

THEORETICAL

PERSPECTIVES





**Even if sociologists
explore common
issues, they don't all
approach them in
the same way.**

Theoretical Perspectives in Sociology

We can think of a perspective as...



a **LENS**

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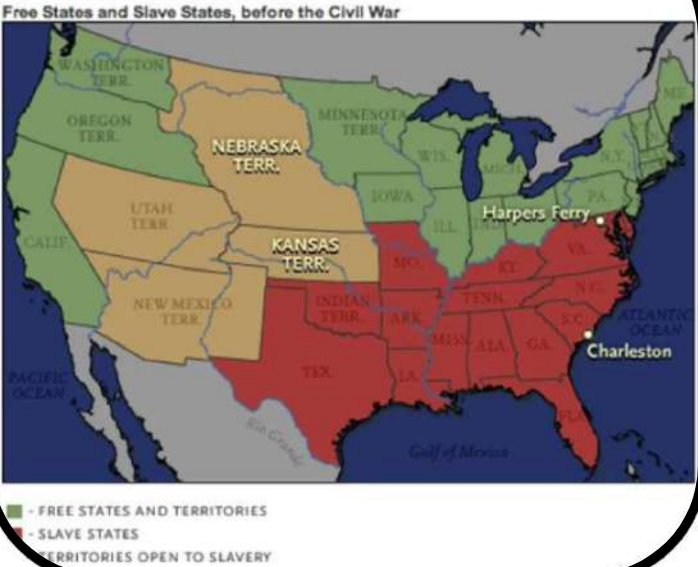
allows us to see the social world from a certain perspective, *with a particular focus.*

We can think of a perspective as...

