

GLOSSARY

A

Absolute monarchy

A government in which a monarch has absolute or unmitigated power

Achieved status

The status a person chooses

Acting crowd

A crowd of people focused on a specific action or goal

Activity theory

The theory that individuals enjoy old age and feel satisfied by maintaining activities and finding replacements for the statuses and roles left behind as they age

Adult child households

A household that includes at least one parent living with one son or daughter 18 or older and no minor children or other family members

Age stratification theory

The theory that members of society are stratified by age, just as they are stratified by other social categories

Ageism

Discrimination based on age

Agenda

A motive or plan

Aggregate

A collection of people who are in the same place at the same time but don't interact or share a sense of identity

Agricultural societies

Societies that rely on farming as a way of life

Alienation

An individual's isolation from their society, work, and sense of self

Alternative movement

A social movement focused on self-improvement and limited, specific changes to individual beliefs and behaviors

Amalgamation

The process of a minority group and a majority group combining to form a new group

Ambilineal descent

A type of unilateral descent that follows either the father's or mother's side exclusively

Anarchy

The absence of any organized government

Animism

Belief in the divinity of nonhuman beings, like animals, plants, and other elements of the natural world

Anomie

A situation in which society no longer has the support of a firm collective consciousness

Anticipatory socialization

The way we prepare for future life roles

Antipositivism

The view that social researchers should strive for subjectivity as they work to represent social processes, cultural norms, and societal values

Anxiety disorder

Feelings of worry and fearfulness that last for months at a time

APA style

A set of formatting and citation standards created by the American Psychological Association

Arithmetic mean

The sum of all data values divided by the number of data points

Ascribed status

The status outside an individual's control

Assembling perspective

A theory that credits individuals in crowds as behaving as rational thinkers and views crowds as engaging in purposeful behavior and collective action

Assimilation

The process of a minority taking on the characteristics of the dominant group

Asylum-seeker

Someone whose claim to refugee status has not been validated

Atheism

Belief in no deities

Audience

The person or people who receive and interpret an author's message

Authoritarian leader

A leader who issues orders and assigns tasks

Authority

Power that people accept because it comes from a source that is perceived as legitimate

Automation

When a task or job done by a human is replaced by technology

B

Bar graph

A chart of categorical data in which the height of the bar represents the amount of data in each category

Bartering

The process of exchanging one form of good or service for another

Belief

A tenet or conviction that people hold to be true

Bias

A person's opinions and preferences

Bigamy

The act of entering into marriage while still married to another person

Bilateral descent

The tracing of kinship through both parents' ancestral lines

Bimodal

When two values occur equally often and more than any other value in a data set

Biological determinism

The belief that men and women behave differently due to inherent sex differences related to their biology

Block quotation

A quotation that is set apart from surrounding text and has special formatting requirements (depending on the research style)

Bourgeoisie

The owners of the means of production in a society

Bureaucracy

A formal organization characterized by a hierarchy of authority, a clear division of labor, explicit rules, and impersonality

C**Capital flight**

The movement (flight) of capital from one nation to another, via jobs and resources

Capitalism

An economic system characterized by private ownership of goods, services, and production and an incentive to produce profit

Career inheritance

The practice of children entering the same or similar occupations as their parents

Carrying capacity

The maximum amount of life that can be sustained by the resources within a given area

Case study

In-depth analysis of a single event, situation, or individual

Caste system

A system in which people are born into a social standing that they will retain their entire lives

Casual crowd

A crowd of people who share close proximity without really interacting

Category

People who share similar characteristics but who are not connected in any way

Charismatic authority

Power legitimized on the basis of a leader's personal qualities

Chattel slavery

A form of slavery in which a person and their offspring are owned and treated as property

Cisgender

A person whose gender identity aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth

Class

A group of people who share a common social status based on factors like wealth, income, education, and occupation

Class consciousness

The awareness of one's rank in society

Class system

Social standing based on social factors and individual accomplishments

Class traits

The typical behaviors, customs, and norms that define each class (also called class markers)

Class width

The possible number of distinct data points in a class within a grouped frequency distribution

Clear division of labor

The fact that each individual in a bureaucracy has a specialized task to perform

Climate change

Long-term temperature and climate shifts due to human activity

Code of ethics

A set of guidelines that the American Sociological Association has established to foster ethical research and professionally responsible scholarship in sociology

Coercive organization

An organization that people do not voluntarily join

Cohabitation

The act of a couple sharing a residence while they are not married

Cohort

A group of people who share a statistical or demographic trait

Collective behavior

A noninstitutionalized activity in which multiple people voluntarily engage

Collective conscience

The communal beliefs, morals, and attitudes of a society

Color-avoidance racism

Avoidance of racial language on the assumption that racism is no longer an issue; also called color-blind racism

Colorism

A belief that some skin tones are superior or inferior to others within the same racial group

Commodification

The changing of something not generally thought of as a commodity into something that can be bought and sold in a marketplace

Concentric zone model

A model of human ecology that views cities as a series of circular rings or zones

Confirmation bias

The tendency to favor evidence that seems to support an existing belief or value

Conflict of interest

When someone has a personal stake in a topic that affects their purpose

Conformity

The extent to which an individual complies with group or societal norms

Conspicuous consumption

The act of buying and using products to make a statement about social standing

Constitutional monarchy

A national government that recognizes monarchs but requires them to abide by the laws of a constitution

