Study Guide #1

Readings you are responsible for:

Ritzer: Chapters Intro, 1, 2, 3.

Kivisto: Readings 28, 31, 35 and 37.

1. Origin of Social Theory

a. Great Transformation: characteristics of Feudal society, forces of social change, characteristics of modern society.

b. Classical theory: definition, characteristics, assumptions.

c. Skepticism and Contemporary theory: history, science as progress, universal laws, social evolutionism, Grand Narrative

Terms: Great Chain of Being, revelation, divine right, Protestant Reformation, Enlightenment, human sciences, natural sciences, empiricism, scientific method, positivism, Law of Three Stages, verification, falsification, social evolutionism, Grand Narrative, laws of nature, Natural Law.

2. Theory of Free Market Capitalism

a. Theorists, classical and contemporary, their works and their assumptions about the free market, human beings and economics as a science.

b. Free market theory of Adam Smith: why is capitalism the best economic system and what are the four Laws of the Marketplace? What is the role, if any, of the government?

c. Social Darwinism: theoretical influences, practical and policy implications.

d. Free market theory of Milton Friedman: how does he agree or disagree with Smith, the role of government? What should the policy goals, economic and social, of a free market system be, according to Smith? What is shock therapy and why does he think it is necessary?.

Terms: laissez faire, free wage labor, law of supply and demand, financial infrastructure, deregulation, privatization, shock doctrine, competition, greed, self-interest, pursuit of profit, eugenics, feeble minded..

3. Structural Functionalism

a. Influence: theoretical, American Exceptionalism, 1950s Utopian America.

b.. Parsons’ Structural Functionalism: functional imperatives, structural systems, positive function of inequality, social system and status role complex.

c. Parsons “made easy”?

Terms: American Exceptionalism, nuclear family, subversion, social contract, luxury market, meritocracy, Davis Moore theory, determined action, need disposition, status role complex, latency function, AGIL.

4. 1950s: The Way We Never Were

a. What were the realities of the 1950s that contradicted the conventional wisdom that America of the 1950s was a utopia?

b. In what ways did the culture (movies, books, music, counter-cultures) of the 1950s reflect a more complex view of the time?

c. Terms: white collar worker, permanent war economy, Beat Generation, rock and roll,

military-industrial complex, counter culture/

5. C.Wright Mills

a. In “White Collar” Mills criticized large organizations and the demands they placed on people. . Which classical theorists influenced him and in what ways?

b. According to Mills, what is the nature of white collar work and what are the consequences for white collar workers?

c. In Mills’ theory of the power elite who rules, how? And what are the consequences for the individual?

d. Terms: bureaucracy, bureaucratization, division of labor, specialization, alienation, elite triumvirate, command positions, trunk decisions, moral insensibility, emotional labor.

6. Class domination theory

a. Who belongs to the upper class in America? And how does Domhoff support his claims that the upper class is both an economic class and a social class?

b. How does the upper class control the economic system?

c. How does the upper class control the political system?

Terms: power networks, power indicators, shared monopolies, interlocking directorates, outsourcing, off shoring, downsizing, rights sizing, capital flight, Bohemian Grove, Alfalfa Club, special interest process, policy-planning process, candidate selection process, opinion shaping process, think tanks, foundations, front groups, public relations, third person technique, focus groups, lobbying, campaign financing.