

# Glossary

## A

**Accounts** are explanations of unexpected or untoward behavior. They are of two sorts: excuses and justifications.

An **achieved status** is a status that an individual earns, such as being a criminal or a college graduate.

The **agents of socialization** are all the individuals, groups, and media that teach social norms.

**Agricultural societies** are based on growing food using plows and large beasts of burden.

**Alienation** occurs when workers have no control over the work process or the product of their labor.

**Anomie** is a situation in which the norms of society are unclear or no longer applicable to current conditions.

**Anticipatory socialization** is the process that prepares us for roles we are likely to assume in the future.

An **ascribed status** is fixed by birth and inheritance and is unalterable in a person's lifetime.

**Assimilation** is the process through which individuals learn and adopt the values and social practices of the dominant group, more or less giving up their own values in the process.

An **authoritarian personality** is submissive to those in authority and antagonistic toward those lower in status.

**Authoritarian systems** are political systems in which the leadership is not selected by the people and legally cannot be changed by them.

**Authoritarianism** is the tendency to be submissive to those in authority, coupled with an aggressive and negative attitude toward those lower in status.

**Authority** is power supported by norms and values that legitimate its use.

## B

A **blended family** includes children born to one parent as well as children born to both parents.

The **bourgeoisie** is the class that owns the tools and materials for their work—the means of production.

**Bureaucracy** is a special type of complex organization characterized by explicit rules and hierarchical authority structure, all designed to maximize efficiency.

## C

**Capitalism** is the economic system, based on competition, in which most wealth (land, capital, and labor) is private property, to be used by its owners to maximize their own gain.

**Caste systems** rely largely on ascribed statuses as the basis for distributing scarce resources.

**Charisma** refers to extraordinary personal qualities that set an individual apart from ordinary mortals.

**Charismatic authority** is the right to make decisions based on perceived extraordinary personal characteristics.

**Churches** are religious organizations that have become institutionalized. They have endured for generations, are supported by and support society's norms and values, and have become an active part of society.

**Civil religion** is the set of institutionalized rituals, beliefs, and symbols sacred to the U.S. nation.

**Class**, in Marxist theory, refers to a person's relationship to the means of production.

**Class consciousness** occurs when people understand their relationship to the means of production and recognize their true class identity.

**Class systems** rely largely on achieved statuses as the basis for distributing scarce resources.

**Coercion** is the exercise of power through force or the threat of force.

**Cohabitation** means living with a romantic/sexual partner outside of marriage.

**Cohesion** in a group is characterized by high levels of interaction and by strong feelings of attachment and dependency.

**Collective behavior** is spontaneous action by groups in situations where cultural rules for behavior are vague, inadequate, or debated.

**Collective efficacy** refers to the extent to which individuals in a neighborhood share the expectation that neighbors will intervene and work together to maintain social order.

**Color-blind racism** refers to the belief that all races are created equal, that racial equality has already been achieved, and that therefore any minorities who do not succeed have only themselves to blame.

The **commodification of children** is the process of turning children into goods available for purchase.

A **community** is a collection of individuals characterized by dense, cross-cutting social networks.

**Competition** is a struggle over scarce resources that is regulated by shared rules.

**Complex organizations** are large formal organizations with elaborate status networks.

**Compulsive heterosexuality** consists of continually demonstrating one's masculinity and heterosexuality.

**Concentrated poverty** refers to areas in which very high proportions of the population live in poverty.

**Conflict** is a struggle over scarce resources that is not regulated by shared rules; it may include attempts to destroy, injure, or neutralize one's rivals.

**Conflict theory** addresses the points of stress and conflict in society and the ways in which they contribute to social change.

**Consumerism** is the philosophy that says "buying is good" because "we are what we buy."

**Content analysis** refers to the systematic examination of documents of any sort.

A **control group** is the group in an experiment that does not receive the independent variable.

**Cooperation** is interaction that occurs when people work together to achieve shared goals.

**Core societies** are rich, powerful nations that are economically diversified and relatively free from outside control.

**Correlation** exists when there is an empirical relationship between two variables (for example, income increases when education increases).

