Social Structure Essay, Research Paper

Social Structure: framework that surrounds us, consisting of the relationships of people and groups to one another, which give direction to and set limits on behavior.

Social Institutions: organized, usual, or standard ways by which society meets its basic needs.

Ascribed Status: refers to positions that an individual either inherits at birth or receives involuntarily later in life. age, gender, race, wealth, sibling

Achieved Status: refers to positions that are earned, accomplished, or involve at least some effort/activity on part of individual occupation, wife, athlete, parent, friend, graduate

Status Inconsistency: contradiction/mismatch between statuses. Gertrude from Ghana.

Dramaturgy: theoretical perspectives that analyzes social life using the analogy of the stage or theatre.

Front Stage: where performances are given; public arena

Back Stage: where people rest from their performances, discuss presentations, plan future performances. (Goffman: still performing roles here)

Role Performance: the way in which someone performs a role w/in the limits that the role provides; showing a particular style or personality. Different teachers teach different ways.

Impression Management: people’s efforts to control the impression that others have of them.

“Ferdinand Tonnies”

Gemeinschaft: type of society in which life is intimate; a community in which everyone knows everyone else and people share a sense of togetherness. Gosssip: mechanism for maintaining group cohesion. Guy losing family, getting rejected by village.

Gesellschaft: type of society dominated by impersonal relationships, individual accomplishments, and self interest. gesSELLshaft capitalistic/modern society sells

Role Conflict: conflicts that an individual feels between two or more roles because the expectations attached to one role are incompatible w/the expectations of another role.

Role Strain: conflicts that someone feels w/in same role. teachers: encouraging students but having to grade them; physicians: make you feel better but give painful treatments.

Ideas to know and understand from the lecture

? The relationship and similarity between the concepts of gemeinshaft, gesellschaft and mechanical and organic solidarity.

? The functions of social institutions as defined by a structural functionalism and conflict theory.

? The difference between ascribed and achieved status, as well as the ability to apply each concept given an example.

? The meaning of status inconsistency, as well as the ability to apply the concept given an example.

? You should understand Erving Goffman’s theory of dramaturgy and the associated concepts of front stage, back stage, role performance, and impression management.

? The difference between role conflict and role strain and the ability to distinguish between the two given examples.

Write definitions along with an example other than the ones given in the textbook.

Macrosociology: analysis of social life focusing on broad features of social structure, such as social class and the relationships of groups to one another; an approach usually used by functionalist and conflict theorists. Gallop polls examine the large-scale social forces by sampling numerous people rather than doing one-on-one interviews.

Microsociology: analysis of social life focusing on social interaction; an approach usually used by symbolic interactionists. Psychiatrists focus on how what people do when they come together impacts their social lives.

Social Interaction: what people do when they are in the presence of one another. A preacher counseling a young married couple. He hits her.

Status: the position that someone occupies in society or a social group. The owner of a salon, even though she performs services also, has more clout and is distinguished.

Status Set: all the statuses or positions that an individual has. The salon owner is married to another business owner, is middle class, is a female, etc. These aspects all form her set.

Status Symbol: items used to identify a status. A stethoscope identifies medical statuses.

Master Status: a status that cuts across the other statuses than an individual occupies. Being considered attractive in your culture

Role: the behaviors, obligations, and privileges attached to a status. They lay out what is expected of people. On a date, my role is to get everything paid for for me.

Thomas Theorem: William I. Thomas’ classic formulation of the definition of the situation: “If people define situations as real, they are real in their consequences.” If you think you are going to heaven after you die, you do everything in your life thinking of that.

Social Construction of Reality: the process by which people use their background assumptions and life experiences to define what is real for them.

Ideas that you should know and understand from the textbook:

? The distinction between macrosociology and mirosociology and the analytical orientation of each of the three theoretical perspectives in sociology.

? You should be able to distinguish between a status and a role and have an understanding of master status (read inserts on Christopher Reeve and Stephen Hawking.)

? You are to read and understand the social construction of reality as it is exemplified in the “Gynecological Examination” on pages 119-120.