a **MAP**



Civil War Map 1846

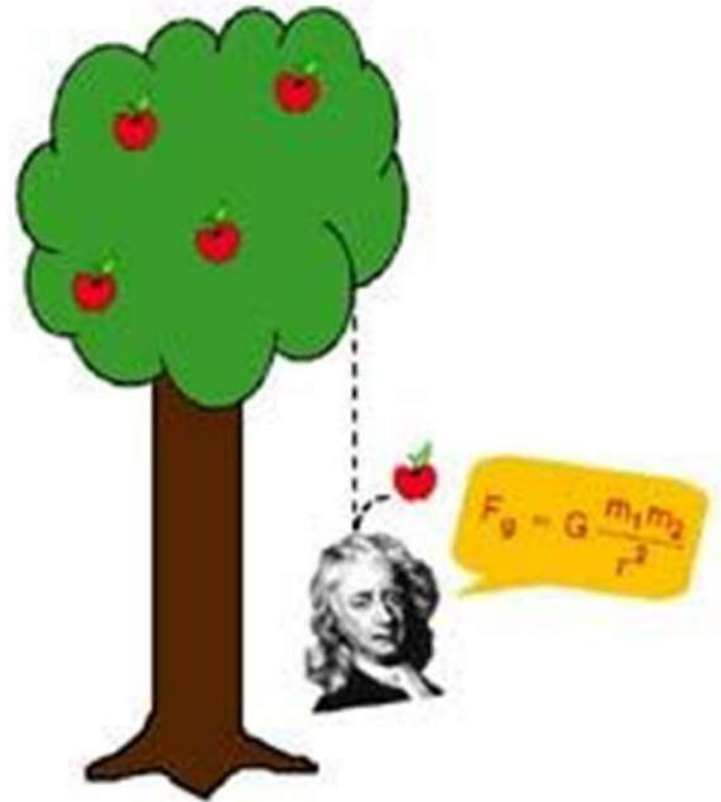


Election Results 2012



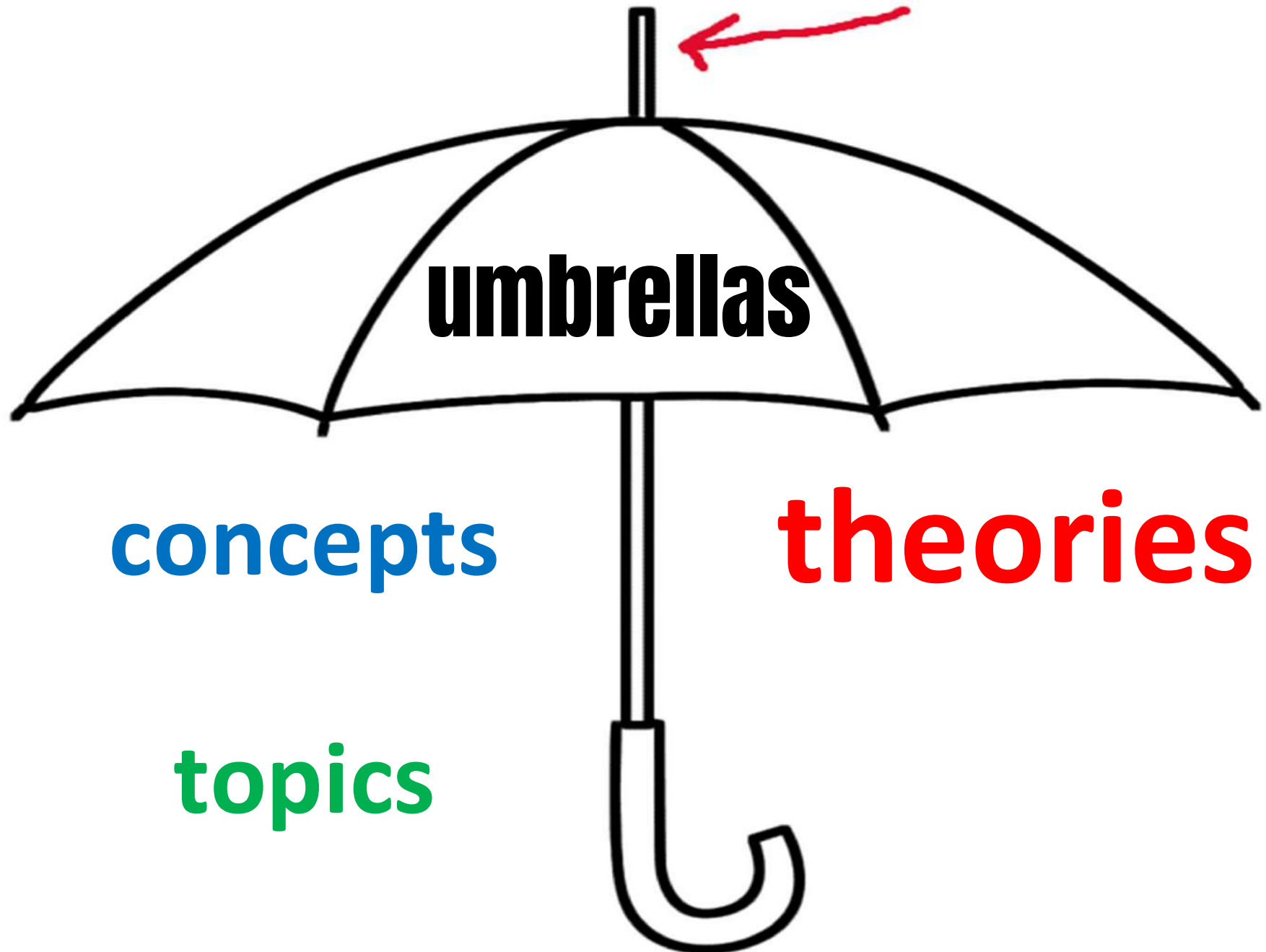
Theory is about **generalization**, relating a new situation to an old one in order to discern patterns and create explanations or predictions.

E.g., Theory of Gravity
Newton didn't invent the idea that things fall down. He offered a theory to explain why and how this happens.



Theory is different from **opinion** (a personal viewpoint) and **fact** (something we know through our senses).

