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

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

Answer: TRUE

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

Answer: FALSE

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

Answer: TRUE

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

Answer: TRUE

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

Answer: FALSE

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

Answer: TRUE

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

Answer: FALSE

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

Answer: TRUE

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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

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