#### **Chapter One**

#### **1. The Discipline of Sociology**

### **1.1. Definition, Nature and Subject Matter of Sociology**

The term sociology comes from the Latin “Socius” that may variously mean society, association, togetherness or companionship and the Greek “logos”, literally means to speak about or word.

Thus, the etymological and literal definition of sociology is the word or speaking about society. A simple definition of sociology is the study or the science of human society.

Auguste Comte (1798-1857) who ‘freed’ or obtain sociology from social philosophy for the first time. He is regarded as one of the founding fathers of sociology.

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.

Sociology can also be defined as referring to the formal study of how humans behave in groups with a special focus on how human groups originate, how they are organized, and how they relate to one another.It includes the study of the customs, structures, and institutions that emerge from interaction, the forces that held together and weaken them, and the effects groups and organizations have on the behavior and character of persons.

As a science of society, sociology mainly focuses on the influence of social relationships up on people’s attitudes and behavior and on how societies are established and change.

**A society** can be defined as a group of people who share a common culture, occupy a particular territorial area, and feel themselves to constitute a *unified* and *distinct* entity.

1.1.2.**The Subject Matter of Sociology**

The subject matter of sociology covers from the intimate family to the hostile mob; from organized criminalities to religious denominations; from race, gender and social class to the shared beliefs of a common culture; and from the sociology of work to the sociology of sports.

**Sociology emphasizes more on the following areas of interest.**

* Social interaction and its effect on the routine daily activities of human being and their behavior.
* The patterns of social interaction and the fundamental laws and principles that governs social relationship.
* The effect of the social world (social environment) on our behavior, world views, life style, personality attitudes, etc.
* How we create the social realities as they are.

**1.2. The Sociological Imagination**

A basic reason for studying sociology is that by understanding the society in which we live, we can gain fuller insights in to ourselves. An American sociologist C. Wright Mills (1959) termed this component as ***sociological imagination.***

Sociological imagination is an approach to the understanding of human behavior by placing it in its **broader** social context. According to the American sociologist C. Wright Mills (1916-1962), the sociological imagination is an **unusual type of creative thinking that** sociologists rely on in attempting to understand social behavior.

Sociological imagination is the ability to see ourselves, concerns, problems and hopes as entwined within the larger social and historical context in which we live. That means our private experiences and personal difficulties are entwined with our society’s structural arrangements and the historical times in which we live.

The sociological perspective helps us to escape from this narrow personal view by exposing the broader social context that underlies human behavior. It helps us to see the links between what people do and the social setting that shapes their behavior.

Generally, it is an empowering tool that allows us to look beyond a limited understanding of thing and viewing the personal and global happening in a new way and through a broader and multi-dimensional lenses than we normally use.

The sociological imagination helps us distinguish between personal troubles and social (public) issues*.* ***Personal troubles*** are private problems that affect individuals and the network of people with which they associate regularly. As a result, these problems must be solved by individuals within their immediate social settings. For example, one person being unemployed or running up a high credit card debt could be identified as a personal trouble. Whereas ***public issues*** are problems that affect large numbers of people and often require solutions at the societal level. Wide spread unemployment and massive, nationwide consumer debt are examples of public issues.

The sociological imagination helps us place seemingly personal troubles, such as losing one’s job or over spending on credit cards, in to a larger social context, where we can distinguish whether and how personal troubles may be related to public issues.

**Benefits of Sociological Imagination**

We can critically assess the validity/ truth of commonly held assumptions. Putting it in other way, we start to realize that certain ideas we have taken for granted may not be entirely true. That is certain ideas which are considered as a normal and natural happens to be far from the exact and appropriate reality that should have been to be. Thus, a sociological thinking encourages us to whether these beliefs are critically true and to the extent that they are not.

***-The sociological imagination enables us to recognize both the opportunities and the constraints that characterize our lives.***

***-The sociological imagination empowers us to be active participants in our society.*** The greater our understanding of the operation of society, however, the more we can take an active part in shaping social life.

***-The sociological imagination helps us to recognize human diversity and human suffering and to cope-up or confront the challenge of living in a diverse world****.*

**1.3.2. Macro and Micro Sociology**

There are generally two levels of analysis in sociology:- micro-sociology and macro-sociology.

**Micro-Sociology** concentrates on the study of small groups and the patterns and processes of human social relations, i.e. face to face interactions between humans. It is interested in small scale aspects of society or social phenomena. It focuses on social interaction analyzing interpersonal relationships, and on what people do and how they behave when they interact.

**Macro-Sociology** concentrates on large groups, events or whole societies. Macro sociologists attempt to explain the fundamental patterns and processes of large-scale social relations. It focuses on the broad features of society to examine the large scale social phenomena that determine how social groups are organized and positioned within the social structure. It also emphasizes upon large scale and long term social processes, including the state, class, the family, the economy, culture, and society. what people think, say and do at the micro-level is influenced and shaped by large structures at the macro level.

**1.4. Sociology and Its Relation with Other Disciplines**

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

**Political Science and sociology**

* 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 science is the study of state (government): various forms and structures whereas sociology is primarily concerned with the study of society as a whole. Sociology especially focuses on the impact of various forms of government on people’s lives.
* Political science focuses primarily on formal political institutions such as systems of the administration and political ideas and theories whereas sociology incorporates in its studies both formal and informal institutions like tribe and ethnic groups.

**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.

**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 artifact 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 and sociology**

* The focus of psychology is on processes that occur within the individual, within the "skin-bound organism." Psychologists are primarily concerned with mental processes: intelligence, emotions, perception, and memory.
* Sociology has no primary interest in the individual, or in his personality, or in his individual behavior but concerned with the nature of the group to which individuals belong and the nature of society on which they live.
* In short, psychology studies the individual, social psychology the individual in the social group, and sociology the groups themselves and the largest social structure in which both the individual and the group process occurs.

**Similarity of sociology to other discipline**

* 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.
* Both sociology and economics are interested in the economic problems in society (issues of poverty and income distribution).
* Moreover, sociology studies the social factors that influence economic growth like employer-employee relationship, the role of other social institutions (e.g. the family) on production.
* 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.
* **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.
* Unlike psychologists, sociologists stress factors external to the individual to determine what influences.
* Sociology can be exciting because it teaches people ways to recognize how they fit into the world and how others perceive them.
* Looking at themselves and society from a sociological perspective helps people see where they connect to different groups based on the many different ways they classify themselves and how society classifies them in turn.
* It raises awareness of how those classifications—such as economic and status levels, education, ethnicity, or sexual orientation—affect perceptions.
* It makes people more aware that there are many different kinds of people in the world who do not necessarily think the way they do.
* It increases their willingness and ability to try to see the world from other people's perspectives. This prepares them to live and work in an increasingly diverse and integrated world.

**Sociology in the Workplace**

* Employers continue to seek people with what are called *“transferable skills.”* This means that they want to hire people whose knowledge and education can be applied in a variety of settings and whose skills will contribute to various tasks.
* Studying sociology can provide people with this wide knowledge and a skill set that can contribute to many workplaces, including:
* an understanding of social systems and large bureaucracies,
* the ability to devise and carry out research projects to assess whether a program or policy is working,
* the ability to collect, read, and analyze statistical information from polls or surveys,
* the ability to recognize important differences in people’s social, cultural, and economic backgrounds,
* skills in preparing reports and communicating complex ideas,
* The capacity for critical thinking about social issues and problems that confront modern society.
* Sociology prepares people for a wide variety of careers.
* Besides actually conducting social research or training others in the field, people who graduate from college with a degree in sociology are hired by government agencies and corporations in fields such as social services, counseling (e.g., family planning, career, and substance abuse), community planning, health services, marketing, market research, and human resources.
* Even a small amount of training in sociology can be an asset in careers like health care, sales, public relations, journalism, teaching, law, and criminal justice.
* **Why Do Health Workers Need to Study Sociology?**
* **Public Health** refers to the art and science of preventing disease and promoting physical and mental health, sanitation, personal hygiene, control of infection, and organization of health services.
* From the normal human interactions involved in dealing with the many problems of social life, there has emerged recognition of the importance of community action in the promotion of health and the prevention and treatment of disease.
* This is expressed in the concept of public health and the knowledge and skills required to do so could only be obtained from studying sociology.

**Chapter Two**

1. **The Development of Sociology: A Historical Review**

**2.1 Early Origins and Development of Sociology**;

The emergence of sociology is dated back to the age of human beings, usually from the beginning of the development of stable civilization.

Sociology and other social sciences emerged from a common tradition reflection of social phenomena, interest in the nature of human social behavior and society has probably always existed; however, most people in most past societies considered their culture as a fixed and God-given entity. But, later on , the sociological issues, questions and problems had been raised and discussed by the foreigners, starting from the ancient Greek, Roman philosopher’s and Hebrew’s prophet’s times.

Throughout history, social philosophers and religious authorities have made countless observations about human behavior, but the first systematic analysis of society is found in the philosophers of early Greek philosophers such as Plato (C. 427-347 B.C.E.) and Aristotle (384-322 B.C.E.). For example, Aristotle was concerned with developing a system of knowledge and he engaged in theorizing and empirical analysis of data collected from people in Greek cities regarding their views about social life when ruled by kings or aristocracies or when living in democracies. However, early thinkers such as Plato and Aristotle provided thoughts on what they believed society ought to be like, rather than describing how society actually was.

The contributions of Isaac Newton (1642-1727) to modern science, including the discovery of the laws of gravity and motion and the development of calculus, inspired social thinkers to believe that similar advances could be made in systematically studying human behavior. More over his belief that the universe is an orderly, self-regulating system strongly influenced the thinking of early social theorists.

Although through all ages people have known of society, sociology is relatively a new academic discipline. It was only in 1838 that the French philosopher and thinker August Comte (1798-1857) coined the term sociology to mean reasoning about the social to describe a new way of looking at society.

**2.1.1 Factors for the Development of Sociology**

The development of sociology and its current concerns have to be understood in the context of changes that have created the modern world. The social world is changing. Some argue it is growing; others say it is shrinking. The important point to grasp is: society does not remain unchanged over time. We live in an age of massive social transformation.

As will be discussed in more detail below, sociology has its roots in significant societal changes of the industrial revolution, the creation of empires, and the enlightenment of scientific reasoning and early practitioners developed the discipline as an attempt to understand societal changes.

Thus, Sociology emerged in the early 19th century in response to the challenges of modernity. Increasing mobility and technological advances resulted in the increasing exposure of people to cultures and societies different from their own.

Sociologists responded to these changes by trying to understand what holds social groups together and also explore possible solutions to the breakdown of social solidarity. Some early sociological theorists (e.g., Marx, Weber, and Durkheim) were disturbed by the social processes they believed to be driving the change, such as the quest for solidarity, the attainment of social goals and the rise and fall of classes, to name a few examples.

Generally: factors for the emergence of sociology in to two: social forces and intellectual forces.

**2.1.2 Social Forces and the Rise of Sociology**

**1. Political Revolutions**

Among the political revolutions, the 1789 French revolution was the most vital one out of the 1800s and 1900s political revolutions. It swept aside the feudal system and brought up a structural change within the existing system.In the French revolution for the first time in history there took place the overall dissolution of social order by the movement guided by secular ideas. And the most important concern of all thinkers of that time was to restore order and stability. The American civil war also brings the same outcome. The impact of these political revolutions on many societies was enormous, and many positive changes were resulted.

**2. The Industrial Revolution and the Rise of Capitalism**

The industrial revolution is sometimes presented as a set of technical innovations. But these technical innovations are only part of the much broader sets of social and economic changes. People began to migrate from the surrounding areas to nearbyurban centers due to the employment opportunities provided by industries. Industrialization and urbanization wereresulted in different social problems like poverty, unemployment, crime, pollution, prostitution, inadequate housing and other social hazards. These were the kinds of social crisis that stimulated the development of sociology.

**3. The Growth of Physical Sciences**

The 19th century was a period of scientific revolution. Scientific method and objective systematic observations to test theories used in chemistry and physics had begun 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 natural sciences, Sociologists like Auguste Comte, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber and George Simmel were been pre-occupied with the idea of modeling sociology after the success of natural science disciplines.

**4. Imperialism**

At the end of 19th c, western expansion resulted in the establishment of new world systems.

The diffusion of new information and knowledge to different societies and their culture served as an input to the sociological and anthropological theories. Just at the time when the industrial revolution and imperialism moved people began to question the fundamental aspects of their social worlds.

**5. Secularization**

The social changes brought by political revolutions, industrial revolutions, 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. There are various social currents, however, that put momentum in the development of sociology such as the rise of socialism, feminism, and the likes.

**2.1.3. Intellectual Forces and the Rise of Sociology**

In the real happenings, intellectual forces cannot be separated from social forces, that is, the intellectual movements were intimately related to the social movements, and in many cases the intellectual forces served as a fuel to the concrete accomplishment of plenty social changes that taken place in Europe and the rest of the world. Among these forces, enlightenment and counter enlightenment movement had been among the crucial areas of thoughts that contribute a lot for the growth of sociology; The basic stand/ belief of enlightenment is man can made the universe/ world through empirical research and rational reasoning. They believe that society is the result of the rational calculation of individuals.

In short, the main reasons for the emergence of sociology, as the scientific study of human behavior are both the social and intellectual forces, and the misery and violence brought about by them that necessitate scientific investigation.

**2.2 Founders of Sociology**

**2.2.1 Auguste Comte (1798-1857)**

In the 19th century European theorists including Auguste Comte made pioneering contributions to the development of a science of human behavior of Sociology.

He advocated positivism in that social phenomena could be studied scientifically and proposed methods of studying it through observation, experimentation, and comparative- historical analysis. This materialistic approach helped to lay the foundations for modern sociology. By using positive (scientific) methods, Comte believed, it is possible to study and provide solutions to existing social problems.

Comte treated society as divided in to two: ***social statics*** and ***social dynamics.***

If social statics is the study of how the parts of the society are interrelated, social dynamics was the focus on the whole societies as the unit of analysis and to show how societies develop and change through time.