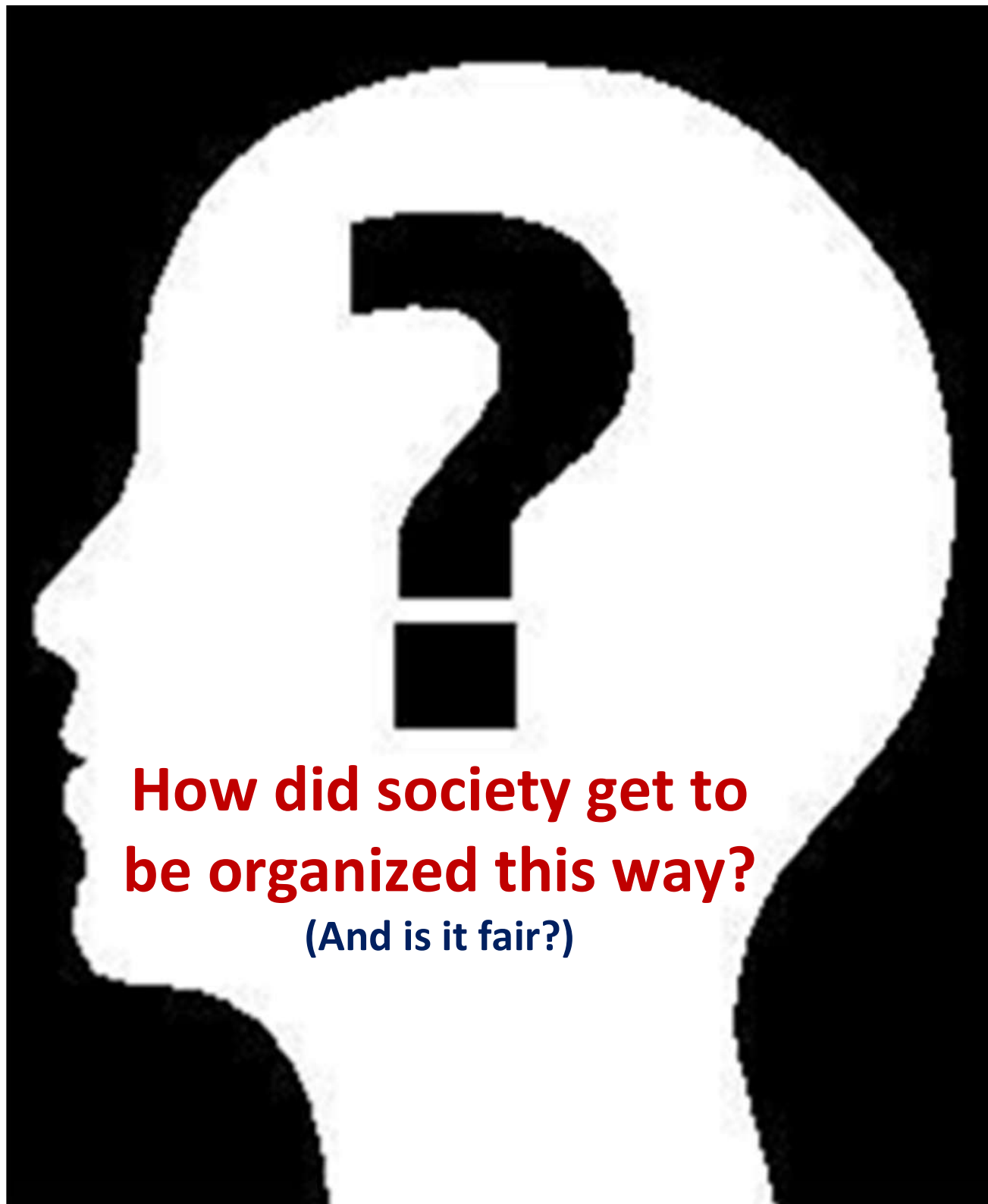
theoretical perspectives are like...



