



## Chapter 9 Exercises

### Multiple Choice

- Elisa graduated from college with a double major and was inducted into the Phi Beta Kappa society. She was then offered a job in New York, where she worked twelve hours a day and produced excellent results. Within two years, she had over one hundred employees working under her. Elisa's hard work was rewarded with a raise and a bonus. This form of promotion is based on the principles of:
  - A meritocracy
  - A democracy
  - A caste system
  - A closed stratification system
- Mohit spent his days combing through garbage in Mumbai, India, with his brothers and sisters. Sometimes he would find food or something to sell for money. He never tried to overcome his lower-class status because he had seen his friends try and fail. So, he accepted his situation and tried to live life as best he could in a closed society. Mohit is an example of someone living in:
  - A meritocracy
  - A dictatorship
  - A caste system
  - An oligarchy
- It was time for Oli to marry. He had finished school and was starting a job. His parents chose a bride for him whose parents had the same amount of wealth and belonged to the same class as they did. Oli and his bride will have a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ marriage.
  - exogamous
  - endogamous
  - traditional
  - unconventional
- Cate is the daughter of a senator and the former CEO of a Fortune 500 company. Harry grew up on a farm, tilling the land for a living. They are planning a June wedding. They will have a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ marriage.
  - exogamous
  - traditional
  - endogamous
  - unconventional
- Which factor is considered when evaluating someone's standard of living?
  - Income
  - Employment
  - Class
  - All of the above
- With the Occupy Wall Street Movement, the people of the United States kept hearing about the top 1%. How much of the United States' wealth rests in the hands of the wealthiest top 1% of people?
  - 1/3
  - 1/4
  - 1/8
  - 1/16
- Charlotte was born to a lower-class family in rural Pennsylvania. After taking a job in the mail room of a large corporate office, Charlotte was slowly promoted through the ranks and became CEO of the company by age fifty. Compared to her parents, Charlotte's story demonstrates what type of social stratification?
  - Structural mobility
  - Intergenerational mobility
  - Intragenerational mobility
  - Downward mobility

8. What is particularly unique about the U.S. middle class?
  - a. It is the smallest class in the United States.
  - b. It is broken into two subcategories: upper- and lower-middle class.
  - c. The people who are middle class often have little to no education.
  - d. The upper class are as likely to become members of the lower class as members of the lower class are likely to become members of the upper class.
9. Which historical event was greatly responsible for global stratification today?
  - a. World War I
  - b. The fall of the British Empire
  - c. The French Revolution
  - d. The Industrial Revolution
10. What is the most significant threat to the relatively high standard of living people are accustomed to in the United States?
  - a. The decline of the middle class
  - b. The feminization of poverty
  - c. The growth of the upper class
  - d. The stagnation of wages for workers
11. GNI in PPP, or gross national income divided by purchasing power parity, helps measure:
  - a. The standard of living in a country
  - b. The average level of education per person in a country
  - c. The amount of inflation affecting a country's currency
  - d. The average global interest rates for loans
12. In 2008, the United States, as well as the rest of the world, felt the effects of the Great Recession. After the collapse of the housing market, people lost their jobs, and they quit spending money. Many people could not afford their mortgages anymore, and their homes went into foreclosure. For many people, it was a time of \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. social stratification
  - b. social inconsistency
  - c. horizontal mobility
  - d. downward mobility
13. Since the social classes in the United States do not have any clear boundaries, how is a sociologist supposed to determine whether their subjects are in the upper class or the upper-middle class?
  - a. Upper class is often defined as having control over one's life and the lives of people around you, while the upper-middle class is often defined as having control only over one's own life.
  - b. The upper class is split into "old money" and "new money" people, while the upper-middle class simply struggles to maintain its wealth.
  - c. All upper-class people enjoy opera and have been trained for their roles, while the upper-middle class consists mostly of newly wealthy people who may not have had the same kind of upbringing.
  - d. In the upper class, everyone knows everyone, but in the upper-middle class, the people do not mix.
14. What seems to be the key (although not the rule) to upward social mobility?
  - a. How well-off your parents are
  - b. How much education you have
  - c. How many jobs you work
  - d. How much you spend on your personal appearance

