acculturation: the transmission of culture from one generation to the next
achieved statuses: positions that are earned, accomplished, or that involved at least some effort or activity on the individual’s part
acid rain: rain containing sulfuric and nitric acids
acting crowd: Herbert Blumer’s term for an excited group that collectively moves toward a goal
activity theory: the view that satisfaction during old age is related to a person's level and quality of activity
age cohort: a group of people born at roughly the same time who pass through the life course together
ageism: prejudice, discrimination, and hostility directed against people because of their age; can be directed against any age group, including youth
agency: individual or collective actions upon social structures and circumstances
agent provocateur: someone who joins a group in order to spy on it and to sabotage it by provoking its members to commit illegal acts
agents of socialization: people or groups that affect our self-concept, attitudes, or other orientations toward life
aggregate: individuals who temporarily share the same physical space but do not see themselves as belonging together
alienation: Marx’s term for workers’ lack of connection to the product of their labour; caused by their being assigned repetitive tasks on a small part of a product
alternative social movement: a social movement that seeks to alter only particular aspects of people
anarchy: a condition of lawlessness or political disorder caused by the absence or collapse of governmental authority
animal culture: learned, shared behaviour among animals
animism: the belief that all objects in the world have spirits, some of which are dangerous and must be outwitted
anomie: Durkheim’s term for a condition of society in which people become detached, cut loose from the norms that usually guide their behaviour
anticipatory socialization: learning part of a future role because one anticipates it
anti-Semitism: prejudice, discrimination, and persecution directed against Jews
appearance: how an individual looks when playing a role
applied sociology: the use of sociology to solve problems—from the micro level of family relationships to the macro level of crime and pollution
ascribed statuses: positions an individual either inherits at birth or receives involuntarily later in life
assimilation: the process whereby a minority group is absorbed into the mainstream culture
authoritarian leader: a leader who leads by giving orders
authoritarian personality: Theodor Adorno’s term for people who are prejudiced and rank high on scales of conformity, intolerance, insecurity, respect for authority, and submissiveness to superiors
authority: power that people accept as rightly exercised over them; also called legitimate power
back stage: where people rest from their performances, discuss their presentations, and plan future performances
background assumptions: deeply embedded common understandings, or basic roles, concerning our view of the world and of how people ought to act
barter: the direct exchange of one item for another
basic demographic equation: growth rate = births – deaths + net migration
basic sociology: see pure or basic sociology
bilateral (system of descent): a system of reckoning descent that counts both the mother’s and the father’s side
blended family: a family whose members were once part of other families
bourgeoisie: Karl Marx’s term for capitalists, those who own the means to produce wealth
bureaucracy: a formal organization with a hierarchy of authority, a clear division of labour, emphasis on written rules, communications, and records; and impersonality of positions
capitalism: an economic system characterized by the private ownership of the means of production, the pursuit of profit, and market competition; the investment of capital with the goal of producing profits
capitalist class: the wealthy who own the means of production and buy the labour of the working class
capitalist world economy: the dominance of capitalism in the world along with the international interdependence that capitalism has created
caste system: a form of social stratification in which one’s status is determined by birth and is lifelong
category: people who have similar characteristics
causation: if a change in one variable leads to a change in another variable, causation is said to exist
charismatic authority: authority based on an individual’s outstanding traits, which attract followers
charismatic leader: an individual who inspires people because he or she seems to have extraordinary qualities
church: according to Durkheim, one of the three essential elements of religion—a moral community of believers or a large, highly organized group with formal, sedate worship services and little emphasis on personal conversion
citizenship: the concept that birth (and residence) in a country imparts basic rights
city: a place in which a large number of people are permanently based and do not produce their own food
city-state: an independent city whose power radiates outward, bringing the adjacent area under its rule
clan: an extended network of relatives
clan system: a form of social stratification in which individuals receive their social standing through belonging to an extended network of relatives
class conflict: Marx’s term for the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie
class consciousness: Karl Marx’s term for awareness of a common identity based on one’s position in the means of production
class system: a form of social stratification based primarily on the possession of money or material possessions
clique: a cluster of people within a larger group who choose to interact with one another, an internal faction

closed-ended questions: questions followed by a list of possible answers to be selected by the respondent

coalition: the alignment of some members of a group against others

coalition government: a government in which a country's largest party aligns itself with one or more smaller parties

coercion: power that people do not accept as rightly exercised over them; also called illegitimate power

collective behavior: extraordinary activities carried out by groups of people; includes lynchings, rumours, panics, urban legends, and fads and fashions

collective mind: Gustave LeBon's term for the tendency of people in a crowd to feel, think, and act in extraordinary ways

colonization: the process by which one nation takes over another nation, usually for the purpose of exploiting its labour and natural resources

common sense: those things that "everyone knows" are true

community: a place people identify with, where they sense that they belong and that others care what happens to them

compartmentalize: to separate acts from feelings or attitudes

confederal union: system of government in which the provinces have most of the powers and the central government has little authority

conflict theory: a theoretical framework in which society is viewed as composed of groups competing for scarce resources

conservative bias: the tendency of analysts to downplay evidence of historical change and to reject evidence of challenges to traditional social patterns

conspicuous consumption: Thorstein Veblen's term for a change from the Protestant ethic to an eagerness to show off wealth by the elaborate consumption of goods

contradictory class location: Erik Wright's term for a position in the class structure that generates contradictory interests

convergence theory: the view that as capitalist and socialist economic systems each adopt features of the other, a hybrid (or mixed) economic system will emerge

