**Chapter 8—Social Class in the United States**

**MULTIPLE CHOICE**

1. A social class is composed of people with similar:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | attitudes and behaviors. |
| b. | lifestyles. |
| c. | vocational positions. |
| d. | all of the above |

ANS: D REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.4

MSC: Factual

2. Members of the upper class:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | are unemployed or under employed. |
| b. | have little in the way of education or occupational skills. |
| c. | stress obedience and respect for elders. |
| d. | have great wealth, often going back for many generations. |
| e. | can be seen by their avoidance of everyday activities like shopping. |

ANS: D REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.4

MSC: Factual

3. The working class is made up of:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | skilled laborers. |
| b. | semi-skilled laborers. |
| c. | factory employees. |
| d. | blue-collar workers. |
| e. | all of the above |

ANS: E REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.4

MSC: Factual

4. Approximately what percent of the population in the United States belongs to the upper class?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | 1-3% |
| b. | 5-6% |
| c. | 10-11% |
| d. | 15-16% |
| e. | 20-21% |

ANS: A REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.4

MSC: Factual

5. A successful professional who has a college education, lives in an exclusive suburb, and has a savings reserve would be placed into which of the following class categories?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | lower-upper |
| b. | middle |
| c. | upper-middle |
| d. | upper |
| e. | lower-lower |

ANS: C REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.4

MSC: Applied

6. A large percentage of the new upper-middle class:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | are two-income couples. |
| b. | are couples who are both college-educated. |
| c. | are corporate executive executives or high governmental officials. |
| d. | are gentrifying run-down city neighborhoods. |
| e. | all of the above |

ANS: E REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.4

MSC: Factual

7. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ class dominates the professional and technical fields and often consists of two-income families.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | upper-middle |
| b. | lower-middle |
| c. | working |
| d. | upper |
| e. | lower-upper |

ANS: A REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.4

MSC: Factual

8. In a class system, each member of a given class shares similar:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | opportunities. |
| b. | lifestyles. |
| c. | attitudes. |
| d. | all of the above |

ANS: D REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.4

MSC: Conceptual

9. Bob lives adequately but has little left over; he is very involved with his extended family; he feels politically powerless and he did not bother to vote last election. Bob is:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | working class. |
| b. | middle class. |
| c. | a family man in any class. |
| d. | politically compromised by his network. |

ANS: A REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.4

MSC: Applied

10. According to Weber, which of the following is NOT a criteria for stratification in a modern society?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | political power |
| b. | social status |
| c. | tradition |
| d. | prestige |

ANS: C REF: Why Does Social Inequality Exist?

OBJ: 8.3 MSC: Conceptual

11. Jason sees himself as a cut above his close-knit neighborhood, where people have little knowledge of world events and are often too tired to get involved in community or political activity. Jason fits which class description?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | upper middle class professionals |
| b. | lower middle class |
| c. | gold coast socialites |
| d. | lower class |

ANS: D REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.4

MSC: Applied

12. Maurice and Shirley are both attorneys who live in a comfortable suburban home. Their children attend private schools and expect to go to college and on to graduate school. This family is best described as:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | upper class. |
| b. | lower-upper class. |
| c. | upper-middle class. |
| d. | lower-middle class. |
| e. | working class. |

ANS: C REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.4

MSC: Applied

13. In 2010, the poorest 20% of American families earned \_\_\_\_\_ of the country’s total income for the year.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | 3.3% |
| b. | 25% |
| c. | 50.2% |
| d. | 65.5% |
| e. | 85% |

ANS: A REF: Poverty OBJ: 8.2 MSC: Factual

14. Hector is a master electrician. He holds a high school diploma and owns a modest home, but can't afford many luxuries. He considers himself politically conservative and fairly religious. Hector is most typical of which of the classes listed?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | lower-middle class |
| b. | upper-middle class |
| c. | upper class |
| d. | lower class |
| e. | lower-lower class |

ANS: A REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.4

MSC: Applied

15. Based upon family income distribution, in 2010, the richest fifth of U.S. families received approximately what percent of the total income for the year?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | 3.3% |
| b. | 25% |
| c. | 50.2% |
| d. | 65.5% |
| e. | 85% |

