## Contents

Series Preface: Contemporary Family Perspectives  ix  
Author Preface  xiii  
Introduction  xv  
  Family Studies and Social Inequalities  xv  
  Understanding Families in Social Context  xix  
  Social Inequality: The Seeds of Discontent  xxi  
  The Revolutions of the 1960s and 1970s  xxiii  
  Making Social Class Visible  xxviii  
  Defining Social Class  xxix  
  Brief Overview of Chapters  xxxii  

1. The Evolution of Families and Marriages  1  
   Families and Marriage: A Brief History  3  
      The Concept of Marriage  4  
   Early Hunting and Gathering Societies  5  
   Settled Agricultural Societies: The Rise of Social Inequalities  6  
   Transformations in Families and Marriages  7  
      The Merging of Religion, Law, and Family Life  8  
   Institutionalizing Inequalities: Gender and Race  9  
      Racial and Ethnic Stratification  11  
   Social Inequalities in Colonial America  12  
      Confronting the Racial “Other”  15  
      African American Families  16  
   Industrialization and the Modern Family  18  
      The Spread of Industrialization to the New World  19  
      Racial and Ethnic Inequality in Industrial America  20  
      Gender in Industrial America  21  
   The Sociological Study of Families  22
5. **Economically Marginal Families: Living on the Edge**

   - **Who Are the Economically Marginal?**
   - **Explaining Poverty**
     - The Culture-Structure Nexus
     - The Post-Industrial Decline and Resurgence of Culture
   - **The Marriage Decline**
   - **Strained Gender Relations**
     - The Perils of Marriage
   - **Having and Rearing Children**
   - **Life in Single-Mother Families**
   - **The Well-Being of Children in Single-Parent Families**
   - **Social Policy and the Poor**
   - **Is Marriage the Answer?**
   - **Conclusion**

6. **Families in Global Economic Context**

   - **Theorizing Global Inequalities**
   - **Race and Ethnicity in Global Perspective**
   - **Families Across the Globe**
   - **The Persistence of Economic and Social Class Inequality**

**Bibliography**

**Index**

**About the Author**