratic forms of interaction. The consequence of this interplay is movement toward family forms that stimulate further individuation and, in the long run, diminish the hold that family relationships have on individuals."

b) Interpretation

In order to interpret this overview I consider the following facts as important. First, most of these concepts and the underlying analyses have, implicitly or explicitly, as their background the model type of the "bürgerliche Familie" (bourgeois family)¹, which has long moulded public opinion and social scientific discussion, and to a certain degree still influences it. Second, labeling a type of family, by attributing or inventing a new term, can be seen as a first step toward social recognition and institutionalization (because language is the most general social institution). Such labels, especially if viewed as scientific, may influence our perception of reality. Third, with each new designation attention is called to an individual type, and at the same time the image of the plurality of family forms is changed. This is again of relevance for the understanding of the family as a social category and of the related conceptions of the family as a universal social form.

The ideal-model of the late 19th and early 20th century "bürgerliche Familie" clearly understands "family" as a specific, developmentally ordered sequence or configuration of marriage linked with the start of a private household. As a rule, this status transition was preceded by a 'commitment' (e.g. "Verlobnis"), known at least to members of the family and other close acquaintances and, more importantly, marriage had to be followed by childbearing. In this way, a new nucleus was created, clearly distinguished, but not separated from different levels of kinship. It had its privacy, to be respected by the social environment and by the state. There was a clear gender-based division of domains and activities, in which the wife bore the main responsibility for maintaining the internal solidarity of the family.

A closer analysis of the concept of family, taking the model of the "bürgerliche Familie" as its reference, leads to the insight that it may be necessary to make the following distinctions in analyzing family rhetoric. First, among marriage or partnership, parenthood, household and kinship; certain concepts of family refer to only one of these components, others refer to constellations of components. Second, among empirical patterns of behavior and theoretical (or conceptual) characterizations. Third, among cases where metaphors are present or absent.

Furthermore, it may be useful to distinguish three levels of discourse: (a) the family as a basic societal category, e.g. "the" family, (b) "family types", i.e. the description of specific features or constellations of features (qualities, modes of behavior) considered characteristic for the structure, behavior and development of empirically observable families, and (c) an individual family, in discourse referring to features (qualities, modes of behavior) viewed by members or by outsiders as the expression of personal experiences or of a personal understanding of one's own family.

These distinctions may be useful in developing a "definition of definitions", a discourse which can deal formally with the many ways the term "family" is used. For this purpose, I would also draw attention to the fact that most concepts of family used in contemporary discourse (in Western societies) focus on the organisation of intergenerational relationships. Furthermore, implicitly or explicitly, these concepts indicate that certain forms of these organizations are or should become socially recognized, whereas other forms do not deserve such recognition. In this view, families (as a social category) in contemporary Western industrial society may be defined as socially recognized and legitimized life-forms constituted primarily through the tasks of structuring enduring relationships between parents and children and between parents themselves. This "operational definition" not only takes into account the patterns of behavior, but also the processes of legitimization which may lead to the acceptance or rejection of certain forms.

¹The term "bürgerliche Familie" ("bourgeois family") is here used in a strictly analytical, e.g. historical sense.

The interrelatedness of behavioral patterns and institutional acceptance has long been rather neglected in family analysis. Tolerable as long as the institutional component remained stable, such an approach is inappropriate in the present situation. In modern welfare states, struggles over recognition take place in the fields of family law and family policy. The latter not only presupposes a notion of the family, but is also a way of reinforcing change and even disclaiming certain societal definitions of the family. Explicitly defined, the term family policy here refers to public activities, measures and organizations seeking to recognize, support, complement, examine and influence the actions and achievements of families. As such, and with reference to general political values, family policy legitimizes the social forms to be recognized as "families".

At this point it may be appropriate to make a distinction between family politics and family policy. The latter represents the outcome of the former, namely the (pragmatic) impact of political forces and ideologies upon the family as articulated within legislative bodies and in the political arena as a whole.

