Social Conflict Theory Essay, Research Paper

The social conflict paradigm is a theory based on society being a complex system characterized by inequality and conflict that generate social change. Personal life experiences dictate me to believe this theory is true. Discussion of the theory in question and how it pertains to myself will be covered in the paper. Social conflict can be seen all over the world we live in: in sports, politics and normal social engagements. The main point I have experienced with this theory would be the fact that I don?t come from a rich, powerful, and prestigious family, which in turn limits my chances of being successful. Karl Marx studied social conflict His entire life and wanted to reduce social inequality. Wheatley-2 The social conflict theory can be described as favoritism. Society tends to show favoritism to the prestigious members of that particular society. Social inequality is shown throughout the world from situations of race, ethnicity, gender, and age. These factors may dictate wealth, schooling, power, and prestige. The social conflict paradigm views the patterns that benefit some people more than it would others, due to their social standings. Karl Marx was a sociologist who embraced the social conflict paradigm. Marx made his main goal to not just understand society but to reduce social inequality. Karl Marx devoted his life to explaining a contradiction in society. That contradiction was ?How in a society so rich, so many could be poor.? Marx makes a good point here: If America is supposed to be a rich country and a free country where the streets are paved with gold and opportunity is knocking around every corner, then why is it that there are so Wheatley-3 Many poor people in America? The answer is social conflict. America does not provide the same opportunities to people from a poor family as they do with people who come from a rich and prestigious family. Two people with the same academic backgrounds and qualifications may apply for a job; however, one comes from a poor family and the other from a well-known rich family. Through the social conflict that exists in the world the person from the rich family has a much grater chance of receiving the job than does the person from the poor family. The same can be said of a person of color and a white person. The typical African-American family earns about 54% of the income of the average white family. Why is this? African-Americans are offered the same public schooling as whites, but are looked at in a different way. The majority of blacks are not given the same Wheatley-4 opportunities as whites partially due to the fact that they are fighting an uphill battle. Just like coming from a poor family a colored person would lose out in a battle over a job to a white person more often than not. Thus the social conflict theory is proven by the way society runs. Social conflict has affected myself in the way that since I do not come from a rich family background I need to work much harder to achieve my goals than I would if I did come from a rich background. My eyes see social conflict when I hear about people from rich backgrounds that don?t have to work while in school, which frees up more time and makes it easier to concentrate on grades. This can lead to a more prestigious college, which then leads to a more prestigious job. I don?t have this advantage so I have to work my way thorough school. This disadvantage leads to less time to put into work, which means lower grades. My situation of managing to work forty hours a Wheatley-5 week and taking full time classes is tough; whereas if I was from a powerful family I would not have to deal with the burden of working and would be able to concentrate on my studies more. Social conflict also tells me that I am better off than others who aren?t even able to attend college due to their backgrounds. A lot of people upon leaving high school have to jump in the work force right away and support their families. This makes it hard to change their social stratification and provide a better situation for their children. Social conflict puts myself in a less fortunate position than others. My parents come from a middle class family, which puts me at a greater chance of being a middle class blue-collar worker. I am divided from the prestigious and am put in a position where I have to work twice as hard to accomplish a goal. Social conflict is division based on social inequality and I am divided from the rich Wheatley-6 and powerful because of my background. There is not a question whether I can achieve my goals or not because I do have the opportunity; however, as I stated before I am at a disadvantage of accomplishment due to my social ranking. Social stratification is the result of social conflict. Social conflict theory states that money is more important than life itself. Many rich people have obtained their affluent way of life by exploiting the earth and the poor in the less-developed countries, poisoning the air and water in the process. This sends out the message that money is the most important in possession in life, more important than the air we breath. Social conflict does not give the same advantages to all and creates the social barriers. I am lucky enough to be in the position where I am able to attend college and not have to join the work force right away. I am in the work force, due to my social class I have to be but by taking classes I can improve my standing Wheatley-7 in society and earn more money than I do now and live a better lifestyle. Social conflict has put me in a better position than most because I?m not looked down upon because of my race and I?m not at the bottom of the economic scale I have the chance to rise to the top. The social conflict paradigm state that if you are at the very bottom chances are you are not going to rise above that an neither are your children and grandchildren and so on. I?ve been shown a new insight in the fact that I want to prove the Marxist or social conflict theory wrong and become prestigious myself and not just settle for a working class position. The social conflict theory is seen everywhere everyday. The struggle to achieve despite the hand you?re dealt at birth is part of everyday life. Sports teams draft second generation players because of their family backgrounds as opposed to another player with the same ability. Politicians are voted into office due largely Wheatley-8 in part to their economic stature. A poor person wouldn?t win an election would they? Not without the deception of the public leading them to believe they were a rich individual. There is no escaping social conflict it is everywhere and will continue to be a part of society forever. Maybe one day Karl Marx?s dream will come true to have society be on an equal playing field but do not look for that to happen in our lifetimes. Discrimination is a big part of society today and discrimination and favoritism is what social conflict is all about. Discriminating against a person because of their background as opposed to a person with a wealthier background happens all the time and social conflict is the reason for it.