ANS: C REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.2

MSC: Factual

16. The poverty index is based solely on:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | food stamp allocations. |
| b. | money income. |
| c. | the stock market. |
| d. | family wealth. |
| e. | social service contributions. |

ANS: B REF: Poverty OBJ: 8.5 MSC: Factual

17. What was the poverty level for a family of four in 2012?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | about $ 8,000 |
| b. | about $23,000 |
| c. | about $27,000 |
| d. | about $39,000 |
| e. | about $46,000 |

ANS: B REF: Poverty OBJ: 8.5 MSC: Factual

18. Rural residents have \_\_\_\_\_ than urban residents.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | higher unemployment rates |
| b. | more healthy leisure activities |
| c. | a wider range of flexible skills |
| d. | higher reading scores |

ANS: A REF: Poverty OBJ: 8.5 MSC: Factual

19. Today, noncash benefits account for about \_\_\_\_\_ of federal welfare benefits.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | 1/2 |
| b. | 1/3 |
| c. | 2/3 |
| d. | 1/4 |
| e. | 98% |

ANS: C REF: Poverty OBJ: 8.5 MSC: Factual

20. Poverty is more frequent:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | among blacks and Hispanics than among whites. |
| b. | among whites than among blacks or Hispanics. |
| c. | in urban than in rural areas. |
| d. | in the Northeast than in the South. |
| e. | among urban whites. |

ANS: A REF: Poverty OBJ: 8.5 MSC: Factual

21. The feminization of poverty refers to:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | a trend in which females represent an increasing proportion of the poor. |
| b. | the fact that more feminists are poor these days. |
| c. | a phenomenon in which nearly all of the social workers who work with the poor are female. |
| d. | the fact that females seem to cope with poverty better than males. |
| e. | the fact that as more women have entered the labor force, they have lowered women's wages. |

ANS: A REF: Poverty OBJ: 8.5 MSC: Conceptual

22. Comparisons of poverty levels among male-headed and female-headed households show that:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | they are equally likely to fall below the poverty level. |
| b. | male-headed households are more apt to be below the poverty level. |
| c. | female-headed households are more apt to fall below the poverty level. |
| d. | families with divorced spouses face the greatest likelihood of poverty no matter who heads the household. |
| e. | there is virtually no difference between the two in terms of poverty level. |

ANS: C REF: Poverty OBJ: 8.5 MSC: Factual

23. Which of the following is a criticism of poverty figures?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | Poverty status should be determined by comparing a person’s financial situation with the rest of society. |
| b. | There is no geographic cost of living adjustment. |
| c. | The money used to pay taxes should be excluded since it cannot buy necessities. |
| d. | The poverty threshold is merely a guess. |
| e. | all of the above |

ANS: B REF: Poverty OBJ: 8.5 MSC: Conceptual

24. One myth that many Americans hold is that the poor are poor because they do not have enough:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | work. |
| b. | ambition. |
| c. | education. |
| d. | children. |
| e. | intelligence. |

ANS: B REF: Poverty OBJ: 8.5 MSC: Factual

25. Statistics on poverty in the United States show that:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | most poor people do not work even though they could. |
| b. | most able-bodied poor of working age hold jobs. |
| c. | unwed mothers are the smallest single group of poor people. |
| d. | all of the above |

ANS: B REF: Poverty OBJ: 8.5 MSC: Factual

26. Which of the following is a myth about the poor?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | Most poor people are black and most black people are poor. |
| b. | Most poor people live in inner-city ghettos. |
| c. | Most people are poor because they are too lazy to work. |
| d. | Most poor people live in female-headed households. |
| e. | all of the above |

ANS: E REF: Poverty OBJ: 8.5 MSC: Factual

27. The United States has been most successful in holding down poverty among:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | children. |
| b. | working-age adults. |
| c. | the elderly. |
| d. | women. |
| e. | single parents. |

ANS: C REF: Poverty OBJ: 8.6 MSC: Factual

28. Of the following nations, the highest rate of poverty among children is found in:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | the United States. |
| b. | Canada. |
| c. | the United Kingdom. |
| d. | Germany. |
| e. | Sweden. |

ANS: A REF: Poverty OBJ: 8.6 MSC: Factual

29. Who expanded Marx’s views about class into a multidimensional view of stratification?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | Max Weber |
| b. | Émile Durkheim |
| c. | Cooley & Mead |
| d. | Davis & Moore |
| e. | Harriet Martineau |

ANS: A REF: Why Does Social Inequality Exist?