3. Dealing with plurality and pluralization

Any description of plurality and of the process of pluralization depends upon the categories used for the description of family forms or types. Since categories arise from the process of analysis and its aims, these analytic processes have an influence on the findings and interpretations of family sociologists. Thus, we can distinguish two or more types of pluralization. In each case categorization processes affect our understanding of "pluralization".

For example, in regard to family formation by married or unmarried women through the birth of a first child, we can distinguish between the conception of a child within or outside of marriage, and with the latter case, between mothers who give birth out of wedlock and those who marry during pregnancy. All family formations can be classified using these four categories. The spectrum of possibilities is basically the same today as in earlier periods. However, the quantitative distribution may have changed. Previously dominant forms have declined and minority forms increased in importance. Thus, the spectrum of family forms is, all in all, more evenly occupied. Viewed quantitatively, this also means that there has been a decline in the frequency of family forms previously regarded as normal. From a qualitative perspective, this also corresponds to a weakening or retrenchment of older conceptions of normality.¹

Starting with this example, in a first definitional attempt, the plurality of family forms may be objectively measured by the distribution of different family types within a given (traditional) spectrum of possibilities. Consequently, we may speak of an ongoing process of pluralization, if over a period of time the distribution of the different types becomes more uniform, e.g. major types decline quantitatively, while minor types increase quantitatively. We may label this kind of pluralization as primary (or endogenous). In addition, we may detect differential developments by comparing different populations within a given society, for example according to their nationality or religion. If the processes in these segments follow a different pace or pattern, a secondary (or exogenous) level of pluralization may be inferred to be present. Where this occurs, it adds a new quality to the processes of pluralization which may be politically quite relevant.

However, since any description or measurement of plurality depends on the categories used to describe and distinguish the types, in other words, on their categorial construction, we may want to identify, in addition to the quantitative pluralization described above, a second kind of pluralization, which is primarily related to conceptual differentiation and innovation. This kind of pluralization is dependent upon the perspective from which family types and family behaviors are observed and interpreted. An obvious example is the case of step-parent families, where the notion of "patchwork-family" suggests a differentiation between families in which the children stem solely from previous partnerships, and families where there are, in addition, offspring from the new partnership or marriage. Or, in studying processes of family formation, it may be suggested that we should pay attention to "late motherhood", i. e. women becoming mothers after age 35 (or 40).

¹ We have developed these notions of plurality in an analysis of types of family formation in Switzerland (Lüscher/Engstler 1991), and Baden-Württemberg (Engstler et al. 1992).

Even though phenomena may not be new, the act of labeling them may create the impression of an ongoing process of differentiation. I therefore like to speak in this context of "conceptual pluralization", characterized as the attempt to "define" new types or forms of families in reference to qualities which are relevant to a public institutional perspective.¹

This kind of pluralization is bound to a process of labeling, which in turn is part of the ongoing public discourse on the family and on family politics. It is observable in fields where professionals play a major role, especially medicine, psychology and social work. Members of these professions are in a position to label certain kinds of family behaviors and family structures as warranting special attention, as problematic or as needing to be the target of public activities. Ultimately, some labels may be introduced into regulations, even into the laws which govern family policies. - Less obtrusive forms of this labeling process are reflected in the categories used in professional textbooks or manuals for family counseling and therapy. Other sorts of labels may be popularized by the mass media and influence general public opinion. Here, the boundaries to contemporary folklore are fluid, as may be seen in popular labels such as "DINKS" (double income, no kids).

New labels and new types may be examined in regard to their pragmatic consequences which can be of two kinds. First, labels may suggest or denote qualities of family structures and behaviors which family members themselves consider meaningful. Second, labels may be relevant for others dealing with the family, as mentioned above in regard to professional activities.

In a certain sense, all three kinds of plurality are intertwined to the extent that they influence general public opinion on the family and its development. Thus, plurality is an important aspect of any analysis of the family in contemporary Western societies, and here again behaviors and conceptions are mutually influencing.

