

SOC 101 – TEST 1 LECTURE

Sociology ("the systematic study of relationships among people" – this approach is possible only because human behavior is "patterned" and "regular")

Sociology (textbook definition = "scientific study of society and human behavior")

Sociology (socius=being with others & logos) & Anthropology (anthro = man)

Psychology (psyche=spirit & logos)

Psychology vs. Sociology (or "free will" vs. "determinism")

Science: requires development of theories that can be proven/disproven by systematic research (using "scientific method" as the paradigm)

Steps in "Scientific Method":

- (1) observe problem/situation,
- (2) analyze problem/situation,
- (3) develop hypothesis (i.e tentative explanation used for research only)
- (4) conduct research,
- (5) develop theory (i.e. a more long-term way to explain findings)
- (6) make findings available for replication.

Replication = repeating a study to check findings of a previously done study

Subjective (i.e. potentially biased by observer's feelings/history/expectations) vs. objective (i.e. a "value free" or "neutral observation")

Left (i.e. liberal) vs. right (i.e. conservative)

Theory vs. law (in social sciences vs. "hard sciences")

Social sciences (which study human relationships):

- (1) sociology (studying industrial peoples),
- (2) anthropology (studying preliterate/tribal people),
- (3) psychology (studying behavior of people)
- (4) political science (studying politics/government),
- (5) economics (studying production/distribution of goods/sciences = the "dismal" science),
- (6) history (studying man's past – often considered a "humanities" area of study).

Society: a group of people who share a "culture" and a "territory"

Territory: a spatial concept, marked by "territorial markers"

Culture = "our way of doing things" vs. territory = a "spatial" concept

Faith vs. reason (after 18th century "Enlightenment" and introduction of modern science as basis for learning)

Note: sociology emerged in middle-1800's when European social observers began to use scientific methods to test their ideas (i.e. moving from "armchair philosophy" to "science").

Auguste Comte (1798-1857):

- (1) "Father of Sociology (i.e. first to suggest application of scientific method to social world studies; also first person to use term "sociology"),
- (2) really a French "armchair social philosopher".

Herbert Spencer (1820-1903):

- (1) sometimes called "2nd Founder of Sociology",
- (2) "survival of fittest (society steadily improves as it changes – inferior societies/members die out),
- (3) Social Darwinism,
- (4) really an English "social philosopher",
- (5) his ideas favored by wealthy industrialists of time who saw themselves as "superior" (i.e. the "fittest").

Karl Marx (1818-1883):

- (1) believed "engine of human history" was "CLASS CONFLICT",
- (2) a historian, philosopher and economist (i.e. didn't see himself as "sociologist"),
- (3) German exiled to England,
- (4) believed "class conflict" to be competition between "HAVES" and "HAVE NOTS" (relative to the "means of production"),
- (5) believed a society's economic system strongly influences all other social institutions,
- (6) capitalist/bourgeoisie (own means of production) vs. working class/proletariat (who are the "masses" who work for capitalist and earn only "subsistence wages" for their efforts),
- (7) considered "means of production" to be anything that could generate wealth (i.e. capital, land, mines, ships, factories, machines, etc.),
- (8) Note: Marx did not develop political system of "communism" – which was a later application of his ideas by others.

Ralf Dahrendorf: expanded Marx's ideas of conflict beyond simply "means of production" so that "conflict is intrinsic to any social organization in which there is accepted difference in authority between groups" – this expansion of Marxist philosophy helps explain why there is inevitable conflict between teachers/principals, workers/supervisors. or officer/enlisted (neither of whom owns the schools, plants or military).

Emile Durkheim (1858-1917):

- (1) Frenchman,
- (2) studied suicide – found rates fairly constant among social groups from one year to another because "social factors influence suicide" (i.e. suicide has a social basis as well as its obvious individual basis),
- (3) identified "social integration" as key factor influencing suicide (i.e. people with weaker social ties more prone to suicide),
- (4) published 1897 suicide study that is considered classic even today,
- (5) "anomie" (i.e. rootlessness found in modern society where people lack sense of intimate belonging) vs. "community" (i.e. a shared sense of belonging).

University of Chicago (often considered 1st to offer "sociology" in 1920's)

Macrosociology (looking at broad elements of society) vs. microsociology (looking at interactions between small units/individuals within society)

Macrosociology = functionalist and conflict perspectives

Microsociology = symbolic interactionism

Functionalism:

- (1) society has structures (or institutions) that "function" to maintain its on-going health (much like our body structures interact together to provide the body's on-going health),
- (2) functionalist are interested in how a given society is able to endure over a period of time,
- (3) includes theorists like Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, and Talcott Parsons,
- (4) manifest vs. latent functions (best seen with "sociological imagination"),
- (5) something is "functional" to the extent it serves well being of a society and is "dysfunctional" to the extent it fails to serve society's well being (note: some things, like "crime", can be both functional and dysfunctional to different aspects of a society).

