

Year 12 induction homework

Please read the information provided and answer the questions below:

Families and households:

1. Explain what is meant by a consensus.
2. Summarise Murdock and Parsons Functions of the family.
3. Why is Parson's perspective on the family known as the warm bath theory?
4. What is the difference between capitalism and communism?
5. Explain how according to Marxists the family benefits capitalism.
6. What is the difference between a liberal, radical and Marxist Feminist?
7. How according to feminists is the family patriarchal (male dominated)?

Push yourself: Which theory offers the most useful to our understanding of families and households? Justify your response?

Education

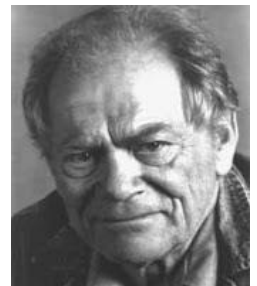
1. Explain what is meant by the term: social class.
2. What is the difference between cultural deprivation and material deprivation?
3. Explain two ways in which working class pupils may underachieve as a result of cultural deprivation.
4. Explain how material deprivation may effect educational achievement.
5. Explain how cultural capital may effect achievement.

Push yourself: Which type of deprivation do you think has the greatest impact on achievement: material or cultural deprivation? Ensure that you justify your response.

Functionalism and the family: Murdock

Functionalism is a sociological theory, which views society as being made up of parts each of which contribute to the maintenance of society as a whole (organic analogy). Functionalist theories are based on the idea that societies need to have consensus or agreement about norms (expected patterns of behaviour e.g. queuing) and values (beliefs that society views as being important e.g. honesty) in order to survive and ultimately function well. According to functionalists a social institution like the family must have a function or a purpose in other words it must do something socially useful. Therefore the family is viewed as performing certain functions, which benefit individuals and wider society; ultimately functionalists stress the positive role of the nuclear family.

George Peter Murdock (1949) Murdock claimed that the nuclear family is a universal **norm**. He based this claim on his study of two hundred and fifty societies, where he discovered that the nuclear families existed in some form in all these societies in addition he argued that the family performed the same function in all societies. These functions are not only essential for a person's development, but vital for the well being of society. The following functions are:



- ✓ **Sexual** – The monogamous (exclusive) relationship that the nuclear family is based on provides stability.
- ✓ **Economic** – According to Murdock the family functioned as a **unit of production** (working together to produce goods and services) in contemporary society the family is a **unit of consumption** which means that they consume the products of society together e.g. shopping together.
- ✓ **Reproduction** – Families reproduce, which is obviously essential for the survival of society.
- ✓ **Educational** – The family is an agent of **primary socialisation** teaching norms, values and a basic level of formal education.

Functionalism and the family: Parson's

Talcott **Parsons** is an American sociologist who focuses on the nuclear family in the context of modern industrial society. He argues that functions which families used to perform during the pre industrial period e.g. looking after the elderly and education have been replaced in industrial societies with other social institutions e.g. schools and social services (Parsons & Bales 1955). This does not mean that the family has become less important in society, rather it has retained are two "**basic**" and "**irreducible**" functions:



Talcott Parsons

1. *The primary socialisation of children.*
2. *The stabilisation of adult personalities.*

Primary Socialisation

The family is the primary agent of socialisation and therefore socialises new members into the culture of society by teaching them social norms and values. Parsons claimed that families are "**personality factories**" producing children who are committed to shared norms and values and who have a strong sense of belonging in society.

