

ORIGINS OF SOCIOLOGY

People have always been curious about how we get along, what we do, and whom we select as our leaders. Philosophers and religious authorities of ancient and medieval societies made countless observations about human behavior. These observations were not tested or verified scientifically; nevertheless, they often became the foundation for moral codes. Several of the early social philosophers predicted that a systematic study of human behavior would one day emerge. Beginning in the nineteenth

Early Thinkers: Comte, Martineau, and Spencer

In France, the nineteenth century was an unsettling time for that nation's intellectuals. The French monarchy had been deposed earlier in the revolution of 1789, and Napoleon had subsequently been defeated in his effort to conquer Europe. Amidst this chaos, philosophers considered how society might be improved. Auguste Comte (1798–1857), credited with being the most influential of these philosophers of the early 1800s, believed that a theoretical science of society and systematic investigation of behavior were needed to improve society.

Comte coined the term *sociology* to apply to the science of human behavior and insisted that sociology could make a critical contribution to a new and improved human community. Writing in the 1800s, Comte feared that France's stability had been permanently impaired by the excesses of the French Revolution. Yet he hoped that the study of social behavior in a systematic way would eventually lead to more rational human interactions. In Comte's hierarchy of sciences, sociology was at the top. He called it the "queen" and its practitioners "scientist-priests." This French theorist did not simply give sociology its name; he also presented a rather ambitious challenge to the fledgling discipline,

Scholars were able to learn of Comte's works largely through translations by the English sociologist Harriet Martineau (1802–1876). But Martineau was a path breaker in her own right as a sociologist; she offered insightful observations of the customs and social practices of both her native Britain and the United States. Martineau's book *Society in America* (1962, original edition 1837) examines religion, politics, child rearing, and immigration in the young nation. Martineau gives special attention to status distinctions and to such factors as gender and race.

Martineau's writings emphasized the impact that the economy, law, trade, and population could have on the social problems of contemporary society.

groups—which would be a state—which would be a state—
longing for members of huge, important groups. Durkheim's interests were not limited to one aspect of social behavior. Like many other sociologists, Durkheim's interests were not limited to one aspect of social behavior. Later in this book, we will give further attention to his thinking on crime and punishment, religion, and the workplace. Few sociologists have had such a dramatic impact on so many different areas within the discipline.

Max Weber

Another important theorist who contributed to the scientific study of society was Max Weber (pronounced "VAY-ber"). Born in Germany in 1864, Weber took his early academic training in legal and economic history, but he gradually developed an interest in sociology. Eventually, he became a professor at various German universities. Weber told his students that they should employ *Verstehen*, the German word for "understanding" or "insight," in their intellectual work. He pointed out that much of our social behavior cannot be analyzed by the kinds of objective criteria we use to measure weight or temperature. To fully comprehend behavior, we must learn the subjective meanings people attach to their actions—how they themselves view and explain their behavior.

For example, suppose that sociologists were studying the social ranking of individuals within an electricians' union. Weber would expect researchers to employ *Verstehen* in order to determine the significance of the union's social hierarchy for its members. Sociologists would seek to learn how these electricians relate to union members of higher or lower status; they might examine the effects of seniority on standing within the union. While investigating these questions, researchers would take into account people's emotions, thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes (L. Coser, 1977:130).

We also owe a great deal to Max Weber's ideas about the relationship between religion and society. Weber's theory of "charismatic authority" suggests that certain religious leaders have a special divine right to lead their followers. This concept has been applied to political leaders as well, particularly those who claim to be "messiahs" or "prophets." Weber's ideas have had a significant influence on modern sociology, particularly in the field of organizational behavior.

1864-1920

cs, history, philosophy

1818-1900

Philosophy, law

*The Protestant Ethic and the
Spirit of Capitalism*
Sozialstaat und Gesellschaft

1848 - *The Communist Manifesto*
1867 - *Das Kapital*

*Most of today's sociological studies
draw on the work of these three
nineteenth-century thinkers.*

Thus, it is no surprise that Karl Marx is viewed as a major figure in the development of several social sciences, among them sociology. (See Figure 1-1.)

Karl Marx

Karl Marx (1818-1883) shared with Durkheim and Weber a dual interest in abstract philosophical issues and in the concrete reality of everyday life. Unlike the others, Marx was so critical of existing institutions that a conventional academic career was impossible, and although he was born and educated in Germany, most of his life was spent in exile:

Marx's personal life was a difficult struggle. When a paper that he had written was suppressed, he fled his native land and went to France. In Paris, he met Friedrich Engels (1820-1895), with whom he formed a lifelong friendship. They lived during a time in which European and North American economic life was increasingly being dominated by the factory rather than the farm.

The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.... The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. WORKING MEN OF ALL COUNTRIES UNITE! (Feuer, 1959:7, 41).

After completing *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx returned to Germany, only to be expelled. He then moved to England, where he continued to write books and essays. Marx's life there was one of extreme poverty. He pawned most of his possessions, and several of his children died of malnutrition and disease. Marx clearly was an outsider in British society, a fact which may well have affected his view of western cultures (R. Collins and Makowsky, 1978:40).

Marx's thinking was strongly influenced by the work of a German philosopher, Georg Hegel. Hegel saw history as a *dialectical process*—a series of clashes between conflicting ideas and forces. At the end of each clash, a new and improved set of ideas was expected to emerge. In Hegel's view, conflict was an essential element in progress. Conflict led to progress; progress came only through conflict.

In applying Hegel's theories, Marx focused on conflict between social classes, as represented by industrial workers and the owners of factories and businesses. Under Marx's analysis, society was fundamentally divided between classes who clash in pursuit of their own class interests. He argued that history could be understood in dialectical terms as a record of the inevitable conflicts between economic groups. This view forms the basis for the contemporary sociological perspective of conflict theory, which will be examined later in the chapter.

When Marx examined the industrial societies of his time, such as Germany, England, and the United States, he saw the factory as the center of conflict between the exploiters (the owners of the means of

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production) and the exploited (the workers). Marx viewed these relationships in systematic terms; that is, he believed that an entire system of economic, social, and political relationships had been established to maintain the power and dominance of the owners over the workers. Consequently, Marx and Engels argued that the working class needed to overthrow the existing class system. Marx's writings inspired those who were subsequently to lead communist revolutions in Russia, China, Cuba, Vietnam, and elsewhere.

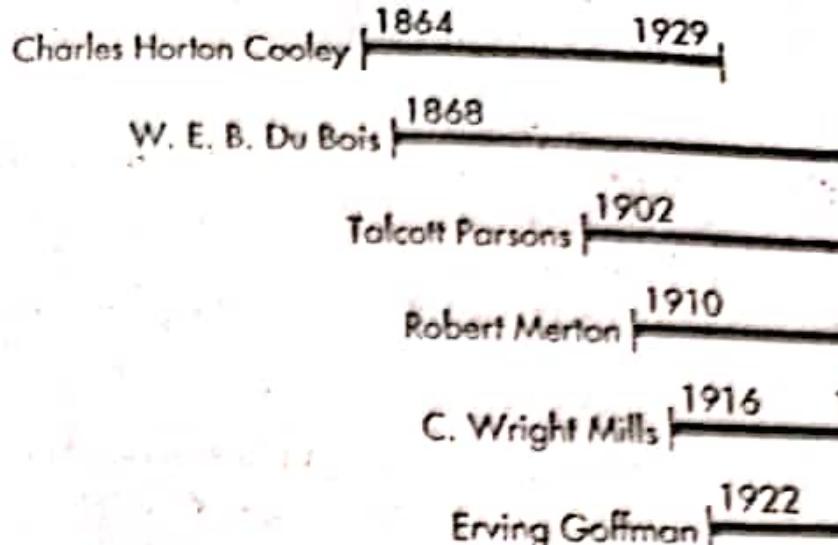
Even apart from the political revolutions that his work helped to foster, Marx's influence on contemporary thinking has been dramatic. Although he certainly did not view himself as a sociologist, Marx nevertheless made a critical contribution to the development of sociology and other social sciences. Partly, this reflected Marx's emphasis on carefully researching the actual, measurable conditions of people's lives, a practice which foreshadowed the scientific nature of today's social sciences.

In addition, Marx placed great value on the group identifications and associations that influenced an individual's place in society. As we have seen, this area of study is the major focus of contemporary sociology. Throughout this textbook, we will consider how membership in a particular gender classification, age group, racial group, or economic class affects a person's attitudes and behavior. In an important sense, this way of understanding society can be traced back to the pioneering work of Karl Marx. (See Figure 1-2.)

Twentieth-Century Sociology

Sociology, as we know it in the 1990s, draws upon the firm foundation developed by Émile Durkheim, Max Weber, and Karl Marx. However, the discipline has certainly not remained stagnant over the last century. Sociologists have gained new insights which have helped them to better understand the workings of society.

Charles Horton Cooley (1864–1929) was typical of the sociologists who became prominent in the early 1900s. Born in Ann Arbor, Michigan, Cooley received his graduate training in economics but later became a sociology professor at the University



of Michigan. Like other early sociologists, he became interested in this "new" discipline while pursuing a related area of study.

Cooley shared the desire of Durkheim, Weber, and Marx to learn more about society. But to do so effectively, Cooley preferred to use the sociological perspective to look first at smaller units—intimate, face-to-face groups such as families, gangs, and friendship networks. He saw these groups as the seedbeds of society in the sense that they shape people's ideals, beliefs, values, and social nature. Cooley's work brought new understanding to groups of relatively small size.]

In the early 1900s, many of the leading sociologists of the United States saw themselves as social

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We will consider Spencer's theory of social change in more detail in Chapter 2.

Émile Durkheim

Émile Durkheim's important theoretical work on suicide was but one of his many pioneering contributions to sociology. The son of a rabbi, Durkheim (1858–1917) was educated in both France and Germany. He established an impressive academic reputation and was appointed as one of the first professors of sociology in France.

