Addis Ababa University
Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology

Introduction to Sociology Handout

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Addis Ababa University
Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology
Introduction to Sociology Course Outline

Course Description

The course introduces students with the subject matter of Sociology by first briefly covering some of the ideas of the classical sociological thinkers and the major sociological theories and then goes on to provide discussions on various sociological concepts (social values, social norms, culture), basic elements of social life (groups, institutions, society), social processes (stratification, social class) and social change.

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1 THE DISCIPLINE OF SOCIOLOGY

1.1 Sociology Defined

Sociology is the study of human social life. Because human social life is so expansive, sociology has many sub-fields. This chapter will introduce you to sociology and explain why it is important, how it can change your perspective of the world around you, and give a brief history of the discipline.

Sociology is a social science concerned with the systematic study of human social relationships and the various ways these relationships are patterned in terms of social groups, organizations and societies.

1.2 Sociology and other social sciences

Since our focus is sociology, let us compare sociology with each of the other social sciences.

Political Science

Political science focuses on politics and government. Political scientists study how People govern themselves: the various forms of government, their structures, and their relationships to other institutions of society. Political scientists are especially interested in how people attain ruling positions in their society, how they then maintain those positions, and the consequences of their activities for those who are governed. In studying a system of government with a constitutional electorate, such as that of Canada, political scientists also focus on voting behaviour.

Economics

Economics also concentrates on a single social institution. Economists study the production and distribution of the material goods and services of a society. They want to know what goods are being produced at what rate and at what cost, and how those goods are distributed. They are also interested in the choices that determine production and consumption-for example, the factors that lead a society to produce one certain item instead of another.

Anthropology

Anthropology, in which the primary focus has been on pre literate or tribal peoples, is the sister discipline of sociology. The chief concern of anthropologists is to understand culture-a people's total way of life. Culture includes (1) the

group's artefact such as its tools, art, add weapons; (2) the group's structure, that is, the hierarchy and other patterns that determine its members' relationships to one another; (3) the group's ideas and values, especially how its belief system affects people's lives; and (4) the group's forms of communication, especially language. The anthropologists' traditional focus on tribal groups is now giving way to the study of groups in industrialized settings.

Psychology

The focus of psychology is on processes that occur with in the individual, within the "skin-bound organism." Psychologists are primarily concerned with mental processes: intelligence, emotions, perception, and memory. Some concentrate on attitudes and values; others focus on personality, on mental 'aberration (psychopathology, or mental illness), or on how individuals cope with the problems they face.

Sociology

Sociology has many similarities to the other social sciences. Like political scientists, sociologists study how people govern one another, especially the impact of various forms of government on people's lives. Like economists, sociologists are concerned with what happens to the goods and services of a society; however, sociologists focus on the social consequences of production and distribution. Like anthropologists, sociologists study culture; they have a particular interest in the social consequences of material goods, group structure, and belief systems, as well as in how people communicate with one another. Like psychologists, sociologists are also concerned with how people adjust to the difficulties of life.

Given these overall similarities, then, what distinguishes sociology from the other social sciences? Unlike political scientists and economists, sociologists do not concentrate on a single social institution. Unlike anthropologists, sociologists focus primarily on industrialized societies. And unlike psychologists, sociologists stress factors external to the individual to determine what influences.

1.3 The sociological perspective: What is it?

1.3.1 Seeing the general in the particular

Peter Berger (1963) characterized the sociological perspective as seeing the general in the particular. He meant that sociologists identify general patterns of social life in the behaviour of particular individuals. While acknowledging that each individual is unique, in other words, sociologists recognize that society acts

differently on various categories of people (say, children compared to adults, women versus men, the rich as opposed to the poor). We begin to think sociologically as we start to realize how the general categories into which we happen to fall shape our particular life experiences.

1.3.2 Seeing the strange in the familiar

Especially at the beginning, using the sociological perspective amounts to seeing the strange in the familiar. As Peter Berger (1963: 34) says in his Invitation to Sociology, 'the first wisdom of sociology is this: things are not what they seem'. For instance, observing sociologically requires giving up the familiar idea that human behavior is simply a matter of what people decide to do and accepting instead the initially strange notion that society guides our thoughts and deeds.

1.3.3 Individuality in social context

The sociological perspective often challenges common sense by revealing that human behavior is not as individualistic as we may think. For most of us, daily living carries a heavy load of personal responsibility, so that we pat ourselves on the back when we enjoy success and kick ourselves when things go wrong. Proud of our individuality, even in painful times, we resist the idea that we act in socially patterned ways.

Since nothing seems a more personal 'choice' than the decision to take one's own life, perhaps the most compelling demonstration of how social forces affect human behavior is the study of suicide. This is why Emile Durkheim (1858-1917), a pioneer of sociology writing a century ago chose suicide as a topic of research. If he could show that an intensely individual act like suicide was socially shaped, then he would have made a strong case for sociology. And he did! He was able to demonstrate that social forces figure in the apparently isolated act of self-destruction.

1.4 Benefits of the sociological perspective

As we learn to use the sociological perspective, we readily apply it to our daily lives. Doing so provides four general benefits.

A. *The sociological perspective becomes a way of thinking a 'form of consciousness' that challenges familiar understandings of ourselves and of others,* so *that we can critically assess the truth of commonly assumptions.*

B. *The sociological perspective enables* us *to assess both opportunities and the constraints that characterize lives.* Sociological thinking leads us to see that, better or worse, our society operates in a particular way. It helps us to see the pattern and order found in all societies. Moreover, in the game of we may decide how to play our cards, but it is society that deals us the hand. The more we understand the game, then, the more effective players we will be. Sociology helps us to

understand what we are likely and unlikely to accomplish for ourselves and how we can pursue our goals most effectively.

C. *The sociological perspective empowers us to be active participants in our society.* Without an awareness of how society operates, we are likely to accept the status quo. We might just think that this is how all societies are, or how all people behave 'naturally'. But the greater our understanding of the operation of society, the more we can take an active part in shaping social life.

D. The sociological perspective helps us to recognize human differences and human suffering and to confront the challenges of living in a diverse world.

1.5 Micro and Macro Sociology

A major difference between the various sociological schools/theories is their level of analysis. Many sociologists work with individual units of analysis; others work with very small groups and focus on the patterns of face to face interaction between humans. This part of sociology is known as **micro sociology** as in small. Micro sociologists use close-up lenses. The **micro** level analysts tend to focus on social interaction or what people do when they are in each others presence (Small scale patterns of society).

There is also another group which concentrates on larger units of analysis. From their point of view the individual is one small dot among many dots that help form a larger picture. This approach is known as **macro sociology**. The **macro** level analysts examine the large scale patterns of society. Macro sociologists pursue questions about aggregate units of analysis such as why is the rate of HIV transmission/suicide higher in some countries than others.

2 THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIOLOGY: A HISTORICAL REVIEW

2.1 Early Origins and Development

Just how did sociology begin? Has it always been there? Or is it relatively new?

Even before BC Greeks and Romans have developed intricate systems of philosophy about human behavior. Although through all ages people have known of society, sociology is a young discipline. It was only in 1838 that the French thinker **Auguste Comte (1798-1857)** coined the term **sociology** from a

Latin word *socius* (the social) and a Greek word Logus (reasoning) thus reasoning about the social to describe a new way of looking at society.

Why did it emerge in the 19th century? Sociology owes its birth to the social currents of the 19th century (such as the French revolution, American civil war, industrial revolution). When society crumbled beneath their feet the social scientists of the period started focusing on the current society.

Factors That Contributed To the Development of Sociology in the 19th Century:

1. Industrial Revolution: by the 19th century Europe found itself in the industrial revolution. This change from agriculture to factory production brought violent changes in peoples life .Masses of people were forced off the land. They moved to the cities in search of work where they were met with anonymity, crowding, filth and poverty. Their ties to the land and to way of life associated with it were abruptly broken. The city greeted them with horrible working conditions: low pay; long exhausting hours; dangerous work; bad ventilation and much noise. To survive, families had to permit their children to work in this same condition. The social relations in the new urban centers were extremely different from those in the rural pre industrial setting. Thus people started asking questions about society.

2. Social Problems: The results of the above change were of an immense social consequence. Not only were cities full of strangers, the tremendous influx of people simply overwhelmed the city's capacity to absorb them. Widespread social problems-including pollution, crime, and inadequate housing were the order of the day. These were the kind of social crisis that stimulated the development of sociology.

3. Political Changes and Upheavals: with the success of the American and French revolutions, in which the idea that individuals possess inalienable rights caught fire, the political systems in western countries slowly began to give way to more democratic forms. The impact of these political revolutions on many societies was enormous, and many positive changes resulted. However there were negative consequences and they attracted the attention of the then thinkers.

4. Religious change/Secularization: Social changes brought about political revolutions, industrial revolution, and urbanization had a profound effect on religiosity. As the traditional order was challenged, religion lost much of its force as the unfailing source of answer to life's questions.

5. Exposure to new cultures: The Europeans had been successful in conquering many parts of the world. Their new empires stretching from Asia through Africa to North America exposed them to radically different cultures. Startled by this contrasting ways they began to ask why cultures differed.

6. The Development of physical/natural sciences: the 19th century was a period of scientific evolution. Just at the time when the industrial revolution and imperialism moved people to question fundamental aspects of their social worlds, the **scientific method** –objective systematic observations to test theories- used in chemistry and physics had began to transform the world. Given these successes, it seemed logical to apply this method to the question being raised about the social world. Thinkers of the day started using the method of the natural sciences.

2.2 Founders of Sociology

2.2.1 Augute Comte (1798-1857)

Comte's aim was to create a naturalistic science of society which would both explain the past development of mankind and predict its future course.

Auguste Comte

Auguste Comte's positive philosophy (positivism) abandoned speculation about the nature of reality in favor of scientific investigation. According to Comte, knowledge of all subjects, from astronomy to sociology, should come from the correlation of evidence gathered from investigation and observation. This materialistic approach helped to lay the foundations for modern sociology, which Comte first called social physics.

Auguste Comte (1798-1857) is commonly credited with having coined the name "sociology" to describe the study of society. His main focus was the improvement of society. If we are to improve society, Comte reasoned, we need a special science to establish the laws of social life. On the basis of these laws, we could then prescribe cures for societal ills: Since he believed that science is the foundation of all knowledge, Comte emphasized that the study of society must be scientific. So he urged sociologists to use **systematic observation, experimentation, and comparative-historical analysis** as methods.

Comte divided the study of society into social **statics** and social **dynamics**. Social statics involves those aspects of social life that have to do with **order and stability** and that allow societies to hold together and endure. Social dynamics refers to those aspects of social life that have to do with **social change and institutional development**.

Furthermore, Comte argued for an understanding of society he labeled *The Law of Three Stages*. Comte, not unlike other enlightenment thinkers, believed society developed in stages.

- The first was the **theological stage** where people took a religious view of society.
- The second was the **metaphysical stage** where people understood society as natural (not supernatural).
- Comte's final stage was the scientific or **positivist stage**, which he believed to be the pinnacle of social development. In the scientific stage, society would be governed by reliable knowledge and would be understood in light of the knowledge produced by science, primarily sociology.

Although the specifics of his work no longer govern contemporary sociology, Comte exerted enormous influence on the thinking of other sociologists, particularly Harriet Martineau, Herbert Spencer, and Emile Durkheim.

2.2.2 Herbert Spencer (1820 – 1903)

Herbert Spencer was one of the founders of sociology and a proponent of evolutionarism. He too believed that society operates according to fixed laws. However, his first and foremost concern was with evolutionary changes in social structure and social institutions.

He defines evolution as "*a change from a state of relatively indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a state of relatively definite, coherent heterogeneity*". The basic themes in his work will be discussed below.

Growth Structure and differentiation

Both organic and social aggregates are characterized by Spencer according to progressive increase in size "just like living organisms begin as germs societies start from extremely small masses." Growth may come either through an increase in population-by simple multiplication of units or from the joining of previously unrelated units-union of groups, and again union of groups of groups. Increase in size is accompanied by an increase in the complexity of their structures. The process of growth is a process of integration. And integration must be accompanied by differentiation if the organism or societal unit is to be viable.

Militant and Industrial Societies

Spencer classified societies in terms of their evolutionary stage as simple compound doubly compound and trebly compound based on their degree of structural complexity.

He also classified societies as militant and industrial based on the type of internal regulation within the societies.

Table 1: The Contrast between Militant and Industrial Societies

THE CONTRAST BETWEEN MILITANT AND INDUSTRIAL SOCIETIES*

Characteristic	*Militant Society*	*Industrial Society*
Dominant function or activity	Corporate defensive and offensive activity for preservation and aggrandizement	Peaceful, mutual rendering of individual services
Principle of social coordination	Compulsory cooperation; regimentation by enforcement of orders; both positive and negative regulation of activity	Voluntary cooperation; regulation by contract and principles of justice; only negative regulation of activity
Relations between state and individual	Individuals exist for benefit of state; restraints on liberty, property, and mobility	State exists for benefit of individuals; freedom; few restraints on property and mobility
Relations between state and other organizations	All organizations public; private organizations excluded	Private organizations encouraged
Structure of state	Centralized	Decentralized
Structure of social stratification	Fixity of rank, occupation, and locality; inheritance of positions	Plasticity and openness of rank, occupation, and locality; movement between positions
Type of economic activity	Economic autonomy and self-sufficiency; little external trade; protectionism	Loss of economic autonomy; interdependence via peaceful trade; free trade
Valued social and personal characteristics	Patriotism; courage; reverence; loyalty; obedience; faith in authority; discipline	Independence; respect for others; resistance to coercion; individual initiative; truthfulness; kindness

The main characteristic of militant societies is compulsion, forced cooperation. Where as, in industrial societies cooperation is voluntary.

