

Chapter 1 Images, Ideals, and Myths

1) Because nearly everyone has experience as a member of a family, it is relatively easy to arrive at an objective understanding of families.

Answer: FALSE

Page Ref: 2

2) Myths and images about families influence our expectations and assumptions about family life.

Answer: TRUE

Page Ref: 4

3) Of all the images of family, the image of family as encumbrance has been around the longest.

Answer: FALSE

Page Ref: 6

4) Myths are beliefs that are held uncritically and without examination.

Answer: TRUE

Page Ref: 10

5) Fewer than 10 percent of American families consist of a breadwinner husband, stay-at-home wife, and their dependent children.

Answer: TRUE

Page Ref: 12

6) The myth of a unified family experience refers to the belief that middle-class and upper-class families differ very little.

Answer: FALSE

Page Ref: 15

7) Age and gender are key factors influencing an individual's experience of family life.

Answer: TRUE

Page Ref: 15

8) The definitions of the terms "household" and "family" are nearly identical.

Answer: FALSE

Page Ref: 13

9) According to the text, divorce and single parenthood are better viewed as the consequences of social problems rather than the cause.

Answer: TRUE

Page Ref: 19

10) The field of family studies has experienced very little change over the past thirty years.

Answer: FALSE

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11) To analyze the family using a sociological perspective, one must

A) promote the nuclear family ideal.

B) understand the larger social context in which families are embedded.

C) engage in micro-level analysis of family interaction.

D) all of the above

Answer: B

Page Ref: 1

12) An obstacle to objectivity in studying families is

A) secrecy.

B) mystification.

C) sacredness.

D) all of the above

Answer: D

Page Ref: 2

13) Using sociologist Erving Goffman's term "backstage area" to describe family points to the idea that

A) family is a haven in a heartless world.

B) family members are always acting out social roles.

C) family is an area of privacy where people are free to act in ways they would not act in public.

D) family is completely severed from public intervention.

Answer: C

Page Ref: 3

14) All of the following are distinct family images that have emerged in American culture except

A) family as haven.

B) family as anxiety.

C) family as encumbrance.

D) family as fulfillment.

Answer: B

Page Ref: 5

15) Love and protection are the two distinct themes in which of the following images of family?

A) family as haven

B) family as anxiety

C) family as encumbrance

D) family as fulfillment

Answer: A

Page Ref: 5

16) The image of "family as fulfillment" gives rise to which of the following observations?

A) The family provides intimacy and personal satisfaction that can be found no where else.

B) We tend to blame the family for inhibiting full human development.

C) Family needs are attained through responsibility, duty, and hard work.

D) Having children is the greatest fulfillment of family life.

Answer: A

Page Ref: 5

17) Dorothy Smith refers to the Standard North American Family (SNAF) as

A) an idealized image.

B) an insulated two-parent family.

C) a distortion of reality.

D) all of the above

E) none of the above

Answer: D

Page Ref: 8

18) According to the text, despite changes in family images over time, an enduring theme in popular understanding suggests that

- A) relationships among family members are expected to be stable and harmonious.
- B) family is the locus of competition and violence.
- C) relationships among family members are no longer idealized.
- D) people do not take media images of the family seriously.

Answer: A

Page Ref: 10

19) Myths can be described as

- A) beliefs that have little to do with moral values.
- B) beliefs that are held without examination or scrutiny.
- C) beliefs that are often based in actual fact.
- D) beliefs that challenge nostalgic images of the past.

Answer: B

Page Ref: 10

20) Which of the following statements exemplifies the myth of a stable and harmonious family of the past?

- A) Marital failure and illegitimacy are modern phenomena which did not exist in pre-industrial families.
- B) Families are self-sufficient units relatively free from outside pressures.
- C) Contemporary families are not better or worse than families of the past, only different.
- D) We expect less from family life today than we did in the past.