**Countercultures** are groups that have values, interests, beliefs, and lifestyles that are opposed to those of the larger culture.

A **countermovement** seeks to reverse or resist change advocated by another social movement.

**Credentialism** is the assumption that some are better than others simply because they have a particular educational credential.

**Crime** is behavior that is subject to legal or civil penalties.

**Cross-sectional design** uses a sample (or cross section) of the population at a single point in time.

**Crude birth rate** refers to the number of live births per 1,000 persons in a given population.

**Crude death rate** refers to the number of deaths per 1,000 persons in a given population.

**Cultural capital** refers to having the attitudes and knowledge that characterize the upper social classes.

**Cultural diffusion** is the process by which aspects of one culture or subculture are incorporated into another.

**Cultural lag** occurs when one part of a culture changes more rapidly than another.

**Cultural relativity** requires that each cultural trait be evaluated in the context of its own culture.

**Culture** is the total way of life shared by members of a community. It includes not only language, values, and symbolic meanings but also technology and material objects.

The **culture of poverty** is a set of values that emphasizes living for the moment rather than thrift, investment in the future, or hard work.

**Culture shock** refers to the discomfort that arises from exposure to a different culture.

## D

**Deduction** is the process of moving from theory to data by testing hypotheses drawn from theory.

The **deinstitutionalization of marriage** refers to the gradual erosion of social norms that stress the need for marriage and dictate how spouses should behave.

**Democracies** are political systems that provide regular, constitutional opportunities for a change in leadership according to the will of the majority.

**Demographic transition** refers to the shift from a society characterized by high birth rates and low life expectancies to one characterized by low birth rates and high life expectancies.

**Demography** is the study of population—its size, growth, and composition.

A **denomination** is a church that accommodates both to the society at large and to the presence of other churches.

The **dependent variable** is the effect in cause-and-effect relationships. It is dependent on the actions of the independent variable.

**Deterrence theories** suggest that deviance results when social sanctions, formal and informal, provide insufficient rewards for conformity.

**Development** refers to the process of increasing the productivity and standard of living of a society—longer life expectancies, more adequate diets, better education, better housing, and more consumer goods.

**Deviance** refers to norm violations that exceed the tolerance level of the community and result in negative sanctions.

**Dialectic philosophy** views change as a product of contradictions and conflict between the parts of society.

A **differential** is a difference in the incidence of a phenomenon across social groups.

**Differential association theory** argues that people learn to be deviant when more of their associates favor deviance than favor conformity.

A **disclaimer** is a verbal device employed in advance to ward off doubts and negative reactions that might result from one's conduct.

**Discrimination** is the unequal treatment of individuals on the basis of their membership in categories.

**Double jeopardy** means having low status on two different dimensions of stratification.

**Dramaturgy** is a version of symbolic interaction that views social situations as scenes manipulated by the actors to convey the desired impression to the audience.

**Dysfunctions** are consequences of social structures that have negative effects on the stability of society.

## E

**Economic determinism** means that economic relationships provide the foundation on which all other social and political arrangements are built.

The **economy** consists of all social structures involved in the production and distribution of goods and services.

**Edge cities** are suburban areas that now have an existence largely separate from the cities that spawned them.

**Education** is the institution responsible for the formal transmission of knowledge.

**Emerging churches** are characterized by (1) the belief that American life and modern Christian churches are atomized, bureaucratic, and inauthentic and (2) an emphasis on informal rituals, a more open perspective toward scripture and behavior, and living a life of mission, faith, and community.

**Emotional labor** refers to the work of smiling, appearing happy, or in other ways suggesting that one enjoys providing a service.

**Empirical research** is research based on systematic, unbiased examination of evidence.

**Endogamy** is the practice of choosing a mate from within one's own racial, ethnic, or religious group.

**Environmental racism** refers to the disproportionately large number of health and environmental risks faced by minorities.

An **ethnic group** is a category whose members are thought to share a common origin and important elements of a common culture.

