

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 (functional, 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) educational 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 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 the establishment of no-fault divorce laws have been good or bad for (a) the institution of the family in the United States, (b) married couples, and (c) children? Explain your answers.