

Final Examination Topics

BA in Sociology

Yeargroup 2020

5th of April, 2023

1. Theory

Classic and Contemporary Sociological Theory

Reading: Appelrouth, Scott and Laura D. Edles. *Classical and Contemporary Sociological Theory: Texts and Readings*. 4th ed. Los Angeles: SAGE, 2020, below mentioned pages.

- 1) Do you find Weber's theory connecting the Protestant Ethic to the rise of capitalism convincing? Why or why not? Use examples from the reading in the chapter and contemporary times. What alternative explanations could be offered to help explain the rise of capitalism that Weber did not cover?

Corresponding primary source:

"Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (excerpts)," in Appelrouth, Scott and Laura D. Edles. *Classical and Contemporary Sociological Theory: Texts and Readings*. 4th ed. Los Angeles: SAGE, 2020. 152-165.

- 2) Please elaborate on the concept of commodification as it is introduced by Karl Marx. Can you think of elements in society that were once outside the realm of production/consumption but are now commodified?

Corresponding primary source:

"Karl Marx, *Capital* (excerpts)," in Appelrouth, Scott and Laura D. Edles. *Classical and Contemporary Sociological Theory: Texts and Readings*. 4th ed. Los Angeles: SAGE, 2020. 55-70.

- 3) Du Bois argued that Whites have no racial consciousness at all: has this changed in recent times as conversations about White privilege have gone mainstream? What are the theoretical and practical implications of Whites developing racial consciousness?

Corresponding primary source:

"W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (excerpts)," in Appelrouth, Scott and Laura D. Edles. *Classical and Contemporary Sociological Theory: Texts and Readings*. 4th ed. Los Angeles: SAGE, 2020. 287-308.

Social structure and inequality

Key textbook: GRUSKY, DB (ed) (2008; 3rd ed) *Social Stratification: Class, Race and Gender in Sociological Perspective*, Westview Press Oxford

- 4) Compare the conflict theory and functionalist approaches on the structure of society. Choose one of the two approaches and use it to analyse a contemporary phenomenon of your choice.
 - [2] Davis and Moore: Some Principles of Stratification. In **GRUSKY**
 - [4] Tumin: Some Principles of Stratification. A critical analysis in **GRUSKY**
 - [9] Marx in **GRUSKY**
- 5) Describe the Affluent worker survey and the Great British Class (GBCS) survey. Outline the key differences between the two including their approach to class analysis.

- Savage (2005) Working-Class Identities in the 1960s: Revisiting the Affluent Worker Study. *Sociology* 39(5): 929–946
 - Savage et al (2013) A New Model of Social Class? Findings from the BBC’s Great British Class Survey Experiment *Sociology* 47(2) 219–250
- 6) Describe the OED triangle. Why is it that many fear that social mobility is dead? Explain Brown’s (2013) reference to the ‘sociology’s inconvenient truth’.
- Brown (2013) Education, opportunity and the prospects for social mobility, *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 34(5-6): 678-700.
- 7) Explain how different school systems create, reproduce, and legitimize pre-existing inequalities. Choose one type of educational institution (schools or universities) and describe the process through examples (see e.g. Khan, Karabel)
- Khan (2011) Getting In: How elite schools play the college game (chapter 6)
 - Karabel (1984) Status-group struggle, organizational interests, and the limits of institutional autonomy the transformation of Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, 1918—1940.
- 8) Which factors explain the ethnic minority disadvantage in education and labour market among the second generation (see Heath et al. 2008)? Why is it that some immigrant groups fare better than others? Use concrete examples to illustrate the difference(s).
- Heath, Rethon and Kilpi (2008) The Second Generation in Western Europe: Education, Unemployment, and Occupational Attainment. *Annual Review of Sociology* 34: 211-235.

2. Methodology

Data collection for quantitative research

Reading:

- Neuman, W. L. (2014): *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Pearson Education Limited

Questions:

- 9) What are the main features of experimental research? What are the strengths and weaknesses?
- 10) What are the main features of survey research? What are the strengths and weaknesses?

Quantitative Research and Data Analysis I.II.

Readings:

- Lecture notes, Glossary of key terms, and PowerPoint slides that are available for download from the webpage of Professor Ferenc Moksony (http://web.uni-corvinus.hu/moksony/research_methods_1_lecture_notes.htm, (http://web.uni-corvinus.hu/moksony/research_methods_2_readings.htm)

Questions:

- 11) Describe the main steps involved in the process of empirical theory testing. Why is it that a theory can be false even if the empirical implications derived from this theory are consistent with facts? What do we mean by suppressor effects? What is a crucial experiment and how does it work? How did Émile Durkheim test his explanation of why suicide is more frequent in warmer seasons than in colder ones?
- 12) What are the main types of alternative explanations and how can we eliminate them? What is randomization and how does it differ from random sampling? How does the use of control variables help rule out non-random alternative explanations? Why is randomization more effective than the use of control variables in eliminating non-random alternative explanations?
- 13) Describe the three main types of percentages that can we calculate in a contingency table. How does the aim of research affect which type of percentage is appropriate in a particular research situation? How does the sampling design affect which type of percentage is appropriate in a particular research situation?

Project Work - Interviews

Readings:

- Videos + Ppt files (in Moodle)

Questions:

- 14) What are the advantages and disadvantages of homogenous and heterogeneous focus groups? And of focus group with acquaintances and with strangers? (Videos: Planning and conducting focus groups II. <https://youtu.be/nhgcNdKz928>, Planning and conducting focus groups III. <https://youtu.be/R47TCVDN8H8>)
- 15) Compare the advantages and disadvantages of focus group research to individual interviews! b. Compare the advantages and disadvantages of (individual/group) interview research with the large-scale survey method, and the observation method! (Comparing individual interviews and focus groups I. <https://youtu.be/Hp9T1496rJg>, Comparing individual interviews and focus groups II. https://youtu.be/F6Gh_mTGnPI videos)
- 16) What are some rules for formulating questions for interviews? (Videos: Formulating questions for individual interviews I., https://youtu.be/2w_t9c0U5uc, Formulating questions for individual interviews II. <https://youtu.be/wxO1IFB7fao>, Formulating questions for individual interviews III. <https://youtu.be/MuJjmLhTR9A>)