**Ethnocentrism** is the tendency to judge other cultures according to the norms and values of one's own culture.

**Ex-felon disenfranchisement** is the loss of voting privileges suffered by those who have been convicted of a felony. In some states, ex-felon disenfranchisement applies only to those in prison; in other states, it is lifelong.

**Exchange** is a voluntary interaction from which all parties expect some reward.

**Excuses** are accounts in which one admits that the act in question is wrong or inappropriate but claims one couldn't help it.

The **experiment** is a method in which the researcher manipulates independent variables to test theories of cause and effect.

An **experimental group** is the group in an experiment that experiences the independent variable. Results for this group are compared with those for the control group.

An **extended family** is a family in which a couple and their children live with other kin, such as the wife's or husband's parents or siblings.

**Exogamy** is the practice of choosing a mate from *outside* one's own racial, ethnic, or religious group.

## F

**False consciousness** is a lack of awareness of one's real position in the class structure.

The **family** is a group of persons linked together by blood, adoption, marriage or quasi-marital commitment

The **fertility rate** is the number of births per every 1,000 women in a population during a given time period.

**Folkways** are norms that are the customary, normal, habitual ways a group does things.

**Formal social controls** are administrative sanctions such as fines, expulsion, or imprisonment.

A **frame** is an answer to the question, What is going on here? It is roughly identical to a definition of the situation.

**Frame alignment** is the process used by a social movement to convince individuals that their personal interests, values, and beliefs are complementary to those of the movement.

**Functions** are consequences of social structures that have positive effects on the stability of society.

**Fundamentalism** refers to religious movements that stress traditional interpretations of religion and the importance of living in ways that mesh with those traditional interpretations.

## G

**Gemeinschaft** refers to societies in which most people share close personal bonds.

**Gender** refers to the expected dispositions and behaviors that cultures assign to each sex.

**Gender roles** refer to the rights and obligations that are normative for men and women in a particular culture.

The **generalized other** is the composite expectations of all the other role players with whom we interact; it is Mead's term for our awareness of social norms.

**Genocide** refers to mass killings aimed at destroying a population.

**Gesellschaft** refers to societies in which people are tied primarily by impersonal, practical bonds.

**Globalization** refers to the process through which ideas, resources, practices, and people increasingly operate in a worldwide rather than local framework.

**Globalization of culture** is the process through which cultural elements (including musical styles, fashion trends, and cultural values) spread around the globe.

A **group** is two or more people who interact on the basis of shared social structure and recognize mutual dependency.

**Groupthink** exists when pressures to agree are strong enough to stifle critical thinking.

## H

The **health belief model** proposes that individuals will be most likely to adopt healthy behaviors if (1) they believe their health is at risk, (2) they believe the risk is a serious one, (3) they believe that changing their behaviors would significantly reduce those risks, and (4) they face no significant barriers that would make changing their behaviors difficult.

**Heterogamy** means choosing a mate who is *different* from oneself.

The **hidden curriculum** consists of the underlying cultural messages taught by schools. Both public and private schools teach young people to accept inequality.

**High culture** refers to the cultural preferences associated with the upper class.

**Homogamy** means choosing a mate who is similar to oneself.

**Homosexuals** (also known as gays and lesbians) are people who prefer sexual and romantic relationships with members of their own sex.

**Horticultural societies** are characterized by small-scale, simple farming, without plows or large beasts of burden.

**Hunting-and-gathering societies** are those in which most food must be obtained by killing wild animals or finding edible plants.

A **hypothesis** is a statement about relationships that we expect to find if our theory is correct.

## I

The **id** is the natural, unsocialized, biological portion of self, including hunger and sexual urges.

An **ideology** is a set of beliefs that strengthen or support a social, political, economic, or cultural system.

**Immigration** is the movement of people to find new homes in a different country.

**Impression management** consists of actions and statements made to control how others view us.

**Incidence** is the frequency with which an attitude or behavior occurs.

**Income** refers to money received in a given time period by an individual, household, or organization.

**Income inequality** refers to the extent to which incomes vary within a given population.

The **independent variable** is the cause in cause-and-effect relationships.

