Sociologists use **THREE MAJOR THEORIES:**

- **Symbolic Interactionism:** analyzes how social life depends on the ways we define others and ourselves.
  - *by the 1930s marriage was more about personality and loveable compassion. divorce went from about failure to freedom and new beginnings.*
  - Symbolic Interactionism looked at how changing ideas put pressure on married couples.

- **Functional Analysis:** society is a functioning unit, each part related to the whole.
  - *divorce rate in the US is high*
  - when family loses functions, it becomes more fragile, making an increase in divorce inevitable.

- **Conflict Theory:** provides a third perspective on social life:
  - society is composed of groups that are competing with one another for scarce resources.
  - *to explain the high US divorce rate, they look at how men and women’s relationships have changed.*
  - since women have gained more power and new roles, the divorce rate has gone up.

- **Macro:** looking at a big picture
- **Micro:** looking at a small, detailed portion - social interaction