

A

Absolute poverty. Poverty as defined in terms of the minimal requirements necessary to afford minimal standards of food, clothing, health care, and shelter.

Achieved status. A position attained through personal ability and effort.

Acid rain. The increased acidity of rainfall that is caused by emissions of sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxides the main source of which is from power plants and automobiles.

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). A disease, often passed on through sexual contact, that attacks the immune system of the body.

Acute disease. A short-term disease (such as influenza or pneumonia) from which a person either dies or recovers.

Adaptation. The ability of a sociocultural system to change with the demands of a changing physical or social environment. The process by which cultural elements undergo change in form and/or function in response to change in other parts of the system.

Adult socialization. The process of learning new roles in maturity.

Affirmative action. Organizational policies intended to assure minorities and women of equal hiring or admission opportunities.

Affective action. Individual action motivated by emotions; one of Weber's four action types. See also *Traditional action*, *Wertrational*, and *Zweckrational*.

Age cohort. A group of people born around the same time.

Age discrimination. The differential treatment of people based solely on their age.

Age grades. A system, found in some traditional cultures, by which the population is grouped by sex and age. Age grades go through rites of passage, hold similar rights, and have similar obligations.

Ageism. Prejudice against a person on the grounds of age in the belief that unequal treatment is justified because the age category to which he or she belongs is inferior to other age categories.

Age-sex pyramid. See *Age-sex structure*.

Agency of socialization. A group or institution within which processes of socialization take place. See also *Social reproduction*.

Age-sex structure (also called “age-sex pyramid”). The relative proportions of different age-sex categories in a population. Often depicted in a graph, the age-sex structure of a society displays the proportion of males to females in each succeeding age category. Beginning with the youngest ages on the bottom and displaying a bar graph of the number of males to the right and females to the left of the center, the graph shows both the relative numbers of males to females in each age category as well as the total proportion of the population in each designated age category. The age-sex structure of societies vary significantly depending on their level of development.

Agrarian society (also called “agricultural society”). A society whose mode of production is based on agriculture (crop growing) primarily through the use of human and animal energy. See also *Traditional state*.

Agribusiness. The mass production of agricultural goods through mechanization and rationalization.

Agricultural society. See *Agrarian society*.

Air pollution. The contamination of the atmosphere by noxious substances. See also *Depletion, Environment, and Pollution*.

Alienation. The sense that one has lost control over social institutions that one has participated in creating; often characterized as estrangement from the self and from the society as a whole. Marx believed that general alienation is rooted in the loss of control on the part of workers over the nature of the labour task and over the products of their labour.

Animal Feeding Operation (AFO). A facility that confines, stables, or feeds animals for 45 days or more in a 12-month period with no ground cover over at least 50 percent of the confinement area. See also Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation.

Altruistic suicide. Durkheim's term for suicide that is performed for the good of a group or for accomplishing a political or social cause.

Americanization. The spread of American cultural elements—products, lifestyles, customs, institutions, and ideologies—around the globe.

Androgyny. The blending of traditional feminine and masculine traits.

Animism. A type of religion based on the belief that events in the world are often caused by the activities of spirits.

Anomic suicide. Durkheim's term for suicide that is performed because the egoistic individual is not given clear guidance from the social order.

Anomie. A structural condition in which social norms are weak or conflicting.

Anomie theory (also called “structural strain theory”). Robert K. Merton's theory of deviance, which holds that many forms of deviance are caused by a disjunction between society's goals and the approved means to achieve those goals.

Anthropology. A social science, closely linked to sociology, that concentrates (though not exclusively) on the study of traditional cultures—particularly hunting-and-gathering and horticultural societies—and the evolution of the human species.

Anticipatory socialization. Learning new roles and attitudes in preparation for joining a group.

Anti-Semitism. Prejudice or discrimination against Jews. It defines the Jewish people as inferior and targets them for stereotyping, mistreatment, and acts of hatred.

Apartheid. The system of strict racial segregation established in South Africa and only dismantled in the last few decades.

Applied sociology. The use of sociological theory and methods to solve social problems.

Appropriate technology. Technology that is designed with the needs, values, and capabilities of the user in mind.

Archaeology. The study of hominid activity and culture in the past based primarily on the discovery and analysis of the material culture they have left behind.

Arms race. A competition between nations in which each side attempts to achieve or maintain military superiority.

Arms trade. The international selling of armaments for profit, which is carried on by governments and private contractors around the world.

Arranged marriage. Marriage arranged by family members, usually parents, based on factors other than the couple's personal preferences, such as family connections or the desire for social status or economic gain.

Artisan. A skilled manual worker.

Ascribed status. A social position that is given at birth based on such characteristics as race or sex.

Assimilation. A minority group's internalization of the values and norms of the dominant culture. The minority group becomes socially, economically, and politically absorbed into the wider culture.

Authoritarian personality. A set of distinctive personality traits, including conformity, intolerance of diversity, and an inability to accept ambiguity. Such personalities desire security, structure, and clear lines of authority.

Authority. Power that is attached to a position that others perceive as legitimate.

Autocatalytic process. A positive feedback cycle between two variables A and B, so that an increase in A causes an increase in B, which then causes a further increase in A. An example of such a relationship is that between the mode of production and reproduction.

Autocratic rule. Rule by a specific leader, who concentrates power in his own hands.

Automation. The replacement of many workers by machines, and the monitoring and coordination of workers by machines with only minimal supervision from human beings.

B

Balance of power. The theory that military conflict can be avoided if both sides have roughly equivalent military power.

Beliefs. Shared ideas held by a collective of people within a sociocultural system.

Bilateral kinship. The tracing of descent through both the mother and father (as in most of the Western world).

Bioethics. Ethical questions relating to life and the biological well-being of the planet.

Biological determinism. The view that biology (nature, genetics) determines complex social behaviour.

Biological drives. Physiological needs necessary for human survival such as the need for food, water, love and affection, and sex for reproduction.

Bio-Psychological constants. Marvin Harris's four predispositions or drives that are shared by all humans. While the needs are universal the ways in which a sociocultural system satisfies these needs vary widely: 1) the need for food, generally opting for more

calories and proteins; 2) the need for conserving human energy; 3) the need for love and affection; and 4) the need for sexual expression.

Bioterrorism. The threat or the actual dispersal of biological or chemical agents to cause widespread disease or death in order to further a group's political, economic, or social agenda.

Blended family (also called "stepfamily"). A family consisting of two adults, both with children from previous relationships, plus their children.

Bourgeoisie. Historically, the merchant class in feudal societies. Today, the term is often used as a synonym for the middle class.

Bureaucracy. A formal organization marked by a clear hierarchy of authority and written rules of procedure, staffed by full-time salaried officials, and striving for the efficient attainment of organizational goals.

Bureaucratization. The tendency of bureaucracies to refine their procedures to attain their goals ever more efficiently. More generally, the process of secondary organizations taking over functions performed by primary groups. See also *Intensification* and *Rationalization*.

C

Capital. The title of Karl Marx's three-volume critical analysis of political economy (in German, *Das Kapital*). The word is also be used to refer to money or other assets (land, buildings, machinery) used to start or grow a business to produce more wealth.

Capitalism. An economic system based on the private ownership of the means of production and distribution in which the goal is to produce profit.

Capitalist class. Those who own companies, or stocks and shares in companies, and use them to generate economic returns or profits.

Carrying capacity. The number of a species that a particular ecosystem can support without suffering irreversible deterioration. See also *Ecology*.

Cash-crop production. Production of crops for world markets rather than for consumption by the local population.

Cash-nexus. The defining of all human relationships in terms of monetary exchange.

Caste system. A closed form of stratification in which an individual's status is determined by birth and cannot be changed.

Cathedrals of consumption. George Ritzer's term for commercial displays meant to inspire awe, wonder, and enchantment in the consumer—shopping centres, casinos, and sports stadiums are examples.

Causation. A relationship in which a change in one variable (the independent variable) induces change in another (the dependent variable). Causal factors in sociology include individual motivation and many external influences on human behaviour that often go unrecognized.

Centralization. Power and authority concentrated into a few offices.

Census. A count of the population, often including a detailed profile of that population.

Charisma. A personal quality attributed to leaders who arouse fervent popular support and enthusiasm.

Charismatic authority. Weber's term for authority that rests on the extraordinary characteristics of leaders attributed to them by followers. See also *Rational-legal authority* and *Traditional authority*.

Chronic disease. Disease of long duration, often not detected in its early stages, from which the patient will not recover. Examples include high blood pressure and diabetes.

Church. A body of people belonging to an established religious organization.

Citizen. A member of a state, having both rights and duties associated with that membership.

Citizens United. A US Supreme Court decision in which five conservative justices ruled that corporations have the same First Amendment free speech protections as a real person. Corporations therefore have a right to unlimited spending in US elections.

Civil disorder. Social conflict (such as riots) in which the government becomes involved to restore public order.

Civil religion. Secular forms of ritual and belief similar to those involved in religion, such as political parades or ceremonies.

Civil rights. Legal rights held by all citizens in a given state.

Clan. A broad extended kin group found in many pre-industrial societies.

Class. Socio-economic differences between groups of individuals that create differences in their life chances and power. Marx differentiates classes by their relationship to the mode of production (owner/non-owner).

Class consciousness. An objective awareness of the class system, including the common interests of people within one's own class.

Class system. A multi-dimensional phenomenon in which populations are ranked along various dimensions such as occupation, education, property, racial or ethnic status, age, and gender. Each of these dimensions is a class system. According to Gerhard Lenski (1966, 80), a class system is "a hierarchy of classes ranked in terms of a single criterion." Thus, "working class" is a particular class within the occupational class system, while, in the United States, "African American" is a particular class within the American racial-ethnic class system, and, in Canada, "French Canadian" and "First Nations" likewise designate ethnic groups.

Clerical worker. A low-prestige and low-paid white-collar worker who performs office tasks such as keeping files and checking forms.

Climate change (also called "global warming"). Changes in the earth's climate caused by the accumulation of gases in the atmosphere, especially carbon dioxide and methane, which absorb some of the sun's energy being reflected back into space and radiate it in all directions, thus exacerbating the natural greenhouse effect and increasing the earth's temperature. See also *Greenhouse effect*.

Cognition. Human thought processes, including perceiving, reasoning, and remembering.

Cognitive ability. The ability to think in abstract terms.

Cohabitation. Living together in a sexual relationship of some permanence without being legally married.

Cohort. See *Age cohort*.

Collective action. Social action undertaken in a relatively spontaneous way by a large number of people.

Collective behaviour. Behaviour in crowds and mobs that occurs when the usual norms are suspended.

Collective conscience. Common beliefs and values that guide human behaviour. Durkheim posited that such a conscience is necessary for maintaining the social order. The concept is sometimes translated as “collective consciousness.”

Collective violence. Violent social behaviour perpetuated by a large number of people engaging as a mass.

Colonialism. The process whereby a nation establishes political and economic rule over less powerful nations.

Coming out. The act of openly declaring oneself as gay.

Command economy (also called a *Planned economy*). An economic system where investment, supply, price, and distribution are planned by government agencies. Examples include the former Soviet Union and contemporary North Korea. See also *Market economy*.

Commercialization. The organization of an activity around the goal of making a profit.

Commodification. The exchange of goods and services through the market economy. These goods and services were previously exchanged through primary group ties.

Commodity chain. The raw material, production, and labour network responsible for the fashioning of a product. These chains often span the globe, with some countries profiting greatly for their contribution to the chain and others clearly being exploited.

Commodity riot. A riot in which the focus of violence is the destruction of property.

Communal riot. A riot in which the target of violence is another group (usually based on race or ethnicity).

Communication. The transmission of information from one individual or group to another.

Communication technology. Technology used to extend the transmission of information between individuals and groups over both distance and time. Examples include language, writing, printing, telegraph, telephone, and the Internet. The development of such technology quickens and intensifies the pace of sociocultural change.

Communism. A set of political and economic ideas in which the means of production and distribution are controlled by an authoritarian state with the expressed goal of creating an egalitarian social order. Communism as developed by Lenin and

institutionalized throughout Eastern Europe (until 1990) and China bears little resemblance to Marx's vision.

Community. A group of people who share a common sense of identity and have sustained interaction with one another.

Comparable worth (also known as “pay equity”). The idea that jobs dominated by women and jobs dominated by men should be evaluated on the basis of training, skills, and experience in an attempt to equalize wages. The principle is that men and women should be paid equally for jobs of comparable worth.

Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO). An industrial process that concentrates large numbers of animals in confined spaces for the purposes of the mass production of livestock. These operations utilize technology for managing nutrition and waste removal. They are formally assigned the “Concentrated” label by government agencies if they confine more than 1,000 “animal units” (1,000 animal units is equal to 2,500 swine; 100,000 broilers; 700 dairy cows; or 1,000 beef steers). See also *Animal Feeding Operation*.

Concept. Any abstract characteristic that can potentially be measured.

Conflict. A clash of interest (sometimes escalating to active struggle) between individuals, groups, or societies.

Conflict theory. A sociological theory that emphasizes the role of power, authority, and manipulation in sociocultural change and stability.

Conformity. Human behaviour that follows the established norms of a group or society. Most human behaviour is of a conforming nature as people accept and internalize the values of their culture or subculture. Conformity is also one of the five modes of adaptation in Robert K. Merton’s anomie theory. See also *Innovation, Rebellion, Retreatism, and Ritualism*.

Conglomerate. A large corporation made up of separate companies producing or trading in a variety of different products and services. A conglomerate is usually the result of a merger between companies or a takeover of one firm by another.

Consensus. Agreement on basic social values by the members of a group or society.

Constitutional government. A government that is constrained by a written document that defines the organizational structure of that government and sets forth the authority and rules of conduct of the various offices within that structure.

Conspicuous consumption. Popularized by Thorstein Veblin, the idea that many people consume goods and services to publicly display their wealth, status, and taste.

Consumerism. The philosophy of seeking happiness through the consumption of goods and services.

Contagion theory. The idea that individuals in crowds are suggestible and take on a single way of acting.

Content analysis. The analysis of cultural meanings through artifacts such as books, documents, songs, and other products of communication.

Contingency work. Temporary, part-time, or contracted employment for the duration of a project. Contingency work is one of the fastest-growing employment sectors in many industrialized countries as it enables employers to expand and contract their workforce with the vagaries of the market and to avoid costly fringe benefits and other commitments related to long-term employment.

Contradiction. Marx's term for mutually antagonistic tendencies within an institution or the broader society, such as those between profit and competition within capitalism.

Contradictory class location. A position in the class structure that shares characteristics of the class positions both above and below it. The classic position would be that of a foreman in a factory or a department chair in academe.

Core country. A country that occupies a central position on the world stage, such as the advanced industrial societies of North America, Western Europe, and Japan. See also *Peripheral country* and *Semiperipheral country*.

Corporate crime. Criminal or deviant behaviour committed by a corporation.

Corporation. A legally recognized organization set up for profit in which the powers and liabilities of the organization are legally separate from the owners or the employees. In the United States, corporations have the same legal status as a person. See also *Citizens United*.

Correlation. The relationship between two variables in which they vary together: for example, a correlation between the income of parents and reading ability among

primary school children. Statistical correlation can vary from -1 to 1 . (Zero indicates no correlation between the variables). A positive correlation between two variables exists where a high score on one is associated with a high score on the other; a negative correlation, where a high score on one variable is associated with a low score on the other.

Cost-benefit decision making. Decision making based on the analysis and weighing of the costs and benefits of the decision

Counterculture. A subculture that is opposed to the ideas, beliefs, and/or behaviours of the dominant culture.

Coup d'état. An armed takeover of government by a small group of conspirators, who are often military officers. See also *Rebellion* and *Revolution*.

Craftsman. See *Artisan*.

Created environment. Human constructions such as buildings, roads, factories, and private homes.

Creative destruction. A revolutionary process of capitalism described by Joseph Schumpeter in which new technologies and industries incessantly destroy old ones, thus causing great turmoil in the economy.

Credentialism. The tendency for jobs to require more and more formal education, even though the skill or knowledge requirements for the job have not changed.

Crime. Any action that violates criminal laws established by political authority.

Criminology. A social science discipline that focuses upon the study of crime and the criminal justice system.

Crisis medicine (also called "curative medicine"). Medical treatment that focuses on curing illness rather than preventing it

Cross tabulation (Crosstabs). A table illustrating the relationship between two variables, such as sex (male and female) and years of education.

Crude birth rate. A statistical measure representing the number of births per year for every thousand people in a given population.

Crude death rate. A statistical measure representing the number of deaths per year for every thousand people in a given population.

Cult. A fragmentary religious group that lacks permanent structure.

Cultural diffusion. The transmission of cultural elements between sociocultural systems.

Cultural lag. A dysfunction in the sociocultural system that results when a change occurs in one part of the system but another part of that system fails to adjust to the change. The failure often causes conflict until adjustment is made. An example is the engagement of married women in outside employment and the continuance of the traditional domestic division of labour.

Cultural materialism. A macro social theory that attempts to account for the similarities and differences between sociocultural systems by focusing on the environmental constraints to which human action is subject.

Cultural pluralism. The more or less peaceful coexistence of multiple subcultures within a given society.

Cultural relativism. The idea that a cultural item can be judged or understood only in relationship to the entire culture in which it is embedded.

Cultural superstructure. In sociocultural materialism, the shared symbolic universe within a sociocultural system, including such components as the art, music, dance, rituals, sports, hobbies, and accumulated knowledge base of the system. See also *Mental superstructure* and *Superstructure*.

Cultural transmission. The socialization process whereby the norms and values of the group are internalized by individuals.

Cultural universal. A value or practice shared by all human cultures.

Culture. The values, norms, and material goods shared by a given group. Some sociologists prefer to restrict the term to symbolic aspects of a culture (values and norms).

Culture of poverty. A social theory proposing that the poor have a different value system that contributes to their poverty. As poor children are socialized into this value system, the inability to escape poverty is perpetuated.

Culture shock. Disorientation resulting from experiencing a new and different culture or rapid social change in one's own culture.

Cumulative change. A distinctive kind of change associated with systems composed of multiple, interrelated parts. Within these systems, some parts change while others

remain unchanged. Thus, cumulative change is a process that combines elements of continuity with elements of change; many parts of the system are preserved for extended periods while new parts are added and other parts are either replaced or transformed. Evolutionary change tends to be cumulative in nature.

Curative medicine. See *Crisis Medicine*.

Custodial care. Health care in which the focus is on the needs of the institution (convenience and efficiency, for example) rather than on the needs of the patient.

Cyberterrorism. The threat of hacking or the actual hacking into computer networks in order to cause widespread disruption for the purpose of furthering a group's political, economic, or social agenda.

D

Data. Systematically measured information.

Data analysis. The organization of data in order to detect patterns and uniformities.

Deductive reasoning. The process of reasoning from general theory to specific hypotheses.

De facto segregation. The separation of social groups in fact, although not by law. Housing patterns in North America often reflect de facto segregation. See also *De jure segregation*.

Defensive medicine. The practice of ordering multiple medical tests as a precaution against overlooking a condition and thus opening the physician up to a lawsuit.

Deforestation. The removal of all trees from an area. See also *Depletion*, *Desertification*, and *Environment*.

Dehumanization. The act of depriving people of their human qualities; that is, treating people like animals or things as if they have no feelings or worth.

Deindustrialization. The loss of manufacturing capacity.

Deinstitutionalization. The movement of mental patients out of hospitals and into the community.

De jure segregation. The separation of social groups by law. See also *De facto segregation*.

Democracy. A form of government that recognizes the right of citizens to participate in political decision making or to elect representatives to government bodies.

Demographic transition. The stabilization of population level in an industrial society once a certain level of economic prosperity has been reached. Population is thought to stabilize because of economic incentives for families to limit the number of children.

Demography. The scientific study of human population, including size, growth, movement, density, and composition.

Density. See *Population density*.

Dependency theory. The thesis that many countries of the Global South cannot control major aspects of their economic life because of the dominance of industrialized societies, which allows core nations to exploit peripheral nations in economic relationships.

Dependent variable. The variable that the researcher believes will be affected by another variable. In the posited relationship between education and income, for example, education is the independent variable and income is the dependent variable. See also *Independent variable*.

Depletion. The human use of natural resources beyond their sustainable limits. For renewable resources such as water and trees, it is their use beyond their rate of replacement. In the case of non-renewable resources, the limits are unknowable, but that there are limits can be inferred. These limits can often be stretched (though not eliminated) through the use of technology, conservation, and recycling. See also *Intensification and Pollution*.

Deregulation. The freeing of corporations from legal constraints. In the past, such constraints had a much larger role in protecting the environment, workers, and consumers from exploitation. Deregulation advocates argue that such regulations are costly and ineffective, and that corporations are capable of regulating themselves.

Desertification. The process of a fertile region being rendered barren by the activities of human societies. See also *Depletion and Pollution*.

Detailed division of labour (also called “manufacturing division of labour”). The breakdown of product manufacturing into simple discrete steps, with each task assigned to an individual worker. Because it leads to greater productivity, the detailed division of

labour is increasingly applied to service, administrative, and professional occupations as well. See also *Division of labour*.

Deterrence theory. The theory that military conflict can be prevented through the buildup of armaments. Deterrence theory is based on ensuring that a potential aggressor would suffer too many losses to make the initiation of hostilities worthwhile. The notion of mutually assured destruction (MAD) was based on this theory.

Deviance (also called “deviant behaviour”). Behaviour that does not conform to significant norms held by most of the members of a group or society. What is regarded as deviant is highly variable across societies.

Deviant behaviour. See *Deviance*.

Deviant community. A group specifically organized around a form of social deviance.

Deviant identity. A person’s self-identification as a deviant.

Deviant subculture. A subculture with values and norms that differ substantially from those of the majority in a society.

Dialectic. An interpretation of change that emphasizes the clash of opposing interests and the resulting struggle as an engine of social transformation.

Dictatorship. A form of government in which one person exercises supreme power and authority.

Differential association. A theory of crime and delinquency holding that deviance is learned as a result of long-term interaction with others.

Differentiation. The development of increasing complexity and division of labour within sociocultural systems.

Diffusion. The spread of cultural traits from one sociocultural system to another.

Discrimination. The denial of equal access to social resources to people on the basis of their group membership.

Disenchantment. The retreat of mysticism, belief in the supernatural, and awe from social life, with these elements being replaced by secular values, rationality, and scientific understanding.

Disintegration. The weakening of the social bond within a society. Disintegration allows various groups to fragment and break away from the whole.

Disneyfication. The process whereby something (like religion) is transformed into a diluted or simplified, trivialized, and sanitized version of its original form in order to create an inoffensive neutral product.

Disorganization. The disturbance of a system from a state of order and predictability to one of chaos and unpredictability.

Division of labour. The specialization of work tasks or occupations and their interrelationships. All societies have some division of labour based on age and sex, but with the development of industrialism, the division of labour becomes far more complex, affecting many parts of the sociocultural system. The division of labour is perhaps the most underrated concept in sociology. See also *Detailed division of labour*.

Domestication. A process of human selection of successive generations of animals or plants for desirable characteristics such as size, taste, or ease of care. Through this process animals and plants are changed at the genetic level.

Domestic economy. Marvin Harris's term that refers to the structural components of sociocultural systems that are organized around basic production, exchange, and consumption within domestic settings (houses, camps, and other family and small community units).

Domestic labour. See *Housework*.

Domestic violence. Violent behaviour directed by one member of a household against another.

Dominant culture. The beliefs and values of the dominant group within a sociocultural system.

Double standard. A code of behaviour that is more restrictive on women than on men.

Doubling time. The time it takes for a particular level of population to double in size. A fairly accurate doubling time estimate can be computed by taking the annual growth rate and dividing it by seventy. At 2 percent annual growth, world population (5.5 billion in 1996) will double in size (to 11 billion) in about thirty-five years (2031), assuming the annual growth stays constant. See also *Exponential growth*.

Dramaturgical model. A sociological perspective that sees the social world as a stage, with all the men and women playing to their roles in the social order.

Dual-career family. A family in which both spouses are in the outside labour force.

Dual labour market. The hypothesis that men and women have differential earnings because they work in different parts of the labour market. For example, men dominate the field of engineering (high pay, high prestige), while women dominate the field of social work (low pay, low prestige).

Dual welfare system. A system that includes disguised forms of welfare that go to the middle class and the rich. See also *Wealthfare* and *Welfare*.

Dyad. A group consisting of two people.

Dysfunction. A component part of the sociocultural system that has negative impact (or harmful effect) on other parts of the system or on the system as a whole.

E

Eclecticism. A conceptual approach that lacks commitment to any single paradigm or theoretical strategy. Eclectics draw upon multiple theories—sometimes contradictory in their assumptions—to explain physical, biological, or social phenomenon.

