The Sociological Perspective
What is Sociology?

The study of:

(1) Social *behavior* in humans
    (interactions, action in social settings)

(2) Social *relations* among humans
    (e.g. class, race, gender, age)

(3) Social *institutions* created by humans
    (e.g. education, economy, religion)

(4) Social *change* over time
    (how structures evolve)

SOCIOMETRY 403: SOCIAL PROBLEMS
The Basic Argument

People interact →
People intuitively develop rules of interaction →
Over time and with repetition, people become accustomed to these rules → The rules become normalized → People internalize the norms → The norms begin creating people’s identity
Sociological Concepts

Values  Symbols  Norms  Class

Roles  Institutions  Power

are key sociological concepts used to explain the dynamic relationship between Individuals and Society

SOCILOGY 403: SOCIAL PROBLEMS
Paradigms in Sociology

Three Theoretical Approaches:

(1) Functionalist
(2) Conflict
(3) Interactionist
# Paradigms in Sociology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Functionalist</th>
<th>Conflict</th>
<th>Interactionist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>View of Society</strong></td>
<td>Stable, Well Integrated</td>
<td>Tension and Struggle Between Groups</td>
<td>Affects Everyday Social Interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level of Analysis</strong></td>
<td>Macrosociology</td>
<td>Macrosociology</td>
<td>Microsociology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Concepts</strong></td>
<td>Manifest &amp; Latent Functions, Dysfunctions</td>
<td>Inequality, Capitalism, Stratification</td>
<td>Symbols, Nonverbal Communication, Face-to-Face Interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>View of the Individual</strong></td>
<td>People are Socialized to Perform Social Functions</td>
<td>People are Shaped by Power, Coercion, Authority</td>
<td>People Manipulate Symbols to Create Their Social Worlds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>View of Social Order</strong></td>
<td>Cooperative, Maintained Through Consensus</td>
<td>Coercive, Maintained Through Force</td>
<td>Maintained Through Shared Understandings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>View of Social Change</strong></td>
<td>Predictable, Reinforcing</td>
<td>Change May Have Positive Consequences</td>
<td>Reflected in Individual Social Position, Communication Among Individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Example</strong></td>
<td>Laws Reinforce the Social Order</td>
<td>Laws Reinforce the Interests of Those in Power</td>
<td>People Respect or Violate Laws Based on Past Experiences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion

Consider how each paradigm would address the following issues:

- Minimum wage
- Immigration
- Educational achievement