

MCAT Vocabulary:

Sociology

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First Set of Vocab Terms

- ❑ **Agrarian societies** Societies in which large scale cultivation using plows and draft animals is the primary means of subsistence.
- ❑ **Alienation** A term used by Marx to refer to the modern plight in which people are estranged from themselves, from the work they produce, and from one another.
- ❑ **Anomie (Durkheim)** A breakdown or confusion in the norms, values, and culture of a group or a society. A condition of relative normlessness.
- ❑ **Assimilation** The merging of minority and majority groups into one group with a common monoculture and identity.
- ❑ **Capitalism** A form of economic organization in which private individuals accumulate and invest capital, own the means of production, and control profits.
- ❑ **Class conflict (Marx):** The struggle between competing classes, specifically between the class that owns the means of production and the class or classes that do not.
- ❑ **Class consciousness (Marx):** the sense of common class position and shared interests held by members of a social class.
- ❑ **Conflict approach** One of the major theoretical perspectives in sociology: emphasizes the importance of unequal power and conflict in society. Weberian conflict theorists stress inequality and conflict based on class, status, power; Marxian theorists emphasize conflict and inequality based on ownership of the means of production.
- ❑ **Content analysis** A research method used to describe and analyze in an objective and systematic way the content of literature, speeches, or other media presentations. The method helps to identify cultural themes or trends.
- ❑ **Correlation** An observed association between a change in the value of one variable and a change in the value of another variable.



- ❑ **Counterculture** A subculture whose norms and values sharply contradict the dominant norms and values of the society in which it occurs.
- ❑ **Cultural relativism** The view that the customs and ideas of a society must be viewed within the context of that society.
- ❑ **Culture lag** The time difference between the introduction of material innovations and resulting changes in cultural practices.
- ❑ **Culture** The common beliefs, norms, and values shared by a group of people. Culture can be further divided into **Material Culture**, **Symbolic Culture**, and **Language**.
- ❑ **Differentiation, functional** The division of labor or of social roles within a society or an organization.
- ❑ **Diffusion** The spread of inventions and discoveries from one group or culture to another on a voluntary basis; a source of cultural change.
- ❑ **Division of labor** The assignment of specialized tasks to various members of a group, organization, community, or society (specialization).
- ❑ **Double Consciousness (Du Bois)** The sense of “two-ness” among African Americans of being both Americans and being black
- ❑ **Dysfunction** Any consequence of a social system that disturbs or hinders the integration, adjustment, or stability of the system.
- ❑ **Equilibrium** In functionalist theory, the view that the parts of a society fit together into a balanced whole.
- ❑ **Ethnocentrism** The tendency to see one's own culture as superior to all others.
- ❑ **Ethnography** A detailed study based on actual observation of the way of life of a human group or society.
- ❑ **Ethnomethodology** The study of the methods used by individuals to communicate and make sense of their everyday lives as members of society. Many ethnomethodologists focus on the study of language and everyday conversation.
- ❑ **Evolutionary theories** Theories of social change that see societies as evolving from simpler forms to more complex ones. In biology, the theory that living organisms develop new traits that may aid their adaptation or survival.



- ❑ **Hunting and gathering societies** Societies that obtain food by hunting animals, fishing, and gathering fruits, nuts, and grains. These societies do not plant crops or have domesticated animals.
- ❑ **Hypothesis** A tentative statement asserting a relationship between one factor and something else (based on theory, prior research, or general observation).
- ❑ **Ideology** A system of ideas that reflects, rationalizes, and defends the interests of those who believe in it.
- ❑ **Individualism** A belief in individual rights and responsibilities.
Industrialization The shift within a nation's economy from a primarily agricultural base to a manufacturing base.
- ❑ **Industrialized societies** Societies that rely on mechanized production, rather than on human or animal labor, as the primary means of subsistence.
- ❑ **Instinct** A genetically determined behavior triggered by specific conditions or events.
- ❑ **Kinship** Socially defined family relationships, including those based on common parentage, marriage, or adoption.
- ❑ **Language** Spoken or written symbols combined into a system and governed by rules.
- ❑ **Macro level** An analysis of societies that focuses on large-scale institutions, structures, and processes.
- ❑ **Mechanical solidarity** Cohesion among a group of people from earlier societies in which people live in smaller groups and are not very specialized.
- ❑ **Medicalization** The rising power of the medical institution, and the growing number of human experiences that are now attached to a medical label or diagnosis.
- ❑ **Methodology** The rules, principles, and practices that guide the collection of evidence and the conclusions drawn from it.
- ❑ **Micro level** An analysis of societies that focuses on small-scale process, such as how individuals interact and how they attach meanings to the social actions of others.
- ❑ **Modernization** The economic and social transformation that occurs when a traditional agricultural society becomes highly industrialized.