Constructivism

An extension of symbolic interaction theory which proposes that reality is what humans cognitively construct it to be

Content analysis

Applying a systematic approach to record and value information gleaned from secondary data as it relates to the study at hand

Contested illnesses

Illnesses that are questioned or considered questionable by some medical professionals

Context

How and when information is presented

Continuity theory

The theory that the elderly make specific choices to maintain consistency in internal and external structures, remaining active and involved throughout their elder years

Control theory

A theory that social control is directly affected by the strength of social bonds and that deviance results from a feeling of disconnection from society

Conventional crowd

A crowd of people who gather for a regularly scheduled event

Convergence theory

The theory of how and why societies move toward similarity over time as their economies develop

Core nations

Dominant capitalist countries

Cornucopian theory

A theory that asserts human ingenuity will rise to the challenge of providing adequate resources for a growing population

Corporate crime

Crime committed by white-collar workers in a business environment

Corrections system

The system tasked with supervising individuals who have been arrested, convicted, or sentenced for criminal offenses

Correlation

When a change in one variable coincides with a change in another variable but does not necessarily indicate causation

Counterculture

A group that rejects and opposes society's widely accepted cultural patterns

Court

A system that has the authority to make decisions based on law

Credentialism

The emphasis on certificates or degrees to show that a person has a certain skill, level of education, or job qualification

Credibility

What makes someone or something believable

Crime

Behavior that violates official law and is punishable through formal sanctions

Criminal justice system

An organization that exists to enforce a legal code

Crowd

A fairly large number of people who share close proximity

Crowdsourcing

The process of obtaining needed services, ideas, or content by soliciting contributions from a large group of people

Cult

A new religious group, typically small, secretive, and highly controlling of members, with a charismatic leader

Cultural capital

Cultural knowledge that serves (metaphorically) as currency to help someone navigate a culture

Cultural imperialism

The deliberate imposition of one's own cultural values on another culture

Cultural racism

When a society's collective beliefs, values, and practices assume the inferiority of certain racial groups

Cultural relativism

The practice of assessing a culture by its own standards and not in comparison to another culture

Cultural transmission

The way people learn the values, beliefs, and social norms of their culture

Cultural universal

A pattern or trait that is globally common to all societies

Culture

Shared beliefs, values, and practices

Culture lag

The gap of time between the introduction of material culture and nonmaterial culture's acceptance of it

Culture of prejudice

The theory that prejudice is embedded in culture

Culture shock

An experience of personal disorientation when confronted with an unfamiliar way of life

Cyberfeminism

The application to and promotion of feminism online

D**Data class**

A grouping or category of data

Davis-Moore thesis

An argument for the necessity of some social stratification

Debt accumulation

The buildup of external debt, wherein countries borrow money from other nations to fund their expansion or growth goals

Debt bondage

The act of people pledging themselves as servants in exchange for basic necessities, often being paid too little to buy their freedom

Degradation ceremony

The process by which new members of a total institution lose aspects of their old identities and are given new ones

Deindustrialization

The loss of industrial production, usually to peripheral and semi-peripheral nations, where costs are lower

Demedicalization

The process by which something that was previously considered a sickness is redefined as a nonmedical aspect of life

Democracy

A form of government that provides all citizens with an equal voice or vote in determining state policy

Democratic leader

A leader who encourages group participation and consensus-building before moving into action

Demographic transition theory

A theory that describes four stages of population growth, following patterns that connect birth and death rates with stages of industrial development

Demography

The study of population

Denomination

A large, mainstream religion that is not sponsored by the state

Dependency ratio

The number of nonproductive versus productive citizens

Dependency theory

The theory that global inequality is due to core nations exploiting peripheral and semi-peripheral nations

Dependent variable

A variable that is changed by another variable

Design patent

A patent granted when someone has invented a new and original design for a manufactured product

Deviance

A violation of contextual, cultural, or social norms

Diagnostic framing

When a social problem is stated in a clear, easily understood manner

Dictatorship

A form of government in which a single person (or a very small group) wields complete and absolute authority over a government or populace after the dictator rises to power, usually through economic or military might

Differential association theory

A theory that states individuals learn deviant behavior from those close to them who provide models of and opportunities for deviance

Diffusion

The spread of material and nonmaterial culture from one culture to another

Digital divide

The uneven access to technology due to race/ethnicity, class, or geography

Disability

A social limitation that reduces a person's ability to perform everyday tasks

Discovery

A thing or idea found from what already exists

Discrimination

Prejudiced action against a group of people

Disengagement theory

The theory that withdrawing from society and social relationships is a natural part of aging

Distribution

A way to describe the structure of a particular data set or population

Doing gender

The performance of roles based upon the gender assigned to us by society and, in turn, ourselves

Dominant group

A group of people who have more power in a society than any of the subordinate groups

Double standard

A concept that prohibits premarital sexual intercourse for women but allows it for men

Downward mobility

A lowering of one's social class

Dramaturgical analysis

A sociological technique for viewing society through the metaphor of theatrical performance

Dyad

A two-member group

Dynamic equilibrium

A stable state in which all parts of a healthy society work together properly

Dysfunction

A social pattern that has undesirable consequences for the operation of society

E**Ecclesia**

A majority religion that is officially recognized

Economy

The social institution through which a society's resources (goods and services) are managed

Education

A social institution through which a society's children are taught basic academic knowledge, learning skills, and cultural norms

Elder abuse

The act of a caretaker intentionally depriving an older person of care or harming them

