

# **Soc 202    Methods**

Approaches to  
Knowledge



# Assumptions of Science

- Nature is orderly-recognizable regularity and order in natural world, events not random
- We can know nature-human like nature amenable to scientific investigation
- Knowledge is superior to ignorance- knowledge pursued for its own sake and improve human condition
- All natural phenomena have natural causes-scientific approach in opposition to religion, spiritualism and magic
- Nothing is self-evident- claims for truth must be demonstrated objectively
- Knowledge is derived from the acquisition of experience-science is empirical rely on perceptions, experience, and observations

# 1. Authoritarian Mode

- Refer to those who are socially or politically defined as qualified producers of knowledge
- Oracles in tribal societies, archbishops in theocratic societies, kings in monarchical societies and individuals occupying scientific roles in technocratic societies, devout Catholics, the pope

## 2. Mystical Mode

- Knowledge is obtained from supernaturally knowledgeable authorities such as prophets, gods
- uses rituals and ceremony
- Depends on supernatural signs and psychological state of knowledge-consumer

## 3. Rationalistic Mode

- Holds that the totality of knowledge can be acquired by strict adherence to forms and rules of logic
- What is logically possible and permissible
- Abstract logic is a normative master science
- Abstract pure mathematics-pure geometry

# Scientific Method

## Three Key Ingredients

- A driving persistent curiosity-common sense problem-solving
- Systematic observation- involves repeated, magnified examinations
- Systematic experimentation- testing different causes to determine a consequence

# Common Sense vs. Scientific Method

- Casual vs persistent curiosity
- Casual vs. systematic observations
- Casual vs. systematic experimentation
- Simple cause-effect vs. probabilistic antecedent-consequences thinking
- Atheoretical vs. theoretical thinking

# How do we know? Two Realities

- Agreement reality- those things we know as part of culture
- Experiential reality-direct personal inquiry or experience
- Tradition-firmly accepted knowledge about workings of the world,everybody knows
- Authority- person who has special training ,expertise, and credentials in a given matter

# Errors in Personal Human Inquiry

- Inaccurate observation-mistakes due to casual,semiconscious observations
- Overgeneralization-few similar events evidence of general pattern-replication-repeating a study helps
- Selective observation-focus on future events ,situations that fit pattern,ignore those that do not
- Illogical reasoning-brush a way contradictions with stroke of illogic

# Answer True or False then say why it is True or false

- Given the strains between their role as mother and employee, working mothers experience more mental illness than nonworking mothers
- Most poor people prefer to live off government welfare

