

BIJLAGE BIJ DE LESSENREEKS

PARADIGMA'S: STARTLESSEN IN VWO-5

WRAP YOUR MIND AROUND THE THEORY



The average salary for a dentist ranges between \$60 000 and \$120 000. **On the other hand**, the average salary for a fast-food cook is between \$16 000 and \$29 400 (www.payscale.com).

FUNCTIONALISM

Functionalists suggest that social class is connected to a person's ability to negotiate the social world. Therefore, intelligence, drive and personal choice influence a person's social class. All people are different, so it makes sense that differences in social class exist in Australia. Some people simply have more skills and abilities than others, and these skills naturally help them reap economic rewards. Have you ever heard the phrase 'The cream rises to the top'? In many ways, this statement explains why stratification continues to occur.

CONFLICT THEORY

Conflict theorists believe that social mobility rarely occurs in a dramatic way, largely because the class system doesn't allow it. Generally, one's parents and the opportunities they can provide determine social class. Parents in positions of wealth wish to make sure their children keep that advantage, so they pass wealth to their children in the form of an inheritance, they make sure their children attend the 'best schools', and they use their social prestige to help their children succeed. Children who lack such things generally remain poor.

WHAT FACTORS MIGHT HAVE INFLUENCED SUCH DIFFERENT OUTCOMES FOR THESE TWO PEOPLE?

SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

Social class and our understanding of it are relative to our personal belief system. People in Australia, for example, like to consider themselves as middle class and consider Australia a relatively egalitarian country when compared to other countries such as the US and the UK. Status symbols are also important in terms of establishing a class identity.



What future might lie in store for a young unwed mother and her child?



Affluent parents often give their children opportunities such as music lessons and access to organised sports, which can influence their social class later in life.

WRAP YOUR MIND AROUND THE THEORY



Functionalists look for the function of any issue. Food banks, functionalists argue, make a dysfunctional system such as homelessness function in a society.

FUNCTIONALISM

Functionalists suggest society works as an inter-related system. Communitarians understand that if society is to run smoothly, the government, the local community and the business sector must all work together for the well-being of all. The root of society is the local community; it anchors this societal tree. The government carries the will of the people to the economic system, thereby functioning as the trunk of this tree. The leaves of a tree make the sugar that allows the entire plant to live. Of course, leaves without roots blow over, and roots without leaves die.

CONFLICT THEORY

Conflict theorists would view homelessness as a sign of inequality in society. Conflict theorists focus on social classes and their drastic differences in wealth, power and prestige. They believe that the upper class controls society's wealth and resources and exploits the lower class. If the upper class shared its wealth, conflict theorists argue, then homelessness would be cut down dramatically.

WHAT CAUSES HOMELESSNESS IN A SOCIETY?

SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

Because symbolic interactionists view things on a smaller scale, they would explore how homelessness affects the way individuals act towards one another. These theorists would ask: How do individuals behave towards one another? What labels do individuals assign to homelessness? How do non-homeless people interact with homeless people?



The inequality of wealth in a society is a leading cause of homelessness.



Is this a typical representation of how non-homeless people interact with homeless people?