Above all, Durkheim will be remembered for his insistence that behavior cannot be fully understood in individualistic terms, that it must be understood within a larger social context. As one example of this emphasis, Durkheim (1947, original edition 1912) developed a fundamental thesis to help understand all forms of society through intensive study of the Arunta, an Australian tribe. He focused on the functions that religion performed for the Arunta and underscored the role that group life plays in defining that which we consider religious. Durkheim concluded that, like other forms of group behavior, religion reinforces a group's solidarity.

Another of Durkheim's main interests was the consequences of work in modern societies. In his view, the growing division of labor found in industrial societies as workers became much more specialized in their tasks led to what he called *anomie*. *Anomie* refers to a loss of direction that is felt in a society when social control of individual behavior has become ineffective. The state of anomie occurs when people have lost their sense of purpose or direction, often during a time of profound social change. In a period of anomie, people are so confused and unable to cope with the new social environment that they may resort to taking their own lives.

As will be seen in the examination of work,

English author, was an early pioneer of sociology who studied social behavior both in her native country and in the United States.

Martineau's (1896) view, intellectuals and scholars should not simply offer observations of social conditions; they should act upon their convictions in a manner that will benefit society. In line with this view, Martineau conducted research on the nature of female employment and pointed to the need for much more research on this important issue (Hoecker-Drysdale, 1992).

Another important contributor to the discipline of sociology was Herbert Spencer (1820-1903). Writing from the viewpoint of relatively prosperous Victorian England, Spencer (unlike Martineau) did not feel compelled to correct or improve society; instead, he merely hoped to understand it better. Drawing on Charles Darwin's study *On the Origin of Species*, Spencer used the concept of evolution of animals to explain how societies change over time. Similarly, he adapted Darwin's evolutionary view of the "survival of the fittest" by arguing that it is "natural" that some people are rich while others are poor.

TABLE 1.2

Comparing Major Theoretical Perspectives

	FUNCTIONALIST	CONFLICT	INTERACTIONIST
View of Society	Stable, well-integrated	Characterized by tension and struggle between groups	Active in influencing and affecting everyday social interaction
Level of Analysis Emphasized	Macro	Macro	Micro analysis as a way of understanding the larger macro phenomena
View of the Individual	People are socialized to perform societal functions	People are shaped by power, coercion, and authority	People manipulate symbols and create their social worlds through interaction
View of the Social Order	Maintained through cooperation and consensus	Maintained through force and coercion	Maintained by shared understanding of everyday behavior
View of Social Change	Predictable, reinforcing	Change takes place all the time and may have positive consequences	Reflected in people's social positions and their communications with others
Proponents	Émile Durkheim Talcott Parsons Robert Merton	Karl Marx W. E. B. Du Bois C. Wright Mills	George Herbert Mead Charles Horton Cooley Erving Goffman

This table shows how the three theoretical perspectives can be compared across four dimensions.

Reviewing the Literature

In conducting a review of the literature—relevant scholarly studies and information—researchers refine the problem under study, clarify possible techniques to be used in collecting data, and eliminate or reduce avoidable mistakes. In our example, we would examine information about the salaries for different occupations. We would see if jobs that require more academic training are better rewarded. It would also be appropriate to review other studies on the relationship between education and income.)

The review of the literature would soon tell us that many other factors besides years of schooling influence earning potential. For example, we would learn that the children of rich parents are more likely to go to college than those from modest backgrounds, so we might consider the possibility that the same parents may later help their children secure better-paying jobs.

We might also look at macro-level data, such as state-by-state comparisons of income and educational levels. In one macro-level study based on census data, researchers found that in states whose residents have a relatively high level of education, household income levels are high as well (see Figure 2-2, opposite). This finding suggests that schooling may well be related to income, though it does not speak to the micro-level relationship we are interested in. That is, we want to know whether individuals who are well educated are also well paid.

Formulating the Hypothesis

After reviewing earlier research and drawing on the contributions of sociological theorists, the researchers may then formulate the hypothesis. A *hypothesis* is a speculative statement about the relationship between two or more factors known as variables.

We might ask, "Do individuals who are well educated earn more money?" In a national level study based on census data, researchers found that individuals whose education levels are high as well (see Figure 2-2, opposite). This finding suggests that schooling may well be related to income, though it does not speak to the micro-level relationship we are interested in. That is, we want to know whether individuals who are well educated are also well paid.

Formulating the Hypothesis

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Researchers who formulate a hypothesis generally must suggest how one aspect of human behavior influences or affects another. The variable hypothesized to cause or influence another is called the *independent variable*. The second variable is termed the *dependent variable* because its action *depends* on the influence of the independent variable.

Our hypothesis is that the higher one's educational degree, the more money one will earn. The independent variable that is to be measured is the level of education. The variable that is thought to depend on it—income—must also be measured.

Identifying independent and dependent variables is a critical step in clarifying cause-and-effect relationships. As shown in Figure 2-3 (page 32), *Causal logic* involves the relationship between a condition or variable and a particular consequence, with one event leading to the other. For instance, being less integrated into society may be directly related to, or produce a greater likelihood of, suicide. Similarly, the time students spend reviewing material for a quiz may be directly related to, or produce a greater likelihood of, getting a high score on the quiz.)

Sociologists seek to identify the causal link between variables; this causal link is generally described in the hypothesis.

Collecting and Analyzing Data

How do you test a hypothesis to determine if it is supported or refuted? You need to collect information, using one of the research designs described later in the chapter. (The research design guides the researcher in collecting and analyzing data.)

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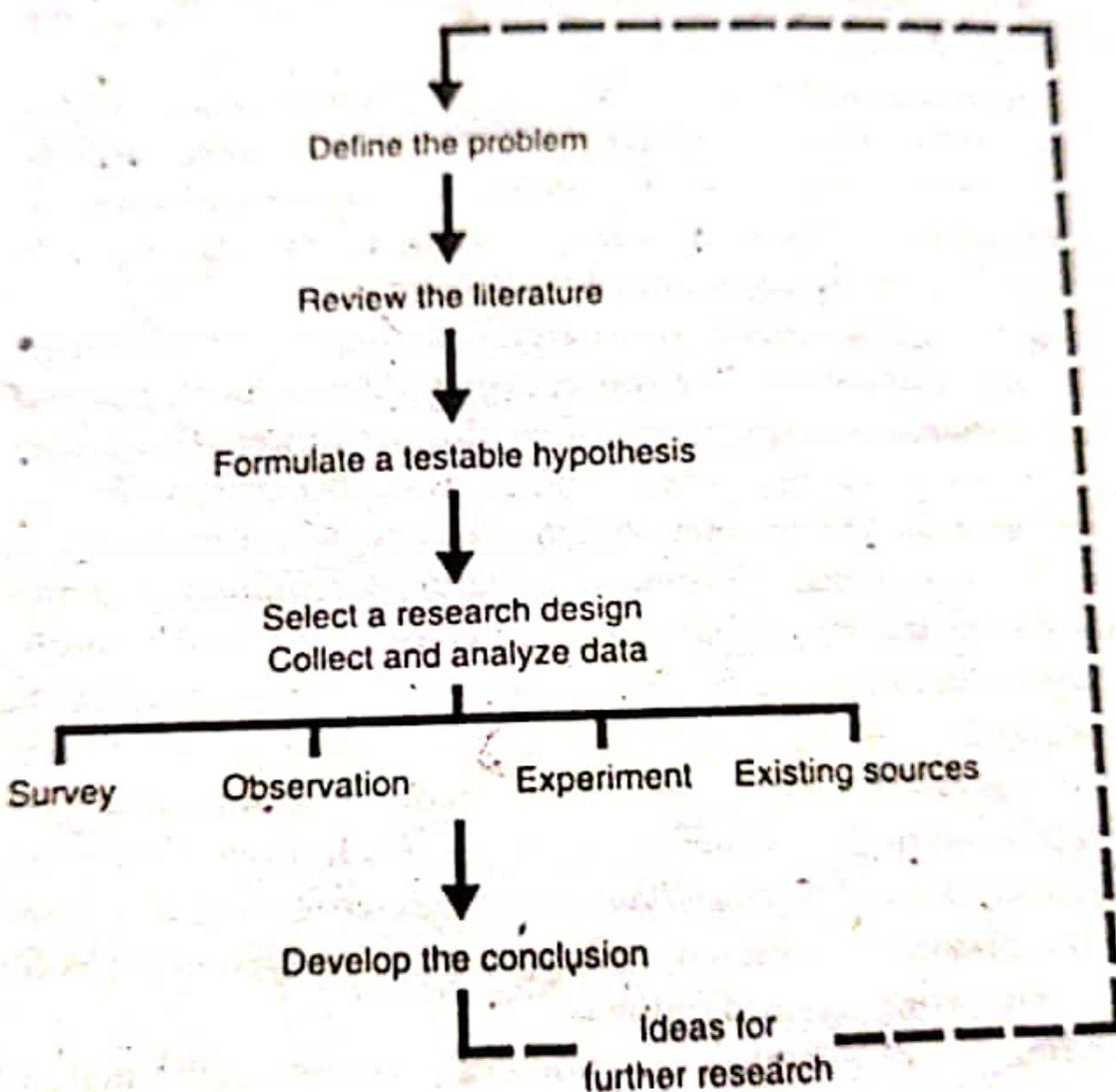
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Selecting the Sample In most studies, social scientists must carefully select what is known as a sample. A *sample* is a selection from a larger population that is statistically representative of that population. There are many kinds of samples, but the one social scientists use most frequently is the random sample. In a *random sample*, every member of an entire population being studied has the same chance of being selected. Thus, if researchers want to examine the opinions of people listed in a city directory (a book that, unlike the telephone directory, lists all households), they might use a computer to randomly select names from the directory. The results would constitute a random sample. The advantage of using specialized sampling

Figure 2.1). We'll use an actual example to illustrate the workings of the scientific method.

FIGURE 2-1
The Scientific Method



The scientific method allows sociologists to objectively and logically evaluate the data they collect. Their findings can suggest ideas for further sociological research.