There are three stages of development in laws of human thought: theological, metaphysical, and the positive. These stages are characterize the development of both knowledge and society. The Three Stages in the Laws of Human Development

1. **Theological Stage**: no critical investigation, both philosophical speculation and scientific explanation were absent but dominated by religious interpretation of occurrences.
2. **Metaphysical Stage**: based on partial religions and partial speculative philosophy, abstract reasoning.
3. **Positive or the Scientific Stage**: all social phenomena are investigated in a scientific manner through observations, experiment and comparison.

He proposed that society moves in ***a unilineal[[1]](#footnote-2)*** manner towards perfection.

his basic ideas suffer from some drawbacks; such as

1. He ignored the coexistence of the three stages of social development within a given social system.
2. He was naive that there could be a multidirectional development in a society by advocating only unilinear development.
3. He ignored the existence of both regression as well as progression in change.

**2.2.2 Herbert Spencer (1820-1903)**

Herbert Spencer was an exponent of ***organistic view of society*** and a proponent of ***evolutionarism*.**The identification of areas of study in sociology such as social control, politics, religion, the family, stratification, associations, and communities are one of the greatest contributions of Spencer. Spencer believed that society operates according to certain fixed laws.He became convinced that societies evolve from lower or barbarian to higher or civilized forms. As generations pass, he said, the most capable and intelligent or the fittest members of the society survive, while the less capable die out. Therefore, over time societies become steadily improved. Spencer called this principle **“*the survival of the fittest”.***

**Unilineal evolutionary** theory refers to a theory of social change which holds that all societies pass through the same successive stages of evolution and inevitably reach the same end.)

In short, Spencer’s idea can be divided in to two

**1) The Idea of Social Evolution**- society moves from simple to more differentiated or complex forms or from homogeneity to heterogeneity. In his book, “*The principle of Sociology*”, he used the organic analogy to explain social organization and social evolution.

**2) The Organic View of Society**- Spencer conceived that the parts of a society are interdependent and interrelated which implies that the existence of one depends on the existence of another and change in one part implies change in another part, the idea he shared with Comte.

He said that through evolution society moves from structural differentiation to functional differentiation, from simplicity to complexity, from uniformity (homogeneity) to specialization (heterogeneity).

Types of societies as viewed by Spencer:

1. **The MilitantSociety.** This is the lowest stage characterized by small bands of people; homogeneous, undifferentiated, dominated by military coercion and rigid rules; compulsory cooperation.chiefs or kings claim to have obtained their authority from divine power (the supernatural). Religion justifies the exercise of military power.

**2. The Industrial Stage (Society**). This is the opposite of the militant stage. Status is replaced by contract. No more rigidity but flexibility; no more despotic but democratic. The dominant sentiment was not patriotism but individualism and development. Human relationship is free, contractual , voluntary cooperation.

**3. The Ethical Society**. The final and perfect stage of societal development. In such type of society, ethics s governs; individuals are selfish but responsive to others. Internal moral restraints replace external moral restraints.

**2.2 3. Emile Durkheim (1858-1917)**

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.Durkheim’s sociology revolved around the following areas.

* Social facts and social currents
* The division of labor in society (1893)
* Suicide (1897)
* The Rules of Sociological method (1895)
* Elementary forms of Religious life (1912).

Like Spencer and Comte, Durkheim believed in the stages in the development of society and he expressed this view in his book **“*The division of labor in Society*.”** In his “***Rules of sociological method”*** he wrote how sociological investigation could be conducted. In **“suicide**” he showed how the behavior of individuals was influenced by social facts outside of the individual in question. In **“*Elementary forms of Religious life***”, Durkheim showed that the origin of religion is social, not natural, and had a social function, how it affects society. Durkheim was the founding father of *functionalism school of thought (perspective*) in sociology. Functionalism is a perspective that emphasizes the way the parts of a society are structured to maintain its stability. Using functionalism as a perspective Durkheim focused on the role of religion in reinforcing feelings of solidarity and unity within group.

* **Social Facts and Social Currents**

In short, social facts are ways of acting thinking and feeling that are characteristics of a group in society.To Durkheim, thus social facts include such phenomena as group laws; customs, belief system, rules of conduct and institutions of society, the social facts of the social world.

Social facts act upon the behavior of the individual independent of his/her free will. They exist over and above individual consciousness. Members of society are directed by collective beliefs, values and laws which have an existence of their own.

* **Solidarity and the Division of Labor in Society**

**Social bond**: Social facts that help society live together. Based on the quality social bond society is divided in to two” 1) Mechanical solidarity 2) Organic solidarity.

**1) Mechanical Solidarity**

* Characteristics of pre-industrial society
* Based on similarity of interest and experience.
* No division of labor and differentiation of tasks.
* The social institutions perform almost all societal functions.
* There were shared values, norms and beliefs all of which help to hold society together.

***Traits of mechanical solidarity***

* ***Main social bond*** – similar, uniform moral and religious consensus.
* ***Position of an Individual***\_ collectivism, focus on group or community.
* ***Economic structure***- Isolation, self-sufficient, limited exchange without side group
* ***Social control***- Repressive laws punish offenders (criminal laws)

**2) Organic Solidarity**

* Characteristics of industrial society
* Based on specialization and differentiation of tasks
* There is division of labor
* People focus of attention is multiple.

***Traits of organic solidarity***

* ***Main social bond***- Highly differentiated tasks, complementary and mutual dependence.
* ***Position of the Individual*** – trying to achieve individual interest
* ***Economic structure***- Division of labor, mutual dependence of groups and exchange
* ***Social control*** – Restitutive laws, safe guarding contract (civil laws).
* It is the characteristics of industrial societies.
* **Suicide**

. Suicide is the act of taking one’s own life intentionally and voluntarily.The likelihood of suicide was related to the degree of the integration /involvement of within groups or society.

Degree of regulation also determines the rate of suicide as well.

* Suicide could occur when there are:

1) high/low degree of integration

2) Low /high degree of regulation.

**Types of suicide**

**1) Egoistic Suicide**: - It’s a result of low degree of integration. The individual feels isolation, deprivation and detachment. For Durkheim, this kind of state of mind exists among Protestants than Catholics, among unmarried as opposed to the married, divorced than undivorced.

**2. Anomic Suicide**-a breakdown of societal norms, a state of normlessness. It is the failure to internalize the norms of the society or inability to adjust to changing norms or tension resulted from the conflicting norms themselves. Inability to adjust, and choose to commit suicide. It is common in industrial societies. Ex. When an individual committed sinful acts for example,

**3. Altruistic Suicide** – Social norms or group expectations are strong enough to force the individual to commit suicide. Altruistic suicide is common in “traditional” societies where values, norms, customs and expectations of the group have an extreme influence upon the group have an extreme influence upon the individual

**4. Fatalistic Suicide**- occurs when there is excessive /oppressive regulation, the opposite of anomic cases.When the regulation is so oppressive individuals who see nothing bright in their future or when they become pessimistic, become hopeless, helpless and commit suicide e.g. Suicide by slaves in bondage.

**2.2.4. Karl Marx (1818-1883)**

He was animmensely influential German philosopher, he is most famous for his analysis terms of class struggles,

His contribution to thinking in sociology is mainly in a perspective called "*Conflict Theory*" in which social organization and change is based upon conflicts built into society.

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 change and better society. Marx concluded that the capitalist economic system was responsible for the devastating poverty that occurred during the industrial revolution. He viewed private property and capitalism as the major cause of poverty and inequality that characterized the 19th century.

In the Marxian framework, class conflict is the struggle between the capitalist and the working class. The major source of conflict in the industrial age was between: the workers, whom he called the ***Proletariat***(from Latin) who survived by selling their labor, *and* the owners of factories, whom he called the ***Bourgeoisie***(a word having the same origin as burgh and burger) who needed the labor to make a profit. The exploited class favored and would benefit from change towards more equality, while the exploiting class resisted such change. From Marx’s view point, the capitalist class controls and exploits the masses of struggling workers by paying less than the value of their labor. This exploitation results in workers’ ***alienation*-**a feeling of powerlessness and estrangement from other people and from oneself.

Marx left two enduring legacies to sociology: the theories of economic determinism and dialectic.

**A. Economic Determinism**:he believed that family, law and religion all develop after and adapt to the economic structure; in short, they are determined by economic relationships. He called this idea *economic determinism.*

According to the principle of economic determinism, the nature of a society is based on the society’s economy. A society’s economic system determines the, legal system and political structure.

**B. The Dialectic**: Marx’s other contribution was the dialectic, the philosophy that views change as a product of contradictions and conflicts between parts of society.

He argued that conflicts between opposing economic interests lead to change.

Marx’s thinking on conflict was influenced by the German philosopher George Hegel, who suggested that for every idea (thesis), a counter idea (antithesis) develops in conflict with it or to challenge it. Over time, as a result of conflict between the two ideas, a new idea (synthesis) is produced. This process of change is called ***the dialectic***.

Within capitalism, Marx suggested, the capitalist class was the thesis and the working class was the antithesis. He predicted that conflicts between them would lead to a new synthesis, a new economic system that would be socialism.

**2.2.5. Max Weber (1864-1920)**

In one of his influential writings, ***“The protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism,”*** he explained protestant religion that came out from the Catholic religion helped for the early development of capitalism in Western Europe. He explored that Protestantism led to investment rather than consumption of profits which in turn encouraged the growth of capitalism.

**Sociology and Social Action**

Sociology is a science which attempts the interpretive understanding of social action in order to arrive at a causal explanation of its course and effects.Social action is all human behavior when and in so far as the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to it, either overt or purely inward and subjective.

Unlike other sociologists of his time, Weber argued in favor of taking the individual as a basic, starting point of analysis.

**Social Action**- on the basis of mode of orientation, Weber identified four types of social actions.

***1. Traditional social action*** – traditions are the motives that determine the action of the individual in a certain way.

***2. Affectual*** – the actions or behavior of an individual are determined by certain affectual facts such as love, hatred, sympathy or anger.

***3. Value oriented rational*** – action of individuals in response to certain values such as religious or ethical.

***4. Goal oriented Rational*** – an action or mode of orientation is a means to an end.

The traditional and affectual actions are not social actions in proper sense because they are not rational actions aiming at achieving certain ends. Value oriented and goal oriented actions are rational actions because, according to Weber, an action is rationally oriented when the means, the end, and secondary results are all rationally taken into account and weighed. This involves rational consideration of alternative means to the end, of the relation of the end to other prospective results of employment of any given means, and the relative importance of different possible ends.

**Weber and the Theory of Domination**

An individual or group of individuals got the right to command others or to be obeyed by others. In other words some people are governors, while most others are governed.

**Types of Domination/Authority**

**Power**- is the ability to do or act.

**Authority**- is power socially defined as appropriate /legitimate, or it is an institutionalized power.

**1. Traditional Authority/Domination** – People obey because the authority existed in the past and therefore should continue. No rational consideration of the importance of the existing authority.

E.g. Hereditary kings, Menelik →Zawditu→ Haileselasie

**2. Charismatic Authority**: based on exceptional quality could be heroism, exemplary character and of the normative patterns of order revealed or ordained by him.Here people obey not regulations, traditions but individual personalities and extra ordinary qualities. These qualities could be possessed by magical power.

**3. The Rational/Legal Authority/Domination**: This is based on rational, goal oriented, and consideration of advantages and disadvantages of being obeyed. Modern bureaucracy is the purest and the best type, and it is the most rational form of administration. Individuals hold positions in the hierarchy of bureaucracy based not on heredity/Kinship but on competence.

**4. Professional Authority** – is identified by other scholars rather than Weber and it is based on expertise, knowledge and profession, etc e.g. Medical doctors, architects, University Presidents etc.

**CHAPTER 3**

**Culture, Society and socialization**

Two concepts that are basic to sociology are *culture* and *society.*

3.1. Culture

Culture is an extremely broad concept. To sociologists, **culture** is made up of *all of the ideas, beliefs, behaviors, and products common to, and defining, a group*’*s way of life.* Culture encompasses everything humans create and have as they interact together.

Culture shapes the way we see the world. It impacts how we think, how we act, what we value, how we talk, the organizations we create, the rituals we hold, the laws we make, how and what we worship, what we eat, what we wear, and what we think of as beautiful or ugly.

Even our emotions and our choices of many of the foods we eat are “cultural acquisitions.”Cultures vary widely around the world. Western industrialized cultures often seem “normal “and often “better” to readers. However, other vastly different cultures exist around the world that also seems “normal” or “better” to their inhabitants. Encountering these different cultures can result in **culture shock,** *confusion that occurs when encountering unfamiliar situations and ways of life.*

**3.1.1 Types of Culture**

It is important to sociologists to look at the various facets of culture. Every culture is composed of both material and nonmaterial components. **Material culture** includes *all the tangible products created by human interaction.* Any physical objects created by humans are part of the material culture. This includes clothing, books, art, buildings, computer software, inventions, food, vehicles, tools, and so on.

**Nonmaterial culture** consists of *the intangible creations of human interaction.* These exist as our ideas, languages, values, beliefs, behaviors, and social institutions.

Material culture, such as technology, may change faster than nonmaterial culture. The result may by a **cultural lag,** in which *a gap occurs as different aspects of culture change at different rates* Cloning provides an example of this situation. Scientific advances make animal, and perhaps human, cloning a reality. However, the procedure is extremely controversial morally and ethically. Similarly, science has investigated ways to transplant human genes into animals or animal organs into humans. These procedures erode traditional boundaries and definitions between human and other animals and challenge traditional values of life.

Sociologists also emphasize the importance of not confusing the sociological use of the word *culture* with the popular usage of the term. In everyday usage, someone might be referred to as “having culture” or as being “cultured” or “uncultured.” Sociologically speaking, however, everyone has a culture. The popular usage of the term *culture* typically refers to what sociologists call *high culture.*

**High culture** consists of *things that are generally associated with the social elite.* The opera, cotillions or debutante balls, classical music and literature, wine tastings, and the fine arts are all examples of high culture. These activities may not be available to everyone, for several reasons. They may be too expensive, or they may be located in exclusive locations that are largely inaccessible without special membership or hefty financial resources. Additionally, special preparation or knowledge may be important in understanding or fully appreciating these activities.

