At the end of every chapter, I will be giving you exercises and projects. These activities are designed to help you understand and use the theories you've learned. The intent of these first two chapters is to provide you with a background for the rest of the book. I am thus keeping these toolboxes brief. The most important things I want you to take away from these two chapters are ideas that you can use to think through and analyze the theories that follow.

- Please define the following terms. Make your definitions as theoretically robust as possible (don't be afraid to consult other sources). You want these definitions to work for you throughout the book: modernity, progress, empiricism, positivism, science, technical project, social project, democracy, perspectives, theoretical definitions.

- Please answer the following questions:
  - Explain the projects of modernity and how science as a knowledge system fits in.
  - Describe the work of the first sociologists. What were their concerns? How do you think sociology fits into the projects of modernity?
  - Explain the institutional arrangements that are supposed to be most conducive to democracy.
  - Define theory. In your definition be certain to explain the purpose, building blocks, and goals of theory.
  - What are the three assumptions sociologists usually make? Describe each assumption and why it is important in the work of theory.

---

**CHAPTER 2**

Defining Moments in Twentieth-Century Theory:

Talcott Parsons and The Frankfurt School

---

Talcott Parsons: Defining Sociology
- Parsons' Vision for the Social Sciences
- Parsons' Theoretical Project
- The Problem of Social Order
- Voluntaristic Action
- Patterning Voluntaristic Action
- The Frankfurt School: The Problem With Sociology
- Historical Roots
- The Problem With Positivism: Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno
- Building Your Theory Toolbox

In Chapter 1, we saw that understanding modernity is vital for understanding contemporary theory and sociology. It's equally important for us to also understand a couple of the developments in the mid-twentieth century that formed contemporary theory, especially in the United States. For our purpose, the two most significant are Talcott Parsons and the Frankfurt School. In many ways these two forces took the social disciplines in opposite directions: Parsons saw himself building on the ideals of modern knowledge—the Frankfurt School did just the opposite and argued that rather than leading to social justice, social science...
Chapter 2  Talcott Parsons and The Frankfurt School

Talcott Parsons: Defining Sociology

Talcott Parsons (1902–1979) was born in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Parsons began his university studies at Amherst (Massachusetts), planning on becoming a physician but later changed his major to economics. After receiving his BA in 1924, Parsons studied in Europe, completing his PhD work in sociology and economics at the University of Heidelberg, Germany. After teaching a short while at Amherst, Parsons obtained a lecturing position in 1931 at Harvard and was one of the first instructors in the new sociology department.

Parsons' Vision for the Social Sciences

Parsons was a man with a grand vision. He wanted to unite the social and behavioral disciplines into a single social science and to create a single theoretical perspective. Parsons worked at this not only theoretically but also organizationally. In 1942, Parsons became department chair of sociology at Harvard University. One of the first things he did was to combine sociology, anthropology, and psychology into one department, the Department of Social Relations. The reason he did this was to break down the barriers between disciplines in order to create a general science of human action. His desire, then, wasn’t simply to understand a portion of human action (as in sociology); he wanted, rather, to comprehend the totality of the human context and to offer a full and complete explanation of social action. The department existed from 1945 to 1972 and formed the basis of other interdisciplinary programs across the United States.

After 10 years of work, Parsons’ first book was published in 1937: The Structure of Social Action. This book is characterized by Lewis Coser (1977) as a "watershed in the development of American sociology in general and sociological theory in particular...." which set a new course— the course of functional analysis—that was to dominate theoretical developments from the early 1940s until the middle of the 1960s" (p. 562). More than any other single book, it introduced European thinkers to American sociologists and gave birth to structural functionalism, which Desmond Ellis characterized in 1971 as "the major theoretical orientation in sociology today" (p. 692). His other prominent works include The Social System, Toward a General Theory of Action, Economy and Society, Structure and Process in Modern Societies, and The American University. For much of the twentieth century, Parsons was "the major theoretical figure in English-speaking sociology, if not in world sociology" (Marshall, 1998, p. 480). As Victor Lipsky (2000) notes, "Talcott Parsons... was, and remains, the pre-eminent American sociologist" (p. 386).

