

## Murdock (1949): The 4 Functions of the Family

- 1) Teaching Sexuality & Gender Roles
- 2) Reproduction
- 3) Primary Socialisation
- 4) Economic Security



### Evaluations

Very 'Rosy' picture of the family  
Old-Fashioned  
Ignore suppressive and destructive sides to the family (i.e. they ignore dysfunction):  
Ignores Family Diversity & the fact other forms of family can carry out all of the functions that Murdock & Parsons argue are only suited to the Nuclear Family i.e. it is not necessarily universal

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## Parsons (1955): 2 Functions of the Family

- 1) Primary Socialisation:
- 2) The Stabilisation of Human Personalities:

### Parsons (1955) 'Functional Fit' Theory

Industrialisation created the need for families to be:

- > GEOGRAPHICALLY MOBILE
- > SOCIALLY MOBILE

Functionalism argues that the 'Nuclear Family' is the most efficient form of family in meeting Society's Functional Pre-Requisites.

### Evaluations

Laslett (1972) – Most Pre-Industrial Families were in fact Nuclear.

Young & Willmott (1973) –

The hardships of early industrial society meant that the extended family were needed more than ever.

'Functional Fit Theory' ignores multiculturalism and the fact that the extended family is still popular amongst certain social groups.

Marxist and Feminist critiques of functions of family

## Parsons: The Biological Division of Labour

Segregated Roles:

Instrumental Role taken on by male

Expressive Role taken on by Females



Evaluations  
Outdated ideas criticised by Feminists for simplistic portrayal of women

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