corporate capitalism: the domination of the economic system by giant corporations

corporate culture: the orientation that characterizes a corporate work setting

corporation: the joint ownership of a business enterprise, whose liabilities and obligations are separate from those of its owners

correlation: the simultaneous occurrence of two or more variables

correspondence principle: the sociological principle that schools correspond to (or reflect) the social structure of society

cosmology: teachings or ideas that provide a unified picture of the world

counterculture: a group whose values, beliefs, and related behaviours place its members in opposition to the broader culture

credential society: the use of diplomas and degrees to determine who is eligible for jobs; even though the diploma or degree may be irrelevant to the actual work

credit card: a device that allows its owner to charge purchases against his or her bank account

crude birth rate: the annual number of births per 1000 population

crude death rate: the annual number of deaths per 1000 population

cult: a new or different religion, with few followers, whose teachings and practices put it at odds with the dominant culture and religion

cultural diffusion: the spread of cultural characteristics from one group to another

cultural goals: the legitimate objectives held out to the members of a society

cultural lag: William Ogburn's term for human behaviour lagging behind technological innovations

cultural levelling: the process by which cultures become similar to one another, and especially by which Western industrial culture is imported and diffused into developing nations

cultural relativism: understanding a people from the framework of its own culture

cultural transmission: in reference to education, the ways schools transmit a society's culture, especially its core values

cultural universal: a value, norm, or other cultural trait that is found in every group

culture: the language, beliefs, values, norms, behaviours, and even material objects passed from one generation to the next

culture of poverty: the assumption that the values and behaviours of the poor make them fundamentally different from other people, that these factors are largely responsible for their poverty, and that parents perpetuate poverty across generations by passing these characteristics on to their children

currency: paper money

debit card: a device that allows its owner to charge purchases against his or her bank account

deferred gratification: forgoing something in the present in the hope of achieving greater gains in the future

definition of the situation: the way we look at matters in life; the way we define reality or some particular situation

degradation ceremony: a term coined by Harold Garfinkel to describe an attempt to remake the self by stripping away an individual's self-identity and stamping a new one in its place; a ritual designed to strip an individual of his or her identity as a group member—for example, a court trial or the defrocking of a priest

dehumanization: the act or process of reducing people to objects that do not deserve the treatment accorded humans

democracy: a system of government in which authority derives from the people; derived from two Greek words that translate literally as "power to the people"

democratic leader: a leader who leads by trying to reach a consensus

democratic socialism: a hybrid economic system in which capitalism is mixed with state ownership

demographic transition: a three-stage historical process of population growth: first, high birth rates and high death rates; second, high birth rates and low death rates; and third, low birth rates and low death rates

demographic variables: the three factors that influence population growth: fertility, mortality, and net migration

demography: the study of the size, composition, growth, and distribution of human populations

demonstration: a public meeting, march, etc. for a political or moral purpose

denomination: a "brand name" within a major religion, for example, Methodist or Baptist
dependency ratio: the number of paid workers required so that dependent individuals, usually seniors and children, can be adequately supported

dependency theory: the view that the Least Industrialized Nations have been unable to develop their economies because they have grown dependent on the Most Industrialized Nations

depersonalization: dealing with people as though they were objects—in the case of medical care, as though patients were merely cases and diseases, not persons

deposit receipts: a receipt stating that a certain amount of goods is on deposit in a warehouse or bank; the receipt is used as a form of money

dictatorship: a form of government in which power is seized by an individual

derential association: Edwin Sutherland’s term to indicate that associating with some groups results in learning an “excess of definitions” of social deviance, and, by extension, in a greater likelihood that one will become socially deviant

diffusion: the spread of invention or discovery from one place to another; identified by William Ogburn as the final of three processes of social change

direct democracy: a form of democracy in which the eligible voters meet to discuss issues and make their decisions

disabling environment: an environment harmful to health

discovery: a new way of seeing reality; identified by William Ogburn as the second of three processes of social change

discrimination: an act of unfair treatment directed against an individual or a group

disengagement theory: the view that society prevents disruption by having the elderly vacate (or disengage from) their positions of responsibility so the younger generation can step into their shoes

divine right of kings: the idea that the king’s authority comes directly from God

division of labour: the splitting of a group’s or society’s tasks into specialties

documents: in its narrow sense, written sources that provide data; in its extended sense, archival material of any sort, including photographs, movies, and so on

dominant group: the group with the most power, greatest privileges, and highest social status

downward social mobility: movement down the social-class ladder

dramaturgy: an approach, pioneered by Erving Goffman, analyzing social life in terms of drama or the stage; also called dramaturgical analysis

dual labour market: workers split along racial, ethnic, gender, age, or any other lines; this split is exploited by owners to weaken the bargaining power of workers

dyad: the smallest possible group, consisting of two people

eclesias (plural ecclesia): a religious group so integrated into the dominant culture that it is difficult to tell where the one begins and where the other leaves off; also referred to as state religion

economy: a system of distribution of goods and services

education: a formal system of teaching knowledge, values, and skills

egalitarian: authority more or less equally divided between people or groups, for example, between husband and wife in a family

eo: Freud’s term for a balancing force between the id and the demands of society

electronic community: individuals who more or less regularly interact with one another on the Internet

electronic primary group: individuals who regularly interact with one another on the Internet, who see themselves as a group, and who develop close ties with one another

emergent norms: Ralph Turner’s and Lewis Killian’s term for the development of new norms to cope with a new situation, especially among crowds

