I. Introduction to Sociology

A. Conventional Wisdoms vs. Sociological Perspective

1. Conventional wisdom

a. definition

i. social beliefs

ii. majority of society share

iii. continue to share despite evidence to the contrary

b. “the individual” and individualism

i. independent, autonomous

ii. architect of own life

iii. outcomes are based on decisions effort and commitment each put in.

c. tied to other conventional wisdoms

i. equality of opportunity

ii. hard work = success

iii. education is an “equalizer”

iv. “freedom”

v. positive thinking

2. Sociological Perspective aka C. Wright Mills: *The Sociological Imagination*

a. society

i. social structure

ii. culture

iii. history

iv. social processes

v. individual

b. impact on individual

i. shape: know and think and beliefs

ii. shape: individual behavior

iii. shape: imagination and goals

iv. determine opportunities

v. determine: life chances, biography

c. conventional wisdoms are means of social control.

B. Society: Social Structure

1. institutions: established ways society is organized to solve problems and meet needs

a. primary

i. Political: organization and legitimation of the system of governance

ii. Economy: production and distribution of goods and

and services, ownership, division of labor

iii Religion: source of meaning and values

iv. Marriage and family: socialization, identity, procreation, sexuality

v. Education: socialization, knowledge and skills

b. other: mass media, military, health care

c. organized in ways that determine how persons can act within them.

2. social roles

a. position within institution

b. roles: parent, worker, citizen, student

c. identity, script, obligations, expectations

` d. social roles and the individual: Zimbardo

3. stratification system

a. hierarchy

b. social location

c. determines opportunities, access to institutions, valued social resources

d. life chances

4. Social Structure as the Titanic

C. Society: Culture

1. definition: world view or way of life

2. non-material

a. language

b. conventional wisdoms

c. values = what we cherish as a society

i. money and success

ii. freedom

iii. human life

d. norms/deviance

i. definition

ii. personal interactions

iii. gender

iv. drugs, sex, and crime

e. rituals and celebrations: emotional solidarity/moral boundaries

i. birthdays, marriage, funerals

ii. Fourth, Pledge, Star Spangled Banner

iii. punishment

f. ideas and knowledge: history

i. power

ii. Lies My Teacher Told Me

iii. Vietnam War and the War on Terror

iv. historical amnesia vs sociological imagination

3. material culture

a. technology

i. car

ii. TV

iii. computer

iv. cell phone

v. fast foods (fordism)

vi. suburban home

b. artifacts

i. lawn

ii. Golden Arches, Ronald McDonald, Jack

iii. chair

E. Socialization

1. Definition

2. goal: social self

a. internalized norms and conventional wisdom

b. accept social roles

c. obedient and respect authority

d. Milgram (authority)

3. human agency