Unlike high culture, **popular culture** consists of *activities that are widespread in a culture, with mass accessibility and appeal, and pursued by large numbers of people across all social classes.* Examples of popular culture include fast-food restaurants, football, rock concerts, television situation comedies, and best-selling novels. Sociologists have devoted considerable attention to studying many facets of our popular culture. To sociologists, high culture is not evaluated as being “better” than popular culture. They are simply different aspects of the larger culture that sociologists find so interesting.

**3.2 SOCIETY**

Society is also a central component of sociological study and everyday lives. A **society** consists of *people who interact and share a common culture. “*Society is indispensable to the individual because it possesses at a given moment an accumulation of values, of plans and materials which the child could never accumulate alone . . . But the individual is also indispensable to society because by his activity and ingenuity he creates all the material values, the whole fund of civilization”. Some definitions of *society* (particularly older ones) specify that interaction occurs within some shared boundary. Increasing globalization and the rapid expansion of communication, information, and transportation technologies all make culture sharing and convergence possible across the globe. Dropping this geographic aspect of the definition of society allows a more accurate and complex understanding of all that a society is. For example, Palestinian society defies any strictly defined territorial boundaries.

**3.2.1 SOCIAL STRUCTURE**

Society includes our **social institutions,** *the major social organizations formed to meet our human needs.* The family, medical system, military, religious system, political system, economy, and educational system are all examples of social institutions. Many introductory sociology textbooks have chapters that discuss these institutions separately, explaining how sociologists apply their theoretical perspectives and research skills to each of these aspects of society.

All of these social institutions are interrelated. Together, they comprise a society’s **social structure,** *the way a society is organized around the regulated ways people interrelate and organize social life.* What happens in the economy, for example, impacts all other institutions to some extent. If the economy takes a downturn, large numbers of people have might trouble supporting their families and paying for medical care or college. They might vote a new political candidate into office. Military recruitment and retention rates might increase because people are unable to find civilian-sector jobs. The interconnections go on and on.

**Status**

Status is central to social interaction and social structure. To sociologists, **statuses** are *established social positions.* Unlike popular usage of the term, having “status” in sociological terms does not equate to prestige. To sociologists, everyone has status, although some do have higher status than others as judged by society. The different statuses in a medical clinic, for example, include physician, nurse, lab technicians, janitorial staff, and patient. In this setting, the relationships between these positions are socially defined, with the doctor having the greatest power and prestige.

Statuses are obtained in different ways. They can be either achieved or ascribed. **Achieved statuses** are those *positions acquired through personal effort.* Being a law-school student, architect, parent, square dancer, or shoplifter are all achieved statuses. Individuals had to do something to become each of these things. **Ascribed statuses** are *positions involuntarily acquired through birth.* Being a female, a Caucasian, a toddler, a son, a brother, or a princess are all ascribed statuses. Some achieved statuses may depend at least to some extent on ascribed statuses. For example, because of their sex, women are not currently allowed to achieve positions as submariners in the U.S. navy. Collectively, *all the statuses a person holds at once* comprise his or her **status set.**

Each of the people in the clinic holds a number of different statuses at the same time. The doctor may also be a daughter, wife, mother, member of the garden club, and civic-league president. This status set changes frequently over a person’s lifetime. Continuing with the doctor as an example, her status set changed when she moved from being a medical student to a doctor. It changed when she married and would change again if she were to divorce or be widowed. She could remove or add statuses from her set by resigning from the civic league or running for political office.

Some statuses in a status set are more socially important and influential than others. A very influential status may become a **master status,** *a status that becomes more socially important than all other statuses.* A master status may attach to either positive or negative statuses. The doctor in our example may be defined by her occupation. Whatever else she is, she is first a doctor to those she meets in social settings. Other people may respond to her with the prestige accorded that position.

If the doctor were to be convicted of a serious crime such as insurance fraud or selling prescription narcotics, she might find that her master status becomes that of a criminal.

**Roles**

Roles, like statuses, are also central to social interaction and social structure. The two concepts of status and role go hand in hand. A **role** is a *behavior expected of someone in a particular status.* Using the status of the doctor from the examples above, a number of role expectations can be identified.

Doctors should come to work. They should examine patients competently and discuss their concerns. They should prescribe medicine lawfully. All of these examples illustrate how we expect doctors to act. These roles together illustrate a **role set,** *all of the roles that go with a single status.*

The *roles for different statuses the person holds may conflict with each other.* This is known as **role conflict.** Our doctor, who is also a mother, may findit difficult to devote the long work hours required of her job and concurrently fulfill the expectations of being a parent. Long work hours may make attending her child’s school plays or teacher conferences difficult. **Role strain** occurs when *two or more roles associated with a single status are in conflict.* This requires balancing expectations. For example, the doctor may find it difficult to give patients all the time she would like to during appointments while holding to her appointment schedule and seeing the number of patients she must see daily to meet the financial obligations of the clinic.

**3.3 Aspects of Culture**

Sociologists studying culture and society focus on several aspects of nonmaterial culture: cultural values, norms, symbols, and language. A look at each of these aspects contributes to our overall understanding of what culture is, how it is created and passed between generations, and how important culture is in everything we do.

**3.3.1 Values**

**Values,** *culturally defined ideas about what is important,* are central to culture. Values delineate how a culture should be. In the United States, sociologists have identified cultural values including success, hard work, freedom, equality, democracy, individualism, and progress (Bellah et al. 1985; Inkeles1979; Williams 1970). Of course, not everyone in a culture shares identical values. They also do not share them equally. Some people or groups hold more tightly to certain values while rejecting others.

There may also be a mismatch between **ideal culture,** *the values and norms claimed by a society,* and **real culture,** *the values and norms that are actually practiced.* For example, in the United States, equality is a core value. Encompassed within this value is the ideal that all workers regardless of gender and race should have equal opportunity in the workplace. In reality, however, even women in high-status positions continue to earn less than men and experience discrimination in career promotions, as do black males seeking high-level positions. These problems are even more pronounced for women of color.

**3.3.2 Norms**

Norms are derived from our societal values. **Norms** constitute the *shared rules or expectations specifying appropriate behaviors in various situations.* We need norms to maintain a stable social order. They both direct and prohibit behavior. Norms tell us what we should do (wait our turn, pay bills on time, show respect for our elders, etc.); they also tell us what we should not do (hit our spouse, curse aloud at a church service, run red lights, etc.). Norms are enforced through a process of internalization. They become part of who we are as individuals and as a culture. However, external social enforcement in the form of both positive and negative sanctions is also critical.

Norms vary over time. Women wearing trousers, especially in public areas or to work, is a relatively recent occurrence. Similarly, recent bans on smoking in many public places signifies shifting norms regarding smoking.

Norms, and the social reaction to breaches, vary in strength and intensity (Sumner 1906). **Folkways** are *weak norms that are often informally passed down from previous generations.* They often deal with everyday behaviors and manners. Most folkways are not written down and enumerated.

They are the type of things that most of us learn from others to do or not to do. We learn from direct guidance and reinforcement. Parents teach children to share their toys and reward them with hugs and smiles. We also learn folkways through encountering others’ reactions. People react perhaps with stares or avoidance when we act “inappropriately” by singing aloud on a bus or wearing a swimsuit while shopping in an expensive downtown boutique.

Violations of folkways are not considered severe breaches of great moral significance. Generally, no serious negative social sanctions (e.g., arrest) result when a folkway is broken. The reaction to a person who violates a folkway may be as minor as ignoring the behavior. Failing to say thank you” may beconsidered rude, but will not result in some harsh penalty for norm violation.

**Mores** (pronounced *more*-ays) are *strongly held norms.* They represent deeply held standards of what is right and wrong. Prohibitions on murder, robbery, and assault are all examples of mores across many cultures. Mores are considered morally significant breaches and are often formalized as laws. For this reason, punishment for violations of mores can be severe, involving sanctions such as arrest or imprisonment. Some mores are so strongly held they have been termed **taboos,** *norms that are so objectionable that they are strictly forbidden.* Taboos are often things considered unthinkable in a culture.

**3.3.3 Symbols**

Symbols are central to our understanding and sharing of culture. A **symbol** is *something that stands for, represents, or signifies something else in a particular culture.* It can represent, for example, ideas, emotions, values, beliefs, attitudes, or events. A symbol can be anything. It can be a gesture, word, object, or even an event.

Sharing symbols can help build a sense of unity and commitment among people. A crucifix, cross, or Star of David are all symbols that have deep, shared meanings regarding Christianity or Judaism. National flags become rallying symbols for citizens and troops. The rush to buy American flags in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, attacks in the United States is a good example of this effect in action.

The meaning of symbols derives from the way they are interpreted within a culture. The American flag may be interpreted as standing for individual freedom. However, some (e.g., American militia groups that think the federal government is too involved in their personal business) may see the flag as a symbol of a lack of freedom. People from other cultures see the flag as having various meanings filtered through their own cultural lenses (e.g., as a symbol of democracy, as a symbol of repression). To someone unfamiliar with the United States, the American flag is not a symbol at all. It is simply a red, white, and blue pattern devoid of any such meanings.

Symbols may take on different meanings in different times or circumstances. White wedding gowns, originally intended to symbolize virginity, are now traditional in the United States even though many brides are not virgins.

**3.3.4 Languages**

Another major component of culture, and a special kind of symbol, is language. **Language** is *a system of symbols that allows communication among members of a culture.* These symbols can be verbal or written. Language is central to the way we understand our world. According to the **linguistic-relativity hypothesis,** *languages reflect cultural perceptions.* This hypothesis is also known as the *Sapir-Whorf hypothesis* or the *Whorf hypothesis.* It is named after the anthropological linguist, who largely developed it. For example, because snow is so central to their lives, Eskimos have different words for falling snow, snow on the ground, drifting snow, and a snow drift (Boas 1911). The Canadian Aleuts have over 30 words for snow. Some other cultures in tropical climates have no word for snow, because they have no need for such a term. Yet, the Philippine Hanunoo people have almost 100 terms for rice .

Language also defines, at least to some extent, how we think about the world and how we act. Research has demonstrated that when people hear the pronoun *he* they think of a male, even if the pronoun was intended to encompass both males and females (Gastil 1990; Switzer 1990). Such findings are part of the impetus behind changing the grammatical convention away from use of male pronouns to represent everyone.

**3.4. DIVERSITY**

As part of their interest in cultural diversity, sociologists study subcultures.

A **subculture** is a *smaller culture within a dominant culture that has a way of life distinguished in some important way from that dominant culture.* Subcultures form around any number of distinguishing factors. They may form, for example, around hobbies (as with ham-radio operators, bingo players, online-game players, hunters, stamp collectors, recreational-vehicle owners), shared interests such as music styles (jazz, hip-hop, rap), other behaviors or interests (cheerleaders, Bible study participants, skydivers, drug users, gamblers, outlaw bikers), occupations (car racing, pilots, police officers), or racial and ethnic backgrounds. Subcultures can also consist of even smaller divisions.

For example, although the “teen subculture” may be discussed as if there is little diversity, teens are actually very diverse. They include jocks, hippies, preppies, ravers, skaters, and more.

Each of these smaller subcultures has their own beliefs, interests, and means of interaction. Yet members of a subculture share most of the values of the dominant culture. They earn money by having a job, pay bills, and see that their children get an education.

Not all smaller cultures within a dominant culture largely share the dominant culture’s values. A *culture that opposes patterns of the dominant culture*s known as a **counterculture.** Countercultures are often youth-oriented. America has long been called a melting pot into which others cultures meld into one new culture. The *process of a cultural group losing its identity and being absorbed into the dominant culture* is known as **assimilation.**

Many groups do claim shared cultural patterns. However, there is an increasing recognition and interest across the United States in **multiculturalism**—*a recognition of and respect for cultural differences.* Multiculturalism allows much of the dominant culture to be shared while valuing some traditions of various subgroups. Events such as Black History Month and courses such as Women’s Studies acknowledge and embrace multiculturalism. When studying cultures and cultural variations, sociologists must be aware of **ethnocentrism,** *judging other cultures by the standards of one’s own culture.* Because we all live within a culture, we tend to see the way our culture does things as “normal” or “natural” and the ways that other cultures do things as “abnormal” or “unnatural.” We also tend to judge our own familiar culture’s ways of doing things as “better.”

Rather than being ethnocentric, sociologists need to develop **cultural relativism.** This means they should be careful to *judge other cultures by those cultures*’ *own standards.* In other words, sociologists try to understand other cultures and why they behave and believe as they do rather than judging them “unnatural “or “wrong.”

A classic study by Marvin Harris (1974), who is profiled below, shows how ethnocentric views can result in major misunderstanding of other cultures. If these misguided views were used to enact social change, the consequences could be severe. Harris examined the Indian Hindu culture, in which cows are venerated as the mother of life. Thus, slaughtering cows for food is not an option. To someone from a wealthy Western country, an ethnocentric perspective on this reverence for cows would likely posit that cow worship is one factor in India’s massive problems of poverty and hunger.

Why not eat the cattle, they might ask? Harris, examined the Indian ecosystem and studied the interplay between humans, culture, and their environment. His findings show how cultural relativism can give a new perspective to this issue. In India, cattle supply fertilizer, tractor power, and milk. Cattle dung provides fuel for cooking and flooring material. Children help their families and earn money by gathering and selling cow dung. Owning a cow provides one final hedge against creditors. The lower castes, that segment of society considered “untouchable” by the rest of society, are allowed to dispose of dead cattle. They are allowed to eat the meat and benefit from a huge leather-craft industry. Overall, Harris concludes that Indians would surely starve if they did eat cows.

**Chapter 4**

**Socialization and Social Interaction**

As humans, we are social beings who spend our lives interacting with others. Most of us have contact with other humans to some extent every day. Indeed, research shows that isolation from human interaction can be quite damaging. Sociologists and others have studied cases of children who spent their early childhood virtually isolated from all human contact, some literally locked away from human contact by abusive adults. These children lacked basic human responsiveness.

**4.1. Socialization**

##### 4.1.1. Meaning of Socialization

Socialization refers to the process by which people interact with others to learn the ways of their culture in order to function within it. Hence, it is a set of process by which people will learn the norms, values, attitudes and beliefs of his/her society. Humans must learn to be human. Socialization can be looked at from societal and individual points of views:

From societal points of view, socialization is the process of fitting new individuals into an organized way of life and teaching them the society’s cultural traditions. Socialization transforms the human animal into a human being, a member of society. Because of that transformation most babies grow up into fully functioning social beings, able to use the language of their parents and competent in their society’s culture.