endogamy: the practice of marrying within one’s own group

environmental sociology: a subdiscipline of sociology that examines how human activities affect the physical environment and how the physical environment affects human activities

epidemiology: the study of disease and disability patterns in a population

ethnic (and ethnicity): having distinctive cultural characteristics

ethnocentrism: the use of one’s own culture as a yardstick for judging the ways of other individuals or societies, generally leading to a negative evaluation of their values, norms, and behaviors

ethnomethodology: the study of how people use background assumptions to make sense out of life

euthanasia: mercy killing

evangelism: an attempt to win converts

exchange mobility: about the same numbers of people moving up and down the social class ladder, such that, on balance, the social class system shows little change

exogamy: the practice of marrying outside one’s group

exponential growth curve: a pattern of growth in which numbers double during approximately equal intervals, thus accelerating in the latter stages

expressive leader: an individual who increases harmony and minimizes conflict in a group, also known as a socioemotional leader

extended family: a nuclear family plus other relatives, such as grandparents, uncles, and aunts, who live together

face-saving behaviour: techniques used to salvage a performance that is going sour

fad: a temporary pattern of behaviour that catches people’s attention

false consciousness: Karl Marx’s term to refer to workers identifying with the interests of capitalists

family: two or more people who consider themselves related by blood, marriage, or adoption

family of orientation: the family in which a person grows up

family of procreation: the family formed when a couple’s first child is born

fashion: a pattern of behaviour that catches people’s attention and lasts longer than a fad

fecundity: the number of children women are theoretically capable of bearing

feminism: the philosophy that men and women should be politically, economically, and socially equal

feminist theories: all three types of feminist theories—Marxist, liberal, and radical—hold that women are oppressed by gender roles that are products of social, historical, and cultural factors

feminization of poverty: the global tendency for adult women to outnumber men amongst the impoverished population. This tendency is embedded in women’s traditional role in the family and in the economy

feral children: children assumed to have been raised by animals in the wilderness, isolated from other humans

fertility rate: the number of children the average woman bears

fiat money: currency issued by a government that is not backed by stored value

folkways: norms that are not strictly enforced

formal organization: a secondary group designed to achieve explicit objectives

front stage: where performances are given
functional analysis: a theoretical framework in which society is viewed as composed of various parts, each with a function that, when fulfilled, contributes to society's equilibrium; also known as functionalism and structural functionalism.

functional requisites: the major tasks a society must fulfill if it is to survive.

fundamentalism: the belief that true religion is threatened by modernism and that the faith as it was originally practised should be restored.

gatekeeping: the process by which education opens and closes doors of opportunity; another term for the social placement function of education.

Gatekeeping: a type of society dominated by intimate relationships; a community in which everyone knows everyone else and people share a sense of togetherness.

gender: the social characteristics that a society considers proper for its males and females; masculinity or femininity.

gender age: the relative ages of men and women's ages in a particular culture.

gender inequality: males' and females' unequal access to resources, power, prestige, status, and property on the basis of their sex.

gender role: the behaviors and attitudes considered appropriate because one is a female or a male.

gender socialization: the ways society sets children on different courses in life because they are male or female.

gender stratification: males' and females' unequal access to power, prestige, and property on the basis of their sex.

gentralization: the extent to which the findings from one group (or sample) can be generalized or applied to other groups (or populations).

generalized other: the norms, values, attitudes, and expectations of “people in general”; the child's ability to take the role of the generalized other is a significant step in the development of a self.

genetic predispositions: inborn tendencies, in this context, to commit socially deviant acts.

goals: the ways individuals affect groups and the ways groups influence individuals.

group dynamics: the ways individuals affect groups and the ways groups influence individuals.

Gatekeeping: Irving Janis' term for a narrowing of thought by a group of people, leading to the perception that there is only one correct answer, and a situation in which to even suggest alternatives becomes a sign of disloyalty.

growth rate: the net change in a population after adding births, subtracting deaths, and either adding or subtracting net migration.

health: a human condition measured by four components: physical, mental, social, and spiritual.

hidden curriculum: the unwritten goals of schools, such as obedience to authority and conformity to cultural norms.

homogamy: the tendency of people with similar characteristics to marry one another.

hospice: a place, or services brought into someone's home, for the purpose of bringing comfort and dignity to a dying person.

household: all people who occupy the same housing unit.

human ecology: Robert Park's term for the relationship between people and their environment (natural resources such as land).

humanizing a work setting: organizing a workplace in such a way that it develops rather than impedes human potential.

hypothesis: a statement of the expected relationship between variables according to predictions from a theory.

gender: a term that refers to the rising proportion of older people as a percentage of the Canadian population.

imperialism: a nation's attempt to create an empire; its pursuit of unlimited geographical expansion.

impression management: the term used by Erving Goffman to describe people's efforts to control the impressions others receive of them.

incent: sexual relations between specified relatives, such as brothers and sisters or parents and children.

indentured service: a contractual system in which someone sells his or her body (services) for a specified period of time in an arrangement very close to slavery, except that it is voluntarily entered into.

individual discrimination: the negative treatment of one person by another on the basis of that person's perceived characteristics.

individual discrimination: negative treatment of a minority group that is built into a society's institutions; also called systemic discrimination.

institutionalized means: approved ways of reaching cultural goals.

instrumental leader: an individual who tries to keep the group moving toward its goals, also known as a task-oriented leader.

institutionalized religion: the formal, highly structured organization, creeds, practices, and rules of conduct intended to assure doctrinal purity and aid believers in their efforts to live by a particular faith.