Emergent norm theory

A perspective that emphasizes the importance of social norms in crowd behavior

Emigration

Movement out of an area to another place of permanent residence

Empirical evidence

Evidence that comes from direct experience, scientifically gathered data, or experimentation

Endogamous marriage

Unions of people within the same social category

Environmental racism

The burdening of economically and socially disadvantaged communities with a disproportionate share of environmental hazards

Environmental sociology

A sociological subfield that studies the relationship between humans and the environment

E-readiness

The ability to sort through, interpret, and process digital knowledge

Established sect

A sect that lasts but does not become a denomination

Ethnicity

Shared culture, which may include heritage, language, religion, and more

Ethnocentrism

The practice of evaluating another culture according to the standards of one's own culture

Ethnography

Observing a complete social setting and all that it entails

Evidence

A piece of information, also called a supporting detail, that is used to support a main idea

Evolutionary model of technological change

When a breakthrough in one form of technology leads to a number of variations from which a prototype emerges, followed by a period of slight adjustments to the technology, interrupted by a breakthrough

E-waste

Broken, obsolete, and worn-out electronics

Exchange theory

The theory that people experience increased dependence as they age and must increasingly submit to the will of others

Exogamous marriage

Unions of spouses from different social categories

Experiment

The testing of a hypothesis under controlled conditions

Explicit rules

The types of rules in a bureaucracy; rules that are outlined, recorded, and standardized

Expressive crowd

A crowd of people who share opportunities to express emotions

Expressive function

A group function that serves an emotional need

Expressive leader

A leader who is concerned with process and ensuring everyone's emotional well-being

Expulsion

When a dominant group forces a subordinate group to leave a certain area

Extended family

A household that includes at least one parent and child as well as other relatives like grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins

Extreme poverty

Being barely able or unable to afford basic necessities

Exurbs

Communities that arise farther out than the suburbs and are typically populated by residents of high socioeconomic status

F**Fact**

A piece of information that can be proven and generally agreed upon as true

False consciousness

A person's beliefs and ideology that are in conflict with their best interests

Family

Socially recognized groups of individuals who may be joined by blood, marriage, or adoption and who form an emotional connection and an economic unit of society

Family life course

A sociological model of family that sees the progression of events as fluid rather than as occurring in strict stages

Family life cycle

A set of predictable steps and patterns families experience over time

Family of orientation

The family into which a person is born

Family of procreation

A family that is formed through marriage

Fertility rate

A measure noting the actual number of children born

Feudal societies

Societies that operate on a strict hierarchical system of power based around land ownership and protection

Field research

Gathering data from a natural environment without doing a lab experiment or survey

Figuration

The process of simultaneously analyzing the behavior of an individual and the society that shapes the behavior

Filial piety

Deference and respect to parents and ancestors

First world

A term from the Cold War era that is used to describe industrialized capitalist democracies

Flash mob

A large group of people who gather publicly in a seemingly spontaneous activity for a limited amount of time

Folkway

Direct, appropriate behavior in the day-to-day practices and expressions of a culture

Formal education

Learning academic facts and concepts through an established curriculum

Formal norms

Established, written rules

Formal organization

A large, impersonal organization

Formal sanction

A sanction that is officially recognized and enforced

Fourth world

A term that describes stigmatized minority groups who have no voice or representation on the world stage

Frame alignment process

Using bridging, amplification, extension, and transformation as an ongoing and intentional means of recruiting participants in a movement

Frequency distribution

A count of every member of a data set and how often each value occurs

Function

The part that a recurrent activity plays in the social life as a whole and the contribution it makes to structural continuity

G**Gatekeeping**

The sorting process by which thousands of possible messages are shaped into a mass media-appropriate form and reduced to a manageable amount

Gender

A social classification based on a person's identity, presentation of self, behavior, and interaction with others

Gender binary

The assumption that sex and gender are aligned and classified into two distinct, opposite, and disconnected forms, usually masculine and feminine

Gender dysphoria

A diagnosis describing the discrepancy between an individual's gender identity and sex assigned at birth

Gender expression

How a person externally communicates their gender identity, including physical appearance and behavior

Gender fluidity

When a person's gender identity or expression is not static and can fluctuate

Gender identity

A person's deeply held internal perception of their gender

Gender nonbinary

When a person's gender identity does not fit inside traditional male or female categories

Gender nonconforming

When a person's gender identity does not fit inside traditional male or female categories

Gender norm

A behavior or attribute that society attributes to a particular sex

Gender spectrum

A conception of gender as a continuum that includes male and female without establishing them as absolutes or polar opposites

Genderqueer

People who do not identify as a man or woman or whose identity lies outside the traditional gender binary of male and female. Some people use genderqueer, gender nonconforming, and non-binary interchangeably.