From the individual viewpoint, socialization is the process of developing a self. Through interaction with others, person gains an identity, develops values and aspirations, and under favorable conditions becomes able to make full use of his or her potential.

Although intensive socialization takes place during the early child hood, socialization is a never-ending process. It begins from early child hood and ends at the end of the life of an individual. Socialization continues throughout life.

**4.1.2. Social Interaction**

To interact effectively with each other, people must have some shared sense of the world. They must interact within some social “reality” that defines how to interact and what those interactions mean. To sociologists, this “reality “is not objective. Rather, it is subjectively understood and built through our day to-day contacts with each other. This concept is central to the symbolic interactions perspective.

The **social construction of reality** is *the process by which people interact and shape reality* (Berger and Luckmann 1966). According to this concept, society is not some objective entity that evolves in a predetermined and unchangeable way.

Humans create it through social interactions. As we interact with others, we constantly talk, listen, observe, evaluate, and judge situations based on the ways we have been socialized to understand and react to them. Through this ongoing process of perceiving and defining events, we “interpret “reality and “negotiate” meaning. For example, a worker who has been repeatedly disciplined by management might perceive a supervisor striking up a conversations harassment, intimidation, or management checking up on them. A worker with no disciplinary actions on their record might perceive the same conversations friendly chat.

Central to this idea is the **Thomas Theorem,** *the understanding that if we define situations as real, they are real in their consequences* (Thomas and Thomas 1928). This means that we respond to the subjective meanings that a situation has for each of us. We then behave based on that interpretation.

**4.2.1. Dramaturgy**

How this shared sense of realty develops and plays out is basic to sociologists ‘understanding of society and social organization. Erving Goffman(1959, 1963a, 1967), developed a **dramaturgical analysis** in which he *compared our everyday social interactions to theatrical performances.* According to Goffman, we interact as if we are actors performing roles on a stage. We *use these performances to direct and control the impressions we make in others*’ *minds.* This is called **impression management.** Through a “presentation of self,” we consciously attempt to influence how other people see us. The campaign literature published by political candidates is an excellent example of this concept in action (King 2002).

Developing the theater analogy, Goffman divides social interaction into *front-stage* and *back-stage* regions. Just like in a play, **front-stage behavior** is *action that occurs for an audience.*We use appearances, mannerisms, and props in this front stage to facilitate our act and better manage the impression we seek to make. Consider, for example, behaviors on a first date. Clothing, conversation topics, and location are selected to convey the way the daters wish to present themselves. During a job interview for an office position, the interviewee might wear a conservative business suit, carry a resume in a nice folder, and lean forward when answering questions in an attempt to create a positive image in the interviewer’s mind.

**Back-stage behavior** *occurs out of sight of any audience.* That is where the props and performances are prepared. It is also where we can truly be ourselves. Preparing for the date or interview in the privacy of home occurred back stage, as clothing and appearances were selected. During a front-stage event, a person might go back stage into a restroom to check or readjust his appearance. After the date or the interview, the person can go home, put on comfortable clothes, and “be himself.”

Our social performances are complex interactions. They consist not only of actively presenting information but also often include concealing information as well. Daters may not reveal, for example, that they have a child or that they smoke cigarettes in an attempt to convey certain images to their date. Job candidates might conceal a police record or lack of computer skills. Regina Kenenfound people in a public laundromat engaged in impression management even among strangers.

She observed people as they tried to conceal “padded bras,torn underwear, stained garments, or even designer bed sheets . . . [as items that may reveal too much personal information] and may contradict the intended presentation of self ” (1982, 178).

Goffman also notes that in our social interactions we are both actor and audience at the same time. On the first date, both parties are concerned with managing their own performances as well as interpreting their dates’ performance. Throughout the date, they are evaluating performances by asking, “How am I coming across? What does that person think of me?” as well as “What do I think of this person? Do I want another date?” In the interview situation, the intervieweras well as the person being interviewed are both engaged in a performance, an act of attempting to convey information to the other person. The office in which the interview is conducted, the way the office furniture is set up, the types of decor used, the way the interviewer is dressed, and the interviewer’s tone and mannerisms all convey an image about the company and the interviewer.

We are constantly reevaluating our performances in light of feedback we perceive we are getting from others. This does not mean that we always perceive feedback correctly, only that we adjust our own acts in response to whether we think we are making the desired impression on others. We may feel we need to appear more sincere, more hardworking, more free-spirited, less anxious, and so on and try to adjust our “performance” to convey these desired impressions.

# 4.3. Total Institutions and Resocialization

A specific type of socialization occurs when people are in places such as prisons, mental hospitals, and military boot camps. These settings are total institutions. According to Erving Goffman, a **total institution** is “*a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life*” (1961, xiii; italics mine). Staff separate “inmates “from the outside world and enforce a reutilized lifestyle within the institution. Mealtimes, work periods, recreation periods, and bedtimes may be tightly scheduled, and uniforms are often required.

A major goal of enforcing these routines is to achieve **resocialization,** *altering the person*’*s personality by controlling the environment.* This resocialization reshapes the inmate’s personality to fit the needs of the institution. It takes place in two steps. First, the existing sense of self must be broken down.

The inmate is systematically separated from the old self and outside life. Second, a new self must be built with new behaviors and attitudes. This is often accomplished through staff manipulation of rewards and punishments.

##### 4.4. Types of Socialization

To have a better picture of socialization, it is useful to know four different kinds of socialization that occur in society. Because socialization begins at birth and continues throughout the life cycle, it is a process that takes different forms depending on the stage of life and the special environmental and situational problems that may arise.

There are four major types of socialization: Primary socialization, Anticipatory socialization, Adult Socialization and Re-Socialization

4.4.1. Primary or Childhood Socialization

The most crucial phase of learning for an individual occurs in the first years of life. In the early years of child hood, incredible complex learning must occur, and it occurs relatively quickly. This early child hood socialization is referred to as primary socialization. It is called primary because it supplies the foundation for all other learning and it must come first. Most often the child learns from the family through imitation, conditioning and reward for accomplishing the expected behavior.

In primary socialization, the child must learn the basic skills necessary to function in society. The child must master or begin to master motor skills involving coordination and control of the body such as walking, grasping, and feeding himself or herself and so on. Language and the understanding of symbols and gestures must be mastered if any further learning is to take place.

4.4.2. Anticipatory Socialization

It is adopting the attitudes and behavior of group or category before one joins it. It is useful in helping the upwardly mobile adapt to their new position in society. One way of learning the roles we will play in our lives is to rehearse them. Anticipatory socialization refers to learning roles by practicing those we anticipate playing in the future. In child hood, for example, children play house-boys practice playing the father and husband roles, while girls rehearse the behavior they see in their mothers. Numerous examples of anticipatory socialization can be found at various stages in our lives.

Children, as well, spends hours copying role models from Television. Here, toys and games give children the opportunity to experience, through play, a taste of what they may do in the future, for example, toys for children to practice occupations such as doctor, firefighter, teacher, etc. Anticipatory socialization is a part of primary socialization, but is not restricted to it. We continue to rehearse though much of our lives because rehearsal functions as a powerful learning tool. It serves as a means of preparation by which people gain some certainty and confidence regarding their performance before others.

4.4.3. Adult or Secondary Socialization

Adult socialization is the learning that builds on and modifies primary socialization and is required all of us as we move into new stages of life and face a changing environment Adult socialization is sometimes called ***secondary socialization***.

We may have, for example, learned the basic framework of marriage and parenthood from both primary and anticipatory socialization. But the actual adjustment to marriage and the ability to get along with your specific partner require some learning and adaptability.

Significant differences exist between child hood socialization and adult socialization. Some of them include:

* Child hood socialization usually takes place in a situation that is specifically geared to teaching and learning. Adult learning on the other hand usually occurs on the job or on the family.
* Children tend to be emotionally involved with those who socialize them- parents, teachers and peers while relations between adults and their socializes tend to be less likely emotional.
* Adult socialization tends to be voluntary.

4.4.5. Re-socialization and De-socialization

In the lives of individuals, as they pass through different stages and life experiences, there is the need for re-socialization and de-socialization. Re-socialization means the adoption by adults that radically different norms and life ways that are more or less completely dissimilar to the previous norms and values. It signifies the rapid and more basic changes in the adult life. A drastic shift that involves giving up one way of life for another that is not only different from it but also incompatible with it. This is quite often happens as adult life in modern societies demands sharp transitions and changes.

E.g. Brainwashing is rejecting old beliefs and ideas and accepting new ideas, Rehabilitation of criminals, Religious conversion of sinners. In all of these cases, a person breaks with the past and is made over.

De-socialization typically precedes re-socialization. De-socialization refers to stripping individuals of their former life styles, beliefs, values and attitudes so that they may take up other partially or totally new life styles, attitudes and values. The individuals have to abandon their former values and take up new ones in order to become part of the new social group.

NB. De-socialization and re-socialization of adults often takes place in what is called **totalinstitutions**, an environment which is an all encompassing and often isolated from the community such as religious places, prisons, military units, mental hospitals etc. they demand a thorough de-socialization of the new entrants before they assume full-fledged membership. In each case, persons joining the new setting have first to be de-socialized, before they are re-socialized.

Re-socialization may also mean socializing individuals again into their former values and norms, after they rejoin their former ways of life, spending a relatively longer period of in total institutions. This is because they may have forgotten most of the basic values and skills of the former group or society. This kind of re-socialization may also be regarded as reintegration, helping the ex-community members renew their memories of their former life ways, skills, knowledge, etc.

Re-socialization is sometimes confused with adult socialization and it is important to distinguish the two processes. It is helpful to think of adult socialization as the learning process required of all of us as we adjust to new stages in our lives. Re-socialization, on the other hand, applies to situations that are more unusual and dramatic. It requires some break with a past way of life because the past way of life no longer works in a radically new situation. All of us go through the process of adult socialization, while only some of us face the difficulties of re-socialization.

**4.5. Settings (Agents) of Socialization**

In the study of socialization, sociologists emphasize four major socializing agents as the most influential in transmitting the culture to the individual and in fostering the individual’s personality and social self. These four agents are the family, school, peer group and mass media.

Throughout life, people change their attitudes, values and self-images as they take on new roles & undergo new experiences. Socialization which involves intense interaction over long time (as in primary group) is likely to have more effect on the individual than less direct influence (as though the radio and newspapers). Thus, government programs to encourage people to take up new farming methods or send their children to school are likely to be more successful if they are passed on by individuals who are known & respected than if they are only promoted over the radio. The mass media are more successful in supporting than initiating a change in values or behavior.)

##### 4.5.1. The family

The family begins the process of socialization and is the first major setting in which the child interacts. The family provides the earliest human contact for an infant and has responsibility of giving the affection, love and concern necessary for the child to thrive. The family also gives the child its initial position in the social structure in terms of social class, ethnicity, and religion.

**4.5.2. Peers (friendship)**

With their peers children are able to engage in democratic relationships with out the ascribed differences given in the home. Children, for example, quickly learn the power and the pain of ridicules from peers and feel the need to fit in and be like the others. As a result, children are constantly learning new behavior and attitudes from other children.

Interactions within the peer group accomplish much in the establishment of identity and self concept. From other children, they learn how they are perceived by others outside their family. Those perceptions in turn affect how they perceive themselves. For instance, they may entertain the idea whether other children call them skinny or fat, fast or slow, smart or stupid, cute or ugly, friendly or unfriendly, etc. Peers also provide role models for each other. Today, much of the pressure to wear the right clothes and do certain things stems from the role modeling of peers and the desire to please the peer group becomes especially acute during the adolescent years, when youths often feel a need to break away from the family and parental control.

**4.5.3. Schools (Classrooms)**

Schools serve us in teaching the intellectual skills necessary for effective participation in society. In addition to stated school curriculums regarding intellectual skills, the hidden curriculum is concerned with molding and shaping what is considered to be proper social behavior. It teaches children to conform, to be neat and punctual, to respect authority and to be patriotic citizens concerned with their country’s way of life.

## 4.5.4. The mass media

Mass media is one of the important settings for socialization. Television and other mass media are not necessarily designed to teach people. Nevertheless, the evidence shows that Television content has heavy concentration of violent and aggressive behavior, and that children are seeing many violent incidents. The media also presents role models for children to admire and imitate e.g., singers and film actor

**4.6. Theories of Socialization**

**4.6.1 The Looking-Glass Self**

Charles Horton Cooley (1864–1929), profiled below, developed the concept of the **looking-glass self.** According to Cooley, *society provides a sort of mirror, or* “*looking-glass,*” *that reflects to us who we are. We form our self-image on the basis of how we think others see us.* This concept consists of three major parts: “the imagination of our appearance to the other person; the imagination of [the] judgment of that appearance; and some sort of self-feeling, such as pride or mortification” (Cooley 1964, 184). We come to think of ourselves in terms of how we imagine others see us. If we think that others see us as beautiful or humorous, for example, we come to see ourselves in those terms. If we think they see us negatively, our self-image is likewise negative.

Our self-image also impacts how we interact with others. For example, if a person perceives that others think they are humorous, that person forms a self-image of themselves as someone who can make others laugh. Acting on this self-image, they may routinely joke with others in social situations or become the “class clown.” If a person forms a self-image of themselves as dumb, they will act accordingly by hesitating to speak up in class. However, our perceptions are not always correct. We may incorrectly interpret what others think of us. The person who thinks others see him as an amusing jokester may actually annoy or embarrass people.

Cooley also recognized that everyone’s view of us is not equally important. Those people who are more important to us have greater impact on our self imagethan do others.

A spouse’s compliment or derogatory statement may have a greater effect on someone’s self-perception than the same comment made by a stranger passing on the sidewalk.

Those whose views are most important to us are those in our primary group. **Primary groups** are those *small groups in which all the members have enduring, intimate face-to-face interaction and cooperation.* Cooley coined the term *primary* for these groups because they include the family, our first social group, and these groups provide much of our early and important socialization and social linkages.