The **indirect inheritance model** argues that children have occupations of a status similar to that of their parents because the family's status and income determine children's aspirations and opportunities.

**Induction** is the process of moving from data to theory by devising theories that account for empirically observed patterns.

**Industrial societies** are characterized by mass production of nonagricultural goods.

The **infant mortality rate** is the number of babies who die during or shortly after childbirth per every 1,000 live births in a given population.

**Informal social control** is self-restraint exercised because of fear of what others will think.

**Information technology** comprises computers and telecommunication tools for storing, using, and sending information.

**Institutionalized racism** occurs when the normal operation of apparently neutral processes systematically produces unequal results for majority and minority groups.

An **institution** is an enduring social structure that meets basic human needs.

**Internal migration** is the movement of people to new homes within a country.

**Insurgent consciousness** is the individual sense that change is both needed and possible.

## J

**Justifications** are accounts that explain the good reasons the violator had for choosing to break the rule; often they are appeals to some alternate rule.

## L

**Labeling theory** is concerned with the processes by which labels such as *deviant* come to be attached to specific people and specific behaviors.

**Language** is the ability to communicate in symbols—orally, by manual sign, or in writing.

**Latent functions or dysfunctions** are consequences of social structures that are neither intended nor recognized.

**Laws** are rules that are enforced and sanctioned by the authority of government. They may or may not be norms.

**Least-developed countries** are characterized by poverty and political weakness and rank low on most or all measures of development.

**Less-developed countries** are those nations whose living standards are worse than those in the most-developed countries but better than in the least-developed nations.

The **linguistic relativity hypothesis** argues that the grammar, structure, and categories embodied in each language affect how its speakers see reality. Also known as the *Sapir-Whorf hypothesis*.

**Longitudinal research** is any research in which data are collected over a long period of time.

The **looking-glass self** is the process of learning to view ourselves as we think others view us.

## M

**Macrosociology** focuses on social structures and organizations and the relationships between them.

A **majority group** is a group that is culturally, economically, and politically dominant.

**Manifest functions or dysfunctions** are consequences of social structures that are intended or recognized.

The **manufacturers of illness** are groups that promote and benefit from deadly behaviors and social conditions.

**Marriage** is an institutionalized social structure that provides an enduring framework for regulating sexual behavior and childbearing.

The **mass media** are all forms of communication designed to reach broad audiences.

**McDonaldization** is the process by which the principles of the fast-food restaurant—efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control—are coming to dominate more sectors of American society.

**Medicalization** refers to the process through which a condition or behavior becomes defined as a medical problem requiring a medical solution.

A **metropolitan statistical area** is a county that has a city of 50,000 or more in it plus any neighboring counties that are significantly linked, economically or socially, with the core county.

**Microsociology** focuses on interactions among individuals.

**Migration** is the movement of people from one geographic area to another.

A **minority group** is a group that is culturally, economically, and politically subordinate.

**Mobilization** is the process by which a social movement gains control of new resources.

**Modernization theory** sees development as the natural unfolding of an evolutionary process in which societies go from simple to complex economies and institutional structures.

**Monogamy** is the term for marriages in which there is only one wife and one husband.

**Moral entrepreneurs** are people who attempt to create and enforce new definitions of morality.

**Mores** are norms associated with fairly strong ideas of right or wrong; they carry a moral connotation.

The **mortality rate** is the number of deaths per every 1,000 people in a given population during a given time period.

**Most-developed countries** are those rich nations that have relatively high degrees of economic and political autonomy.

**Multiculturalism** is the belief that the different cultural strands within a culture should be valued and nourished.

## N

The **near poor** live in households earning from just above the federal poverty level to twice the federal poverty level.

**New religious movements (NRMs)** are religious or spiritual movements begun in recent decades and not derived from a nation's mainstream religions.

A **nonmetropolitan statistical area** is a county that has no major city in it and is not closely tied to such a city.

The **norm of reciprocity** is the expectation that people will return favors and strive to maintain a balance of obligation in social relationships.