It seems reasonable to assume that these Columbia University graduates will earn more income than high school graduates. But how would you go about testing that hypothesis?

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Defining the Problem

Does it "pay" to go to college? Some people make great sacrifices and work hard to get a college education. Parents borrow money for their children's tuition. Students work part-time jobs or even take full-time positions while attending evening or weekend classes. Does it pay off? Are there monetary returns for getting that degree?

The first step in any research project is to state as clearly as possible what you hope to investigate—that is, *define the problem*. In this instance, we are interested in knowing how schooling relates to income. We want to find out the earnings of people with different levels of formal schooling.

Early on, any social science researcher must develop an operational definition of each concept being studied. An *operational definition* is an explanation of an abstract concept that is specific enough to allow a researcher to assess the concept. For example, a sociologist interested in status might use membership in exclusive social clubs as an operational definition of status. Someone studying prejudice might consider a person's unwillingness to hire or work with members of minority groups as an operational definition of prejudice. In our example, we need to develop two operational definitions—education and earnings—in order to study whether it pays to get an advanced educational degree. We'll define *education* as the number of years of schooling a person has achieved, and *earnings* as the income a person reports having received in the last year.

Initially, we will take a functionalist perspective (although we may end up incorporating other approaches). We will argue that opportunities for more earning power are related to level of schooling and that schools prepare students for employment.

up a research project? And how do they ensure that the results of the research are reliable and accurate? Can they carry out their research without violating the rights of those they study?

What Is the Scientific Method?

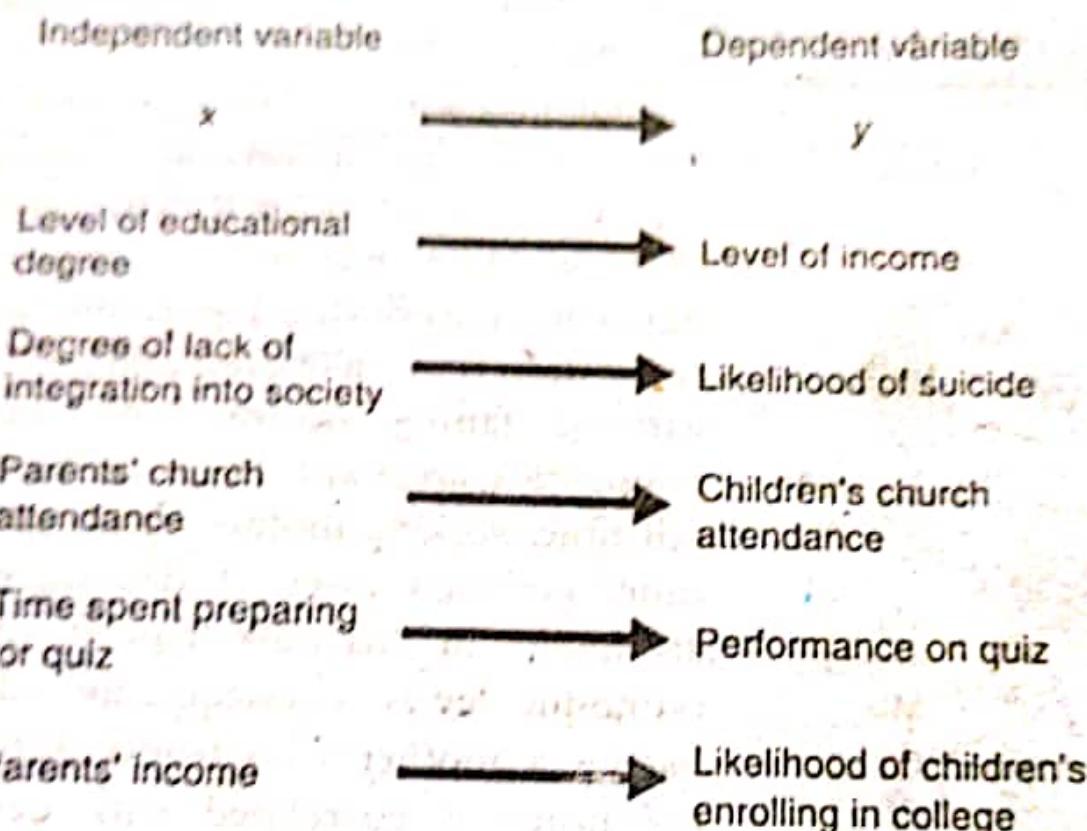
Like all of us, sociologists are interested in the central questions of our time: Is the family falling apart? Why is there so much crime in the United States? Is the world falling behind in its ability to feed a growing population? Such issues concern most people, whether or not they have academic training. However, unlike the typical citizen, the sociologist has a commitment to use the *scientific method* in studying society. The scientific method is a systematic, organized series of steps that ensures maximum objectivity and consistency in researching a problem.

Many of us will never actually conduct scientific research. Why, then, is it important that we understand the scientific method? The answer is that it plays a major role in the workings of our society. Residents of the United States are constantly bombarded with "facts" or "data." A television news report informs us that "one in every two marriages in this country now ends in divorce," yet Chapter 14 will show that this assertion is based on misleading statistics. Almost daily, advertisers cite supposedly scientific studies to prove that their products are superior. Such claims may be accurate or exaggerated. We can better evaluate such information—and will not be fooled so easily—if we are familiar with the standards of scientific research. These standards are quite stringent, and they demand as strict adherence as possible.

The scientific method requires precise preparation in developing useful research. Otherwise, the research data collected may not prove accurate. Sociologists and other researchers follow five basic steps in the scientific method: (1) defining the problem, (2) reviewing the literature, (3) formulating the hypothesis, (4) selecting the research design and then collecting and analyzing data, and (5) developing the conclusion (see

FIGURE 2-3

Causal Logic



In causal logic an independent variable (often designated by the symbol x) influences a dependent variable (generally designated as y); thus, x leads to y . For example, parents who attend church regularly (x) are more likely to have children who are churchgoers (y). Notice that the first two pairs of variables are taken from studies already described in this textbook.

Think About It

Identify two or three dependent variables that might be influenced by this independent variable: number of alcoholic drinks ingested.

techniques is that sociologists do not need to question everyone in a population.

It is all too easy to confuse the careful scientific techniques used in representati-

A *correlation* exists when a change in one variable coincides with a change in the other. Correlations are an indication that causality *may* be present; they do not necessarily indicate causation. For example, data indicate that working mothers are more likely to have delinquent children than mothers who do not work outside the home. But this correlation is actually caused by a third variable: family income. Lower-class households are more likely to have a full-time working mother; at the same time, reported rates of delinquency are higher in this class than at other economic levels. Consequently, while having a mother who works outside the home is correlated with delinquency, it does not *cause* delinquency. Sociologists seek to identify the *causal* link between variables; this causal link is generally described in the hypothesis.

The author of
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also generate ideas for future study.)

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a variety of topics for about one and a half hours. The author of this book examined the responses of the 1,875 people interviewed in 2002 concerning their level of education and income.

Ensuring Validity and Reliability The scientific method requires that research results be both valid and reliable.⁷ **Validity** refers to the degree to which a measure or scale truly reflects the phenomenon under study. A valid measure of income depends on the gathering of accurate data. Various studies show that people are reasonably accurate in reporting how much money they earned in the most recent year. **Reliability** refers to the extent to which a measure produces consistent results. Some people may not disclose accurate information, but most do. In the General Social Survey, only 5 percent of the respondents refused to give their income or indicated they did not know what their income was. That means 95 percent of the respondents gave their income, which we can assume is reasonably accurate (given their other responses about occupation and years in the labor force).

Developing the Conclusion

Scientific studies, including those conducted by sociologists, do not aim to answer all the questions that can be raised about a particular subject. Therefore, the conclusion of a research study represents both an end and a beginning. It terminates a specific

There are two main forms of the survey: the *interview*, in which a researcher obtains information through face-to-face or telephone questioning, and the *questionnaire*, in which the researcher uses a printed or written form to obtain information from a respondent. Each of these has its own advantages. An interviewer can obtain a higher response rate because people find it more difficult to turn down a personal request for an interview than to throw away a written questionnaire. In addition, a skillful interviewer can go beyond written questions and probe for a subject's underlying feelings and reasons. On the other hand, questionnaires have the advantage of being cheaper, especially in large samples.

Studies have shown that the characteristics of the interviewer have an impact on survey data. For example, women interviewers tend to receive more feminist responses from female subjects than do male researchers, and African American interviewers tend to receive more detailed responses about race-related issues from Black subjects than do White interviewers. The possible impact of gender and race indicates again how much care social research requires (D. W. Davis 1997; Huddy et al. 1997).

The survey is an example of *quantitative research*, which collects and reports data primarily in numerical form. Most of the survey research discussed so far in this book has been quantitative. While this type of research can make use of large samples, it can't offer great depth and detail on a topic. That is why researchers also make use of *qualitative research*, which relies on what is seen in field and naturalistic settings, and often focuses on small groups and communities rather than on large groups or whole nations. The most common form of qualitative research is observation, which we consider next. Throughout this book you will find examples of both quantitative and qualitative research, since both are used widely. Some sociologists prefer one type of research to the other, but we learn most when we draw on many different research designs and do not limit ourselves to a particular type of research.