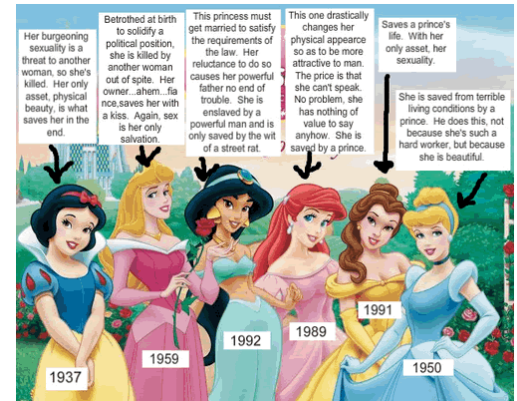
The stabilisation of adult personalities

This is the second function of the family and it is a very important function. Adult personalities, which are unstable, can threaten the smooth running of society. There are two ways in which adult personalities help to stabilise the adult personality:

1. Marital partners provide one another with love and emotional support (expressive role).
2. Parents can indulge their childish tendencies by playing with their children, ultimately expressing the childish aspect of their personalities.

Parsons and the instrumental and expressive role

Functionalists claim that society has basic needs which must be met in order for it to survive. **Instrumental** needs or roles refer to non emotional practical requirements e.g. society needs a fit mobile work force and in contemporary society a flexible one. Expressive needs or roles refer to the need for emotional reassurance and security. Parsons advocates a traditional division of labour where women perform the **expressive role** as women are naturally nurturing, while men perform the instrumental role as the breadwinner because this is the natural division of labour as biology determines gender roles according to functionalists.



Parsons account of family life is described as the **warm bath theory**, where fulfilment, well being, comfort warmth and rejuvenation are provided by the nuclear family in the same way a warm bath provides comfort at the end of an exhausting day.

In sum, family life provides adults with emotional support and security. Ultimately this helps to stabilise their personality and benefit wider society. As society has changed the functions of the family have become more specialised.

Marxism and the family

Marxism is a structural conflict perspective (a theory that believes that individuals are a product of society and that norms and values are imposed by the powerful) based on the ideas of Karl Marx. For Marxists, the system we live in (capitalism) divides everyone into two basic classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.



- The Bourgeoisie (or the ruling class) are the small group of people who own businesses or other places of employment (the means of production).
- The Proletariat (or the working class) are the larger poorer group who work for the Bourgeoisie.

The Bourgeoisie benefit in every way from how society operates, while the proletariat get far less than they deserve.

Capitalism and Communism

Capitalism can be defined as, "a system of economic enterprise based on market exchange. Nearly all industrial societies today are capitalist in their orientation – their economic systems are based on free enterprise and on economic competition." (Giddens, 2006, p.1009). Capitalism is an economic system based on private ownership.

Marxists believe that capitalism uses the class system to oppress the proletariat and benefit the bourgeoisie. Marx believed that one day the proletariat will revolt and communism will replace capitalism.

Communism is an economic system based on collective (shared) ownership of property and organisation of labour. Its aim is to advantage all members of a society providing an equal share.

Key Marxist ideas

Infrastructure & Superstructure

The infrastructure refers to the underlying economic forces that determine the way a society is, for example, the infrastructure in the UK is based around capitalism. The superstructure refers to the social institutions that support the infrastructure, for example the family.

Marxists believe that a change to the infrastructure will produce a corresponding change in the superstructure.

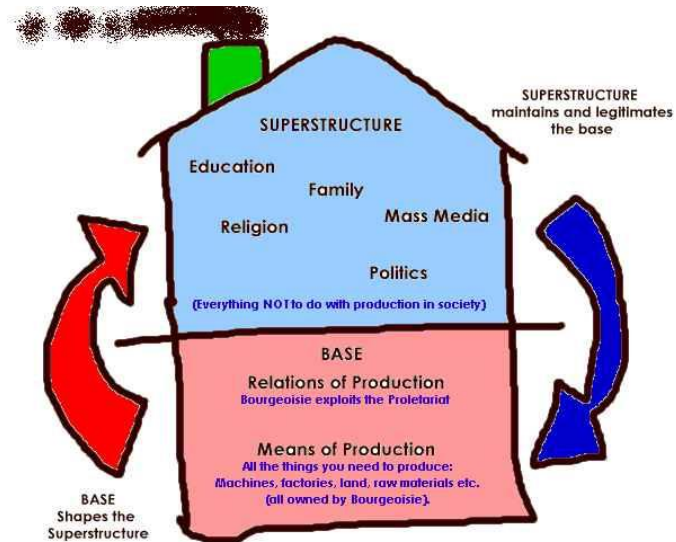
Alienation

Alienation refers to “a sense of estrangement from the work that people do, from other workers, from what they are producing and even from their own essential humanity.”