Each
**theoretical
perspective
works** with a
set of assumptions
& theories about
social life,
relating to
questions
like:

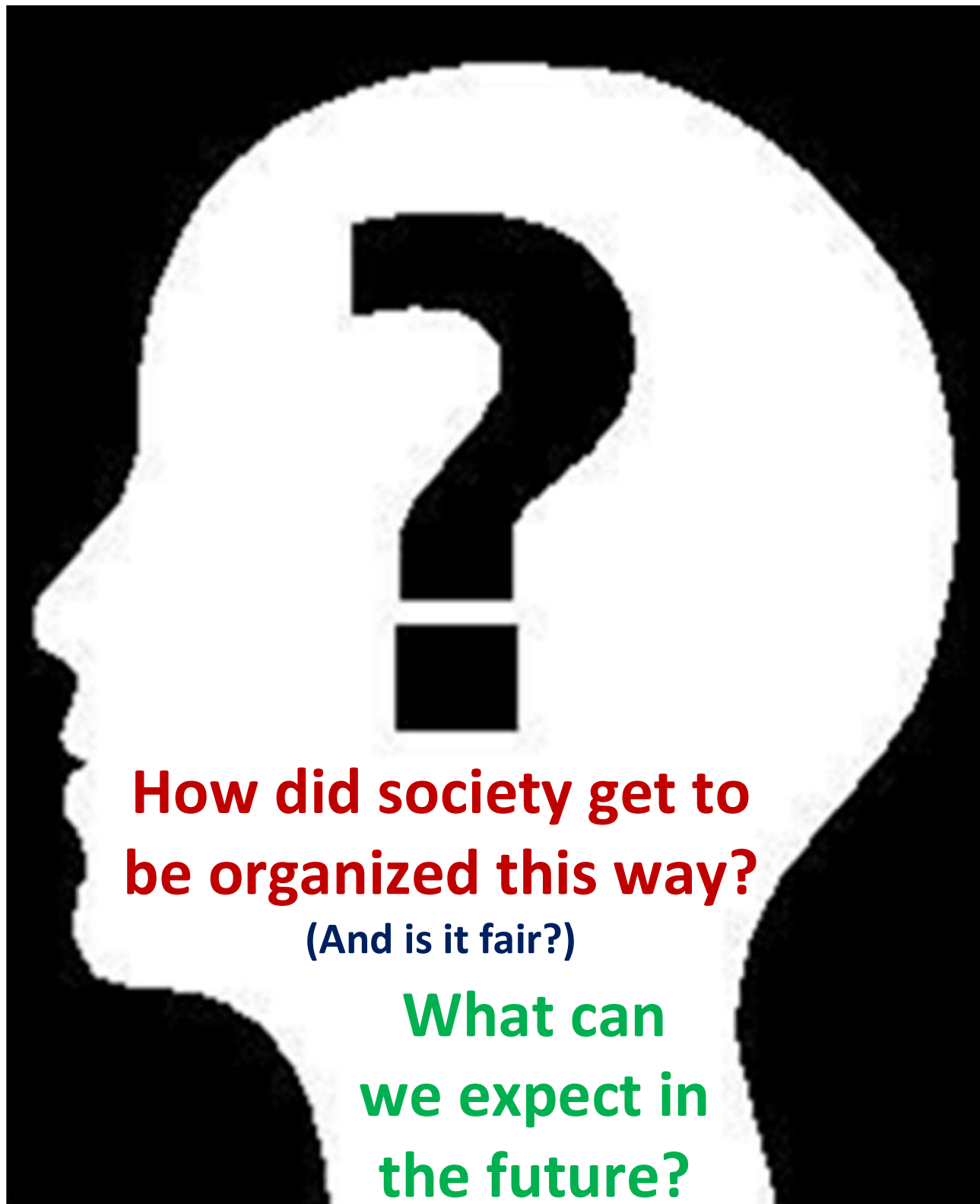


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**How did society get to
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(And is it fair?)

