

# Sociological Theories

## 1. Positivism and Interpretivism

Positivism - macro, quantitative, 'objective'

Interpretivism - micro, qualitative, subjective

## 2. Is sociology a science?

Science = 'objective', controlled and about cause and effect

Positivism - scientific sociology (Durkheim's Suicide)

Realism

Interpretivist criticisms of science

## 3. Functionalism

Structural/ systems/ consensus

Durkheim's social facts etc.

Parsons' organic analogy

Merton's latent functions

## 4. Marxism

Structural/ conflict

Marx's key concepts

Gramsci's humanistic Marxism (hegemony)

Althusser's repressive and ideological state apparatus

## 5. Feminism

Radical

Liberal

Marxist

Difference

Postmodern

## 9. Can sociology be value free?

Becker - take the side of the underdog

Choice of what to research/ politics

Committed sociology - it should criticise governments if necessary

Positivism - it should just work with governments

New Right - sociology is too left wing

In the research process

Anti-positivists no

Positivists yes

Barriers

Apply perspectives

## 8. Social policy

Modernity - science, industrialisation, positivism

## 7. Modernity, Postmodernity and Late Modernity

Lyotard - incredulity to metanarratives

Postmodernity - consumerism, individual freedom

Baudrillard - hyperreality

Late Modernity - globalisation, risk and abstract systems

## 6. Social action theory

Mead's self-concept

Weber - Verstehen and the Protestant ethic

Goffman's dramaturgical theory

Becker's Labelling theory