Close friends, children’s play groups, and perhaps even some neighbors and some work groups also constitute primary groups. As Cooley explains, primary groups are “fundamental in forming the social nature and ideals of individuals. The result of intimate association . . . is a certain fusion of individualities in a common whole . . . [T]he simplest way of describing this wholeness is by saying that it is a ‘we’ ” (1963, 23).

In primary groups, members value each other as individuals and achieve some personal fulfillment. They do things that will benefit the group, without expectation of payment or self-serving benefit. One member of a family might wash laundry or perform housework that benefits all family members. A few close friends might spend several unpaid days working to repair the roof on another friend’s house.

Other groups in our lives are **secondary groups,** *larger groups in which all members do not interact directly and have relationships that are not permanent.* Members do not share the intimate bonds characteristic of primary groups and, thus, are somewhat interchangeable. They join the group because it benefits them in some way. They may leave the group or join other groups as it behooves them to do so. However, these groups may still have some shared norms and sense of group identity. Examples of secondary groups include office workers, students in an exercise class, neighborhood civic leagues, and professional organizations. These groups are also important to our views of ourselves, but less so than primary groups.

**The I and Me**

George Herbert Mead (1863–1931), developed a concept of the self that was central to our understanding of the socialization process and the development of symbolic interactions.

To Mead (1934), we are not born with a “self.” We develop a self through social experience and interaction. There are two phases to this self that we form: the *I* and the *Me.* The *I* is a spontaneous, impulsive, creative actor. The *Me* is the part of us that conforms, reflecting and acting on the reactions of others. We have a mental conversation with ourselves that guides our behaviors that goes like this: When *I* do something, it will reflect on *Me,* and others will appraise that behavior. *I* can then fashion new actions and reactions in response to my perception of how others have appraised *Me.*

The core of socialization in Mead’s concept is **role taking,** or *the ability to take the role of others in social interaction, enabling us to see ourselves as we perceive society sees us.* In other words, we learn to assess and adjust our behavior based on the anticipated and perceived reactions of others. We develop this role-taking ability through a series of four stages. As we move through each of these stages, we become increasingly able to take the role of others and further develop our self. In the *prepay stage,* babies do not have the ability to take the role of others. They only respond to their environment.

As children develop, they grow into the *play stage.* They play at being some particular person, such as Mommy or Daddy, or a teacher, and they play with imaginary playmates. This, according to Mead, is the stage during which the self begins to form. In the organized *game stage,* children learn to take the role of multiple other players and understand the relationship these roles have to each other. A child playing kickball must understand the roles of each player on the field to play his own role.

Upon reaching the *adult stage,* the person becomes able to take on a role Mead calls the *generalized other.* In this stage, they learn to take the attitude of the whole community. They learn to think about how the community perceives their behavior. The self is finally formed as the person comes to understand and respond to societal values. They can then fashion their behavior by having the complete *I/Me* mental conversation.

More recent research by sociologists has considered whether the concepts of Cooley and Mead can be applied to animals. Mead said that animals could not engage in these types of interactions because they lacked the cognitive skills (e.g., memory and language) to do so. However, Cooley did not see language as critical for such interaction.

In their study of a cat shelter, sociologists Janet and Steven Alger found that “although the caretakers did not believe that the cats had conversations with themselves in human language, they gave examples of cats appearing to make mental calculations based on memory, taking the role of the other, and accessing future consequences. These mental calculations allowed the cats to define the situation, choose a course of action, and change that course when necessary” (2003, 16). Other researchers are also examining the interactions in the social world of animals.

**4.6.2 Personality and Social Development**

Sociologists have also looked to the field of psychology for insights that help inform their understanding of the socialization process. Much of the work of Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), profiled below, is both complex and controversial. However, Freud made important contributions to our understanding of socialization. He argued that early socialization is critically important to personality development and to managing natural desires that promote self-interest rather than social interests. He also addressed the importance of internalizing norms and values. Additionally, Freud (1950) moved beyond Cooley’s and Mead’s focus on conscious perceptions, identifying the importance of the unconscious mind.

Freud (1950) saw personality as divided into three parts: the id, the ego, and the superego. The **id** is made up of *our basic biological drives and needs.*

These are our sexual drives and fundamental needs, including food. They are self centered rather than socially centered, and they crave immediate gratification. The **ego** is *our “self,” our personality, which balances the urges of the id with the requirements of a civil society.* The desires of the id have to be tempered.

Chaos would result if everyone was constantly seeking to gratify all of their own desires. Society would not be able to exist as we know it. Through socialization, which Freud saw as primarily the responsibility of parents, we learn to repress our id and develop the ego.

The **superego** consists of *our internalized social controls, culture, values, and norms.* It is our conscience. The Id and the superego are engaged in constant struggle, mediated by the ego in a largely unconscious process. If the ego mediates properly, the person will be well socialized and well adjusted. Otherwise, the result will be a personality problem.

Freud focused largely on the importance of early childhood (the preschool- age years) in our socialization and later development. Other psychologists have developed theories that, while often focusing on the importance of childhood, elaborate on other age-based life stages and social experiences.

How socialization impacts this moral reasoning has been the subject of further research by psychologist Carol Gilligan (1982; Gilligan, Ward, and Taylor 1989). Considering gender, she argues that boys and girls use different principles in moral reasoning. These principles reflect **gender-role socialization,** *the process of learning to take on socially approved roles for males and females.* Boys tend to focus on justice, whereas girls tend to focus on caring and responsibility. Gender-role socialization impacts us throughout our lives. It influences the way we approach social relationships, leisure activities, even our jobs. For example, Lawson (2000) demonstrates that gender even impacts how men and women sell cars. Male salespeople focus more on aggressive sales tactics, while women are more likely to use their interaction skills. These psychological theories have been targets of various criticisms. Critics argue that they are largely based on studies of males (excluding Gilligan) and the middle class and tend to generalize findings from Western cultures to other cultures. However, they are important in pointing out that socialization is a process of development.

**4.6.3. The Socialization Process**

Sociologists recognize that the experience of socialization is a lifelong process. It occurs from childhood through adulthood and even into old age. It occurs across our entire life span and, to some extent, across all of our social interactions. People move into, and out of, roles throughout their lives from “getting a driver’s license, high school graduation, marriage, divorce, the first full-time job, retirement, [through] widowhood. In general, each major transition initiates a new socialization experience or situation that has implications for the individual’s self-concept”. At the end of life, socialization processes even help people prepare for death.

Across all societies, the *family* is the first and most important location for socialization (an *agent* of socialization). The family into which we are born provides us social characteristics such as social class, race and ethnicity, and religious background. Our families are our initial teachers of behaviors, language, cultural knowledge, values, and social skills.

They are also central to gender role socialization. In other words, they provide our primary socialization. Older research focused almost exclusively on parents as agents of socialization for children. Newer research examines how children influence parents as well. Researchers are also looking at how changing family structures, such as the increasing number of single-parent families, impact child socialization.

In schools, students are exposed to a variety of different experiences. They interact with people of different races, ethnicities, religions, social classes, and value systems, perhaps for the first time. These secondary-group interactions with schoolmates and staff are different than the primary-group interactions they have had with their families. When children enter school, they enter a bureaucracy where they are expected to learn how to be a student.

They will be educated not only in academic skills, but also in a **hidden curriculum** that encourages *conformity to the norms, values, and beliefs held by wider society.* Students learn to speak with proper grammar, stand in line, wait their turn, and in some schools, say the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag. In addition to families, schools also contribute to gender-role socialization. Formal and informal institutional activities such as recess periods and games socialize children into culturally approved gender roles.

Socialization also occurs among **peer groups,** *those of similar age, social class, and interests.* Peer settings allow children to engage in activities outside of parental control and other adult supervision. Peers become especially important in adolescence. They influence students’ study habits, music, and clothing choices, and views of self.

Theories that address peer socialization are often used to explain adolescent deviance. Friends are a major source of information about sexuality for adolescents, and they have a greater influence on dating choices than do adults.

Pressure from peers encourages teens to engage in sexual intercourse, with boys in particular pressing each other to talk about sexual prowess and “scoring”. Parents, however, have influence over many of the “big” areas in adolescents’ lives, such as their long-term goals.

**Mass media,** *impersonal communications that are directed in a one-way flow to a large audience,* are also important in the socialization process. These media are pervasive throughout society. They include newspapers, magazines, movies, radio, and television. We are exposed to a variety of behaviors, ideas, beliefs, and values through the media. We also obtain many of our views about society and how things are or should be through the mass media. For example, whether or not we have ever met a team of emergency room physicians or observed surgery, we develop expectations about these people and situations based on media portrayals (e.g., televised medical dramas and documentaries about medical procedures).

A number of studies have found that the mass media in various forms including children’s books (e.g., Davis 1984; Peterson and Lach 1990), television programming (e.g., Thompson and Zerbinos 1995), and advertising (Kilbourne 2000) perpetuate gender stereotypes and gender role socialization. The socialization process continues in a variety of settings, including religious organizations, political organizations, recreational settings, and voluntary associations such as clubs (Gecas 2000, 2860).

The workplace is also a major location for socialization. Workplace socialization requires that we learn to fulfill the role of worker, demonstrating the requisite job skills and norms associated with the position (Moreland and Levine 2002). Nurses, for example, must learn how to transfer the skills and values acquired during training to the work setting (Lurie 1981). That includes fitting the norms of how nurses interact with physicians, colleagues, and patients, how they dress, and how they present themselves as a “nurse.”

While in nursing school, student nurses are also influenced by **anticipatory socialization.** They *learn and adopt the behavior and attitudes of the group they desire or expect to join.* This occurs as they interact with their peers and attempt to fit in with their mentors and established colleagues.

Anticipatory socialization occurs in many settings across society. It’s not specific to the work place. It occurs in any group we wish to join or use as a reference group. For example, we anticipate how to fit in with classmates, a potential spouse’s family, or members of a sports team we join (see Chapter 5).

Retirement from paid work also continues the socialization process. Many workers look forward to being able to leave their jobs and move on to another position or leisurely activities.

What they find may be unexpected, at least to some degree. Social expectations for retirees are not as clearly defined as for other stages in the life course. This leaves some retirees in a “role less” role. However, loss of the worker role is less of a problem to retirees than other issues such as health or income (e.g., Solomon and Szwabo 1994), and most retirees experience their retirement years positively (Atchley 2000; Palmore et al. 1985; Crowley 1985).

**Chapter five**

**5. Social Organization and Interaction**

**5.1. The Concept of Social Organization**

Human beings are social animals by nature and whatever we do or say is related to the social environment. Our lives as human being have their meanings in organized relationships. Whether we eat, drink, play, Worship, recreate or learn; we do it in social group context. No one enjoys alone outside organized networks of social interaction and relationships. Hence, social organizations are the results of the interaction, relationship, action and reaction that we perform in our social life.

**Social organization** refers to the actual regularity of human interaction; there is organization to a degree that the actions of individuals towards other individuals are recurrent and coordinated by the mutual orientation of the acts of each individual to others. It also refers to the pattern of individual and group relations and interactions. The term “organization” signifies the technical arrangement of parts in a whole, and the term “social” indicates the fact that individual and group relations are the outcomes of social processes. Social organizations are the basis of our life because it gives structure or pattern to our life.

Hence, one of sociology’s main concerns is to study the behavior of human society as it appears in its structured and organized ways and relationships. Specifically, sociologists are here interested in discovering and analyzing:

* The Personal and group relations that influence individual behavior and social institutions;
* How persons and groups relate to each other;
* How people organize themselves in various social situations, whether consciously or unconsciously;
* What kind of social relationships occur in their organized behaviors; and
* How these social relationships are maintained; how they decline or disintegrate.

Social organization or structure of a society may also be seen as a network of roles involving interaction between individuals and groups which together give the society both its unique qualities and the characteristics which it shares with other societies. It includes the process by which influence, authority and power are exerted, the interdependence of individuals and groups through segregation or integration, and the broad patterns through which social order is maintained and social solidarity promoted.

**5.2. The patterning of Social life (Social Structure, Social Interaction and Relationship)**

“The art of progress is to preserve order amid change and to preserve change amid order.”

Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947), mathematician and philosopher

Social life is not an island or it is not something that is performed in random way rather it is patterned or structured by the values, norms and sentiments of the members of the group.

**Social structure** is the recurrent and patterned relationships that exist among the components of a social system. In other words, it is the interweaving of people’s interactions and relationships in recurrent and stable patterns. Because of social structure, human life gives the impression of organization and regularity. Social structure gives us the feeling that much of social life is routine and repetitive.

We can find the notion of structure throughout the sciences; molecular structure, atomic structure, anatomical structure and personality structure. But what sociologists call social structure consists of subtle understandings and agreements networks of invisible rules and institutional arrangements that guide our behavior. Many sociologists view social structure as a social fact of the sort described by Emile Durkheim. We experience a social fact as external to our lives as an independent reality that forms a part of our objective environment. It is there, something that we cannot deny and that we must constantly deal with. Consequently, social structures constrain our behavior and channel our actions in certain directions. They provide the frame work within which we make our choices. Beyond our characteristics as individuals, then, are the characteristics of groups of which we are a part.

If we are to live our lives as members of society, our actions must be guided and constrained by the requirements of the larger social enterprise. Much of human life is organized and focused rather than haphazard and random. The recurrent and patterned relationships we establish with one another find expression in our use of space. The way we lay out our buildings reflects our division of labor and our patterns of social inequality.

There are two basic aspects of the patterns of social life which are necessary for human interactions: status and role. **Status** and **role** are basic units of social structure. They are very important concepts for groups, institutions and societies. Membership in groups, institutions and societies confers status and role. Through their behavior in various groups people come to perform certain roles and acquire status.

**1. Status**: refers to any of the hundreds of socially defined positions that members of a society may occupy. It signifies the numerous social spaces existing in a society. These spaces are independent of the individuals who occupy them; they simply designate the positions necessary to the ongoing functions of a society: bank teller, lawyer, cleric, student, prisoner, mother, husband and many more.

We can have two types of statuses: ascribed and achieved

**A. Ascribed status**: Ascribed statuses are assigned to us by society, generally at the time of our birth: gender, race or ethnic group, age and family. A classic example of a scribed status is the Hindu caste system, which existed until recently in India. A Hindu was born into a particular caste and usually remained in the caste for life. The class hierarchy seems as follows.