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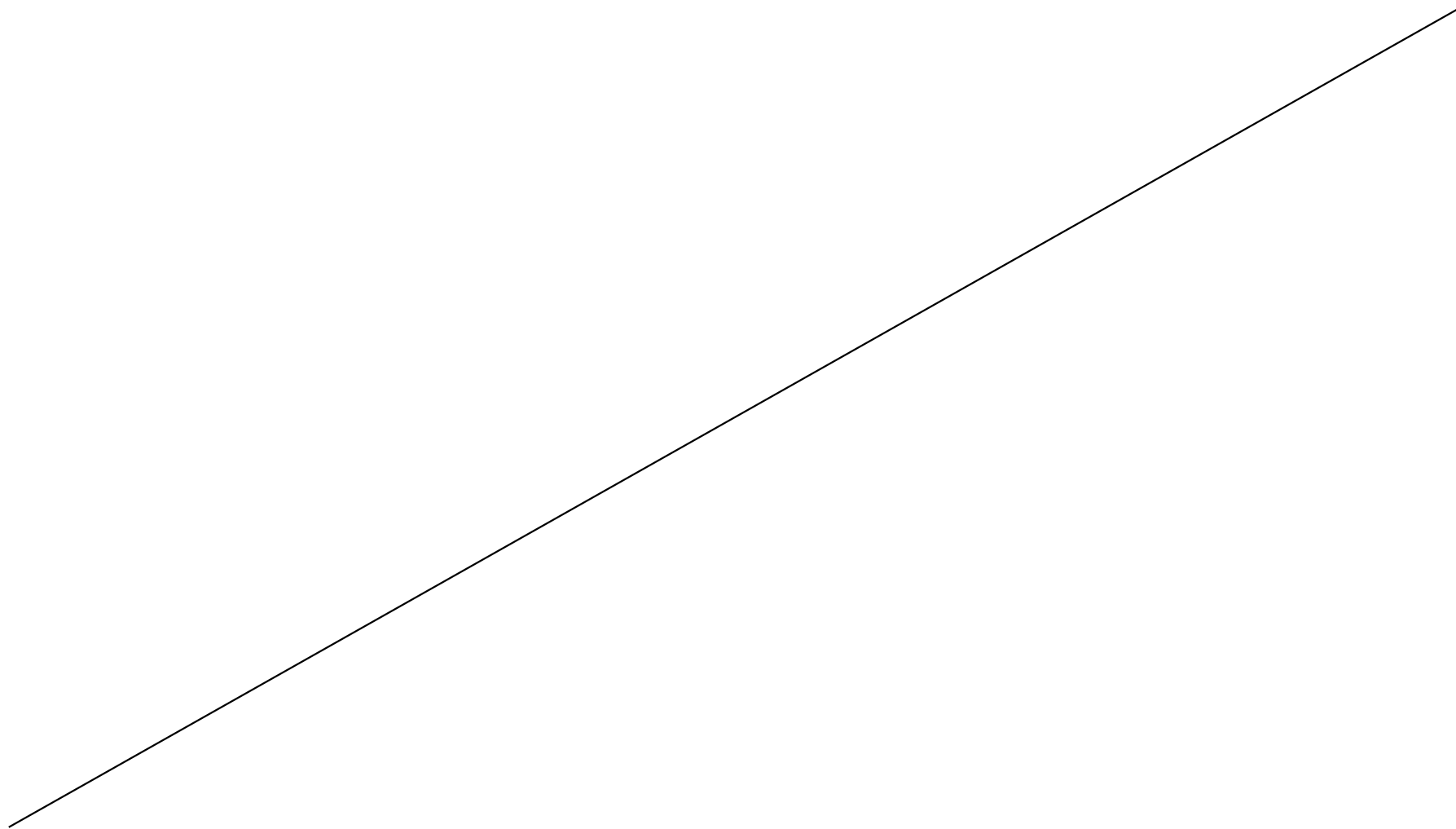
**How did society get to
be organized this way?**

(And is it fair?)