4. Family plurality in "postmodern" societies

Among the different approaches to understanding contemporary societies, the discourse on postmodernity may be useful as a general frame of reference for family analysis in regard to the following three aspects: First, empirically, because theories of postmodernity have the radical pluralization of labels and life-forms as one of their points of departure. Second, methodologically, because postmodern analysis stresses the relevance of semiotics, i.e. the necessity of paying attention to different levels of discourse and their ambivalent connections with "real" actions and behaviors. Third, pragmatically, because postmodern thinking raises the question of what is meant by individuality (or subjectivity), and whether an awareness of "personal identity" is at all possible. Postmodern discourse addresses itself (at least implicitly) to the process of socialization, which is almost universally seen as the core function or task of the family.

These aspects have been elaborated in the ongoing discussion of cultural manifestations for which the label 'postmodern' is used. If we agree that works of art can be seen as symbolic manifestations of major societal concerns, a basic connection can be assumed between artistic, literary and architectural or sociological interpretations of current themes concerning human sociability. Increasingly attempts are made to interpret the postmodern within a sociological framework. One interpretive approach tries to locate it in a ideal-historical spectrum (e.g. Gitlin, 1989; Boyne & Rattansi, 1990). Donati (1989: 167) interprets the ongoing historical transition from an epistemological point of view:

The passage from the pre-modern to the modern happens if the existence of events and phenomena is no longer taken for granted, but becomes problematized. This leads to an interest in modes of experience and of cognition. But modernity still presupposes the existence of "subjects". Postmodern thinking rises out of radical doubts over this convention.

Another interpretive approach elaborates on specific features of postmodernity. Thus Welsch (1987) emphasizes what he calls "radical plurality". He suggests that we speak of truths, of justices and of humanities in the plural.

¹ Within our own research program we have looked at these processes in regard to "late motherhood": See: Engstler/Lüscher 1992.

I wish to emphasize here that the pluralism of our time not only displays a high level of differentiation: it also embraces all spheres and levels of social life, the private as well as the public domains, the economy as well as the arts. This omnipresence is highly correlated with the mutual interpenetration and mutual interdependence of domains and of systems of knowledge. To put it simply: There is a notion and a feeling that everything depends upon everything else, that our daily actions are dependent upon and affect large numbers of other people. We may not know them; but we can include them in our thinking on the social world. The media often suggest that we have access to them. Reference groups proliferate, and in specific ways partially abstract, partially personalized. Life in the contemporary world thereby becomes life under conditions of overwhelming multi-perspectivity.¹

Postmodernism, then, may be understood as a general concept which in effect represents a package of theses on characteristics of contemporary Western societies. There seems to be a great plurality of private life styles, particularly in the area of living arrangements. While these are not necessarily historically new forms, the spectrum of possibilities - as mentioned above - is distributed more evenly, and there is less consensus on what the ideals of normality should be than there once was. These ideals have also lost their attractiveness. Moreover, the plurality of private life styles is an object of continuing public awareness and even of discussion. This may be explicit, for example, when the plurality is described, ideas of normality are attacked, or rare forms are dealt with at length. It may also be implicit, for example, in the vast quantity and variety of everyday consumer goods offered in the commercial market place. From childhood on, commercials constantly draw people's attention to this abundance.

By selecting from among these offered goods, people can obtain the material goods needed for leading a great variety of distinct lifestyles. More generally still, for the first time in history information is not in short supply, but available in abundance. This is a consequence of the ever-present media. They juxtapose existentially relevant goods with trivial everyday consumer goods, eyewitness reports on wars with detailed reports on local sporting events, objective reports on foreign cultures with sensationalistic portrayals full of primitive sexual voyeurism. The immediate sensory experience is one of images related to (artificial) realities, often produced only for entertainment purposes. This social situation offers the individual a multitude of life perspectives, and also brings to consciousness the need to choose among the many available alternatives. An important aspect of the situation is that the present, the here-and-now of dealing with current choices and decisions, draws attention to and predominates over not only the future, but also the past, and does so to an extent unparalleled in human history. For the modern period, in contrast, the dominant orientation was toward the future.