Ecological-evolutionary theory. Theories of sociocultural systems that stress their origin, maintenance, and change by focusing on the relationships of the system to their social and physical environments.

Ecology. The study of the system of relationships between organisms and their environment.

Economic interdependence. The dependence of individuals on one another for the production of most of the goods needed to sustain life. Comte and Durkheim both note that in societies with a high division of labour, economic interdependence is greater.

Economic surplus. Lenski's term for the amount of goods and service produced in a sociocultural system over and above what is needed to keep productive classes alive and industrious.

Economy. The organization of production and distribution of goods and services within a sociocultural system.

Ecosystem. A self-sustaining community of plants and animals within a natural environment.

Education. The transmission of knowledge to members of society. The knowledge passed on comprises technical and cultural knowledge, technical and social skills, and the norms and values of the society.

Education system. The system of formalized transmission of knowledge and values operating within a given society.

Educational deflation. The devaluing of education as a result of the forces of supply and demand.

Egalitarian family. A family in which power is shared more or less equally by both partners.

Ego. Freud's term for the part of the self that represents reason and common sense.

Egoistic suicide. Durkheim's term for suicide performed by an individual who has not sufficiently integrated into the social order.

Elder abuse. Acts of violence or neglect directed at the elderly, often by family members.

Elite. Men and women who occupy the highest positions of the dominant institutions of a society and who consequently hold enormous power. See also *Power elite*.

Elite crime. Criminal behaviour of elites that is part of their normal activity, such as evading taxes, hiring illegal immigrants as domestics, or engaging in insider trading.

Elitist. The attitude that some are better than others and have a right to the extraordinary privilege, power and wealth accorded them. Alternatively, one who subscribes to the theory that there is a power elite in American society.

Emigration. The movement of people out of their native land to other countries.

Empire. A group of states under a single government.

Empirical. Pertaining to social data or facts that are based on systematic observation or measurement.

Empiricism. The philosophy that knowledge comes from observation and experience.

Endogamy. A system in which individuals may only marry within their own social category or group.

Enlightenment. Pertaining to seventeenth- and eighteenth-century European cultural movement that placed great faith in science and human reason in dealing with social issues.

Entrepreneur. A person who starts or organizes a business firm.

Entropy. Gradual decline into disorder. The entropy law, or second law of thermodynamics, states that energy can only be transformed in one direction, from ordered to disordered. Entropy is also another name for pollution.

Environment. The physical, biological, and chemical constraints to which action is subject.

Environmentalism. A concern with preserving the physical environment in the face of the impact of industrialism.

Epidemiology. The study of biological, social, and economic factors associated with disease and health.

Estates. The three groups into which the population in medieval Europe was divided: the First Estate comprised the clergy; the Second Estate, the nobility; and the Third Estate, everyone else, or commoners.

Estate system. A form of stratification established by law in which the ownership of land leads to the monopolization of power.

Ethnic group. A group of people who share a cultural identity, separating them from other groups around them.

Ethnicity. One's ethnic group.

Ethnocentrism. The tendency to judge other cultures by the standards of one's own culture, often with the feeling that one's own is superior.

Ethnography. A qualitative mode of inquiry that consists of the study and systematic description of cultural systems, social groups or organizations based on direct observation.

Ethnomethodology. A research method that focuses on the activities and beliefs of group members to determine what sense they make of their everyday lives.

Eugenics. A social movement in the early twentieth century that sought to apply genetic selection in order to "improve" the human race.

Euthanasia. The act of killing a person who is terminally ill (active euthanasia) or allowing such a person to die by withholding treatment (passive euthanasia). Usually the act is claimed to be an act of mercy.

Eutrophication. The process by which an aquatic system becomes over fertilized. One negative environmental consequence is overgrowth of microscopic plants, leading to oxygen depletion, which causes certain aquatic species to die.

Evaluation research. Social research whose aim is to assess the effectiveness of a particular policy or social program.

Evolution. The change of biological organisms by means of adaptation to the demands of the physical environment. Genetic variation is random, some mutations are beneficial and allow the organism to adapt to their environment and pass on their genes to future generations, thereby changing the species itself.

Exchange reciprocity. Rough equality in the exchange of goods and services between groups or between sociocultural systems.

Exogamy. A system in which individuals may only marry outside their social category or group.

Experiment. A research method in which variables can be analyzed under carefully controlled conditions, usually within an artificial situation constructed by the researcher. An experiment can potentially determine whether a given variable affects another independently of other factors.

Exponential growth. A geometric rate of progression that has the potential of producing a very fast rise (or an "explosion") in the numbers of a population experiencing such growth. See also *Doubling time*.

Expropriation. The confiscation of property or labour from an individual.

Extended family. A family group consisting of more than two generations of the same kinship line living either within the same household or, as is more common in the West, very close to one another.

F

Fad. Collective behaviour that involves a novel, often frivolous, and usually short-lived activity.

False consciousness. A Marxian term for an ideology of the subordinate class that has been largely fashioned by the ideology and control of elites within the society.

Family. A group of individuals related to one another by blood ties, marriage, or adoption. Members of families form an economic unit, the adult members of which are responsible for the upbringing of children. While all societies involve some form of family, the form the family takes is widely variable. In modern industrial societies, the main family form is the nuclear family, although a variety of extended family relationships is also found.

Family of orientation. The family into which an individual is born and socialized.

Family of procreation. The family an individual creates when children are born or adopted.

Fecundity. The number of children that a woman is biologically capable of bearing in her lifetime in a particular society. See also *Fertility*.

Feedback loop. In sociocultural materialism, the dynamic relationships between the different components of sociocultural systems. While the theory begins with an examination of infrastructural determinism, it recognizes that structure and superstructure can play an independent role in determining the character of the system. See also *Infrastructural determinism*.

Fee-for-service medicine. The provision of medical services in return for a monetary fee paid by the consumer.

Femininity. The characteristic behaviours expected of women in a given culture.

Feminism. Advocacy of the political, economic, and social equality of the sexes.

Feminization of poverty. A process by which increasing proportions of the poor are women and children.

Fertility. The average number of live-born children produced by women of childbearing age in a particular society. See also *Fecundity*.

Fetishism. Obsessive attachment or sexual desire directed toward an object.

Feudalism. A social system based on fealty between a lord and a vassal. Feudalism is characterized by grants of land (fiefs) in return for formal oaths of allegiance and promises of loyal service.

Field research. Research in which the investigator is directly involved with the people or groups being studied.

First World. A term now rarely used that refers to the group of nation-states that possess advanced industrial economies, usually market based. See also *Second World* and *Third World*; *Global North* and *Global South*.

Flextime. An arrangement that allows employees to set their own schedules (starting and quitting times) whenever possible.

Folkways. Widespread standards of behaviour.

Forces of production. Marx's term for the technology, labour, and raw materials used to produce economic goods in a society.

Fordism. The assembly line system of production pioneered by Henry Ford. Although Fordism became very widespread, not all industrial processes are based on the assembly line.

Formal organization. See *Secondary organization*.

Formal rationality. The use of *zweckrational*—goal-oriented rational behaviour—to achieve a goal without thought to wider social values, traditions, or emotions. A popular name for the phenomenon is “technocratic thinking.” See also *Substantive rationality*.

Forms. The traditional, legal, or accustomed ways of government, characterized by respect for office, procedure, law, opposing parties, consultation, and open communication within executive agencies and between branches of government.

Function. The way in which a sociocultural trait contributes toward the maintenance or adaptation of another component of that system or to the entire system itself.

Functional analysis. The use of functionalism to analyze a sociocultural system or a part of that system.

Functionalism. A theoretical perspective that focuses on the ways in which various parts of the social system contribute to the continuity of society and on the effects that the various parts have on one another.

Fundamental innovation. An idea, invention, or discovery that is truly revolutionary in nature such that it stimulates many other innovations or changes the way of life of the sociocultural system. The invention of the steam engine or the discovery of penicillin are two such fundamental innovations.

Fundamentalism. A commitment to and belief in the literal meanings of scriptural texts.

Futurist. A person who attempts to forecast the broad parameters of social life, usually from the study of present-day trends.

G

Game stage . The third of three stages of childhood socialization described by George Herbert Mead. In the game stage the child becomes aware of the multitude of roles and how they relate to one another and to the self. See also *Imitation stage* and *Play stage*.

Gang. An informal group of individuals who engage in common activities, many of which may be outside the law.

Gemeinschaft. Ferdinand Tönnies's term for social organization based on close personal ties and traditional norms and values.

Gender. A category based on socially defined behaviour regarded as appropriate for the members of each sex.

Gender gap. The gap between men and women in terms of their political attitudes and behaviour.

Gender identity. One's self-identification as a man or a woman.

Generalization. A claim that a specific observation will apply to a broader population. See also *Inductive reasoning*.

Genetic engineering. The genetic manipulation of organisms in an effort to produce characteristics that are perceived as desirable.

Genocide. The systematic, planned annihilation of an ethnic, racial, or political group.

Gentrification. The renovation of poor and working-class urban neighbourhoods and the displacement of the original residents.

Gesellschaft. Ferdinand Tönnies's term for social organization based on loose personal ties, self-interest, rationalization, and impersonality.

Ghetto. A section of a city occupied predominantly by members of a single racial or ethnic group, usually because of social or economic pressure.

Glass ceiling. The unspoken and unwritten limit that a woman (or a member of a minority group) may attain within an organization.

Globalization. The development of extensive worldwide patterns of economic, social, or political relationships between nations.

Global North. Countries that have a high level of industrialization. With the exception of Australia and New Zealand, these countries are located in the northern hemisphere, and most of them were formerly considered the “First World.” Following the collapse of the Soviet bloc, however, a number of Eastern European countries were reclassified as part of the Global North.

Global South. Countries in which industrialization remains fairly limited. Most of these countries lie in the southern hemisphere, and many were former colonies of industrial states. **Global stratification.** Systematic global inequalities between nation-states that are determined by a nation-state's position in the capitalist world-system.

Government. Formal institutional structures of the nation-state whose purpose is to regulate internal and external relations.

Greenhouse effect. A process whereby certain atmospheric gases such as carbon dioxide and methane (called “greenhouse gases”) absorb some of the sun’s energy being reflected back into space and radiate it in all directions, thus preventing some of the sun’s heat from leaving the earth’s atmosphere. In recent decades, the natural greenhouse effect, which makes earth liveable for humans, has been exacerbated by human activities that have increased greenhouse gases, causing climate change.

Green Revolution. The tremendous increase in farming productivity that occurred beginning in the 1950s with the application of pesticides, herbicides, and chemical fertilizers, and the development of plant varieties specifically bred to respond to these chemical inputs.

Gross domestic product (GDP). The total value of all goods and services produced within the boundaries of a particular country in any given year. A country’s GDP includes the value of the production of foreign-owned firms within that country but not the value of goods produced by that country’s firms on foreign soil. GDP is now the preferred measure of the wealth of nations.

Gross national product (GNP). The total value of all goods and services produced by nationals of a particular country in any given year. A country’s GNP does *not* include the value of the production of foreign-owned firms within that country but *does* include the value of goods and services produced by that country’s firms abroad. Although GDP is

the preferred measure of the wealth of nations, GNP is often used in historical comparisons.

Group. A collection of individuals who communicate and interact on a regular basis, sharing many attitudes and beliefs.

Group size effect. The variable effects of different group sizes upon the people within a group.

Groupthink. The tendency for groups to reach consensus on most issues brought before them.

Guerilla movement. The organized efforts of a non-government military organization in resisting the legally established government.

H

Hate crime. Assault or other violent acts aimed at individuals because they are members of a deviant or a minority group.

Health maintenance organization (HMO). In the US, an organization that provides health care to patients in return for a fixed annual fee. HMOs therefore have an interest in limiting the cost of treatment per patient. See also *Managed care*.

Hegemony. The predominant political, economic, or social influence of a nation-state over others. A "hegemon" refers to the dominant leader itself.

Herding society (also called "pastoral society"). A society whose subsistence is based on domesticated animals. See also *Traditional state*.

Heterosexuality. A sexual preference for persons of the opposite sex.

Hidden curriculum. Behaviours or attitudes that are learned at school but that are not a part of the formal curriculum. For example, aspects of classism can often be "unintentionally" conveyed in learning materials.

