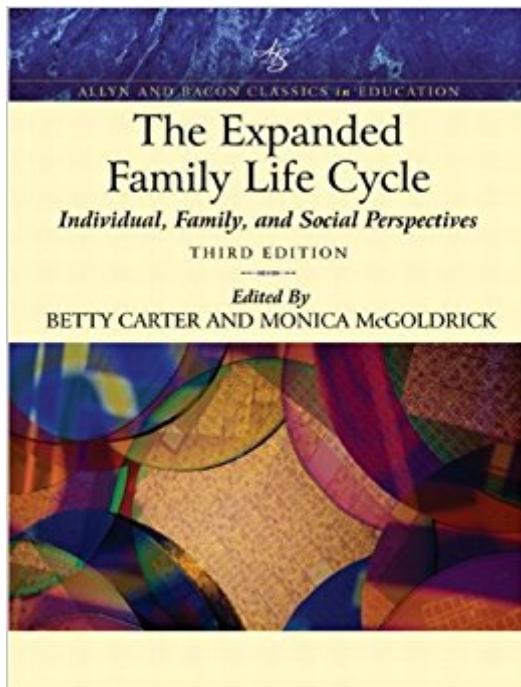


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# The Expanded Family Life Cycle : Individual, Family, And Social Perspectives (Allyn And Bacon Classics In Education)



## **Synopsis**

Now featured in a Classics Edition with a new Foreword by Donald Boch, The Expanded Family Life Cycle integrates theory and current research with clinical guidelines and cases by two of the most-respected authors, teachers, and clinicians in the field of family therapy—Carter and Monica McGoldrick. This classic Family Therapy text provides a more comprehensive way to think about human development and the life cycle, reflecting changes in society away from orientation toward the nuclear family, toward a more diverse and inclusive definition of family. This expanded view of the family includes the impact of issues at multiple levels of the human system: the individual, family households, the extended family, the community, the cultural group, and the larger society. The text features a ground-breaking integration of individual male and female development in systemic context; our increasing racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity; the emergence of men's movements and issues; the growing visibility of lesbian and gay families; and the neglected area of social class.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

I used this book, which came highly recommended, to teach a graduate-level course in Family Therapy. At first glance it seemed like a useful text, having earned a great deal of praise from other professors. However, the book was a disappointment to both myself and my students. While I would not go so far as to say that the book contained no useful information, much of the book's potential utility was overshadowed by the authors' transparent political agenda. An example of good clinical

advice provided by the authors was to ask wealthy families, in an initial interview, how they are using their funds to help the poor. Coming across with this overtly judgmental and clinically irrelevant question in the first interview is clearly not the way to win over a troubled family. When studying the book, it was often possible to forget that families seeking therapy may actually have troubles of their own. The articles in the book focused largely on sociopolitical issues. Obviously, one cannot discount the influence of the larger context; however, struggles with gender unfairness in the workplace are rarely the presenting problem which drives an entire family into a therapist's office. Perhaps it was for this reason that focused, practical clinical advice for the budding clinician was nearly absent from many of the articles. Pragmatics aside, the book was also lacking in terms of scholarship. A variety of grand claims were made by various authors with limited citations to support these claims. Despite the reference lists at the end of each chapter, I found it jarring to read several consecutive paragraphs without footnotes describing, for example, the "typical" presentation of clients from different cultural groups.

This is by far the most biased and political excuse for a "textbook" that I have ever come across in my 8 years of higher education. A more accurate title for this "text" would have been "The Angry Feminist Perspective of The Expanded Family Life Cycle." This "text" is fraught with overt criticisms of what the authors seem to view as an unfairly male-dominated society and they make a concerted effort to trace nearly every social issue plaguing families back to this evil, entrenched system that continues to subjugate women. There is also a plethora of racist, prejudiced, and wholly unsubstantiated generalizations about men (surprise surprise), women, racial groups, ethnic groups, religions, etc... You can basically open the book to any page and find examples of this. In fact, I'll do that now..."Although African Americans have the capacity to be openly expressive of their feelings, such expression may be held in check in an effort to minimize intergenerational conflict." (pg. 72; no scholarly reference)"Traditionally, the Irish have believed that children should be seen and not heard." (p. 77; no scholarly reference)"Irish women have little expectation of, or interest in, being taken care of by a man." (p. 79; no scholarly reference)"What must be noted here, of course, is the fact that violence and physical abuse are fundamentally problems that must be addressed by men." (pg. 128; no scholarly reference)"It has become a commonplace observation that men have difficulty creating and sustaining same-sex friendships or communicating their emotional problems or vulnerability." (pg.

Obviously I had to purchase this because it is required for their course. Otherwise, it's a waste of

money due to a radical, pro homosexual bias. In a field where science and empirical data should prevail, this book falls short. It poses efforts to change the manner in which family is defined, quote sources which have long been refuted, such as Kinsey. For such a small percentage of a population, there is content directed in support of, and even using research that has great bias for, the homosexual agenda.<sup>1</sup> The quality of writing in this textbook is terrible. I had to reread some paragraphs a few times just to figure out what the authors were trying to convey. It is not the subject matter - basic theories on therapy and human nature are not that complicated - it's that the editor was lazy/incompetent, and the authors cannot write to save their lives. I spent a good portion of my undergraduate years reading philosophy and early British literature. I am perfectly capable of reading and understanding a textbook on therapy.<sup>2</sup> Despite the length (the book is thin, but the margins and font are small), the authors manage to not say a whole lot of anything. The chapters on interventions for psychiatric disorders, substance use disorders, and domestic violence are absolutely useless - in fact, they do not even talk about how these issues actually affect the family life cycle, much less how the family therapist is to respond to these situations. This is unfortunate, considering the text is supposed to be about the development of families and the individuals within them - and that mental disorders and abuse come up in therapy on a daily basis.

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