Organic Analogy

Spencer established the basis of functionalism which draws the organic analogy which compares society with an organism. He believed that society like an organism has various interdependent parts which work to insure the stability and survival of the entire society.

Non Intervention and survival of the fittest

As we saw above Spencer was convinced that societies evolve from lower to higher forms .As generation passes , he said the most capable and intelligent (the fittest) member of society survive, while the less capable die out. He called this principle "survival of the fittest". Because of the similarities Spencer's view became known as *Social Darwinism.*

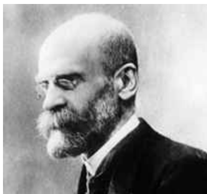
Since the survival of the fittest would produce an improved society, he was against any intervention that would help the unfit survive. According to Spencer, societies develop through a process of struggle (for existence) and fitness (for survival), which he referred to as the survival of the fittest. Because this phrases is often attributed to Darwin, Spencer's view of society is known as social Darwinism-the believe that those species of animals, including hb , best adopt to their environment survive and prosper while those poorly adopted die out. He equated this process of natural selection with progress, because only the fittest members of society succeed. As a result of these ideas he strongly opposed attempts at social reform that might interfere with the natural selection process and thus damage society by favoring its least worthy members.

Although Spencer contributed many useful concepts and terms many of his ideas had serious flaws. For one thing societies are not the same as biological systems; people are able to create and transform the environment they live in. More over, the notion of survival of the fittest easily can be used to justify class, racial-ethnic, and gender inequalities and to rationalize the lack of action to eliminate harmful practices that contribute to such inequalities.

2.2.3 Emile Durkheim

Durkheim is one of the classical sociologists whose is impact is both multidirectional and durable. Although he accepted the ways of the positivists he was not satisfied because he thought their analysis is limited to ideologies. Durkheim's sociology revolved around the following three topics.

Emile Durkheim



Emile Durkheim, one of the fathers of sociology, utilized scientific methods to approach the study of society and social groups. Durkheim believed that individuals are products of complex social forces and cannot be considered outside of the context of the society in which they live. He used the conception of the collective conscience to describe the condition of a particular society. According to Durkheim, this collective conscience is something entirely separate from the individual consciences that together form it. He studied various aspects of this conscience in his books. In Suicide, Durkheim studied the reasons why individuals commit suicide and how the rate of such suicides indicates whether or not there are problems in the society in question.

Social facts

According to Durkheim a social fact is every way of acting fixed or not, capable of exercising on the individual an external constraint or which is general

throughout society and existing in its own right independent of its individual manifestations. To Durkheim, thus social facts include such phenomena as the belief system, customs and institutions of society- the facts of the social world. He argued that sociologists should confine themselves to the study of social facts and that social facts should be considered as things. (As objects & events in the natural world)
They exist over and above individual consciousness. Members of a society are directed by collective beliefs values and laws which have an existence of their own.

Solidarity and the Division of Labor in Society
In the book *Division of Labor in Society,* he based his analysis on his conception of two ideal types of society. The more primitive type characterized by **mechanical solidarity**, has a relatively undifferentiated social structure, with little or no division of labor. The more modern type, characterized by **organic solidarity**, has a much greater and more refined division of labor. He defined Division of labor as a social fact which involves the degree to which tasks or responsibilities are specialized.
As we saw above the change in division of labor has important implications on the type of solidarity. In addressing the issue of solidarity, Durkheim was concerned in what holds society together or social solidarity.

Mechanical Solidarity

- Unified because all people are generalists. People are all engaged in similar activities.
- Greater likelihood of competition among people
- Peoples focus of attention is similar/limited

Organic Solidarity

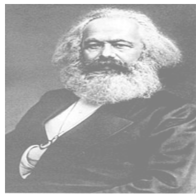
- Held together by the specialization of people and their need for the services of many others
- Differentiation allows people to cooperate more and be supported by the same resource base.
- Peoples focus of attention is multiple

Suicide and Social Currents
Durkheim chose to study suicide because it is a relatively concrete phenomenon; there were relatively good data available on suicide. He was not concerned with why any specific individual committed suicide instead he was concerned with why one group had a higher rate of suicide than another. His study his study demonstrates that human behavior, although it may seem very individual can be understood only by studying the social context in which the behavior takes place. After looking at numerous statistics on different countries Durkheim

concluded that suicide was a social phenomenon, related to the individuals involvement in group life and the extent to which he or she is part of some cohesive social unit.

2.2.4 Karl Marx (1818-1883)

Marxist theory became increasingly influential in sociology during the 1970s. The following account is a simplified version of Marxist theory. Marx's extensive writings have been variously interpreted and, since his death, several schools of Marxism have developed.



Karl Heinrich Marx was an immensely influential German philosopher, political economist, and revolutionary. While Marx addressed a wide range of issues, he is most famous for his analysis of history in terms of class struggles, summed up in the opening line of the introduction to the *Communist Manifesto*: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles." Marx believed that the downfall of capitalism was inevitable, and that it would be replaced by communism

German economist and philosopher Karl Marx (1818-1883) often is regarded as one of the most profound sociological thinkers; his theories combine ideas derived from philosophy, history, and the social sciences. Central to his view was the belief that society should not just be studied but should also be changed, because the status quo (the existing state of society) was resulting in the oppression of most of the population by a small group of wealthy people.

In sharp contrast to Durkheim's focus on the stability of society, Marx stressed that history is a continuous clash between conflicting ideas and forces. He believed that conflict-especially class conflict-is necessary in order to produce social and a better society. For Marx, the most important changes were economic. He concluded that the capitalist economic system was responsible for the overwhelming poverty that he observed in London at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution (Marx and Engels, 1967/1848).

In the Marxian framework, class conflict is the struggle between the capitalist class and the working class. The capitalist class, or bourgeoisie, is comprised of those who own and control the means of production. Means of production refers to the tools, land, factories, and money for investment that form the economic basis of a society. The working class, or proletariat, is composed of those who must sell their labour because they have no other means to earn a livelihood. From Marx's viewpoint, the capitalist class controls and exploits the masses of struggling workers by paying less than the value of their labour. This exploitation results in workers' **alienation**-a feeling of powerlessness and

estrangement from other people and from oneself. Marx predicted that the working class would become aware of its exploitation, overthrow the capitalists, and establish a free and classless society, as discussed in Chapter 8 ("Social Stratification and Class").

2.2.5 Max Weber

Max Weber (1864-1920) defined sociology **as "the science which aims at interpretative understanding (in German, Verstehen) of social behavior in order to gain an explanation of its causes, its course, and its effects."** To Weber, this Verstehen can be achieved only by discovering the subjective meanings that individuals give to their own behavior and to the behavior of others.

Weber's work is often said to be a running debate with the ghost of Karl Marx.. In order to refute Marx, who argues that all social life, including what people think and believe, ultimately depends on the conditions of economic production Weber tried to prove that cultural ideas and social structures influence each other and that social life, including economic processes, ultimately depends on what people think and believe. In his most famous work, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (1905), Weber argued that the Calvinist emphasis on hard work and self denial influenced the development of attitudes and practices favorable to a capitalist economy.

Max Weber
Max Weber, a German economist and sociologist, is considered one of the founders of modern sociological thought. In *The Protestant Work Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism,* his most famous work, Weber explored the influence of ethics and religion on the development of capitalism.

2.2.5.1 Social Action

His typology of the four types of social action is central to comprehending his sociology.

Weber differentiated between several types of social actions:

1. **Rational actions (also known as value-rational ones):** actions which are taken because it leads to a valued goal, but with no thought of its consequences

and often without consideration of the appropriateness of the means chosen to achieve it;

2. **Instrumental action:** actions which are planned and taken after evaluating the goal in relation to other goals, and after thorough consideration of various means (and consequences) to achieve it. An example would be most economic transactions;

3. **Affectional (affective) action (also known as emotional actions):** actions which are taken due to one's emotions, to express personal feelings. For examples, cheering after a victory, crying at a funeral would be emotional actions.

4. **Traditional actions:** actions which are carried out due to tradition, because they are always carried out in such a situation. An example would be putting on clothes or relaxing on Sundays. Some traditional actions can become a cultural artifact;

2.2.5.2 Social Stratification – Class, status and Parties

Weber believed that social stratification results from a struggle for scarce resources in society. Although he saw this struggle as being primarily concerned with economic resources, it can also involve struggles for prestige and for political power.

1. Class (Market situation)

Like Marx, Weber saw class in economic terms. He argued that classes develop in market economies in which individuals compete for economic gain. He defined a class as a group of individuals who share a similar position in a market economy and by virtue of that fact receive similar economic rewards. Thus, in Weber's terminology, a person's 'class situation' is basically their market situation. Those who share a similar class situation also share similar life chances. Weber distinguished the following class groupings in capitalist society:

1. the propertied upper class
2. the property less white-collar workers
3. the petty bourgeoisie
4. the manual working class

In his analysis of class, Weber disagreed with Marx on a number of important issues:

1. Factors other than the ownership or non-ownership of property are significant in the formation of classes.

2. Weber saw no evidence to support the idea of the polarization of classes. Although he saw some decline in the numbers of the petty bourgeoisie (the small property owners) due to competition from large companies, he argued that they enter white-collar or skilled manual trades rather than being depressed into the ranks of unskilled manual workers.
3. Weber rejected the view, held by some Marxists, of the inevitability of the proletarian revolution. He saw no reason why those sharing a similar class situation should necessarily develop a common identity, recognize shared interests and take collective action to further those interests.
4. Weber rejected the Marxist view that political power necessarily derives from economic power. He argued that class forms only one possible basis for power and that the distribution of power in society is not necessarily linked to the distribution of class inequalities.

Status situation

While class forms one possible basis for group formation, collective action and the acquisition of political power, Weber argued that there are other bases for these activities. In particular, groups form because their members share a similar status situation. Whereas class refers to the unequal distribution of economic rewards, status refers to the unequal distribution of 'social honor'. A status group is made up of individuals who are awarded a similar amount of social honor and therefore share the same status situation.

Parties

Weber defined parties as groups which are specifically concerned with influencing policies and making decisions in the interests of their membership. In Weber's words, parties are concerned with 'the acquisition of social "power"'.

2.2.5.3 Power and Types of Authority

Max Weber defined power as:

The chance of a man or a number of men to realize their own will in a communal action even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action.

In other words, power consists of the ability to get your own way even when others are opposed to your wishes. Weber was particularly concerned to distinguish different types of authority. He suggested there were three sources: charismatic, traditional, and rational-legal.

1. **Charismatic authority**

Charismatic authority derives from the devotion felt by subordinates for a leader who is believed to have exceptional qualities. These qualities are seen as supernatural, super-human, or at least exceptional compared to lesser mortals. Charismatic leaders are able to sway and control their followers by direct emotional appeals which excite devotion and strong loyalties.

2. Traditional authority

Weber called the second type of authority traditional authority. In this case authority rests upon a belief in the 'rightness' of established customs and traditions. Those in authority command obedience on the basis of their traditional status, which is usually inherited. Their subordinates are controlled by feelings of loyalty and obligation to long-established positions of power. The feudal system of medieval Europe is an example of traditional authority: monarchs and nobles owed their positions to inherited status and the personal loyalty of their subjects.

3. Rational-legal authority

The final type of authority distinguished by Weber was rational-legal authority. In this case, unlike charismatic and traditional authority, legitimacy and control stem neither from the perceived personal qualities of the leader and the devotion they excite, nor from a commitment to traditional wisdom. Rational-legal authority is based on the acceptance of a set of impersonal rules.

3 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES IN SOCIOLOGY

Given the many and varied ideas and trends that influenced the development of sociology, how do contemporary sociologists view society? Some see it as basically a stable and ongoing entity; others view it in terms of many groups competing for scarce resources; still others describe it as based on the everyday, routine interactions among individuals. Each of these views represents a method of examining the same phenomena. Each is based on general ideas as to how social life is organized and represents an effort to link specific observations in a meaningful way. Each utilizes theory-a set of logically interrelated statements that attempts to describe, explain, and (occasionally) predict social events. Three major theoretical perspectives have emerged in sociology: the functionalist, conflict, and symbolic interactions perspectives.

3.1 Functionalist Perspectives

Also known as functionalism and structural functionalism, functionalist perspectives are based on the assumption that society is a stable, orderly system; a complex system whose parts work together to promote stability. Stability is perhaps the key feature of this model of society. This stable system is characterized by societal consensus whereby the majority of members share a common set of values, beliefs, and behavioral expectations. According to this perspective, a society is composed of interrelated parts, each of which serves a function and contributes to the overall stability of the society. As its name suggests, the structural-functional paradigm has two components. First, society is composed of various kinds of social structure, defined as a relatively stable pattern of social behavior. Social structure ranges from broad patterns including the family and religious systems to forms of greeting and other patterns that characterize face-to-face social contact. Second, all structures are related in terms ott1lelr social functions, which refer to consequences for the operation of society as a whole, Thus all the elements of society-from religious belief to a simple handshake-have important functions that help society to persist, at least in its present form.

Since this approach was influenced by Comte, Spencer, and Durkheim, who often drew on the work of natural scientists, early functionalists compared society to a living, evolving organism. Societies develop social structures, or institutions that persist because they play a part in helping society survive. These institutions include the family, education, government, religion, and the economy. If anything adverse happens to one of these institutions or parts, all other parts are affected and the system no longer functions properly. The structural functional paradigm owes much to the ideas of Auguste Comte, who was concerned about how society could remain unified while undergoing massive change. Another who advanced this theoretical approach was the English

Sociologist Herbert Spencer (1820-1903). A student of both the human body and society, Spencer asserted that the two have much in common. The structural parts of the human body include the skeleton, muscles, and various internal organs. All of these body parts are interdependent, and each one has a function that contributes to the survival of the human organism, Likewise, reasoned Spencer, the elements of human society are interdependent and work to keep society operating. This approach, then, leads sociologists to identify the various parts of society, asking what part each plays in the operation of the whole.

