WHAT ELEMENTS CREATE A SOCIAL STRUCTURE? 66

macrosociology and microsociology

HOW DO THE THREE PARADIGMS VIEW SOCIAL STRUCTURE? 76

functionalisn: social institutions and structures serve essential functions in a society

conflict theory: the structure and culture of the underprivileged are deliberately weakened for the benefit of the dominant group

symbolic interactionism: social construction of reality: “If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences”

HOW CAN SOCIAL POLICIES IMPROVE SOCIETY? 79

high-quality preschool programs: improve the lives of the participants; decrease the amount of funding needed for other social programs (special education, welfare)

get the topic: WHAT ELEMENTS CREATE A SOCIAL STRUCTURE?

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Micro Orientations: Social Interactions 74
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An Example of Functionalism: Studying Essential Features of Functional Social Structures 76
An Example of Conflict Theory: Deliberate Efforts to Weaken the Structure and Culture of Native Americans 77
Social Policy—The Perry Preschool Project 79

Theory

FUNCTIONALISM 76

• social institutions and structures are essential functions for society
• five primary tasks of society that create social structures: (1) adaptation and replacement, (2) orientation and socialization, (3) production and economy, (4) social order, (5) unity and purpose
• just because society is having its needs met, this does not mean individual members of society are also having their needs fulfilled

CONFLICT THEORY 77

• study issues such as race, social class, and inequality

Key Terms

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social structures 67
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self-focused impression management 76

MY SEARCH LAB


INTRODUCTION

This 1999 article by Eltzen demonstrates the importance of language and symbols in society.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Some people argue that changing sexist language in sports will not change the way people feel about female athletes or result in more support for female athletics. Do you agree or disagree?
2. Make a list of examples of sexist or racist symbols and language in the area of jobs/employment.

INTRODUCTION
In their 1966 book The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge, Berger and Luckmann introduce the idea that social reality emerges through the process of interaction.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
1. According to the authors, there are elements that provide the scene and tools to understand reality that predates the individual. What are they?
2. Explain how face-to-face interactions are both predictably patterned and highly flexible.


INTRODUCTION
In this 1991 ethnographic analysis of prison, the authors use participant observation to show how individual prisoners go through identity transformation as an adaptation to incarceration.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
1. Explain what “impression management” means. How does impression management become increasingly important to a prison inmate?
2. How does an inmate’s identity shift and change through the duration of imprisonment? Explain the pre-prison, middle, and post-prison identities.

THE THINKSPOT
Can social media be considered a corporate structure? Is social media taking the place of government? These are some interesting questions, to say the least. Go to the ThinkSpot to watch Dan Robles of the Ingenesist Project discuss these very questions and why he thinks the answers to both questions may be “yes.” Robles, the founder of the site, states that “The Ingenesist Project provides complete specification for an innovation economy built on a platform of social media.” After watching this video, do you agree?

Now that you’ve read the chapter and thought long and hard about social interactions, go to the ThinkSpot and watch the clip from “The Big Bang Theory” in which Leonard, Sheldon, and Penny have an interaction in their apartment building’s lobby that illustrates just how differently people interact at the social level. Think about what symbolic interactionists, functionalists, and conflict theorists would say about this interaction.

Sample Test Questions
These multiple-choice questions are similar to those found in the test bank that accompanies this textbook.

1. In what kind of society is the economy based on service and technology?
   a. Industrial
   b. Agricultural
   c. Postindustrial
   d. Hunting and gathering
2. Craigslist is an example of a modern-day
   a. social institution,
   b. political system,
   c. barter system,
   d. religious group.
3. Which of the following systems distributes power in a society?
   a. Legal
   b. Political
   c. Economic
   d. Educational
4. Which of the following groups is the best example of a Gemeinschaft relationship?
   a. A large city
   b. A soccer team
   c. A government
   d. A large corporation
5. Which of the five tasks of society allows new members to join and assigns roles to the new members?
   a. Socialization and orientation
   b. Adaptation and replacement
   c. Production and economy
   d. Unity and purpose

ESSAY
1. What are the differences between an industrial society and a post-industrial society?
3. Why is it important to observe the conventions of personal space?
4. Explain how a group might change from a Gemeinschaft to a Gesellschaft.
5. Which systems would a conflict theorist target when addressing the issue of poverty? Why?

WHERE TO START YOUR RESEARCH PAPER
For more information on sociological theories, especially the works of Durkheim and Marx, go to http://www2.uwsuper.edu/HPS/MBALL/DEAD_SOC.HTM
To learn more about the agricultural revolution and its transition from hunting and gathering, go to http://www.wsu.edu/gened/learn-modules/top_agrev/agrev-index.html
For a detailed view of hunting and gathering in New Guinea, go to http://www.climatechange.umaine.edu/Research/projects/NewGuinea.html
To learn more about how elevated social status may help people live longer lives, go to http://www.newscientist.com/article/dn10972-social-status-helps-you-live-longer.html
To learn more about Head Start, go to http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsp/HdStart/index.jsp