1. The priest and warrior classes held the highest positions in the caste system
2. The occupational classes fell just below the priest and warrior classes.
3. At the bottom were the out castes.

**B. Achieved Status**: Are statuses attained as a result of some activity or accomplishment. Your presence in this sociology class us probably one step in achieving a new status, the status of college student.

**2. Social roles**: By virtue of occupying a particular status, we have social relationships with occupants of other status. These relationships and the norms that govern them are called roles. Role can be regarded as bundle of expectations. It is the pattern of behavior associated with or expected of a person or the individual who occupies a status. When one puts the rights and duties which constitute the status into effect, he is performing a role.

Role can be divided into two:

**A. Ideal role**: prescribes the rights and duties belonging to a social position. it tells the individual what is expect of him un his role as a father or teacher to whom he has obligations and up on he has a right full claim. These norms dictate what people should do and should not do generally.

**B. Actual Role**: is role behavior which is subject to the influence of a specific social setting as well as the personality of the individual. Actual role refers to actual conduct or the role performance of the individual who has occupied a specific status. They are actual behaviors of the people in a given situations regardless of how the perspective norms should behave. There are also other important points with regards to the concepts of role and status. Some of them include:

**Role set**: is a concept, which indicates the complements of roles associated with a particular status. Therefore, each social status involves not a single associated role but an array or roles. Each of us simultaneously occupies many statuses and for each status, has several roles.

For example, a person who takes a status of a lecturer at Woldia University does have several roles to play including giving lecture to students, doing research, sitting at departmental meetings to decide on departmental affairs, taking extra assignments with other government and non-government agencies, etc. All these are complementary roles associated with the person and are referred to as role set.

**Status set:** We often use the term status set for all the statuses that a person occupies. It refers to complement of a distinct statuses occupied by an individual, each of these in turn having its own role set. For instance, a person can be a teacher, a husband, father and Idir chairman. In this particular case the person has four status positions.

**Multiple Roles**: Each status demands a different role. As a result of this, they have multiple roles, a variety or complex of roles related with different statuses. It refers to the different roles played by the individual as a result of occupying different status. A doctor, for example, may be at the same time the head of a house hold, a church member, a lecturer etc. Each of these is a different status and demands a different role.

NB. It should be made plain that the role set differs from multiple roles. Multiple roles refer not to the complex of roles associated with a single social status but with the various social statuses (often in differing institutional spheres) in which people find themselves.

**Social Mobility**

All of us begin life with a social heritage that includes call membership. An individual may shift or alter his class level or status position over time through his individual efforts.In some societies moving up in the social ladder or hierarchy is possible. Individuals freely move up and down the class structure. Such movement in the class structure of society is referred to as **social mobility.**

Social mobility may be vertical or horizontal

1. ***Vertical Social Mobility***

Vertical social mobility implies a change in status position and is of two types:1) Upward (ascending) and 2) Down ward (descending), the former takes place when status position rises up in the social structure, while the latter is down in the social hierarchy.

For example, take for instance a poor peasant who migrated to Addis Ababa ins each of employment at the age of thirteen, and who started out as a shoe shiner boy and after a while he managed to save some money and later opened up a modest shop. In the life time of the person, we observe changes in status position from a poor peasant boy to a middle class shop owner. The mobility may also be in opposite direction as, for instance, a person who commands substantial wealth, but over time develops the habit of heavy drinking & gambling and gradually looses all his money and resorts to beginning and making a living in the streets of Addis. In this case the mobility experienced is downw3ard, i.e., from a rich respectable person to a poor bigger in the life time of the person.

1. ***Horizontal Social Mobility*** is a movement within a class where the individual slightly improves and/or declines in his status position with in his class level.Horizontal mobility does not involve status change.

**Chapter Six**

**6. Social Groups and organizations**

**6.1. Meaning and Types of Groups**

We generally refer to any gathering of individuals as a group. We say there are groups at work, groups waiting for a bus, ethnic or racial groups living in one part of a town and so forth. However, a sociologist would not call these entire bunch of people groups because some of them lack the characteristics essential to the sociological definition of a social group.One non-group, for example, is a category. A category is a set of people who happen to share some common characteristic e.g. the set of all females in Ethiopia. Members of a category do not necessarily know one another or interact with one another in any way.

Another type of non-group is an aggregate. This is a gathering of people in physical proximity who has come together temporarily, but who lack any organization or lasting pattern of relationship. The crowd at the bus stop is an example of an aggregate, as is a bunch of people who happen to be in the same theatre watching movie or play. So, the sociological interest is beyond this on a social group. There are four essential characteristics of a social group:

* 1. Regular and usually sustained interaction between members.
  2. A sense of common identity
  3. shared interests and
  4. Some patterns for organization of behavior on a regular basis.

From these characteristics, the following definition is generally accepted as a standard:

“A group is a plurality of individuals who have contact with one another, who take each other into account in making decisions, and who have some sense of common identity as well as shared goals or interests.”All groups are not the same. They vary in terms of their size, the intensity of relationship between members, standards for membership and the importance of the group to its members. There are two broad types of groups classified depending on their quality of relationship and interaction. These are primary and secondary groups.

1. **Primary groups**: are groups characterized by.

* close and intimate association and cooperation
* Usually small in size
* Relatively frequent contact
* Usually face – to – face relationships
* Strong sense of identity and loyalty
* Deep and extensive communications, etc. E.g. The family, peer groups.

The very name of the group, primary, indicates something of its importance, it is primary in time, primary in intimacy, and primary in belonging. Primary groups have two important functions: socialization and individual support. The primary group assists in the formation of basic human character and provides us with norms which we, in turn, internalize. While providing this education in socialization. Primary group also gives the member unconditional support. Relationships outside the primary group tend to be dependent up on one’s ability to perform. One can, for example, be a college student only so long as grades are maintained and bills are paid. Failure on either count will result in being cast out of the role of student. Membership in primary groups is not dependent up on performance, but on a covenant relationship in which one will be given support, even while being chastised for failing in some duty.

**2. Secondary groups**: As societies grow larger and more complex, the relative frequency of primary groups lessons. Most relationships between people are carried on in what are known as secondary groups. These groups are opposite to primary groups and are characterized by:

* Relatively larger in size.
* Instrumental in nature; that is, they have specific goals to be attained, and the efforts of the group are directed at obtaining these goals.
* Relations with in the secondary group are partial in that members tend to see only one or a few segments of the person of their fellow members (i.e., Relations do not involve the entire personality of the individual participant.)
* Finally, relationships are basically contractual in the sense that members are expected to give something, perform some duty or pay in some way for the privilege of membership. E.g. College class, the company for which we work, our church, Idir etc.

**Remarks**

1. We may find primary groups in a secondary group
2. Not all groups small in size are primary groups. For example, a committee of five may constitute a group which is of secondary in its characteristics and purposes.

**Social Institutions**

**6.1.2. What is an Institution**?

“An institution is an organized network of values, norms, folkways and more through which a particular human society organizes itself and directs its members in the performance or its activities to satisfy their needs.”So, social institution is a pattern which has developed around a major social function, goal or need. It is thus a means to an end.Institutions are universal in nature although they vary considerably in terms of their level of development and the functions they perform.

**6.1.2.1. Basic Social Institutions**

There are five basic social institutions: The family, Education, religious, political and Economic institutions.

**1. The Family**

Definition: “family is a socially sanctioned, relatively permanent grouping of people who are united by blood, marriage or adoption ties and who generally live together and cooperate economically.” The following are among the more or less universal functions of the family find throughout time and in all societies. However, the family has many other important functions that many vary overtime and from one society to another.

***1.* Reproduction and regulation of sexual behavior**: reproduction is a prerequisite for the survival of a society. The family provides institutionalized means by which the society’s members are replaced from generation to generation. The family also provides for and regulates sexual derive. E.g. Premarital sex, incest taboo

***2*. Care and protection of the young**: Young children through their long period of dependency need care and protection.

***3.* Socialization**: the family is virtually the only primary social institution responsible for the early development of personality in the individual.

4. **Family also provides the means by which n individual’s social status** is initially fixed. For example, through the family individual member are assigned their ethnic or social status, their initial religious status and their class status.

*5.* ***the family also provides the affection, love and emotional support*** that is so vital to human happiness.

**6.2. Religious Institution**

Sociologists are not generally concerned with weather religious belief is true or not. They are mainly interested in the significance of religion in a society. We find some kind of religion in all societies (university). The religious institution meets many basic human needs and its function in society can be broadly categorized under three headings.

**1. Individual support** – Religion can provide a source of explanation and meaning for individuals when faced by strains and crisis in their lives such as war, death and natural disasters.

**2. Social integration** – Religion provides unity, cohesiveness and solidarity in a society. Durkheim saw religion as a kind of social glue, binding society together and intergrading individuals into it.

**3. Social control** *–* Religion provides people with ethical principles and a set of guide lines for appropriate and in appropriate behavior.

6.**3. The Economic Institution**

The economic institution is universal. Its goal is the meeting of society’s economic needs, and it performs the following functions in order to meet them. To meet these function people have to cooperate with one another and create responsible organization, especially under condition when there exist extensive division of labor and thus specialization in certain labor activities.

Functions:

1. Gathering of resources.
2. The manufacturing of goods and services
3. The distribution of goods and services
4. The consumption of goods and services

In less complex societies and non-industrialized countries, economic institutions are merged with families and tribe, and it is difficult to distinguish economic activities from family life, religion, politics and social relations. In more complex societies economic institution is more clearly separated from other social institutions.

6.**4. The Political Institution**

The political institution is the complex of norms that regulate the acquisition and exercise of power by some individuals or groups over other within a given territory through social structures claiming a monopoly ultimate authority. The major Functions are:

1. Regulating the power of some people over others and determines when, how and who should gain power.

2. Resolving conflicts that exist among various segments of society.

3. Institutionalizing and enforcing social norms through laws which are established by governments’ legislative body.

4. Protecting citizens from outside enemies.

\* In general, political institution plays a basic role of maintaining peace and order.

6.**5. Educational Institution**

The major Functions of educational institution are

**1- Socialization**: Schools are important agencies of secondary socialization which usually beginning in the family. Here Schools transmit societal values, attitudes, beliefs, norms, specific skills and system of knowledge to young people.

**2- Recruitment**: The Educational institution recruits, young people for specific roles by sorting out those who are best suited. In short, Educational institution produces labor force with the appropriate skills needed for work.

**3- Social Control**: Schools act as important agencies of social control, which encourage children to learn and conform to the values and norms expected by society. This is mainly carried out through the hidden curricula as there are no organized course in obedience and conformity.

**4- Preparing for social change**: Beyond encouraging people to accept culture which will lead to stability, schools also prepare students for a rapidly changing industrial society. It promotes technological changes in society by providing the basis of knowledge and skill that enable technological innovation to occur.

**CHAPTER Seven**

**7.1. Stratification, mobility and social movement**

Sociologists use a geological metaphor to explain how groups of people are divided into social rankings similar to the layers, or strata, in the Earth’s surface.

The term that sociologists use to describe this division of people into layers is **social stratification,** *the structured hierarchy, or social strata, that exist in a society.*Social stratification is one of the most basic concepts in sociology.Stratification is systemic; it is actually part of our social system, notsomething that occurs haphazardly.

Stratification is a “social arrangement patternedsocially and historically, which is rooted in an ideological framework thatlegitimates and justifies the subordination of particular groups of people”. This means that stratification is an enduring facetof society, supported by social values and belief systems.

It results in inequalities of valued resources (wealth, social opportunities, power, etc.) between groups or categories of people. **Inequality** is *the degreeof disparity of this distribution within society.* Although the term is sometimes used interchangeably with social stratification, inequality is actually more specific.

It is one of the oldest concepts in sociology, dating at least as far back as the Hebrew prophets (Sernau, 2001) and Plato (427–347 B.C.). Like stratification, inequality is one of the most basic concepts in sociology and “is relevant for the study of social systems that range in size from the dyad [see chapter 5] . . . to the modern world-system,” discussed below (O’Rand 1992, 795).

Some of the most important questions for sociologists studying stratification involve understanding the impacts of this inequality on our lives. To Charles Lemert, “these are questions of social *structures,* of the individual *subjects*who must live with them, and of the social *differences* these structures create”. Stratification and inequality impact every facet of our lives. Stratification results in great variations in lifestyles representing systemic differences in opportunities (Bottomore 1965).

Stratification impacts our lives in ways that we might not immediately recognize, both materially and nonmaterially.

It impacts our health through such factors as differential access to nutrition, health care, treatment quality, the resources people have available to cope with stress in their lives, and living conditions, with the poor being more likely to live in unhealthy locations (e.g., Crawford 1986; Pearlin 1989; Ross and Wu 1995; Knox and Gilman 1997; Stretesky and Lynch 1999). Stratification impacts our access to quality education (DiMaggio 1982), which will, in turn, impact other areas such as income.

# 7.2. FORMS OF STRATIFICATION

A variety of social-stratification systems with varying opportunities to move between strata have existed throughout history (Lenski 1984). The earliest types of societies were hunting and gathering societies stratified along tribal systems into groups of chiefs, shamans, and others. Other preindustrial societies were stratified by feudal systems (consisting of kings, nobles, and serfs) and slave systems. Feudal systems were justified by tradition and religion; slavery was justified by those in power as a matter of natural selection.

A type of stratification system widely associated with agrarian societies is a caste society. In **caste societies,** *a person’s location in the social strata isascribed by birth rather than based on individual accomplishments.* Movement between strata, or castes, is prohibited or severely limited. The system is maintained through **endogamous marriages,** *cultural rules requiring that peoplemarry only within their own group.* Other strict restrictions on interactions between the castes are also important in maintaining the system.

Traditional Indian society was a caste system. Some rural areas in that country still remain largely caste systems (Human Rights Watch 1999). South African society under **apartheid** (laws that formalized strict racial segregation) was a caste system based on race. That system of legally sanctioned segregation was officially eliminated in 1992. Some scholars have also classified feudal medieval Europe and the southern United States under slavery as caste societies.

Industrial society gave rise to class-based systems of stratification. In **class societies,** *social stratification is based on a combination of ascribed andachieved statuses.* Strata are largely established along economic lines but are not as clearly delineated as in a caste system. Class societies allow movement between classes based on individual accomplishments.