**Normal accidents** are accidents that can be expected to happen sooner or later, no matter how many safeguards are built into a system, simply because the system is so complex.

**Norms** are shared rules of conduct that specify how people ought to think and act.

A **nuclear family** is a family in which a couple and their children form an independent household living apart from other kin.

## O

An **operational definition** describes the exact procedure by which a variable is measured.

**Operationalizing** refers to the process of deciding exactly how to measure a given variable.

**Organizational culture** refers to the pattern of norms and values that structures how business is actually carried out in an organization.



## P

**Participant observation** refers to conducting research by participating, interviewing, and observing “in the field.”

The **peer group** refers to all individuals who share a similar age and social status.

A **peer** is a member of a peer group.

**Peripheral societies** are poor and weak, with highly specialized economies over which they have relatively little control.

**Pluralism** is the peaceful coexistence of separate and equal cultures in the same society.

**Political economy** refers to the interaction of political and economic forms within a nation.

**Politics** is the social structure of power within a society.

**Political opportunities** are resources that allow a social movement to grow; they include preexisting organizations that can provide the new movement with leaders, members, phone lines, copying machines, and other resources.

**Political process theory** suggests that social movements develop when political opportunities are available and when individuals have developed a sense that change is both needed and possible.

**Polygamy** is any form of marriage in which a person may have more than one spouse at a time.

**Popular culture** refers to aspects of culture that are widely accessible and commonly shared by most members of a society, especially those in the middle, working, and lower classes.

**Postindustrial societies** focus on producing either information or services.

**Power** is the ability to direct others' behavior even against their wishes.

The **power elite** comprises the people who occupy the top positions in three bureaucracies—the military, industry, and the executive branch of government—and who are thought to act together to run the United States in their own interests.

**Prejudice** is an irrational, negative attitude toward a category of people.

**Prestige** refers to the amount of social honor or value afforded one individual or group relative to another. Also referred to as *status*.

**Primary groups** are groups characterized by intimate, face-to-face interaction.

The **primary sector** is that part of the economy concerned with extracting raw materials from the environment.

**Primary socialization** is personality development and role learning that occurs during early childhood.

**Privatization** is the process through which government services are “farmed out” to corporations, redesigned

to follow corporate structures and goals, or redefined as individual responsibilities.

The **profane** represents all that is routine and taken for granted in the everyday world, things that are known and familiar and that we can control, understand, and manipulate.

**Professional socialization** is the process of learning the knowledge, skills, and cultural values of a profession.

**Professions** are occupations that demand specialized skills and creative freedom.

The **proletariat** is the class that does not own the means of production. They must support themselves by selling their labor to those who own the means of production.

**Propinquity** is spatial nearness.

The **Protestant Ethic** refers to the belief that work, rationalism, and plain living are moral virtues, whereas idleness and indulgence are sinful.

## R

A **race** is a category of people treated as distinct because of *physical* characteristics to which *social* importance has been assigned.

**Racism** is the belief that inherited physical characteristics associated with racial groups determine individuals' abilities and personalities and provide a legitimate basis for unequal treatment.

**Random samples** are samples chosen through a random procedure, so that each individual in a given population has an equal chance of being selected.

**Rational-legal authority** is the right to make decisions based on rationally established rules.

**Reference groups** are groups that individuals compare themselves to regularly, either because they identify with the group or aspire to it.

**Relative deprivation** exists when we compare ourselves to others who are better off than we are.

**Relative-deprivation theory** argues that social movements arise when people experience an intolerable gap between their expectations and the rewards they actually receive.

**Religion** is a system of beliefs and practices related to sacred things that unites believers into a moral community.

**Religiosity** is an individual's level of commitment to religious beliefs and to acting on those beliefs.

**Religious economy** refers to the competition between religious organizations to provide better “consumer products,” thereby creating greater “market demand” for their own religions.

**Replication** is the repetition of empirical studies by another researcher or with different samples to see if the same results occur.

**Reproductive labor** refers to traditionally female tasks such as cooking, cleaning, and nurturing that make it possible for a society to continue and for others to work and play.

**Resocialization** is the process of learning a new self-concept and a radically different way of life (often against our will).