Hierarchy of credibility. A hierarchy that some journalists observe by attaching the greatest importance to the views and opinions of those in positions of power, such as government ministers, political leaders, senior police officers, or wealthy and influential individuals.

Higher education. Education beyond high school level, often in college or university.

High-trust system. A work setting in which individuals have a great deal of autonomy and control.

Historical materialism. Marx's theory that processes of social change are determined primarily (but not exclusively) by economic factors.

Holistic. Characterized by an emphasis on the whole system and on the interdependent nature of the parts of that system.

Holistic medicine. Medical treatment aimed at the whole person, including physical and mental aspects, as well as the person's social environment.

Homo duplex. Durkheim's idea that human beings have a dual nature, the angel and the beast, with the beast being the stronger of the two. The first and "lower" part of that nature is the "will," an id-like nature that is focused on the individual satisfaction of all wants and desire. The other, "higher" part is the "collective conscience," which is social in origin. This conscience is based on a collective moral system, a reality separate from the individual that is made up of ideas and values.

Homogamy. The tendency for individuals to select mates from similar social backgrounds.

Homogenization. The process of becoming more uniform, with all parts of a whole becoming alike.

Homophobia. Fear, hatred, or loathing of homosexuals.

Homo sapiens. The species of modern humans that evolved in Africa some 200,000 years ago during a time of great environmental change.

Homosexuality. A sexual preference for persons of the same sex.

Hospice. Care for the terminally ill with an emphasis on pain relief, emotional and spiritual counseling within the home.

Household. A census term for a collection of people occupying a housing unit.

Housework (also called "domestic labour"). Unpaid work done in and around the home, such as cooking, cleaning, and shopping. Studies show that the bulk of this labour is carried out by women despite the predominance of dual-income families.

Human ecology. The study of the relationship between humans and their environments.

Humanitarian. A person devoted to human welfare and social reform.

Human relations management. The interdisciplinary study of worker relations in the workplace. The goal is to maximize productivity by improving worker-management relations through the promotion of social events and other activities to improve worker morale. Many sociologists (especially Mills and Braverman) consider human relations management simply an exercise in manipulation.

Hunting-and-gathering society. A society whose subsistence is based primarily on hunting animals and gathering edible plants.

Hyperconsumption. The consumption of goods and services to the point of abnormal excess.

Hyperindustrialism. A societal condition in which virtually all social institutions (government, family, education) have adapted to the demands of the industrial economy. Many scholars favour the term *hyperindustrialism* over *post-industrial society* to refer to complex industrial societies such as Canada and the US. The prefix *hyper-* denotes "over and above," even to the point of "abnormal excess." To describe contemporary North America as "hyperindustrial" is to stress both its continuity with the past and its rapidly changing nature—even to abnormal excess.

Hypothesis. A tentative statement about a given state of affairs that predicts a relationship between variables, usually put forward as a basis for empirical testing.

I

Iatrogenic. Pertaining to a disease caused by a physician in the course of examining or treating the patient.

Id. Freud's term for the part of the self that represents human drives such as sexuality and hunger.

Idealism. The pursuit of one's values and beliefs, often to the exclusion of practical reality.

Idealist. One who is influenced more by ideals than practical considerations. Alternatively, one who subscribes to the hypothesis that ideas are prime movers (important causal agents) in sociocultural systems.

Ideal type. Weber's construct of a "pure type," an analytical tool created by emphasizing logical or consistent traits of a given social item. The traits are defining

ones but not necessarily desirable ones. Ideal types do not exist anywhere in reality; rather, they serve as measuring rods that can be used in comparing social phenomena. One example is Weber's ideal type of bureaucratic organization (which is anything but desirable). More widely used and understood examples include "ideal democracy" and "ideal capitalism."

Ideology. Shared ideas or beliefs that serve to justify and support the interests of particular groups or organizations.

Idiographic. Characterized by a concern with unique historical events. See also *Nomothetic*.

Imitation stage. The first of three stages of childhood socialization described by George Herbert Mead. In the imitation stage the child mimics or copies the behavior of others without much understanding of the social meaning of the behavior. See also *Game stage* and *Play stage*.

Immigration. The settlement of people into a country in which they were not born.

Impairment. Abnormal functioning of the body or mind, either that one is born with or that arises from injury or disease.

Imperialism. The establishment of a colonial empire in which domination is political and/or economic.

Impression management. Selective control of how others perceive us.

Income. Payment of wages usually earned from work or investments. Income is usually measured by year.

Independent variable. The variable that an investigator believes affects another variable. For example, in the posited relationship between education and income, education is the independent variable and income is the dependent variable. See also *Dependent variable*.

Index crime. Street crime such as robbery, rape, and other serious offences.

Indigenous culture. The native or original culture of a particular region.

Individualism. A belief in the centrality and primary importance of the individual and the importance of self-sufficiency and independence.

Inductive reasoning. The process of reasoning from specific observations to general statements. See also *Deductive reasoning* and *Generalization*.

Industrial democracy. An employment system in which there is democratic participation in the workplace.

Industrialism. A mode of production characterized by the large-scale manufacturing of goods (including agriculture). As with any mode of production, industrialism imposes severe constraints upon the rest of the sociocultural system.

Industrialization. The continual expanding application of sophisticated technology designed to efficiently draw energy and raw materials out of the environment and fashion them into products for human use.

Industrialization of war. The application of industrial production and bureaucratic organization to warfare.

Industrial production. Economic production carried on through the use of machinery driven by inanimate sources of power.

Industrial reserve army. A term popularized by Marx that refers to the legions of unemployed within a society dominated by capital. The existence of an industrial reserve army keeps wages down.

Industrial Revolution. The transformation of a technology based on human and animal labour to a technology based on the use of inanimate energy sources. The term is generally used to refer to the transformation that occurred in England in the second half of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century. Like many historical designations, however, the “Industrial Revolution” is in fact an arbitrary construct used by social scientists and lay people alike to break the continuous world of reality into manipulable pieces. That is, no one event marks the Industrial Revolution’s beginning or end except as defined by social consensus.

Infanticide. The intentional killing of infants. One of history’s dirty secrets, according to Malthus and others, is the widespread practice of infanticide as a method of controlling population level throughout human history.

Infant mortality rate. The number of infants who die during the first year of life per thousand live births. Infant mortality rates have declined dramatically in industrial societies.

Informal relations. Organizational relations that are developed on the basis of personal connections. These ties are often used instead of the formally recognized procedures to pursue organizational goals.

Infrastructural determinism. The major principle of cultural materialism asserts that production and population variables “probabilistically determine” the rest of the sociocultural system (Harris 1979, 55-58). Sociocultural materialism states the principle in this way: The mode of production and reproduction probabilistically determines primary and secondary group structure, which in turn probabilistically determines the cultural and mental superstructure (Elwell 1999, 157-159). See also *Primacy of the infrastructure*.

Infrastructure. The interface between a sociocultural system and its environment. In sociocultural materialism, infrastructure constitutes the principle mechanism by which society regulates the amount and type of energy from the environment.

In-group. A social group that an individual belongs to and identifies with.

Inner city. The central neighbourhoods of industrial cities, which are subject to dilapidation and decay, the more affluent residents having moved to outlying areas.

Innovation. The introduction of a new technology, product, or technique into a sociocultural system. Alternatively, the behaviour of individuals who have accepted the culturally approved goal but have not fully internalized the culturally approved means to attain this goal. These individuals therefore adopt a different (and often deviant) method for attaining the goal. Innovation is one of the five modes of adaptation in Robert K. Merton’s anomie theory. See also *Conformity, Rebellion, Retreatism, and Ritualism*.

Instinct. A genetically fixed pattern of complex behaviour (that is, behaviour that goes beyond reflex) that appears in all normal animals within a given species. The vast bulk of human behaviour is learned. Though humans have several reflexive behaviours, the behaviour of humans is not considered to be instinctual by most social scientists.

Institution. An established pattern of human social behaviour in a given society. Examples include marriage, family, and government.

Institutional capitalism. A condition that exists when large institutions such as pension plans, banks, and insurance companies hold large shares of capitalistic enterprises.

Institutional discrimination. Accepted social arrangements that place minority groups at a disadvantage.

Institutionalization. The embodiment of widespread norms, beliefs, and values into social structures, laws, and formal codes of conduct. Institutionalization also refers to the act of committing a person to an institution such as a nursing home or asylum.

Institutional racism. Accepted social arrangements that discriminate on the basis of race.

Insurrection. An organized revolt against civil authority in an attempt to replace that authority with another.

Integration. The incorporation of disparate parts into a whole; the bringing of people of different ethnic groups into equal association.

Intelligence. The level of intellectual ability in an individual. Intelligence also refers to the gathering of information (defensive, offensive, and industrial capabilities) about one nation by another.

Intelligence quotient (IQ). A score attained on tests of symbolic or reasoning abilities. Most social scientists (excluding psychologists) put little stock in the validity of IQ tests.

Intensification. The application of ever expanding technology and labour techniques to increase productivity. Intensification also refers to the growth in the complexity of the mode of production (greater energy expenditures as well as energy produced and consumed) and population over the course of social evolution. See also *Bureaucratization* and *Rationalization*.

Interest group. A group organized to pursue specific interests in the political arena. The interests of these groups are often economic, but many are organized around moral concerns. The major activities of interest groups are lobbying the members of legislative bodies, contributing vast sums to political campaigns, and, increasingly, running their own propaganda campaigns to affect the legislative process.

Intergenerational mobility. Movement up or down the social hierarchy from one generation to another.

Interlocking directorates. Linkages between boards of directors of different companies. These linkages occur because the same people (often of the same class) sit on several different boards.

Intermediate organization. Robert Nisbet's term for a primary group that is based on religion, family, or community and that, historically, stood between the individual and the state.

Internal colonialism. The economic exploitation of a group within a society whereby the labour of group members is sold cheaply and they are made to pay dearly for products and services.

Internalization. The process by which members of a group make the ideas, values, and norms of the group their own.

International division of labour. The specialization of work tasks and occupations among nation states; the interdependence of countries that trade on global markets. When there is an international division of labour, products are produced globally, but profits go only to a few.

Interpersonal violence. The use of force between individuals to kill, injure, or abuse.

Intersocietal selection. The evolution of the global system of societies by which larger, more technologically advanced societies have prevailed in conflicts over territory and resources with more traditional sociocultural systems.

Iron cage. Weber's term for a rationalized society that subordinates individual thought and behaviour to bureaucratic control.

Iron law of oligarchy. A generalization posited by Robert Michels (1915, 365): "Who says organization, says oligarchy." As bureaucracy enlarges and centralizes, more and more authority is placed at the top of these huge organizations.

Irrationality factor. The paradox of supremely rational organizations—that is, bureaucracies—acting in ways that are very irrational in terms of the well-being of the total society. Because bureaucracies are designed for the efficient attainment of goals set by those at the top of the organization and because those individuals often have goals that are antithetical to the goals of society as a whole (say, profit versus welfare), the irrationality factor is very much a part of modern life.

Islamophobia. An irrational fear and/or hatred of or aversion to Islam, Muslims, or Islamic culture.

J

Jeremiad. Writing that is characterized by a long list of complaints, laments, or prophecies of doom.

Job displacement. The permanent loss of jobs due to shifts in employment patterns. With the transition from agrarian to industrial societies, many agricultural jobs were lost while new manufacturing and service jobs were created. The shifts continue.

K

Kinesic communication. Communication through body language.

Kinship. The network of social relationships that link individuals through common ancestry, marriage, or adoption.

L

Labelling effect. The impact of labelling on an individual. For example, tracking students in different reading groups may produce poor reading not because of the ability of the student but because the student was placed in a poor reading group and therefore internalized the label.

Labelling theory (also called “societal reaction theory”). A social theory that holds that society's reaction to certain behaviours is a major factor in defining the self as deviant. That is, people may become “deviant” because certain labels (thief, prostitute, homosexual) are attached to their behaviour by criminal justice authorities and others. The resulting treatment of the individual pushes them into performing the deviant role.

Labour. Physical or mental work; the primary factor in the production process.

Labour power. Abstract human labour that is used in exchange for money. This concept was much used by Karl Marx.

Laissez-faire. The idea that government should not interfere with commerce. This is one of the main doctrines of capitalism that while part of the ideal is rarely practiced.

Language. Symbols and a system of grammar that allow the communication of complex ideas.

Latent function. An unintended consequence of one part of a sociocultural system on the whole or on other parts of that system. Latent functions are often indirect and not always obvious. For example, in the United States, the reform of big city political

machines had many unintended consequences for the governability of American cities. See also *Manifest function*.

