

Discussion Questions

1. What do you believe is the ideal makeup of a family? Why? How does your description relate to the functions the family performs in society?
2. Which of the main theoretical perspectives discussed in this chapter (functionalist, conflict, and feminist) is most useful when examining the families with which you are familiar? Why?
3. A majority of Americans and a strong majority of young Americans (those below 30) now support same-sex marriages. What are some cultural and structural changes that have led to this increase in support for marriage equality over the past decade?
4. Does (or did) your family expect you to marry someone of a particular (a) race or ethnicity, (b) social class, (c) education background, or (d) religion? Why or why not? How do you think endogamous norms impact (a) individual marriages and (b) society?
5. How does your family's income influence the (a) amount and (b) quality of the time family members spend together? How might (a) more or (b) less money influence your family members' relationships with one another? Why?
6. Do you think it is a good idea to give people the choice to have a "covenant marriage"? Why or why not? If yes, would you consider supporting an effort to make marriage licenses more expensive for those who do not opt for "covenant marriages"? Why or why not?