Emile Durkheim continued the development of the structural functionalist paradigm in France. Like Spencer, Durkheim investigated ways in which modern societies maintain their social integration.

Talcott parsons and Robert Merton

Talcott Parsons (1902-1979), a founder of the sociology department at Harvard University, was perhaps the most influential contemporary advocate of the functionalist perspective. He stressed that all societies must make provisions for meeting social needs in order to survive. Parsons sought to identify major functions such as the integration of the various parts of society into a whole, the achievement of goals, an incentive to work and cooperate, and adjustment to the environment. In a functional analysis of the U.S. family in the 1950s, Parsons (1955) suggested that a division of labor (distinct, specialized functions) between husband and wife is essential for family stability and social order. The husband/father performs the instrumental tasks, which involve leadership and decision making responsibilities in the home and employment outside the home to support the family. The wife/mother is responsible for the expressive tasks, including housework, caring for the children, and providing emotional support for the entire family. Parsons believed that other institutions, including school, church, and government, must function to assist the family and that all institutions must work together to preserve the system over time. Although Parsons' analysis has been criticized for its conservative bias, his work still influences sociological thinking about gender roles and the family.

Functionalism was refined further by one of Parsons' students, Robert Merton, who distinguished between **manifest and latent functions** of social institutions. Manifest functions are intended and/or overtly recognized by the participants in a social unit. In contrast, latent functions are unintended functions that are hidden and remain unacknowledged by participants. For example, a manifest function of education is the transmission of knowledge and skills from one generation to the next; a latent function is the establishment of social relations and, networks .Merton noted that all features of a social system may not be functional at all; **dysfunctions** are the undesirable consequences of any element of a society. A dysfunction of education can be the perpetuation of gender, racial and class inequalities. Such dysfunctions may threaten the capacity of a society to adapt and survive.

Between 1945 and 1960, the functional perspective flourished in sociology; however social strife during the 1960s exposed the limitations of this perspective. Recently, functionalism has experienced resurgence and now is referred to by some as "neofunctionalism".

3.2 The conflict paradigm

The conflict paradigm is *a framework for building theory that envisions society as an arena of inequality that generates conflict and change.* Guided by this paradigm, sociologists investigate how factors such as social class, race, ethnicity, sex and age are linked to unequal distribution of money, power, education and social prestige. A conflict analysis points out that, rather than promoting the operation of society as a whole, social structure typically benefits some people while depriving others.

Working within the conflict paradigm, sociologists spotlight ongoing conflict between dominant and disadvantaged categories of people - the rich in relation to the poor, white people as opposed to black, men versus women. Typically, those on top strive to protect their privileges; the disadvantaged counter by attempting to gain more resources for themselves.

Finally, many sociologists who embrace the conflict paradigm attempt not just to understand society but also to reduce social inequality. This was the goal of Karl Marx, the social thinker whose ideas underlie the conflict paradigm. Marx did not seek merely to understand how society works. In a well-known declaration, Marx asserted: 'the philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to change it.'

Critical evaluation
The conflict paradigm has developed rapidly in recent decades. Yet, like other approaches, it has come in for its share of criticism. Because this paradigm highlights inequality and division, it glosses over how shared values or interdependence generate unity among members of a society. In addition, say critics, to the extent that the conflict approach explicitly pursues political goals, it relinquishes any claim to scientific objectivity. Conflict theorists are uneasy with the notion that science can be 'objective'. They contend, on the contrary, that the conflict paradigm as well as *all* theoretical approaches have political consequences, albeit different ones.

One additional criticism, which applies equally to both the functional and conflict paradigms, is that they envision society in very broad terms. 'Society' becomes a thing in itself, describing our lives as a composite of 'family', 'social class', and so on. A third theoretical paradigm depicts society less in terms of abstract generalizations and more in terms of people's everyday, situational experiences.

3.3 The Symbolic-Interaction Paradigm

Both the Structural-functional and social-conflict paradigms share a macro level orientation, meaning *a concern with large scale patterns that characterize society as a whole.* They approach society as you might investigate a city from the windows of a helicopter-noting, for example, that highways facilitate traffic flow from one place to another, or that there are striking contrasts between the neighborhoods of the rich and the poor. The symbolic-interaction paradigm, however, differs, providing a micro-level orientation, meaning a concern with small-scale patterns of social interaction in specific settings. Exploring urban life in this way means being at street level, observing, for example, face-to-face interaction in public parks or how people respond to a homeless person they pass on the street. The symbolic-interaction paradigm, then, is ***a theoretical framework based on the assumption that society involves interaction by which individuals actively construct reality in everyday life.***

How are the lives of millions of distinct individuals woven together into the drama of society? One answer is that people interact in terms of shared symbols and meanings. Only in rare situations do we respond to each other in direct, physical terms, as when someone ducks to avoid a punch. Mostly, we respond to others according to the meanings we attach to them. For example, if we define a homeless man on a city street as "just a bum looking for a handout," we may ignore him. On the contrary, if defined as a "fellow human being in need," he becomes part of a situation that actively engages us. Similarly, a police officer walking nearby may generate a sense of security in some pedestrians and a feeling of nervous anxiety in others. Sociologists guided by the symbolic-interaction approach view society as a complex mosaic of subjective perceptions and responses.

The development of the symbolic interaction paradigm was greatly influenced by Max Weber a German sociologist who emphasized the importance of understanding society as it is subjectively perceived by individuals. From this foundation, others have developed a number of related approaches to understanding society. George Herbert Mead (1863-1931), who explored how the human personality gradually emerges as a result of social experience, is one dimension. The work of American sociologist Erving Goffman is another. Goffman's approach to understanding Society is described as dramaturgical analysis because it emphasizes how human beings resemble actors on a stage as we deliberately foster certain impressions in the minds of others. Other contemporary sociologists, including George Homans and Peter Blau, have developed an approach called **social-exchange analysis**. This shows how social interaction is often guided by what each one stands to gain and lose from others. In the study of Family this approach is applied to the process of courtship, in which

individuals typically seek mates who offer them at least as much-in terms of physical attractiveness, intelligence, and social background-as they offer in return.

Critical evaluation

The symbolic paradigm helps to overcome a limitation typical of all macro-level approaches to understanding society. Society is indeed composed of broad social patterns, such as "the family" and "social inequality." The existence of social structure, however, does not negate society's foundation in people actively engaging one another in social interaction. Put another way, as a micro-approach, this paradigm attempts to convey more of how we as individuals actually *experience* society. At the same time, all social experience is affected by social structure, just as what you choose to do in the future will be guided (although not determined) by your past life.

3.1 Post Modernism

The challenge to modernism

Since the 1980s, postmodern perspectives have become increasingly influential in sociology. These perspectives take a number of forms, and the more radical of these represent a major challenge to the perspectives examined so far. Many writers who adopt some of the stronger claims of postmodernism emphasize differences between people rather than similarities between members of social groups. They believe that it is the job of the researcher to uncover and describe these differences rather than to make generalizations about whole social groups. This involves acknowledging that there are many different viewpoints on society and that you should not judge between them. All viewpoints are seen as being equally valid; none is superior to any other. Sociologists should not try to impose their views on others, but should merely enable the voices of different people to be heard. This is very different from the goals of other sociologists (such as Marxists and functionalists) who set out to produce scientific explanations of how society works and how social groups behave.

4 SOCIOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

4.1 What is a Valid Sociological Topic?

Social researchers research just about every area of human behavior. On the macro level, they study such broad matters as war, voting patterns, race relations, and city growth. On the micro level, they study such individualistic matters as waiting in public places, meat packers at work, interactions between

people on street corners, and even how people decorate their homes for Christmas. Social researchers study social interaction. No human behavior is ineligible for sociological research-whether that behavior is routine or usual, respectable or reprehensible, free or forced. The question of how to do research, however, is a little more complicated, and needs to be examined in greater detail.

4.2 Common Sense and the Need for Sociological Research

First, why do we need sociological research? Why can't we simply depend on common sense, on "What everyone knows"? This is because; commonsense ideas may or may not be true.

Although these particular ideas are accurate, we still need social research to test them, because not all commonsense ideas are true. After all, common sense tells some people that women's revealing clothing is one reason that men rape. To others, common sense indicates that men who rape are sexually deprived. Research, however, does not support either of these ideas. Studies show that men who raped don’t care what a woman wears. (Most rapists don’t even care who the woman is; she is simply an object to satisfy their lust and drive for power.) And some rapists are sexually deprived, while others are not- the same as men who do not rape. Many rapists have a wife or girlfriend with whom they have an ongoing sexual relationship. If neither provocative clothing nor sexual deprivation is the underlying cause of rape, then what is? Although we may want to know why men rape, we might also want to know what the victims' reactions are. Or we may want to know something entirely different about rape. That, of course, brings us to the need for sociological research.

Regardless of the particular question that we want to answer, the point is that we want to move beyond guesswork and common sense. We want to know what really is ongoing on. And for accurate answers, we need sociological research. Let us look, then, at how social researchers do their research.

4.3 The Research Procedure

As shown in Figure 5.1, eight basic steps are involved in scientific research. As you look at each of these steps, be aware that this is an ideal model. In some research these steps are collapsed, in others their order may be changed, while in still others one or more steps may even be omitted.

4.3.1 Selecting a Topic

The first step is to select a topic. Choice of a research topic is not made in a vacuum. It is influenced by a number of factors, chief among which are the following:

- interests and values of the researcher
- current debates in the academic world
- funding
- the cooperation Vs resistance of the research subject

4.3.2 Defining the Problem

The second step is to define the problem, to specify exactly what you want to learn about the topic. Ordinarily, social researchers' interests are focused. They develop a researchable question that focuses on a specific area or problem.

Here, the researcher employs any one of the three tools for making research issue more precise. He can choose between (a) formulating specific objectives in the form of statements, (b) formulating research questions, or (c) formulating testable hypothesis.

It is important to note that, once a researcher has specified his research issue in one of these forms, his research activities will be guided in responding to them. Hence, any attempt to use more than one of these tools of precision will be counterproductive since it will lead to unnecessary overlaps and confusions.

4.3.3 Reviewing the Literature

The third step is to review the literature to se if the question has already been answered. Nobody wants to reinvent the wheel. In addition, a review of what has been written on the topic can stimulate ideas, further refining the problem to be investigated.

4.3.4 Choosing a Research Method

The means by which social researchers collect data are called research methods. Social researchers use six basic research methods, outlined in the next section. They select the method that will best answer the particular questions they want to solve.

4.3.5 Collecting the Data

The next step is to gather the data. Social researchers take great care to assure both the validity and reliability of their data. Validity is the extent to which operation definitions measure what they are intended to measure. In our example, we would need to be certain that we were really measuring social isolation, social integration, and rape and not something else.

Reliability is the extent to which studies yield consistent results. Inadequate operational definitions and sampling will undermine reliability. For example, if our measure of rape is adequate and other researchers apply it to the same group of people we studied, they would include the individuals whom we included and exclude those who we excluded. Clear measures, however, are just the first step towards relativity. Even through our operational definitions are clear and other researchers can follow them, we won't know that our study is reliable until other research produces similar results.

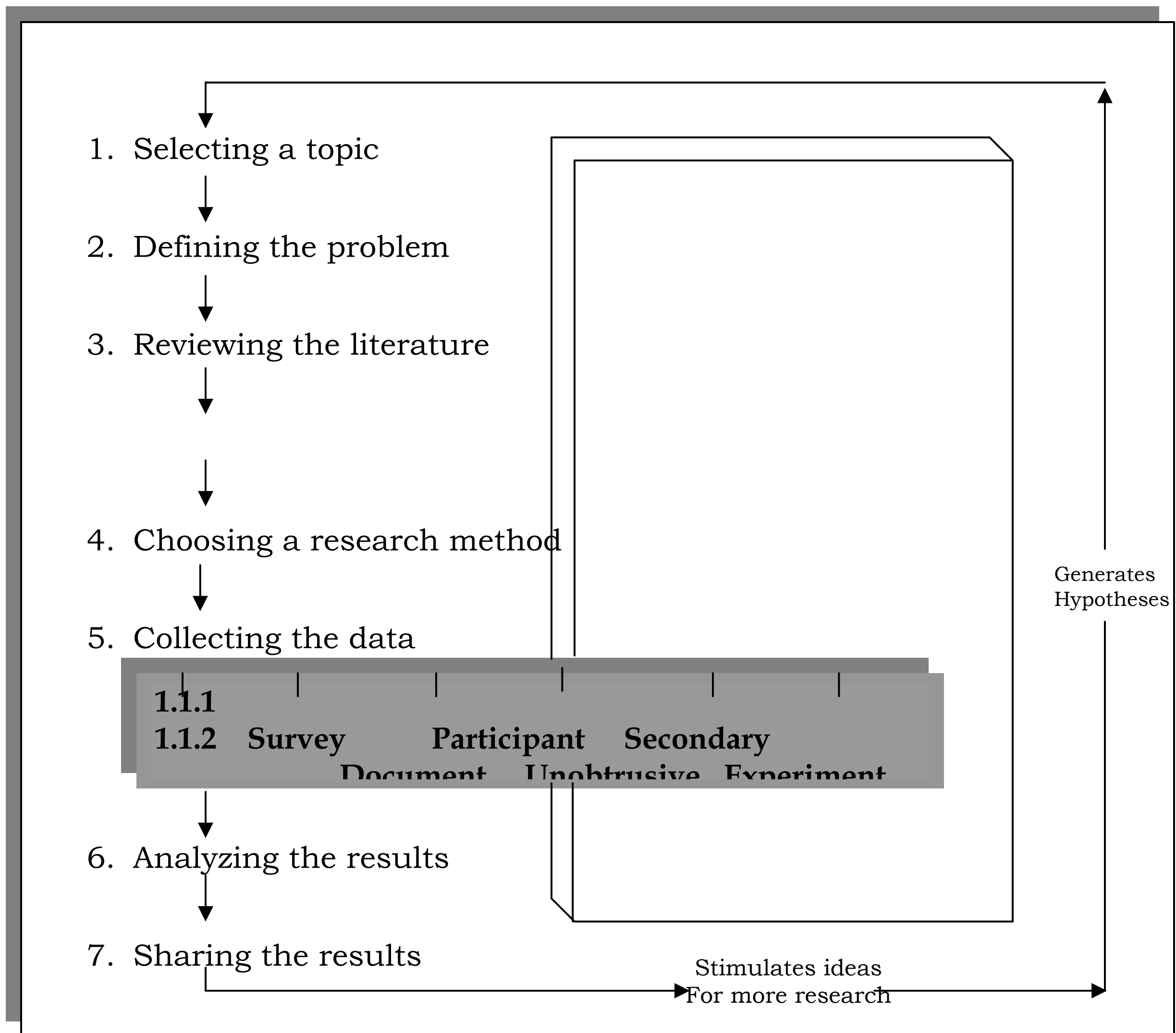
4.3.6 Analyzing the Results

After the data are gathered, it is time to analyze them. Social researchers have specific techniques for doing this, each of which requires special training. They range from statistical tests for which there are many, each with its own rules for application) to content analysis, which in voles examining the content of something in order to identify its themes--in this case perhaps television programs about rape, or even diaries kept by women who have been raped. The basic program that social researchers, even many undergraduates, learn is the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