People that you should know from this chapter:

? Ferdinand Tonnies

? Emile Durkheim

? Erving Goffman

Chapter Seven

Terms to know and understand from Lecture:

Rationalization of Society: a widespread acceptance of rationality and a social organization largely built around this idea.

Ideal Type: Max Weber: composite of characteristics based on many specific examples, purely rational model.

Quality Circles: group of approximately 12 workers, 1-2 managers who meet regularly to discuss ways to improve quality within the organization. It’s the people at the bottom that know. It’s not efficient because nothing ever happens as a result of these meetings.

Self-Managed Work Teams (Small Work Groups): small groups/teams of individuals who work together to perform their job. Loyalty increase, absenteeism decreases, and produces harder workers.

Employee Stock Ownership: employees purchase the firm’s stock at a discount or as part of their salary. When employees own the majority of the stock, the firm is more profitable and there exists less tension as opposed to the firms where employees own only a tiny amount of the stock

Corporate Day Care: facilities at work. Absenteeism decreases, shorter maternity leaves, decreased turnover (quitting and leaving your job), corporation saves money.

Ideas to know and understand from Lecture:

? The relationship between the rationalization of society and the shift from mechanical to organic solidarity, gemeinshaft to gesellshaft. (Table 7.1 pa 175 from text)

? You should understand the relationship between organization changes such as quality control circles, self-managed work teams, employee stock ownership, and corporate day care on the bureaucratic structure.

? You should know and understand what it is meant by an “Ideal Type” and the theorist that is credited with that concept.

Write definitions along with an example other than the ones given in the textbook.

Formal Organization: a secondary group designed to achieve explicit objectives. College is a formal organization that we’ve started to take for granted.

Bureaucracy: a formal organization with a hierarchy of authority; a clear division of labor; emphasis on written rules, communications, and records; and impersonality of positions. Supreme Court.

Five Characteristics of Bureaucracy

1. Clear cut levels, with assignments flowing downward and accountability flowing upward. Everyone has a job and they have to answer to someone “higher up” than them.

2. A division of labor. Each worker has a specific task that they’ve been trained to do.

3. Written rules. If there isn’t a written rule covering it, it isn’t allowed.

4. Written communications and records. Fill that out in triplicate, memos, publications, testimonies to service, email etc.

5. Impersonality. We’re all “robots” that can be replaced easily.

Six dysfunctions of a bureaucracy w/a summary explanation of each

1. Red Tape: A Rule is a Rule. Procedures impede the purpose of the organization.

2. Lack of Communication Between Units. When units are so specialized they forget to cross reference the long term goals and hinder the purpose of the organization.

3. Bureaucratic Alienation: Estrangement from limited creativity, lost sense of contribution and loss of identity with final products.

4. Resisting Alienation: workers form primary groups at work, rejecting an identity as mere machines that exist to perform functions.

5. The Alienated Bureaucrat: doesn’t do anything for the organization beyond what they’re absolutely required to do, uses rules to justify doing as little as possible.

6. Bureaucratic Incompetence: Peter Principle; employees are promoted to their level of incompetence. They’re promoted until they can’t handle the responsibilities well.

McDonaldization of society: the process by which ordinary aspects of life are rationalized and efficiency comes to rule such things as food preparation.

alienation: Marx’s term for the experience of being cut off from the product of one’s labor that results in a sense of powerlessness and normlessness.

Peter principle: a bureaucratic “law” according to which the members of an organization are promoted for good work until they reach their level of incompetence, the level at which they can no longer do good work.

Iron Law of Oligarchy: Robert Michels’ phrase for the tendency of formal organizations to be dominated by a small, self-perpetuating elite.

Goal displacement: a goal displaced by another; in this context, the adoption of new goals by an organization; also known as goal replacement.

Ideas that you should know and understand

You should know the characteristics of a bureaucracy as well as the dysfunctions of a bureaucracy.

You should know what is meant by the McDonaldization of society and be able to identify it as it exists in your social world.

Read and understand the perspectives box on page 194 of your text. Cultural Diversity Around the World.