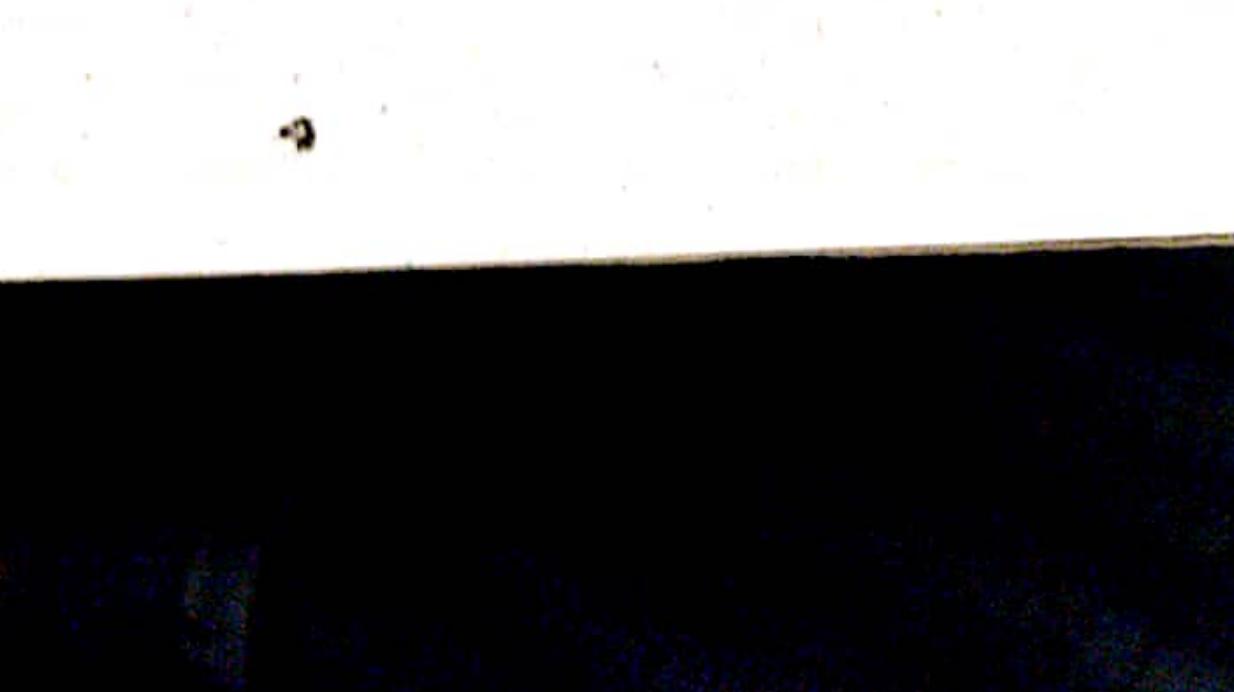
Observation

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Observation

As we saw in the introduction to this chapter, Patricia A. Adler and Evi Adler gathered their information on the Hawaiian resort industry by observing the everyday interactions among employees. Investigators who collect information through direct participation and/or by closely watching a group or community are engaged in *observation*. This method allows sociologists to examine certain behaviors and communities that could not be investigated through other research techniques.

An increasingly popular form of qualitative research in sociology today is ethnography. *Ethnography* refers to the study of an entire social setting through extended systematic observation. Typically, the description emphasizes how the subjects themselves view their social life in some setting. The Adlers' study of the Hawaiian resort industry, described in the opening to this chapter, was an ethnographic study that covered hotel workers' leisure time and family lives as well as their on-the-job behavior (P. Adler and Adler 2003, 2004).



one's educational degree, the more money one will earn. We collected and analyzed the data, making sure the sample was representative and the data were valid and reliable. Finally, we developed the conclusion. The data do support our hypothesis about the influence of education on income.

Major Research Designs

An important aspect of sociological research is deciding how to collect the data. A **research design** is a detailed plan or method for obtaining data scientifically. Selection of a research design is often based on the theories and hypotheses the researcher starts with (Merton 1948). The choice requires creativity and ingenuity, because it directly influences both the cost of the project and the amount of time needed to collect the data. Research designs that sociologists regularly use to generate data include surveys, observation, experiments, and existing sources.

Surveys

Almost all of us have responded to surveys of one kind or another. We may have been asked what kind of detergent we use, which presidential candidate we intend to vote for, or what our favorite television program is. A **survey** is a study, generally in the form of an interview or questionnaire, that provides researchers with information about how people think and act. Among the United States' best-known surveys of opinion are the Gallup poll and the Harris poll. As anyone who watches the news during presidential campaigns knows, these polls have become a staple of political life.

When you think of surveys, you may recall seeing many person-on-the-street interviews on local television news shows. Although such interviews can be highly entertaining, they are not necessarily an accurate indication of public opinion. First, they reflect the opinions of only those people who happen to be at a certain location. Such a sample can be biased in favor of commuters, middle-class shoppers, or factory workers, depending on where the interviewer selects. Second, tele-

grocery stores, and cuses on these arenas. Feminist researchers and consult their subjects more than other researchers, and are more oriented to seeking change, raising consciousness, and trying to affect policy. In addition, feminist researchers are particularly open to a multidisciplinary approach, such as making use of historical evidence or legal studies as well as feminist theory (Baker 1999; Lofland 1975; Reinharz 1992).

Experiments

When sociologists want to study a possible cause-and-effect relationship, they may conduct experiments. An **experiment** is an artificially created situation that allows a researcher to manipulate variables.)

In the classic method of conducting an experiment, two groups of people are selected and matched for similar characteristics, such as age or education. The researchers then assign the subjects to one of two groups: the experimental or the control group. The **experimental group** is exposed to an independent variable; the **control group** is not. Thus, if scientists were testing a new type of antibiotic, they would administer the drug to an experimental group but not to a control group.

Sociologists don't often rely on this classic form of experiment, because it generally involves manipulating human behavior in an inappropriate manner, especially in a laboratory setting. However, they do try to re-create experimental conditions in the field. For example, to see the effect of a criminal background on a person's employment opportunities, sociologist Devah Pager

Major Research Designs

Method	Examples	Advantages
Survey	Questionnaires Interviews	Yield specific information
Observation	Ethnography	Yield specific information
Experiment	Deliberate manipulation of people's social behavior	Yield people's responses
Existing sources/ Secondary analysis	Analysis of census or health data Analysis of films or TV commercials	Cost effective

research, called a *code of ethics*. The professional society of the discipline, the American Sociological Association (ASA), first published the society's *Code of Ethics* in 1971 and revised it most recently in 1997. It puts forth the following basic principles:

1. Maintain objectivity and integrity in research.
2. Respect the subject's right to privacy and dignity.
3. Protect subjects from personal harm.
4. Preserve confidentiality.
5. Seek informed consent when data are collected from research participants or when behavior occurs in a private context.
6. Acknowledge research collaboration and assistance.
7. Disclose all sources of financial support (American Sociological Association 1997).

These basic principles probably seem clear-cut. How could they lead to any disagreement or controversy? Yet many delicate ethical questions cannot be resolved simply by reading these seven principles. For example, should a sociologist who is engaged in participant-observation research always protect the confidentiality of subjects? What if the subjects are members of a religious cult allegedly involved in unethical and possibly illegal activities? What if the sociologist is interviewing people who are being held by government officials?



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Norms

All societies have ways of encouraging and enforcing what they view as appropriate behavior while discouraging and punishing what they consider to be improper conduct. "Put on some clean clothes for dinner" and "Thou shalt not kill" are examples of norms found in the culture of the United States, just as respect for older people is a norm of Japanese culture. Norms are established standards of behavior maintained by a society.

In order for a norm to become significant, it must be widely shared and understood. For example, in movie theaters in the United States, we typically expect that people will be quiet while the film is showing. Because of this norm, an usher can tell a member of the audience to stop talking so loudly. Of course, the application of this norm can vary, de-

Like mores, folkways represent culturally learned
patterns of behavior and can vary from one society
to another. Even folkways concerning time are not
universally shared. As an example, some cultures
do not share the western concern with keeping ap-
pointments precisely. King Hassan II of Morocco is
notorious for arriving late at meetings. In 1980,
when Britain's Queen Elizabeth II paid a call, the
king kept her waiting for 15 minutes. The queen
was not amused, but the Moroccans could not un-
derstand why she and the British public were so up-

in its population of 120 million people, *Kurisumasu* (the Japanese term for "Christmas") is nevertheless a major holiday. Although *Kurisumasu* is not a religious observance, it is a highly commercial occasion, reflecting obvious influences from the United States. The Japanese are encouraged to buy gifts as they pass through stores filled with tinsel Christmas trees and the sweet sounds of Bing Crosby singing "White Christmas" (R. Yates, 1985).

ELEMENTS OF CULTURE

Each culture considers its own distinctive ways of handling basic societal tasks as "natural." But, in fact, methods of education, marital ceremonies, religious doctrines, and other aspects of culture are learned and transmitted through human interactions within specific societies. Lifelong residents of Naples will consider it natural to speak Italian, whereas lifelong residents of Buenos Aires will feel the same way about Spanish. Clearly, the citizens of each country have been shaped by the culture in which they live.

1 Language

Language tells us a great deal about a culture. In the old west, words such as *gelding*, *stallion*, *mare*, *piebald*, and *sorrel* were all used to describe one animal—the horse. Even if we knew little of this period of history, we could conclude from the list of terms that horses were quite important in this culture. As a result, they received an unusual degree of linguistic attention.

In the contemporary culture of the United States, the terms *convertible*, *dune buggy*, *van*, *four-wheel drive*, *sedan*, and *station wagon* are all employed to describe the same mechanical form of transportation. Perhaps the car is as important to us as the horse was to the residents of the old west. Similarly, the Samal people of the southern Philippines—for whom fish are a main source of both food and income—have terms for more than 70 types of fishing and more than 250 different kinds of fish. The Slave Indians of northern Canada, who live in a rather frigid climate, have 14 terms to describe ice, including eight

and others are an especially vivid example of communication without typical oral speech.

for different kinds of "solid ice" and others for "seamed ice," "cracked ice," and "floating ice." Clearly, the priorities of a culture are reflected in its language (Basso, 1972:35; J. Carroll, 1956).

Language as the Foundation of Culture Language is the foundation of every culture, though particular languages differ in striking ways. *Language* is an abstract system of word meanings and symbols for all aspects of culture. Language includes speech, written characters, numerals, symbols, and gestures of nonverbal communication.

The sign languages used by deaf people and others are an especially vivid example of communication without typical oral speech.