4.3.7 Sharing the Results

Now it is time to warp up the research, or, if it si a broad project, at least some part of it. In this step the researchers write a report to share their findings with the scientific community. The report includes a review of the proceeding steps to help others judge the research results. It also shows how the findings are related to the literature, the published results of other research on the topic. When research is published, usually in a scientific journal or a book, it then "belongs" to the scientific community. Table 5.1 is an example of published research. These findings are available for replication; that is, others can repeat the study to test the results. In this way, scientific knowledge builds slowly as finding is added to finding.

Let us look in greater detail at the fifth step and examine the research methods that social researchers use.



4.4 Research Methods

Social researchers use four major research methods (or "research designs") for gathering data: surveys, participant observation, secondary analysis and documents, and experiments. To understand these strategies better, let's continue our example of rape. As we do so, note how the choice of method depends on the questions we want to answer.

4.4.1 Surveys

In a survey, questionnaires are either sent, or given directly in interviews, to a selected sample of people that are sometimes as many as several thousand. Thus, survey is a research method that is characterized by the use of questionnaires and samples.

To be able to generalize your findings, you must select a sample that is representative of the population (called a "representative sample"). What kind of sample will allow you to do this?
The best is a random sample. This does not mean that you stand on some campus corner and ask questions of whoever happens to walk by. In a random sample, everyone in the population has the same chance of being included in the study. In this case, since the population is every female enrolled in your college, all such females--whether first year or graduate students--must have the same chance of being included in the sample. Equally, such factors as a woman's major, her age, martial status, grade-point average, or whether she is a day or evening or full or part-time student must not affect her chance of becoming part of your study.
How can you get a random sample? First you need a list of all the female students enrolled in your college. You then would assign a number to each name on the list and, using a table of random numbers, determine which student become part of your sample. (Random numbers are available on tables in statistics books, or they can be generated by a computer.)
Because a random sample represents the population--in this case female students at your college-- you can generalize your findings to all the female students on your campus, whether they were included in the sample or not.
Social scientists have developed a variation of this sampling technique that you might want to consider. Suppose you want to compare the experiences of freshmen and seniors. If so, you could use a stratified random sample. You would first identify freshmen and seniors, and then use random numbers to select subsamples from each group.

Asking Neutral Questions After you have decided on your population and sample, your next task is to make certain that your questions are neutral. Your questions must allow respondents, people who respond to a survey, to express their own ideas. Otherwise, you will end up with biased answers--and biased findings are worthless. (The Down-to-earth Sociology box on page 125 gives examples of biased findings.) For example, if you were to ask, "Don't you agree that rapists deserve the death penalty?" you would be tilting the results toward agreement with the position being stated.

Questionnaires

Two sorts of questionnaire are used in surveys. Some have a *standardized* [pre-coded] set of questions, to which only a fixed range of responses is possible. Either the respondents or the researcher mark certain categories of reply to the questions asked - for instance, 'Yes/No/Don't know', or 'Very likely/Likely/ Unlikely/Very unlikely'. Fixed-choice surveys have the advantage that responses

are easy to compare and tabulate, since only a small number of categories are involved. On the other hand, because they do not allow for subtleties of opinion or verbal expression, the information they yield is likely to be restricted in scope. Other types of questionnaire are *open-ended*, giving opportunities for respondents to express their views in their own words: they are not limited to ticking fixed-choice responses. Open-ended questionnaires are more flexible, and provide richer information than standardized ones. The researcher can follow up answers to probe more deeply into what the respondent thinks. On the other hand, the lack of standardization means that responses may be more difficult to compare.

4.4.2 Participant Observation (Fieldwork)

In the second method, participant observation, the researcher participates in a research setting while observing what is happening in that setting.

The researcher's personal characteristics are extremely important in fieldwork. Fro example, could a male researcher conduct a research on raped females? Technically, the answer is yes. But given the topic, which specifically centers on the emotions of females who have been brutally victimized by males, female social researchers may be better suited to conduct such research, and thus more likely to achieve results. Here again, however, our commonsense suppositions regarding how likely female rape victims are to disclose information to male versus female interviewers are just that--suppositions. Research alone will verify or refute these assumptions. In conducting research, then, social researchers must be aware of how such variables as their sex, age, race, personality, and even height and weight can affect their findings (Henslin 1990a). Although these variables are important in all research methods, they are especially important in participant observation.

Participant observers face a problem with generalizability, the ability to apply their findings to larger populations. Most of their studies are exploratory in nature, documenting in detail what people in a particular setting are experiencing and how they are reacting to those experiences. Although such research suggests that other people who face similar situations react in similar ways, it is difficult to know just how far the findings apply beyond their or final setting. The results of participant observation, however, can stimulate hypotheses and theories and be tested in other settings using other research techniques.

4.4.3 Secondary Analysis

In secondary analysis, a third research method, the researcher analyzes data that have already been collected by others. Fro example, if you were to examine the original data collected for studies reported later in this chapter (such as Rossi, page 134, or Scully and Marolla, pages 138-139), you would be doing secondary analysis. Ordinarily, researches prefer to gather their own data, but lack of

resources, especially money, may make that impossible. In addition, existing data may contain a wealth of information that was not pertinent to the goals of the original study, which can be analyzed for your specific purposes.
Like the other methods, this approach also poses its own problems. How can a researcher who did not directly carry out the research be sure that the data were systematically gathered, accurately recorded, and that biases were avoided? That may be an impossible task, especially if the original data were gathered by numerous researchers, not all of whom were equally qualified.

4.4.4 Experiments

An *experiment* can in fact be defined as an attempt, within artificial conditions established by an investigator, to test the influence of one or more variables upon others. In an experimental situation, the researcher directly controls the relevant variables. Hence, in this respect, experiments offer major advantages over other research procedures.

Experiment as a mode of scientific observation involves two major steps: (1) taking action and (2) observing the consequences of that action. Social researchers using the experimental method typically select a group of subjects, do something to them, and observe the effects of what was don The most conventional type of experiment, in the natural as well as social sciences, involves there major pairs of components: (1) independent and dependent variables, (2) experimental (also known as the treatment group, the intervention group, or the stimulus group) and control groups, and (3) pre-testing and post-testing.

(1) Independent and Dependent Variables: Essentially, and experiment examines the effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable. Typically, the independent variable takes the form of an experimental *stimulus*, which is either present or absent: that is a *dichotomous variable*, having two attributes. In the example concerning anti-black prejudice, prejudice is the dependent variable, and exposure to black history is the independent variable. The researcher's hypothesis suggests that prejudice depends, in part, on a lack of knowledge of black history. The purpose of the experiment is to test the validity of this hypothesis.

(2) Pre-testing and Post-testing: In the simplest experimental design, subjects are measured in terms of a dependent variable (pre-tested), exposed to a stimulus representing an independent variable, and then re-measured in terms of the dependent variable (post-tested). Differences noted between the first and last measurements on the dependent variable are then attributed to the influence of the independent variable. In the example of anti-black prejudice and exposure to

black history, we would begin by pre-testing the extent of prejudice among our experimental subjects. Using a questionnaire asking about attitudes toward blacks, for example, we could measure the extent of prejudice exhibited by each individual subject and the average prejudice level of the whole group. After exposing the subjects to the black history film, we could administer the same questionnaire again. Responses given in this post-test would permit us to measure the later extent of prejudice for each subject and the average prejudice level of the group as a whole. If we discovered a lower level of prejudice during the second administration of the questionnaire, we might conclude that the film had indeed reduced prejudice. In the experimental examination of attitudes such as prejudice, we face a special practical problem relating to *validity*: the subjects would respond differently to the questionnaires the second time, even if their attitudes remained unchanged. Figuring out the purpose of the research by the time of the second measurement, and not wishing to seem prejudiced, the subjects might "clean up" their answers the second time around. Thus, the film would seem to have reduced prejudice, although, in fact, it had not.

(3) Experimental and Control Groups: The foremost method of offsetting the effects of the experiment itself is the use of a *control group*. Laboratory experiments seldom if ever involve only the observation of an experimental group to which a stimulus has been administered. In addition, the researchers also observe a control group to which the experimental stimulus has *not* been administered. In the example of prejudice and black history, two groups of subjects might be examined. To begin, each group is administered a questionnaire designed to measure their anti-black prejudice. Then, one of the groups — the experimental group — is shown the film. Later, the researcher administers a post-test of prejudice to *both* groups.

4.4.5 Deciding Which Method to Use

Four primary factors underlie a researcher’s choice of method. First, resources are crucial, and researchers must always match methods to available resources. The second significant factor is access to subjects. If persons in a sample live in remote parts of the country, researchers may have to mail them questionnaires or conduct a telephone survey even if they would prefer face-to-face interviews. The third factor concerns the purpose of the research, the questions that the researcher wishes to answer. Fourth, the researcher’s background or training comes into play. In graduate school, social researchers study many methods but are able to practice only some of them. Consequently, following graduate school they generally feel most comfortable using the methods in which they have had the most training and tend use these during their career. methods.

5 SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND INTERACTION

5.1 Groups and Institutions

5.1.1 Groups

The understanding of social groups is a very crucial task in sociology. Even when sociologists use individual humans as their unit of analysis, their focus is not really the person. Even if sociologists ask why Mrs. X decided to live in place A than B, they will not seek the reasons in Mrs. X's head but with in her social situation, religious group, her age group, her racial ethnic group, her political affiliation. To understand Mrs. X sociologists want to know about the groups that may shape her opinion and encourage her behavior. In doing so they reveal that the fundamental subject matter of sociology is the group.

5.1.1.1 What is a group?

When most people say "group" they mean any number of persons who happen to be together. Sociologically speaking however, a group has a different meaning differentiated from other collectives.

The largest and most inclusive collective is plural. Simply Defined a plural is a social group consisting of two or more people. We distinguish three types of plurals.

A *social group* consists of a number of people who define themselves as members of a group; who interact frequently according to established and enduring patterns; who expect certain behavior from other members that they don't expect from outsiders; and who are defined by both fellow members and nonmembers as belonging to a group on the basis of some shared characteristics.

Categories on the other hand are forms of plurals which consist of two or more people who are classified together because they share certain characteristics in common. They don't have any sense of common identity and don't necessarily have any common norms or interests. They are only lumped together according to a particular social characteristic such as age or income.

The third are *aggregates*. Aggregates refer to people who are in the same place at the same time but who interact little if at all and have no sense of belonging together. The identifying criteria are physical proximity.

Factors distinguishing groups from quasi groups (categories and aggregates)

1.Regular and conscious interaction exists among members of a group in accordance with established statuses and roles. Because of this we say that definite relations exist between the individuals comprising the group.

2.Member of a group develop similar norms, values, and expectations of behavior for people occupying different positions in the social group.
3.Members of a group usually develop a sense of identity or belongingness and realize that they are different from other non-members.

In contrast, quasi groups lack structure and organization and members are usually unaware or less aware of the existence of the group itself. Even if there is interaction it is not structured across status and roles.

5.1.1.2 Primary and Secondary groups

Not all groups are identical. Groups differ in Groups vary in size, permanence, impermanence, involvement, identification and influence. On the basis of this sociologists have found it important to classify groups. One important and well known distinction comes from Charles Horton Colley. The following points summarize the difference between primary and secondary groups.
1. Relationships: in primary groups are intimate, personal in nature involving the personalities of participants where as relationship in secondary groups are often impersonal, non-emotional and the link between members tends to be much looser.
2. In primary groups individuals are involved as complete persons who can satisfy all or most of a wide range of purposes whereas secondary groups do not require the total involvement of the personality of the members but require them to exhibit only part of their personality of one another.
3. Members of a primary group are united by an accord of feelings and/or sentiments where as in secondary groups, members are united by rational agreement of interests and look to the satisfaction of specific and particular ends. Primary groups are usually characterizes by a 'we' feeling where belonging is an end in itself. They are relationship oriented and involve great emotional links between their members. In secondary groups, on the other hand, members belong to the group in order to accomplish some objective which is difficult to attain by individual effort. Hence secondary groups are goal oriented and relationships and membership is a means to an end.
4. Because of their intimate character primary groups tend to be small in size where as the size of secondary groups is unlimited (it could be as few as two and as large as millions).
5. Primary groups exert profound influence up on the personality of their members where as the influence of secondary groups is more or less limited.