Answer: A

Page Ref: 11

21) The “myth of separate worlds” refers to

- A) the sharp distinction between childhood and adulthood.
- B) the idea that men and women experience marriage differently.
- C) the belief that families of the past and families of the present have nothing in common.
- D) the belief that families operate in isolation from other social institutions such as politics or the economy.

Answer: D

Page Ref: 11

22) Family Darwinism means

- A) family success or failure is the result of how “fit” a specific family form is.
- B) family relationships are largely determined by genes.
- C) the leader of each family emerges out of a struggle for power.
- D) sibling relationships are shaped by the struggle for power.

Answer: A

Page Ref: 11

23) Which of the following argues against the myth of separate worlds?

- A) The experience of working women points to the interrelationship of work and family.

- B) Families interact with institutions such as schools.
- C) Parents share the authority for raising their children with organizations and institutions outside the family.
- D) all of the above

Answer: D

Page Ref: 12

24) Globalization

- A) increases the control of nation-states over the welfare of their families.
- B) decreases the control families have over their own members.
- C) decreases the mobility of workers.
- D) all of the above

Answer: B

Page Ref: 12

25) The myth of the monolithic family form embodies all of the following features except

- A) the family is nuclear in form.
- B) the family consists of mother, father, and their children.
- C) single parents and their children are identified as families.
- D) the family exhibits a gendered division of labor.

Answer: C

Page Ref: 13

26) Which of the following is not likely to be a trend among new American families in the near future?

- A) an increase in the percentage of families of color
- B) major involvement with government institutions
- C) an increase in families with a semi-extended family form
- D) rapid economic advancement

Answer: D

Page Ref: 13

27) Which of the following factors contributes to increasing diversity among contemporary families?

- A) the large-scale increase of househusbands performing primary domestic responsibilities
- B) the resurgence of the nuclear family form
- C) increasing racial and ethnic diversity
- D) all of the above

Answer: C

Page Ref: 15

28) The assumption that all family members have common needs, experiences, and meanings is expressed in the myth of

- A) the monolithic family form.
- B) a unified family experience.
- C) family consensus.
- D) separate worlds.

Answer: B

Page Ref: 15

29) The authors of the text report that the key factor(s) producing different realities for members of the same family household is (are)

- A) gender and age.
- B) level of education.
- C) age and occupation.
- D) an authoritarian parenting style.

Answer: A

Page Ref: 15

30) Jessie Bernard's classic work on marriage revealed that

- A) quality of marriages declines with number of children.
- B) husbands and wives experience marriage in pretty much the same way.
- C) every marital union actually contains "his and hers" marriages, and the two do not always coincide.
- D) parents have less authority over their children than other societal experts.

Answer: C

Page Ref: 15

31) The concept of the family as a "gendered institution" refers to the notion that

- A) by definition, a family must consist of both male and female members.
- B) in contemporary families, males and females are no longer affected by sex role expectations.
- C) gender organizes family practices and distributions of power.
- D) same-sex marriages are illegal.

Answer: C

Page Ref: 15

32) Marcia Millman's research on family dynamics cited in the text found that

- A) rivalries and conflicts of interest are common in families.
- B) families use money to achieve social control.
- C) family relations can be more similar to business relations than different.
- D) all of the above

Answer: D

Page Ref: 17

33) The belief that families operate on the principles of harmony and love, generating very little conflict or violence, is part of the myth of

- A) a monolithic family form.
- B) separate worlds.
- C) a unified family experience.
- D) family consensus.

Answer: D

Page Ref: 16

34) Patriarchy refers to

- A) a religion in which God is male.
- B) social relations in which men are dominant over women.
- C) how men inherit property.
- D) violence committed by men against women.

Answer: B

Page Ref: 16

35) With respect to violence in families, the authors of your text observe that

- A) violence is found in all families.
- B) families can be places of both violence and nurturance.
- C) most families are either violent or nurturing.
- D) although American society is filled with violence, the family is one place where it is generally screened out.