Parsons’ Theoretical Project

There are at least three ways in which Parsons helped shape the center of sociological discourse in the twentieth century: the way he theorized, the problem he addressed, and the theory itself. We'll start with his theorizing. Recall that science is built upon positivism and empiricism. As such, science assumes that the universe is empirical; it operates according to law-like principles, and humans can discover those laws through rigorous investigation. Science also has very specific goals, as do most knowledge systems. Through discovery, scientists want to explain, predict, and control phenomena. Additionally, there are two other important issues in positivistic theory, which we find in the following quotes from prominent contemporary theorists:

The essence of science is precisely theory... as a generalized and coherent body of ideas, which explain the range of variations in the empirical world in terms of general principles.... [It is] explicitly cumulative and integrating. (Collins, 1986, p. 1345, emphasis added)

A true science incorporates the ideas of its early founders in introductory texts and moves on, giving over the analysis of its founders to history and philosophy. (Turner, 1993, p. ix, emphasis added)

The first thing I want you to glean from the above quotes is that scientific theory is generalized. To make an idea or concept general means to make it applicable to an entire group of similar things. As you'll see when we consider Parsons' theory, his concepts are very general (and thus fairly dry—but, then, all scientific theory is that way). Scientific knowledge also involves both theory synthesis and cumulation. Synthesis involves bringing together two or more elements in order to form a new whole. For example, water is the synthesis of hydrogen and oxygen. Theoretical synthesis, then, involves bringing together elements from diverse theorists so as to form a theory that robustly explains a broader range of phenomena. Cumulation refers to the gradual building up of something, such as the cumulative effects of drinking alcohol. Theory cumulation specifically involves the building up of explanations over time. This incremental building is captured by Isaac Newton's famous dictum, "If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders

Particular...
these ideas originally came. Now, you and I might know from whom this proposition comes (Durkheim), but does it matter? No. Like Einstein's formula, it's immaterial. If we are doing social science, what matters is whether or not we can show this statement to be false through scientific testing. If we can't, then we can have a certain level of confidence that the proposition accurately reflects a general process in the social world. In science, authorship is superfluous; it's the explanatory power of the theory that matters. The cumulation of these general statements is one of the main goals of scientific theory.

Of his groundbreaking work, Parsons (1949) says, "The Structure of Social Action was intended to be primarily a contribution to systematic social science and not to history" (pp. A–B). His work is actually a synthesis of three theorists. Parsons (1961) notes how he used each one:

for the conception of the social system and the bases of its integration, the work of Durkheim; for the comparative analysis of social structure and for the analysis of the borderline between social systems and culture, that of Max Weber; and for the articulation between social systems and personality, that of Freud. (p. 31)

Yet Parsons clearly wants us to forget the historical and personal origins of the theories—for science, it's the power of the synthesized theory to illuminate and delineate social factors and processes that matters. This approach to theory is also what led to the three sociological perspectives or paradigms you were taught in your introduction to sociology courses: structural-functionalism, conflict theory, and interactionism. To say that someone is a functionalist, for example, is to pay more attention to the general features of the theory than what he or she contributes originally.

The Problem of Social Order

Parsons saw himself responding to the problem of social order posed by the philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679). Parsons' understanding of this Hobbesian problem of social order begins with the fact that all humans are ruled by passions. And, all people are motivated to fulfill these passions; and, more importantly, they have the right to fulfill them because "there is no common rule of good and evil to be taken from the nature of the objects themselves" (Hobbes, as quoted in Parsons, 1949, p. 89).

In other words, things aren't good or bad in themselves and people have different desires for diverse things—thus there is no basis for rule. In the absence of any rule, people will use the most efficient means possible to acquire their goals. "These means are found in the last analysis to be force and fraud" (Parsons, 1949, p. 90). Thus the most natural state of humanity is war of all against all. The question, then, is how is social order achieved? Parsons' basic response is the normative order—social order achieved through norms. While some of the language might be new to you, most of Parsons' response will probably feel familiar. The reason that's probably the case is that Parsons' answer to the problem of social order has become for many sociologists the basic answer given in introduction to sociology classes.
Voluntaristic Action

In thinking about humans, it’s sometimes convenient to make the distinction between behavior and action: All living things behave; only humans have the potential to act. Action implies choice and decision, whereas behavior occurs without thought, as when a plant’s leaves reach for the sun. Of course, humans behave as well as act; there are a lot of things we do on autopilot, but we have the potential for action. Theory that focuses on this issue is referred to as action theory, which has been an interest of philosophy since the time of Aristotle. Parsons’s work on action theory draws from Max Weber, who argued that action takes place when a person’s behavior is meaningfully oriented toward other social actors, usually in terms of meaningful values or rational exchange. Voluntaristic action, then, is never purely individualistic: People choose to act voluntarily within a context of culture and social situations in order to meet individual goals. And because human needs are met socially, people develop shortcuts to action by creating norms and by patterning action through sets of ends and means.