Since the personality of individuals is shaped in primary groups, according to Cooley they are nurseries of individuals.

5.1.1.3 In-groups and Out groups

Sometimes group membership is defined as much by what people are not, as by what they are; in other words, the antagonisms that some groups feel toward other groups become an integral part of their identity. Groups toward which individuals feel loyalty are called in-groups; those toward which they feel antagonisms, out-groups. For Johnny, Satan's Servants was an in-group, while the police, teachers, welfare workers, and all those associated with school represented out-groups.

This fundamental division of the world into in-groups and out-groups has far-reaching consequences for people's lives. To identify with a group generates not only a sense of belonging, but also loyalty and feelings of superiority. In-groups can therefore exert a high degree of control over their members. Johnny's shooting of the dog is such an example.

Not surprisingly, in-and out-group relations also lead to **discrimination**, for, with their strong identification and loyalties, people favor members of their in-groups. This aspect of in-and out-groups is, of course, the basis of many problems in contemporary society. Another consequence is the **production of rivalries**, which are usually mild, such as sports rivalries between nearby towns, where the most extreme act is likely to be the furtive invasion of the out-group's territory in order to steal a mascot, paint a rock, or uproot a goal post. In some cases, however, an out-group can come to symbolize such evil that it arouses hatred and motivates members of an in-group to extreme acts. In spite of the recent Israeli-Palestinian accord, for example, seething hatred remains, and extremists on both sides are still willing to sacrifice their lives to help bring about the destruction of the other.
As sociologist Robert Merton (1968) observed, in-and out-group relations also produce a very interesting **double standard**. The traits of one's in-group come to be viewed as virtues, while if those same traits characterize groups we don't like they are defined as vices (Schaller 1991). For example, men who see women as members of an out-group may define an aggressive male employee as assertive, but an aggressive female employee as pushy; a male who doesn't speak up as "knowing when to keep quiet," but his female counterpart as too timid to make it in the business world.

5.1.1.4 Group Dynamics

Now that we have surveyed the types of groups that make up society, let's look at what happens within groups, especially the ways in which individuals affect groups and the ways in which groups affect individuals. These reciprocal influences are known as group dynamics. We first discuss the differences that the

size of the group makes and then examine the effects of the group on leadership, conformity, and decision making.

George Simmel (1858-1918) noted the significance of group site. He used the term **Dyad** for the smallest possible group, which consists of two persons. Dyads, he noted, which include marriages, love affairs, and close friendships, *show two distinct qualities*. *First, they are the most intense or intimate human groups*. Because only two persons are involved, the interaction is focused exclusively between one and the other. *Second, because dyads require the continuing active participation and commitment of both members, they are the most unstable of social groups.* If one member loses interest, the dyad collapses. In larger groups in contrast, even if one member withdraws the group can continue, for its existence does not depend on any single member.

A triad *is a group of three persons,* such as a married couple with their first child. As Simmel noted, the addition of a third person fundamentally changes the group. For example, with the birth of a child hardly any aspect of a couple's relationship goes untouched. In spite of difficulties that couples experience adjusting to their first child, however, their marriage is usually strengthened. Simmel's principle that groups larger than a dyad are inherently stronger helps explain this effect. *Like dyads, triads are also intense, for interaction is shared by only three persons; but because interaction is shared with an additional person, the intensity lessens.*

Simmel also pointed out that triads, too, are *inherently unstable*. Because relation-ships among a group's members are seldom neatly balanced, *they encourage the formation of* ***coalition****, in which some group members align themselves against others*. In a triad, it is -not uncommon for two members to feel strong bonds with one another, leading them to act as a dyad and leaving the third feeling hurt and excluded. In addition, triads often produce an **arbitrator or mediator**, *someone who tries to settle disagreements between the other two.*

The general principle is that as a small group grows larger its intensity, or intimacy, decreases and its stability increases. To see why, look at Figure below. The addition of each person to a group greatly increases the connections among people. It is not only the number of relationships that makes larger groups more stable. As groups grow, they tend to develop a more formal social structure to accomplish their goals. For example, leaders emerge and more specialized roles come into play, ultimately resulting in such formal offices as president, secretary, and treasurer.

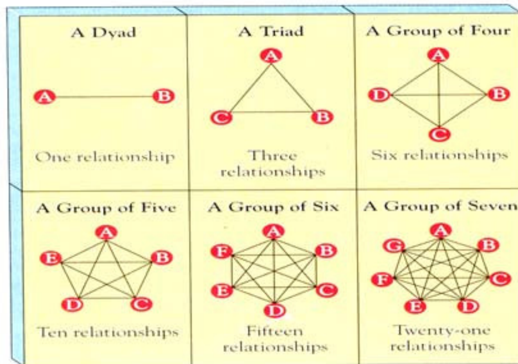


Figure 5.1: The effect of group size on relationships

5.1.2 Institutions

Each society has its own social institutions. These are not buildings or places, but structures of relationship, obligation, role and function. These are social concepts and practices, but also involve *cognitive structures*. Members of a society have a similar mental concept of right and wrong, order and relationships, and patterns of good (positive values).

Social institutions then are stable sets of statuses, roles, groups, and organizations form; they provide the foundation for addressing fundamental social needs. These enduring patterns of expectations are called social institutions. Sociologists usually think of institutions as the building blocks that organize society. They are the patterned ways of solving the problems and meeting the requirements of a particular society
Social institutions in modern society include the family, education, religion, politics and the economy. Some sociologists would add health care and the military to the list.

1. Family: All societies must have a way of replacing their members; reproduction is essential to the survival of society. Within the institution of family, sexual relations among adults is regulated, people are cared for, children are born and socialized, and newcomers are provided an identity-a "lineage" that gives them a sense of belonging. Just how these activities are carried out varies from society to society, but family, whatever its form, remains the hub of social life in virtually all societies

2. Education: New members of a society need to be taught what it means to be a member of that society and how to survive in it. In small, simple societies the family is the primary institution responsible for socializing new members into the culture. However, as societies become more complex, it becomes exceedingly

difficult for a the family to teach its members all they need to know to function within that society. Hence most modern, complex societies have an elaborate system of schools-primary, secondary, college, professional that not only create and disseminate knowledge and information but also train individuals for future careers and teach them their "place" in society.

3.Economy: From the beginning of human societies, the problems of securing enough food and protecting people from the environment have persisted (Turner, 1972). Today, modern societies have systematic ways of gathering resources, converting them into goods and commodities, and distributing them to members. In addition, societies provide ways of coordinating and facilitating the operation of this massive process. For instance, banks, insurance firms, stock brokerages, data processing facilities, and accounting firms don't produce goods themselves but provide services that make the gathering, producing, and distributing of goods possible (Turner, 1972). To facilitate the distribution of both goods and services, economic institutions adopt a system of common currency and an identifiable mode of exchange.

4. Politics and law: All societies face the problem of how to preserve order and avoid chaos. The legal system provides explicit laws or rules of conduct, mechanisms for enforcing those laws, mechanisms for settling disputes, and mechanisms for changing laws that have become outdated or for creating new ones (Turner, 197,2). These activities take place within a larger system of governance in which power, authority, and leadership are established and changed. In a democracy the governance process includes the citizens, who have a say in who leads them; in a monarchy kings or queens can claim that their birthright entitles them to positions of leadership. In some societies the transfer of power is efficient and mannerly; in others it is violent. In any case, all societies establish ways to make important societal decisions.

5. Religion: ALL societies also face the problem of providing their members with a sense of purpose and meaning. Religion gives individuals a belief system for understanding their existence as well as a network of personal support in times of need. Although many members of a given society-and, in fact, some entire societies may actively reject religion, it remains one of the enduring and powerful institutions in human societies. In some societies, it provides enormous comfort to people; in others, it has created irreparable divisions.

6. Military: To deal with the possibility of attack from outside, many societies maintain an active military defense to protect its citizen’s from this threat. However, militaries are used not only to defend societies but also, at times, to aggress against others.

7. Health care: One of the profoundly universal facts of human life is that people get sick. Most modern societies have established a complex system of health care that disseminate medical treatments. Doctors, nurses, hospital, pharmacies, drug and medical equipment manufacturers, Patient and others all play an active role in the health care institution.

Social institutions are highly interrelated. For instance, ,although much dissemination of information occurs in the schools, families and churches still play a major role in teaching society's members haw to get along.

5.2 Social Values, Norms and Social Control

5.2.1 Social Values

Values are shared assumptions, standards by members of a society as to what is right or wrong, good or bad, important or unimportant, and desirable and undesirable. By defining what individuals should strive for and what they should avoid, values serve as general guide lines of behaviour.

Values are evaluations and arguments, from the standpoint of the culture, of what ought to be. These broad principles are widely evident in a people's way of life. Our personalities develop in relation to the values of our culture, usually without our being aware that this is so. We learn from our families, schools, and religious institutions how to think and act according to cultural standards of value, what personal goals are defined as worthy, and how to relate properly to our fellow human beings.

5.2.2 Social Norms

Norms are specific rules that specify appropriate or inappropriate forms of behavior in specific circumstances. Social values are transformed in to actions in the form of norms.

Norms are usually derived from social values because they are reflections of what society values. For most of our history, Americans have viewed sex as appropriate within marriage, and then largely for the purpose of having children. By the 1960s, however, the rules of sexual behavior had changed: sexual activity had become widely redefined as a form of recreation, often involving people who hardly knew each other. By the mid1980s, the rules had changed once again. Amidst growing fears of sexually transmitted diseases, especially the deadly acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), the "sexual revolution" was coming to an end, with more Americans limiting their sexual activity to one partner. Such patterns illustrate the operation of what sociologists call norms,

rules that guide behavior. Many norms are ***proscriptive***, mandating what must not do. For example, people are now- warned to avoid casual sex. Other norms are ***prescriptive*****,** stating what we must do. Following practices of "safe sex," for instance, has been broadly promoted in recent years.

Some norms apply to virtually every social situation. For example, we expect children to obey their parents consistently, regardless of setting. Other norms, however, vary from situation to situation. Applauding at the completion of a musical performance is appropriate, and even expected; applauding at the end of a classroom lecture is acceptable, but rather rare; and applauding the completion of a sermon by a priest or rabbi is generally considered inappropriate. In the same way, the norms that guide our behavior at a library, a formal dinner party, and a rock concert are all somewhat different.
Depending on the intensity/strength of feeling associated with them, social norms are classified in **Mores** and **Folkways.**

5.2.3 Mores and Folkways

5.2.3.1 Mores

Not all cultural norms have the same degree of importance. The term mores (pro-nounced MORE-ays; the rarely used singular form is mos) refers to *norms that have great moral significance*. Proscriptive mores are often simply termed as taboos these are illustrated by the expectation that adults not have sexual relations with children. Mores can also be prescriptive, as in the expectation that people in public places wear sufficient clothing to conform to "standards of decency."

Because of their importance mores usually apply to anyone; anywhere and at anytime. This also explains the strong penalties that follow a violation of many mores. For example, people consider the right to one's property as beyond question. Consequently, from early childhood we learn that theft is such a serious wrong that the force of the police and the legal system can be directed against an offender.

We can further classify mores in to ***laws*** and ***conventions.***
Laws are codified mores. ***Conventions*** on the other hand refer to formal agreements such as those made between countries.

5.2.3.2 Folkways

Folkways: are minor rules about social conduct that serve as conventional ways of doing things, those norms that should be followed as a matter of good conduct or politeness. They are only agreed notions of proper conduct. Sumner used the term folkways to designate norms that have little moral significance. Examples include norms

involving dress and polite behavior. Since they are viewed as less important than mores, folkways involve matters about which we tend to allow people considerable personal discretion. For the same reason violations of folkways typically result in only mild penalties. For example, a male who does not wear a tie to a formal dinner party is violating one of the folkways we sometimes call "etiquette"; he might be the subject of some derisive comment but little more. On the other hand, were he to arrive at the dinner party wearing only a tie, he would be violating cultural mores and inviting far more serious sanctions.

Depending on their duration Folkways are also divided in to two as ***customs*** and ***fashions.***
Customs are folkways that have existed for a long time and become part of society's traditions.
Fashions are folkways which are not relatively permanent and change from time to time.

Some Observations about Norms and Values:

1. Norms are directed at a certain action
2. For any norm there is a certain class of actors which is the target of that norm
3. Norms and values vary across groups and societies.
4. Norms are dynamic whereas values are relatively permanent.

5.2.4 Social Control

The more existence of social norms does not guarantee their universal observation. In fact certain degree of non-conformity is essential for social change because if all members of societies readily conformed to accepted social values & norms, social change would have not been possible. All societies need a system of social control which, prevent non conformity and encourage conformity. Social control refers to the activities of a group or a society deigned to punish offending and to induce others to follow the prescribed norms of society. Social control can take two forms, formal and informal.

Informal social control consists of the techniques where by people who know one another on a personal basis accord praise and encouragement to those who comply with societal expectations and show displeasure and discouragement to those who do not.
Informal social control is more effective in simple traditional societies and small groups where gossip and other group administered sanctions are sufficient induce people to conform to expectations of behavior.