- ❑ **Nomadic Societies** that move their residences from place to place.
- ❑ **Norm** A shared rule about acceptable or unacceptable social behavior.
- ❑ **Organic solidarity** Cohesion among post-industrial groups in which people are held together based on their specialized knowledge.
- ❑ **Participant observation** A research method in which the researcher does observation while taking part in the activities of the social group being studied.
- ❑ **Pastoral societies** Societies in which the raising and herding of animals such as sheep, goats, and cows is the primary means of subsistence.
- ❑ **Physician Role** Expectations about the way doctors are supposed to interact with patients and conduct their practice
- ❑ **Postindustrial society** A term used by Daniel Bell to refer to societies organized around knowledge and planning rather than around industrial production.
- ❑ **Public sociology** addresses a wide range of audiences, most of which are outside the academy... collaborate with many groups to improve social situations.
- ❑ **Rationalization** The process of subjecting social processes to calculation, efficiency, cost-benefit analyses, and administration.
- ❑ **Revolutionary movement** A type of social movement whose aim is to reorganize existing society completely.
- ❑ **Ruling class** A small class that controls the means of economic production and dominates political decisions.
- ❑ **Sick Role** Expectations about how sick people are supposed to act.
- ❑ **Social construction of reality** The process of socially creating definitions of situations so that they appear to be natural.
- ❑ **Social psychology** The scientific study of how individual behavior is socially influenced.
- ❑ **Socialist societies** Societies in which productive resources are owned and controlled by the state rather than by individuals.
- ❑ **Society** A group of people with a shared and somewhat distinct culture who live in a defined territory, feel some unity as a group, and see themselves as distinct from other peoples.



- **Sociological imagination** The ability to look at the social world and see how an individual's biography intersects with larger social trends; to think about things differently and question elements about our everyday routines.
- **Sociological perspective** Observing the larger social patterns, trends, and prevalence of any given social experience or phenomenon; a bird's eye view of a situation.
- **Sociology** The study and analysis of patterned social relationships in modern societies.
- **Structural-functional perspective** One of the major theoretical perspectives in sociology, developed by Talcott Parsons: focuses on how the various parts of society fit together or adjust to maintain the equilibrium of the whole.
- **Subculture** A distinguishable group that shares a number of features with the dominant culture within which it exists while also having unique features such as language, customs, or values.
- **Symbol** Any object or sign that evokes a shared social response.
- **Symbolic interactionism** An interpretive perspective, inspired by the work of George Herbert Mead, saying that individuals learn meanings through interaction with others and then organize their lives around these socially created meanings.
- **Theory** A system of orienting ideas, concepts, and relationships that provides a way of organizing the observable world through describing, explaining, and predicting.
- **Values** Strongly held general ideas that people share about what is good and bad, desirable or undesirable; values provide yardsticks for judging specific acts and goals.



Second Set of Vocab Terms

- ❑ **"Iron law of oligarchy"** The idea that power in an organization tends to become concentrated in the hands of a small group of leaders.
- ❑ **Absolute poverty** The condition of having too little income to buy the necessities-- food, shelter, clothing, health care.
- ❑ **Achieved status** A social position (status) obtained through an individual's own talents and efforts.
- ❑ **Ascribed status** A social position (status) such as sex, race, and social class that a person acquires based on their birth or life situations.
- ❑ **Back Region** The settings in which people act in more relaxed, spontaneous ways rather than paying attention to how they are being perceived by others.
- ❑ **Bureaucracy** A large-scale formal organization with centralized authority, a hierarchical chain of command, explicit rules and procedures, and an emphasis on formal positions rather than on persons.
- ❑ **Caste** system A closed system of social stratification in which prestige and social relationships are based on hereditary position at birth.
- ❑ **Class Position** in a social hierarchy based on prestige and/or property ownership.
- ❑ **Conformity** Going along with the norms or behaviors of a group.
- ❑ **Conjugal family** A form of family organization centered around the husband-wife relationship rather than around blood relationships.
- ❑ **Contagion theory** Le Bon's theory that the anonymity people feel in a crowd makes them susceptible to the suggestions of fanatical leaders, and that emotions can sweep through such a crowd like a virus.
- ❑ **Cultural capital** Symbolic wealth socially defined as worthy of being sought and possessed. Often marked by style of dress, speech, "elite" taste and manners.
- ❑ **Defining the situation** The socially created perspective that people apply to a situation. 2 Deviance Behaviors or characteristics that violate important social norms.
- ❑ **Dominant status** One social position that overshadows the other social positions an individual occupies (also called master status).



