

Organizations, Government, Political Power and War

Retrace where we are and how we got here --

Renaissance - opening of society

Reformation - closing of society

Counter-Reformation - further closing and repression of knowledge and intellectual freedom

Industrial / Scientific Revolution - change in family roles and social structures with decline in agrarian society and rise of factory systems - oppression of women; emergence of ownership of means of production as focal point in social and economic organization and processes of domination

Modern Age - full affirmation of male dominance; production of more than can be consumed; potential (unrealized) for universal satisfaction of basic human needs; fulfillment of self and organization of identity through work

Post Modern Age - changing patterns of social organization; decline in "Fordism" and industrial factory system with loss of identities based on workplace. More time available for leisure than is required for work and traditional concepts of work

Ask group to redefine the importance of each, especially as they lead up to where society is today, framing responses in terms of material covered to date. Find connections between where society has been and where it is today. Specifically, how do present day systems of government relate to sociologically based knowledge of:

- 1) Socialization - We are trained to be what and who we are
- 2) Deviance - Positive and Negative aspects; political forces seize on both at opportune times
- 3) Stratification - Particularly useful in maintenance of social control and social structure
- 4) Gender Issues - Issues of social control and domination are extremely important in many forums:
 - a) religious structure; many religious doctrines denigrate the position of women
 - b) political processes; male dominated processes depend on gender differentiation
- 5) Ethnic and Racial Issues - Emphasis of differences is key to support of certain power structures based on functions of prejudice

Each of the periods provided specific guidance regarding values, norms, social expectations. From each period society emerged with changes in structure -- some discarded, new structure adopted.

So, as things change do some things remain the same? What changes quickly? What changes slowly? What is always necessary?

Institutions and Institutional Roles - Governments come and go, need for authority remains. Authority centralized through **government** provides for system of civil discourse based on enactment of a system of laws (codified norms) which may be enforced by military means

Important Concepts of government:

- 1) Politics - the means whereby power is used; e.g. election process
- 2) Power - Ability of individuals or groups to promote their interests, even against resistance
- 3) Authority - Government's legitimate use of power with consent of those being governed

Various government entities exist:

1) Democracies: The Dominant Form

participatory - ancient Greece

liberal - U.S., western Europe, Japan, Australia, N.Z. etc.

constitutional monarchies - U.K., Japan, Sweden

a) New strength and appeal of democracy thru association with

triumph of capitalism;

b) attractive presentation via globalization and information sharing

through mass communications (totalitarian states' loss of power)

2) Communism - Totalitarian government based on economic ideologies

3) Fascism - Totalitarian government based on social ideologies exalting

nation and race/ethnicity above individual

Weber - Democracy is dependent on two primary conditions:

1) multiple parties representing different interest and outlooks (*regarding modern political parties; are there really significant differences? If so, what are they?*)

2) leaders with imagination and the courage needed to escape the inertia of the bureaucracy (**Weber's "democratic elitism" and concept of the power elite** emerges here: Liberal Democracy is really *the rule of the politicians and not the rule of the people*)

In all cases, regardless of the types of government involved, whether similar or basically antagonistic, wars may emerge:

- 1) limited - troops and armed forces in limited areas without intentional civilian involvement
- 2) total - all encompassing, full economic and social commitment, unlimited civilian involvement

Issues in warfare:

- a) Ideology
- b) Economy

Two relevant films:

Holocaust - Depiction of nationalistic, economically driven war; civilian support founded upon nationalism and economics and maintained and solidified through racial and ethnic prejudice supporting and leading to genocidal processes

Cambodia: Year Zero; Cambodia: Year Ten - Civil war founded on isolationist nationalism; genocidal processes engaged in as means of purification