OBJ: 8.3 MSC: Factual

30. Janis was a young mother in her late 20s when she and her husband divorced, forcing her to live on her sole income as a part time minimum wage worker. Janis represents:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | competition in the low wage market for better jobs. |
| b. | interruptions in structural mobility. |
| c. | a popular myth about why women cannot live without assistance. |
| d. | the feminization of poverty. |

ANS: D REF: Poverty OBJ: 8.5 MSC: Applied

31. Most government assistance from programs goes to which social class?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | the poor |
| b. | women and children among the poor |
| c. | the middle class |
| d. | elderly retired men among the poor |

ANS: C REF: Poverty OBJ: 8.4 MSC: Factual

32. Mother Teresa controlled no industry or property and had little wealth, but she influenced people all over the world. Which theorist would best account for her position?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | Karl Marx |
| b. | Max Weber |
| c. | Ralf Dahrendorf |
| d. | Davis and Moore |

ANS: B REF: Why Does Social Inequality Exist?

OBJ: 8.3 MSC: Applied

33. Teresa is a waitress in Chicago who has little control over the system, but when she joins the 99% Movement she attempts to exercise \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as part of a group.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | formal sanctions |
| b. | appeals process |
| c. | class privilege |
| d. | power |

ANS: D REF: Why Does Social Inequality Exist?

OBJ: 8.3 MSC: Applied

34. Which one of the following does NOT explain why so many children live in poverty in the United States?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | Many children live in poor immigrant households. |
| b. | Unmarried single women have lower incomes or job opportunities. |
| c. | The gap between the rich and the poor brings everyone down. |
| d. | Children do not vote, and the U.S. system favors groups with lobbies and advocates. |

ANS: C REF: Poverty OBJ: 8.5 MSC: Conceptual

35. When we look at functionally important jobs in our society, the patterns show:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | functionality is not related to job rewards. |
| b. | people with more important functional jobs are rewarded more highly. |
| c. | function varies with race, gender, and region. |
| d. | function depends on education levels. |

ANS: A REF: Why Does Social Inequality Exist?

OBJ: 8.3 MSC: Factual

**TRUE/FALSE**

1. Lower-class people tend to blame themselves for lack of success and for material need.

ANS: T REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.4

MSC: Conceptual

2. The functionalists argue that society should distribute its wealth in terms of “each according to his or her needs.”

ANS: F REF: Why Does Social Inequality Exist?

OBJ: 8.3 MSC: Conceptual

3. Because of the American political ideal of the basic equality of all citizens, the United States has a class structure with less stratification than any other country.

ANS: F REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.1

MSC: Factual

4. Class distinctions exist in the United States based on race, education, family name, career choice, and wealth.

ANS: T REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.4

MSC: Conceptual

5. Conflict theorists believe that a small amount of social mobility is left open by the powerful to keep the masses in line.

ANS: T REF: Why Does Inequality Exist? OBJ: 8.3

MSC: Conceptual

6. Social stratification has shown that social class does not affect social aspects of people’s lives.

ANS: F REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.1

MSC: Conceptual

7. Marx argued that in order to understand human societies, one must look at the economic conditions producing the necessities of life.

ANS: T REF: Why Does Social Inequality Exist?

OBJ: 8.3 MSC: Factual

8. Lower-class people get sick more often and have higher infant mortality rates, shorter life expectancies, and larger families than the upper classes.

ANS: T REF: Consequences of Social Stratification

OBJ: 8.7 MSC: Factual

9. The poor are more likely to be arrested, charged with a crime, convicted, and sentenced to prison; they receive longer sentences than middle- and upper-class criminals.

ANS: T REF: Consequences of Social Stratification

OBJ: 8.7 MSC: Factual

10. The view of class presented by Weber can be characterized as more of a multidimensional view than the one presented by Marx.

ANS: T REF: Why Does Social Inequality Exist? OBJ: 8.3

MSC: Conceptual

11. A functionalist theory of stratification would argue that stratification is socially necessary to give rewards for achievement.

ANS: T REF: Why Does Social Inequality Exist?