Manifest functions (i.e. obvious/intended) vs. latent functions (hidden/not obvious)

Conflict:

- (1) stresses conflict/competition for scarce resources (like wealth/power, prestige),
- (2) Karl Marx is founder,
- (3) studies how dominant elites use power to control less powerful,
- (4) focus is on "haves" and "have nots" in a society,
- (5) sees "crime" as simply a "label" where powerful elites label activities of less powerful as "criminal" to control them).

Symbolic interactionism:

- (1) interested in face-to-face interactions between people using "symbols" to communicate (i.e. it is a microsociological approach),
- (2) studies how members of a society choose/agree upon symbols.

Symbols = something with deeper meaning than appears on the surface; something that stands for something else; something simple that represents something much more complex.

Verbal symbols (i.e. language) vs. non-verbal symbols

Non-verbal symbols:

- (1) gestures (with hands),
- (2) facial expressions,
- (3) body language,
- (4) modes of dress (i.e. "uniforms").

Society vs. culture

Society = "groups of people who interact mostly with each other and live in a defined territory"

Culture = "language, beliefs, behaviors and material objects passed from one generation to the next (or, simply, 'our way of doing things')"

Material culture (i.e. artifacts) vs. nonmaterial culture (i.e. the "expressive" part of culture – such as religion or marriage customs – includes language, gestures, and other forms of interactions)

Socialization (or "enculturation") = the process by which the external culture is internalized

Agents of socialization:

- (1) parents (our primary socializers as small children),
- (2) peers (become very important as we grow beyond home),
- (3) teachers,
- (4) religious leaders (for those with close religious ties – especially fundamentalists),
- (5) mass media.

Note: agents of socialization help pass culture from one generation to the next – they also help "socialize" immigrants

Instinct (i.e. inborn) vs. culture (as replacement for instinct in higher forms of animals/humans – must be taught to each person via socialization)

Ethnocentrism vs. cultural relativism

Ethnocentrism = use of one's own cultural standards to judge others' cultures as inferior.

Ethnocentrism can be reduced by exposure to many other cultures.

Ethnocentrism easily leads to atrocities like: (A) Sand Creek Massacre (which is portrayed in a popular movie called "Soldier Blue") and (B) Custer's slaughter of Black Kettle's Camp on the Washita in winter (which is portrayed in one segment of the movie "Little Big Man")

Cultural relativism = refers to idea that no one culture is better or worse than another – each has its own strengths and weaknesses only relative to another culture its compared with – supported via today's "celebration of cultural diversity"

Culture shock = refers to a sense of anxiety, confusion and disorientation that occurs when one comes in contact with a very different culture.

Future shock = refers to confusion/disorientation resulting from rapid/accelerating rates of change in contemporary industrial society (an idea popularized by Alvin Toffler circa 1970) – this includes the idea that much of what one generation knows is made obsolete for the new generation (so that the values/practices learned as a child may not be applicable to the same person as an older adult)

Dominant culture vs. counter culture (organized around set of norms/values which sharply contradict those of dominant culture in a society)

Examples of "counter cultures" (which runs against/counter to/opposite dominant culture):

- (1) religious sects,
- (2) delinquent gangs,
- (3) social movements (feminism or gay rights).

Cultural universals = general traits shared by all cultures

Examples of "cultural universals":

- (1) some customs of hospitality,
- (2) some method of food preparation and acceptable foods,
- (3) language,
- (4) art,
- (5) mythology,
- (6) religion,
- (7) family
- (8) education,
- (9) government,
- (10) housing,
- (11) incest taboo.

Linguistics = the formal study of language (often seen as subfield of anthropology)

Note: often there is a great deal of trouble with language translations because, while the meanings may be similar, each culture may have unique meanings (such as the Eskimo use of 20 very specific words for snow vs. only the words snow and powder in English). The meaning is lost as we make the translation. Also, proper names lose their original meaning as they are translated (example: Yeshua into Jesus)

Language = a set of words and rules of grammar

Words = symbols standing for ideas/objects important to the culture)

Words can be "spoken" or "written" = cultures/societies are thus "preliterate" or "literate"

Illiterate person = one who can't read/write in a literate culture/society

Language allows people to:

- (1) store knowledge,
- (2) transmit culture to future generations.

Note: a written language allows culture to actually survive the death of all its members

Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis (1930's – Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf) includes the idea that language influences the way people see the world. Thus, when we learn a language, we learn a way of seeing the world (i.e. a particular way of thinking/perceiving reality).

