

Intro: Sociological Perspective

SOC

Durkheim, Suicide and Religion

- national level statistics, Durkheim found that suicide rates vary by religion
 - Protestants had higher rates than catholics
 - Jews : lowest rate
 - applied theory of social integration to these statistics
- Durkheim: Protestants = higher rate because church less effective at integrating ppl
 - Protestants: “authors of their own beliefs”
 - Contrasting with catholicism
- Jewish communities have always been prosecuted, so used to stay together
- Nothing to do with the teachings of these religions (?), but how much they integrate their members (sense of community)
- Durkheim compared Switzerland’s Protestant and Catholic cantons, which supported his theory
- StatCan, 2012 :
 - 10-14 year olds (females) have the lowest rate of suicide
- Durkheim + Social Facts
 - Every social fact has 3 characteristics:
 - Developed prior to and separate from you as an indiv.
 - Can be seen as characteristic of a particular group
 - Involves a constraining or coercing force that pushes indiv. into acting in a certain way (conformity)

- **The 3 Revolutions:**

- Scientific revolution (post-16th Century):

- starts w/ Galileo and Copernicus. The view emerged that a **scientific method** could be used to support a certain POV
- Conjunction w/ a shift away from religious explanations of human life, so became acceptable
- Auguste COMTE (1798-1857) applied it to the social world
 - just as physical world operates according to gravity + other laws of nature
 - Law of the 3 stages: theological (fictitious) - metaphysical (abstract) - positive (scientific)
 - Scientific stage : Comte - “sociology is the queen of sciences”
 - Comte’s approach (foundation of sociological method) = *positivism* “understanding based on science.”
 - objective knowable reality
 - Contrast it w/ anti-positivism/interpretivism
 - Theological (fictitious) - fetishism - polytheism - monotheism

- Industrial Revolution (1750-1850)

- Wholesale shift in the way we lived/worked
- In UK and spread to rest of Europe + N America
- shift in production: farming, small scale manufacturing to developed industries using water, steam, etc.
 - sudden ability to use large machines (growth of factories + mills)
 - started process of mass urbanization = birth rates decrease, health issues increase, bad work conditions
 - wage labour (left their land owners, to not work for them w/ no wage)
 - New social problems (exploitation, small amount of population is benefitting from it)

- Democratic revolution
 - *Enlightenment* (1700-1789)
 - Promotes indiv. rights + social responsibility, equality of opportunity + political ideology of democracy
 - Reject traditional ideas about religion (rulers chosen by God) who will question the authority of the ruler?
 - rejected ideas of monarchy as result of God's will
 - thinkers + ordinary ppl thought about a diff. way to interpret their social reality
 - these values became manifest in French Revolution
 - *French Revolution* (1789-1799)
- ↑ (Revolutions in the "West")