

Sociology 0150  
Feb. 21, 2006  
Notes recorded by Josh Pastuch

### Big 3 Macrotheorists:

Marx, Durkheim, & Weber - The ways they characterize modern society.

#### Marx

Uses criticism & historical materialism to demystify social relations.  
Positivist in the sense that truth is reachable/accessible not through ordinary science but through critical means. Consciousness of social system is bounded by class viewed from. Radical chains are the product of being in lower social class but this is the class "privileged" both to understand social relations (epistemological privilege) and to make social change (privileged agent of emancipatory change).

#### Durkheim

Establishes the "social" as terrain of study & creates a methodology for sociology. Positivist in the scientific sense. Proxy - Uses forms of law as a proxy of solidarity.  
Unit of analysis is the collective. Also a functionalist/organicist

#### Weber

Interpretive- [Rational (logic) & Empathetic (the "feel" for it)]  
Scientific - (verifiable and clear)  
Social interaction is meaningful & interactive/intersubjective.  
He suggests that sociological study proceeds through constructed and heuristic ideal types.  
Units of analysis- the meaning making individual

2 Ideal Types in PE&SC are the "Protestant Ethic" and the "Spirit of Capitalism"  
These are discovered through empirical observation, the presentation & rebuttal/refutation and plausible alternative explanations.

Recorded by Kate Pfeifer

### The Big 3 Macro Theorists:

#### 1. Marx

- \* Uses criticism and historical materialism to demystify the reality of social relations
- \* Positivist - the truth is accessible only through critical means
- \* Unit of analysis is mode of production

#### 2. Durkheim

- \* Positivist in the scientific sense.

- \* These positivist assumptions establish the "social" as terrain of study and provides methodological grounds for sociology
- \* Treats social facts as measurable. Not all statistics are part of the terrain of sociology.
- \* Unit of analysis is collective.

### 3. Weber

- \* Understanding is interpretive (rational & empathic) but still scientific (verifiable & clear)
- \* Social action is meaningful and intersubjective
- \* Ideal types - socially constructed categories can help you figure out how to understand something and express it to someone else
- \* Unit of analysis is meaning making individual

Weber's thesis: How religion affects jobs.

Weber's theoretical set up:

**Makes an empirical observation:** Upper class men (business men) are usually Protestant. Catholics have a liberal arts interest - gymnasium (pg. 189).

\*Protestants run the economy! (historical circumstances, inheritance, growth of protestant cities could be why). (pg. 188-189). Good to compare this with Marx's criticism on 26-27. (opposite causal claims). He continues to present and rebut plausible alternative explanations.

\*Permanent intrinsic character of religious beliefs explains economic situations.

**Presents and rebuts alternative arguments.**

**Presents and supports his thesis.**

Analysis of Argument made by Weber:

\*Bourgeois made \$ by saving \$. Encouraged a taboo on consumption, display of wealth. Valued working hard and not spending money. Honesty, hard work, punctuality, frugality, and industry establishes credit, time = \$.

Protestant Ethic: ideal type

Way of characterizing practices in religion and spiritual work. Shapes growth of wealth.

Economic traditionalism (192)

\*How capitalists came to be

\*How workers came to be

\*\*\*For next class, think about the ways Marx talks about class and how Weber does. Compare and contrast these.