Law. Written rules established by a political authority and backed by government.

Legitimacy. The generally held belief that a particular social institution is just and valid.

Legitimation. The ways in which an institution engenders acceptance, validity, or commitment from individuals and other institutions.

Legitimation crisis. A situation that results when the commitment on the part of members to a particular social institution is not sufficient for that organization to function effectively. Governments that lack legitimation often rely on repression to continue their rule (which is very inefficient).

Lesbianism. Sexual activities and emotional attachments between women.

Liberal democracy. A form of government based on some form of democracy coupled with capitalism.

Life chances. The opportunities that are available to individuals as a result of their position in the class system.

Life expectancy. The number of years that a newborn in a particular society can expect to live. Life expectancy also refers to the number of additional years that people at any given age can, on average, expect to live.

Lifespan. The maximum length of life that is biologically possible for a member of a given species.

Lifestyle changes. Changes that are often called for when treating chronic disease. Rather than curing the disease, the patient makes changes in lifestyle (better nutrition, more exercise, smoking cessation, weight reduction, stress alleviation) that help to control the disease process.

Limited war. Warfare fought principally by a relatively small number of soldiers to reach specific and politically limited objectives. See also *Total war*.

Literacy. The ability of individuals to read and write.

Local knowledge. Knowledge of a local community possessed by individuals who have spent long periods of their lives in that community.

Longevity. A long duration of life or a long tenure in an organization.

Looking-glass self. A social psychological concept stating that an individual's self-concept is derived from interactions with others: that is, from that individual's perception of how others perceive him or her.

Low-trust system. A work setting in which individuals have little autonomy and control.

Luddite. A person who is against increased industrialization or new technology. The term, often used derogatorily, originally referred to British textile artisans (1811–16) who rioted and destroyed textile machinery in the belief that this new technology was contributing to their replacement by less skilled low-wage workers.

M

Macrosociology. The study of large-scale organizations, sociocultural systems, or the world- system of societies.

Magic. Rituals performed in an attempt to influence supernatural beings to help achieve human ends.

Market economy. An economic system where investment, supply, price, and distribution are determined by the by the economic forces of supply and demand.

Male inexpressiveness. The difficulties that men have in talking about their feelings to others.

Malthusianism. Thomas Robert Malthus's theory of population dynamics, according to which population increase inevitably comes up against the “natural limits” of food supply because population grows geometrically (1, 2, 4, 8, 16, . . .) while food supply grows arithmetically (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, . . .). Because of this dynamic, Malthus asserted that population must be constantly checked through preventive and positive checks which will significantly affect the rest of the sociocultural system. See also *Positive checks* and *Preventive checks*.

Managed care. The reorganization of health care delivery along corporate lines. See also *Fee-for-service medicine* and *Health maintenance organization*.

Management. The coordination, supervision, or control of people and processes; the group of people who make decisions regarding the operations of an institution.

Managerial capitalism. A change in the control of capitalist enterprises from owners (who predominated in Marx's day) to very well-salaried managers.

Managerial demiurge. C. Wright Mills's concept related to the increased proportion of managers at the top of government and business bureaucracies, an interlocking of these two bureaucracies, and the idea that more and more areas are becoming the object of management and manipulation.

Manifest function. An intended and known consequence of one part of a sociocultural system on the whole or on other parts of that system. For example, the reform of big city political machines had the intended consequence of reducing corruption by city officials. See also *Latent function*.

Manipulation. Skilful or devious management.

Manufacturing division of labour. See *Detailed division of labour*.

Market research. Social research aimed specifically at determining the sales potential of a product or service.

Marriage. A socially approved sexual and economic relationship between two or more individuals.

Marxism. Contemporary social theory that derives its main elements from Karl Marx's ideas. Marxist theory strongly emphasizes class struggle and material causation.

Masculinity. The characteristic forms of behaviour expected of men in any given culture.

Mass media. Forms of communication designed to reach a vast audience without any personal contact between the senders and receivers. Examples include newspapers, magazines, DVDs, radio, and television.

Master status. A position that is so central to the identity of the individual that it overshadows all other statuses.

Material culture. The physical objects of a given sociocultural system. Material culture is usually thought to consist of products, art, tools, and other tangibles. See also *Culture*.

Materialism. The view that material conditions (usually economic and technological factors) play the central role in determining social stability and change. Materialism also refers to the philosophical view that the only thing that can truly be said to exist is matter; that, fundamentally, all things are composed of material and all phenomena are the result of material interactions.

Materialist. One who believes that material conditions are the foundation of sociocultural systems.

Matriarchy. Sociocultural systems in which females have a major role in economic, government, or other major institutions. Most anthropologists insist that there are no true matriarchies in the sense of female dominance; however there are societies such as the Iroquois in which females, particularly mothers, exercise equal if not dominant political power.

Matrilineal descent. The practice of tracing kinship through only the female line. See also *Patrilineal descent*.

Matrilocality. A family residential pattern in which the husband is expected to live near the wife's parents. See also *Neo-locality*.

McDonaldization. George Ritzer's term for rationalization, the identical process extensively described by Weber. Ritzer coined the term because modern audiences, including students, could easily relate to fast food restaurants.

Mean. A statistical measure of central tendency or average based on dividing a total by the number of individual cases involved. The mean is very sensitive to extreme scores. For example, the average life expectancy for people in a society with high infant mortality would be a misleading measure. See also *Median*.

Means of consumption. George Ritzer's term for the means whereby the consumption of goods and services is carried out in a society. The means of consumption consist of such institutions as malls, superstores, Internet stores (such as Amazon.com), warehouse stores, theme parks, cruise lines, mega malls, and casinos.

Means of production. Marx's term for the means whereby the production of material goods is carried on in a society. Marx included in this concept both the "forces of production" and the social relations among the producers (which he called the "relations of production" and which he based on the ownership of the technology). See also *Forces of production* and *Relations of production*.

Mechanical solidarity. Durkheim's term for the bond between an individual and a group that is based on shared interests, activities, beliefs, values, and so on. When there is mechanical solidarity, one's individual conscience is enveloped by the collective conscience. See also *Organic solidarity*.

Mechanization. The use of machinery to replace human labour.

Median. The number that falls at the halfway point in a range of numbers. The scores below the median are half the scores and those above are the other half. The median is a way of calculating "central tendency," which is sometimes more useful than a calculated mean (particularly when the distribution includes many extreme scores).

Medicaid. A US government program (federal and state) to provide medical care to the poor.

Medicalization. The tendency in the West to define all forms of deviance and social problems in terms of disease, genetic predisposition, or other personal pathologies.

Medical model. The application of a medical perspective in explaining and treating troublesome human behaviour.

Medicare. In the United States, government health insurance for those over sixty-five. In Canada, a tax-funded national health care program available to every resident of the country.

Megalopolis. A vast unbroken urban region consisting of two or more central cities connected by their surrounding suburbs.

Mental disorder. The psychological inability to cope effectively with the demands of day-to-day life. Psychiatrists recognize two general types of mental disorder: neurosis (milder forms of illness, such as anxiety states) and psychosis (more serious forms of disturbance, in which individuals lose touch with reality). The organic and sociocultural bases of various mental disorders are disputed matters.

Mental superstructure. In sociocultural materialism, Max Weber's typology of motivation for human behaviour. According to Weber there are four such motivations: value-oriented rational action (or *wertrational*), affective action (action motivated by emotions), traditional action (action motivated by what Weber calls the "eternal yesterday"), and goal-oriented rational action (or *zweckrational*). See also *Cultural superstructure* and *Superstructure*.

Microsociology. The study of small-scale patterns of human interaction and behaviour within specific settings.

Middle class. A social class broadly defined occupationally as those working in white-collar and lower managerial occupations. In research, the middle class is sometimes

defined according to income levels or subjective identification of the participants in the study. See also *Bourgeoisie*.

Migration. The movement of people from one country or region to another in order to settle permanently.

Militarism. A policy that emphasizes military preparedness, threats, and action in addressing problems of state. A glorification of military ideals and capabilities.

Military-industrial complex. An alliance among a nation's military establishment and defense industries that interchange personnel and share a common interest in furthering defence spending and weapons production. In some nation states the military-industrial complex has great influence on government policy through contributions to political campaigns, lobbying, and spending defense dollars in representative's districts.

Military rule. Government by military leaders.

Millenarianism. The belief held by members of some religious movements that cataclysmic changes will occur in the near future (lately centred on the year 2012 or the second coming of Christ), heralding the arrival of a new epoch in human affairs.

Mini-systems. Immanuel Wallerstein's term for societies small in size, homogeneous, and relatively simple in structure. Such societies are self-contained sociocultural systems. Examples include hunting-and-gathering societies and simple horticultural, herding, and fishing societies.

Minority group. A group of people who are defined on the basis of their ethnicity or race. Because of their distinct physical or cultural characteristics, they are often singled out for unequal treatment within a society.

Miscegenation. The mixing of the races through marriage or sexual relationships.

Mixed economy. An economy that has major elements of both capitalism and socialism. Canada and many economies of Europe are mixed.

Mobilization. The process of arousing people and resources to press for social change.

Mode. The value that appears most often in a given set of data. The mode can sometimes be a helpful way of portraying central tendency. See also *Mean* and *Median*.

Mode of production. The technology and the practices employed for expanding or limiting basic subsistence production, especially the production of food and other forms

of energy. Examples include the technology of subsistence, the relationships between technologies and the environment, and work patterns. See also *Infrastructure* and *Mode of reproduction*.

Mode of reproduction. The technology and practices employed for expanding, limiting, and maintaining population size. Examples of variables included in the mode of reproduction are demography, mating patterns, fertility, mortality, nurturance of infants, contraception, abortion, and infanticide. See also *Demography*, *Infrastructure*, *Mode of production*, and *Population*.

Modernity. The state of being modern, usually associated with industrial and hyperindustrial societies.

Modernization. The process of general social change brought about by the transition from an agrarian to an industrial mode of production.

Monarchy. A hereditary form of government in which a king or queen or some similar member of the nobility rules.

Monogamy. A bond that restricts the individuals involved to an exclusive sexual partnership for the duration of the relationship. See also *Serial monogamy*.

Monopoly. A situation in which a single producer dominates in a given industry or market. See also *Oligopoly*.

Monopoly capitalism. A form of capitalism in which huge amounts of accumulated capital within corporations give these organizations enormous social, political, and economic power. Operating control of these organizations is vested in specialized management.

Monotheism. The belief in a single divine being. Christianity, Islam, and Judaism are all monotheistic religions.

Mores. Norms that have strong moral significance, violation of which cause strong social reaction. Examples include prohibitions against murder and sexual molestation of children.

Mortality rate. The number of deaths that occur in a particular population in a specified period of time (usually a year).

Motive. A personal drive, intentional reason, or impulse that causes a person to act in a certain way.

Multiculturalism. A sensitivity to the diverse cultural backgrounds and experiences of the members within a society. Multiculturalism can also be used to describe policies and ideologies that promote that sensitivity.

Multi-linear evolution. An interpretation of social evolution that not all societies pass through predetermined stages of evolutionary development and that varying paths of evolutionary change are followed by different societies.

Multinational corporation (also called “transnational corporation”). A business corporation that operates in two or more countries.

N

Nationalism. An individual's internalization of the set of beliefs and values expressing love, pride, and identification with a given nation-state. Rituals and symbols are important tools in fostering nationalism among the citizenry.

Nation-state. A modern state in which a government has sovereign power within a defined territorial area and the mass of the population are citizens.

Neo-colonialism. The informal dominance of some nations over others by means of unequal conditions of economic exchange (as between industrialized countries of the Global North and countries of the Global South).

Neo-locality. A family residential pattern in which the couple lives apart from the place of residence of both partners' parents. See also *Matrilocality*.

Newly industrialized countries. Nation-states (such as South Korea) that have recently become industrialized.

News values. The values and assumptions held by editors and journalists that guide them in choosing what is “newsworthy”: that is, what to report and what to leave out, and how what they choose to report should be presented.

Nomothetic. Characterized by a tendency to generalize or to search for universal laws or principles. Sociology is a nomothetic enterprise. See also *Idiographic*.

Non-material culture. The norms, customs, beliefs, and ideologies of social groups. See also *Material culture*.

Non-profit organization. See *Voluntary organization*.

Non-state actors. International agencies such as the United Nations or the World Health Organization that play a part in the world-system.