**What can
we expect in
the future?**

GROUP ACTIVITY

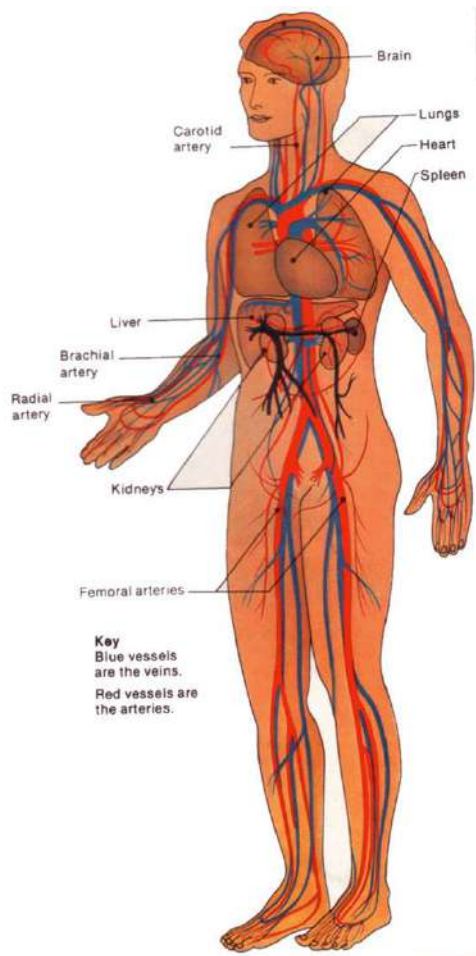
- 1) Read through the statements with your group.**
- 1) Note connections or similarities among different statements.**
- 1) Rearrange the statements into FOUR groups that you think reflect distinct theoretical perspectives.**
- 1) Give each theoretical perspective a name and a symbol. (Be creative!)**



CONFLICT THEORY



FUNCTIONALISM



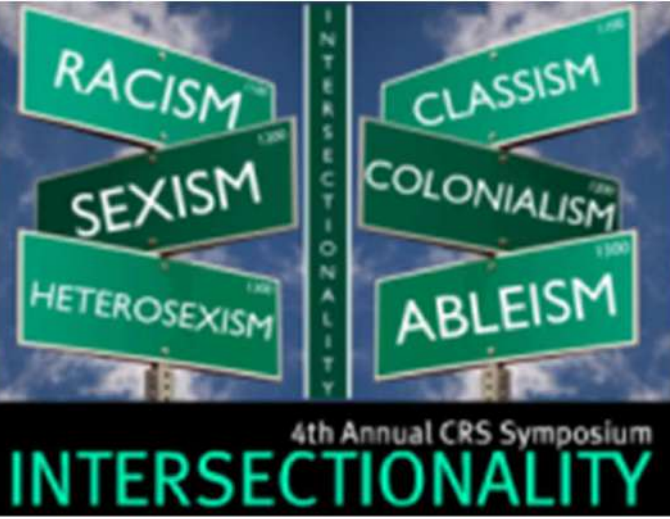
CONFLICT THEORY



SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

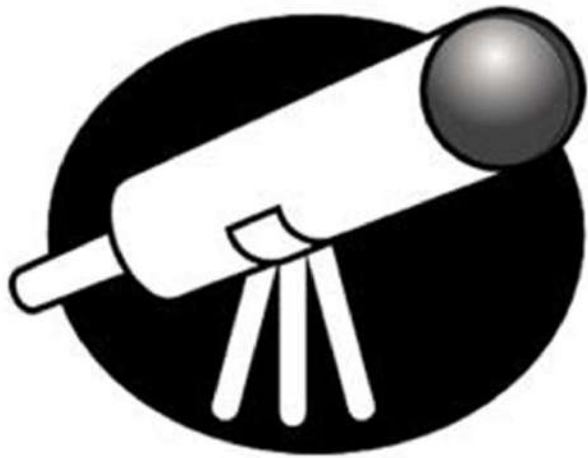


FEMINISM



SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM





Macro Perspective

Vs.



Micro Perspective

APPLYING THE PERSPECTIVES

The HTML5 Gendered Advertising Remixer

Home About LEGO Flash

Ads Targeting Boys

Ads Targeting Girls

Mashup Swap Clear

*Requires an updated web browser
Try [Chrome](#) or [Firefox](#)

INSTRUCTIONS: Drag and drop one clip from each side into the audio and video boxes. Push the green mashup button to see your remix. Hit the red clear button to start again.

1. How would each theoretical perspective approach the issue of **gendered toys**?
2. What questions might they ask? What aspect would they focus on?
3. Brainstorm ideas with your group.

for more on the

FOUR THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES



See handouts

- “Sociological Perspectives Applied to Different Issues”
- “Summary of Sociological Perspectives In-Class Activity”