This movement, however, can still be limited by factors such as unequal treatment based on ascribed statuses.Sociologists and others studying the United States do not agree on exactly how many classes characterize the American class structure or the exact boundaries between these classes. Some support a multidimensional view that precludes distinct labels (Blau and Duncan 1967). Others divide the population into as few as two or as many as seven classes.

Sometimes distinctions are based on more than income. For example, the highest class is sometimes divided into “old money” and “new money.”Those with old money have wealth primarily due to birth. These elite have exclusive lifestyles and extensive networking opportunities. Even activities such as supporting charitable organizations often provide networking opportunities with other elites (Domhoff 1974; Ostrander 1984). In his autobiography, sociologist George Homans (1984), writes about his time at Harvard University. There, students sought membership in a hierarchy of social clubs that determined many of the networking connections the student wouldhave for a lifetime.Those with new money are people whose wealth is earned. This groupincludes sports stars, entertainers, and entrepreneurs, such as billionaire Microsoft founder Bill Gates. In 2004, Bill Gates led the list of the richest people in America (*Forbes* 2004).

On the other end of the stratification scale, some sociologists argue that those on the very bottom of the hierarchy are effectively treated like an outcaste—hence the term *underclass.* This term, they argue, depicts those trapped beneath the class structure largely by structural factors beyond their control (e.g., Wilson 1987). To others, *underclass* is a degrading term that implies personal deficiencies or values, rather than structural realities (Gans1990a, 1995).

**Classless societies** *have no economic strata.* Although hunting and gathering societies may have been classless, no industrial society has ever been truly classless. The Soviets claimed to have created a classless society. However, that society was classless in name only. In practice, it was actually a system stratified by managers and workers with benefits for certain members of society (e.g., Kelly 1981; Lenski 1992).

## 7.2.1. SOURCES OF STRATIFICATION

Two of the major questions sociologists studying stratification have triedto answer is why stratification exists and if it is inevitable. Sociologists workingfrom the two major macro-theoretical perspectives provide varying responses.

## Structural-Functionalist Perspectives

True to Emile Durkheim’s (profiled in chapter 10) perspective that inequality serves a social function, sociologists working in the structural-functionalist tradition (discussed in chapter 2) have examined how stratification contributes to the operation of society as a whole. Kingsley Davis, profiled below, and Wilbert Moore (1945) offered an early and controversial, but still influential, functionalist analysis of stratification.

They argue that some form of stratification is universal across all societies. To operate smoothly, societies face a “motivational problem” in ensuring that the best, most qualified people fill the most important roles in society. By offering the greatest rewards to people who fill the most important positions, stratification is an “unconsciously evolved device by which societies insure that the important positions are conscientiously filled by the most qualified persons”(Davis and Moore 1945, 243).

This perspective has been widely criticized (e.g., Tumin 1953, 1985). Critics have charged that the Davis-Moore thesis implies that individual attributes determine how people are located in society, and that the most talentedearn their positions through their hard work and merits. This idea disregards theimpact of social factors such as discrimination that are outside of individual control.

It does not give appropriate attention to the tensions and divisiveness that can arise as a result of inequality. For example, hard feeling may result among those who work hard yet are treated unfairly or feel they are not properly rewarded for their efforts.

Davis and Moore have also been criticized for disregarding those who inherit their wealth or position. Someone born into privilege has not “earned”that position through her own efforts. Another factor that the perspective disregards is the ability of those with higher status to use their position and contacts to secure and further improve their own positions and resources (Wrong 1959).

This includes politicians and corporate executives, who can often enact their own pay raises. Critics also argue that the most highly rewarded positions (e.g., entertainers and sports figures that earn millions annually) do not always fill the most important roles in society.

Additionally, critics argue that this perspective does not adequately account for the wide disparity between the rich and poor. They ask, if stratification is, indeed, a requirement for society to function, how much inequality is actually necessary?

Sociologist Herbert Gans (2001), analyzed the functions of poverty. He described 13 functions the poor play in society. Among these functions, the poor ensure that society’s “dirty work” gets done, their existence creates jobs that serve the poor (e.g., social-service workers, shelter providers), and the poor buy goods others do not want (e.g., day-old bread, used clothing and vehicles). The existence of the poor also guarantees the status of those who are not poor (i.e., others are able to say that they themselves are not poor and are higher in the social strata). The poor also absorb the costs of social change (e.g., they are uprooted during urban-renewal projects).

Gans says that his analysis does not mean that poverty must, or should, exist, and he offers several more expensive alternatives for fulfilling these functions. He argues that a “functional analysis must conclude that poverty persists not only because it fulfills a number of positive functions but also because many of the functional alternatives to poverty would be quite dysfunctional for the affluent members of society” (Gans 2001, 328). He also uses his analysis to show that functionalism, accused by critics of being inherently conservative, can be used in more liberal and radical analyses.

## Social-Conflict Perspectives

The social-conflict perspective on stratification focuses on the tensions in society that result from social inequalities. Sociologists working from a conflict perspective argue that across society, groups are in a constantstruggle for valued resources, vying for wealth, status, and power. Some groupswill be successful; others will not. Social stratification is the outcome of this ongoingstruggle.

Conflict theorists base their work on the writings of Karl Marx. Marx often collaborated with his friend and coauthor Friedrich Engels, who is profiled below. According to Marx (1983), capitalist society is comprised of two major social classes. These **social classes** are *positions based onthe unequal locations of people within economic groups.* The smaller of these two classes is the **bourgeoisie,** or the capitalists, who *own the factories, industrialmachinery, and banks.* As business owners, the bourgeoisie seek to maximize their profits by keeping production costs low and selling their product for as much as they can.

Most people fit into the other major class Marx identified. They are members of the **proletariat,** *the factory workers who actually work to producethese products.* Their desire for higher wages is at odds with the capitalists’ desire for high profits. To survive in an industrial economy, the proletariats have no choice but to work for the bourgeoisie. By their ownership of the factories, the bourgeoisie control the work and wages available to the proletariat. This situation leads to exploitation of the workers by the owners.

Class conflict results as each segment of society looks out for its own interests. Marx felt that this conflict was the driving force for social change, writing that “the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles” (1983, 203). Marx also felt that the capitalist system would eventually lead to its own demise.

He predicted that through their class struggles workers would eventually develop a **class consciousness,** *a recognition of themselves as a social classwith interests opposed to the bourgeoisie.* They would learn how to overcome their oppression, revolt against the capitalists, and establish a classless society. Sociologists have intensively studied Marx’s views and widely critiqued his prediction of class revolt. Although Marx did acknowledge some minor social classes, he predicted that class struggle would drive people into one major class or the other. The system of social stratification has not developed as Marx thought.

He did not predict the rise of the middle class or the system of stockholders that spreads corporate ownership beyond a few capitalists. Additionally, some aspects of class conflict have resulted in improved conditions and pay for workers and helped to preclude the development of a class consciousness largely based on exploitation (Dahrendorf 1959).

Additionally, critics of Marx and the conflict perspective argue that unequal rewards may indeed be useful and necessary. However, there is still much inequality in the United States and globally, as discussed below, and that inequality is increasing in many instances.

## Multi-dimensional Perspectives

Max Weber, developed a more complex view of social stratification than Marx’s view of economically based classes. Weber developed three separate but interrelated dimensions of stratification: class, status,and power. Class, to Weber, was also based on economic position, but, unlike Marx, he did not dichotomize class. Rather, he saw **class** as *a continuum of economiclocations that leads to differences in lifestyle or life chances.*Weber’s dimension of **status** referred to *established social positions based on social honoror social prestige*

Weber’s third dimension of **power,** *the ability to influence others, even if those others resist*, includes political connections and influence.Power is sometimes termed *party* in discussions of Weber’s concept to capturethis implication.

# 7.3. MAINTAINING STRATIFICATION

Stratification is influenced by ascribed statuses, such as race, ethnic background, gender, and age. We are born with these statuses, and, despite our personal efforts and achievements, they impact our lifestyle and life chances. Prejudices and discrimination based on these ascribed statuses serve to justify and maintain systems of stratification.

Although the terms are often used interchangeably in everyday conversations, *prejudice* and *discrimination* are different. **Prejudice** is *a preconceivedand irrational attitude toward people based on their group membership.* Just as the term suggests, this is a pre-judgment. It is inflexible and not based on direct evidence or contact. Prejudices can take the form of positive or negative attitudes toward a group, but the term is often used with a negative connotation. Socialization contributes to prejudice and people who hold prejudicial attitudes toward one group tend to be prejudice toward others as well. Eugene Hartley asked people to express their reactions to various minority groups.

He found that people who expressed prejudice against actual racial and ethnic groups also expressed prejudicial attitudes against fictitious groups he had made up for his research. Common and damaging forms of prejudice are found in the “isms” that exist throughout society (e.g., racism, sexism, ageism). All of these “isms” take the form of a *belief that one group is naturally inferior or superior, thus justifyingunequal treatment of the group on the basis of their assumed characteristics.*

These “isms” reinforce, and are reinforced by, another common and potentially destructive form of prejudice, stereotypes. **Stereotypes** are *beliefs thatgeneralize certain exaggerated traits to an entire category of people.* These common images can assign either positive or negative traits to various groups. They may arise out of observations of behaviors or traits that the observer applied to all people in the actor’s category (sex, ethnicity, club membership, hair color, etc.). Like the “isms,” stereotypical beliefs are used to justify unequal treatment of groups. If stereotypes are accepted by the people to which they refer, they can also become self-fulfilling prophecies.

Stereotypes abound across society. For example, black professionals have reported troubles hailing cabs. Research has shown that children’spicture books tend to depict women in more traditional roles, working inside the home rather than in an occupation (e.g., Peterson and. Women are even depicted more negatively than men in college sociology textbooks. The elderly are frequently stereotyped as senile and less capable and competent in many areas of life than younger people (Butler 1975). Images of elderly women may be especially negative.

Prejudices may also result in **scapegoating,** *focusing blame on another person or category of people for one*’*s own problems.* Hitler blamed Jews andother “enemies of the state” for Germany’s troubles before World War II (Scheff1994). Modern-day white-supremacist groups blame other races for economicproblems.

**Discrimination,** *unequal treatment of people based on their group membership,* also perpetuates stratification. Discrimination differs from prejudice.Prejudice is an attitude; discrimination is a behavior. Although the two may,and often do, occur together, they can also exist separately (Merton 1976). When*discrimination becomes part of the operation of social institutions,* it is knownas**institutional discrimination.** It perpetuates stratification patterns by systematicallydisadvantaging certain groups. According to Joe Feagin and MelvinSikes (1994), racism is still alive and well, although less overt than in the past.However, institutional racism is rampant. It manifests in patterns of residential and educational segregation.

The result is a social structure that adversely impacts the chances of those subjected to prejudice and discrimination. These ascribed factors require a multidimensional approach to stratification. They can have multiple, interrelated effects. Stratification also applies to many more social factors than race, ethnicity, gender, and age. We are also ranked to varying degrees by other factors such as religious affiliation and sexual preference. People are even socially ranked by their physical appearance.

# 7.4. SOCIAL MOBILITY

Sociologists interested in stratification also focus on **social mobility,** *movement within the stratification system from one position, or strata, to another.*This movement can be upward or downward. It can be studied at the collectivelevel using characteristics such as ascribed status (e.g., the upwardmobility of African Americans in the United States since the end of slavery, thestatus of women) or even at the level of entire nations (e.g., ranking by economicfactors such as gross domestic product).

However, social mobility is usually addressedat the micro level by examining individual or family level movementwithin the social structure. Interestingly, these micro-level patterns of mobilityare “considered a core characteristic of a society’s social structure,” even thoughstructure which is typically considered a macro-level area of study. Mobility can be examined by how much time it takes to occur. **Intragenerationalmobility**is *movement that occurs within the lifetime of an individual.*

Individuals that change their social position over the course of their lifetime achieve this type of mobility (e.g., an employee that starts in the mail room and becomes corporate vice president). **Intergenerational mobility** is *movement that occurs from generation to generation* (e.g., the mail-room clerk’s son becomes the corporate officer).

Mobility can also be examined by the factors behind the change. *Mobility that occurs as a result of changes in the occupational structure of a society* is **structural mobility.** A strong economy can create new options for upwardmobility. The so-called dot-com businesses that arose with the growth of the Internetprovided new, often high-paying employment opportunities during the late1990s. When the dot-com bust came at the end of the decade, the occupationalstructure once again changed, and many workers lost their jobs.

**Positional mobility** is *movement that occurs due to individual effort* (e.g., hard work, winningthe lottery). This type of mobility does not depend on structural changes.

Because stratification persists over the long term, it results in limited social mobility. People generally remain in the social class in which they are born. Movements within the social structure tend to be incremental as opposed to large leaps. Although cases do occur in which people go from rags to riches and make big moves across several strata, this is an exception rather than the rule.

In the United States, when mobility does occur, upward mobility has traditionally been more common than downward mobility. It has been especially pronounced for minorities in white-collar occupations. Additionally, the decades of the 1980s and 1990s saw an increase in the capitalist class. However, upward mobility is not always the pattern. For example, women tend to experience downward mobility after divorce (Weitzman 1985, 1996). Women divorcing powerful or well-connected men lose their husband’s income as well as his status.

Research has shown that the structure of society can limit those who try to get ahead in spite of educational and occupational aspirations. Jonathan Kozol (1991) examined wealthy schools and poorly funded schools. He found that these schools provided different elements of success to their students, ranging from differences in physical structure and educational resources (e.g., computers, sports equipment) to the messages they sent students about their self-worth and value to society.

# 7.5. Social Change, and Social Movements

Cultures and societies are dynamic. They constantly experience **social change,** meaning that *the structures of cultures and societies transform into new forms.* Changes may occur primarily within one society (e.g., a coup installs a new government) or encompass multiple societies (e.g., globalization brings a fast-food restaurant or department store to places previously without these entities).

Explaining social change has always been a major interest for sociologists. Sociologists who study social change focus their attention away from the routines of social life that are generally somewhat stable and predictable, a much as this book discusses. Instead, they examine **collective behaviors,** those *spontaneous activities that involve large numbers of people violating established norms.* Those behaviors occur when people react to something new or unfamiliar.

