Celestus Gossip Town – draft

It is important to know why we gossip. It has a role in creating a bond among people, helps to build relationships, community values, networks, understand each other’s position in life and career-wise. It also has connections to evolution and, according to Dunbar, it has the same effect as that of the ‘picking’ among apes.

Sociological theories focus on macro-level (large-scale) and micro-level (small-scale and on individual level that has relationships with groups). Paradigms helps explain the various aspects of social life and provide a theoretical/philosophical framework to formulate theories, and experiments in support of them.

**The three main paradigms are:**

*1) Structural functionalism*

Tries to explain how institutions create social solidarity. These institutions have a set of rules that everyone has to follow in order to have that stability. Schools, religious places, government, courts, hospitals, media, family etc. This could be implemented and make citizens attend such institutions. They could gossip about topics relevant to the institution they belong to and about the others too.

*2) Conflict theory*

As the name suggests it focuses on conflict. Chaos, haha. The status of citizens on Celestus could create conflict on itself. Dividing people is always the goal of media and politicians, then people are easier to control. Making the citizens inequal will give them plenty of reasons to gossip about each other, to try and decrease the social status of one and increase the other.

*3) Symbolic interactionism*

Humans attribute meanings to objects and situations and interact with these meanings. But these associations to meanings come from interacting each other. It is essentially a circle. It helps look for patterns in interactions among people. I think it would be a great idea to develop the gossips the citizens of Celestus exchange based on specific attributions. Just like how we add meaning to race and gender, social class and education, they could do the same. Those who are higher in hierarchy could look down on those who are lower, and exchange gossips about them, creating a ‘norm’ about specific things. For example, ‘Did you hear John cheated on the exam at school?’ ‘Really? He must be desperate to get into higher education and get a better job than his father’. And it would spread that it is mostly poor people who cheat on exams, to get into uni. Perhaps it’s a bit too concrete or long to fit into the simulation, maybe you prefer short gossips, but it's an idea?