The plurality of life perspectives makes possible a multitude of life-courses, of ways to conceptualize personal identity, but it also underlines the need to become conscious of oneself as an individual. Reflection may go so far as to question the concept of the subject; i.e. whether the individual is at all capable of becoming conscious of her/his own identity. Under these social circumstances, the individual is constantly required to orient her-/himself and to make decisions. Individuality entails continuous reinforcement and stabilization of personal identity. One might say that the individual person needs to master social plurality within her/himself and her/his own actions. This also means that the brunt of responsibility for social integration is transferred "to" the individual, and further, to important personal (intimate) relationships. This is particularly apparent in regard to the widespread interest in one's personal life course, with the ensuing specific understanding of biography as an individual achievement.

¹One may understand the concept of perspectives in two different ways. First, one may define it - in a way approximating that of everyday usage - as the organization of perception and related experiences. Multi-perspectivity, then, refers to the awareness of different points of view. It entails the probability of juxtapositions and of contradictions. Within a sociological theory of action, we may use a second definition of the concept of perspectives. It draws upon the ideas of G.H. Mead, and more generally speaking, of pragmatistic (i.e. pragmatic in the way Peirce defined the term) orientations. Here, a perspective is defined as the objective expression of an interpretation of the interrelationships between people and their life worlds. Perspectives contain an element of reflection. They become, in this way, constituents of personal identity (Lüscher 1990). If one accepts the pragmatistic notion of perspective, one will probably also accept that nowadays most people live under conditions of continuous exposure to alternative choices and to claims as to the best definition of personal identity. This entails a high probability of ambiguity and ambivalence.

In view of this general sociological characterization of the postmodern, two basic interpretations of the plurality of family life forms (of which we have distinguished three different meanings) are possible. According to the first interpretation, the plurality of family life forms is a consequence of social developments which are highly problematic, because they point to the growing difficulties which exist for the free unfolding of the person. This is to a certain extent a pessimistic view which perceives the pluralization of family life forms as the expression of societal anomie. The argumentation of the second interpretation is just the opposite. Here it is asserted that the plurality of family forms is the consequence of parents' efforts to find and to live out identities for themselves and their children under the difficult conditions of contemporary social life. According to this interpretation, the plurality of family forms is an indication not of anomie, but rather of resistance to anomie.

It is difficult to reach a definitive conclusion about which of these interpretations is correct. Still, in the end they demarcate the two poles between which current family research moves. In turn, these two poles emphatically point to the special scope of the analysis of reconstituted families.

5. The special relevance of "reconstituted families"

Reconstituted families hold an important place in the analysis of contemporary family forms. Empirically, it is significant that their numbers are increasing, although it is difficult to obtain reliable data. This is again related to factors which contribute to the conceptual and theoretical relevance of this family form. In fact, the topics which I have dealt with in my general considerations on the plurality of families in contemporary societies are again more or less centered around processes of reconstituting families. Two important considerations are the following:

First, if we locate the core of the family in the parent/child relationship, then in a general sense we can speak of a reconstitution of the family whenever this relationship radically changes, for example through the death of a parent, through desertion, separation or divorce. Under certain circumstances, it may be of relevance whether parents were married or not.

Second, in a more narrow sense, one can speak of reconstitution when (after a separation in the former sense) children enter into new close daily relations with an adult who, through marriage or partnership with a parent, is destined to assume the role of stepmother or stepfather. - This thereby reconstituted family can be expanded by the birth of own children to form a more or less "extended reconstituted family". Additional increases and differentiations can be accomplished by further separations or partnerships. These transformations also alter family networks.