- ❑ **Dramaturgical analysis** An approach to social situations developed by Erving Goffman in which they are examined as though they were theatrical productions.
- ❑ **Dyad** A group composed of two people.
Egalitarian marriage A family in which husband and wife share equally in family decision making.
- ❑ **Emergent norm** theory A theory of collective behavior suggesting that people move to form a shared definition of the situation in relatively normless situations.
- ❑ **Emotion work** An individual's effort to change an emotion or feeling to one that seems to be more appropriate to a given situation.
- ❑ **Face-work** A term used by Goffman to refer to the actions taken by individuals to make their behavior appear consistent with the image they want to present.
- ❑ **Family Two** or more persons who are related by blood, marriage, adoption, or serious long-term commitment to each other, and who live together. They usually form an economic unit, and adult members care for the dependent children.
- ❑ **Formal sanction** A social reward or punishment that is administered in an organized, systematic way, such as receiving a diploma or getting a fine.
- ❑ **Generalized other** A general idea of the expectations, attitudes, and values of a group or community.
- ❑ **Groupthink** The tendency of individuals to follow the ideas or actions of a group.
- ❑ **Habitus** An internalized set of preferences and dispositions that are learned through experience; often linked to an individual's socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds.
- ❑ **Human-capital perspective** The view that the earnings of different workers vary because of differences in their education or employability.
- ❑ **Impression management** A term used by Goffman to describe the efforts of individuals to influence how others perceive them.
- ❑ **Informal sanction** A social reward or punishment that is given informally through social interaction, such as an approving smile or a disapproving frown.



- ❑ **Institutionalized** Social practices that have become established, patterned, and predictable and that are supported by custom, tradition, and/or law.
- ❑ **Institutions** The patterned and enduring roles, statuses, and norms that have formed around successful strategies for meeting basic social needs. Instrumental leader A group leader whose role is to keep the group's attention directed to the task at hand.
- ❑ **Intergenerational mobility** A vertical change of social status from one generation to the next.
- ❑ **Internalization** Taking social norms, roles, and values into one's own mind.
- ❑ **Intragenerational mobility** A vertical change of social status experienced by an individual within his or her own lifetime.
- ❑ **"I" portion of the self** In George Herbert Mead's view, the spontaneous or impulsive portion of the self.
- ❑ **Labeling theory** A theory of deviance that focuses on the process by which some people are labeled deviant by other people (and thus take on deviant identities) rather than on the nature of the behavior itself.
- ❑ **Looking-glass self** The sense of self an individual derives from the way others view and treat him or her.
- ❑ **McDonaldization** A process by which the principles of the fast-food restaurant are coming to dominate more and more sectors of society.
- ❑ **"Me" portion of the self** In George Herbert Mead's view, the portion of the self that brings the influence of others into the individual's consciousness.
- ❑ **Modeling** Copying the behavior of admired people.
- ❑ **Monopoly** The exclusive control of a particular industry, market, service, or commodity by a single organization.
- ❑ **Mores** Strongly held social norms, a violation of which causes a sense of moral outrage.
- ❑ **Negative sanctions** Actions intended to deter or punish unwanted social behaviors.
- ❑ **Nuclear family** A family form composed of a married couple and their children.
- ❑ **Oligopoly** The control of a particular industry, market, service, or commodity by a few large organizations.



- ❑ **Organizational ritualism** A form of behavior in organizations, particularly in bureaucracies, in which people follow the rules and regulations so closely that they forget the purpose of those rules and regulations.
- ❑ **Patriarchal family** A form of family organization in which the father is the formal head of the family.
- ❑ **Positive sanctions** Rewards for socially desired behavior.
- ❑ **Power** The capacity of an individual group to control or influence the behavior of others, even in the face of opposition.
- ❑ **Prestige** A social recognition, respect, and deference accorded individuals or groups based on their social status.
- ❑ **Primary deviance** Deviant behavior that is invisible to others, short-lived, or unimportant, and therefore does not contribute to the public labeling of an individual as being deviant.
- ❑ **Primary group** A social group characterized by frequent face-to-face interaction, the commitment and emotional ties members feel for one another, and relative permanence.
- ❑ **Principle of cumulative advantage** A process whereby the positive features of some institutions help to generate further benefits for them (also called the Matthew Effect)
- ❑ **Reference group** A social group whose standards and opinions are used by an individual to help define or evaluate beliefs, values, and behaviors.
- ❑ **Relative poverty** The condition of having much less income than the average person in society, even if one can afford the necessities of life.
- ❑ **Resocialization** The process of socializing people away from a group or activity in which they are involved.
- ❑ **Role conflict** A situation in which two or more social roles make incompatible demands on a person.
- ❑ **Role exit** The process of leaving a role that is central to one's identity and building an identity in a new role while also taking into account one's prior role.
- ❑ **Role** To functionalists, the culturally prescribed and socially patterned behaviors associated with particular social positions. For interactionists, the effort to mesh the demands of a social position with one's own identity.