Parsons calls this context of action the unit act. There are a variety of factors in the unit act. The first, and in some ways the most important, are the conditions of action. There are of course occasions when we have some control over the initial context—for example, you may decide to go to the movies on Saturday or study for a test. But once the choice is made, the actor has little immediate agency or choice over the conditions under which action takes place. Parsons has in mind such things as the presence of social institutions or organizations, as well as elements that might be specific to the situation, such as the social influence of particular people or physical constraints of the environment.

The second set of factors under which people act concerns the means and ends of action. Here we can see a fundamental difference between action and reaction: Action is goal oriented and involves choice. But for people to make choices among goals and means, the choices themselves must have different meanings. According to Parsons, the meanings and relationships between means and ends are formed through shared value hierarchies. Cultural values are shared ideas and emotions regarding the worth of something, and values are always understood within a hierarchy, with some goals and means more highly valued than others; otherwise it would be difficult to choose between one thing and another because you wouldn’t care. Choices among means and ends are also guided by norms. Norms are actions that have sanctions (rewards or punishments) attached to them. Taken together Parsons is arguing that human action is distinctly cultural and thus meaningful action.

Patterning Voluntaristic Action

While Parsons has now outlined the context wherein action takes place, the problem of social order isn’t adequately addressed. Two things need to be specifically addressed: First, Hobbes talked about a person’s inner passions driving him or her; second, social order needs patterned behavior. Parsons argues that patterning action occurs on two levels: the structuring of patterned behaviors and individual internalization or socialization. Parsons understands internalization in Freudian terms. Freud’s theory works like this: People are motivated by internal energies surrounding different need dispositions. As these different psychic motives encounter the social world, they have to conform in order to be satisfied. Conformity may be successful (well-adjusted) or unsuccessful (repressed), but the point to notice here is that the structure of the individual’s personality changes as a result of this encounter between psychic energy and the social world. The superego is formed through these encounters. For Parsons, the important point is that cultural traditions become meaningful to and part of the need dispositions of individuals. The way we sense and fulfill our needs is structured internally by culture—notice how Parsons reconceptualized Hobbes’ concern for passions; in Parsons’s scheme they are social rather than individual. For Parsons, then, the motivation to conform comes principally from within the individual through Freudian internalization patterns of value orientation and meaning.

Action is also structured socially through modes of orientation and types of action that have become institutionalized. Modes of orientation simply refer to the way we come into a social situation with specific motives and values. These motives and values come together and form three types of action: instrumental, expressive, and moral. Instrumental action is composed of the need for information and evaluation by objective criteria. Expressive action is motivated by the need for emotional attachment and the desire to be evaluated by artistic standards. Moral action is motivated by the need for assessment by ultimate notions of right and wrong. People will tend to be in contact with others who are interested in the same type of action.

As we interact over time with people who are likewise oriented, we produce patterns of interaction and a corresponding system of status positions, roles, and norms. Status positions tell us where we fit in the social hierarchy of esteem or honor; roles are sets of expected behaviors that generally correspond to a given status position (for example, a professor is expected to teach); and norms are expected behaviors that have positive and/or negative sanctions attached to them. Generally these cluster together in institutions. For functionalists such as Parsons, institutions are enduring sets of roles, norms, status positions, and values that are recognized as collectively meeting some societal need. In this context, then, institutionalization refers to the process through which behaviors, cognitions, and emotions become part of the taken-for-granted way of doing things in a society ("the way things are").

These clusters of institutions meet certain needs that society has—e.g., the institutions function to meet those needs. The most important set of institutions for Parsons are the ones that produce latent pattern maintenance. If something is latent, it’s hidden and not noticed. Social patterns are maintained, then, through indirect management. For this task, society uses culture and socialization. The chief socializing agents in society are the structures that meet the requirement of latent pattern maintenance—structures such as religion, education, and family.

In addition to latent pattern maintenance, Parsons gives us three other requisite functions for a system: adaptation, goal attainment, and integration. The adaptation function is fulfilled by those structures that help a system to adapt to its environment. Adaptation draws in resources from the environment, converts them to usable elements, and distributes them throughout the system (the economy). Goal attainment is the subsystem that activates and guides all the other elements toward a specific goal (government). In Parsons’s scheme, integration refers to the subsystems
and structures that work to blend together and coordinate the various actions of other structures. In society, the structure most responsible for this overall coordination is the legal system. Together, these four functions are referred to as AGIL: Adaptation, Goal attainment, Integration, and Latent pattern maintenance. All of these functions are embedded within one another and form a bounded system that tends toward equilibrium or balance; in other words, they form society.