Generalized other

The organized and generalized attitude of a social group

Genocide

The deliberate annihilation of a targeted (usually subordinate) group

Gentrification

The entry of upper- and middle-class residents to city areas or communities that have been historically less affluent

Geriatrics

A medical specialty focusing on the elderly

Gerontocracy

A type of social structure wherein the power is held by a society's oldest members

Gerontology

A field of science that studies the process and challenges of aging

Gerotranscendence

The idea that as people age, they transcend limited views of life held in earlier years

Gini coefficient

A measure of income inequality between countries using a 100-point scale, in which 1 represents complete equality and 100 represents the highest possible inequality

Global assembly lines

The practice of assembling a product through multiple international transactions

Global commodity chains

Internationally integrated economic links that connect workers and corporations for the purpose of manufacture and marketing

Global feminization of poverty

A pattern that occurs when women bear a disproportionate percentage of the burden of poverty

Global inequality

The concentration of resources among a wealthy minority within core nations

Global stratification

The unequal distribution of resources among countries

Globalization

The process of integrating governments, cultures, and financial markets through international trade into a single world market

Grief

A psychological, emotional, and social response to the feelings of loss that accompany death or a similar event

Gross national income (GNI)

The income of a nation calculated based on goods and services produced, plus income earned by citizens and corporations headquartered in that country

Group

Any collection of at least two people who interact with some frequency and share some sense of aligned identity

Grouped frequency distribution

When data is grouped into different categories, called classes, that have the same width and do not overlap

H**Habitualization**

The idea that society is constructed by us and those before us and followed like a habit

Hate crime

An attack based on a person's characteristics

Hawthorne effect

When study subjects behave in a certain manner due to their awareness of being observed by a researcher

Heteronormativity

The belief that heterosexuality, predicated on the gender binary, is the default, preferred, or normal mode of sexual orientation

Heterosexism

An ideology and set of institutional practices that privilege heterosexuals and heterosexuality over other sexual orientations

Hidden curriculum

The informal teaching done in schools that socializes children to societal norms

Hierarchy of authority

A clear chain of command found in a bureaucracy

High culture

The cultural patterns of a society's elite

Histogram

A type of bar graph that displays the frequency distribution of numerical classes; the bars represent classes of consecutive numbers, and the bar heights represent frequencies of classes

Historical racism

Current economic inequality or social disparity caused by past racism

Homophobia

An extreme or irrational aversion to lesbian, gay, and bisexual people

Horticultural societies

Societies based around the cultivation of plants

Hospice

Health care that treats terminally ill people at the end of life by providing comfort during the dying process

Human ecology

A functional perspective that analyzes the relationship between people and their physical environment, both constructed and natural

Hunter-gatherer societies

Societies that depend on hunting wild animals and gathering uncultivated plants for survival

Hypothesis

A testable educated guess about predicted outcomes between two or more variables

Ideal culture

The standards a society would like to embrace and live up to

I**Immigration**

Movement into an area to take up permanent residence

Impairment

A physical limitation that a less able person faces

Impersonality

The removal of personal feelings from a professional situation

Implicit bias

The process of unconsciously associating stereotypes with categories of people

Income

The money a person earns from work or investments

Indentured servitude

The state of being committed to work for someone else for a specific period of time, typically without formal wages

Independent variable

A variable that causes changes in a dependent variable

Individual mandate

A provision in the Affordable Care Act that required everyone to have insurance coverage by 2014 or pay a penalty

Industrial societies

Societies characterized by a reliance on mechanized labor to create material goods

Informal education

Learning cultural values, norms, and expected behaviors through participation in a society

Informal norms

Casual behaviors that are generally and widely conformed to

Informal sanction

A sanction that occurs in a face-to-face interaction

Information literacy

The ability to find, evaluate, and use sources for a particular purpose

Information societies

Societies based on the production of nonmaterial goods and services

In-group

A group a person belongs to and feels is an integral part of his identity

Innovation

A new object or idea introduced to culture for the first time

Institutional discrimination

Current economic inequality or social disparity caused by past racism

Institutionalization

The act of implanting a convention or norm into society

Instrumental function

Being oriented toward a task or goal

Instrumental leader

A leader who is goal oriented with a primary focus on accomplishing tasks

Intergenerational mobility

A difference in social class between different generations of a family

Internally displaced person

Someone who fled their home while remaining inside the country's borders

Interpersonal racism

Prejudice and discrimination, both conscious and unconscious, that occur between individuals

Interpretive framework

A sociological research approach that seeks in-depth understanding of a topic or subject through observation or interaction; this approach is not based on hypothesis testing

Intersectionality

A theoretical framework that suggests social categories create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination and privilege

Intersex

A variety of conditions in which a person is born with reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't fit the typical definitions of female or male

Interview

A one-on-one conversation between the researcher and the subject

In-text citation

A brief note or marker that is inserted near specific information in a text and indicates the original source

Intimate partner violence (IPV)

Violence that occurs between individuals who maintain a romantic or sexual relationship

Intragenerational mobility

A difference in social class between different members of the same generation

Invention

The combination of existing realities into new forms

Iron cage

A situation in which an individual is trapped by social institutions

Iron law of oligarchy

The theory that an organization is ruled by a few elites rather than through collaboration

J**Jail**

A corrections facility intended for temporary confinement and usually run at the local level

K**Kinship**

A person's traceable ancestry (by blood, marriage, and/or adoption)

Knowledge gap

The gap in information that builds as groups grow up without access to technology

L**Labeling theory**

The theory that deviant behavior is determined and labeled by members of society

Laissez-faire leader

A hands-off leader who allows members of the group to make their own decisions

Language

A symbolic system of communication

Latent function

The unrecognized or unintended consequence of a social process

Law

A rule adopted and enforced by a political authority

Leadership function

The main focus or goal of a leader

Leadership style

The style a leader uses to achieve goals or elicit action from group members

Legal code

A system for maintaining formal social control through laws

Legitimation

In the context of sickness, the act of a physician certifying that an illness is genuine