**Resource mobilization theory** suggests that social movements emerge when individuals who experience deprivation can garner the resources they need to mobilize for action.

**Rites of passage** are formal rituals that mark the end of one age status and the beginning of another.

A **role** is a set of norms specifying the rights and obligations associated with a status.

**Role conflict** is when incompatible role demands develop because of multiple statuses.

**Role strain** is when incompatible role demands develop within a single status.

**Role taking** involves imagining ourselves in the role of others in order to determine the criteria they will use to judge our behavior.

## S

The **sacred** consists of events and things that we hold in awe and reverence—what we can neither understand nor control.

**Sampling** is the process of systematically selecting representative cases from the larger population.

**Sanctions** are rewards for conformity and punishments for nonconformity.

The **Sapir-Whorf hypothesis** argues that the grammar, structure, and categories embodied in each language affect how its speakers see reality. Also known as the *linguistic relativity hypothesis*.

**Scapegoating** occurs when people or groups blame others for their failures.

**School choice** refers to a range of options (vouchers, tax credits, magnet and charter schools, home schooling) that enable families to choose where their children go to school.

**Secondary groups** are groups that are formal, large, and impersonal.

The **secondary sector** is that part of the economy concerned with the processing of raw materials.

**Sects** are religious organizations that arise in active rejection of changes they find repugnant in churches.

**Secularization** is the process of transferring things, ideas, or events from the sacred realm to the nonsacred, or secular, realm.

**Segregation** refers to the physical separation of minority- and majority-group members.

The **self-concept** is our sense of who we are as individuals.

**Self-fulfilling prophecies** occur when something is *defined* as real and therefore *becomes* real in its consequences.

**Sex** is a biological characteristic, male or female.

**Sexism** is a belief that men and women have biologically different capacities and that these form a legitimate basis for unequal treatment.

**Sexual harassment** consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

**Sexual scripts** are cultural expectations regarding who, where, when, why, how, and with whom one should have sex.

The **sick role** consists of four social norms regarding sick people. They are assumed to have good reasons for not fulfilling their normal social roles and are not held responsible for their illnesses. They are also expected to consider sickness undesirable, to work to get well, and to follow doctor's orders.

**Significant others** are the role players with whom we have close personal relationships.

A **single-payer system** is a health care system in which doctors and hospitals are paid solely by the government.

**Social change** is any significant modification or transformation of social structures and sociocultural processes over time.

**Social class** is a category of people who share roughly the same class, status, and power and who have a sense of identification with each other.

The **social construction of race and ethnicity** is the process through which a culture (based more on social ideas than on biological facts) defines what constitutes a race or an ethnic group.

**Social control** consists of the forces and processes that encourage conformity, including self-control, informal control, and formal control.

**Social-desirability bias** is the tendency of people to color the truth so that they sound more desirable and socially acceptable than they really are.

**Social interaction** refers to the ways individuals interact with others in everyday, face-to-face situations.

**Social mobility** is the process of changing one's social class.

A **social movement** is an ongoing, goal-directed effort to fundamentally challenge social institutions, attitudes, or ways of life.

A **social network** is an individual's total set of relationships.

**Social processes** are the forms of interaction through which people relate to one another; they are the dynamic aspects of society.

A **social structure** is a recurrent pattern of relationships among groups.

**Socialism** is an economic structure in which productive tools (land, labor, and capital) are owned and managed by the workers and used for the collective good.

**Socialization** is the process of learning the roles, statuses, and values necessary for participation in social institutions.

A **society** is the population that shares the same territory and is bound together by economic and political ties.

**Sociobiology** is the study of the biological basis of all forms of human (and nonhuman) behavior.

**Socioeconomic status** (SES) is a measure of social class that ranks individuals on income, education, occupation, or some combination of these.

The **sociological imagination** is the ability to see the intimate realities of our own lives in the context of common social structures; it is the ability to see personal troubles as public issues.

**Sociology** is the systematic study of human society, social groups, and social interactions.

The **sociology of everyday life** focuses on the social processes that structure our experience in ordinary, face-to-face situations.

