

Views of society essay

[Life](#), [Friendship](#)



Every day we have to decipher the information provided to us.

The manner in which a sociologist would do this can be done using 3 different theories: conflict theory, functional analysis, and symbolic interactionism. Lets us use embryonic stem cell research as an ethical dilemma to apply these three theories. Before applying our theories it will be helpful to explain the meaning of them. Conflict theorists impress that society is made up of a system of social structures that compete with each other for scarce resources. Like the conflict theory, the functional analysis sees society as a system of interrelated parts, or subsystems. But in order for society to work as a unit all of those subsystems have to work together. The third perspective used by sociologist is symbolic interactionism and that is that we as humans use symbols to understand and develop views of the world and to communicate with others when defining both our-self concept and concept of others. To explain why embryonic stem cell research is debated, conflict theorists focus on the ethical issues that have been raised regarding stem cell research.

Because stem cells are derived from the cells of embryos and fetuses serious debates sparked regarding ethical concerns about the use of these cells in research and treatments. But the National Institutes of Health have released guidelines regarding their use. However the guidelines have not necessarily alleviated all of the ethical issues raised the National Institutes of Health is now the small group controlling the recourses. Applying the functional analysts' perspective to the embryonic stem cell research opponents is a little different. Remembering that with this approach society is a whole unit that works together. To allow such research that requires the destruction of

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human embryos, no matter how noble the purpose may be, is to treat that human person as merely a mean to an end of an unrelated issue and disregarding the well-being of that embryo. Therefore all parts are not being allowed to function together.

Symbolic integrationists that are trying to explain why embryonic stem cell research is debated use the thought that, that embryo was a life and it has now been destroyed. Depending on our own conceptions of this research it could symbolize that alleviating one disease permits us to destroy this other human life. If I were to design a study to show or indicate why embryonic stem cell research is wrong I would use the conflict theory.

Whether trying to prove or disprove this particular issue I feel that this perspective is going to provide reasons why groups should be arguing one way or another for those recourses. Society in the United States is comprised with many different values. This is due to different backgrounds people come from. This could be the result of different ethnic-ethnicity or a different social class. But sociologists have identified some core values that are shared by people making up society in the United States. A few of the values developed by Robin Williams will be described here. Efficiency and practicality is one of these core values.

Americans are rewarded for their fast and efficient way of doing things. Hence we're always looking for a more efficient way to get things done. Some of these values work hand in hand. Another core value is science and technology. Using science to control nature is one idea being done with technology such as the new wind turbines. But the development of new

technology for computers can sure help us become more efficient with numerous tasks. Again building the values Williams has listed progress because Americans always want ' bigger and better' which will help society progress while also helping society be more efficient.

Freedom is a core value that many Americans may forget or rather, take for granted. But this core value pervades U. S.

life. Democracy is the form of representative government that the United States has which has been granted due to the freedom we have and allows everyone to express their opinion and political views to the government. Americans central role of equality is another important value that plays a part in our lives.

The six values listed here and another six values described by Williams can combine together in different combinations to form a value cluster. When combining different values together don't work together forming a value contradiction. For example, one certainly couldn't always express achievements and success, humanitarianism, and equality. I'm sure there may be times where this could be tolerated, but it would be difficult for the person looking to achievement and success to treat a co-worker equally and as a humanitarian when he's looking to get ahead of everyone else. That would be a value contradiction where a value cluster could be shown with democracy, freedom, and equality because we couldn't have a democracy without freedom and our United States democracy promotes that everyone is equal. Everyone plays a role in society and this role depends on our attitudes, behaviors, self-concept, and beliefs toward life.

There are many agents of socialization which can affect these traits for an individual such as ones family friends, religion, day care, school & peers, and the workplace. I do believe that some of these do have a greater influence than others and I will discuss and explain them below. The family is going to be the first agent of socialization one encounters and it is one that will always be with you throughout your life. One of the main findings noted by sociologists is that the family's social class can play a major role in socialization for the child. The family's social class in part depicts the type of opportunities or lack thereof one might have experienced. Typically the working class family is going to be less educated and not used to having some of the opportunities offered to them that the middle-class or upper-class have.

Therefore, the working-class expect their children to have the same experiences and teach them obedience to do what they are told because they will usually expect that they will always have a boss telling them what to do. Where in contrast, the middle-class and upper-class are maybe given more opportunities and take the initiative to explore the valuable qualities they have. But again how they are taught at home is going to give the child their idea of what is expected from them and how they are treated from others. As one gets a little older school and peer groups will play a very weighted role as an agent of socialization and then that peer group, even though it will change, it will continue throughout your life. The roles one learns from their peers can possibly even replace the ones learned first from home.

But from these groups of peers one can be accepted or rejected and this outcome can and does definitely dominate ones self-concept, attitude, and future behaviors as we continue to grow. Finally we get to what I feel the third significant agent of socialization is. The workplace comes into play after the initial family and peer influences have molded our attitudes and beliefs toward life. Here we actually get a glimpse of the whole picture and the different roles people have in society and many times we have different roles throughout our time in the workplace, but a lot of times our workplace becomes part of our attitude and self-concept.