Liberation theology

The use of a church to promote social change via the political arena

Life course

The period from birth to death, including a sequence of predictable life events

Life expectancy

The number of years a newborn is expected to live

Line graph

A graph that shows how data changes over time

Literature review

A scholarly research step that entails identifying and studying all existing studies on a topic to create a basis for new research

Looking-glass self

Our reflection of how we think we appear to others

M**Malthusian theory**

A theory asserting that population is controlled through positive checks (war, famine, disease) and preventive checks (measures to reduce fertility)

Manifest function

A sought-after consequence of a social process

Market socialism

A subtype of socialism that adopts certain traits of capitalism, like allowing limited private ownership or consulting market demand

Marriage

A legally recognized contract between two or more people in a sexual relationship who have an expectation of permanence about their relationship

Mass

A relatively large group of people with a common interest, even if they may not be in close proximity

Master status

A label that describes the chief characteristic of an individual

Material culture

The objects or belongings of a group of people

Matrilineal descent

A type of unilateral descent that follows a mother's line only

Matrilocal residence

A system in which it is customary for a husband to live with (or near) his wife's family

McDonaldization

The increasing presence of the fast food business model in common social institutions

Measure of central tendency

A number that best describes a typical value in a data set

Measure of dispersion

An indication of whether data values are all similar or cover a wide section

Measure of relative position

A description of the position of particular values compared to others in a data set

Mechanical solidarity

A form of social cohesion that comes from sharing similarities

Media

All print, digital, and electronic means of communication

Media consolidation

A process by which fewer owners control the majority of media outlets

Media globalization

The worldwide integration of media through the cross-cultural exchange of ideas

Median

The middle value in an ordered array of data

Medical sociology

The systematic study of the physical, mental, and social components of how humans manage health, illness, disease, disorders, and health care for both the sick and the healthy

Medicalization

The process by which something that was previously considered a nonmedical aspect of life is redefined as a sickness in need of medical intervention

Megachurch

A Christian church that has a very large congregation averaging more than 2,000 people who attend regular weekly services

Megalopolis

A large urban corridor that encompasses several cities and their surrounding suburbs and exurbs

Mental disorder

A condition that makes it more difficult to cope with everyday life and results from some behavioral, psychological, or biological dysfunction in the individual

Mental illness

A severe, lasting mental disorder that requires long-term treatment

Mercantilism

An economic policy based on national policies of accumulating silver and gold by controlling markets with colonies and other countries through taxes and customs charges

Meritocracy

An ideal system in which personal effort—or merit—determines social standing

Meta-analysis

A technique in which the results of virtually all previous studies on a specific subject are evaluated together

Metropolis

The area that includes a city, its suburbs, and its exurbs

Migration

The movement of people into and out of an area, including immigration and emigration

Minority group

Any group of people that is singled out for differential and unequal treatment, typically lacking social power; also referred to as a subordinate group

Mode

The value in a data set that occurs most frequently

Model minority

The stereotype applied to a minority group that is seen as reaching higher educational, professional, and socioeconomic levels without protest against the majority establishment

Modernization

The process that increases the amount of specialization and differentiation of structure in societies

Modernization-aging theory

The theory that industrialization and modernization are the primary causes of the elderly losing power and influence in society

Modernization theory

The theory that low-income countries can improve their global economic standing by industrialization of infrastructure and a shift in cultural attitudes toward work

Monarchy

A form of government in which a single person (a monarch) rules until they die or abdicate the throne

Money

An object that a society agrees to assign a value to so it can be exchanged as payment

Monogamy

The act of being married to only one person at a time

Monotheism

Belief in a single deity

Mood disorder

A long-term, debilitating illness that primarily affects a person's emotions

Moral development

The way people learn what is "good" and "bad" in society

Morbidity

The incidence of disease

Mores

The moral views and principles of a group

Mortality

The number of deaths in a given time or place

Mortality rate

A measure of the number of people in a population who die

Motivational framing

A call to action in support of a social movement

Multimodal

When more than two values occur equally often and more than any other value in a data set

Mutualism

A form of socialism under which individuals and cooperative groups exchange products on the basis of mutually satisfactory contracts

N**Nature**

The influence of our genetic makeup on self-development

Negative sanction

A punishment for violating norms

Neo-Luddites

Those who see technology as a symbol of the coldness of modern life

Net neutrality

The principle that all internet data should be treated equally by internet service providers

New media

All interactive forms of information exchange

New social movement theory

A theory that attempts to explain the proliferation of postindustrial and postmodern movements that are difficult to understand using traditional social movement theories

No mode

When all values occur only once or all occur an equal number of times in a data set

Nongovernmental organization (NGO)

An organization that works globally for humanitarian and/or environmental causes and is not associated with a national government

Nonmaterial culture

The ideas, attitudes, and beliefs of a society

Nonreactive research

The use of secondary data, which does not include direct contact with subjects and will not alter or influence people's behaviors

Nonviolent crime

A crime that involves the destruction or theft of property but does not use or threaten force

Normative organization

An organization that people join to pursue shared interests or because it provides some intangible rewards; also called a voluntary organization

Norms

The visible and invisible rules of conduct through which societies are structured

Nuclear family

Two parents (traditionally a married husband and wife) and children living in the same household

Nurture

The role that our social environment plays in self-development

O**Oligarchy**

A form of government in which power is held by a small, elite group

Oligopoly

A situation in which a few firms dominate a market

One person, one vote

The concept that each person's vote should be counted equally

Operational definition

A specific explanation of an abstract concept that a researcher plans to study

Organic solidarity

A form of social cohesion that arises out of the mutual interdependence created by the specialization of work

