

| | Functionalism | Conflict Perspective | Interactionist Perspective |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| View of society | Stable, well integrated | Characterized by tension and struggle between groups | Active in influencing and affecting everyday social interaction |
| Level of analysis emphasized | Macro | Macro | Micro analysis as a way of understanding the larger macro phenomena |
| View of the individual | People are socialized to perform societal functions | People are shaped by power, coercion | People manipulate symbols and created their social worlds through interaction |
| Key concepts | Manifest functions; Latent functions; Dysfunction | Inequality; Capitalism; Stratification | Symbols; Nonverbal communication; Face-to-face |
| View of the social order | Maintained through cooperation and consensus | Maintained through force and coercion | Maintained by shared understanding of everyday behavior |
| View of social change | Predictable, reinforcing | Change takes place all the time and may have positive consequences | Reflected in people's social positions and their communications with others |
| Example | Public punishments reinforce the social order | Laws reinforce the positions of those in power | People respect laws or disobey them based on their own past experience |
| Proponents | Emile Durkheim; Talcott Parsons; Robert Merton | Karl Marx; W.E.B. Du Bois; Ida Wells-Barnett | George Herbert Mead; Charles Horton Cooley; Erving Goffman |