Marxists believe the proletariat feel alienated because they lack the means of production. They lack the opportunity to live freely, fulfilling themselves through creative activity or producing things using their imagination.

False-Class Consciousness

Marxists believe that as we consume various soap opera’s celebrity gossip, latest football transfers etc. We fail to notice the inequality in society and our exploitation. False-class consciousness thus refers to the fact that we are unaware of our ‘real’ identity as exploited and oppressed workers.



Marxism & The Family

Marxists see all society’s institutions such as the education system, the media and the family, as helping to maintain class inequality and capitalism. Marxists therefore believe that the functions that the family perform are purely for the benefit of the capitalist system. This view sharply contrasts with the Functionalist perspective who view the family as benefitting society as a whole and the individual members of the family.

Marxists identify three main ways that the family exploits the proletariat:

- 1) The Inheritance of Private Property.
- 2) Ideological Functions e.g. socialisation into accepting inequality.
- 3) The family as a unit of consumption.



The Inheritance of Property

As certain individuals started to become wealthy they began to own private property. One Marxist, **Friedrich Engels**, argues that this helped to create the patriarchal, monogamous nuclear family. Engels’ believed that monogamy became essential because of the inheritance of private property – men had to be certain of the paternity of their children in order to ensure that their legitimate heirs inherited from them.

Engels described the rise of the monogamous nuclear family as a “world historical defeat of the female sex.” This was because it brought the woman’s sexuality under male control and turned them into, “a mere instrument for the production of children.”

Marxists believe that only with the overthrow of capitalism and private ownership of the means of production, will women achieve liberation from patriarchal



control. Once capitalism has been overthrown, a classless society can be established with the means of production and property owned publically and not privately. There will no longer be a need for the patriarchal nuclear family as there will be no need to have a means of transmitting private property down the generations.

The Ideological Function

Marxists argue that the family performs key ideological functions for capitalism. By 'ideology', Marxists mean a set of ideas or beliefs that justify inequality and maintain the capitalist system by persuading people to accept it as fair, natural or unchangeable.

As we have seen in previous lessons, the family are seen as responsible for primary socialisation. Marxists would argue that the family socialises children to see that hierarchy and inequality are inevitable. Parental, usually paternal, power over children accustoms them to the idea that there is always someone, usually a man, in charge. This prepares them for working life where they will accept orders from their capitalist employers.

A Unit of Consumption

The capitalist system exploits the labour of the workers, making a profit by selling the products of their labour for more than it pays them to produce these commodities. The family plays a major role in generating profits, since it is an important market for the sale of consumer goods:

- Advertisers urge families to 'keep up with Joneses' by consuming all the latest products.
- The media target children who use 'pester power' to persuade parents to spend more.
- Children who lack the latest clothes or 'must have' gadgets are mocked and stigmatised by their peers.



Feminism and the family

Liberal Feminism

Liberal feminists are concerned with campaigning against sex discrimination and for equal rights and opportunities for women (e.g. equal pay and an end to discrimination in employment.)

- They argue that women's oppression is being gradually overcome through changing people's attitudes and through changes in the law such as the Sex Discrimination Act (1975), which outlaws discrimination in employment.
- They believe we are moving towards greater equality, but that full equality will depend on further reforms and changes in the attitudes and socialisation patterns of both sexes.

In terms of the family, Liberal Feminists hold a view of a "march of progress". Although liberal feminists do not believe full gender equality has yet been achieved in the family, they argue that there has been gradual progress. For example, some studies suggest that men are doing more domestic labour, while the way parents now socialise sons and daughters is more equal than in the past.

