

# Sociology families

Family



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Soci 1002 Presentation Is this really true, are afro-Caribbean families dysfunctional. In addressing this point, I will examine the sociology theorist Michael Garfield Smith. Smith believed that European family's norms and values are important in one way or another to the assimilation process and plays a major role in the afro- Caribbean families. He argued that the plantation destroyed African culture and he saw the plantation as the basis on which the Caribbean family structure was formed.

Smith had no doubt that the experience of previous generations on plantation has no doubt influenced the way in which subsequent generations were socialized, but he argues that over time families adjust to the present social conditions. European family norms was based mainly the nuclear family, but for afro-caribbean families there are several other types of families. These other types of afro- Caribbean families should be viewed as dysfunctional because it is not of what the European family norms consist of. The other types of afro-caribbean family structures are: The matrifocal family- The emergence and functioning of African slave families was adverse to the objectives of the plantation. Family units of the slaves were very often broken up and males were often sold to other plantations far away while the mother and her child were left to survive as a unit. On the other hand, there are other factors, however, which contributed to matrifocality in the contemporary Caribbean. These include migration, imprisonment of males, crime, and male marginalization. On the issue of male marginalization; the male on the plantation could not own property and had no family rights.

Hence the marginalization of the male in the Afro-Caribbean family started on the plantation and was further influenced by the aforementioned factors in the modern era. \* The visiting union- This is a frequent occurrence in the Caribbean it is domestic unit of a woman and her children. Here the mother and her children live apart of the father but may be visited but may be visited by a man which the mother shares a relationship with. \* The common law unit- Similar to the nuclear family, however it is an ongoing bond that without legal marriage. Here the spouses are committed to each other sexually and raise children in a stable relationship.