*Our Social World, Fifth Edition*

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**Chapter 2 Classroom Exercise #7**

**ANSWER KEY**

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| **PARADIGM** | **METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK / KEY THEORISTS** | **KEY IDEAS** | **CRITICISMS OF PARADIGM BY OTHERS** | **VIEW ON DIVORCE** | **VIEW ON CRIME** |
| **Structural-Functional** | **Meso- to Macrosociology**: looking at large patterns or trends: Durkheim, Comte, Parsons | society as a system whose parts work together; society as stable and orderly; "biological organism" metaphor; macro view; things are the way they are for a reason | ignores inequalities that generate tension and conflict; belief that greater social control can solve social problems: NO AGENCY: too simple | divorce accommodates for increased economic equality among men and women: family may no longer be backbone of society: lax social values on reproduction occurring only in marriage, etc. | crime is a function of economic life: it creates a reason for us to have and enforce laws: crime is necessary if we are to have law enforcement |
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| **Social Conflict** | **Meso- to Macrosociology**: looking at large patterns or trends: Marx, Weber (sometimes), Dahrendorf, Simmel, Coser | highlights inequality and tries to reduce it; sees society as arena for inequality that generates conflict and change; order is created by elite power; macro view; change is normal; inequality may serve a purpose, but it serves people differently | political views can question objectivity; ignores how shared values can lead to unity: little or no faith in the social structure: difficult to maintain any stability | the institution of marriage can perpetuate inequality and can be more serving to men; therefore, as women gain more equal resources they may not have to rely as much on men/marriage | crime is a way for the have-nots to get what they need: in the case of white-collar crime, it is a way for the haves to have more |
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| **Symbolic Interaction** | Interpretive sociology: **Micro- to Mesosociology**: observational science: Mead, "The Iowa School," Weber (sometimes) | sees society as the product of everyday interactions of individuals; micro view: there is no one "true reality": our reality is a process of our everyday interactions | overlooks the widespread influence of culture: there are things whose "reality" is not up for debate (i.e., physical objects do exist): cross-cultural values do persist (incest taboo almost universal) | couples enter relationships with a different understanding of "love" "commitment" "the perfect relationship" the role of women and men in marriage, etc., and these differing realities affect the ability to stay married | crime is a way for us to regulate the reality of what is "right" and "wrong": we have different norms of acceptable behavior, so there is nothing bad about crime: sometimes stealing is okay, sometimes murder is okay, etc. |
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| **Rational Choice** | **Micro- to Mesosociology**; examines how individuals make choices | choices are made based on utilitarian factors, maximizing rewards and minimizing costs; assumes we're motivated by self interest | macro level ignored; human behavior may not always be self-centered; cannot explain altruism; people do not always maximize their self interest | couples enter into marriage with the partners who can offer them the most (in terms of love, resources, power, etc.) and will "cost" them the least. They will divorce when the benefits of marital dissolution outweigh the costs. | For some, crime is the most rational decision. Those who cannot achieve the desired ends any other way and for whom the benefits of crime outweigh the costs will engage in criminal activity. |
| **Feminist Theory** | **Micro- to Meso- to Macrosociology;** rooted in symbolic interaction and conflict theory | Women are disadvantaged by the societal power hierarchy; women's lives have not been accurately represented in sociology. | Feminist theory should include the intersection of race, class, and gender. | Marriage is a patriarchal institution set up to benefit men. Despite this, women are often disadvantaged by divorce because they do not earn as much income (because of employment discrimination) but are often awarded custody of the children (which they now have to support on a smaller income). | Men learn that to be masculine is to be tough and violent, resulting in some crimes; men learn to view women as sex objects which can lead to a "rape culture." |