Formal social control: laws are passed and enforcement agents are created to oversee the implementation of these laws. It is as characteristics where group administered sanctions are not enough to control deviants.

Social control involves the use of ***sanctions***, sanctions are actions through which societies reward conformity to social norms and punish non- conformity (failure to abide by the norms of society).

Norms and sanctions go hand in hand because norms spell out the rules of proper behavior and sanctions spell out rewards or punishments for conformity and non.

Sanctions can be of two types; ***positive and negative***. Positive sanctions encourage behavior that conforms to social norms through rewards. Negative sanctions are punishments which discourage people from violating societal norms. Negative sanctions can be formal (like imprisonment, fines, dismissal from work, etc) or informal/like criticism, ridicule, gossip, stigmatization, ostracization, etc). Like wise positive sanctions (rewards) can also be formal or informal.

5.3 Social Structure: Status And Role

5.3.1 Status

Among the most important components of social interaction is status, which refers to a. recognized social position that an individual occupies within society. Every status involves various rights, duties, or expectations that are widely recognized. Sociologists therefore use this term rather differently from its everyday meaning of "prestige". The statuses people occupy guide the social interaction that occurs within any setting. Within the 'college classroom, for example, the two major statuses of professor and student have different and well-defined rights and duties. *A status, then, is a social definition of who and what we are in relation to specific others.*

We all occupy many statuses simultaneously. *The term **Status set** refers to all the statuses a particular person holds at a given time.* A girl is a daughter in relation to her parents, a sister to her siblings, a friend to others in her social circle and a goalie to members of her hockey team. Just as statuses 5 are complex they are also changeable. A child becomes an adult, a student becomes a lawyer, and people marry to become husbands and wives, sometimes becoming single again as a result of death or divorce.

5.3.1.1 Ascribed Status and Achieved Status

An ascribed status *is a social position that is received at birth or involuntarily assumed later in the life course*. Examples of statuses that are commonly ascribed at birth are being a daughter, a Hispanic, an American, or the Prince of Wales. Becoming a teenage girl a senior citizen, or a widow or widower are examples of statuses ascribed as part of the aging process. All ascribed statuses are matters about which people have little or no personal choice.

In contrast, ***an achieved status*** *refers to a social position that is assumed voluntarily and that reflects a significant measure of personal ability and effort*. Examples of achieved statuses are being an honors student, an Olympic athlete, a computer programmer, or a thief. In each case, the individual has a choice in the matter.

5.3.1.2 Master Status

Among the many statuses a person holds at any time, one often has overpowering significance to everyday life. *A* ***master status*** *is a status that has exceptional importance for social identity, often shaping a person's entire life*. A master status is usually a crucial element of one's self-concept and may be the result of any combination of ascription and achievement.

5.3.2 Role

A second major component of social interaction is ***role,*** *which refers to patterns of expected behavior attached to a particular status*. Every status involves various obligations and privileges that shape the role. The student role, for example, involves obligations to professors and other students, as well as the privilege of being able to devote much of one's time to personal enrichment through academic study. **Thus, individuals occupy a status and perform a role**. Cultural norms suggest how a person with a particular status ought to act, which is often called a role expectation.

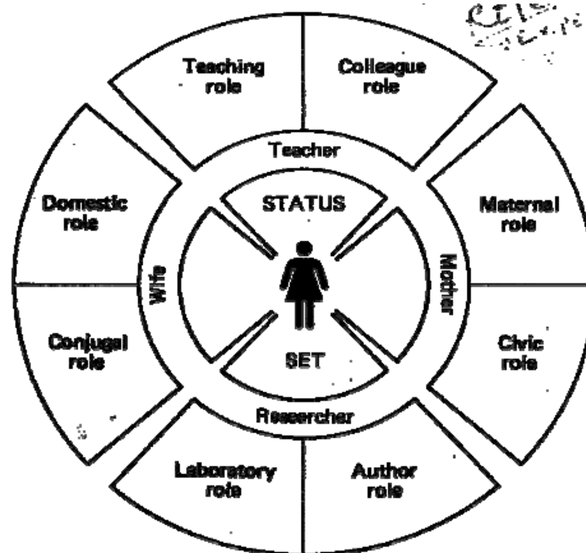


Figure 5-1 Status Set and Role Set

Like status, a role is relational; it organizes our behavior toward some other person. The parent's role, for example, is centered on responsibilities toward a child. Correspondingly, the role of son or daughter consists largely of obligations toward a parent.
*Because individuals occupy many statuses simultaneously-a status set-they perform **multiple roles***. Yet, the total number of roles usually exceeds the number of statuses because each status can involve performing several roles in relation to various other people.

Robert Merton (1968) introduced the term **role set** to identify a number of roles attached to a single status. Figure 6-1 illustrates the status sets and corresponding role sets of one individual.

5.3.2.1 Conflict and Strain

As this example suggests, performing all the roles within an array of role sets is often demanding. Indeed, sometimes various roles' seem almost incompatible. All of the roles in the example-wife, mother, teacher, and researcher draw on a person's limited time and energy. Sociologists use the concept of role conflict to refer to incompatibility among the roles belonging to two or more statuses. We experience role conflict when we find ourselves pulled in various directions while trying to respond to the many status we hold at the same time. A surgeon might choose not to operate on her own son because the personal involvement of motherhood could impair her professional objectivity as a physician.

But even a single status can leave a person with this feeling. The reason is that the many roles linked to one status may make competing demands on us. The concept of role strain refers to incompatibility among the roles corresponding to a single status. A factory supervisor may wish to be a good friend and confidant to other workers. At the same time, however, a supervisor's responsibility for

everyone's performance may require maintaining some measure of personal distance. In short, performing the roles attached to even one status may involve a balancing act" as we attempt to satisfy various duties and obligations.
An individual may handle problems associated with multiple roles in various ways. One simple way to reduce role conflict is to define some roles as more important than others. A new mother, for instance, might devote most of her efforts to parenting and put her career on hold, at least for the present.

Setting priorities is also a common way of reducing the strain among roles linked to a single status. This approach involves emphasizing one particular role, while withdrawing from another with which it conflicts. A father, for example, may decide that maintaining a close and trusting relationship with his child is more important than enforcing cultural norms as a disciplinarian.
Another way to deal with role conflict is to do what Robert Merton (1968) described as "insulating" roles from one another. No role is discarded, but people "compartmentalize" their lives so that roles linked to one status are performed in one place for part of the day, while those corresponding to another status dominate activity elsewhere or at some other time. For example, people usually try to leave their jobs behind them when they go home to assume the responsibilities of spouse or parent.
Role conflict and role strain are everyday experiences in industrial societies because people routinely assume so many statuses and perform an even greater number of roles.

5.3.2.2 Role Exit

An interesting area of recent research is role exit the processes by which people disengage from social roles that have been central to their lives.

6 CULTURE

6.1 The Concept of Culture

The word culture has many different meanings. For some it refers to an appreciation of good literature, music, art, and food. For a biologist, it is likely to be a colony of bacteria or other microorganisms growing in a nutrient medium in a laboratory Petri dish. However, for sociologists and other social scientists, culture is the full range of learned human behavior patterns. The term was first used in this way by the pioneer English Anthropologist Edward B. Tylor in his book, *Primitive Culture,* published in 1871. Tylor said that culture is "*that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.*"

Culture can be defined as the language, believe values behavior and material objects shared by a particular people. From the above discussion suggests we can identify two elements of culture: material and non material culture

Material Culture: refers to the tangible physical aspects of culture such as the goods, and artifact people create. Material culture can range from utensils and jewelries to buildings and armaments.

Non Material Culture: refers to all the non physical products of human society that are create overtime and shared; its knowledge, beliefs, values ,morals, symbols and so on; a groups ways of thinking (its believes, values and other assumptions about the world) and doing(its common patterns of behavior, including language gestures and other forms of interaction)

Sociologically speaking the concept of culture is broader than its common usage. In everyday conversation, “culture” refers to art forms associated with a certain group or time period such as classical forms of literature, music, dance, and painting. Here however, the term refers to *everything* that is part of a people’s way of life. From the traditional, rural, ancient; to the modern, urban, contemporary, and so on.

6.1.1 The components of Culture

Although cultures vary they have 5 common elements in common: symbols, language, Tvalues, norms, and material culture. We will start with the one underlying the rest: symbols.

6.1.1.1 Symbols

A symbol is anything that carries a particular meaning recognized by members of a culture. A whistle, a red light, and a fist raised in the air can all serve as symbols.

Culture can't exist without symbols because there would be no shared meanings among people. Symbols help us communicate ideas such as love or patriotism because they express abstract ideas with visible objects. As the basis of culture they are the basis of everyday reality. Symbols are variable. An action or an object with important symbolic meaning with one culture may have a very different meaning or no meaning at all in another culture.

Example: The "okay" gesture has various meanings in different societies.

Thus symbols that bind together people of one society can also separate people who live within various societies of the world.

To some degree symbols also vary within a single society. For instance opening the door for women may signify a common courtesy in the minds of some men yet symbolize male dominance to many women.

Cultural symbols often change overtime. Blue jeans were first strong and inexpensive clothing worn by people engaged in physical labor, however later "designer jeans" became much the opposite: fashionable status symbols.

6.1.1.2 Language

Language is defined as a system of symbols with standard meanings that allow members of a society to communicate with one another. It is the means by which people enter the world of culture. Language is the most important means of cultural transmission.

6.1.1.3 Material Culture

In addition to the intangible cultural elements such as values and norms, every culture includes a wide range of material human creations that are refereed as artifacts.

Material and non material elements of culture are closely related. An examination of society's artifacts reveals that the things people create often express their cultural values.

6.1.2 Culture Universals

Cultural universals: are cultural traits that are shared by all of humanity collectively. Examples of such general traits are communicating with a verbal language, using age and gender to classify people, and raising children in some sort of family setting. No matter where people live in the world, they share these universal cultural traits. However, different cultures have developed their own specific ways of carrying out or expressing these general traits.

Examples of such "human cultural" traits include:

1. communicating with a verbal language consisting of a limited set of sounds and grammatical rules for constructing sentences
2. using age and gender to classify people (e.g., teenager, senior citizen, woman, man)
3. classifying people based on marriage and descent relationships and having kinship terms to refer to them (e.g., wife, mother, uncle, cousin)
4. raising children in some sort of family setting
5. having a sexual division of labour (e.g., men's work versus women's work)

6.1.3 Multiculturalism and Subculture

Although all societies have cultures, it often is the case that one society may include several quite distinct cultures-which often is referred to as ***multiculturalism.*** To deal conceptually with multiculturalism, sociologists developed the concept of subculture.
A subculture is a culture within a culture-a distinctive set of beliefs; morals, customs and the like are developed or maintained by some set of persons within the larger society.

6.1.4 Prejudice and Discrimination

Prejudice refers to negative or hostile beliefs or attitudes about some socially identified set of persons. People become the objects of hatred, contempt, suspicion, or condescension simply because of who they are, without regard for their individual qualities. Discrimination refers to actions taken against some socially defined set of people to deny members, collectively, rights and privileges enjoyed freely by others. When members of a racial, ethnic, or religious minority are refused employment, promotion, residence in a neighborhood, and the like, these actions constitute discrimination. Put another way, prejudice consists of thoughts and beliefs, while discrimination consists of actions.

But, while multiculturalism often leads to conflict, prejudice, and discrimination, history provides examples of more pleasant solutions.

6.1.5 Assimilation and Accommodation

Assimilation refers to the process of exchanging one culture for another. Usually, this term is applied to people who adjust to new surroundings by adopting the prevailing culture as their Own. Think of assimilation in terms of fitting into or disappearing into a new culture. For example, to become fully assimilated into an Ethiopian culture, an immigrant from Kenya would need to change those ways of speaking, acting, and thinking that distinguish the two cultures. Or an American would be fully assimilated into Mexican culture when native-born Mexicans could not detect his or her American background.

A second Outcome is accommodation, which describes the situation where two groups find they are able to ignore some important cultural differences between them and emphasize common interests instead. During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Catholic-Protestant conflicts agitated American society. A rapid influx of Irish Catholics, fleeing the terrible famine of 1845-46 in Ireland, caused many Protestants in the United States to fear that their religious culture was being threatened. Over the decades, the cultural antagonisms between Protestants and Catholics waned until it became possible for them to emphasize their common Christianity rather than their historical theological disputes. At that point, accommodation had occurred.

6.2 Socialization

6.2.1 Why Is Socialization Important?

Socialization is the lifelong process of social interaction through which individuals acquire a self-identity and the physical, mental, and social skills needed for survival in society. It is the essential link between the individual and society (Robertson, 1989). Socialization enables each of us to develop our human potential and learn the ways of thinking, talking, and acting that are essential for social living.

6.2.2 Agents Of Socialization

Agents of socialization are the persons, groups, or institutions that teach us what we need to know in order to participate in society. We are exposed to many agents of socialization throughout our lifetime. Here, we look at the most pervasive ones in childhood-the family, the school, peer groups, and the mass media.

6.2.2.1 The Family

The family is the most important agent of socialization in all societies. The initial love and nurturance we receive from our families are essential to normal cognitive, emotional, and physical development. Furthermore, our parents are our first teachers. From infancy, our families transmit cultural and social values to us.

Functionalists emphasize that families are the primary locus for the procreation and socialization of children in industrialized nations. Most of us form an emerging sense of self and acquire most of our beliefs and values within the family context. We also learn about culture (including language, attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms) as it is interpreted by our parents and other relatives.