The Frankfurt School: The Problem With Sociology

Karl Marx spawned two distinct theoretical approaches. One approach focuses on conflict and class as general features of society. The intent with this more sociological approach is to analytically describe and explain conflict. Conflict and power are understood as fundamental to society. And, again, this approach is based on the same question as Parsons: How is social order possible? The short version of Parsons' theory is that social order is achieved through commonly held norms, values, and beliefs. A norm, as you'll recall, “is a cultural rule that associates people’s behavior or appearance with rewards or punishments” (Johnson, 2000, p. 209). This approach to understanding social order is sometimes called the “equilibrium model” because it’s based on people internalizing and believing in the collective conscious. People do have selfish motivations, but they are offset by the collective conscious, thus creating a balance between individual desires and social needs.

Conflict theorists, however, would point out that there is an element of power underlying norms. Notice in the above definition that norms are founded upon an ability to reward or punish behavior, both of which are based on power. Conflict theorists also point out that the values and beliefs commonly held in society can be explained in terms of the interests of the elite. Thus, for conflict theorists, social order is the result of constraint rather than consensus and power is thus an essential element of society. Conflict theorists take the same basic scientific approach as Parsons, seeking generalizable processes and building theory cumulatively.

The other theoretical approach that is inspired by and draws from Marx is critical theory. In general, critical theory “aims to dig beneath the surface of social life and uncover the assumptions and masks that keep us from a full and true understanding of how the world works” (Johnson, 2000, p. 67). Critical theory doesn’t simply explain how society operates. Rather, it uncovers the unseen or unrecognized ways in which society operates to oppress certain groups while maintaining the interests of others.

Critical theory has one more defining feature: It is decidedly anti-postmodern. Thus, critical theory has a very clear agenda that stands in opposition to scientific sociology. This perspective was brought together by the Frankfurt School.

Historical Roots

Briefly, the Frankfurt School (also known as the Institute of Social Research) began in the early 1920s at the University of Frankfurt in Germany. It was formed by a tight group of radical intellectuals and, ironically, financed by Felix Weil, the son of a wealthy German merchant. Weil’s goal was to create “an institutionalization of Marxist discussion beyond the confines of middle-class academia and the ideological narrow-mindedness of the Communist Party” (Wiggershaus, 1986/1995, p. 16). As the Nazis gained control in Germany, the Frankfurt School was forced into exile in 1933, first to Switzerland, then to New York, and eventually California. In 1953, the school was able to move back to its home university in Frankfurt. The various leaders and scholars associated with the school include Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, Eric Fromm, and Jürgen Habermas.

Though there were many reasons why the School and its critical theory approach came into existence, one of the early problems that these theorists dealt with was the influence of Nazism in Germany. The two decades surrounding World War II were watershed moments for many disciplines. The propaganda machine in back of Nazism and the subsequent human atrocities left a world stunned at the capacity of humanity’s inhumanity. The actions of the Holocaust and the beliefs that lay at their foundation spurred a large cross-disciplinary movement to understand human behavior and beliefs. One of the best-known attempts at understanding these issues is Stanley Milgram’s (1974) psychological experiments in authority.

The sociological attempt at understanding this horror demanded that culture be studied as an independent entity, something Marx didn’t do. It was clear that what happened in Germany was rooted in culture that was used to intentionally control people’s attitudes and actions—this use of culture was formalized in 1933 with the Reich Ministry for Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda. Additionally, ideology became seen as something different, something more insidious, than perhaps Marx first suspected. The Frankfurt School asks us to see ideology as more diffuse, as not simply a direct tool of the elite, but, rather, as a part of the cultural atmosphere that we breathe.

In general, the Frankfurt School elaborates and synthesizes ideas from Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Sigmund Freud, and focuses on the social production of knowledge and its relationship to human consciousness. This kind of Marxism focuses on Marx’s indebtedness to Georg Wilhelm Hegel. Marx basically inverted Hegel’s argument from an emphasis on ideas to material relations in the economy. The Frankfurt School reintroduced Hegel’s concern with ideas and culture but kept Marx’s critical evaluation of capitalism and the state. Thus, like Marx, the Frankfurt School focuses on ideology but, unlike Marx, critical theory sees ideological production as linked to culture and knowledge rather than simply class and the material relations of production. Ideology, according to critical theorists, is more broadly based and insidious than Marx supposed.

