

WORD OF GOD  
Community  
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INTERUNIVERSITY

CURTIS

Harned }  
Staggars }  
Fullbright }

A CHRISTIAN CRITIQUE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE THEORY  
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PHYSICAL SCIENCES BASED IN CORE GRADUATE PROGRAM at UWS  
BIOLOGY  
HUMAN & SOCIAL SCIENCES

INTRODUCTION

The paradigmatic nature of Social Science knowledge (Kuhn, Laudin).  
- a paradigm is determined by:  
a) the questions it poses,  
b) the methods it uses.  
- the theories these generate provide its answers.

*Old Evangelical ~~critique~~ assumptions*

I. DIACHRONIC PARADIGMS

(These replaced Medieval Christian-Historical paradigms based on a historical interpretation of the universe)

1. Evolutionism:

Question: What is the meaning in universal and human history?

Method: Comparative analysis of human diversity within a single integrated system.

Theories of Sociocultural Evolution (Comte, Tylor, Frazer, Morgan, Spencer, etc.)

Theories of Racial Evolutionism (Hooton, Leakey, paleontology).

2. American Historicism:

Question: What is the history of specific societies and the nature of sociocultural change?

Method: Archaeology, glottochronology, oral history, etc.

Theory of Specific Sociocultural Histories (Boas, Kroeber, Linton, Lowie etc).

Theory of Acculturation (Herskovits, Barnett, Goodenough)

Theory of Archaeology.

3. Marxism in the Social Sciences:

Question: What is the direction and stages of human history?

Method: Comparative history.

Marxist Sociology and Anthropology.

*Challenge of Materialist Scientism*

## II. SYNCHRONIC PARADIGMS

(These reflect the growing impact of modern sciences on the study of human beings)

### 1. Social Structuralism:

Question: What is the nature of human society and social organization?

Method: Analysis of social structures and comparison of social structures.

Theories of Sociology: Concern with modern social structures (Durkheim, Parsons, Lipset, etc)

Theories of Structural Functionalism (anthropology): Comparative social structures (Malinowski, Radcliffe-Brown).

*challenge from society & relativism*

### 2. Cultural Structuralism:

Question: What are the universal human cognitive structures. What are the variations in human cognitive systems?

Method: Comparative cultural analysis - of language, symbols, rites, myths, etc.

Sociology of Knowledge (Berger, Mannheim, Merton)

Ethnoscience (Goodenough, Frake) -

Linguistics (Sapir, Whorf, Hymes, Chomsky) - *Nature of language: Philosophical assumption of language*

Cognitive Structuralism (Piaget, Levi-Strauss, Douglas, Turner, Leach)

*challenge of limit & nature of human knowledge*

*Challenge of world view & contextualization*

Bob

David

① BIOsociology

Doug

Carl

② STRATEGY THEORIES  
*Boals*

Ken

Jim

ARENA THEORIES

Paul

Arl

TABLE 1

## TYPES OF KNOWLEDGE

## FIELDS

## BASIC ASSUMPTIONS AND PROBLEMS

EMPIRICAL  
KNOWLEDGE

PHYSICS

ASTRONOMY

GEOLOGY

CHEMISTRY

BIOLOGY

1. Unbiased. a) value free; b) detached observer (he is outside the system he is observing); c) etic analysis; d) data unaffected by the observation or by the mind.
2. Closed system. One analyses a set of variables while controlling for all other variables and external inputs.
3. Empirical. One need deal only with sense experienceable data. One need not infer rational minds independently operating behind the system.
4. Deterministic. Objects act in accord with external principles.
5. Reductionistic. One seeks to reduce all observations to basic causal factors.
6. Rationalistic. The goal is a complete system of rationally ordered knowledge. Affect is not given serious consideration, nor is intuition.
7. Quantitative Methodology. One seeks to measure a real world for sense experiences are potentially measurable.

## PROBLEMS:

1. What are the limitations of observation (empirical)?
2. Where does the distinction between object and subject take place?
3. What role do the sensory systems and the mind play in creating or molding knowledge.

HERMENEUTICAL  
KNOWLEDGE

PSYCHOLOGY

SOCIOLOGY

MEDICINE

ANTHROPOLOGY

POLITICAL SC.

HISTORY

ART

MUSIC

1. Personalization. Observer is part of the system. In passing judgment on others, he passes judgment on himself. Knowledge is affected, and, indeed created by the observer.
2. Open system. One can never control for all variables because a) the number of them is too great, b) the system is too large to permit the observer to see the whole thing, and c) not all actors are predetermined objects.
3. Interpretive. One must look behind experience to minds that are beyond direct observation. Cognitive systems become important, and we must take other people's thoughts seriously. Our own knowledge is always interpretive and based on analogies. Etic and etic analyses are both important.
4. Indeterministic. Explanation consists not of showing absolute laws, but in showing that it is rational for people to do what they do. It is not causal but evaluative. Strategy theory and transactional theory arise.
5. Reflexive. Knowledge and activity is not one way, it is interactive between beings. Therefore the observer must be aware of how others see and react to him, and of his own self image and how he communicates it to them.
6. Construct nature of knowledge. It is not a reflection of nature but an interpretive map or model created by the mind.
7. Historical. History and development must be taken into account.
8. Ethical. The question of morality arises, as does that of involvement.
9. Wholistic approaches. The goal is not to reduce, but to include all dimensions including affect, intuition and belief.

## PROBLEMS

1. What is the nature of knowledge? And what are its limitations?
2. How does one learn to know what is in the mind of another?
3. What are the realities behind the world of empirical observation?