

# Lecture 4- Major Theoretical Perspectives in Sociology

Thursday, January 16, 2020

12:09 PM

- Theory: a conceptual overview of the way something works
- A set of logically interrelated statements that attempts to describe, explain, and occasionally predict social events
- Social theorizing the task of weaving isolated observations or facts into an understanding of human society and behaviour

Theoretical perspective:

Major classical paradigms or perspectives in sociology

- Functionalist Perspective
  - Stresses that our lives are guided by social structures
    - Example: Giving greetings on the street
  - Society is a system made up of interrelated parts- each of which performs one or several important social functions or meets vital social needs
  - Parts/subsystems: social institutions: economy, family, education, religion, government, medicine, science
  - Institutions provide the rules governing behaviours and a set of common values that bind people together
  - Talcott Parsons
- Robert Merton :
  - contributions to sociological theory, sociological structure and sociological science

- How can we assume that society has a natural order when social patterns differ from place to place and change over time
- By emphasizing social interaction, tends to focus on inequality based on social class, race, ethnicity and gender-divisions that may generate considerable