intentional family: people who declare themselves a family and treat one another as members of the same family, originated in the late twentieth century in response to the need for intimacy not met due to distance, divorce, and death.

instrumentalized means: approved ways of reaching cultural goals.

intentional family: people who declare themselves a family and treat one another as members of the same family, originated in the late twentieth century in response to the need for intimacy not met due to distance, divorce, and death.
intergenerational mobility: the change that family members make in social class from one generation to the next
interlocking directorates: the same people serving on the board of directors of several companies
internal colonialism: the policy of economically exploiting minority groups
interview: direct questioning of respondents
invasion-succession cycle: the process of one group of people displacing a group whose racial-ethnic or social class characteristics differ from their own
invention: the combination of existing elements and materials to form new ones; identified by William Ogburn as the first of three processes of social change
iron law of oligarchy: Robert Michels’ phrase for the tendency of formal organizations to be dominated by a small, self-perpetuating elite
job ghettos: also known as pink ghettos, employment areas dominated by women (and usually lower paid than areas dominated by men)
just-in-time (JIT) strategy: a Japanese way of organizing production that maximizes inventory and storage at the production site—components are produced and moved between plants on a just-in-time basis
kaizen: continuous improvement—production techniques are continuously evaluated in search of more efficient and improved methods
labelling theory: the view, developed by symbolic interactionists, that the labels people are given affect their own and others’ perceptions of them, thus channelling their behaviour into either social deviance or conformity
laissez-faire capitalism: unrestrained manufacture and trade (loosely, “leave alone” capitalism)
laissez-faire leader: an individual who leads by being highly permissive
language: a system of symbols that can be combined in an infinite number of ways and can represent not only objects but also abstract thought
latent functions: the unintended consequences of people’s actions that help keep a social system in equilibrium
leader: someone who influences other people
leadership styles: ways people express their leadership
leisure: time not taken up by work or required activities such as eating, sleeping, commuting, child care, and housework
life course: the sequence of events that we experience as we journey from birth to death
life expectancy: the number of years an average newborn can expect to live
life span: the maximum length of life of a species
living will: a statement people in good health sign that clearly expresses their feelings about being kept alive on artificial life support systems
looking-glass self: a term coined by Charles Horton Cooley to refer to the process by which our self develops through internalizing others’ reactions to us
macro-level analysis: an examination of large-scale patterns of society
macro-politics: the exercise of large-scale power, the government being the most common example
macrosociology: analysis of social life focusing on broad features of social structure, such as social class and the relationships of groups to one another; an approach usually used by functionalist and conflict theorists
mainstreaming: helping people become part of the mainstream of society
Malhuth theorem: an observation by Thomas Malhuth that although the food supply increases only arithmetically (from 1 to 2 to 3 to 4 and so on), population grows geometrically (from 2 to 4 to 8 to 16 and so forth)
manifest function: the intended consequences of people’s actions designed to help some part of a social system
manner: the attitudes people show as they play their roles
market: any process of buying and selling; on a more formal level, the mechanism that establishes values for the exchange of goods and services
market competition: the exchange of items between willing buyers and sellers
market force: the law of supply and demand
market restraints: laws and regulations that limit the capacity to manufacture and sell products
marriage: a group’s approved mating arrangements, usually marked by a ritual of some sort
mass media: forms of communication, such as radio, newspapers, and television, directed to mass audiences
mass society: industrialized, highly bureaucratized, impersonal society
mass society theory: an explanation for participation in social movements based on the assumption that such movements offer a sense of belonging to people who have weak social ties
master status: a status that cuts across the other statuses an individual occupies
material culture: the material objects that distinguish a group of people, such as their art, buildings, weapons, utensils, machines, hairstyles, clothing, and jewellery
matriarchy: authority vested in females; female control of a society or group; a society in which women dominate men
matrilineal (system of descent): a system of reckoning descent that counts only the mother’s side
McDonaldization: A term denoting the increasing rationalization of the routine tasks of everyday life
means of production: the tools, factories, land, and investment capital used to produce wealth
mechanical solidarity: Durkheim’s term for the unity that comes from being involved in similar occupations or activities
medicalization: the transformation of something into a matter to be treated by physicians
medicalization of social deviance: to make social deviance a medical matter, a symptom of some underlying illness that needs to be treated by physicians
medicine: one of the major social institutions that sociologists study; a society’s organized ways of dealing with sickness and injury
medium of exchange: the means by which people value goods and services in order to make an exchange, for example, currency, gold, and silver
megalopolis: an urban area consisting of at least two metropolises and their many suburbs
meritocracy: a form of social stratification in which all positions are awarded on the basis of merit
metropolis: a central city surrounded by smaller cities and their suburbs
micro-level analysis: an examination of small-scale patterns of society
micro-politics: refers to the exercise of power in everyday life
microsociology: analysis of social life focusing on social interaction; an approach usually used by symbolic interactionists
middle-range theories: explanations of human behaviour that go beyond a particular observation or research but avoid sweeping generalizations that attempt to account for everything
milking: a crowd standing or walking around as they talk excitedly about some event
minimax strategy: Richard Berk’s term for the effort people make to minimize their costs and maximize their rewards
minority group: a group discriminated against on the basis of its members' physical or cultural characteristics

modernization: the process by which a *Gemeinschaft* society is transformed into a *Gesellschaft* society; the transformation of traditional societies into industrial societies

monarchy: a form of government headed by a king or queen

money: any item (from seashells to gold) that serves as a medium of exchange; today, currency is the most common form