Families also are the primary source of emotional support. Ideally, people receive love, understanding, security, acceptance, intimacy, and companionship within families. The role of the family is especially significant because young children have little social experience beyond its boundaries; they have no basis for comparison or for evaluating how they are treated by their own family.

To a large extent, the family is where we acquire our specific social position in society. From birth, we are a part of the specific ethnic, economic, religious, and regional sub cultural grouping of our family.

6.2.2.2 The School

It is evident that with the rapid expansion of specialized technical and scientific knowledge and the increased time children are in educational settings, schools continue to play an enormous role in the socialization of young people. For many people, the formal education process is an undertaking that lasts up to twenty years.

As the number of one-parent families and families in which both parents work outside the home has increased dramatically, the number of children in daycare and preschool programs also has grown rapidly. Studies generally have found that daycare and preschool programs may have a positive effect on the overall socialization of children. These programs are especially beneficial for children from less-advantaged backgrounds in that they provide these children with valuable learning experiences not available at home. Many scholars also have found that children from all social classes and family backgrounds may benefit from learning experiences in early childhood education programs that they have not had in their homes.

Schools teach specific knowledge and skills; they also have a profound effect on children's self-image, beliefs, and values. As children enter school for the first time, they are evaluated and systematically compared with one another by the teacher. A

permanent, official record is kept of each child's personal behavior and academic activities.

Regardless of whether we see the educational process as positive or negative in its consequences, schools clearly do expand children's horizons beyond their family and immediate neighborhood.

6.2.2.3 Peer Groups

As soon as we are old enough to have acquaintances outside the home, most of us begin to rely heavily on peer groups as a source of information and approval about social behavior. A peer group is a group of people who are linked by common interests, equal social position, and (usually) similar age. In early childhood, peer groups often are composed of classmates in daycare, preschool, and elementary school. In adolescence, these groups typically are people with similar interests and social activities. As adults, we continue to participate in peer groups of people with whom we share common interests and comparable occupations, income, or social position.

Peer groups function as agents of socialization by contributing to our sense of "belonging" and our feelings of self-worth. Unlike families and schools, peer groups provide children and adolescents with some degree of freedom from parents and other authority figures. Peer groups also teach and reinforce cultural norms while providing important information about "acceptable" behavior. The peer group is both a product of culture and one of its major transmitters. In other words, peer groups simultaneously reflect the larger culture and serve as a conduit for passing on culture to young people.

Individuals must earn their acceptance with their peers by conforming to a given group's own norms, attitudes, speech patterns, and dress codes. When we conform to our peer group's expectations, we are rewarded; if we do not conform, we may be ridiculed or even expelled from the group. Conforming to the demands of peers frequently places children and adolescents at cross purposes with their parents.

6.2.2.4 Mass Media

An agent of socialization that has a profound impact on both children and adults is the mass media, comprised of large-scale organizations that use print or electronic means (such as radio, television, or film) to communicate with large numbers of people. The media function as socializing agents in several ways: (1) they inform us about events, (2) they introduce us to a wide variety of people, (3) they provide an array of view-points on current issues, (4) they make us aware of products and services that, if we purchase them, supposedly will help us to be accepted by others, and (5) they entertain us by providing the opportunity to live vicariously (through other people's experiences).

6.2.3 Gender Socialization

Gender socialization is the aspect of socialization that contains specific messages and practices concerning the nature of being female or male in a specific group or society. Gender socialization is important in determining what we think the "preferred" sex of a child should be and in influencing our beliefs about acceptable behaviors for males and females.

In some families, gender socialization starts before birth. Parents who learn the sex of the fetus through ultrasound or amniocentesis often purchase color-coded and gender-typed clothes, toys, and nursery decorations in anticipation of their daughter's or son's arrival. After birth, parents may respond differently toward male and female infants; they often play more roughly with boys and talk more lovingly to girls. Throughout childhood and adolescence, boys and girls typically are assigned different household chores and given different privileges (such as how late they may stay out at night).

Like the family, schools, peer groups, and the media contribute to our gender socialization. From kindergarten through college, teachers and peers reward gender-appropriate attitudes and behavior. Sports reinforce traditional gender roles through a rigid division of events into male and female categories. The media also are a powerful source of gender socialization; from an early age, children's books, television programs, movies, and music provide subtle and not-so subtle messages about "masculine" and "feminine" behavior.

6.2.4 Socialization through the life course

Why is socialization a lifelong process? Throughout our lives, we continue to learn. Each time we experience a change in status (such as becoming a university student or getting married), we learn a new set of rules, roles, and relationships. Even before we achieve a new status, we often participate in anticipatory socialization-the process by which knowledge and skills are learned for future roles. Many societies organize social experience according to age.

6.2.4.1 Infancy and Childhood

Some social scientists believe that a child's sense of self is formed at a very early age and that it is difficult to change this view later in life. Interactionists emphasize that during infancy and early childhood, family support and guidance are crucial to a child's developing self-concept. In some families, children are provided with emotional warmth, feelings of mutual trust, and a sense of security. These families come closer to our ideal cultural belief that childhood should be a time of carefree play, safety, and freedom from economic, political, and sexual responsibilities.

6.2.4.2 Adolescence

In industrialized Societies, the adolescent (or teenage) years represent a buffer between childhood and adulthood. Anticipatory socialization often is associated with

adolescence, whereby many young people spend much of their time planning or being educated for future roles they hope to occupy. However, other adolescents (such as 15- and 16-year-old mothers) may have to plunge into adult responsibilities at this time. Adolescence often is characterized by emotional and social unrest. In the process of developing their own identities, some young people come into conflict with parents, teachers, and other authority figures who attempt to restrict their freedom.

6.2.4.3 Adulthood

One of the major differences between child and adult socialization is the degree of freedom of choice. If young adults are able to support themselves financially, they gain the ability to make more choices about their own lives. In early adulthood (usually until about age 40), people work toward their own goals of creating meaningful relationships with others, finding employment, and seeking personal fulfillment. Of course, young adults continue to be socialized by their parents, teachers, peers, and the media, but they also learn new attitudes and behaviors. For example, when we marry or have children, we learn new roles as partners or parents. Adults often learn about fads and fashions in clothing, music, and language from their children. Parents in one study indicated that they had learned new attitudes and behaviors about drug use, sexuality, sports, leisure, and ethnic issues from their university aged children.

Workplace, or occupational, socialization is one of the most important types of adult socialization.

6.2.5 Resocialization

Resocialization is the process of learning a new and different set of attitudes, values, and behaviors from those in one's previous background and experience. It may be voluntary or involuntary. In either case, people undergo changes that are much more rapid and pervasive than the gradual adaptations that socialization usually involves.

6.2.5.1 Voluntary Resocialization

Resocialization is voluntary when we assume a new status (such as becoming a student, an employee, or a retiree) of our own free will. Sometimes, voluntary resocialization involves medical or psychological treatment or religious conversion, in which case the person's existing attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors must undergo strenuous modification to a new regime and a new way of life. For example, resocialization for adult survivors of emotional/physical child abuse includes extensive therapy in order to form new patterns of thinking and action, somewhat like Alcoholics Anonymous and its twelve-step program that has become the basis for many other programs dealing with addictive behavior.

6.2.5.2 *Involuntary Resocialization*

Involuntary resocialization occurs against a person's wishes and generally takes place within a total institution-a place where people are isolated from the rest of society for a set period of time and come under the control of the officials who run the institution . Military boot camps, jails and prisons, concentration camps, and some mental hospitals are total institutions. In these settings, people are totally stripped of their former selves-or depersonalized-through a degradation ceremony. Inmates entering prison, for example, are required to strip, shower, and wear assigned institutional clothing. In the process, they are searched, weighed, fingerprinted, photographed, and given no privacy even in showers and restrooms. Their official identification becomes not a name but a number. In this abrupt break from their former existence, they must leave behind their personal possessions and their family and friends. The depersonalization process continues as they are required to obey rigid rules and to conform to their new environment.

After stripping people of their former identities, the institution attempts to build a more compliant person. A system of rewards and punishments (such as providing or withholding cigarettes and television or exercise privileges) encourages conformity to institutional norms. Some individuals may be rehabilitated; others become angry and hostile toward the system that has taken away their freedom. While the assumed purpose of involuntary resocialization is to reform persons so that they will conform to societal standards of conduct after their release, the ability of total institutions to modify offenders' behavior in a meaningful manner has been widely questioned. In many prisons, for example, inmates may conform to the norms of the prison or of other inmates, but little relationship exists between those norms and the laws of society.

7 SOCIAL INEQUALITY AND SOCIAL PROCESS

7.1 Social Stratification

What Is Social Stratification?

In every society, some people have more valued resources-money, housing, education, health, and power-than others. Such patterns are commonly called *social inequality.* Some social inequality reflects differences in people themselves-their varying abilities and efforts, for example. However, it also relates to the *society* in which they live. Sociologists use the term social stratification to refer to a system by which categories of people in a society are ranked in a hierarchy.

Four key principles explain social stratification:

1. Social stratification is a characteristic of society, not simply a function of individual differences. It is a society-wide system that unequally distributes social resources among categories of people. In the most technologically primitive societies-the hunting and gathering societies little was produced so only rudimentary social stratification could exist. In technologically advanced societies, however social resources are unequally distributed to various social categories, regardless of people's individual innate abilities.
2. Social stratification is universal but variable. No society is completely devoid of social stratification. While social stratification in technologically primitive societies is minimal and limited to age and sex, historically, as societies develop more sophisticated technologies, they also forge more complex and often more rigid systems for distributing goods the society produces. Yet social stratification, though universal, is also highly variable. One important global pattern is that social stratification in agrarian societies is more rigid than that common in industrial societies. Less pronounced differences in systems of social inequality also distinguish today's industrial societies from one another.

3. Social stratification persists over generations. Social stratification is closely linked to the family; that is, children assume the social positions of their parents, a person's social position, at least initially, is ascribed; therefore, systems of social stratification tend to retain considerable stability.
4. Social stratification is supported by patterns of believe. No system of social stratification is likely to persist over many generations unless is widely viewed as fair.

7.2 Forms of Social stratification

7.2.1 Caste

The caste system is by definition a form of differentiation which is hereditary and extremely rigid. The system is usually maintained by religion. It is synonymous with traditional Indian society. According to Hindu religious doctrine, there were five distinguishable groups in Indian society. In order of importance these were:

1. Brahmans - the priest caste, who had been born from the mouth of the Hindu god;
2. Kshatriyas - the military caste, created from the arms of the god;
3. Vaishyas - the merchant caste, formed from the thighs of the god;
4. Sudras - artisans, born from the feet of the god;
5. Untouchables - outcasts employed only in the most menial tasks.

There were strict rule about eating habits and to touch a lower caste individual or anything touched by one brought the necessity for ritual cleansing.

A caste was a social group, membership of which was hereditary and fixed for life (except for the possibility of becoming an outcaste) and whose members were constrained to marry within the major caste but outside their own clan. Each major caste was subdivided; each subdivision was frequently subdivided; and so on, almost ad il1fillitum, each subdivision being treated as a caste with its own strict rules concerning food preparation, eating, drinking, smoking, bodily contact, spatial proximity to members of other castes, the wearing of ornaments, language and occupation.

Life for the majority of people was made palatable by the doctrine of *karma*, i.e. caste membership in this life is the result of good or bad conduct in a previous life, and rebirth into a higher caste could be achieved by those who behaved well in the caste into which they had been born.

7.2.2 The class System

A caste system bolsters stable, agrarian societies; industrial social life, in contrast, depends on more individual initiative, extensive education, and specialized skills. Social inequality in industrialized societies thus takes the form of class system, systems of social stratification based on individual achievement

In class systems, social categories—or classes-are not as rigidly defined as they are in caste systems. This "openness" promotes the development of individual talents, leading to relatively high rates of social mobility that blur class distinctions. The breakdown of clear social categories also stems from several other factors. First, especially at the outset, industrial economies encourage migration from traditional rural villages to cities

and by producing more wealth and providing more opportunity for education, cities themselves promote social mobility. Second, industrial societies usually develop democratic political systems in which political rights arc extended to more and more people. In other words, while each category in a caste system has a different standing before the law, class systems tend to embrace the principle (though imperfectly applied) of equal standing before the law. Third, industrialization generally attracts immigrants to a society. A century ago, for example, drawn by opportunity, millions of people carne to the United States and took low-paying jobs at the bottom of the social hierarchy pushing others upward to positions of higher income and greater social prestige. In time, many of these immigrants themselves were similarly promoted.

Class systems, then, rest on the belief that individual talents and abilities, rather than birth, should determine social position.

To recapitulate, class systems differ from slavery, or castes in four main respects:

1. Unlike the other types of strata, classes are not established legal or religious provisions; membership is not based upon inherent position as specified either legally or by custom. Class system is typically more fluid than the other types of stratification and boundaries between classes are never clear-cut. There are no restrictions on intermarriage between people from different class

2. An individual's class is at least in some part achieved, not simply ascribed at birth as is common in other types of stratification system. Mobility—movement upwards and downwards in the class is much more common than in the other types. (In the caste system, individual mobility from one caste to another is impossible

3. Classes depend on economic differences between groupings of individuals—inequalities in possession and control of material resources. In the other types of stratification systems, non economic factors such as the influence of religion in the Indian caste system are generally more important.

4. In the other types of stratification system, inequalities are expressed primarily in personal relationships of duty or obligation - between serf and lord, slave and master, or lower- and higher-caste individuals. Class systems, by contrast, operate mainly through large-scale connections of an impersonal kind. For instance, one major basis of class differences is to be found in inequalities of pay and working conditions; these affect all the people in specific occupational categories, as a result of economic circumstances pertaining in the economy as a whole.