A **spurious relationship** exists when one variable *seems* to cause changes in a second variable, but a third variable is the *real* cause of the change.

**Stakeholder mobilization** refers to organized political opposition by groups with a vested interest in a particular political outcome.

The **state** is the social structure that successfully claims a monopoly on the legitimate use of coercion and physical force within a territory.

A **state church** is one that is strongly supported or even mandated by the government.

**Status** is an individual's position within a group relative to other group members; also social honor, expressed in lifestyle.

**Status set** refers to the combination of all statuses held by an individual.

A **stereotype** is a preconceived, simplistic idea about the members of a group.

**Strain theory** suggests that deviance occurs when culturally approved goals cannot be reached by culturally approved means.

**Stratification** is an institutionalized pattern of inequality in which social statuses are ranked on the basis of their access to scarce resources.

**Strong ties** are relationships characterized by intimacy, emotional intensity, and sharing.

**Structural-functional theory** addresses the question of social organization (structure) and how it is maintained (function).

**Subcultures** are groups that share in the overall culture of society but also maintain a distinctive set of values, norms, and lifestyles and even a distinctive language.

**Suburbanization** is the growth of suburbs.

**Suburbs** are communities that develop outside of cities and that, historically, primarily provided housing rather than services or employment.

The **superego** is composed of internalized social ideas about right and wrong.

**Survey research** is a method that involves asking a relatively large number of people the same set of standardized questions.

**Symbolic interaction theory** addresses the subjective meanings of human acts and the processes through which people come to develop and communicate shared meanings.

## T

**Technological imperative** refers to the idea that once a technology becomes available, it becomes difficult to avoid using it.

**Technology** involves the human application of knowledge to the making of tools and to the use of natural resources.

**Terrorism** is the deliberate and unlawful use of violence against civilians for political purposes.

The **tertiary sector** is that part of the economy concerned with the production of services.

A **theory** is an interrelated set of assumptions that explains observed patterns.

**Total institutions** are facilities in which all aspects of life are strictly controlled for the purpose of radical resocialization.

**Tracking** occurs when evaluations made relatively early in a child's career determine the educational programs the child will be encouraged to follow.

**Traditional authority** is the right to make decisions for others that is based on the sanctity of time-honored routines.

**Transgendered persons** are individuals whose sex or sexual identity is not definitively male or female. Some are hermaphrodites, some are transsexuals.

**Transnational corporations** are large corporations that produce and distribute goods internationally.

A **trend** is a change in a variable over time.



**U**

**Underemployed** people hold jobs more appropriate for someone with fewer skills or hold part-time jobs only because they can't find full-time jobs.

The **underground economy** is economic activity associated with workers who are trying to hide from state regulation such as prostitutes, unlicensed contractors, and work by undocumented laborers.

**Unemployed** people are those who lack a job, are available for work, *and* are actively seeking work.

**Urbanization** is the process of concentrating populations in cities.

**V**

**Value-free** sociology concerns itself with establishing what is, not what ought to be.

**Values** are shared ideas about desirable goals.

**Variables** are measured characteristics that vary from one individual or group to the next.

**Vested interests** are stakes in either maintaining or transforming the status quo.

**Victimless crimes** such as drug use, prostitution, gambling, and pornography are voluntary exchanges between persons who desire illegal goods or services from each other.

**Voluntary associations** are nonprofit organizations designed to allow individuals an opportunity to pursue their shared interests collectively.

**W**

A **war** is an armed conflict between a national army and some other group.

**Weak ties** are relationships characterized by low intensity and little intimacy.

**Wealth** refers to the sum value of money and goods owned by an individual or household.

**White-collar crime** refers to crimes committed by respectable people of high status in the course of their occupation.

**White privilege** refers to the benefits whites receive simply because they are white.

**World-systems theory** is a conflict perspective of the economic relationships between developed and developing countries, the core and peripheral societies.

**Z**

**Zero population growth** exists when the fertility rate is about 2.1 births per woman, the rate needed to maintain the population at a steady size.