Out-group

A group that an individual is not a member of, and may even compete with

Outlier

A data value that is extreme compared with the rest of the values in a data set

Outsourcing

The practice of contracting jobs to an outside source, often in another country

P**Palliative care**

Health care that focuses on quality of life for people with serious illnesses

Panoptic surveillance

A form of constant monitoring in which the observation posts are decentralized and the observed is never communicated with directly

Paradigm

A philosophical and theoretical framework used within a discipline to formulate theories, generalizations, and the experiments performed in support of them

Paraphrase

A restatement, in original language, of another person's idea(s) or words

Parole

A temporary release from a corrections facility that requires supervision and the consent of officials

Participant observation

When a researcher immerses themselves in a group or social setting in order to make observations from an insider perspective

Pastoral societies

Societies based around the domestication of animals

Patrilineal descent

A type of unilateral descent that follows a father's line only

Patrilocal residence

A system in which it is customary for a wife to live with (or near) her husband's family

Patrimonialism

A type of authority wherein military and administrative factions enforce the power of the ruler

Peer group

A group made up of people who are similar in age and social status and who share interests

Percentile

An indication of what percentage of a data set lies at or below a given value

Peripheral nations

Nations on the fringes of the global economy, dominated by core nations, with very little industrialization

Personality disorder

An enduring and inflexible pattern of behavior, not due to substances or other medical conditions, that causes a person to behave in ways that seem normal to them but abnormal to society

Physician-assisted suicide

An individual's voluntary use of lethal medication, provided by a medical doctor, to end their life

Pie chart

A chart that uses the relative frequency distribution to divide a circle into wedges (categories), showing how large each category is in relation to the whole

Plagiarism

Using words and/or ideas without giving credit to the original source

Planned obsolescence

The act of a technology company planning for a product to be obsolete or unable from the time it's created

Plant patent

A patent that recognizes the discovery of a new plant type that can be asexually reproduced

Pluralism

An ideal system in which coexisting cultures retain their identities while maintaining equality and mutual respect

Polarization

A practice where the differences between low-end and high-end jobs become greater and the number of people in the middle levels decreases

Police

A civil force in charge of regulating laws and public order at a federal, state, or community level

Politics

A means of studying a nation's or group's underlying social norms and values, as revealed through its political structure and practices

Pollution

The introduction of contaminants into an environment at damaging levels

Polyamory

The practice of engaging in multiple romantic and typically sexual relationships with the consent of all people involved

Polyandry

A form of marriage in which one woman is married to more than one man at one time

Polygamy

The state of being committed or married to more than one person at a time

Polygyny

A form of marriage in which one man is married to more than one woman at one time

Polytheism

Belief in multiple deities

Popular culture

Mainstream, widespread patterns among a society's population

Population

A defined group serving as the subject of a study

Population composition

A summary of a population's demographic profile, based on fertility, mortality, and migration rates

Population pyramid

A visual representation of population distribution according to age and sex

Positive sanction

A rewards given for conforming to norms

Positivism

The scientific study of social patterns

Power

The ability to exercise one's will over others

Power elite

A small group of powerful people who control much of a society

Prejudice

Beliefs, thoughts, feelings, and attitudes, usually flawed, that someone holds about a group

Primary aging

Aging caused by biological factors, such as molecular and cellular changes

Primary data

Data that are collected directly from firsthand experience

Primary deviance

A violation of norms that does not have any long-term effects on the individual's self-image or interactions with others

Primary group

A small, informal group of people who are closest to us

Primary source

The first version of particular information, such as an original document, firsthand account, speech, research result, or work of art

Primogeniture

A legal principle that all property passes to the firstborn son

Prison

A corrections facility intended for long-term confinement and usually run at the state or federal level

Private health care

Health insurance that a person buys from a private company; private health care can either be employer-sponsored or direct-purchase

Privilege

Benefits people receive simply from being part of a dominant group

Probation

Supervised correctional time used as an alternative to prison

Prognostic framing

When a social movement states a clear solution to a problem and a means of implementation

Proletariat

The laborers in a society

Public

An unorganized, relatively diffuse group of people who share ideas

Public health care

Health insurance that is funded or provided by the government

Purpose

The goal of a text

Q**Qualitative data**

Information that is not necessarily empirical and is often based on what is observed in a natural setting

Quantitative data

Research collected in numerical form that can be counted

Quartiles

Percentiles that divide data into four even parts

Queer theory

An interdisciplinary approach to sexuality studies that identifies Western society's rigid splitting of gender into male and female roles and questions its appropriateness

Quotation

The exact words of a source

R**Race**

A grouping of people that varies among societies and is typically based on shared physical and/or social qualities

Racial profiling

A type of systemic racism that singles out racial minorities for differential (usually harsher) treatment

Racism

Prejudice and discrimination based on the belief that certain racial groups are somehow superior or inferior to others

Random sample

Study participants that were randomly selected to represent a larger population

Range

The difference between the largest and smallest values in a data set

Rationalization

A belief that modern society should be built around logic and efficiency rather than morality or tradition

Rational-legal authority

Power that is legitimized by rules, regulations, and laws

Real culture

The way society really is based on what actually occurs and exists

Reference group

A group to which an individual compares themselves

Reference list

A list of publication details for each source used in a text

Reform movement

A movement that seeks to change something specific about the social structure

Refugee

Someone who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster

Reification

The error of treating an abstract concept as though it has a real, material existence