Norm. A rule or expectation of conduct that either prescribes a given type of behaviour or forbids it.

Normative consensus. Shared agreement among the vast majority in a group or society about what behaviours are appropriate and expected of its members.

Normative structure. Long-standing patterns of norms and expectations of behaviour within a society or an organization.

Nuclear family. A basic family group living separately from other relatives and consisting of two parents and their dependent children.

Nurse Practitioner. A registered nurse with a Master's degree and clinical experience, which enables him or her to diagnose and treat common illnesses, either independently or as part of a health care team.

O

Objectivity. A stance in which one strives as much as possible to reduce or eliminate bias in the conducting or interpretation of research and scholarship.

Occupational distribution. The number of workers in each occupational classification.

Occupational prestige. Social respect accorded to individuals or groups because of the status of their occupation.

Oligarchy. Rule by a few within an organization or in the society as a whole.

Oligopoly. A situation in which a small number of firms dominate a given industry or market. When four or fewer firms supply 50 percent or more of a given market, the effects of oligopoly become apparent. These effects are reputed to be a rise in price and a lowering of quality because of the decline of competition. See also *Monopoly*.

Open-lineage family. A family system found in pre-industrial Europe in which family relationships are closely intertwined with the local community.

Operatives and labourers. Unskilled and semi-skilled workers, usually working in manufacturing or construction.

Organic solidarity. Durkheim's term for social cohesion based on the interdependence of the division of labour rather than on similarity between individuals. See also *Mechanical solidarity*.

Organization. A relatively large group of individuals that is formally organized for the purpose of attaining a goal.

Organized crime. Criminal activities carried out by organizations established as businesses.

Offshoring. See *Outsourcing*.

Outsourcing. The contracting of services or manufacturing to another organization in order to reduce costs. When this is done with a contract to a business in another country it is called "offshoring."

Ownership. The legal right to the possession of an object or thing. For Marx, ownership of the means of production was a key factor in understanding a sociocultural system.

Ozone depletion. A decline in the total volume of ozone in the earth's stratosphere. This depletion in the ozone layer, which protects plant and animal life from harmful ultraviolet radiation, is believed to have been caused by the production of chlorofluorocarbons and other gases. See also *Environment and Pollution*.

P

Paradigm. A theoretical framework or worldview within which middle-range theories and generalizations regarding social reality are formulated and tested.

Participant observation. A research method in which the social scientist engages in systematic observation while participating as a member of the group.

Participatory democracy. A system of democracy in which all members of a group or community participate collectively in major decisions. Most nation-states today are too large and complex for participatory democracy to be a feasible form of government.

Pastoral society. See *Herding society*.

Patient dumping. The practice of treating only patients who can pay, leaving the poor to governmental or charitable organizations.

Patriarchy. Social organization that structures the dominance of men over women.

Patrilineal descent. The practice of tracing kinship through only the male line. See also *Matrilineal descent*.

Patrilocality. A family residential pattern in which the wife is expected to live near the husband's parents. See also *Matrilocality* and *Neo-locality*.

Pauperization. The act or process of impoverishing someone. Marx theorized that capital must ultimately lead to the pauperization of the masses.

Pay equity. See *Comparable worth*.

Peak oil. The year when the production of oil reaches its maximum and begins to decline. Peak oil can refer to a particular oil field, a nation-state, or to the world as a whole.

Peasants. People in agrarian societies who produce food from the land using traditional farming methods of plow and animal power; farm workers in agrarian societies.

Peer group. A friendship group composed of individuals of similar age with common interests and position.

Peripheral country. A country that has a marginal role in the world economy and is dependent on core countries in its trading relationships. See also *Core country* and *Semiperipheral country*.

Personal crime. Crime directed against individuals.

Personality. The consistent pattern of attitudes and beliefs that an individual projects to the social world.

Physician assistant. In the United States, a trained medical assistant who handles many routine medical problems, thereby allowing the physician to deal with the more difficult cases.

Planned economy. See *Command economy*.

Play stage. The second of three stages of childhood socialization described by George Herbert Mead. In the play stage the child begins to take on the role of significant others such as the pretending to be his or her mother. With this behavior the child begins to see the self as others do. See also *Game stage* and *Imitation stage*.

Plea bargain. A deal between the prosecution and the accused offender where the accused will plead guilty in return for a reduced charge.

Pluralist. One who subscribes to pluralist theory.

Pluralist theory. An analysis of politics emphasizing the role of diverse and competing interest groups in preventing too much power being accumulated in the hands of political and economic elites.

Policy research. Social research aimed at clarifying issues and problems that can then be addressed by changes in social policy.

Political action committee (PAC). In the US, an interest group organization that raises and contributes money to politicians who support the interests of the group.

Political economy. Marvin Harris's term that refers to the structural components of sociocultural systems that are organized around production, exchange, and consumption within and between large-scale political units (bands, villages, states, and empires).

Political party. An organization of people with similar interests and attitudes established with the aim of achieving legitimate control of government and using that power to pursue specific programs.

Politics. Attempts to influence governmental activities.

Pollution. The contamination of soil, water, or air by noxious substances. Pollution is one of the principal constraints of the environment. See also *Depletion*, *Environment*, and *Intensification*.

Polyandry. A form of marriage in which a woman may have more than one husband.

Polygamy. A form of marriage in which a person may have more than one spouse.

Polygyny. A form of marriage in which a man may have more than one wife.

Polytheism. The belief in two or more divine beings. See also *Monotheism*.

Popular culture. Cultural elements (beliefs, norms, material objects, artistic expressions) that are part of the everyday life of a people.

Population. In social research, the entire group of people that the researcher is studying. For very large groups, sampling is usually undertaken.

Population density. The number of people who live in a given area. This is usually measured by the number of people per square mile (in the US) or kilometre (in Canada).

Population replacement level. A situation in which the birth rate and the death rate in a particular area are about equal, thus leading to zero population growth.

Positive checks. Malthus's term for measures and activities by which the life span of an existing human being is shortened in some way. "Positive" is used here in a sense that the check is characterized by actions that terminate life—not in the colloquial sense that it is good or desirable. Malthus labels these "positive" checks because they actively cut down existing population by reducing the human life span. It is a most unfortunate choice of terms. See also *Infanticide*, *Malthusianism*, and *Preventive checks*.

Positivism. A philosophical position according to which there are close ties between the social and natural sciences, which share a common logical framework. Accurate observation, description, and measurement are considered critical in this perspective.

Post-industrial society. A society based on the production of services and information rather than material goods. This is a notion advocated by those who believe that the industrial order is passing. See also *Hyperindustrialism*.

Postmodernism. A theoretical perspective, widespread in cultural studies and anthropology, that is based on the idea that there is no objective social reality but that different realities are constructed in the minds of individuals from the words and images (or discourse) exchanged between people.

Power. The ability to achieve aims or further the interests that one holds even when opposed by others.

Power elite. According to C. Wright Mills, men in the highest positions of government, corporations, and the military, who hold enormous power in modern industrial societies.

Poverty line. The amount of income that it takes to maintain a family at a basic level. This amount is often determined by government.

Pre-industrial society. A broad classification of all modes of production that came before industrialism. The most common of these are hunting-and-gathering, horticultural, pastoral, and agrarian societies.

Prejudice. The holding of unfounded ideas about a group that are resistant to change.

Prestige. Social respect accorded to individuals or groups because of the status of their position.

Preventive checks. Malthus's term for measures and activities in which people attempt to prevent births in some manner. See also *Infanticide*, *Malthusianism*, and *Positive checks*.

Primacy of the infrastructure. Marvin Harris's idea that when trying to understand or explain a widespread social practice or belief, one must always begin with an examination of the relationship between infrastructure and the environment. Harris originally called this the principle of infrastructural determinism, a somewhat unfortunate choice of terminology since Harris explicitly recognizes the probabilistic nature of the relationship. Because of misunderstandings and misinterpretations, Harris later renamed this principle the primacy of the infrastructure.

Primary deviance. A deviant act; the violation of a norm.

Primary group. A typically small group of individuals standing in an enduring personal relationship to one another. Examples include parents, spouses, or close friends. See also *Secondary group*.

Primary group structure. In sociocultural materialism, structural groups in which members tend to interact on an intimate basis. These groups perform many functions including regulating production, reproduction, socialization, and education, and enforcing social discipline. Primary and secondary group structure is the basic dichotomy of social structure used in sociocultural materialism; together they encompass all human organisations. Examples include the structure of families, communities, voluntary organizations, and friendship networks. See also *Secondary group structure* and *Structure*.

Primary labour market. The economic position of individuals engaged in occupations that provide secure jobs and good benefits and working conditions. See also *Secondary labour market*.

Primary needs. Karl Marx's term for natural needs that we are born with, including the need for food, water, and shelter. See also *Secondary needs*.

Primary sector. That part of a modern economy based on the extraction of natural resources directly from the natural environment, including such industries as mining and agricultural production.

Private health care. Fee-for-service health care available only to those who pay the full cost of the services.

Privatization. The transfer of public services from government control to private enterprise. Examples in the US include military services and security, education, and

prisons. In Canada widespread privatization occurred in the 1980s and 90s in mining, fisheries, oil and natural gas, transportation (shipping, rail, air, and trucking), and telecommunications.

Profane. Pertaining to elements of society that belong to the ordinary everyday world rather than to the realm of the supernatural. See also *Sacred*.

Profession. An occupation that requires extensive educational qualifications, has high social prestige, and is subject to codes of conduct laid down by central bodies (or professional associations).

Proletariat. A Marxist term for the class of industrial workers who have nothing to sell on the free market except their labour.

Propaganda. Information that is systematically spread by an organization to further its agenda.

Property crime. A crime such as theft that does not physically harm an individual.

Prostitution. The selling of sex acts for economic gain.

Protestant ethic. The belief of certain Protestants, especially Calvinists, that hard work is a Christian duty that builds moral character. Weber theorized that these Protestant values of hard work and thrift as well as beliefs in predestination caused Calvinists (and to a lesser extent other Protestant sects) to search for clues as to whether one was saved. Over time they came to see worldly success as evidence that they were among the elect. This led them to value profit and facilitated the transition to capitalism.

Psychoanalytic theory. A psychological theory positing that the unconscious shapes much of human behaviour.

Psychopath (also called Sociopath). An anti-social personality disorder in which the individual lacks a conscience, engages in behaviour with little consideration of the harm done to others and experiences no feelings of guilt or remorse for the harm that they cause. While they can often mimic human emotions they apparently do not experience any social bond with others.

Psychosis. A serious mental disorder that involves a failure to distinguish between internal and external reality. The affected person cannot function effectively in social life.

Public health care. Government-funded health care services available to all members of the population.

Q

Qualitative research. Relatively unstructured research that is more open to indirect observation and interpretation. The many qualitative techniques include participant observation, content analysis, and focus groups.

Quantitative research. Relatively structured research that focuses on the collection of discrete data and systematic analysis.

R

Race. A socially defined category of people who share genetically transmitted physical characteristics.

Racial profiling. The use of race as the primary criterion to decide whether to subject an individual to more intensive scrutiny by agents of social control such as police or airport security.

Racism. The attribution of inferiority to a particular racial category. Racism is a specific form of prejudice focused on race.

Radical movement. A social movement that seeks fundamental change in the sociocultural system.

Random sample. A sample of a research study population in which each individual in the population has an equal chance of being selected.

Rape. The use of force to compel one individual to engage in a sexual act with another.

Rational choice theory. The idea that humans make cost-benefit analyses before engaging in significant social actions such as having children or going to college.

Rationalism. The reliance on logic, observation, and reason to guide one's behaviour and beliefs.

Rationality. A mental state characterized by coherent thought processes that are goal oriented, and are based on a cost-benefit evaluation.

Rationalization. Weber's term for the process by which modes of precise calculation based on observation and reason increasingly dominate the social world.

Rationalization is a habit of thought that replaces tradition, emotion, and values as

motivators of human conduct. Bureaucracy is the result of rationalization applied to human social organization. See also *Bureaucratization*, and *Intensification*.

Rational-legal authority. Weber's term for authority that is based on law, rules, or regulations. See also *Charismatic authority* and *Traditional authority*.

Reactionary movement. A social movement bent on resisting change or advocating for the return to an earlier order.