monolithic bias: the tendency to ignore the diversity contained within a phenomenon and to focus, instead, on the most general exterior features. When applied to the family, the bias results in a failure to recognize that traditional notions of the family—male breadwinner, housewife, and biological children—have been supplanted by an amazing diversity of family forms and experiences

monolithic structure: the representation of structure as homogeneous and undiversified. For example, if the family is represented as a monolithic representation, the representation ignores the complex diversity of types and forms incorporated into contemporary experiences of the family

monolithic structure: the belief that there is only one God

moral community: people united by their religious practices

moral panic: a fear that grips large numbers of people that some evil group or behaviour threatens the well-being of society, followed by intense hostility, sometimes violence, toward those thought responsible

mores: norms that are strictly enforced because they are thought essential to core values

multiculturalism (also called pluralism): a philosophy or political policy that permits or encourages ethnic variation

multinational corporations: companies that operate across many national boundaries; also called transnational corporations

nationalism: a strong identity with a nation, accompanied by the desire for that nation to be dominant

natural sciences: the intellectual and academic disciplines designed to comprehend, explain, and predict events in our natural environment

neoliberalism: a version of the capitalist economic system based on the neoliberalism philosophy that permits or encourages ethnic variation

negative sanction: an expression of disapproval for breaking a norm, ranging from a mild, informal reaction such as a frown to a formal prison sentence or an execution

negative sanction: an expression of disapproval for breaking a norm, ranging from a mild, informal reaction such as a frown to a formal prison sentence or an execution

neocolonialism: the economic and political dominance of the Least Industrialized Nations by the Most Industrialized Nations

net migration rate: the difference between the number of immigrants and emigrants per 1000 population

networking: the process of consciously using or cultivating networks for some gain

new social movements: social movements with a new emphasis on the world, instead of on a condition in a specific country

new technology: the emerging technologies of an era that have a significant impact on social life

noncentrist party: a political party that represents less popular ideas

nonmaterial culture: a group's ways of thinking (including its beliefs, values, and other assumptions about the world) and doing (its common patterns of behaviour, including language and other forms of interaction)

nonverbal interaction: communication without words through gestures, space, silence, and so on

norms: the expectations or rules of behaviour that develop out of values

nuclear family: a family consisting of a husband, wife, and child(ren)

objective method (of measuring social class): a system in which people are ranked according to objective criteria such as their wealth, power, and prestige

objectivity: total neutrality

oligarchy: a form of government in which power is held by a small group of individuals; the rule of the many by the few

oligopoly: the control of an entire industry by several large companies

open-ended questions: questions that respondents are able to answer in their own words

operational definitions: the way in which a variable in a hypothesis is measured

organic solidarity: Durkheim's term for the interdependence that results from people needing others to fulfill their jobs; solidarity based on the interdependence brought about by the division of labour

out-groups: groups toward which one feels antagonism

panic: the condition of being so fearful that one cannot function normally, and may even flee

participant observation (or fieldwork): research in which the researcher participates in a research setting while observing what is happening in that setting

patricracy: authority vested in males, male control of a society or group; a society in which men dominate women

patrilinial (system of descent): a system of reckoning descent that counts only the father's side

patterns: recurring characteristics or events

peer group: a group of individuals roughly the same age linked by common interests

personal identity kit: items people use to decorate their bodies

personality disorders: the view that a personality disturbance of some sort causes an individual to violate social norms

Peter principle: a bureaucratic “law” according to which the members of an organization are promoted for good work until they reach their level of incompetence, the level at which they can no longer do good work

pink ghettos: also known as job ghettos, employment areas dominated by women (and usually lower paid than areas dominated by men)

pluralism: the diffusion of power among many interest groups, preventing any single group from gaining control of the government

pluralistic society: a society made up of many different groups

pluralistic theory of social control: the view that society is made up of many competing groups, whose interests manage to become balanced

political socialization: the way in which young people are inculcated with beliefs, ideas, and values that embrace the civil order through the education system

polyandry: a marriage in which a woman has more than one husband

polygamy: a marriage in which a man has more than one wife

polytheism: the belief that there are many gods

population: a target group to be studied

population shrinkage: the process by which a country's population becomes smaller because its birth rate and immigration are too low to replace those who die and emigrate

population transfer: involuntary movement of a minority group

positive sanction: a reward or positive reaction for approved behaviour, for conformity