15. A person's position in a country's social stratification is determined by:
- Wealth, power, income, race, and education
  - GNI PPP, GDP, GNI, the PRB, and standards of living
  - Clothes, accessories, hobbies, shoes, and number of credit cards
  - Prestige, family, legal records, occupation, and favorite food
16. The Davis-Moore thesis states that:
- Economic hardship and skyrocketing inflation are the causes for all social stratification in the United States
  - Karl Marx was correct, and stratification can only be solved by converting to a socialist government
  - The more society values a particular profession, the more the people in that profession will make
  - People constantly move up and down the social ladder, and this creates an unstable economy which will eventually collapse on itself
17. Whose work do conflict theorists rely on to help form their arguments surrounding social stratification?
- Auguste Comte
  - Émile Durkheim
  - René Descartes
  - Karl Marx
18. Hope wanted a new designer purse she saw online. She knew her social media followers would covet her bag and want to be like her, so she purchased the \$5,000 bag. This kind of purchasing is called:
- Conspicuous consumption
  - Popular consumerism
  - Designer consumerism
  - Credit card consumerism
19. Symbolic interactionists have come to the conclusion that:
- Most people do not care about social rank and standing.
  - Only lower-class people drink beer.
  - Only upper-class people can enjoy a good game of polo.
  - Most people only socialize with people in their same social class.
20. One main issue in studying global social inequality is:
- Most countries keep their economic situations secret.
  - Social inequality is relative, and therefore, difficult to compare across cultures.
  - The presence of tourism can make a country look richer than it really is.
  - Most people live beyond their means, which gives a false sense of wealth to a society.

## Free Response

21. Track the social stratification of your family tree. Did the social standing of your parents differ from the social standing of your grandparents and great-grandparents? What social traits were handed down by your forebears? Are there any exogamous marriages in your history? Does your family exhibit status consistencies or inconsistencies?
22. What defines communities that have low status consistency? What are the ramifications, both positive and negative, of cultures with low status consistency? Try to think of specific examples to support your ideas.
23. Review the concept of stratification. Now, choose a group of people you have observed and been a part of—for example, cousins, high school friends, classmates, teammates, or coworkers. How does the structure of the social group you chose adhere to the concept of stratification?

24. Which social class do you and your family belong to? Are you in a different social class from your grandparents and great-grandparents? Does your class differ from your social standing, and if so, how? What aspects of your societal situation establish you in a social class?
25. What class traits define your peer group? For example, what speech patterns or clothing trends do you and your friends share? What cultural elements, such as taste in music or hobbies, define your peer group? How do you see this set of class traits as different from other classes either above or below yours?
26. Write a list of ten to twenty class traits that describe the environment of your upbringing. Which of these seem like true class traits, and which seem like stereotypes? What items might fall into both categories? How do you imagine a sociologist might address the conflation of class traits and stereotypes?
27. Why is it important to understand and be aware of global stratification? Make a list of specific issues that are related to global stratification. Next, choose a topic from your list and look at it more closely. Who is affected by this issue? How is the issue specifically related to global stratification?
28. Compare a family that lives in a grass hut in Ethiopia to an American family living in a trailer home in the United States. Assuming both exist at or below the poverty levels established by their country, how are the families' lifestyles and economic situations similar, and how are they different?
29. Analyze the Davis-Moore thesis. Do you agree with Davis and Moore? Does social stratification play an important function in society? What examples can you think of that support the thesis? What examples can you think of that refute the thesis?
30. Consider social stratification from the symbolic interactionist perspective. How does social stratification influence the daily interactions of individuals? How do systems of class—based on factors such as prestige, power, income, and wealth—influence your own daily routines, as well as your beliefs and attitudes? Illustrate your ideas with specific examples and anecdotes from your own life and the lives of people in your community.