The Problem With Positivism:
Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno

The clearest expression of early critical theory is found in Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer’s (1972) book *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, first published in 1944. Adorno was born in Germany September 11, 1903. His father was a well-to-do wine merchant and musician. Adorno himself studied music composition in Vienna for 3 years beginning in 1925, after studying sociology and philosophy at the University of Frankfurt. He finished his advanced degree in philosophy under
Paul Tillich (Christian socialist) in 1931, and started an informal association with the Institute. In 2 short years, Adorno was removed by the Nazis due to his Jewish heritage. He moved to Merton College, Oxford, in 1934 and to New York City in 1938, where he fully affiliated with the Frankfurt School in exile. When the school returned to Germany, Adorno became assistant director under Max Horkheimer, who had served as director since 1930. Horkheimer was German, also Jewish, and born into a wealthy family on February 14, 1895. After World War I, Horkheimer studied psychology and philosophy, finishing his doctorate in philosophy in 1925 at Frankfurt University, where he became a lecturer and eventually met Adorno. Horkheimer became the second director of the Institute of Social Research in 1930 and continued in that position until 1958, when Adorno took the directorship.

In the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Horkheimer and Adorno argue that the contradictions Marx saw in capitalism are eclipsed by the ones found in the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment promises freedom through the use of reason, rationality, and scientific method. But in the end it brings a new kind of oppression, not one that is linked to the externalities of life (such as class) but one that extinguishes the spirit and breath of human nature. As we've seen, positivism is based on reason and assumes the universe is empirical. Reason is employed to discover the laws of nature in order to predict and control it. Horkheimer and Adorno argue that the very definition of scientific knowledge devalues the human questions of ethics, aesthetics, beauty, emotion, and the good life—all of which are written off by science as concerns of philosophy and literature, which under positivism isn't valued as knowledge at all.

Science is based on the Cartesian dichotomy of subject and object, but the human sciences (sociology, psychology, psychiatry, anthropology, history, and the like) have in applying the scientific method objectified the human being through and through. In objectifying, controlling, and opposing nature, the scientific method opposes human nature—human nature is treated like physical nature, objectified and controlled. It results in such things as seeing all human sensualities and sensibilities as evil forces that must be controlled (the Freudian id); and the human psyche, emotions, sensualities, and body must all be managed and brought under the regime of science. People in positivistic social sciences become statistics in a population that must be controlled for the interests of the state (current examples include sexual practices, emotion management, bodily weight, child rearing, smoking, drinking, and so on—all of which are seen as weakness or problems within the individual).

Through the Enlightenment and science, rationality has been enthroned as the supreme human trait. Yet Horkheimer and Adorno trace this ascendancy back to fear of the unknown. Rationality began in religion, as magicians, shamans, and priests began to organize and write doctrine; and this impetus toward safety and control accelerated as society relieved such people from the burden of daily work; spirit guides became professional. Their work systematized and provided control over rituals and capricious spirits. Eventually, God was rendered predictable through the ideas of sin and ritualized redemption; and the idea of direct cause and effect was established. Religious issues became universal, with one version of reality, one explanation of the cosmos and humankind's place in it. The hierarchy of gods and individual responses were thus replaced by instrumental reason. The same fear of uncertainty was the motive behind science as well. The technical control of the physical world promised to relieve threats from disease, hunger, and pestilence. And to one degree or another it has done that. Yet science, like religion before it, taks on myth form and refit's own method: There is only one form of knowledge, only one way of knowing that is valid.

This unstoppable engine of rationality also extends to the control of everyday life (and we can see how much we've "progressed" in this since the time of Horkheimer and Adorno). The modern life is an administered life. Every aspect is open to experts and analysis and is cut off from real social contact and dependency. People are isolated through technology, whether it's the technologies of travel (cars and planes), technologies of communication (such as phones and computers), or the technology of management (bureaucracies). People rationally manage time, space, and relationships, as well as their own self. Self-help is the prescription of the day, guided by experts of every kind. But what's lost is self-actualization—there are only remnants of a self that hasn't been administered, only small portions to self-actualize, and even those are squashed in the name of the administered life.