positivism: the application of the scientific approach to the social world

postcolonialism: the theory concerned with how to understand the cultural products (print and visual media, literature, the arts, and, of course, language) coming from societies that were once colonies of Europe
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protestant ethic</td>
<td>C. Wright Mills’s term for the rulers of society: the top people in the leading corporations, the most powerful generals and admirals of the armed forces, and certain elite politicians, who make the nation’s major decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>power</td>
<td>the ability to carry out one’s will, even over the resistance of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>power elite</td>
<td>C. Wright Mills’s term for those who rule the country: the top people in the leading corporations, the most powerful generals and admirals of the armed forces, and certain elite politicians, who make the nation’s major decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prejudice</td>
<td>an attitude of prejudging, usually in a negative way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prestigefulness</td>
<td>respect or regard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>primary sector</td>
<td>that part of the economy which extracts raw materials from the environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>primary social deviance</td>
<td>Edwin Lemert’s term for acts of social deviance that have little effect on the self-concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>principles of scientific management</td>
<td>also referred to as Taylorism, scientific management sought to reduce waste and inefficiency in production by measuring every movement and regulating every step of the work process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>private ownership of the means of production</td>
<td>the ownership of machines and factories by individuals who decide what shall be produced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proactive social movement</td>
<td>a social movement that promotes some social change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>profane</td>
<td>Durkheim’s term for common elements of everyday life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>profession</td>
<td>(as opposed to a job) an occupation characterized by rigorous education, a theoretical perspective, self-regulation, authority over clients, and a professional culture that stresses service to society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proletariat</td>
<td>Karl Marx’s term for the exploited class, the mass of workers who do not own the means of production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>propaganda</td>
<td>in its broad sense, the presentation of information in the attempt to influence people; in its narrow sense, one-sided information used to try to influence people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proportional representation</td>
<td>an electoral system in which seats in a legislature are divided according to the proportion of votes each political party receives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant ethic</td>
<td>Weber’s term to describe the ideal of a self-denying, highly moral life, accompanied by hard work and frugality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public</td>
<td>a dispersed group of people who usually have an interest in the issue on which a social movement focuses; the sympathetic and hostile publics have such an interest, but a third public is either unaware of the issue or indifferent to it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public opinion</td>
<td>how people think about some issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pure or basic sociology</td>
<td>sociological research whose only purpose is to make discoveries about life in human groups, not to make changes in those groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qualitative or field interview</td>
<td>an interview in which the researcher is a participant in a conversation with the subject being interviewed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qualitative research methods</td>
<td>research in which emphasis is placed on observing, describing, and interpreting people’s behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quality circles</td>
<td>refer to the involvement of rank-and-file workers in detecting and correcting defects and inefficiencies in products and services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quantitative research methods</td>
<td>research in which emphasis is placed on precise measurement, numbers, and statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>queer theory</td>
<td>an emergent theory that deliberately challenges all notions of a fixed identity. Therefore, instead of viewing sex, gender, and desire as a continuum, queer theory smashes these links. Gender and desire/pleasure become more “free-floating” and based on individual attraction—regardless of the sex of the other person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>questionnaire</td>
<td>a list of questions to be asked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quiet revolution</td>
<td>the fundamental changes in society that occur as a result of vast numbers of women entering the workforce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>race</td>
<td>inherited physical characteristics that distinguish one group from another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>racism</td>
<td>prejudice and discrimination on the basis of race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>random sample</td>
<td>a sample in which everyone in the target population has the same chance of being included in the study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rapport</td>
<td>a feeling of trust between researchers and subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rationality</td>
<td>the acceptance of rules, efficiency, and practical results as the right way to approach human affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rationalization of society</td>
<td>a widespread acceptance of rationality and a social organization largely built around this idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rational-legal authority</td>
<td>authority based on law or written rules and regulations; also called bureaucratic authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reactive social movement</td>
<td>a social movement that resists social change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>real culture</td>
<td>the norms and values that people actually follow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>redemptive social movement</td>
<td>a social movement that seeks to change people totally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reference groups</td>
<td>the groups we use as standards to evaluate ourselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reformative social movement</td>
<td>a social movement that seeks to change only particular aspects of society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reformists</td>
<td>a category of study of feminist spirituality represented by those who advocate revealing the “liberating core” of religious teachings with female imagery and exposing and refusing to accept rituals that are clearly sexist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reincarnation</td>
<td>in Hinduism and Buddhism, the return of the soul after death in a different form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rejectionists</td>
<td>a category of study of feminist spirituality represented by those who judge the traditional teachings to be hopelessly sexist and have left it to establish a new spiritual tradition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relative deprivation theory</td>
<td>in this context, the belief that people join social movements on the basis of their evaluations of what they think they should have compared with what others have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reliability</td>
<td>the extent to which data produce consistent results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>religion</td>
<td>according to Durkheim, beliefs and practices that separate the profane from the sacred and unite its adherents into a moral community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>replication</td>
<td>repeating a study in order to test its findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>representative democracy</td>
<td>a form of democracy in which voters elect representatives to govern and make decisions on their behalf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reputational method (of measuring social class)</td>
<td>a system in which people who are familiar with the reputations of others are asked to identify their social class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>research method (or research design)</td>
<td>one of seven procedures sociologists use to collect data: surveys, participant observation, qualitative interviews, secondary analysis, documents, unobtrusive measures, and experiments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reserve labour force</td>
<td>the unemployed, unemployed workers are thought of as being “in reserve”—capitalists take them “out of reserve” (put them back to work) during times of high production and then lay them off (put them back in reserve) when they are no longer needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>resocialization</td>
<td>the process of learning new norms, values, attitudes, and behaviours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>resource mobilization</td>
<td>a theory that social movements succeed or fail on the basis of their ability to mobilize resources such as time, money, and people’s skills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
respondents: people who respond to a survey, either in interviews or by self-administered questionnaires
revisionists: a category of study of feminist spirituality represented by those who believe that the basic message of the major religions is liberating
revolution: armed resistance designed to overthrow a government
revolutionaries: a category of study of feminist spirituality represented by those who seek to change the established orthodoxy by importing language, images, and rituals from other traditions
riot: violent crowd behaviour aimed against people and property
risk society: in postmodern theory, a term referring to a media-created perception of society that causes Americans and Canadians to feel increasingly at risk of being victimized by crime.
rituals: ceremonies or repetitive practices; in this context, religious observances or rites, often intended to evoke awe for the sacred
role: the behaviours, obligations, and privileges attached to a status
role conflict: conflicts that someone feels between roles because the expectations attached to one role are incompatible with the expectations of another role
role extension: the incorporation of additional activities into a role
role performance: the ways in which someone performs a role within the limits that the role provides; showing a particular “style” or “personality”
role strain: conflicts that someone feels within a role
romantic love: feelings of erotic attraction accompanied by an idealization of the other
routinization of charisma: the transfer of authority from a charismatic figure to either a traditional or a rational-legal form of authority