Answer: B

Page Ref: 18

36) Research on family violence finds that

- A) most murder cases involve relatives or intimates.
- B) women are rarely violent in the context of family.
- C) family violence decreased with the popularization of the family as haven image.
- D) all of the above

Answer: A

Page Ref: 18

37) The authors make which of the following points regarding change in American families?

- A) We should be alarmed about how family change will affect other social institutions.
- B) Changes in families reflect changed circumstances in other areas of society.
- C) Family change has caused an increase in the rate of violent crime, but has not influenced the teen pregnancy rate.
- D) none of the above

Answer: B

Page Ref: 19

38) The myth of family decline as the cause of social problems suggests that the family is in serious trouble primarily due to

- A) the entry of so many women into the labor force.
- B) the negative effects of high rates of television viewing.
- C) increasing numbers of fatherless families.
- D) the secularization of American society.

Answer: C

Page Ref: 20

39) The authors of the text make which of the following points about the effects of divorce on children?

- A) Divorce is tearing apart the fabric of society.
- B) Analysts sometimes overstate evidence on the negative effects of divorce and ignore evidence finding that most children from divorced families do quite well.
- C) The effects of divorce on children should not be seen as negative in any way.
- D) none of the above

Answer: B

Page Ref: 20

40) Which of the following is a component of a macro level analysis of families?

- A) a focus on internal dynamics of nuclear families
- B) a focus on the ways structures such as race, class, and gender shape families
- C) a focus on relationships in extended families
- D) none of the above

Answer: B

Page Ref: 21

41) Which of the following would not be likely to be used in family research using quantitative methodology?

- A) survey research
- B) statistical analysis
- C) unstructured interviews
- D) All of the above are typically used in quantitative research.

Answer: C

Page Ref: 22

42) Qualitative research methodology includes which of the following?

- A) The researcher observes people and talks with them over a period of time as they engage in the customary activities of their lives.
- B) The researcher interviews individuals using open-ended questions that allow them to answer in their own words.
- C) The researcher tries to discover the meaning an activity has for the participants in that activity.
- D) all of the above

Answer: D

Page Ref: 22

43) The basic assumptions scholars use in studying the social world is called a(n)

- A) structure.
- B) image.
- C) myth.
- D) paradigm.

Answer: D

Page Ref: 23

44) Talcott Parsons and other structural functionalists argued

- A) diverse family forms are an essential feature of modern life.
- B) the nuclear family is the “normal family” in modern society.
- C) a “Big Bang” in family life occurred during the 1960s.
- D) families are less and less important in modern society.

Answer: B

Page Ref: 23

45) The social locations of families are affected by

- A) class.
- B) race.
- C) gender.
- D) all of the above
- E) none of the above

Answer: D

Page Ref: 25

46) Family diversity is “relational” means that

- A) families involve social relationships.
- B) good relationships ought to be the family ideal.
- C) extended families are becoming more common.
- D) the forms families take are related to the different forms other families take.

Answer: D

Page Ref: 24

47) The structural diversity model holds that

- A) human agency is no match for the larger forces of society.
- B) we should study human agency rather than social forces.
- C) families adapt to and may change their social environment.
- D) families are becoming less diverse.

Answer: C

Page Ref: 25

48) Describe the dominant images of families found in the media. Discuss how these images affect our assumptions and expectations about family life.

49) Discuss the myth of separate worlds. What evidence does the text offer to counter the public sphere - private sphere dichotomy?

50) What is the distinction between “household” and “family?” How has divorce changed the way we think about family ties?

51) Contrast the myth of family decline as the cause of social problems with the authors’ discussion of social problems and family change. How does the authors’ understanding of the relationship between these concepts differ from the relationship found in this myth?

52) A friend contends that recent changes in family life in the United States are attributable to changing family values. Respond to this individual using a sociological perspective.