

- Chapter 1.1: The Sociological Point of View
- Chapter 1.2: Sociology Then and Now

Sociology - Chapter 1.1: The Sociological Point of View

Essential Questions:

1. Describe what sociology is and explain what it means to have a sociological imagination.
2. Explain how sociology is similar to and different from other social sciences.

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Vocabulary:

1. Sociology: the social science that studies human society and social behavior
2. Social sciences: the disciplines that study human social behavior or institutions and functions of human society in a scientific way.
3. Social interaction: how people relate to one another and influence each other's behavior
4. Social phenomena: observable facts or events that involve human society
5. Sociological imagination: the ability to see the connection between the larger world and one's personal life.

Draw the world or society

Sociological imagination

Draw the individual

6. Sociological perspective: ability to see beyond commonly held beliefs to the hidden meanings behind human actions
7. Anthropology: the comparative study of past and present cultures
8. Psychology: the social science that deals with the behavior and thinking of organisms
9. Social psychology: the study of how the social environment affects an individual's behavior and personality
10. Economics: the study of the choices people make in an effort to satisfy their needs and wants.

Essential Questions:

1. Describe what sociology is and explain what it means to have a sociological imagination.

*Sociology is the study of human society and social behavior. To have a sociological imagination means that one can focus on how examining the relationships between one's self and the larger world can help them.*

2. Explain how sociology is similar to and different from other social sciences.

*Sociology examines the relations between society and culture, the individual, economics, politics and past events, which are all the focus of one or more of the other social sciences (similar studies and topics)*

*Sociology is different in that it encompasses all of these things rather than focusing on a singular aspect or a singular area.*

Sociology - Chapter 1.2: Sociology Then and Now

Essential Questions:

1. How did the field of sociology develop?
2. In what ways do the three main theoretical perspectives in sociology differ in their focus?

1. How did the field of sociology develop?

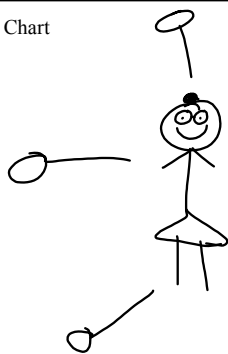
- Although human interaction has been studied for centuries, the actual academic discipline dedicated to it did not develop until the 1800s.
- What factors led to its development? The rapid social and political changes that took place in Europe as the result of the Industrial Revolution, growth of cities, job shortages, crime, inability to adapt to the rural-urban lifestyle and the lack of personal relationships in urban settings.
- Political revolutions also formed a basis. Individual liberty and rights became the focus of a wide variety of political movements; these movements gave rise to the American and French Revolutions.

- The sweeping political, social and economic changes caused some scholars to question the traditional explanations of life.
- They attempted to prove their beliefs through observation, controlled experiments and careful collection/analysis of information. In the 1800s, some scientists believed that the social world was based on a set of basic principles that could be studied and analyzed through the use of scientific research methods.
- It began mainly in France, Germany and England, which had been most affected by the political and urban changes.
- The "Fathers of Sociology" are considered to be Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim and Max Weber.
- Their inspiration was not just political; Spencer (for example) was heavily influenced by the views of Charles Darwin.

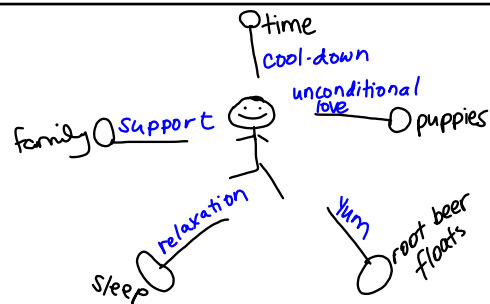
- Darwinism: AKA "survival of the fittest" The idea that the strong will survive and the weak will fail/die.
- Spencer: "Social change and unrest are natural occurrences during a society's evolution. No steps should be taken to correct society's ills."
- Social Darwinism: the idea that some societies should advance and others should not.
- Karl Marx: Sociologist and Socialist: "From each, according to his ability. To each, according to his need."
- Marx: "Men will always hate those who have more than them." (paraphrase)
- Two classes of people: bourgeoisie (haves) and the proletariat (have nots).

- Conflict theory: Marx's idea that views social change as the result of conflicts between groups with opposing interests.
- Emile Durkheim (like Comte) was concerned with the problem of social order.
- He saw society as a system of interdependent parts that maintain the system throughout time and ALSO saw the parts in terms of their functions.
- Function: the consequence that an element of society produces for the maintenance of its social system.
- Example: religion's function in maintaining social order... do shared beliefs and values act as the glue that holds society together?
- Activity: Bubble Map: What helps you hold it together?

Function Chart



1. Draw yourself in the middle.
2. Draw at least 5 lines and circles radiating out of the center.
3. For each line/circle, give ONE thing that relaxes you or makes you feel happy.
4. Give a brief explanation of why that thing makes you happy.



- Weber: interested in separate groups within society rather than society as a whole (cliques).
- He thought that sociologists should study more than the observable; he thought that uncovering the thoughts and feelings of individuals were more important. ("The why is more important than the action")
- Verstehen: an attempt to understand the meanings that individuals attach to their actions
- He also came up with the idea of ideal type, which is a description comprised of the essential characteristics of a feature of society.

The Three Perspectives: Functionalist Perspective

- Functionalist Perspective: (Comte, Spencer, Durkheim) the view that society is a set of interrelated parts that work together to produce a stable social system.
- Society is held together by a consensus (majority vote/action)
- dysfunction: the negative consequence an element has for the stability of the social system
- manifest function: the intended and recognized consequence of some element of society (Ex: having a car helps you get places)
- latent function: the unintended and unrecognized consequence of an element of society (Ex: having a car makes you more popular)
- theory: explanation of the relationships among particular phenomena
- theoretical perspectives: a general set of assumptions about the nature of things. In sociology, a theoretical perspective outlines specific ideas about the nature of social life.
- Topics of interest to functionalists include the functions that family or education serve in society.

The Three Perspectives: Conflict Perspective

- Conflict Perspective (Marx): focus on the forces in society that promote competition and change
- Conflict theorists are interested in how those who possess power in society exercise control over those with less power
- They are also interested in nonviolent competition between various groups in society (men/women, different age groups, etc)
- Competition over scarce resources is the basis of social conflict
- Those who control a resource make rules about its distribution; this leads to conflict
- Topics of interest to conflict theorists include decision making in the family, relationships among racial groups and disputes between workers and employers.

The Three Perspectives: Interactionist Perspective

- Interactionist Perspective (Weber): focus on how individuals interact with one another in society .
- Interactionists are interested in the ways in which individuals respond to one another in everyday situations.
- They are also interested in the meanings that individuals attach to their own actions and to the actions of others.
- They look heavily on symbols, which are things that represent something else. Members of the society must agree on the meaning attach to specific symbols (the flag, hearts, jack o'lanterns, etc.)
- Symbolic Interaction: how people use symbols when interacting
- This perspective is used to study things like child development, relationships within groups and mate selection.

1st

7th