I. Riots

A. Definition: spontaneous crowd violence

1. arbitrary violence to property (destruction) or person (harm)

2. size

3. relatively spontaneous and unplanned

4. out of control (disrupt social order)

5. not purposeful

B. Classical theory and riots: Contagion Theory

1. medical model

2. social strain is initial cause:

a. industrialization: farm to factories

b. urbanization: rural to urban

c. mass society: gemeinshcaft to geselleshaft

3. social psychology: anomie, alienation, anxiety

4. they gather

a. irrational

b. heightened emotions

c. excitable

4. “infect” each other with mood of excitement

5. infection turns crowd into herd

6. herd: disruptive, and irrational, not purposeful

7. No political goals just psychological: “Acting Out”

C. Classical Theory: Circular Reaction (A variation)

1. Herbert Blumer (symbolic interactionist)

2. Assumptions: the same as Contagion

3. argument:

a. social strain

b. like minded

i. milling: moving about among others in aimless and random fashion

ii. collective excitement: symbolic cues

iii. social contagion: circular reaction that

heightens excitement

c. creates: restless crowd: that needs to act

d. action

i. irrational

ii. no purpose

D. Riots

1. In what ways does the Tulsa riot firt, not fit classical theory?

2. Medias role in the riot?

3. Social order riots

1. characteristics

i. reaction to social change

ii. violence to property and person (targeted)

iii. not spontaneous

iv. briefly disrupts social order

v. purpose: maintain or reestablish status quo

vi. officials compliant

vii. participants