OBJ: 8.3 MSC: Conceptual

12. A social class is made up of people who share similar resources.

ANS: T REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.1

MSC: Conceptual

13. Marx believed that wealth should be distributed according to need.

ANS: T REF: Why Does Social Inequality Exist?

OBJ: 8.3 MSC: Factual

14. Davis and Moore argue that different positions in society make different levels of contributions to the well-being and preservation of society.

ANS: T REF: Why Does Social Inequality Exist?

OBJ: 8.3 MSC: Factual

15. Functionalists would argue that filling the more complex and important positions in society often requires talent that is scarce and has a long period of training.

ANS: T REF: Why Does Social Inequality Exist?

OBJ: 8.3 MSC: Conceptual

16. The richest 20% of Americans own more than 75% of all of the country’s wealth.

ANS: T REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.2

MSC: Factual

17. There is substantial agreement among sociologists regarding the actual number of social classes in the United States.

ANS: F REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.4

MSC: Factual

18. Historically, the upper class in the United States have been members of Presbyterian and Episcopalian churches.

ANS: T REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.4

MSC: Factual

19. Sociologists place successful business and professional people who earn reasonably high incomes in the upper-class category.

ANS: F REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.4

MSC: Conceptual

20. Conflict theorists would argue that providing unequal rewards ensures that the most talented and best trained individuals will fill the social roles of greatest importance.

ANS: F REF: Why Does Social Inequality Exist?

OBJ: 8.3 MSC: Conceptual

21. The richest 5% of all families in the United States own over half the country’s wealth.

ANS: T REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.2

MSC: Factual

22. Critics of the functionalist view suggest that stratification is immoral because it creates extremes of wealth and poverty and denigrates the people at the bottom.

ANS: T REF: Why Does Social Inequality Exist?

OBJ: 8.3 MSC: Conceptual

23. Conflict theorists see stratification as an outcome of a struggle between groups for dominance of resources and social control.

ANS: T REF: Why Does Social Inequality Exist?

OBJ: 8.3 MSC: Conceptual

24. In America, poverty in rural areas is actually higher than it is in cities.

ANS: T REF: Poverty OBJ: 8.5 MSC: Factual

25. Happiness is related to how you spend your time, not how you spend your money.

ANS: T REF: The American Class Structure OBJ: 8.1

MSC: Conceptual

26. Most government assistance benefits today are in the form of goods and services.

ANS: F REF: Poverty OBJ: 8.5 MSC: Factual

27. The homeless are a large proportion of people counted as living in poverty by the U.S. Census.

ANS: F REF: Poverty OBJ: 8.5 MSC: Factual

28. Most poor people are white.

ANS: T REF: Poverty OBJ: 8.5 MSC: Factual

29. African Americans make up more than half the long-term poor.

ANS: T REF: Poverty OBJ: 8.5 MSC: Factual

30. The number of families receiving welfare assistance has continued to rise since 1996.

ANS: F REF: Poverty OBJ: 8.5 MSC: Factual

31. Smoking is associated with lower social status in society.

ANS: T REF: Consequences of Social Stratification

OBJ: 8.7 MSC: Factual

**ESSAY**

1. Why does stratification exist? Summarize and compare the functionalist and conflict theory views of social stratification. Who were the proponents of each of these views? Compare and contrast these two perspectives.

ANS: Not Provided REF: Why Does Social Inequality Exist?

OBJ: 8.3 MSC: Conceptual

2. Outline and discuss the distribution of wealth and income in the United States. What are the proven consequences of social inequalities in this country?

ANS: Not Provided REF: The Consequences of Social Class Structure

OBJ: 8.7 MSC: Applied

3. Identify and describe the characteristics of each of the social classes in the United States.

ANS: Not Provided REF: The American Class Structure

OBJ: 8.4 MSC: Conceptual

4. What are the known characteristics of the poor in the United States? Discuss how we measure and account for poverty.

ANS: Not Provided REF: Poverty

OBJ: 8.5 MSC: Factual

5. Using what you know about stratification in the United States, what kind of synthesis of functionalism and conflict theory could you offer to account for the major features of the country’s class structure? Be sure to use specific facts to support your theory.

ANS: Not Provided REF: Why Does Social Inequality Exist?

OBJ: 8.3 MSC: Applied