**functionalism notes:**

The Scientific perspective is focused on cause and effect, which is a dependent relationship that takes away from free will. Positivism searches for that cause. The idea of cause and effect became prevalent due to Darwin, Lombroso, and Durkheim, who studied Biology and Evolution, Social Darwinism, and sociology, respectively. These are the forms of the 3 basic causal behavior explanations, being biological, environmental, and social.

Out of the positivism came the perspective of functionalism. The most basic concept of functionalism is that it explains structure, the biggest structure being society. Society can produce many things, including crime, and different societies produce different crimes. Crime is directly produced from structural conditions assisted by micro elements. These Micro elements create macro structure which causes crime. As our knowledge grows, so too does structure. Society produces many things, including deviance. But deviance causes society to detect a problem in its structure which is then fixed to maintain functionality. Sometimes boundaries have to be crossed in allow the structure of society to adapt.

Another basic way to look at society through functionalism is that idea that society is goal directed, and it informs its members how to behave in order to reproduce society.

The functionalist perspective on deviance emphasizes the positive contributions deviance has on social structure. Something is functional when it has positive consequences for society, and dysfunctional when it has negative consequences. Deviance is functional and constructive because it helps to reinforce the existing social order.

**Durkheim and Merton and functionalism:**

Durkheim was one of the main contributors to functionalism. In order to understand his contributions, an understanding of his life is necessary. Durkheim was born and raised in a very traditional Jewish family and community. Society in his community was simple and religious. When he began pursuing his studies, he became integrated into the complex and secular French society associated with the schools. Therefore, when he saw French society, as a whole, changing from traditional to modern, simple to complex, religious to secular, he was aware of the potential dangers. This change was a cause of the industrial revolution, and caused disintegration of norms. This moral crisis allowed him to realize that sociology was about looking for scientific solutions to social disruptions that could not be fixed with religion. He tried to identify the normal parts of functioning society, as well as restoration for disintegration of norms. He believed that society could have too strong or weak of norms, causing an inability to adapt or loosely defined boundaries, both of which would be considered pathological societies.

Durkheim described the change from traditional to secular society as a change from mechanical to organic solidarity and the period in between was disintegration. Mechanical is characteristic of a loss of individuality in replace for collective oneness, one set of norms governs all of society. Organic is characteristic of many different sets of norms and individuality. Mechanical saw rural communities guided by religion whereas organic saw secular individuals guided by wealth. But mechanical solidarity disappeared faster than organic appeared, and therefore created a period of disintegration.

Durkheim’s functionalist perspective on deviance states that deviance is necessary, needed for the existence of society, and universal, present in all societies. Adherence to this two criteria mean that thing was normal in society. He states that deviance contributes to society in several ways by setting boundaries, bringing society together, causing society to adapt, tension reduction. He also makes a distinction between latent and manifest functions. Manifest functions are intended consequences of something, and latent functions are unintended consequences of something.