Relative frequency

The percentage of all data that fall into a particular class, represented by a percentage or fraction

Relative poverty

Being unable to live the lifestyle of the average person in a country

Reliability

A measure of a study's consistency that considers how likely results are to be replicated if the study is reproduced

Religion

A system of beliefs, values, and practices concerning what a person holds to be sacred or spiritually significant

Religious belief

A specific idea that members hold to be true

Religious experience

The conviction or sensation of being connected to the divine

Religious ritual

A behavior or practice that is either required or expected of members

Religious/redemptive movement

A movement that promotes inner change or spiritual growth in individuals

Representative democracy

A government in which citizens elect officials to represent their interests

Research database

A searchable collection, usually digital, of academic journal articles

Research style

A set of formatting and citation standards used for research writing, often within a particular discipline

Resistance movement

A movement that seeks to prevent or undo changes to the social structure

Resocialization

The process by which old behaviors are removed and new behaviors are learned in their place

Resource mobilization theory

A theory that explains social movements' success in terms of their ability to acquire resources and mobilize individuals

Revolutionary movement

A movement that seeks to completely change every aspect of society

Role conflict

A situation when one or more of an individual's roles clash

Role performance

The expression of a role

Role strain

Stress that occurs when too much is required of a single role

Roles

Patterns of behavior that are representative of a person's social status

Role-set

An array of roles attached to a particular status

S**Sample**

A small, manageable number of subjects that represent a population

Sanction

A way to authorize or disapprove of certain behaviors

Sapir-Whorf hypothesis

The way that people understand the world based on their form of language

Scapegoat theory

A theory that suggests that the dominant group will displace its unfocused aggression onto a subordinate group

Scientific method

An established scholarly research method that involves asking a question, researching existing sources, forming a hypothesis, designing and conducting a study, and drawing conclusions

Second world

A term from the Cold War era that describes nations with moderate economies and standards of living

Secondary aging

Aging caused by controllable factors, such as exercise and diet

Secondary data analysis

Using data collected by others but applying new interpretations

Secondary deviance

Deviance that occurs when a person's self-concept and behavior begin to change after their actions are labeled as deviant by members of society

Secondary group

A larger and more impersonal group that is task focused and time limited

Sect

A small religious group that diverges from a denomination and/or becomes its own denomination

Sedimentation of racial inequality

The intergenerational impact of both practical and legal racism that limits the ability of Black people to accumulate wealth

Segregation

The physical separation of two groups, particularly in residence but also in workplace and social functions

Selective optimization with compensation theory

The theory that successful personal development throughout the life course and subsequent mastery of the challenges associated with everyday life are based on selection, optimization, and compensation

Self

A person's distinct sense of identity as developed through social interaction

Self-fulfilling prophecy

An idea that becomes true when acted upon

Self-report study

A collection of data acquired using voluntary response methods, such as questionnaires or phone interviews

Semi-peripheral nations

Nations that are not powerful enough to dictate policy but act as a major source of raw materials and an expanding middle-class marketplace

Senescence

The aging process, including biological, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual changes

Sex

A term that denotes the presence of physical or physiological differences between males and females

Sex ratio

The ratio of men to women in a given population

Sexism

The prejudiced belief that one sex should be valued over another

Sexuality

A person's capacity to experience sexual feelings and attraction

Sexual orientation

A person's physical, mental, emotional, and sexual attraction or lack thereof

Shaken-baby syndrome

A group of medical symptoms such as brain swelling and retinal hemorrhage resulting from forcefully shaking or impacting an infant's head

Sick role

A pattern of expectations that defines appropriate behavior for the sick and those who take care of them

Side-by-side bar graph

A bar graph in which the bars are placed next to one another to show similarities and/or differences in populations

Signal phrase

A phrase used to identify and/or introduce a quotation, paraphrase, or summary

Significant other

A specific individual that impacts a person's life

Social change

The change in a society created through social movements as well as through external factors like environmental shifts or technological innovations

Social construction of race

The school of thought that race is not biologically identifiable

Social construction of sexuality

Socially created definitions about the cultural appropriateness of sex-linked behavior that shape how people see and experience sexuality

Social control

The regulation and enforcement of norms

Social disorganization theory

A theory that asserts crime occurs in communities with weak social ties and the absence of social control

Social epidemiology

The study of the causes and distribution of diseases

Social facts

The laws, morals, values, religious beliefs, customs, fashions, rituals, and all other cultural rules that govern social life

Social gerontology

A specialized field of gerontology that examines the sociological aspects of aging

Social institution

A pattern of beliefs and behaviors focused on meeting a social need

Social integration

How strongly a person is connected to their social group

Social mobility

The ability to change positions within a social stratification system

Social movement

A purposeful, organized group working toward a common social goal

Social movement industry (SMI)

A collection of social movement organizations that are striving toward similar goals

Social movement organization (SMO)

A single social movement group

Social movement sector

The term for multiple social movement industries in a society, even if they have widely varying constituents and goals

Social order

An arrangement of practices and behaviors on which society's members base their daily lives

Social placement

The use of education to improve social standing

Social solidarity

The social ties that bind a group of people together

Social stratification

A socioeconomic system that divides society's members into categories ranking from high to low, based on things like wealth, power, and prestige

Socialism

An economic system characterized by government ownership of goods, services, and production and an incentive to share work and wealth equally among members