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While in the world. T the same lish-spea visiting English she will meaning ture to States co to the "

ica." Duster says:

Are we essentially a nation with a common—or at least dominant—culture to which immigrants and "mi-

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SUMMARY

Culture is the totality of learned, socially transmitted behavior. This chapter examines the basic elements which make up a culture, social practices which are common to all cultures, and variations which distinguish one culture from another.

1. *Elements of culture*: A social transmission of culture,

11—Cultural relati
ing other culture
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13 Advocates of
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members would most never consider doing so.

Acceptance of norms is subject to change, as the political, economic, and social conditions of a culture are transformed. For example, under traditional norms in the United States, a woman was expected to marry, rear children, and remain at home if her husband could support the family without her assistance. However, these norms have been changing in recent decades, in part as a result of the contemporary feminist movement (see Chapter 11). As support for traditional norms weakens, people will feel free to violate them more frequently and openly and will be less likely to receive serious negative sanctions for doing so.

(4)

Sanctions

What happens when people violate a widely shared and understood norm? Suppose that a football coach sends a twelfth player onto the field. Imagine a college graduate showing up in cutoffs for a

The prohibition against cannibalism is an example of a social norm so widely accepted in the United States that it rarely needs to be verbalized.

job interview at a large bank. Or consider a driver who neglects to put any money in a parking meter. In each of these situations, the person will receive sanctions if his or her behavior is detected.

Sanctions are penalties and rewards for conduct concerning a social norm. Note that the concept of reward is included in this definition. Conformity to a norm can lead to positive sanctions such as a pay raise, a medal, a word of gratitude, or a pat on the back. Negative sanctions include fines, threats, imprisonment, and even stares of contempt.)

In Table 3-1 on page 74, the relationship between norms and sanctions is summarized. As you can see in this table, the sanctions that are associated with formal norms (those written down and codified) tend to be formalized as well. If a coach sends too

ence. People attending a serious film will be more likely to insist on its excellence than those attending a slapstick comedy or a horror movie.

Types of Norms Sociologists distinguish between norms in two ways. First, norms are classified as either formal or informal. Formal norms have generally been written down and involve strict rules for punishment of violators. In the United States, we often formalize norms into laws, which must be very precise in defining proper and improper behavior. In a political sense, law is the "body of rules, made by government for society, interpreted by the courts, and backed by the power of the state" (Cummings and Wise, 1993:491). Laws are an example of formal norms, although not the only type. The requirements for a college major and the rules of a card game are also considered formal norms.

By contrast, informal norms are generally understood but are not precisely recorded. Standards of proper dress are a common example of informal norms. Our society has no specific punishment or sanction for a person who comes to school or to college dressed quite differently from everyone else. Making fun of nonconforming students for their unusual choice of clothing is the most likely response (E. Gross and Stone, 1964; G. Stone, 1977).

Norms are also classified by their relative importance to society. When classified in this way, they are known as *mores* and *folkways*.

(3) **Mores** (pronounced "MOR-ays") are norms deemed highly necessary to the welfare of a society, often because they embody the most cherished principles of a people. Each society demands obedience to its mores; violation can lead to severe penalties. Thus, the United States has strong mores against murder, treason, and child abuse that have been institutionalized into formal norms. **Folkways** are norms governing everyday behavior whose violation raises comparatively little concern. For example, walking up a "down" escalator in a department store challenges our standards of appropriate behavior, but it will not result in a fine or a jail sentence. Society is more likely to formalize mores than it is folkways. Nevertheless, folkways play an important role in shaping the daily behavior of members of a culture.

SOCIALIZATION

SUMMARY

Socialization is the process whereby people learn the attitudes, values, and actions appropriate to individuals as members of a particular culture. This chapter examines the role of socialization in human development; the way in which people develop perceptions, feelings, and beliefs about themselves; and the lifelong nature of the socialization process.

1 Socialization affects the overall cultural practices of a society, and it also shapes the images that we hold of ourselves.)

2 In the early 1900s, Charles Horton Cooley advanced the belief that we learn who we are by interacting with others.

3 George Herbert Mead is best known for his theory of the *self*. He proposed that as people mature, their selves begin to reflect their concern about reactions from others.

4 Erving Goffman has shown that many of our daily activities involve attempts to convey distinct impressions of who we are.

5 The family is the most important agent of socialization in the United States, especially for children.

6 As the primary agents of socialization, parents play a critical role in guiding children into those *gender roles* deemed appropriate in a society.

7 Like the family, schools have an explicit mandate to socialize people in the United States—and especially children—into the norms and values of our culture.

8 Peer groups frequently assist adolescents in gaining some degree of independence from parents and other authority figures.

9 Television has been criticized as an agent of socialization because it encourages children to forsake human interaction for passive viewing.

10 We are most fully exposed to occupational roles through observing the work of our parents, of people whom we meet while they are performing their duties and of people portrayed in the media.

the family, workplace, and the state. The role of religion in socializing young people into society's norms and values will be explored in Chapter 14.

Individuality is often lost within total institutions. For example, upon entering prison to begin "doing time," a person may experience the humiliation of a *degradation ceremony* as he or she is stripped of clothing, jewelry, and other personal possessions (H. Garfinkel, 1956). Even the person's self is taken away to some extent; the prison inmate loses his or her name and becomes known to authorities as No. 72716. From this point on, daily routines are scheduled with little or no room for personal initiative. The institution is experienced as an overbearing social environment; the individual becomes secondary and rather invisible.

①

Family

The family is the institution most closely associated with the process of socialization. Obviously, one of its primary functions is the care and rearing of children. We experience socialization first as babies and infants living in families; it is here that we develop an initial sense of self. Most parents seek to help their children become competent adolescents and self-sufficient adults, which means socializing them into the norms and values of both the family and the larger society. In this process, adults themselves experience socialization as they adjust to becoming spouses, parents, and in-laws (Gecas, 1981).

The lifelong process of learning begins shortly after birth. Since newborns can hear, see, smell, taste, and feel heat, cold, and pain, they orient themselves to the surrounding world. Human be-

AGENTS OF SOCIALIZATION

As we have seen, the culture of the United States is defined by rather gradual movements from one stage of socialization to the next. The continuing

pointed out earlier, Margaret Mead (1970:65-91) has suggested that socialization is greatest in societies undergoing rapid social change; in such societies, the young socialize the old to new customs and values.

2 School

Like the family, schools have an explicit mandate to socialize people in the United States—and especially children—into the norms and values of our cultures. As conflict theorists Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis (1976) have observed, schools in this country foster competition through built-in systems of reward and punishment, such as grades and evaluations by teachers. Consequently, a child who is working intently to learn a new skill can nevertheless come to feel stupid and unsuccessful. However, as the child matures, children become capable of increasingly realistic assessments of their intellectual, physical, and social abilities.

Functionalists point out that, as agents of socialization, schools fulfill the function of teaching recruits the values and customs of the larger society. Conflict theorists concur with this observation, but add that schools can reinforce the divisive aspects of society, especially those of social class. For example, higher education in the United States is quite costly despite the existence of financial aid programs. Students from affluent backgrounds thus have an advantage in gaining access to universities and professional training. At the same

Peer Group

As a child grows older, the family becomes somewhat less important in his or her social development. Instead, peer groups increasingly assume the role of George Herbert Mead's significant others. Within the peer group, young people associate with others who are approximately their own age and who often enjoy a similar social status.

Peer groups, such as friendship cliques, youth gangs, and special-interest clubs, frequently assist adolescents in gaining some degree of independence from parents and other authority figures. As we will study in more detail in Chapter 7, conforming to peers' behavior is an example of the socialization process at work. If all of one's friends have successfully battled for the right to stay out until midnight on a Saturday night, it may seem essential to fight for the same privilege. Peer groups also provide for anticipatory socialization into new roles that the young person will later assume.

Teenagers imitate their friends in part because the peer group maintains a meaningful system of rewards and punishments. The group may encourage a young person to follow pursuits that society considers admirable, as in a school club engaged in volunteer work in hospitals and nursing homes. On the other hand, the group may encourage someone to violate the culture's norms and values by driving recklessly, shoplifting, engaging in acts of vandalism, and the like.

Gender differences are noteworthy in the social world of adolescents. Males are more likely to spend time in groups of males, while females are more likely to interact with a single other female. This pattern reflects differences in levels of emotional intimacy; teenage males are less likely to develop strong emotional ties than are females. Instead, males are more inclined to share in group activities. These patterns are evident among adolescents in many societies besides the United States (Dornbusch, 1989:248).

Peer groups serve a valuable function by assisting the transition to adult responsibilities. At home,

their parents
as well.



Mass Media

In the last 75 years, such technological innovations as radio, motion pictures, recorded music, and television have become important agents of socialization. Television, in particular, is a critical force in the socialization of children in the United States. Many parents in essence allow the television set to become a child's favorite "playmate"; consequently, children in our society typically watch over three hours of television per day. Remarkably, between the ages of 6 and 18, the average young person spends more time watching the "tube" (15,000 to 16,000 hours) than working in school (13,000 hours). Apart from sleeping, watching television is the most time-consuming activity of young people.

Relative to other agents of socialization discussed

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TABLE 4-1

1. DEFINITION OF SOCIOLOGY

'Sociology' which had once been treated as social philosophy, or the philosophy of history, emerged as an independent social science in the 19th century. *Auguste Comte*, a Frenchman, is traditionally considered to be the father of sociology. Comte is accredited with the coining of the term *sociology* (in 1839). "Sociology" is composed of two words : *socius*, meaning companion or associate, and '*logos*', meaning science or study. The etymological meaning of "sociology" is thus the science of society. *John Stuart Mill*, another social thinker and philosopher of the 19th century, proposed the word *ethology* for this new science. *Herbert Spencer* developed his systematic study of society and adopted the word "sociology" in his works. With the contributions of Spencer and others it (sociology) became the permanent name of the new science.