We can define a class as a large-scale grouping of people who share common economic resources, which strongly influence the types of life-style they are able to lead. Ownership of wealth, together with occupation, is the chief bases of class differences. The major classes that exist in Western societies are an upper class (the wealthy,

employers and industrialists, plus top executives - those who own or directly control productive resources); a middle class (which includes most white-collar workers and professionals); and a working class (those in blue-collar or manual jobs). In some of the industrialized countries, such as France or Japan, a fourth class - peasants (people engaged in traditional types of agricultural production) - has also until recently been important. In Third World countries, peasants are usually still by far the largest class.

7.2.3 Slavery

Slavery, whose essential characteristics is ownership of some people by others has been common in world history.

Slavery was based on one of these three factors.
The first was debt. In some cultures, an individual who could not, pay a debt could be enslaved by the creditor. The second was a violation of the law. Instead of being killed, a murderer or thief might be enslaved by the family of the victim as compensation for the loss he or she had caused. The third was war and conquest. When one group of people conquered another, it was often convenient w enslave at least some of the vanquished.

Slavery, then, was a sign of defeat in battle, of a criminal act, or of debt, not the sign of some supposedly inherently inferior status.

Common Characteristics of Slavery

The practice of slavery differed markedly from one region or time to another. However, whether slavery was the outcome of debt, punishment, conquests, or racism; whether it was permanent or temporary; whether it was inheritable or not, a slave was the property of another person, and a legal system dictated by slave owners enforced the slave's status. Slavery was a major divide between people, marking those who were free (and thus entitled to certain privileges by the law) and those who were slaves (and not so entitled).

7.3 Social Mobility

In studying stratification, we have to consider not only the differences between economic positions or occupations, but what happens to the individuals who occupy them.

Definition
Social mobility is a term used by sociologists to refer to ***the movement of individuals and groups between different social categories or different socio-economic positions.***
Social mobility can be vertical or horizontal. Vertical mobility means movement up or down the socioeconomic scale. Those who gain in property, income or status are said to

be upwardly mobile, while those who move in the opposite direction are downwardly mobile. In modern societies there is also a great deal of lateral mobility, which refers to geographical movement between neighborhoods, towns or regions. Vertical and lateral mobility are often combined. For instance, an individual working in a company in one city might be promoted to a higher position in a branch of the firm located in another town, or even in a different country.
There are two ways of studying social mobility. First, we can look at individuals' own careers - how far they move up or down the social scale in the course of their working lives. This is usually called ***intragenerational mobility***. Alternatively, we can analyze how far children enter the same type of occupation as their parents or grandparents. Mobility across the generations is called ***intergenerational mobility.***

7.4 Social Change

7.4.1 What is social change?

Earlier chapters have examined human societies in terms of both stability and change. Relatively *static* social patterns include status and roles, social stratification and various social institutions. The dynamic forces that have recast humanity's consciousness, behavior and needs, range from innovations in technology to the growth of bureaucracy and the expansion of cities. These are *all* dimensions of social change, *the transformation of culture and social institutions over time.* The process of social change has four key characteristics:

1. *Social change happens everywhere, although the rate of change varies from place to place.* Still, some societies change faster than others. Hunting and gathering societies tend to change quite slowly. Members of technologically complex societies, on the other hand, can sense significant change even with in a single lifetime. Moreover, even in a given society, some cultural elements change more quickly than others. William Ogburn's (1964) theory of *cultural lag* recognizes that material culture (that is, things) usually changes faster than non-material culture (ideas and attitudes). For example, medical techniques that prolong life have developed more rapidly than have ethical standards for deciding when and how to use them.

2. *Social change is sometimes intentional but often unplanned*. Industrial societies actively promote many kinds of change. For example, scientists seek more efficient forms of energy and advertisers try to convince consumers that life is incomplete without some new gadget. Yet even the experts rarely envisage all the consequences of the changes they promote.

Early car manufacturers certainly understood that cars would allow people to travel in a single day distances that had required weeks or months to traverse a century before. But no one foresaw how profoundly the mobility provided by cars would reshape

European societies, scattering family members, threatening the environment and reshaping cities and suburbs. In addition, automotive pioneers could hardly have predicted the 50,000 deaths each year in car accidents in the Western world alone.

3. *Social change often generates controversy*. As the history of the car demonstrates, most Social change yields both positive and negative consequences. Capitalists welcomed the Industrial Revolution because advancing technology increased productivity and swelled profits. Many workers, however, fearing that machines would make their *skills* obsolete, strongly resisted 'progress'. In the Western world, changing patterns of interaction between black people and white people, between women and men and between gays and heterosexuals give rise to misunderstandings, tensions and, sometimes, outright hostility.

4. *Some changes matter more than others*. Some social changes have only passing significance, whereas other transformations resonate for generations. At one extreme, clothing fads among the young burst on the scene and dissipate quickly. At the other, we are still adjusting to powerful technological advances such as television half a century after its introduction. Looking ahead, who can predict with any certainty how computers will transform the entire world during the next century? Will the Information Revolution turn out to be as pivotal as the Industrial Revolution? Like the car and television, computers will have both beneficial and deleterious effects, providing new kinds of jobs while eliminating old ones, joining people together in ever-expanding electronic networks while threatening personal privacy.

7.4.2 Causes of social change

Social change has many causes. And in a world linked by sophisticated communication and transportation technology, change in one place often begets change elsewhere.

7.4.2.1 Culture and change

Culture is a dynamic system that continually gains new elements and *loses* others. There are three important sources of cultural change. First, *invention* produces new objects, ideas and social patterns. Through rocket Propulsion research, which began in the 1940s, we have engineered high-tech vehicles for space flight. Today we take such technology for granted; during the next century a significant number of people may well travel in space.

Second, *discoveries occur when people first take note of certain elements of the world or learn* to see them in a new way. Medical advances, for example, offer a growing understanding of the human body. Beyond the direct effects for human health, medical discoveries have also stretched life expectancy, setting in motion 'the graying of the Western World'.

Third, *diffusion* creates change as trade, migration and mass communication spread

cultural elements throughout the world. Ralph Linton (1937) recognised that many familiar elements of a culture have come to us from other lands. For example, cloth was developed in Asia whilst coins were devised in Turkey. Generally, material things diffuse more readily than non-material cultural traits. The Kaiapo, described at the beginning of this chapter, have been quick to adopt television but reluctant to embrace the materialism and individualism that sometimes seize those who spend hours watching Western commercial programming.

Through much migration, the Western world has steadily changed in response to cultural diffusion. In recent decades, people from Africa, Asia and other parts of the world have been introducing new cultural patterns, clearly evident in the sights, smells and sounds of cities across European countries. Conversely, the global power of the Western world ensures that much of Western culture - from the taste of beef burgers to the sounds of Pavarotti - is being diffused to other societies.

7.4.2.2 Conflict and change

Tension and conflict within a society also produce change. Marx heralded class conflict as the engine that drives societies from one historical era to another. In industrial-capitalist societies, he maintained, struggle between capitalists and workers propels society towards a socialist system of production. In the century since Marx's death, this model has proven simplistic. Yet, he correctly foresaw that social conflict arising from inequality (involving race, gender and sexuality as well as social class) would force changes in every society, including our own.

7.4.2.3 Ideas and change

Max Weber, too, contributed to our understanding of social change. While Weber acknowledged the importance of conflict based on material production, he traced the roots of social change to the world of ideas. He illustrated his argument by showing how people who display charisma can convey a message that sometimes changes the world.

Weber also highlighted the importance of ideas by revealing how the world view of early
Protestants prompted them to embrace industrial capitalism. By showing that industrial capitalism developed primarily in areas of Western Europe where the Protestant work ethic was strong, Weber (1958; orig. 1904-5) concluded that the disciplined rationality of Calvinist Protestants was instrumental in this change.

Ideas also fuel social movements. Social movements may emerge from the determination to modify society in some manner (say, to clean up the environment) or from a sense that existing social arrangements are unjust. The international gay rights movement draws strength from the contention that lesbians and gay men should enjoy rights and opportunities equal to those of the heterosexual majority. Opposition to the gay rights movement, moreover, reveals the power of ideas to inhibit as well as to

advance social change.

7.4.2.4 The natural environment and change

Human societies are closely connected to their natural environment. For this reason, change in one tends to produce change in the other. By and large, 'modern' culture has cast nature as a force to be tamed and reshaped to human purposes. From the onset of industrialization and the rise of capitalism, people have systematically cut down forests to create fields for farming and to make materials for building; they have established towns and cities, extended roads in every direction and dammed rivers as a source of water and energy. Such human construction not only reflects a cultural determination to control the natural environment; it also points up the centrality of the idea of 'growth' in our way of life. But the consequences of this thinking have placed increasing stress on the natural environment. Western societies confront problems from growing mountains of solid waste, as well as air and water pollution, all the while consuming the lion's share of global resources. A growing awareness that such patterns are not sustainable in the long term is forcing us to confront the need to change our way of life in some basic respects.

7.4.2.5 Demographic change

Population growth places escalating demands on the natural environment, and also alters cultural patterns. In cities of the Netherlands, a high-density nation, homes are small and narrow with extremely steep staircases to make efficient use of space. In Tokyo, Japan, commuters routinely endure crowding on subways that would challenge the patience of a lifelong Londoner or Parisian. The fast-paced and anonymous way of life that is typical of populous cities barely resembles that found in the rural villages and small towns common to our past. Profound change also results from the shifting composition of a population. As Chapter 14 ('Ageing and the Elderly') explained, many societies are growing older. Soon nearly one in five people in Western countries will be 6S or older. Medical research and health care services already focus extensively on the elderly, and common stereotypes about old people will be undermined as more men and women enter this stage of life. Ways of life may change in countless additional directions as homes and household products are redesigned to meet the needs of growing ranks of older people. Migration within and among societies is another demographic factor that promotes change. Between 1870 and 1930, millions of rural peoples in Western societies, along with millions of immigrants from poorer countries, swelled the industrial cities. As a result, farm communities declined, metropolises burgeoned and the Western world became for the first time a predominantly urban society. Similar changes are taking place today as people moving between European Union member states interact with new immigrants from Africa and Asia.

7.4.2.6 Modernity

A central concept in the study of social change is modernity, *social patterns linked to industrialization.* In everyday usage, modernity (its Latin root means 'lately') designates the present in relation to the past. Sociologists include within this catchall concept the many social patterns set in motion by the Industrial Revolution beginning in Western Europe in the mid eighteenth century. Modernity then is the process of social change initiated by industrialization.

7.5 Social movements

Besides those engaged in revolutionary activity, a wide variety of other social movements, some long-enduring, some highly transient, have existed in modern societies. Social movements are as evident a feature of the contemporary world as are the formal, bureaucratic organizations they often oppose. Studying their nature and impact forms an area of major interest in sociology.

7.5.1 Definition

A social movement may be defined as a collective attempt to further a common interest, or secure a common goal, through collective action outside the sphere of established institutions. The definition has to be a broad one, precisely because of the variations between different types of movement. Many social movements are very small, numbering perhaps no more than a few dozen members; others might include thousands or even millions of people. Some movements carry on their activities within the laws of the society or societies in which they exist, while others operate as illegal or underground groups. Often, of course, laws are altered partly or wholly as a result of the action of social movements. For example, groups of workers that called their members out on strike used to be engaging in illegal activity, punished with varying degrees of severity in different countries. Eventually, however, the laws were amended, making the strike a permissible tactic of industrial conflict. Other modes of economic protest, by contrast, still remain outside the law in most countries - such as sit-ins in factories or workplaces.

The dividing lines between social movements and formal organizations are sometimes blurred, because movements which become well established usually take on bureaucratic characteristics. Social movements may thus gradually become formal organizations, while - less frequently - organizations may devolve into social movements. The Salvation Army, for example, began as a social movement, but has now taken on most of the characteristics of a more permanent organization. An example of the opposite process would be the case of a political party which is banned, and forced to go underground, perhaps becoming a guerrilla movement.

Similarly, it is not always easy to separate social movements from interest groups - associations set up to influence policy-makers in ways that will favor their members. An

example of an interest group would be the Automobile Association, which lobbies Parliament to defend the interests of motorists. But is the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, which regularly lobbies Parliament about matters to do with nuclear weapons, an interest group or part of a more wide-ranging mass movement? No clear-cut answer can be given in such cases; social movements often actively promote their causes through organized channels while also engaging in more unorthodox forms of activity.

7.5.2 Classifying social movements

Many different ways of classifying social movements have been proposed. Perhaps the neatest and most comprehensive classification is that developed by **David Aberle**, who distinguishes four types of movements.

1. **Transformative movements** aim at far-reaching change in the society or societies of which they are a part. The changes their members anticipate are cataclysmic, all-embracing, and often violent. Examples are revolutionary movements, or some radical religious movements. Many millenarian movements, for instance, have foreseen a more or less complete restructuring of society when the era of salvation arrives.

2. **Reformative movements** have more limited objectives, aspiring to alter only some aspects of the existing social order. They concern themselves with specific kinds of inequality or injustice. Cases in point are the Women's Christian Temperance Union or anti-abortion groups.

Transformative and reformative movements both are concerned primarily with securing changes in society. Aberle's other two types are each mainly aimed at changing the habits or outlook of individuals.

3. **Redemptive movements** seek to rescue people from ways of life seen as corrupting. Many religious movements belong in this category, in so far as they concentrate on personal salvation. Examples are the Pentecostal sects, which believe that individuals' spiritual development is the true indication of their worth (Schwartz, 1970).

4. **Alterative movements**, which aim at securing partial change in individuals. They do not seek to achieve a complete alteration in people's habits, but are concerned with changing certain specific traits. An illustration is Alcoholics Anonymous.