People that you should know:

Max Weber

Karl Marx

Chapter 8

Ideas and terms from Lecture

Social Construction/Relativity of Deviance: Piercing Exercise

Deviance Theories

Biological Theories of deviance: Underlying Assumption: Deviance is the result of genetic predispositions to commit deviant acts

1. Deviant individuals are less intelligent

2. The “XYZ” theory: an extra Y chromosome in males leads to crime.

3. The Body Type theory: people with square, muscular body builds are more likely to commit street crimes.

Psychological Theories of deviance: Underlying Assumption: deviance is the result of a personality disorder within the individual

1. Sociopath

Sociological Theories of deviance

A. Structural Functionalist Theory: Underlying Assumption: Deviance performs both functions and dysfunctions for society

1. Dysfunctionalist: deviance represents dysfunction and leads to disequilibrium (imbalance) within the social system and must be minimized or eliminated.

2. Functionalist (Durkheim)-deviance serves three functions for society

a. deviance clarifies moral boundaries and affirms norms

b. it promotes social unity

c. it promotes social change

B. Structural Functionalist

Robert Merton’s Strain Theory of Deviance

Individual Response Cultural Goals Legitimacy of Means Conformity accept accept

Innovation accept reject

Ritualism reject accept

Retreatism reject reject

Rebellion reject/substitute reject/substitute

C. Structural Functionalist

Illegitimate Opportunity Theory: Underlying Assumption: not everyone has equal access to deviance.

Symbolic Interactionist theories of deviance

Differential Association Theory

Control Theory

Labeling Theory

Structural Functionalist theories of deviance

Emile Durkheim’s theory

Strain Theory

Illegitimate Opportunity Theory

Conflict theories of deviance

Class dominated theories of deviance

Medicalilzation of deviance

Ideas that you should know and understand from the lecture

You should know why sociologists believe that deviance is a socially constructed phenomena (Piercing exercise and Perspectives Box on page 199 of text)

You should be able to distinguish between biological, psychological and sociological explanations of deviance.

You should know the components of the seven sociological theories of deviance discussed in lecture as well as the theoretical perspective that they are associated with.

You should know the components of Durkheim’s theory of deviance as functional for society.

You should thoroughly know Robert Merton’s strain theory of deviance.

You should understand the relationship between labeling theory and the class discussion of the “Saints and Roughnecks” study and the “Being Sane in Insane Places” study.

You should know and understand what is meant by the medicalizaiton of deviance.

Deviance: the violation of rules or norms

Stigma: “blemishes” that discredit a person’s claim to a “normal” identity

Social Control: a group’s formal and informal means of enforcing its norms

Official Deviance: a society’s statistics on lawbreaking; its measures of crimes; victims, lawbreakers, and the outcomes of criminal investigations and sentencing.

Social Order: a group’s usual and customary social arrangements, on which its members depend and on which they base their lives.

Crime: the violation of norms that are written into law.

Recidivism Rate: the proportion of people who are rearrested

Retribution: the punishment of offenders in order to restore the moral balance upset by the offense.

Deterrence: creating fear so people will refrain from breaking the law.

Rehabilitation: the resocialization of offenders so they can become conforming citizens.

Incapacitation: to take away someone’s capacity to commit crimes, in this instance, by putting the offender in prison.

Hate Crimes: crimes to which more severe penalties are attached because they are motivated by hatred (dislike, animosity) of someone’s race0ethinicity, religion, sexual orientation, or disability.

Negative Sanction: a punishment or negative reaction for disapproved behavior, for deviance

Positive Sanction: a reward or positive reaction for approved behavior, for conformity

Degradation ceremony: rituals designed to strip an individual of his or her identity as a group member; for example, a court martial or the defrocking of a priest

The four primary reasons for imprisoning individuals:

1. Retribution: pay back for your wrong

2. Deterrence: create fear

3. Rehabilitation: resocialize

4. Incapacitation: keeping them off the streets.

Deviance —\*Degradation. A minister would have to relinquish his position if he was caught cheating on his wife.

Ideas that you should know and understand

You should know the four primary reasons for imprisoning individuals

You should know the trends regarding hate crimes in the US pg 221

You should know and understand problems with official crime statistics. p 222

People that you should know

Robert Merton

Emile Durkheim

Edwin Sutherland differential association and white-collar crimes