Originally, the Enlightenment had an element of critical thought, where the process of thinking was examined. But it soon became mechanical as the technologies that it creates; and it denies other ways of knowing and being. Horkheimer and Adorno's story of the Enlightenment is, then, "an account of how humankind, its efforts to free itself from subjugation to nature, has created new and more all-encompassing forms of domination and repression" (Alway, 1995, p. 33).

The irony and problem is that the Enlightenment was to free humankind. Yet it has created a new kind of unfreedom, a binding of the mind that prevents it from perceiving its own chains of bondage. This of course is what Marx meant when he spoke of false consciousness, but for Horkheimer and Adorno the blindness is ever more insidious. The very tools of thought that were to bring enlightenment instead bring the administered life. How is it possible to get out of this conundrum? This is precisely where critical theory comes in.

First, it's important to understand that there isn't a specific goal or program. Gone are the lofty goals of the Enlightenment and the method of reason and rationality are useless as well. In back of this negation is a caution and realization. The caution is about being derailed again by believing that we've found the way—unlike the capitalists in Marx's scheme, the philosophers of the Enlightenment may be seen as having the best of intentions. We should, then, be cautious of any simple answers. The realization is that human beings are social beings; we reflect and express the spirit of the age and the position we hold in society. Knowledge is therefore never pure.

Knowing this implies a second feature of critical theory: The way to freedom is through continual process and critical thinking, the goal of which is to unearth. In his introduction to Adorno's *Culture Industry*, Bernstein (1991) notes:

In reading Adorno, especially his writings on the culture industry, it is important to keep firmly in mind the thought that he is not attempting an objective, sociological analysis of the phenomena in question. Rather, the question of the culture industry is raised from the perspective of its relation to the possibilities for social transformation. The culture industry is to be understood from the perspective of its potentials for promoting or blocking "integral freedom." (p. 2, emphasis original)
Notice that Adorno's reading of the culture industry is not intended as a systematic, objective, sociological study. Rather, it is an act of interrogation. But it is questioning with a purpose: In Adorno's case, to assess the potentials for integral freedom that pop culture provides. The image of integral freedom calls up many images, but among the most important are that freedom must be understood with reference to the whole being of human—including social relations, economic achievement, spirituality, sensuality, aesthetics, and so on—and that its chief value is the dignity of the person. "Reason can realize its reasonableness only through reflecting on the disease of the world as produced and reproduced by man" (Horkheimer, 2004, p. 120).

Part II
The Social Situation and Its People

Chapter 3: Symbolic Interaction: Herbert Blumer
Chapter 4: Organizing Ordinary Life: Harold Garfinkel
Chapter 5: Performing the Self: Erving Goffman
Chapter 6: Social Exchanges: George Homans, Peter Blau, and Randall Collins

BUILDING YOUR THEORY TOOLBOX

Most of the chapters in this book are in dialogue with Parsons and critical theory in one way or another. In Chapters 3 and 4, we'll see Herbert Blumer and Harold Garfinkel take Parsons to task on his solution to the problem of social order. As you'll see, a good part of their disagreement comes down to one of the basic assumptions that sociological theorists have to make, the way in which society exists. However, Parsons' ideas about structure and social systems will come back to us in Chapters 7 through 10. Though different structures and systems are referenced, these concepts first gained currency through the work of Parsons. In Chapter 11, we'll take a look at Jürgen Habermas' extension of critical theory. In Chapters 13 and 14, Michel Foucault and Jean Baudrillard will introduce us to some new theoretical perspectives, poststructuralism and postmodernism, respectively. Even though they are not directly in the line of Frankfurt critical theory, you'll see glimmers of the same issues that sparked Horkheimer and Adorno. So, again, what I'd like for you to do here is to build a basic understanding of the issues and conceptual ideas we've talked about; they will help you think your way through the rest of the theories.

- Please define the following terms. Make your definitions as theoretically robust as possible (don't be afraid to consult other sources). You want these definitions to work for you throughout the book: generalized theory, theoretical synthesis, theory accumulation, the problem of social order, voluntaristic action, the unit act, values, norms, socialization, types of action, status positions, latent pattern maintenance, adaptation, goal attainment, integration, conflict theory, critical theory, administered life, unfreedom

- Please answer the following questions:
  - Explain Parsons' vision for the social sciences.
  - Describe the way in which Parsons theorized. Here I want you to write what we might think of as the ideal definition for social science.
  - Explain how Parsons solves the problem of social order. In other words, according to Parsons, how are social actions patterned across time and space?
  - Describe how and why the Frankfurt School came into existence.
  - Explain critical theory's assessment of positivistic theory.