Rebellion. Social actions aimed at removing particular rulers or regimes rather than bringing about significant structural changes in a society. In Robert K. Merton's anomie theory, rebellion is one of the five modes of adaptation, characterized by a rejection of both normative goals and the socially sanctioned means of achieving them and the substitution of new goals and means in their stead. See also *Coup d'état* and *Revolution*, as well as *Conformity*, *Innovation*, *Retreatism*, and *Ritualism*.

Recidivism rate. The percentage of ex-convicts who are convicted of new offences after being released from prison.

Reciprocity. A system of the exchange of goods based on social ties.

Reference group. The group that one identifies with and looks to for standards of behaviour, values, beliefs, and attitudes.

Reform movement. A social movement concerned with implementing a limited program of social change. Examples include changing the health care system to provide universal access to care or reasserting government regulation over the actions of corporations.

Regulatory capture. An industry's domination of a regulatory agency through lobbying and staffing the agency with people drawn from the industries being regulated.

Relations of production. Marx's term for the social relations that people enter into through their participation in economic life. Relations of production are socially patterned and independent of the wills and purposes of the individuals involved. The primary distinction between those individuals is whether they are owners of the forces of production or have only their labour to sell.

Relative deprivation. A perceived disadvantage in social or economic standing based on a comparison to others in a society.

Relative poverty. Poverty defined by reference to the living standards of the majority in a given society.

Reliability. The probability that a given measure would be the same if measured again. Not all measures are reliable.

Religion. A set of beliefs involving symbols regarded as sacred, together with ritual practices in which members of the community engage.

Religiosity. A measure of the intensity and importance of religious faith to an individual.

Replication study. A study that is repeated on another sample of subjects at a different time. Such studies are checks on the validity and reliability of research.

Representative democracy. A form of democracy that is based on the existence of two or more political parties and in which voters democratically elect politicians to represent their interests.

Research design. The overall logic and strategy of the research methods of a particular study.

Research methods. The diverse strategies used to gather empirical (factual) material in a systematic way.

Resocialization. The relearning of cultural norms and values by mature individuals, usually in the context of a total institution. See also *Total institution*.

Retirement centre. A city or town to which many people move when they retire.

Retreatism. The escape of society's demands through the rejection of culturally prescribed means and goals. Retreatism is one of the five modes of adaptation in Robert K. Merton's anomie theory. Those who adapt through retreatism are society's dropouts: psychotics, tramps, and substance abusers. See also *Conformity*, *Innovation*, *Rebellion*, and *Ritualism*.

Revolution. The overthrow of a government by the governed; a process of change involving the mobilization of a mass social movement toward radically transforming society. Revolution also refers to a drastic and far-reaching political, economic, social, or technological change (such as the agricultural or industrial revolutions).

Riot. An outbreak of collective violence directed against persons, property, or both.

Rite of passage. A communal ritual that marks the transition from one status to another. Examples include a confirmation, bar mitzvah, or a wedding ceremony.

Ritual. Formalized ceremonial behaviour in which the members of a group or community regularly engage.

Ritualism. The adherence to legitimate means of achieving success even when blocked from reaching goals; that is, going through the motions. Ritualism is one of the five modes of adaptation in Robert K. Merton's anomie theory. See also *Conformity, Innovation, Rebellion, and Retreatism*.

Role. The expected behaviour associated with a given status.

Role conflict. The situation that develops when two or more roles conflict with one another.

Role model. An admired person who is held up as an example to imitate.

Role set. All of the roles that a person occupies at a given time. For example, a woman might be a doctor, daughter, wife, mother, sister, and so on.

Role strain. The result of conflicting expectations within a given role.

Ruling class. The class of people who exercise overwhelming power and control within a society.

S

Sacred. Something set apart from the everyday world that inspires attitudes of awe or reverence among believers. See also *Profane*.

Sampling. Taking a small part of a population in order to draw inferences from the analysis of the sample characteristics to the population as a whole.

Sanction. A reward for conformity or a punishment for nonconformity that reinforces socially approved forms of behaviour.

Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. The theory that people perceive their world through the framework of language. Thus, language determines (or, according to the weak version of the theory, influences) other aspects of culture because it provides the categories through which reality is defined.

Scapegoating. Blaming, punishing, or stigmatizing a relatively powerless individual or group for wrongs that were not of their doing.

Schizophrenia. A serious mental disturbance in which an individual typically has delusions or hallucinations and a distorted sense of reality.

Science. The application of systematic methods of observation and careful logical analysis. Science also refers to the body of knowledge produced by the use of the scientific method.

Scientific management (also called “Taylorism”). A set of ideas developed by Frederick Winslow Taylor that involve simplifying, rationalizing, standardizing, and coordinating the actions of workers to produce maximum efficiency.

Scientific method. Steps taken in the research process to assure the validity, reliability, and generalization of the results. These steps include observation (or gathering the data), hypothesis testing, and analysis of data.

Scientism. An ideology claiming that science and the scientific method alone can provide true knowledge and understanding of the world. Scientism rejects any alleged truths that cannot be explained by that method.

Script. The learned performance of a social role. This concept is used in role theory.

Secondary deviance. The deviant role behaviour that a person adopts as a result of being labelled as deviant.

Secondary group (also called “**secondary organization**” or “**formal organization**”).

A group that is relatively large and whose members interact on the basis of narrow roles rather than on an intimate basis and are usually organized around a specific task. See also *Primary group*.

Secondary group structure. In sociocultural materialism, structural groups in which members tend to interact without any emotional commitment to one another. These organizations are coordinated through bureaucracies. They perform many functions such as regulating production, reproduction, socialization, education, and enforcing social discipline. Examples include governments, parties, military, corporations, educational institutions, media, service and welfare organizations, and professional and labour organizations. Secondary and primary group structure is the basic dichotomy of social structure used in sociocultural materialism; together they encompass all human organisations. See also *Primary group structure* and *Structure*.

Secondary labour market. The economic position of individuals engaged in occupations that provide insecure jobs and poor benefits and conditions of work. See also *Primary labour market*.

Secondary literature. In the social sciences, a scholar's work about another scientist's theory or writings. Textbooks and encyclopedias are secondary rather than primary literature.

Secondary needs. Desires and wants that become important when primary needs are satisfied. Many secondary needs are learned.

Second World. A term now rarely used to refer to the former Soviet Union and the formerly communist industrial societies of Eastern Europe. See also *First World* and *Third World*; see also *Global North* and *Global South*.

Sect. A group that has broken off from an established religion.

Secular. Pertaining to beliefs that are temporal or "of this world" rather than spiritual in nature.

Secularization. The process of decline in the social influence of religion. See also *Rationalization*.

Segregation. The spatial and social separation of people based on ethnicity or race.

Self-consciousness (Self). The individual's awareness of being a distinct social identity, a person separate from others. Human beings are not born with self-consciousness but acquire an awareness of self as a result of early socialization.

Self-fulfilling prophecy. The idea that the mere application of a label changes behaviour and thus provides justification for that label.

Semiperipheral country. A country often in the initial stages of industrialization that contain some manufacturing in those industries that core countries no longer find profitable. Semiperipheral countries are in an intermediate zone between core and peripheral countries, they provides labour and raw materials to core countries and may engage in some exploitation of peripheral countries. See also *Core country* and *Peripheral country*.

Semi-profession. An occupation the members of which are overwhelmingly employed by bureaucracy, although increasing numbers of professionals are employed in such organizations as well. A semi-profession is not often a terminal profession, and semi-professionals lack specialized knowledge such as is needed to practice law or medicine. Semi-professionals lack the power, latitude on the job, and prestige of full professionals, and they also lack the compensation. Examples include teachers, social workers,

nurses, and other occupations dominated by females—and many would say it is this latter characteristic that determines their status as semi-professions.

Serial monogamy. The process of contracting several exclusive sexual relationships in succession. Rather than monogamous marriages it could be said that the dominant pattern in the west is now serial monogamy: marriage, divorce, and remarriage. See also *Monogamy*.

Service workers. A census classification of employees who provide labour related to cleaning, sales, day care, entertainment, and other personal services.**Sex.** The biological categories of female and male.

Sexism. A belief system that involves considering one sex superior to the other, thereby justifying sexual inequalities.

Sex ratio. The number of males per hundred females.

Sex role. The gender-specific role behaviour that a person learns as a member of a particular society.

Sex stratification. The ranking and differential reward system of the sexes.

Sexual harassment. The making of persistent unwanted sexual advances (physical or verbal) by one individual toward another within a relationship where the individuals have unequal power (such as an employer and employee).

Sexual orientation. An individual's physical or romantic attraction toward the opposite sex (heterosexual), one's own sex (homosexual), or both sexes (bisexual). Research suggests that such orientation may well exist on a continuum.

Sexual revolution. The widespread change in sexual behaviour and attitudes among men and women in the Western world during the twentieth century. The sexual revolution is most commonly associated with the 1960s, although some claim it began in the 1920s.

Sick role. Patterns of behaviour expected of one who is sick. This role often exempts the person from his or her normal role obligations.

Significant other. A person with whom one has an intimate relationship.

Situational deviance. Acts that are only defined as deviant in particular contexts.

Social action. Behaviour that is meaningful to the actor and/or to the observer.

Social capital. The social network of influence and support that people have.

Social change. Alteration in social structures or culture over time.

Social class. A socioeconomic category based on differences between groups of individuals that create differences in their life chances and power.

Social construction. A theoretical perspective that explains most social behaviours as created and learned within a cultural, social, and historical context.

Social control. The set of positive and negative sanctions that are used by a group to bring individual members into compliance with its norms and values. See also *Sanctions*.

Social control agents. Those who regulate and enforce social control within an organization or sociocultural system. In society at large, this includes the criminal justice and mental health systems.

Social Darwinism. An early and now largely discredited view of social evolution emphasizing the importance of "survival of the fittest" or the struggle between individuals, groups, or societies as the motor of development. Social Darwinism became widely popular in the latter half of the nineteenth century and was often used to justify existing inequalities.

Social differentiation. The process through which different statuses develop within a group or a society.

Social disintegration. The process of a society losing coherence and declining over time. Durkheim attributed this to the weakening of the collective conscience caused by the increasing division of labour.

Social disorganization. A structural condition of society caused by rapid change in social institutions, norms, and values.

Social environment. The contacts of a sociocultural system with other societies.

Social evolution. Theories of cumulative sociocultural change that generally hold that human societies move from simple to complex forms of organization.

Social facts. Social forces or patterns external to the individual.

Social forces. The elements of society and social organizations that exert an influence on individual human behaviour.

Social group. Two or more individuals who interact in systematic ways with one another and share a high degree of common identity. Social groups may range in size from dyads to large-scale societies.

Social institution. A major structural entity in a sociocultural system that addresses a basic need of the system. Social institutions involve fixed modes of behaviour backed by strong norms and sanctions that tend to be followed by most members of a society.

Social interaction. Meaningful behaviour between two actors.

Socialism. An economic system in which the means of production and distribution of goods and services are publicly owned.

Social issue. A problem that is the result of the institutional structure in a society. Social issues usually affect large numbers of people and are experienced as individual problems. Examples in modern Western society include divorce, poverty, and immigration.

Socialization. The lifelong process through which humans develop an awareness of social norms and values, and achieve a distinct sense of self.

Social justice. The fair administration of laws without regard to ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, religion, or class.

Social mobility. Movement between different social positions within a stratified system.

Social movement. A large informal grouping of people who are organized to bring about or to block a change in the sociocultural system.

Social network. The web of relationships between individuals or groups.

Social organization. The pattern of relationships within a group or society.

Social reproduction. The process that perpetuates characteristics of social structure over periods of time. See also *Agency of socialization*.

Social role. The expected patterned behaviour of an individual occupying a particular status position.

Social stratification. Structured inequalities in life chances between groups in society. These inequalities are relatively fixed; individuals within each broad group have similar attitudes, beliefs, and backgrounds.

Social structure. The pattern of human relationships formed by human groups and institutions within a given society.

Societal reaction theory. See *Labelling theory*.

Society. A group of people who live in a particular territory, are subject to a common system of political authority, and share a common culture.

Sociobiology. An approach that attempts to explain the social behaviour of humans in terms of biological principles.

Sociocultural materialism. A variant of cultural materialism that emphasizes the relationship between intensification, bureaucratization, and rationalization as well as feedback loops from structural and cultural elements to the material infrastructure of a society. See also *Cultural materialism*.

Sociocultural system. Material, structural, and cultural elements that make up the total system.

Socioeconomic status (SES). A frequently used measure of class determined by some combination of income, occupational prestige, and years of education.

