

Chapter 4 Families and Households

Topic 6 Family diversity

Answers to QuickCheck Questions on page 233

1. Because they believe cohabitation requires less commitment than marriage and is therefore less stable than marriage, resulting in relationship break-ups and lone-parent families from which children suffer.
2. Any two of the following:
 - It wrongly assumes that husbands and wives' roles are fixed by biology
 - Its favoured conventional nuclear family is based on patriarchal oppression and gender inequality
 - There is no evidence that children in lone-parent families are more likely to be delinquent than those brought up in a two-parent family of the same class.
 - It claims about cohabitation are not proven. Poverty may be the real cause of relationship breakdown, not cohabitation.
3. The conventional family has a traditional gender division of labour between a male breadwinner and a female homemaker. The neo-conventional family is a dual-earner family in which both spouses go out to work.
4. It is a family connected by divorce rather than marriage. The key members are usually female and may include former in-laws, or a man's ex-wife and his new partner.
5. The view that we have become freed or disembedded from traditional roles and structures, leaving us with more individual freedom to choose our relationships and how we lead our lives.
6. Any two of the following: society is increasingly fragmented; greater diversity of cultures and lifestyles; people can 'pick and mix', creating their identities and lifestyles from a wide range of choices; rapid social change.
7. They are not influenced by traditional norms to the same extent as heterosexual relationships are.