Chapter 2

Discussion Questions.

1. There are more White-Americans living in poverty than any other racial or ethnic group in the U.S. mainly because White-Americans make up the majority of the U.S. population. However, when the size of each specific racial and ethnic group in the U.S. in calculated and poverty rates are factored in, White-Americans are among the least likely to live in poverty. Discuss some of the specific reasons why this is the case. Is racism a factor in poverty levels among the different racial/ethnic groups in the U.S.?
2. The sociological perspectives discussed in this chapter provide very different views into social class and poverty in the U.S. Discuss the advantages of using multiple perspectives in understanding social problems such as poverty.
3. Students studying poverty can often come up with numerous reasons why people go hungry in the U.S. (e.g., a lack of sufficient money), but few realize that poor families encounter higher food prices and a smaller selection of food than other families. Discuss why this happens and what, if anything, should be done about it.
4. The United States has one of the highest income disparities in the world. The gap between the rich and the poor continues to grow. Other nations, such as Nordic countries, have much lower income disparities. Discuss some possible reasons why such dissimilarity exists among highly developed nations.
5. Some researchers believe that the poverty line is too low. If you were in charge of adjusting the poverty line to reflect the current year what would it be for an individual? A family of four?
6. If you could create a plan to allieviate poverty what points would your plan include?