Marxist Feminism

Marxist feminists argue that the main cause of women's oppression in the family is not men, but capitalism. Women's oppression performs several functions for capitalism.

- **Women reproduce the labour force** through their unpaid domestic labour, by socialising the next generation of workers and maintaining and servicing the current one.
- **Women absorb anger** that would otherwise be directed at capitalism. **Ansley (1972)** describes wives as 'takers of shit' who soak up the frustration their husbands feel because of the alienation and exploitation they suffer at work.
- **Women are a 'reserve army' of cheap labour** that can be taken on when extra workers are



needed. When no longer needed, employers can 'let them go' to return to their primary role as unpaid domestic labour.

Marxists feminists see the oppression of women in the family as linked to the exploitation of the working class. They argue that the family must be abolished at the same time as a socialist revolution replaces capitalism with a classless society.

Radical Feminism

Radical Feminists argue that all societies have been founded on patriarchy – rule by men. For radical Feminists, the key division in society is between men and women:

- **Men are the enemy:** they are the source of women's oppression and exploitation.
- **The family and marriage are the key institutions** in patriarchal society. Men benefit from women's unpaid domestic labour and from their sexual services, and they dominate women through domestic and sexual violence or threat of it.



For radical feminists, the patriarchal system needs to be overturned. In particular, the family is seen as the root of women's oppression and must be abolished. They argue that the only way to achieve this is through separatism – women must organise themselves to live independently of men.

Many radical feminists argue for 'political lesbianism' – the idea that heterosexual relationships are inevitably oppressive because they involve 'sleeping with the enemy'. They argue that women should make a conscious political choice to 'cut' men out of their lives.'

Difference Feminism

Whilst the other types of feminism tend to assume that most women live in conventional nuclear families and that they share a similar experience of family life, Difference Feminists argue that we cannot generalise about women's experiences in this way.

They argue for example that lesbian and heterosexual women, white and black women, middle-class and working-class women, and so on, have very different experiences of the family from one another.

For example, black feminists argue that by regarding the family solely as a source of oppression, white feminists neglect black women's experience of racial oppression. Instead black feminists view the black family positively as a source of support and resistance against racism.

Gender Role Socialisation and patriarchy

Sociologists note that from an early age, infants and children are trained to conform to social expectations about their gender. Much of this training goes on in the family during primary socialisation.

Oakley (1982) identifies four processes central to the construction of gender identity and the transmission of patriarchal values.

- **Manipulation** – refers to the way in which parents encourage and reward or discourage behaviour on the basis of whether it is appropriate for the child's sex. For Example – dressing girls in pink and boys in blue.
- **Canalisation** – refers to the way in which parent's direct children's interests into toys and play activities that are seen as normal for that sex. For Example – directing boys and girls towards different toys.
- **Verbal Appellations** – Parents may reinforce cultural expectations by referring to daughters and sons using stereotypical feminine and masculine descriptions such as telling boys they are 'strong' and girls they are 'pretty'.



- **Differentiated Activities** – Daughters may have cultural expectations about their future responsibilities reinforced by mothers insisting they help with housework.

Domestic Labour and Emotional Labour – Patriarchy and the family

Domestic Labour

Domestic labour refers to work performed in the home, such as childcare, cooking and cleaning. Functionalists view domestic labour as part of the expressive role, so within families it is often carried out by the women in the household.

Even when women are in full-time employment, domestic labour is still often viewed as their responsibility. This is known as the dual burden. The **dual burden** can be defined as when a person is responsible for two jobs.



Delphy & Leonard (1992) claim that women make the fundamental contributions to the family and men receive the benefits.

Marxist feminists like **Benston (1969)** claim that the unpaid domestic labour done by the wife, directly benefits capitalism by:

- Ensuring that her husband (the adult worker) is fed and cared for.
- Producing and caring for future workers.
- Being a reserve army of labour.
- Being a free service provider for capitalism.

