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March 24th, 2023

**1. 20-Days: Exercise Submission**

Watch and read each of the following. Send an email (schmidt@umassglobal.edu) confirming that you have completed watching and reading the materials.

1. Watch the following videos:

a. Social Theories Overview, Pt. 1

b. Social Theories Overview, Pt. 2

c. Macrosociology vs Microsociology

d. Social Institutions

e. Functionalism

f. Conflict Theory

g. Social Constructionism

h. Symbolic Interactionism

i. Rational Choice Exchange

2. Read the following:

a. Read this article on Christian Sociology

b. Read the short Dennis Hiebert editorial “Social Practices of the Christian Sociologist” from the Journal of Sociology and Christianity available electronically.

**20-Day Exercise Submission**

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**1. The video on Social Theory has been watched.:**

**a. Social Theories Overview, Pt. 1**

**Study Extracts:**

**Social Theory** focuses on society, culture, concepts, and assumptions about social reality.

Social theory is a body of knowledge aimed at making sense of human life-aligned most closely with sociology-an intellectually inclusive and versatile body of ideas (Thorpe, 2017, Anatomy of Social Theory, para. 1) . It was during the middle of the 19th century that sociology developed as a distinct and scientific study of human social life, groups, and societies. The Industrial Revolution transformed Europe from an agricultural to a factory-based economy and prompted the emergence of new means of employment away from rural communities (Schmidt, 2023).

**b. Social Theories Overview, Pt. 2:**

Social theory Pt. 2 offers a concise view of the Feminist Theory: focusing on gender differences and inequality in modern and post-modern societies. Especially where you have a patriarchal society. Here, different values are attached to males, resulting in some form of gender discrimination. There are gender and structural oppression in capitalist economies like Europe and America in equal pay for the same work, management hierarchy, promotions, etc.

**c. Macrosociology vs Microsociology**

**Macrosociology** involves the study of widespread social processes. Microsociology involves studying people at a more interpersonal level, as in face-to-face interactions.

“The macro-level study of widespread social processes has been the more dominant approach and has been practiced since sociology’s origins in the founding work of figures like Emile Durkheim. Durkheim, for example, studied the large-scale shift from homogenous traditional societies to industrialized societies, where each individual played a highly specialized role. The tendency toward macro sociology is evident in the kinds of questions that early sociologists asked: What holds societies together? How are norms (and deviance) established and handled by organizations? What factors lead to social change, and what are the results of this change? Macrosociologists focus on society as something that is before, and greater than, the sum of individual people”.

**Microsociology:** “Studying social life on the micro-level is a more recent development (in the early and mid-twentieth century) in the field’s history and was pioneered by proponents of the symbolic interactionism perspective, namely George Herbert Mead, Herbert Blumer, and Erving Goffman. Mead was a pragmatist and behaviorist, which means several things”.

**d. Social Institutions** are standardized patterns and behaviors that fulfill basic social needs.

**e. Functionalism:** The Theory of Functionalism: how society exists and operates over time in their attempt to function and adapt and to steer equilibrium or stability in their functions and the environments, involving people and culture, their living and eco-habitational characteristics, etc.

**f. Conflict Theory:**  Conflict Theory: involves creating new societies in the 18th and 19th centuries when there were competing class struggles between the workers and the factory owners, mainly in Europe during the industrial revolution.

**g. Social Constructionism:**  Social Constructionism: People agree to attach values to things like money (mutual exchange and acceptability for its value) and labor (with wages) to reconstruct society.

**h. Symbolic Interactionism:**  Symbolic Interactionalism is a process focusing on individual interactional and relational societal experiences. People give different meanings to a social activity based on experience, interaction, and learning how individuals or people act.

**i. Rational Choice Exchange:**  “takes a looks at society as a series of individual interactions. And is often used to study family relationships, work relationships, partner selection, parenting, and many other interpersonal interactions. At the same time, female femininity tends to be objectified in some male-dominated environments and cultures. There is still wage or income discrimination against women in some sectors in the US and European countries in the 21st century”. The Social Exchange Theory: also refers to social interactions based on cost-benefit analysis. People gravitate toward each other when they share common values in education, workplaces, fraternity, norms, tradition, etc. Able to share and exchange their ideals and beliefs and bound by similar means and rules.

**Three main assumptions in Rational Choice theory:** 1) All human actions can be ranked. 2) All actions can be compared to the other. 3) Additional options may not change outcomes in interpersonal interactions

**2. Read the following:**

**a. Read this article on Christian Sociology:**  Extracts derived from the article on Christian Sociology – Conclusion: Christian sociology values both individuals and social institutions. As individuals, we are free to make choices, but our intention to turn away from God alienates us from Him and others. Society is also fallen and imperfect and responsible for its choices and attitudes. Deterministic worldviews that deny the free will of individuals and institutions deny the significance of both. There can be no meaningful judgment if forces outside our control determine all individual and corporate actions. Isaiah 46:8–11 shows us God’s plan to judge our actions and our ability to do what we choose. As humans, we will face the consequences of our choices in creating our society. God gives us the responsibility to protect and direct the societal institutions He ordains, including family, state, and church. Families are charged with reproductive responsibilities as well as training and nurturing. The state is charged with carrying out justice, primarily involving law and order. The church is charged with demonstrating Christian love within itself and society. We are answerable to God for the direction these institutions lead society. The same burden of responsibility, however, points to the blessing of having free will yet belonging to a loving and just God. Our freedom entails responsibilities, duties, and work. We are not free to wreak mayhem in the social order; but we are free to serve others in love and to serve and love God. Such is God’s call on humans.

There are three major paradigms in sociology that reflect different views of society:

1. The Structural-Functional Paradigm

2. The Social Conflict

3. Symbolic Interaction (Schmidt, 2023). See summary of paradignms 1-3 in section # 1e, f, and g, above.

**b. Read the short Dennis Hiebert editorial “Social Practices of the Christian Sociologist” from the Journal of Sociology and Christianity, available electronically.**

Notable Article Extract: Both sociology and Christianity are social practices. No academic discipline calls for justice, mercy, and humility more earnestly and effectively than sociology. As for Christianity, God has told you, Christian sociologist, what is good, and what practices the Lord requires of you. To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God are much greater requisites than the taken-for-granted beliefs and routinized actions of any academic discipline or career. They are ongoing, for life, and will ultimately define who you are by what you do.

3. Send an email to your professor through DIAL confirming that you have

completed watching and reading the materials.