ruling class: another term for the power elite
rumour: unfounded information spread among people
sacred: Durkheim’s term for things set apart or forbidden that inspire fear, awe, reverence, or deep respect
sample: the individuals intended to represent the population to be studied
sanctions: expressions of approval or disapproval given to people for upholding or violating norms
Sapir-Whorf hypothesis: Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf’s hypothesis that language creates ways of thinking and perceiving
scapegoat: an individual or group unfairly blamed for someone else’s troubles
science: the application of systematic methods to obtain knowledge and the knowledge obtained by those methods
scientific method: the use of objective, systematic observations to test theories
secondary analysis: the analysis of data already collected by other researchers
secondary group: compared with a primary group, a larger, relatively temporary, more anonymous, formal, and impersonal group based on some interest or activity, whose members are likely to interact on the basis of specific roles
secondary sector: that part of the economy which turns raw materials into manufactured goods
secondary social deviance: Edwin Lemert’s term for acts of social deviance incorporated into the self-concept, around which an individual orients his or her behaviour
sect: a group larger than a cult that still feels substantial hostility from and toward society
segregation: the policy of keeping racial or ethnic groups apart
selective perception: seeing certain features of an object or situation, but remaining blind to others
self: the unique human capacity of being able to see ourselves “from the outside”; the picture we gain of how others see us
self-administered questionnaires: questionnaires filled out by respondents
self-fulfilling prophecy: Robert Merton’s term for an originally false assertion that becomes true simply because it was predicted
sex: the biological characteristics that distinguish males and females
sex typing: the association of behaviours with one sex or the other
sexual harassment: the abuse of one’s position of authority to force unwanted sexual demands on someone
shaman: the healing specialist of a preliterate tribe who attempts to control the spirits thought to cause a disease or injury, commonly called a witch doctor
sick role: a social role that excuses people from normal obligations because they are sick or injured, while at the same time expecting them to seek competent help and cooperate in getting well
significant other: an individual who significantly influences someone else’s life
sign-vehicles: the term used by Erving Goffman to refer to how people use social setting, appearance, and manner to communicate information about the self
slave: a form of social stratification in which some people own other people
small group: a group small enough for everyone to interact directly with all the other members
social change: the alteration of culture and societies over time
social class: a large number of people with similar amounts of income and education who work at jobs roughly comparable in prestige; according to Weber, a large group of people who rank closely to one another in wealth, power, and prestige; according to Marx, one of two groups: capitalists who own the means of production or workers who sell their labour
social cohesion: the degree to which members of a group or a society feel united by shared values and other social bonds
social conservatism: a value system characterized by a belief in conventional morality and social mores and a desire to preserve them, often aggressively, through civil law and regulation. Social conservatism is often linked to the economic changes associated with neoliberalism.
social construction of reality: the process by which people use their background assumptions and life experiences to define what is real for them
social control: a group’s formal and informal means of enforcing its norms
social deviance: the violation of rules or norms
social environment: the entire human environment, including direct contact with others
social facts: Durkheim’s term for the patterns of behaviour that characterize a social group
social inequality: a social condition in which privileges and obligations are given to some but denied to others
social institutions: the organized, usual, or standard ways by which society meets its basic needs
social integration: the degree to which people feel a part of social groups
social interaction: what people do when they are in one another’s presence
social location: the group memberships that people have because of their location in history and society
social mobility: movement up or down the social-class ladder
social movement: a large group of people who are organized to promote or resist social change
social movement organization: an organization developed to further the goals of a social movement
social network: the social ties radiating outward from the self that link people together
social order: a group's usual and customary social arrangements, on which its members depend and on which they base their lives
social placement: a function of education that funnels people into a society's various positions
social sciences: the intellectual and academic disciplines designed to understand the social world objectively by means of controlled and repeated observations
social setting: the place where the action of everyday life unfolds
social stratification: the division of large numbers of people into layers according to their relative power, property, and prestige; applies both to nations and to people within a nation, society, or other group
social structure: the framework that surrounds us, consisting of the relationship of people and groups to one another, which gives direction to and sets limits on behaviour
socialism: an economic system characterized by the public ownership of the means of production, central planning, and the distribution of goods without profit motive
socialization: the process by which people learn the characteristics of their group: the attitudes, values, and actions thought appropriate for them
society: a term used by sociologists to refer to a group of people who share a culture and a territory
sociological perspective: an approach to understanding human behaviour that entails placing it within its broader social context
sociology: the scientific study of society and human behaviour
spirit of capitalism: Weber's term for the desire to accumulate capital as a duty—not to spend it, but as an end in itself—and to constantly reinvest it
state: a political entity that claims monopoly on the use of violence in some particular territory; commonly known as a country
status: social ranking, the position someone occupies in society or a social group
status consistency: ranking high or low on all three dimensions of social class
status inconsistency (or discrepancy): ranking high on some dimensions of social class and low on others; a contradiction or mismatch between statuses
status set: all the statuses or positions an individual occupies
status symbols: items used to identify a status
stereotype: assumptions of what people are like, based on previous associations with them or with people who have similar characteristics, or based on information, whether true or false
stigma: "blemishes" that discredit a person's claim to a "normal" identity
stockholders' revolt: the refusal of a corporation's stockholders to rubber-stamp decisions made by its managers
stored value: the backing of a currency by goods that are stored and held in reserve
strain theory: Robert Merton's term for the strain engendered when a society socializes large numbers of people to desire a cultural goal (such as success) but withholds from many the approved means to reach that goal; one adaptation to the strain is crime, the choice of an innovative means (one outside the approved system) to attain the cultural goal
stratified random sample: a sample of specific subgroups of the target population in which everyone in the subgroups has an equal chance of being included in the study
street crime: crimes such as mugging, rape, and burglary
structural mobility: movement up or down the social-class ladder that is attributable to changes in the structure of society, not to individual efforts
structured conversation: see qualitative or field interview
structured interviews: interviews that use closed-ended questions
subculture: the values and related behaviours of a group that distinguish its members from the larger culture; a world within a world
subjective meanings: the meanings that people give their own behaviour
subjective method (of measuring social class): a system in which people are asked to state the social class to which they belong
subsistence economy: a type of economy in which human groups live off the land with little or no surplus
suburbanization: the movement from the city to the suburbs
suburbs: the communities adjacent to the political boundaries of a city
superego: Freud's term for the conscience, the internalized norms and values of our social groups
survey: the collection of data by having people answer a series of questions
sustainable environment: a world system that takes into account the limits of the environment, produces enough material goods for everyone's needs, and leaves a heritage of a sound environment for the next generation
sweating: historically, the term used in reference to exploitative working conditions in the garment industry, with its detailed division of labour separating the craft process (design, cutting, and marketing) from the labour-intensive tasks of sewing and finishing
symbol: something to which people attach meanings and then use to communicate with others
symbolic culture: another term for nonmaterial culture
symbolic interactionism: a theoretical perspective in which society is viewed as composed of symbols that people use to establish meaning, develop their views of the world, and communicate with one another
system of descent: how kinship is traced over the generations
taboo: a norm so strong that it brings revulsion if violated
taking the role of the other: putting oneself in someone else's shoes; understanding how someone else feels and thinks and thus anticipating how that person will act
teamwork: the collaboration of two or more persons interested in the success of a performance to manage impressions jointly
techniques of neutralization: ways of thinking or rationalizing that help people deflect society's norms
technological determinism: the view that technology determines culture, that technology takes on a life of its own and forces human behaviour to follow
technology: often defined as the applications of science, but can be conceptualized as tools (items used to accomplish tasks) and the skills or procedures necessary to make and use these tools
tertiary sector: that part of the economy which consists of service-oriented occupations
tertiary social deviance: the normalizing of behaviour considered socially deviant by mainstream society; relabelling the behaviour as non-deviant
theory: a general statement about how some parts of the world fit together and how they work; an explanation of how two or more facts are related to one another
Thomas theorem: William I. Thomas's classic formulation of the definition of the situation: "If people define situations as real, they are real in their consequences."
timetables: the signals societies use to inform their members that they are old; these timetables vary around the world
tool: an object created or modified for a specific purpose

