

## Invitation to Sociology

### **Sociology**

*Social interaction – how people relate to one another and influence each other's behavior.*

*Social phenomenon – an observable fact or event.*

### **Social Sciences**

*Anthropology – comparative study of the various aspects of past and present cultures*

*Psychology – study of mental processes and human behavior*

*Social psychology – study of how an individual's behavior and personality are affected by the social environment.*

*Economics – science examining the production, consumption, and distribution of scarce goods.*

*Political Science – Examination of the organizational and operation of government, including group interests, morals, values, beliefs, and practices*

*History – an investigation of past events*

### **C. Wright Mills**



*sociological imagination*

*was concerned with sociology's application to the real world and the daily lives of individuals in society*

## **Auguste Comte**



*French scholar*

*Father of sociology*

*Did not complete his college education*

*positivism*

*First to use the term sociology to describe the study of society*

*was concerned with finding solutions to the chaos created by the French Revolution*

*He used social statics to describe processes by which the overall structure of a society remains relatively stable, or unchanged, over time.*

*He applied social dynamics to the processes by which elements within the society change in a systematic fashion to allow for social development.*

*A social dynamic change caused by the Industrial Revolution, compelled people to move from farms to cities.*

*He practiced cerebral hygiene [refusal to read the works of other writers in order to keep his mind pure]*

## **Karl Marx**



*Class conflict was inevitable because workers will eventually overthrow the capitalists just as slaves overthrew their owners.*

*Bourgeoisie & proletariat*

## **Herbert Spencer**



*Strongly influenced by the works of Charles Darwin*

*Considered social change and unrest to be natural occurrences in a society's evolution toward stability and perfection*

*Credited with the phrase "survival of the fittest"*

*His brand of sociology is known as social Darwinism*

*Practiced "cerebral hygiene"*

## **Emile Durkheim**



*First to systematically apply the methods of science to the study of society.*

*Saw society as a set of interdependent parts that maintain the system over time. These parts are functions.*

*Felt that sociologists should study only those aspects of society that are directly observable.*

*He did not consider the thoughts and feelings of individuals within society to be the proper subject matter of the discipline.*

*First sociologist to test his theories through statistical analysis.*

*Introduced mechanical and organic solidarity (m- close knit social relationships that result when a small group of people share the same values and perform the same tasks; o – impersonal social relationships that arise with increased job specialization)*

**Dr. Charles V. Willie**



*Harvard University Professor*

*Graduate of Morehouse College*

*areas of research include desegregation, higher education, public health, race relations, urban community problems, and family life.*

**Max Weber**

*Sociologists should go beyond studying what can be directly observed.*

*Believe sociologists must try to uncover the feelings and thoughts of individuals.*

*Verstehen – empathetic understanding of the meanings others attach to their actions*

**W.E.B. Dubois**



*First Black-American to earn a Ph.D from Harvard University*

*Became a professor of history, sociology, and economics at Atlanta University*

*Co-founder of the NAACP*

*Believed that education will uplift people from second-class citizenship and poverty*

### **Harriet Martineau**



*wrote a book titled, *The Hour and the Man*, about the Haitian slave leader Toussaint L'Ouverture*

*an early feminist theorist because she wrote about the link between slavery and the oppression of women.*

### **Perspectives**

#### *Sociological Perspective*

*Helps us gain a new view for looking at ourselves and the world by looking beyond commonly held beliefs to the hidden meanings behind human [group] actions.*

*Helps us see that we are human beings and broaden our view of the social world.*

#### *Theoretical Perspective*

*A theory is a systematic explanation of the relationships among phenomena*

*A general set of assumptions about the nature of phenomena.*

### **Three Broad Theoretical Perspectives that form modern sociology**

Functionalist – view society as a set of interrelated parts that work together to produce a stable social system.

Dysfunction is a negative consequence an element has for the stability of the social system. Ex. crime

Manifest function is the intended and recognized consequence of some element of society. Ex. purpose of a car

Latent function is the unintended and unrecognized consequence of an element of society. Ex. function of the automobile gaining social standing through the display of wealth.

Conflict – focus on those forces in society that promote competition and change.

Interactionist – focus on how individuals interact with one another in society

Symbol – anything that stands for something else. Ex. U.S. 4<sup>th</sup> of July

Symbolic Interaction - ???

Free Test Questions Below:

An example of group conformity is several members of a little league team begin wearing their baseball caps backwards and soon the entire team is following this style.

Using the Internet for shopping is convenient and can save time. This is a manifest function of this type of shopping.

Some people think that shopping over the Internet can lead to social isolation because people go to stores less often. This is a latent function of Internet shopping.

The theory that society benefits when each individual finds his or her own social-class level without outside interference is called Social Darwinism.

Also, be sure you are able to categorize each sociologist with an appropriate perspective.