Thus, I would like to suggest as a most general proposition that the growing interest in reconstituted families is not only due to their rising numbers; in addition, it is due to the fact that they display combinations of the structural features of the contemporary family in general and serve as the focus of manifold concerns about contemporary families. To summarize briefly:

* The problematization of the possibilities of personal identity is today especially apparent in the phenomenon of reconstituted families, especially in regard to its effects on young children. For one thing, the latter experience family-internal conflicts and sometimes competing personal (intimate) relationships. These challenges already existed in earlier times but they are - more or less synergistically - bound up with the increased demands (and problematization) of identity creation characteristic of life in "postmodern" societies.

* Different but related logics of relationships and strategies come into play in reconstituted families and interact in the formation of relationships between partners, parents and children, relatives, and also in social networks. The analysis of these relational structures furthers the development of insights into the specific features of individual forms of relationships, and also into the possibilities (and limits) of their synthesis.

Taking into account the processes of differentiation considered above, the often difficult phases of transition, and the tasks of finding new patterns of adaptation, we can easily understand why reconstituted families are a focal point of those professions providing services, counselling and therapy to families. Especially apparent from various examples are the different fields in which practical welfare work and, more generally, family policy have effect. One may especially consider the difference between showing respect for others independence and choosing to intervene in their lives, between defending the rights of individual family members (especially children) and promoting

the overriding interests of the group (the "system"), and between the perspectives or systems of knowledge of experts and those of participants themselves.

All these topics are of interest in view of the situation and the development of the family and society in general. And this is why interest in reconstituted families is acquiring increasing sociological significance, namely in that it makes us aware of various possibilities for understanding family relationships in particular and social relationships in general.

Key-words

Reconstituted families, family pluralization, postmodern families, perspectivity, family sociology ,

Abstract

The growing interest in 'reconstituted' families is due not only to their increasing frequency, but also to an awareness of the complex array of factors affecting contemporary families. Thus, the analysis of reconstituted families is usefully embedded within the current discourse on pluralization, the problematization of personal identity, and most generally, on the role of the family in 'postmodern' societies.

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Overview 1: (to be inserted p. 2)
Sample of family conceptualizations in current publications

Authors	Term	Characteristics
(1) Gross, Hohner, 1990	"Multiple Elternschaft" (multiple parenthood)	Configurations made possible by reproductive medicine, especially IVF
(2) Hoffman-Riem, 1988	"Fragmentierte Elternschaft" (Fragmented parenthood)	As above
(3) von Trotha, 1990	"Temporäre Schwiegerfamilie" (temporary family-in-law)	Relations of parents to the unmarried partners of their children
(4) Peuckert, 1989	"Commuter-Ehe" (commuter marriage)	The alternation between living together and separately due to spatially separate places of employment or for other reasons
(Several authors)	"dual-career-families"	Negotiation of biographical contingencies
(6) Beck, 1986	"Verhandlungsfamilie auf Zeit" (Negotiative family of limited duration)	Necessarily strengthened family ties as a reaction to centrifugal tendencies
(7) Gergen, 1991	"micro-wave relationships"	Family as a network of changing configurations depending upon different tasks in the life-course
(8) Dychtwald, 1988	"Matrix family"	Marriages/families after second divorce
(9) Brody et al., 1988	"Serial marriages"	Structural consequences of divorce and remarriage
(10) Furstenberg, 1988	"Sukzessiven" (Successive marriages)	Families in a second or third partnership
(11) Ley/Borer, 1992	"Fortsetzungsfamilie" (Successive families)	

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| (12) Bernstein, 1988 | "Patchworkfamilie" |
| (13) Bucholz, 1990 | "Antifamilie-Familien" |
| (14) Shorter, 1989 | "Postmoderne Familie" |
| (15) Hoffman-Nowotny, 1988 | "Hybridfamilien" |
| (16) Dizard/Cadlin, 1990 | "Minimal-Familie" |

Stepfamilies with own child

Families founded by '68 activists with ambivalent attitudes toward the family

New family relations as a consequence of new sexual behaviors

Families marked by the fusion and contradictions of "Gemeinschaft" and "Gesellschaft"

Families affected by the contradictions between individuation and the subordination of personal to group identity.