

March 2, 2004

Questions on Taylor, Baca Zinn and Wells, Sudarkasa, Sherif, and Pyke

1. Although many more Asian women marry non-Asian men than the reverse, among blacks, men marry women of other races at twice the rate of black females. Speculate about the reasons that might explain these gendered differences in rates.
2. What is social class? Give three examples of the interaction between ethnicity and social class.
3. What proportion of African American families did you think were poor, single-parent, inner-city families before you read Taylor? What is the correct answer, for 1986?
4. Describe regional patterns of segregation of African Americans mid-century.
5. What definition of family does Taylor provide? How does it compare with your definition?
6. Describe Frazier's thesis on the history of the African American family. What are its strengths? Weaknesses? (Taylor)
7. Describe the Moynihan Report and the response it generated. (Taylor)
8. List three ways of conducting historical research on slaves before the Civil War and on African Americans following emancipation. (Taylor)
9. What was Gutman's reasoning about contemporary African American family disorganization (fatherless, etc.)? (Taylor)
10. Several scholars speak of cultural factors in addition to structural factors producing the observed differences in African American families, historically and presently. What do they mean? (Taylor)
11. What modifications and challenges has more recent historical research on the African American family produced? (Taylor)
12. What does "extendedness" mean, according to Staples?
13. What are some of the current trends of African American families? What are some of the explanations offered by the research?
14. What were some of Lewis's findings regarding socialization (child-rearing) of African American children?

15. List some of the criticisms of US family policy and suggestions for improvement with respect to easing the strain on African-American families.
16. Describe Baca Zinn and Wells' critique of sociological research on Latino families.
17. Compare Baca Zinn and Wells' critiques of research on the Latino family to critiques we have read of research on the African American family.
18. Baca Zinn and Wells offer a new research paradigm (p. 383). Describe it.
19. Baca Zinn and Wells argue in favor of developing an analytical, rather than just a descriptive, account of Latino families. What's the difference?
20. Baca Zinn and Wells discuss various determinants of diversity in Latino families. Compare to the authors we have read discussing African American family diversity.
21. Baca Zinn and Wells discuss four economic and demographic "upheavals." What are they?
22. What variables in addition to the unequal distribution of social opportunities and the history of the various national-origin groups make the analysis of the Latino family even more complex? (Baca Zinn and Wells)
23. Baca Zinn and Wells describe a common assumption many hold with respect to the immigrant narrative. What is it, and how well does it apply to Latino immigrants? (p. 386)
24. Provide brief sketches of the national-origin groups these authors discuss: their similarities and differences.
25. Baca Zinn and Wells discuss the concept of "familism." Compare it to Sudarkasa's discussion of the consanguineal W. African family system and its influence on African-American families during slavery and following emancipation.
26. Baca Zinn and Wells discuss some divergent, at times conflicting, experiences of immigrants based on gender and generational differences. Describe some of these (p. 400).
27. Sudarkasa begins her piece rather polemically. Describe the polemic. Describe similarities between her position and the scholars she is critiquing. What is her solution?
28. Describe Sudarkasa's argument supporting W. African influences on African American families of the 19th and 20th centuries.
29. Contrast conjugality and consanguineality.

30. What does Sudarkasa say about the position of African American unwed mothers in W. Africa and during slavery (note: “unwed” is used loosely here, as enslaved Africans could not legally marry, although some owners encouraged religious ceremonies).
31. Sudarkasa suggests reframing the “marital instability” problems of contemporary African American families. How? Describe the evaluative “spin” she puts on this. Do you agree?
32. How convincing is Sudarkasa’s argument?
33. What factors have contributed to a rapid rise of an Islamic consciousness in the US, according to Sherif?
34. What are some of the sources of diversity among Islamic families in the US? (Sherif)
35. What are the most common stereotypes of Islam, do you think? (Sherif)
36. List two characteristics of parent-child relations in Muslim families that caught your attention (Sherif)
37. Discuss Islamic views about gender roles and marriage. Be prepared to both defend them and critique them in recitation. (Sherif)
38. How, according to Pyke, may the image of the Normal American Family produce conflict in Korean and Vietnamese immigrant families?
39. What experiences have you had with the notion of Asians as “model minority”?
40. What are “Confucian family values” (Pyke)
41. The overwhelming majority of Pyke’s respondents provided negative descriptions of their parents in at least one domain. Discuss.
42. A lot of Pyke’s respondents think that Americans “have their parents go to the nursing homes...” Is this your idea? What proportion of elderly people (over 70) in the US are in nursing homes at any one point in time, do you think?

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