The result may be minimal, unanticipated, or short-term changes. Those behaviors may also lead to **social movements,** *organized collective activities that deliberately seek to create or resist social change.* Social movements purposely result in long-term, sweeping changes. Such activities are increasingly referred to as **collective action** because of the *intent to bring about a lasting change*(Miller 2000, 5).

The study of collective action is subfield of sociology. Sociologists in the American Sociological Association have established their own interest group for this area. Collective action also overlaps with interests in a number of other disciplines, including public opinion studied in political-science courses, the movements studied in political and religious sociology, and mass behavior studied in popular-culture and mass-media courses (Shibutani 1988, 26).

# 7.6. SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Unlike the spontaneity of the collective behaviors discussed above, social movements intend to direct social change. These movements encompass a diversity of issues. Contemporary movements include efforts to draw attention to the rights of the disabled, animal rights, environmental activism, abortion (pro-choice and pro-life), AIDS activism, gay rights, civil rights, patients’ rights, rights of those who choose to be childfree, gun control, the right to die (i.e., euthanasia), Mothers against Drunk Driving (MADD), the open-source software movement, and women’s liberation, to name just a few. Sociologists are interested in how these movements form, why they arise, the forms they take and their life cycle, what change occurs, and the outcomes of that change.

Social movements work to accomplish their goals through actions that disrupt the established status quo, authority, and culture. Movement participants develop a sense of collective identity that bolsters their sense of having a shared cause and helps sustain their efforts, thereby sustaining the movement (Tarrow1994). Some movements are fairly short-lived and either die out or accomplish their goals (e.g., local efforts to stop the construction of a nuclear power plant or prison). Other movements have long lives, some having adherents who participate for their entire lives (e.g., the NAACP) (Klandermans 2000, 246).

## 7.6.1 Formation of Social Movements

It is difficult to identify the beginning of most social movements as they are occurring. However, sociologists have suggested a number of factors that may be behind the birth of a social movement. These factors include the relative deprivation of one group to larger society, social unrest, dissatisfaction, a sense of injustice, ideology or beliefs, social stresses (such as a crisis or cultural lag), resources, organization, and an orientation toward change. Some factors seem to play a larger role in the formation of one social movement and less in others.

However, social movements all involve collective action of people who work to enact some type of change they feel would be preferable in the social structure. Freeman (1999, 19–20) studied four social movements of the 1960s and 1970s to better understand what is required for the formation of social movements. Her analyses of the civil rights, student protests, welfare rights, and women’s liberation movements prominent during this period identify four elements that are essential for a social movement to form. She finds that there must be (1) a preexisting communications network that can be (2) co-opted to disseminate the ideas of the movement, along with (3) crises that spur involvement in the cause and (4) an effort to organize interested groups into a movement.

Freeman’s analysis of the civil rights movement illustrates these elements.Churches and black colleges provided a communications network thatpredated the civil rights movement. Students and church members shared commonexperiences of racism and discrimination that led them to be receptive tothe message of the movement when presented to them through these familiar andtrusted networks. Emerging leaders, consisting of a number of church ministers,began to speak to these shared experiences and provide avenues for social action.

Participation in social movements became, in Freeman’s word, logical. In Montgomery, Alabama, when Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus to a white passenger, those hearing the civil rights message had the spark to ignite action. While Martin Luther King Jr. served as spokesperson, the ensuing Montgomery bus boycott was then largely organized by E. D. Nixon, a Pullman car porter and activist with the already established NAACP.

Social movements also use tactics designed to encourage a sense of community and belonging during difficult periods. Music, for example, can be utilized for this purpose. The civil rights movement’s theme was the song “We Shall Overcome,” a piece that traces its roots back to two gospel songs sung by slaves. The song also aided in recruitment and garnering support for the cause.

**7.6.2. Types of Social Movements**

Sociologists have no one single way to classify social movements. Some classifications consider movement goals or methods employed to achievethose goals. Herbert Blumer (1969) classified social movements as *general* or*specific.* General movements involve a change of values across society—for example, changes in the views and status of women brought about by the women’s movement.

These movements are not sharply focused on methods, which may actually be diffuse, with different branches of the movement supporting different activities (letter-writing campaigns, sit-ins, hiring a lobbyist, etc.). Specific movements have a more well-defined focus—for example, the antiabortion movement.

One commonly cited classification is provided by David Aberle (1966). He divides social movements into four types, broadly based on who they seek to change (individuals or society) and the extent of the change sought (small or sweeping). **Alternative social movements** *focus on partial change at the individuallevel.* Movements advocating birth control provide an example of this type of movement. **Redemptive social movements** *seek a total change of individuals.*

Movements that aim to bring a state of grace to adherents are redemptive movements (e.g., born-again Christians). Like transformation movements, discussed below, they reject at least some features of the current society. **Reformativesocial movements** *seek a partial change of society.* Women’s suffrage and child-labor laws fit this definition by seeking to reform voting laws and the status of women as well as the situation of children. **Transformative socialmovements***support a total change of society.* Examples include millenarian and revolutionary movements.

Another type of social movement is the *reactionary social movement,* sometimes called a **countermovement.** Countermovements*organize in response to the changes brought about by other social movements.* Members perceivea threat from these changes and seek to protect their own establishedpositions. For example, in response to the animal-rights movement, a countermovementhas arisen defending targets of animal activism, such as factory farmsand recreational hunting (Munro 1999).

Although there are many similarities between social movements and countermovements, their differences are important. As Johnson (1999) points out, since countermovements are protecting some already established economic and political interests, the resources are likely in place to facilitate their emergence and growth. Additionally, since they are responding to changes brought about by social movements, counter rmovements borrow the rhetoric of those movements but twist it to support their opposing goals.

Operation Rescue, an antiabortion movement that blockaded access to clinics that included abortion among their family-planning services, serves as an example of these tactics (Johnson 1999). Operation Rescue was devised as a part of a larger effort by right-wing Christian organizations to close abortion clinics nationwide. Beginning with a blockade at a New Jersey clinic in 1987, activists attempted to deny clinic access by surrounding clinic doors and windows. They prayed, sang religious and/or civil rights hymns, heard inspirational speeches, and utilized tactics including picketing, tying up clinic phone lines, and distributing“wanted posters” of clinic physicians. When arrested, activists went limpso that police had to carry them away.

Operation Rescue activists co-opted familiar rhetoric from progressive movements of the 1960s. They called themselves the “civil rights movement of the eighties,” calling for “civil rights for the unborn” and “equal rights for unborn women.” They sang freedom songs, held sit-ins, and cultivated media comparisons to the nonviolent tactics of the civil rights movement.

As a result of a combination of injunctions, escalating violence attributed to their activists, and legislative and court action targeted to allowing clinic access, the countermovement was forced to refocus activities in new directions, such as picketing physicians’offices, homes, and other places they frequented. Although, as Johnson notes, the movement did focus attention on fetal rights and reduce the number of abortion facilities and physicians for a period of time, it did not achieve a recriminalizationof abortion or significantly reduce public support for abortion.

Some groups also actively seek to avoid social change. The Amish generally hold to their traditions, but social forces such as farm economics and a growing need to find employment outside of the Amish community are pressuring them to modernize. While they see change as neither good nor evil, they do see it as potentially tempting young people and pulling them away from traditional sources of solidarity within the Amish community.

However, the Amish have accommodated some planned changes through careful and deliberate selection (Savells 2001). For example, some dairy farmers have generators in their barns to keep commercially sold milk cool per health-department standards. Batteries that provide taillights at night on horse-drawn transportation are also allowed as a safety measure.

# 7.6.3 Decline of Social Movements

A number of factors, including world events, movement ideologies and chosen tactics/strategies, and movement organization, interact to influence the history of social movements. Frederick D. Miller (1999) identified four often linked reasons why social movements decline: success, failure, co-optation, and repression.

The movement may achieve its goals. Such was the case for the women’s suffrage movement. However, most movements have multifaceted agendas—for example, the civil rights movement. These movements may achieve some goals but find they must continue to work toward others. In an unusual case of a movement re-creating itself to address a different issue, the current March of Dimes organization began as a movement working to fight polio. After the development of the polio vaccine, the movement re-created itself to target birth defects, premature birth, and low birth weight.

The movement can end due to organizational failures. Strategies can be ineffectual, factional disputes can develop, or the movement may become so internallyfocused (*encapsulated* in Miller’s terminology) that it loses touch andappeal with those outsiders it needs to survive and attract as new members. Stoper’s study (1999) of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), a 1960s movement founded to coordinate civil rights sit-ins, finds that the group moved on to organizing black voter registration and even seating black Mississippi delegates at the 1964 Democratic National Convention. However, after apparent successes, the group faced several crises and organizational problems that resulted in its demise.

Leaders may also be enticed with rewards that serve their own interests rather than those of the movement. This diverts the leader’s attentions away from the goals of the movement. If leaders are rewarded for their position in the movement with more money or intangible benefits (e.g., status) than they could get from other occupations, their interest may become in maintaining their position rather than advancing the goals of the movement.

Robert Michels (1962), argued that long-term political leaders’ interests turn to maintaining their positions rather than advancing causes. Powerful interests may repress a movement by using tactics such as bringing criminal sanctions against members and leaders; infiltrating the movement with spies; harassing, attacking, or threatening members or recruits; and spreading false information.

Governments have attempted to repress anarchistmovements in various countries, for example. Although efforts at repression may have the effect of strengthening the solidarity and resolve of the movement, it may also destroy the movement.

# 7.6.4. Theories of Social Movements

There are a number of theories about how and why social movements arise and the paths they take. In searching for explanations, sociologists have developed several theories. Two older perspectives are *deprivation theories* and *mass-society theory.* According to

**1. Deprivation Theory:** According to this theory**,** *social movements arisewhen people feel deprived of something that others have or that they feel others have.* Expectations, rather than absolute measures, are the key to whether or not people feel deprived. The slight (or perceived slight) may be a range of situations from poor working conditions to standard of living to racial preferences.

**2. Mass-Society Theory**:Social isolation is the key totheproponents of this perspective. They argue that *modern society is alienating, immoral, apathetic, and discouragesindividuality, and that in this context, socially isolated people are attractedto social movements for personal reasons.* Joining gives them a sense of importance and intent. This makes them easily manipulated and easily influenced to join movements. Both of these perspectives have received mixed support in the research, finding some support and much criticism. Newer theories focus on collective action and tying individual experience to the movement’s goals.

***3. Resource-Mobilization Theory***

Sociologists have developed a different approach to understanding social movements that draws from our understanding of both collective action andorganizations. **Resource-mobilization theory** recognizes that *social movements need to generate adequate, and often substantial, resources toachieve their goals*.

The resources they need to muster are extensive. They include money, membership, office facilities and equipment, communication processes, political influence, and a skill base with expertise in organization, leadership, and marketing the cause.

Successes and limits are set by the resources a movement is able to mobilize. These resources are mobilized through the efforts of **social-movement organizations (SMOs),** *formal organizations that seek social change by achievinga social movement’s goals.* These SMOs can be studied just as sociologistsstudy any formal organizational system.

Ratherthan being loose or chaotic confederations of people with similar interests, successfulSMOs follow a bureaucratic structure in regard to leadership and administration.

They are goal-oriented and see political participation as rational. There may be more than one SMO in a social movement. The civil rights movement, for example, has included the NAACP, the SNCC, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), the Black Panthers, and a number of other groups (Appelbaum and Chambliss 1995, 545–46). Because these SMOs are competing for limited resources and the same potential members and support bases, systems exist in which SMOs interact with each other and with other groups that have desired resources.

Examining these interrelationships has provided an important step in the need for a theory that explains “panoplies and cascades of movements rather than single movements in isolation” (Collins 1999, 37). SMOs may find the need to cultivate **conscience constituents,** *people outside of the movement who provideresources but do not directly benefit from its goal accomplishment*.

Social movement “industries” may even arise to garner support for the cause. Resource-mobilization theory points out the importance of resources to SMOs. However, critics question whether it adequately accounts for those who have only occasional involvement in movements and how much members and leaders are really willing to invest in personal costs to the organization. Randall Collins notes that sociologists need to have a much better understanding of two areas. In his view, one of these major areas of study still remains in regard to mobilization.

“First, what causes interests to be mobilized in the first place? And second, what determines the extent to which the entire array of mobilized movements is fragments or consolidated? . . . [R]esource mobilization theory . . . [has been able] to offer a fair answer to the first question. The secondremains on theagenda” (Collins 1999, 38).

# 7.7. New Social Movements

Since the 1960s, **new social movements** have arisen that focus on “*bringing about social change through the transformation of values, personalidentities and symbols*”. The women’s movement, the environmental movement, and the gay-rights movement all fit within this classification. These new social movements are set apart from older movements by several features (Scott 1990). Unlike older movements, they are not primarily political. As such, they do not challenge the state and social structures directly. Rather, they are located in, and defend, civil society.

Also unlike older movements, they do not rely on formal and hierarchical organizational structures. New movements utilize networking and grassroots mass-mobilization efforts to change cultural values and lifestyle alternatives. They emphasize personal autonomy and link personal experience to the ideology of the movement. For example, the women’s movement encourages women to empower themselves and understand how their own daily lives are shaped, and can be improved, by the movement’s concerns.

Some observers, however, have argued that the differences between old and new social movements, especially their political efforts and organizational forms, are not as great as some theorists have suggested. The activist organization AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT-UP) is a new social movement that formed in 1987 in response to federal policy and pharmaceutical companies that discriminated against people with HIV/AIDS.

The organization’s efforts have included some traditional tactics, such as demonstrations and sit-ins. However, it has also focused on changing cultural perceptions and attitudes. Education and attention-getting tactics, including throwing condoms in public, are some of the strategies used. Efforts have resulted in changes in public policy (e.g., an improved drug-testing and accelerated approval process, getting more women and minorities into clinical trials).

Community activists now work with the National Institute of Health’s AIDS Clinical Trials Group (NIH ACTG). Characteristic of new social movements, members themselves develop new skills, knowledge, and values. They become more educated on science and medicine, develop social skills, and become more assertive in dealing with their own health and health care professionals (Brashers et al. 2002).

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)