

Marriage and family in updike's stories essay sample

[Family](#), [Divorce](#)



A new problem had arisen in the twentieth century. Divorces between couples were occurring more than ever, and divorce had become the main concern in the twentieth century. John Updike became interested in this topic and began to write on this topic. He became one of the greatest writers of the twentieth century. He has written some of the greatest stories, but all his stories have one thing in common. All of Updike's stories' themes are about family relationships, marriage, and divorce. This topic appears clearly in his three short stories Son, Still of Some Use, and The Lovely Troubled Women of our Old Crowd.

One of the main causes of family problems, resulting in divorces, is the disability of parents to compromise. Most of the time, parents disagree on something and the problem grows until dislike is created, resulting in a divorce. The parents usually divorce without thinking about the consequences of the divorce. And some of the consequences could be very harsh that parents would regret divorcing. One of the million consequences concerns children. Children are very sensitive and could be greatly affected by an act like divorce. One of the ways children could be affected by divorce is that the children won't marry, frightened that they would make the same mistake their parents did. This is shown in Updike's story The Lovely Troubled Women of our Old Crowd. In the story, the four girls Annie, Betsy, Jennifer, and Mary are in their mid twenties, and till now they are not married and don't think about getting married, as Updike said in his story,

Why don't they get married? You see them around town, getting older, little spinsters, pedaling bicycles to their pretty jobs or walking up the hill beside

the rocks with books in their arms. Annie Langhorne, Betsy Clay, Jennifer Wilcombe, Mary Jo Morison: we've known them all since they were two or three, and now they've reached their mid-twenties, back from college, back from year Abroad-grown women but not going anywhere?" (Updike, p. 39)

These four girls are greatly affected by their parents' divorces, and as a result they didn't get married.

Divorce also has other consequences rather than just children not divorcing. Another major problem of divorce is family break up. In the story Still of Some Use, the old games the family used to play with represent the family relationships. After years in the attic, Foster's ex-wife decided to clean out the attic. When the family was in the attic cleaning it out, they saw the old games, broken and ruined. The ruination of the games represents the break up of the family after the divorce. And their will to throw the games away shows how the family is broken up and would never heal, as it is shown in the story,

" Want to ride with me to the dump? Tommy asked. I would but I better go."
(Updike, p. 2)

This quote shows how the games will be thrown away and how the family will break up soon.

In Updike's last story, Son, many family problems are shown throughout the generations, but one of them is how parents get in fights and disagreements

in front or within the hearing range of their sons. In one of the generations, the narrator says,

Below him, irksome voices grind on, like machines working their way through tunnels. His parents each want something from the other. (Updike, p. 1070)

Here the narrator describes the disagreement and the hollering the son's parents get in to. With these fights and disagreements family relationships could and will easily break up.

Family relations should be kept strong in order for families to succeed in this world. With family problems, separations, and corrupted families will arise. Updike writes his stories about family relations to show the people how the homes and families of these generations are running. And he clearly showed that by stories, which include the three stories stated earlier.