

Study Questions, Week 4

Topic for the Week: Social Interaction and Social Structure

Readings for the Week:

Macionis text, Chapter 4

Reader, Chapters 15 (Hall and Hall) and 16 (Wood)

Questions:

- (1) What is meant by the term *social interaction*. What are the *functions* and *products* of social interaction?
- (2) What is meant by the term *social structure*. What are the components of social structure? Provide concrete examples of the component of social structure and briefly describe some functions of each.
- (3) Distinguish the following concepts: *ascribed* status, *achieved* status, *master* status. What is the relationship between *statuses* and *roles*? Between *statuses* and *social hierarchies*?
- (4) What is meant by *role conflict*? What is meant by *role strain*? Provide an example of each from your own experiences.
- (5) Sociologists argue that society is socially constructed. What does this mean? How do the *Thomas theorem*, *ethnomethodology* and *dramaturgical analysis* contribute to our understanding of social construction processes?
- (6) Provide an example of how social situations are constructed. What roles do *nonverbal communication*, *idealization*, and *tact* play in social construction processes?
- (7) Are social constructionists generally more interested in *objective* or *subjective* reality? Explain.
- (8) The social construction of reality occurs through interaction. How might *emotions*, *language*, and *humor* influence the *meaning* attached to a particular interaction? What role does *perception* play in this process?
- (9) Explain the role of nonverbal communication in social interaction. What messages are transmitted nonverbally? How do these affect social organization?
- (10) How do men's and women's friendships differ? Explain how these differences create structures that influence behavior.