Soc 1

Lecture 2

Tuesday, September 29, 2009

Fall 2009
“The Age of the Enlightenment &
the Primacy of the Self”

I. Announcements:
http://www.soc.ucsb.edu/faculty/mohr/classes/soc1/

Readings available at Grafikart by Friday(?)

First writing assignment due in section this week.

You must attend section this week (or be dropped)

More generally, you need to attend lecture

iClicker ($38) at UCen Bookstore
A. Main Idea for Course:

A. I/I: Individual Centered Explanations.  
     Institutional Centered Explanations.  
     What are they?

1. Individual Centered Explanations: Privilege the 
   perspective and efficacy of human individuals in 
   explaining society.

   vs.

2. Institutional Centered Explanations
The Institutional Construction of the Gendered Self

B. What is an Institution?

Definition:

A social arrangement or pattern of action, way of behaving or way of knowing that is enduring, widely shared and persistent.

Key Point: “the persistence [of institutions] is not dependent, notably, upon current collective mobilization, mobilization repetitively reengineered and reactivated in order to secure the reproduction of the pattern. That is, institutions are not reproduced by action […]. Rather, routine reproductive procedures support and sustain the pattern, furthering its reproduction – unless collective action blocks, or environmental shock disrupts the reproductive process” (Ron Jepperson, 1991, p. 145)
A. Main Idea for Course:

C. I/I: Individual Centered Explanations. Institutional Centered Explanations. What are they?

1. Theories.
   Theories about why things happen in society.

2. Ideologies.
   Coupled to interests or systems.

3. Hypotheses.
   Links to explanatory accounts.
A. Main Idea:

D. I/I-Centered Explanations. How related?

1. There is a **Duality** between the individual and the institution. Neither can exist w/o the other.

2. But this is different than saying, both are true.

3. Because they are dual, their character is different.

4. Before you get to duality, you need to understand I/I.
B. Readings: The Sociological Imagination:

50 years.

Linking together the duality of the individual & the institution as a way of understanding the social world.

Personal Troubles & Public Issues

Develops the Institutional Centered View & Ties it back to the self.
B. Readings: The Sociological Imagination.

1. Institutions are hard to understand. But the sociological imagination can help us.

2. But Institutions bend to our will, and we shape as we wish.

Who is shaping them? who is defining them? Are they using a sociological imagination to understand that its not just individuals in the world, but a duality between individuals and institutions?
B. Readings: **What do Sociologists do?**
   by Anthony Giddens

A. Sociology makes people uneasy, why?
   a. state the obvious.
   b. seem to deny individual efficacy.

B. Why is sociology different than Physics?
   a. We are “Concept Bearing Agents”
   b. What we know, is what we do, and so we make the world accordingly.
   c. “Double Hermeneutic”
   d. What knowledge we discover, is quickly taken in and becomes part of the real that we now study.
B. Readings: What do Sociologists do? by Anthony Giddens

C. Why is sociology useful?
   1. Shows others worlds (Anthrop. Moment)
   2. What we can articulate, small amount of what we know (Goffman).
   3. Unintended Consequences to our actions.
   4. We are influenced by institutions that we did not ourselves make (Durkheim).
“The Age of the Enlightenment & the Primacy of the Self”

C. Individual Centered vs. Institutional Centered Approaches.


2. Easier to get Individual Centered because it is the dominant ideology and cultural logic of our culture.
C. The Self.

1. The “Natural” Perspective: Facilitates Individual Centered Thinking.
   • We live in individual bodies
   • We live in an age that highlights the ‘self’

2. On the Historical Emergence of the Individual Centered approach?
   • The ‘self’ not always so prominent
   • When did become so? How did it happen?
1. The Enlightenment — from moral dilemmas of self to scientific dilemmas of the universe
Cogito Ergo Sum — I think therefore I am,
(René Descartes, 1596-1650)
II. Self as Foundation of Society:

1. Thomas Hobbes (1589-1679): *The Leviathan*
How to reconcile power of individuality & Feudal Estates?
The Institutional Construction of the Self

II. Thomas Hobbes

State of Nature:
War of all against all...

...the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short
3. Adam Smith
(1723-1790): (Scottish)
An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations (1776)

The Invisible Hand guided free markets emphasizing that if individuals are left alone to pursue own interests, needs, rational calculations, then the greatest good for the greatest number will result
Inverts Hobbes

*Discourse on the Origin and Basis of Inequality Among Men* (1755)

“The first man who, having fenced in a piece of land, said "This is mine," and found people naive enough to believe him, that man was the true founder of civil society. From how many crimes, wars, and murders, from how many horrors and misfortunes might not any one have saved mankind, by pulling up the stakes, or filling up the ditch, and crying to his fellows: Beware of listening to this impostor; you are undone if you once forget that the fruits of the earth belong to us all, and the earth itself to nobody.

Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains, *The Social Contract* (1762)

1761 forced to flee Paris
5. The American Revolution (1776): “The Declaration of Independence”

Rejects the Rights of a Monarch to govern “free men”

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it....
The Institutional Construction of the Self


Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded only upon the general good.”
The Institutional Construction of the Self

D. In sum: Individual Centered Approach

1. The individual is *logically prior* to society.
2. The individual is a *rational*, calculating person, who knows his or her needs (desires, wishes) and acts in such a way as to rationally maximize the fulfillment of those desires.
3. Society is the result of a *social contract*, entered into (implicitly) by all the members of the society.
4. Society has no legitimate right to infringe upon the *natural civil liberties* of the individual.
5. Social institutions consist of the accumulated *aggregate outcome* of all the rational choices made by all the individuals that are members of that society.
The Institutional Construction of the Self

C. How do we see these issues around us?