Socialization

The process by which people come to understand societal norms and expectations, accept society's beliefs, and be aware of societal values

Socialized medicine

When the government owns and runs the entire health care system

Society

People who live in a definable community and share a culture

Socioeconomic status (SES)

An individual's level of wealth, power, and prestige

Sociology

The systematic study of society and social interaction

Sorting

Classifying students based on academic merit or potential

Stacked bar graph

A bar graph in which bars from each population are stacked on top of each other; it can be used to compare different categories and breakdowns within categories

Standard deviation

A measure of how much it's expected that a data value differs from the mean

Standard of living

The level of wealth available to acquire material goods and comforts to maintain a particular socioeconomic lifestyle

Statistic

A number or percentage based on a collection of data

Status

The responsibilities and benefits that a person experiences according to their rank and role in society

Status consistency

The consistency, or lack thereof, of an individual's rank across social categories like income, education, and occupation

Stereotype

An oversimplified generalization about a group of people

Stereotype interchangeability

When persistent stereotypes don't change but are instead transferred to a new group

Stigmatization

When a culture assigns negative perceptions to an individual because of perceived differences from the population at large

Strain theory

A theory that addresses the relationship between socially acceptable goals and socially acceptable means to reach those goals

Street crime

Crime committed by people against other people or organizations, usually in public spaces

Structural mobility

A societal change that enables a whole group of people to move up or down the class ladder

Structural unemployment

A societal level of disconnect between people seeking jobs and the jobs that are available

Subculture

A group that shares a specific identification apart from a society's majority, even as the members exist within a larger society

Subculture of aging theory

The theory that the elderly create new communities when they are excluded (due to age), voluntarily or involuntarily, from participating in other groups

Subjective poverty

A state of poverty composed of many dimensions, subjectively present when a person's actual income does not meet their expectations

Subsistence farming

Farming where farmers grow only enough to feed themselves and their families

Suburb

A community adjacent to a city, typically close enough for a daily commute

Summary

A brief, general overview of a larger amount of information

Survey

A way to collect data from subjects who respond to a series of questions about behaviors and opinions, often in the form of a questionnaire

Symbol

A gesture or object with an associated meaning that is recognized by people who share a culture

Systemic racism

Systems and structures with procedures or processes that disadvantage minority racial groups; also called structural or institutional racism

T**Technological diffusion**

The spread of technology across borders

Technological globalization

The cross-cultural development and exchange of technology

Technology

The application of science to solve problems in daily life

Technophiles

Those who see technology as symbolizing the potential for a brighter future

Thanatology

The systematic study of death and dying

Theory

A proposed explanation about social interactions or society

Third world

A term from the Cold War era that refers to poor, nonindustrialized countries

Thomas theorem

How a subjective reality can drive events to develop in accordance with that reality, despite being originally unsupported by objective reality

Total institution

An organization in which members live a controlled lifestyle and total resocialization occurs

Totalitarian dictatorship

A form of dictatorship in which most aspects of citizens' lives are controlled by the leader

Totemism

Belief in a divine connection between humans and other natural beings

Tracking

A formalized sorting system that places students on "tracks" that perpetuate inequalities

Traditional authority

Power legitimized on the basis of long-standing customs

Transgender

A general term used to describe someone whose gender identity is different than the sex they were assigned at birth. Transgender is sometimes shorted to trans. A trans man is a person whose sex assigned at birth was female, but whose gender identity is male. A trans woman is a person whose sex assigned at birth was male, but whose gender identity is female.

Transphobia

An extreme or irrational aversion to transgender people

Triad

A three-member group

U**Underemployment**

When a person has a lower-paying, lower-status job than their education and experience qualifies them to perform

Underground economy

An unregulated economy of labor and goods that operates outside of governance, regulatory systems, or human protections

Underinsurance

When people spend at least 5% or 10% of their income (depending on overall income level) on health care costs that are not covered by insurance

Unilateral descent

The tracing of kinship through one parent only

Unimodal

When only one value occurs most in a data set

Universal access

The equal ability of all people to participate in an education system

Universal health care

A system that guarantees health care coverage for everyone

Upward mobility

An increase—or upward shift—in social class

Urban sociology

A sociological subfield that studies the social, political, and economic relationships in cities

Urbanization

The process of large populations moving to relatively small areas and forming cities

Utilitarian organization

An organization that is joined to fill a specific material need

Utility patent

A patent granted for the invention or discovery of any new and useful process, product, or machine

V**Validity**

The degree to which a sociological measure accurately reflects the topic of study

Value-added theory

A functionalist perspective theory that posits that several preconditions must be in place for collective behavior to occur

Value neutrality

A practice of remaining impartial, without bias or judgment, during the course of a study and in publishing results

Values

A culture's standard for discerning what is good and just in society

Verstehen

A German word that means "to understand in a deep way"

Victimless crime

Crime that does not affect individual(s) other than the one(s) engaging in it

Violent crime

A crime based on the use or threat of force

W

Wealth

The value of money and assets a person has

White flight

The migration of economically secure White people toward the suburbs and away from racially/ethnically mixed urban areas

White privilege

The benefits people receive simply by being White or perceived as White

X

Xenocentrism

A belief that another culture is superior to one's own

Xenophobia

A fear or hatred of things perceived as foreign

Z

Zero population growth

A theoretical goal in which the number of people entering a population through birth or immigration is equal to the number of people leaving it via death or emigration