

REVISING A PAPER

EXERCISE

Check the sentences in the following student paper for problems with subject-verb agreement and reference of pronouns. In each sentence that is unsatisfactory, cross out the verb form or pronoun that causes the problem. Write an acceptable substitute in the space above the word you have crossed out. In most cases, you will be able to correct the problem by substituting a single word. (**Note:** Not all sentences have an agreement or reference problem.)

Untying the Tie That Binds

Divorce is the formal ending of a marriage by judicial procedure. Until very recently, almost all states required one spouse to sue the other for some violation of your marital duties. Among other causes, there was always drunkenness, desertion, and adultery. There was relatively few divorces granted on the so-called "civilized" grounds of mental cruelty or mental suffering. Recently, however, simple incompatibility and a breakdown of the relationship has become admissible as grounds for divorce. It is rapidly crowding out the older causes. In many states, they are revising their divorce laws to include these causes. These changes are valuable developments, for they allow people to separate with dignity. If it has failed, it is more truthful to admit that the partners were ill-suited.

This easing of the divorce laws have created a situation in which divorce is becoming more acceptable. People are unwilling to put up with their problems now that the solution to it is easily obtained. Today when a person goes into a popular bookstore, you will find numerous how-to-do-it books on divorce made easy. The more divorces we see around us, the easier it is to envision your own divorce.

One major cause for divorce is the search for personal satisfaction, which is found with both men and women. Also, however, social changes that began long ago has changed the traditional functions of the family and of marriage. Basically, the wife used to be the producer of goods (bread, cheese, clothing) as well as a performer of services (washing, ironing, taking care of the sick). The husband was the provider of food and money.

Modern institutions such as the factory, the hospital, or the department store has changed all that. Men and women no longer need a spouse to survive or to function well in society. It has become more of a special kind of friendship than anything else. Marriage is one of the many institutions that is slowly changing as the result of basic changes in our society. A mother no longer tells a daughter that she is disgraced because she got a divorce. A man no longer feels that he needs a wife to darn your socks and iron your shirts. Personally, I find marriage less threatening if it is not a life sentence but gives you a second chance.