The question 'what is sociology' is, indeed, a question pertaining to the definition of sociology. No student can rightfully be expected to enter on a field of study which is totally undefined or unbounded. At the same time, it is not an easy task to set some fixed limits to a field of study. It is true in the case of sociology. Hence it is difficult to give a brief and a comprehensive definition of sociology.

Sociology has been defined in a number of ways by different sociologists. No single definition has yet been accepted as completely satisfactory. In fact, there are as many definitions of sociology as there are sociologists. For our purpose of study a few definitions may be cited here.

1. *Auguste Comte*, the founding father of sociology, defines sociology as the science of social phenomena "subject to natural and invariable laws, the discovery of which is the object of investigation".

✓ *Kingsley Davis* says that "Sociology is a general science of society".

✓ *Harry M. Johnson* opines that "sociology is the science that deals with social groups".

✓ *Emile Durkheim* defines sociology as the "science of social institutions".

5. *Park* regards sociology as "the science of collective behaviour".

6. *Small* defines sociology as "the science of social relations".

7. *Marshal Jones* defines sociology as "the study of man-in-relationship-to-men".

8. *Ogburn and Nimkoff* define sociology as "the scientific study of social life".

9. *Franklin Henry Giddings* defines sociology as "the science of social phenomena".

10. *Henry Fairchild* defines sociology as "the study of man and his human environment in their relationships to each other".

11. *Max Weber* defines sociology as "the science which attempts the interpretative understanding of social action in order thereby to arrive at a causal explanation of its course and effects".

12. *Alex Inkeles* says, "Sociology is the study of systems of social action and of their inter-relationships".

13. *Kimball Young and Raymond W. Mack* define sociology as "the scientific study of the social aspects of human life".

14. *Morris Ginsberg*: Of the various definitions of sociology the one given by Morris Ginsberg seems to be more satisfactory and comprehensive. He defines sociology in the following way: "In the broadest sense, sociology is the study of human interactions and inter-relations, their conditions and consequences".

A careful examination of various definitions cited above, makes it evident that sociologists differ in their opinion about the definition of sociology. Their divergent views about the definition of sociology only reveal their distinct approaches to its study. However, the common idea underlying all the definitions mentioned above is that sociology is concerned with man, his social relations and his society.

2. NATURE OF SOCIOLOGY

Sociology, as a branch of knowledge, has its own unique characteristics. It is different from other sciences in certain respects. An analysis of its internal logical characteristics helps one to understand what kind of science it is. The following are the main characteristics of sociology as enlisted by Robert Bierstedt in his book "*The Social Order*".

✓ Sociology is an Independent Science (I)

Sociology has now emerged into an independent science. It is not treated and studied as a branch of any other science like philosophy or political philosophy or history. As an independent science it has its own field of study, boundary and method.

✓ Sociology is a Social Science and not a Physical Science (II)

Sociology belongs to the family of social sciences and not to the family of physical sciences. As a social science it concentrates its attention on man, his social behaviour, social activities and social life. As a member of the family of social sciences it is intimately related to other social sciences like history, political science, economics, psychology, anthropology etc. The fact that sociology deals with the *Social universe* distinguishes it from astronomy, physics, chemistry, geology, mathematics and other physical sciences.

✓ Sociology is a Categorical and not a Normative Discipline (III)

Sociology "confines itself to statements about *what is*, not *what should be or ought to be*". "As a science, sociology is necessarily silent about questions of value. It does not make any kind of value-judgements. Its approach is neither moral nor immoral but amoral. It is *ethically neutral*. It cannot decide the directions in which sociology ought to go. It makes no recommendations on matters of social policy or legislation or programme. But it does not mean that sociological knowledge is useless and serves no purpose. It only means that sociology as a discipline *cannot* deal with problems of good and evil, right and wrong, and moral or immoral."

✓ Sociology Is a Pure Science and not an Applied Science (IV)

A distinction is often made between *pure* sciences and *applied* sciences. The main aim of pure sciences is the acquisition of knowledge and it is not bothered whether the acquired knowledge is useful or can be put to use. On the other hand, the aim of applied science is to apply the acquired knowledge into life and to put it to use. Each pure science may have its own applied field. For example, physics is a pure science and engineering is its applied field. Similarly the pure sciences such as *economics, politics, science, history*, etc., have their applied fields like *business, politics, journalism* respectively. Sociology as a pure science has its applied field such as *administration, diplomacy, social work* etc. Each pure science may have more than one application.

Sociology is a pure science, because the immediate aim of sociology is the acquisition of knowledge about human society, not the utilisation of that knowledge. Sociologists never determine questions of public policy and do not recommend legislators what laws should be passed or repealed. But the knowledge acquired by a sociologist is of great help to the administrator, the legislator, the diplomat, the teacher, the foreman, the supervisor, the social worker and the citizen. But sociologists themselves do not apply the knowledge to life and use, as a matter of their duty and profession.

✓ Sociology Is Relatively an Abstract Science and not a Concrete Science (V)

This does not mean that sociology is an art and not a science. Nor does it mean, it is unnecessarily complicated and unduly difficult. It only means that sociology is not interested in concrete manifestations of human events. It is more concerned with the *form* of human events and their *patterns*. For example, sociology is not concerned with particular wars and revolutions but with war and revolution in general, as social phenomena, as types of social conflict. Similarly, sociology does

Subject matter and scope of Sociology

Definition, Scope and uses of Sociology

An all-embracing and expanding science like sociology is growing at a fast rate no doubt. It is quite natural that sociologists have developed different approaches from time to time in their attempts to enrich its study. Still it is possible to identify some topics which constitute the subject-matter of sociology on which there is little disagreement among the sociologists. Such topics and areas broadly constitute the field of sociology. A general outline of the fields of sociology on which there is considerable agreement among sociologists could be given here.

- (1) Firstly, the major concern of sociology is sociological analysis. It means the sociologist seeks to provide an analysis of human society and culture with a sociological perspective. He evinces his interest in the evolution of society and tries to reconstruct the major stages in the evolutionary process. An attempt is also made "to analyse the factors and forces underlying historical transformations of society". Due importance is given to the scientific method that is adopted in the sociological analysis.
- (2) Secondly, sociology has given sufficient attention to the study of primary units of social life. In this area, it is concerned with social acts and social relationships, individual personality, groups of all varieties, communities (urban, rural and tribal), associations, organisations and populations.
- (3) Thirdly, sociology has been concerned with the development, structure and function of a wide variety of basic social institutions such as the family and kinship, religion and property, economic, political, legal, educational and scientific, recreational and welfare, aesthetic and expressive institutions.
- (4) Fourthly, no sociologist can afford to ignore the fundamental social processes that play a vital role. The social processes such as co-operation and competition, accommodation and assimilation, social conflict including war and revolution; communication including opinion formation, expression and change; social differentiation and stratification, socialisation and indoctrination, social control and deviance including crime, suicide, social integration and social change assume prominence in sociological studies.
- (5) Fifthly, sociology has placed high premium on the method of research also. Contemporary sociology has tended to become more and more rational and empirical rather than philosophical and idealistic. Sociologists have sought the application of scientific method in social researches. Like a natural scientist, a sociologist senses a problem for investigation. He then tries to formulate it into a researchable proposition. After collecting the data he tries to establish connections between them. He finally arrives at meaningful concepts, propositions and generalisations.

Sixthly, sociologists are concerned with the task of "formulating concepts, propositions and theories". "Concepts are abstracted from concrete experience to represent a class of phenomena". For example, terms such as social stratification, differentiation, conformity, deviance etc., represent concepts. A proposition "seeks to reflect a relationship between different categories of data or concepts". For example "lower-class youths are more likely to commit crimes than middle-class youths". This proposition is debatable. It may be proved to be false. To take another example, it could be said that "taking advantage of opportunities of higher education and occupational mobility leads to the weakening of the ties of kinship and territorial loyalties". Though this proposition sound debatable, it has been established after careful observations, inquiry and collection of relevant data. Theories go beyond concepts and propositions. "Theories represent systematically related propositions that explain social phenomena". Sociological theories are mostly rooted in factual than philosophical. The sociological perspective becomes more meaningful and fruitful when one tries to derive insight from concepts, propositions and theories.

Finally, in the present era of explosion of knowledge sociologists have ventured to make specialisations also. Thus, today good number of specialised fields of inquiry are emerging or Sociology of knowledge, sociology of history, sociology of literature, sociology of culture, sociology of religion, sociology of family etc., represent such specialised fields. The field of soci

"Society is the union itself, the organisation, the sum of voluntary associations in which society divides itself among together." — Paul Gauguin

— Table 1.

5. Society is "a web of social relationships".

Chapter 8

SOME BASIC CONCEPTS

On society's role in college and university admissions: The role of society in college and university admissions is complex and multifaceted. Society is composed of people. Without the students and the

Society—Meaning and Characteristics; Community—Meaning and Characteristics. Society and Community Differences; Association—Definition and Characteristics; Association and Community; Institution—Definition and Characteristics; Primary and Secondary Institutions; Functions of Social Institutions; Associations and Institutions; Social System—Social Institutions; Aarjan Wetter's Typology of Social Action.

*Society**Community*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Society is a web of social relationships. 2. A definite geographic area is not an essential aspect of society. 3. Society is abstract. 4. 'Community sentiment' or a sense of 'we-feeling' may be present or may not be present in society. 5. Society is wider. There can be more than one community in a society. 6. The objectives and interests of society are more extensive and varied. 7. Society involves both likeness and difference. Common interests as well as diverse interests are present in society. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community consists of a group of individuals living in a particular area with some degree of 'we-feeling'. 2. Community always denotes a definite locality or geographic area. 3. Community is concrete. 4. 'Community sentiment' is an essential element of community. There can be no community in its absence. 5. Community is smaller than society. 6. The objectives and interests of a community are comparatively less extensive and varied. 7. Likeness is more important than difference in community. There is common agreement of interests and objectives on the part of members. |
|--|--|

4. ASSOCIATION

We use the words *association* and *institution* very commonly in our daily talks. Sometimes, these words are used interchangeably to mean one and the same. But these words are used in a specific way in sociology. Hence it is necessary for us to know the meaning and nature of and difference between these two terms.