Sociological imagination. C. Wright Mills's term for the application of imaginative thought to the asking and answering of sociological questions; the ability to see the effects of social patterns and history on human behaviour.

Sociology. The study of human behaviour and societies, with particular emphasis on the industrialized world.

Sociopath. See *Psychopath*.

Solid waste. The accumulation of noxious material substances. See also *Depletion, Environment, and Intensification*.

Specialization. An occupation that concentrates upon a small part of the whole enterprise. Sociologists may specialize in medical sociology, stratification, or over thirty other specializations within the discipline.

Species. A distinct population of individuals that have common characteristics, interbreed, and are not capable of reproducing with other populations of organisms.

Split labour market. A situation in which one group of labourers (usually defined by race, sex, or ethnicity) is routinely paid less than other groups.

Standing army. A full-time professional army.

State. A given territory ruled by government institutions whose authority is backed by law and the ability to use force.

Stateless society. A society that lacks formal institutions of government.

State society. A society that possesses a formal apparatus of government.

Statics. Social equilibrium or the absence of change.

Status. A social position within a society. Status can also refer to the social honour or prestige that a particular individual or group is accorded by other members of a society.

Status attainment. The process through which people arrive at a given position within a stratified system.

Status inconsistency. Gerhard Lenski's term for the situation when an individual holds two status positions of very different prestige.

Status offence. An act that is illegal for juveniles but not for adults (such as running away from home or engaging in sexual activities).

Status quo. The existing state; the way things currently exist.

Status set. All of the statuses held by an individual at a given time.

Stepfamily. See *Blended family*.

Stereotype. A rigid and inflexible image of the characteristics a group. Stereotypes attribute these characteristics to all individuals belonging to that group.

Stigma. A symbol (or a negative social label) of disgrace that affects a person's social identity.

Stratification. Structured inequalities in life chances between groups in society.

Straw man. An argument based on misrepresentation of an opponent's position. To "attack a straw man" is to create the illusion of having refuted a proposition by replacing it with a superficially similar proposition (the "straw man") and then refuting it without ever having dealt with the original position.

Strike. A temporary work stoppage by a group of employees.

Structural strain theory. See *Anomie theory*.

Structural unemployment. Unemployment related to changes in the composition of industries that make up an economy. This results in workers whose skills and training have become obsolete and who have little chance of ever finding employment at comparable paying jobs.

Structure. In sociology, all human institutions, groups, and organizations.

Subculture. A group within the broader society that has values, norms, and lifestyle distinct from those of the majority.

Substantive rationality. Weber's term for rationality exercised within a context of human values, traditions, and emotions. See also *Formal rationality*.

Suburbanization. The development of areas of housing outside the political boundaries of cities.

Sui generis. Of its own kind or in a class of its own.

Superego. Freud's term for the part of the self that reflects moral social standards internalized by the individual.

Superstructure. In sociocultural materialism, the symbolic universe—the shared meanings, ideas, beliefs, values, and ideologies that people associate with the physical and social world. The superstructure can be divided into cultural and mental components. See also *Cultural superstructure* and *Mental superstructure*.

Surplus value. Marx's term for the value of an individual's labour power (calculated by the amount of value the labour contributes to the product minus the amount of money paid to the worker by the capitalist). The conventional name for this difference is *profit*. Thus, the whole capitalist system is based on "expropriating" surplus value (or stealing labour) from workers.

Surveillance. The monitoring of people's activities in order to ensure compliant behaviour. Modern techniques of surveillance include not only video cameras and microphones but also a whole range of computer surveillance.

Survey. A collection of data done systematically, often through a questionnaire or interview.

Sweatshop. A workplace that violates one or more standards of workplace safety, labour laws, or worker compensation. Such shops now thrive in many peripheral countries.

Symbol. One item used to meaningfully represent another, such as a flag that represents a nation.

Symbolic interaction. In sociology, a theoretical approach that focuses on social reality as constructed through the daily interaction of individuals and that places strong

emphasis on the role of symbols (gestures, signs, and language) as core elements of this interaction.

Synthesis. The combining of elements from separate sources to produce a coherent whole. Much of macro social theory consists of the synthesis of the ideas and insights of many theorists.

T

Taboo. A sociocultural prohibition on some act, person, place, animal, or plant. Public knowledge of the violation of a taboo often results in severe sanctions.

Taylorism. See *Scientific management*.

Technical specialist. An individual who specializes in a highly technical field.

Technology. The application of logic, reason, and knowledge to the problems of exploiting raw materials from the environment. Social technologies employ the same thought processes in addressing problems of human organization. Technology involves the creation of both material instruments (such as machines) used in human interaction with nature and social instruments (such as bureaucracy) used in human organization. See also *Rationalization*.

Terrorism. The use of violence or the threat of violence to achieve political, social, or economic ends. Although many restrict the term to only those acts committed by non-governmental groups, state terrorism is also a major factor in the social world.

Tertiary sector. That part of an economy that provides services (nursing care, psychological counseling, and so forth) engaged in by both private and government entities.

Theory. A summary statement of a general principle that explains regularly observed events.

Third world. . A term formerly used to refer to countries that did not number among the industrialized nations of the First World and were also not aligned with the Soviet bloc (the so-called Second World). Because these countries were generally poor, relatively unindustrialized nations, the term "Third World" came to designate the world's underprivileged. See *Global South*; see also *First World* and *Second World*.

Total institution. An organization in which individuals are isolated for long periods of time as their lives are controlled and regulated by the administration of the organization. Examples include prisons, mental hospitals, or army boot camps. See also *Resocialization*.

Totalitarianism. A form of government in which an authoritarian government attempts to regulate every aspect of sociocultural life.

Total war. Warfare in which all the resources of the modern state are committed, including a large proportion of the population (both directly and indirectly), all of the armed forces, and a large proportion of the industrial sector of the society. See also *Industrialization of war*.

Totem. A symbol associated with a group that is given sacred significance and is often used as an identifying insignia.

Totemism. A system of religious belief studied by Durkheim that attributes sacred qualities to a particular type of animal or plant.

Tracking. Grouping students in educational institutions based upon test scores predicting their abilities.

Trading network. A pattern of economic exchange between companies or countries.

Traditional action. Action motivated by custom or tradition; one of Weber's four action types. See also *Affective action*, *Wertrational*, and *Zweckrational*.

Traditional authority. Weber's term for authority based on long-established custom or tradition. See also *Charismatic authority* and *Rational-legal authority*.

Traditional state. A society in which the production base is agriculture or the herding of animals. See also *Agrarian society* and *Herding society*.

Transformative movement. A social movement whose aim is to produce major social change in a society.

Transitional class. Marx's term for an economic class in which previous relations of production linger on in the beginning stages of new relations of production. Examples include peasants or landowners of a feudal system that has become capitalist.

Transnational corporation. See *Multinational corporation*.

Triad. A group of three. Such groups tend to separate into a dyad against one (referred to as "triadic separation").

Tribe. A social group organized largely on the basis of clan and kinship whose members share a common culture and language, and existing apart from states.

Tribute. A regular payment of money or goods from a subjugated nation-state to the conqueror nation. At times, this payment is for protection or in lieu of being subjugated.

U

Unconscious. Freud's term for motives and ideas unavailable to the conscious mind of the individual.

Underclass. A class of individuals in mature industrial societies situated at the bottom of the class system who have been systematically excluded from participation in economic life. The underclass is normally composed of people from ethnic or minority groups.

Underemployment. Employment at a job below one's skill or educational level.

Unemployment rate. A government's measure of those who are not working but are actively seeking work.

Unilinear evolution. A largely discredited view of social evolution according to which all societies pass through the same stages of development. Unilinear evolution is often used in straw man arguments to discredit the idea of social evolution.

Unintended consequence. A significant effect of social action on the total sociocultural system (or other parts of that system) that was neither intended nor foreseen by the participants. Robert K. Merton developed the concepts of "latent function," "manifest function," and "dysfunction" to analyze more effectively these unintended consequences.

Union. A social organization set up to represent the worker's interests in both the workplace and in the broader society.

Upper class. A social class roughly composed of the more affluent members of society, especially those who have great wealth, have control over businesses, or hold large numbers of stocks and shares.

Urban ecology. An analysis of urban life that examines the relationship between the city and its physical surroundings. Urban ecology is based on an analogy with the adjustment of plants and organisms to their physical environment.

Urbanism. The extent to which a community has the characteristics of city life.

Urbanization. The increasing concentration of the human population into cities from rural areas.

Urban renewal. Governmental programs that encourage the renovation of deteriorating city neighbourhoods through the renovation or destruction of old buildings and the construction of new ones.

Utilitarian organization. A group organized around a specific purpose such as to make money or to give charity.

V

Validity. The degree to which the measurement of a variable actually reflects the intended concept. For example, the validity of IQ tests in measuring intelligence is questioned by many social scientists.

Values. Culturally defined standards held by human individuals or groups about what is desirable, proper, beautiful, good, or bad. Values serve as broad guidelines for social life.

Variable. A characteristic that varies in value or magnitude and along which an object, individual, or group may be categorized. Examples include income and age.

Verstehen. A German term that means to understand, perceive, know, and comprehend the nature and significance of a phenomenon; to grasp or comprehend the meaning intended or expressed by another. Weber used the term to refer to the social scientist's attempt to understand both the intention and the context of human action.

Vertical mobility. Movement up or down a social stratification system. See also *Stratification*.

Vested interest. An expectation of private gain that often underlies the expressed interest in a public issue.

Victimless crime. Violation of law in which no person aside from the offender is victimized. Examples include using illegal drugs or gambling illegally.

Vital statistics. Statistical information about births, deaths, marriages, immigration, and other population characteristics.

Voluntary organization (also called “non-profit organization”). A group that is formed to achieve personal or socially worthwhile goals other than monetary profit.

W

Wealth. Accumulated money and material possessions controlled by an individual, group, or organization.

Wealthfare. Government aid to the upper and middle classes. Often, this aid is disguised in the form of tax breaks (e.g., a deduction for interest on home mortgages) or subsidized services (e.g., higher education).

Welfare. Government aid (in the form of services and money) to the poor.

Welfare state. A government system that provides a range of human services for its citizens.

Wertrational. Weber’s term that refers to value-oriented rationality. The value may come from an ethical, religious, philosophical or even holistic context. While the goal is not rationally "chosen," the means used to attain the goal are rational in character.

White-collar. Pertaining to non-manual occupations such as administrative or professional jobs. The growth of bureaucracy has caused the proliferation of white-collar occupations, which profoundly affects the values and perceptions of the people who hold these jobs. C. Wright Mills wrote extensively about this class of worker.

White-collar crime. Criminal activities carried out by white-collar or professional workers in the course of their jobs.

Will. An id-like nature that is focused on the individual satisfaction of all wants and desires; the first and “lower” part of Durkheim’s dual conception of human nature. Centred on the body, these egoistic drives and desires recognize no interests but those of the individual actor, pushing the individual to satisfy all wants and desires even at the expense of the will of others. The will knows no boundaries and is a “tyranny of passions imposed by nature” (Mestrovic, [1988]1993, 54); it is the root of all human wickedness and evil and the source of immorality.

Working class. A social class of industrial societies broadly composed of people involved in manual occupations. Many of these jobs are unskilled and poorly paid and provide few benefits and little job security.

World economy. A single division of labour that spans multiple cultures. Unlike a world empire, a world economy does not have a unified political system. Capitalism, according to Immanuel Wallerstein, is a world economy.

World-systems theory. Immanuel Wallerstein's theoretical approach that analyzes societies in terms of their position within global economic systems. According to Wallerstein, the capitalist world-system now determines the relationships among nation states.

X

Xenophobia. The fear and/or hatred of foreigners.

Y

Year dating conventions. Using the birth of Christ as a reference point, the dating system of B.C. (Before Christ) and A.D. (*Anno Domini* or Medieval Latin for “in the year of the Lord”) have been used in the West since the Middle Ages. In deference to the non-Christian world many now use the designation B.C.E. (Before the Common Era or Before the Current Era) and C.E. (Common Era). B.C. dates = BCE dates; AD dates = CE dates. BP (Before Present) is a dating system widely used in Anthropology, YA (Years Ago) less often. 4,000 BP = 4,000 YA = 2,000 BCE = 2,000 BC.

Z

Zero population growth (ZPG). Population stability achieved when each woman has no more than two children.

Zweckrational. Rational action in relation to a goal; one of Weber's four action types. See also *Affective action*, *Wertrational*, *Traditional action*, and *Rationalization*.