

# **Final Examination Topics**

**BA in Sociology**

**Yeargroup 2021**

**March, 2024**

## 1. Theory

### Classic and Contemporary Sociological Theory

Main textbook: Ritzer (2010, 8<sup>th</sup> Ed) Sociological theory. McGraw-Hill

- 1) Why are teenage girls living in poverty and social exclusion increasingly opting for motherhood? Provide a sociological explanation using Weber's four types of social action. Which of the four do you think applies most? (see lecture 2)
  - Fernandez Kelly: *Social & cultural capital in the urban ghetto*
  - Weber: Types of Social Action
- 2) Describe the chances for promotion of American soldiers using the relative deprivation theory. Make sure to draw comparisons based on factors such as their stationed location, family status (i.e., married or not), educational level, combat experience, etc. Identify potential problems in applying the reference group theory. (see lecture 6)
  - Stouffer: *The American Soldier*
  - Merton: Contributions to the theory of reference group behavior
- 3) Why has a workplace counterculture emerged in factories like Hawthorne? Describe collective action using the prisoner's dilemma. (see lecture 7)
  - Mayo: *Hawthorne and the Western Electric Company*
  - Olson: Logic of collective action
- 4) What's the connection between Protestantism and capitalist development? Use Weber's theory on *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* to describe the reasons why the centers of early capitalist development were predominantly Protestant. Provide examples from the reading and consider any alternative explanations that could be offered to help explain the rise of capitalism that Weber did not cover. (see lecture 12)
  - Weber: The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism

### Social structure and inequality

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

- 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? Why is it that some immigrant groups fare better than others? Use concrete examples to illustrate the differences.
  - 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_1_lecture_notes.htm), [http://web.uni-corvinus.hu/moksony/research\\_methods\\_2\\_readings.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](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](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>)