Association as a Means of Pursuing Ends

Men have diverse needs, desires and interests and ends which demand their satisfaction. They have three ways of fulfilling their ends. *Firstly*, they may act independently, each in his own way without bothering about others. This is unsocial and has its own limitations. *Secondly*, men may seek their ends through conflicts with one another. One may clash with another or others to snatch things or objects which one wants from others. *Finally*, men may try to fulfil their ends through co-operation and mutual assistance. On the basis of this co-operative effort each individual will be contributing to the ends of his fellow-men. This co-operative pursuit has a reference to *association*. When a group or collection of individuals organises itself expressly for the purpose of pursuing certain of its ends together on a co-operative pursuit, an association is said to be formed.

Association

1. An association is a group of people organised for the purpose of fulfilling a need or needs.

2. Association denotes membership. We belong to associations, to political parties, trade unions, youth clubs, families, etc.

3. Associations consist of individuals.

4. Associations are concrete.

5. An association has a location; it makes sense to ask where it is. Thus, a family can be located in space.

6. Associations are mostly created or established.

7. An association may have its own distinctive name.

8. Associations may be temporary or permanent.

Institution

1. Institution refers to the organised way of doing things. It represents common procedure.

2. Institution denotes only a mode or means of service! We do not belong to institution. We do not belong to marriage, property, education or law.

3. Institutions consist of laws, rules, and regulations.

4. Institutions are abstracting entities and yes!

5. An institution does not have locations. The question where it is, makes no sense at all. Thus, we cannot locate examination, education, marriage, etc.

6. Institutions are primarily evolved.

7. Institution does not possess specific names, but has a structure and may have symbol.

8. Institutions are relatively more durable.

9. SOCIAL SYSTEM
Meaning of System

system, economic system
Example of the Human body
The human body
and how system represent
There are different
There are organs with
hearing, taste and smell
nervous system
digestive system
distinctive function
connected with every
interrelation and in
an equilibrium among
a systematic arrangement

Origin of the Concept

Biological
factors influenced by the view
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fascinated by the
artists have also
Henderson and
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The State

Social scientists have increasingly recognized the importance of the state—or government at all levels—as an agent of socialization because of its growing impact on the life cycle. Traditionally, family members have served as the primary caregivers in our culture, but in the twentieth century the family's protective function has steadily been transferred to outside agencies such as hospitals, mental health clinics, and insurance companies (Ogburn and Tibbits, 1934:661–778). Many of these agencies are run by the government; the rest are licensed and regulated by governmental bodies. In the social policy section of this chapter, we will see that the state is under pressure to become a provider of child care, which would give it a new and direct role in the socialization of infants and young children.

In the past, the life cycle was influenced most significantly by heads of households and by local groups such as religious organizations. However, in the 1990s the individual as a citizen and an economic actor is influenced by national interests. For example, labor unions and political parties serve as intermediaries between the individual and the state.

The state has had a noteworthy impact on the life cycle by reinstating the rites of passage that had disappeared in agricultural societies and in periods of early industrialization. For example, government regulations stipulate the ages at which a person may drive a car, drink alcohol, vote in elections, marry without parental permission, work overtime, and retire. These regulations do not constitute strict rites of passage: most 21-year-olds do not vote and most people choose their age of retirement without reference to government dictates. Still, by regulating the life cycle to some degree, the state shapes the socialization process by influencing our views of appropriate behavior at particular ages (Mayer and Schoepflin, 1989).

8

STRATIFICATION
AND SOCIAL
MOBILITY

generally very guilty about concealing income from caseworkers, they did conceal it be-

SUMMARY

Stratification is structured ranking of entire groups of people that perpetuates unequal economic rewards and power in a society. In this chapter, we examine four general systems of stratification, various components of stratification, the explanations offered by functionalist and conflict sociologists for the existence of social inequality, and the relationship between stratification and social mobility.

UNDERSTANDING STRATIFICATION

Systems of Stratification

This section will examine four general systems of stratification—systems of slavery, castes, estates, and social classes. These should be viewed as ideal types useful for purposes of analysis. Any stratification system may include elements of more than one type. For example, the southern states of the United States had social classes dividing Whites as well as institutionalized enslavement of Blacks.

(1) **Slavery** The most extreme form of legalized social inequality for individuals or groups is **slavery**. The distinguishing characteristic of this oppressive system of stratification is that enslaved individuals are owned by other people. These human beings are treated as property, just as if they were equivalent to household pets or appliances.

Slavery has varied in the way it has been practiced. In ancient Greece, the main source of slaves consisted of captives of war and piracy. Although slave status could be inherited by succeeding generations, it was not necessarily permanent. A person's status might change depending on which city-state happened to triumph in a military conflict. In effect, all citizens had the potential of becoming slaves or of being granted freedom, depending on the circumstances of history. By contrast, in the United States and Latin America, racial and legal barriers were established to prevent the freeing of slaves. As we will see in Box 8-1, millions of people around the world continue to live as slaves.

Whenever and wherever it has existed, slavery has required extensive coercion in order to maintain the privileges and rewards of slave owners. For example, it is estimated that as many as 9000 Blacks were involved in an 1822 slave revolt in Charleston, South Carolina, led by a carpenter and former slave named Denmark Vesey. Imagine the resources that must have been needed to crush such a massive rebellion. This is but one reflection of the commitment to social control required to keep people trapped in lives of involuntary servitude (Franklin and Moss, 1988; Schaefer, 1993).

(2) **Castes** Castes are hereditary systems of rank, usually religiously dictated, that tend to be fixed and

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estates

① Caste

immobile. The caste system is generally associated with Hinduism in India and other countries. In India there are four major castes, called varnas. A fifth category of outcastes, referred to as untouchables, is considered to be so lowly and unclean as to have no place within this system of stratification. There are also many minor castes. Caste membership is established at birth, since children automatically assume the same position as their parents. Each caste is quite sharply defined, and members are expected to marry within that caste.

Caste membership generally determines one's occupation or social roles. An example of a lower caste is the *Doms*, whose main work is the undesirable job of cremating bodies. The caste system promotes a remarkable degree of differentiation. Thus, the single caste of chauffeurs has been split into two separate subcastes: drivers of luxury cars have a higher status than drivers of economy cars.

In recent decades, industrialization and urbanization have taken their toll on India's rigid caste system. Many villagers have moved to urban areas where their low-caste status is unknown. Schools, hospitals, factories, and public transportation facilitate contacts between different castes that were previously avoided at all costs. In addition, there have been governmental efforts to reform the caste system. India's constitution, adopted in 1950, includes a provision abolishing discrimination against untouchables, who had traditionally been excluded from temples, schools, and most forms of employment. Today, untouchables constitute about 15 percent of India's population and are eligible for certain reserved governmental jobs. This situation has created resentment among people just above the untouchables in the caste system, who feel

given to White, "Colored," in the Republic of South Africa, and to a lesser extent to racial groups in the United States (see Chapter 10), brings to mind certain aspects of India's caste system.

(3)

Estates A third type of stratification system, called estates, was associated with feudal societies during

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Blacks, Hispanics, single mothers with dependent children, and people who cannot find regular work. This class lacks both wealth and income and is too weak politically to exercise significant power.

Both of these classes, at opposite ends of the nation's social hierarchy, reflect the importance of ascribed status, which is a social position "assigned" to a person without regard for the person's unique characteristics or talents. (By contrast, achieved status is a social position attained by a person largely through his or her own effort.) While privilege and deprivation are not guaranteed in the United States, those born into extreme wealth or poverty will often remain in the same class position they inherited from their parents.

The nation's most affluent families generally inherit wealth and status, while many members of

useful in stressing the importance of stratification as a determinant of social behavior and the fundamental separation in many societies between two distinct groups, the rich and the poor.

Max Weber's View of Stratification Unlike Karl Marx, Max Weber insisted that no single characteristic (such as class) totally defines a person's position within the stratification system. Instead, writing in 1916, he identified three analytically distinct components of stratification: class, status, and power (Gerth and Mills, 1958). f, v, g

Weber used the term **class** to refer to people who have a similar level of wealth and income. For example, certain workers in the United States provide the sole financial support for their families through jobs which pay the federal minimum wage. According to Weber's definition, these wage earners constitute a class, because they have the same economic position and fate. In this conception, Weber agreed with Marx regarding the importance of the economic dimension of stratification. Yet Weber argued that the actions of individuals and groups could not be understood solely in economic terms.

Weber used the term **status group** to refer to people who have the same prestige or lifestyle, independent of their class positions. In his analysis, status is a cultural dimension that involves the ranking of groups in terms of the degree of prestige they possess. An individual gains status through membership in a desirable group, such as the medical profession. Weber further suggested that status is subjectively determined by people's lifestyles and therefore can diverge from economic class standing. In our culture, a successful pickpocket may be in the same income class as a college professor. Yet the thief is widely regarded as a member of a low-status group, while the professor holds high status.

For Weber, the third major component of stratification, power, reflects a political dimension. **Power** is the ability to exercise one's will over others. In the United States, power stems from membership in particularly influential groups, such as corporate boards of directors, government bodies, and interest groups. As we will explore more fully in Chapter 15, conflict theorists generally agree that two major sources of power—big business and government—are closely interrelated.

13

THE FAMILY

Perspectives on Stratification

As sociologists have examined the subject of stratification and attempted to describe and explain social inequality, they have engaged in heated debates and reached varying conclusions. No theorist stressed the significance of class for society—and for social change—more strongly than Karl Marx. Marx viewed class differentiation as the crucial determinant of social, economic, and political inequality. By contrast, Max Weber questioned Marx's emphasis on the overriding importance of the economic sector and argued that stratification should be viewed as a multidimensional phenomenon.