total institution: a place in which people are cut off from the rest of society and are almost totally controlled by the officials who run the place

totalitarianism: a form of government that exerts almost total control over the people

tracking: the sorting of students into different educational programs on the basis of real or perceived abilities

traditional authority: authority based on custom

traditional orientation: the idea—characteristic of tribal, peasant, and feudal societies—that the past is the best guide for the present

transformative social movement: a social movement that seeks to change society totally

triad: a group of three people

underclass: a small group of people for whom poverty persists year after year and across generations

underemployment: the condition of having to work at a job beneath one’s level of training and abilities, or of being able to find only part-time work

underground economy: exchanges of goods and services that are not reported to the government and thereby escape taxation

unitary state: form of government in which all power resides with the central government

universal citizenship: the idea that everyone has the same basic rights by virtue of being born in a country (or by immigrating and becoming a naturalized citizen)

unobtrusive measures: various ways of observing people who do not know they are being studied

unstructured interviews: interviews that use open-ended questions

upward social mobility: movement up the social-class ladder

urban legend: a story with an ironic twist that sounds realistic but is false

urbanization: the process by which an increasing proportion of a population lives in cities

validity: the extent to which an operational definition measures what was intended

value cluster: a series of interrelated values that together form a larger whole

value contradictions: values that contradict one another; to follow the one means to come into conflict with the other

value-free: an ideal condition in which a sociologist’s personal values or biases do not influence social research

values: the standards by which people define what is desirable or undesirable, good or bad, beautiful or ugly; attitudes about the way the world ought to be

variable: a factor or concept thought to be significant for human behaviour, which varies from one case to another

Verstehen: a German word used by Weber that is perhaps best understood as “to have insight into someone’s situation”

virtual organizations: Companies “without walls,” often transcending time, space, and culture.

voluntary association: a group made up of volunteers who have organized on the basis of some mutual interest

Walmartization: A term referring to profound transformations in regional and global economies through the sheer size, influence, and power of the big-box department store Wal-Mart.

war: armed conflict between nations or politically distinct groups

wealth: property and income

welfare (state) capitalism: an economic system in which individuals own the means of production, but the state regulates many economic activities for the welfare of the population

white-collar crime: Edwin Sutherland’s term for crimes committed by people of respectable and high social status in the course of their occupations; for example, bribery of public officials, securities violations, embezzlement, false advertising, and price-fixing

working class: those who sell their labour to the capitalist class

world system: economic and political connections that tie the world’s countries together

zero population growth: a demographic condition in which women bear only enough children to reproduce the population

414  Glossary