Examples of the "Sapir-Whorf Hypotheses":

- (1) Jam/jelly not distinct words in Hebrew,
- (2) Eskimo have 20 distinct words for snow,
- (3) Native Englishman learning German begins to see world differently.

Subcultures = smaller culture embedded in larger culture

Subcultures develop own "jargon" (for technical communication) and "slang" (for more informal communication)

Examples of subcultures with slang/jargon:

- (1) prisons/police,
- (2) medical,
- (3) military,
- (4) education professionals.

Norms (unwritten rules of behavior, known by all in group) vs. laws (written, but not known by everybody who is expected to obey them)

Laws are actually "rigid norms" that are written and enforced by political authority
Note: there can be very serious legal consequences for failing to obey laws since
"Ignorance of the law is no excuse" – think of felonies involved in violation of the
S.C. buggery law or shooting an unarmed/nonviolent intruder!

Examples of norms:

- (1) wearing suit/tie to church,
- (2) wearing formal clothes to formal dance.

Norms tell us how we are expected to behave, think or feel in a specific situation.

Therefore, we might say norms:

- (1) organized social behavior,
- (2) make the actions of others more predictable.

Informal sanctions (reinforce norms) vs. formal sanctions (reinforce laws)

Informal sanctions are done by your own group, while formal sanctions are by the state

Pluralistic society = a society composed of different racial, religious, and ethnic groups

Sociobiology focuses on genetics/biology as an influence on social behavior

Nature vs. nurture debate (i.e. genes vs. experience)

Nature (i.e. biology) vs. nurture (traditional psychology and sociology)

Chromosomes (23 pr. in somatic cells; 23 in sex cells) vs. genes vs. DNA

Sex chromosome abnormalities: XXY, XYY and XXXY

Mongoloidism/Trisomy 21/Downs Syndrome refers to XXX configuration in 21st place

Technology = tools and skills used by people to alter their environment

Technological determinism = idea that technology develops a life of its own and people
are forced to follow those changes (example: everyone uses computers – making
typewrites obsolete – and computers require very specific behavior by people –
forcing people's behavior to change accordingly)

Cultural diffusion = occurs when military/missionaries spread culture from an advanced
one to a less advanced one – may eventually produce "cultural leveling"

Gender = a society's image of maleness or femaleness

Sex = biological differences between male and female

Genders: masculine, feminine and androgynous

Sex: male, female and hermaphrodite (or "intersex state")

Gender roles = behaviors/attitudes appropriate for a specific sex in specific culture

Gender socialization (i.e. how we are "taught" what is appropriate for different gender
behavior by those dominant in our culture)

Gender stereotypes (where "all women" are expected to be one way and "all men" are
expected to be another)

Gender messages from "mass media" include:

- (1) advertising,
- (2) television programs/movies,
- (3) video games.

Modeling (occurs when we learn by imitating others) – we start this early as we model
parent's behaviors

Ways to transmit knowledge to children:

- (1) modeling,
- (2) word of mouth (i.e. informal),
- (3) formal school.

More than simply providing knowledge, school is a major "social agent"

Peer groups offer rewards of social approval for conformity to norms

Anticipatory socialization (occurs prior to actual change event as we begin to identify with, and practice for, a new role we imagine ourselves entering)

Resocialization (occurs when learning a new identity – such as boot camp or initial prison processing)

Total institutions (where people are cut off from rest of society and are put under complete control of others)

Examples of total institutions:

- (1) military boot camp,
- (2) prisons
- (3) mental hospitals, (6) some boarding schools (such as military academy).

People entering total institutions are usually subject to "degradation ceremony" as way to suddenly strip away old, familiar identity

Institutionalization (i.e. development of such strong identity that separation anxiety occurs when finally free) – this often results in "recidivism" in prisons

Rites of passage (i.e. public events/ceremonies that mark our move from old" to "new" in the eyes of the group we belong in)

Examples of "rites of passage":

- (1) scarification (i.e. ritual cutting/branding),
- (2) male circumcision,
- (3) clitoridectomy or Pharonic circumcision of female,
- (3) school graduation,
- (4) wedding ceremony,
- (5) nursing pin ceremony.

Traditional life cycle:

- (1) child,
- (2) adult.

Modern, U.S. life cycle:

- (1) childhood (birth – 12 years),
- (2) adolescence (ages 13 – 21),
- (3) adulthood:
 - (A) early (ages 21 – 40)
 - (B) middle (ages 40 – 65),
 - (c) late (ages 65 and beyond).

Note: adolescence is a way of keeping children out of the adult job market by keeping them dependent longer than in traditional societies.

All people go through "puberty" (i.e. physical changes that mark the ability to reproduce), while only advanced societies have a concept of "adolescence"