Karl Marx's View of Class Differentiation Sociologist Leonard Beeghley (1978:1) aptly noted that "Karl Marx was both a revolutionary and a social scientist." Marx was concerned with stratification in all types of human societies, beginning with primitive agricultural tribes and continuing into feudalism. But his main focus was on the effects of class on all aspects of nineteenth-century Europe. Marx focused on the plight of the working class and felt it imperative to strive for changes in the class structure of society.

In Marx's view, social relations during any period of history depend on who controls the primary

mode of economic production. His analysis centered on how the relationships between various groups were shaped by differential access to scarce resources. Thus, under the estate system, most production was agricultural, and the land was owned by the nobility. Peasants had little choice but to work according to terms dictated by those who owned land.

Using this type of analysis, Marx examined social relations within capitalism—an economic system in which the means of production are largely in private hands and the main incentive for economic activity is the accumulation of profits (D. Rosenberg, 1991). Marx focused on the two classes that began to emerge as the estate system declined—the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The bourgeoisie, or capitalist class, owns the means of production, such as factories and machinery, while the proletariat is the working class. In capitalist societies, the bourgeois maximize profit in competition with other firms. In the process, they exploit workers, who must exchange their labor for subsistence wages. In Marx's view, members of each class share a distinctive culture. He was most interested in the culture of the proletariat, but also examined the ideology of the bourgeoisie, through which it justifies its dominance over workers.

According to Marx, exploitation of the prole-

~~Outline~~

the Middle Ages. The *estate system*, or feudalism, required peasants to work land leased to them by nobles in exchange for military protection and other services. The basis for the system was the nobles' ownership of land, which was critical to their superior and privileged status. As in systems based on slavery and caste, inheritance of one's position largely defined the estate system. The nobles inherited their titles and property, whereas the peasants were born into a subservient position within an agrarian society.

As the estate system developed, it became more differentiated. Nobles began to achieve varying degrees of authority. By the twelfth century, a priesthood emerged in most of Europe, as did classes of merchants and artisans. For the first time, there were groups of people whose wealth did not depend on land ownership or agriculture. This economic change had profound social consequences as the estate system ended and a class system of stratification came into existence.

④

Social Classes A *class system* is a social ranking based primarily on economic position in which achieved characteristics can influence mobility. In contrast to slavery, caste, and estate systems, the boundaries between classes are less precisely defined, and there is much greater movement from one stratum, or level, of society to another. Yet class systems maintain stable stratification hierarchies and patterns of class divisions. Consequently, like the other systems of stratification described thus far, class systems are marked by unequal distribution of wealth and power.

Income inequality is also a basic characteristic of a class system. In 1991, the median family income in the United States was \$35,939. In other words, half of all families had higher incomes in that year and half had lower incomes. Yet this fact may not fully convey the income disparity. In 1991, about 25%

Sons family are regarded as higher value is given to the son as opposed to the brothers according to Murdock, 64 percent to one side of the family or descent. **Patrilineal** (from Latin *patr*, father) indicates that only the father is important in terms of property, establishment of emotional ties which favor **matrilineal** ("mother's") descent, only the mother counts; the relatives of the father are not important.

Where Do We Live?

The social norms concerning residence of a newly created family determine the pattern of residence, which in the United States, a married couple lives in a separate household. However, from a cultural view, it becomes clear that neolocal residence is relatively common in many societies, the bride and her parents (the **patrilocal** pattern), (the **matrilocal** pattern). It is felt that the new couple needs support and especially the husband.

In a society where males are dominant in all family decision making, it is termed a **patriarchy**. Frequently, in patriarchal societies, the eldest male wields the greatest power. Women hold low status in such societies and rarely are granted full and equal rights within the legal system. It may be more difficult, for example, for a woman to obtain a divorce than it is for a man. By contrast, in a **matriarchy**, women have greater authority than men. Matriarchies may have emerged among Native American tribal societies and in nations in which men were absent for long periods of time for warfare or food gathering.

Some marital relationships may be neither male-dominated nor female-dominated. The third type of authority pattern, the **egalitarian family**, is one in which spouses are regarded as equals. This does not mean, however, that each decision is shared in such families. Mothers may hold authority in some spheres, fathers in others. In the view of many sociologists, the egalitarian family has begun to replace the patriarchal family as the social norm. A study of Detroit families by Robert Blood, Jr., and Donald Wolfe (1960) supports this contention (see Box 13-1 on page 366).

FUNCTIONS OF THE FAMILY

Do we really need the family? A century ago, Friedrich Engels (1884), a colleague of Karl Marx, described the family as the ultimate source of social inequality because of its role in the transfer of

(Browne, 1991).

1. **Reproduction.** For a society to maintain itself, it must replace dying members. In this sense, the family contributes to human survival through its function of reproduction.

2. **Protection.** Unlike the young of other animal species, human infants need constant care and economic security. Infants and children experience an extremely long period of dependency, which places special demands on older family members. In all cultures, it is the family that assumes ultimate responsibility for the protection and upbringing of children.

3. **Socialization.** Parents and other kin monitor a child's behavior and transmit the norms, values, and language of a culture to the child (see Chapters 3 and 4). Of course, as conflict theorists point out, the social class of couples and their children significantly influences the socialization experiences to which they are exposed and the protection they receive.

4. **Regulation of sexual behavior.** Sexual norms are subject to change over time (for instance, changes in customs for dating) and across cultures (Islamic Saudi Arabia compared with more permissive Denmark). However, whatever the time period or cultural values in a society, standards of sexual behavior are most clearly defined within the family circle. The structure of society influences these standards so that, characteristically in male-dominated societies, formal and informal norms permit men to express and enjoy their sexual desires more freely than women may.

States were to unmarried mothers, com-
with only one-tenth in 1970.
ly, about half of all children born in the
states are expected to spend some part of
childhood in single-parent homes (Ahlburg
ita, 1992:4).

icians and religious leaders are debating
ing of "family values," an increasing pro-
portion of people in the United States are living in
non-traditional types of family arrangements such
as rent families, stepfamilies, and foster

apter, we will see how family patterns
change from one culture to another and even within
a culture. In the Toda culture of southern
India, a man may be simultaneously married to
two women. Fatherhood is not always connected
to biological facts; any husband may estab-
lish his paternity by presenting a pregnant woman
and arrow. The Balinese of Indonesia
allow men to marry each other because they
believe that husbands have already been intimate in the
Banaro culture of New Guinea, the
husband is bidden to have intercourse with his
wife's first borne a child by another man
for the purpose. Once the wife has proved
she is sterile, the husband is allowed
to have sexual relations with her (Leslie and Kor-
bin, 1960, 39).

In this chapter, we will see that the family is uni-



have two parents living with their
unmarried children.

versal—found in every culture—though varied in its organization. A **family** can be defined as a set of people related by blood, marriage (or some other agreed-upon relationship), or adoption who share the primary responsibility for reproduction and caring for members of society. We will look at the primary functions of the family and the variations in marital patterns and family life in the United States. Particular attention will be given to the increasing number of people who are living in dual-career or single-parent families. The social policy section will examine the distressing prevalence of domestic violence in the United States.

THE FAMILY: UNIVERSAL BUT VARIED

The family as a social institution is present in all cultures. Although the organization of the family can vary greatly, there are certain general principles concerning its composition, descent patterns, residence patterns, and authority patterns.

Composition: What Is the Family?

In the United States, the family has traditionally been viewed in very narrow terms—as a married couple and their unmarried children living together. However, this is but one type of family, what

sociologists refer to as a **nuclear family**. The term **nuclear family** is well-chosen, since this type of family serves as the nucleus, or core, upon which larger family groups are built. People in the United States see the nuclear family as the preferred family arrangement. Yet, as is shown in Figure 13-1, by 1990 only about one-quarter of the nation's households fit this model. (The term **household** is used by the Bureau of the Census to refer to related or unrelated individuals sharing a residence as well as to people who live alone.)

As Figure 13-1 (page 362) illustrates, the proportion of households in the United States composed of married couples with children at home has decreased steadily over the last 30 years. At the same time, there have been substantial increases in the number of single-person and single-parent households. Similar trends are evident in other industrialized nations, including Canada, Great Britain, and Japan (see Figure 13-2 on page 363).

A family in which relatives in addition to parents and children—such as grandparents, aunts, or uncles—live in the same home is known as an extended family. While not common, such living arrangements do exist in the United States. The structure of the extended family offers certain advantages over that of the nuclear family. Crises such as death, divorce, and illness involve less strain for family members, since there are more people who can provide assistance and emotional support. In

women, security and autonomy. Apparently, money establishes the balance of power not only for married couples but also for unmarried heterosexual couples who are living together. Married women with paying work outside the home enjoy greater marital power than full-time

..... Comparative studies have revealed the complexity of marital power issues in other cultures. For example, anthropologist David Gilmore (1990) examined decision making in two rural towns in southern Spain. These communities—

surplus cash is uncommon ^{more} and household finances are often based on borrowing and buying on credit because of the uncertainties of household employment—the wife “rules” the household economy, and the husband accepts her rule.

✓ 5 *Affection and companionship.* Ideally, the family provides members with warm and intimate relationships and helps them feel satisfied and secure. Of course, a family member may find such rewards outside the family—from peers, in school, at work—and may perceive the home as an unpleasant place. Nevertheless, unlike other institutions, the family is obligated to serve the emotional needs of its members. We expect our relatives to understand us, to care for us, and to be there for us when we need them.

✓ 6 *Providing of social status.* We inherit a social position because of the “family background” and reputation of our parents and siblings. The family unit presents the newborn child with an ascribed status of race and ethnicity that helps to determine his or her place within a society’s stratification system. Moreover, family resources affect children’s ability to pursue certain opportunities such as higher education and specialized lessons.

It is apparent, then, that the family has been as-

Chapter 2

DEFINITION, SCOPE AND USES OF SOCIOLOGY

Definition of Sociology—Nature of Sociology—Subject-matter and Scope of Sociology—Im-
plications of Sociology—Nature of Sociology—Subject-matter and Scope of Sociology—Func-