

Six Models of Society: Part 2

4) Karl Marx (1818-1883)

- Agrees with Smith that economic factors have shaped course of history
- Perhaps most influential figure in social sciences
- Hated capitalism, thought it would be replaced by communism
- Proposed classless society
- Said society is defined by social relationships
- Utopian vision of peaceful community after worker revolution to gain control of production
- Discussed “surplus labor” and problems inherent in this capitalist model
- Agrees people can be unselfish, but economic system makes people oppressed
- Theory of social determinism- class determines social relations, law of economics predicts how societies work
- All societal structures emerge from class structure
- Thought revolution was inevitable

5) Emile Durkheim (1858-1917)

- First to attempt to make sociology a science
- Rejects Hobbes’ theories
- Redefines society- society is independent from the individuals in it, only studied society as a whole and did not discuss human nature
- Individual is a product of society, “collective consciousness”
- Society is deterministic in that it regulates life
- Citizens must be integrated into the society
- Study suicide as example of lack of ability to integrate to society
- Anomie- caused by breakdown of society and rules and norms do not function properly, state of alienation from society for an individual
- Three types of suicide
 - o Anomic- society unable to meet needs of individual, society rejects individual
 - o Egoistic- individual rejects society and withdraws from group
 - o Altruistic- individual sacrifices himself for the good of the group

6) Max Weber (1864-1920)

- Theory of society opposite of Durkheim, believed individual shaped society
- Believed you must understand meanings people attach to social interactions in order to understand society
 - o Goal-oriented action – calculation and carrying out of most efficient means to desired end
 - o Value-oriented action – actions inspired by value system, use same efficient methods
 - o Emotional action – actions dominated by feelings, not rational, no methodical plan
 - o Traditional action – includes routines and habits, often automatic and do not carry meaning
- Society arises from how individuals members follow the four action patterns
- Societies differ by how individuals follow these action patterns