Emotional Labour

Radical Feminists argue that wives provide emotional support to their husbands, whereas it is rarely returned.

Delphy & Leonard claim that wives are more likely to listen, agree, sympathise, understand, excuse and flatter.

Marxists Feminists argue that the emotional support provided by wives is a way of elevating the frustrating of capitalism.

Ansley – women in the family are “the takers of shit.”

EDUCATION: Social class and academic achievement: Cultural deprivation

Defining social class

Social class refers to a group which occupies a particular social and economic position in society. Sociologists have found it useful to use occupation as a way of measuring social class.

An **internal factor** refers to factors within the education system that affect pupil's achievement, while **external factors** are factors outside of school that affect pupil's achievement.

The following are external factors for the trends relating to social class and achievement:

- Cultural deprivation
- Material deprivation
- Capital (cultural economic and educational)



What does the term cultural deprivation refer to?

The view that some social groups e.g. the working classes lack the values, attitudes, **norms**, **values** and skills that are necessary for educational success. In other words the basic '**cultural equipment**' individuals need to learn, this includes language, reasoning skills and discipline. This is taught through **primary socialisation**. According to cultural deprivation theorists many working class families fail to socialise their children adequately. Consequently, children from this class background grow up culturally deprived. There are three main aspects associated with cultural deprivation namely: *Intellectual development, Language and attitudes and values*.



Intellectual Development & Parents Education

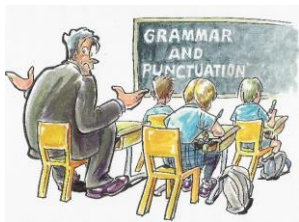
Intellectual development refers to thinking and reasoning skills and the ability to problem solve etc.

It is proposed by cultural deprivation theorists that many working class homes are not stimulating academically, due to the lack of books and educational resources. Therefore, many working class children begin school without having developed the basic intellectual abilities needed to progress. This is supported by **Douglas (1964)** who found that working class pupils scored lower on tests of ability than middle class pupils. **Douglas** found that working-class parents placed less value on education. As a result, they were less ambitious for their children, gave them less encouragement and took less interest in their education. Consequently, their children had lower levels of motivation and achievement.



Language

The importance of language in relation to educational achievement is emphasised by **Bereiter and Engelmann (1966)** and **Bernstein (1975)**. Bereiter and Engelmann (1966) argue that the language used in lower class homes is deficient. Communication takes the form of disjointed phrases, gestures and monosyllabic speech. **Bernstein** identified two types of speech codes that impact upon the achievement of working class pupils: The **restricted code** which refers to basic, unsophisticated, grammatically simple, descriptive, gesture based this type of speech is associated with the working class. The elaborate code refers to speech which is sophisticated and conveys complex ideas, a wider more complex vocabulary etc. This type of speech is typically associated with the middle classes. The latter is used by teachers, exam boards and is assumed to be the 'correct' way to speak. According to Bernstein the working classes are at an immediate disadvantage in education as both teachers and exam boards speak in the elaborate code. Consequently, this has a negative impact on their academic achievement.



Attitudes and Values

Cultural deprivation theorists argue that parent's attitudes and values are a key factor affecting educational achievement. **Feinstein (1998)** found working class parent's lack of interest was the main reason for their children's underachievement and was even more important than financial hardship or factors within the school. Lack of parental interest reflects the subcultural values of the working class according to cultural deprivation theorists. According to **Hyman (1967)** the values and beliefs of a lower class subculture are a 'self-imposed barrier' to educational and career success. **Sugarman (1970)** argues that working class subculture has four key features that act as a barrier to educational achievement:

- *Fatalism* – A belief in fate and destiny, you cannot change your status.
- *Collectivism* – Valuing belonging to a group more than succeeding as an individual.
- *Immediate gratification* – Seeking instant rewards (education is delayed gratification)
- *Present time orientation* – Viewing the present as more important than the future.



