

# Myth of model family

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The image of the model family is breathtaking, a housewife-mother, a breadwinner father, a couple of kids and a pet or two. This is the dream of most Americans but at the same time is a cliché. "The "traditional" family... has existed for little more than two hundred years". This idea has been so widely accepted due to the attention that it has received in the media. Like Gary Soto in "Looking for Work" the perfect family misleads people into thinking what is truth and what is fiction.

Of course the truth is that there is no such thing as the "perfect" family. One family cannot represent all the variation of families all around the world. The universal nuclear family is the same with the stay-at-home mother, the breadwinner father, a couple of children and maybe a pet or two. Preferably, people would like to see what a family should be or act like, but not everyone is the same. Each and every culture is different, with each of them having their own definition or idea of what the model family is like.

In Soto's "Looking for Work" the story is about a child's expectance of a family life filled with love and comforts, which is contrast with his real working class family life. In the story Soto, back at the age of nine, dream to live is a life where his family is straightforward in their routine. Soto lived in a working class family that had only a breadwinner mother and three children. There was no mention of a father. Over the years there has been the question of who has the authority in an American family. It used to be the male of the family who had the most authority.

Over the years, that has slowly changed. As in Soto's story he lives with his mom and no mention of a dad. Today there are families that have two fathers or two mothers or only one of each and not the other. The idea of the

“ perfect” model family is so widely accepted, due to the attention that it receives in the media. So the idea of two fathers, or two mothers, is a rare thing to see on a television show. But who in the media decides what a family is? The media has a lot of influence over what we think a family is.

For example, Soto’s idea of his family being perfect came from him watching Father Knows Best. It gave him the idea that there is a certain way a family should act that he “ so much wanted to imitate it” . Every one has his or hers own definition of what a family is. Soto’s idea of a family, was given by the media, not his own idea. In Soto’s family there was a difference between the American family and other families. Soto’s family ate “ beans and tortillas in the stifling heat of [the] kitchen” . A perfect family would have turkey for dinner and apple pie for desert.

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Like Soto we often see other people’s families differently than we see our own. In other words people can be “ blinded” to the truth of a family. People have said that a person deprived of sight “ see” what the naked eye can’t. Yet they may not have the physical sight but have another kind of vision. The vision of seeing what they want to see. Many Americans only see what they want to see and not what is really there. This in turn goes back to the media who gives us this picture of what is and what should be rather than what really is.

In conclusion the perfect family is nothing other than a dream that Americans have. The dream if not having to worry about the image that they give off or the way they act. Ultimately there are many myths about the

perfect family, but it is up to the person to choose whether to follow some ones vision of a family, or to follow their own views of a family. One way or another a family is a family, no matter the family members because each family is special or “ perfect” in their own way.