**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**Chapter 7**

* What is the difference between wealth and income? Why is it sociologically important to make a distinction between the two? Which is greater in the United States today, the income gap or the wealth gap?
* What are the key dimensions and trends related to income inequality in the United States today? What about wealth inequality? How would you expect these trends to evolve or change in the coming decade? Explain your reasoning.
* Herbert Gans talks about the “uses of poverty” for the non-poor. Recall some of his points presented in the chapter and then add some of your own. Would you agree with the argument Gans makes about the existence and persistence of poverty? Why or why not?
* How is the poverty rate determined in the United States? What is the origin of this formula, and what are its strengths and weaknesses?
* What is the difference between individual or household poverty and neighborhood poverty? Why is the distinction important? How does being poor in a poor neighborhood amplify the effects of economic disadvantage?