These values and beliefs are internalised during socialisation which results in the underachievement of working class pupils in education according to Sugarman.

Class differences in achievement: Material Deprivation

Material Deprivation

Material deprivation refers to poverty and a lack of material necessities such as adequate housing and income. It could be argued that material deprivation is responsible for underachievement in relation to social class.

Poverty and underachievement

Material deprivation is closely related to educational under achievement as evidenced by the following: **In 2006, only 33% of children receiving free school meals (a widely used measure of child poverty) gained five or more GCSE'S at A*-C against 61% of pupils not receiving free school meals.**

Nearly 90% of 'failing' schools are located in deprived areas.



Housing

Poor housing can affect a child's educational achievement both *directly* and *indirectly*.

- **Direct** – Overcrowding may make it more difficult to study, less room for educational activities, **disturbed sleep which will affect concentration and focus.**
- **Indirect** – Poor health and welfare e.g. damp homes can lead to repository illnesses, overcrowding can lead to an increased risk of accidents. Families in temporary accommodation are more likely to suffer Psychological distress, infections and this may lead to absences at school.
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Financial support and the costs of education

Lack of financial support means that children from poorer families have to go without equipment and miss educational experiences that would enrich their educational achievement. **Tanner et al (2003)** argues that the cost of 'free schooling' places an enormous burden upon poorer families e.g. uniforms, books, computers, a calculator, sports, music and art equipment etc. 'Hand me downs' seem like a solution although they can lead to children being stigmatised and bullied. Lack of funds also means that children from low income families need to work e.g. paper rounds, baby sitting etc. and this can have a negative impact upon schooling. The fear of debt also deters working class students from applying to university.



Dropout rates are also higher for universities that have a higher intake of working class students **e.g. for Sunderland the rate is 13% compared to Oxford which is 1.4%. The National Audit Office (2002)** discovered that working class students spent twice as much time in paid work to reduce their debts as middle class students.

Fear of Debt

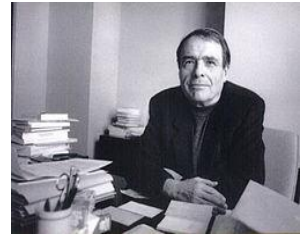
Attitudes towards debt may deter working-class students from going to university. **Callender & Jackson (2005)** found that working-class students are more likely to see debt negatively and something to be avoided. They are more likely to see the costs rather than the benefits in going to university. The increase in tuition fees from 2012, to a maximum of £9,000 per year, may mean that the increased debt burden will deter even more working-class students from applying to university.

Furthermore, working-class students who go to university are less likely to receive financial support from their families. A **National Union of Students (2010)** online survey found that 81% of those from the highest social class received helped from home, compared to only 43% of those from the lowest class.

Reay (2005) found that working-class students were more likely to apply to local universities so they could live at home and save on travel costs, however this gives them less opportunity to go to the highest status universities. They were also more likely to work part-time to fund their studies, making it more difficult for them to gain higher-class degrees.

Bourdieu: Three types of capital

Bourdieu explains educational underachievement in relation to social class in terms of both material and cultural factors, he draws on the concept of '**capital**' to explain why the middle class are more successful, he discusses three types of capital: Cultural, Educational and Economic.



Cultural Capital

The term cultural capital refers to the knowledge, values, attitudes, tastes, preferences and abilities of the middle classes. Middle class culture is a type of capital because like wealth it gives status and advantages to those who possess it. Education transmits the dominant middle class culture and de values working class culture.

Educational and economic capital

Educational capital refers to academic qualifications. Economic capital refers to wealth. Middle class children with cultural capital are more likely to achieve educational capital while wealthier parents can convert economic capital to educational capital through private tuition etc.

Sullivan (2001) used questionnaires to conduct a survey of 465 pupils in four schools with the aim of assessing their cultural capital, she discovered that those with the greatest cultural capital and therefore more likely to achieve highly were the middle classes.