- ❑ **Secondary deviance** Behavior discovered by others and publicly labeled by them as deviant. Also refers to ongoing deviant behavior.
- ❑ **Secondary group** A social group bound together for the accomplishment of common tasks, with few emotional ties among members.
- ❑ **Self-fulfilling prophecy** A belief or prediction about a person or situation that influences that person/situation so that the belief/prediction comes true.
- ❑ **Social capital** Power based on whom one knows & one's connections.
- ❑ **Social learning theory** A form of learning theory suggesting that people learn through observation and imitation, even though they are not rewarded or punished for certain behaviors.
- ❑ **Social network** A set of interdependent relations or links between individuals.
- ❑ **Social reproduction** The carryover of a set of practices from one generation to the next (not necessarily within a family).
- ❑ **Social stratification** The fairly permanent ranking of positions in a society in terms of unequal power, prestige, or privilege.
- ❑ **Socialization** The process of preparing newcomers to become members of an existing social group by helping them to learn the attitudes and behaviors that are considered appropriate.
- ❑ **Socioeconomic status (SES)** An index of social status that considers a person's occupation, education, and income as measures of social status.
- ❑ **Status group** People sharing social identity based on similar values/lifestyles.
- ❑ **Status inconsistency** May occur when an individual occupies two or more unequal statuses in a society.
- ❑ **Stigmatization** The process of spoiling a person's identity by labeling him or her in a negative way.
- ❑ **Subjective social class** A person's own perception of his or her class position.
- ❑ **Total institution** A place where people spend 24 hours of every day for an extended part of their lives, cut off from the rest of society and tightly controlled by the people in charge.
- ❑ **Vertical integration** A form of business organization that attempts to control the business environment by assuming control of one or more of its resources.
- ❑ **Vertical mobility** Movement of an individual or a group upward or downward, from one social status to another.
- ❑ **Wealth (material capital)** The total value (minus debts) of what is owned.
- ❑ **White-collar crime** Crimes committed by "respectable" individuals, often while they practice their occupations—for example, embezzling money or stealing computer time.

Third Set of Vocab Terms



- ❑ **Affirmative action** The requirement that employers make special efforts to recruits hire and promote qualified members of previously excluded groups including women and minorities.
- ❑ **Apartheid** The recent policy of racial separation in South Africa enforced by legal political and military power.
- ❑ **Autocracy Rule** or government concentrated in a single ruler or group of leaders who are willing to use force to maintain control.
- ❑ **Civil law** The branch of law that deals with wrongs against the individual.
- ❑ **Comparable worth** A policy of equal pay for men and women doing similar work, even if the jobs are labeled differently by sex.
- ❑ **Complementary marriages** Marriages in which husband and wife take distinctly separate family roles.
- ❑ **Contact hypothesis** The theory that people of different racial groups who became acquainted would be less prejudiced toward one another.
- ❑ **Convergence theory** A theory suggesting that modernizing nations come to resemble one another over time.
- ❑ **Cooptation** A social process by which people who might otherwise threaten the stability or existence of an organization are brought into the leadership or policy-making structure of that organization.
- ❑ **Democracy** A form of political organization in which power resides with the people and is exercised by them.
- ❑ **Democratic-collective organization** An organization in which authority is placed in the group as a whole, rules are minimized, members have considerable control over their work, and job differentiation is minimized.
- ❑ **Double standard** A set of social norms that allows males greater freedom of sexual expression, particularly before marriage, than females.
- ❑ **Dual economy** The conceptual division of the private sector of the economy into monopoly (core) and competitive (periphery) sectors.
- ❑ **Dual-career families** Families in which both husband and wife have careers.
- ❑ **Dual-career responsibilities** The responsibilities of women who are wives as well as workers< often used to explain why women earn less.
- ❑ **Economic core** The sector of the economy characterized by large, generally very profitable, oligopolistic firms that are national or multinational in scope; also called the monopoly sector.



- ❑ **Economic institution** The pattern of roles, norms, and activities organized around the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services in a society.
- ❑ **Economic periphery** The sector of the economy characterized by small, local, barely profitable firms; also called the competitive sector.
- ❑ **Epidemiology** The study of disease patterns across and within populations.
- ❑ **Ethnic group** A group that shares a common cultural tradition & identity.
- ❑ **Gender differences** Variations in the social positions, roles, behaviors, attitudes, and personalities of men and women in a society.
- ❑ **Gender gap** Differences in the way men and women vote.
- ❑ **Gender stratification** The hierarchical ranking of men & women and their roles in terms of unequal ownership, power, prestige, social control, and social rewards.
- ❑ **Gender** The traits and behaviors that are socially designated as "masculine" or "feminine" in a particular society.
- ❑ **Genocide** The destruction of an entire population.
- ❑ **Global economy** An economy in which the economic life and health of one nation depends on what happens in other nations.
- ❑ **Heterosexual** A person whose preferred partner for erotic, emotional, and sexual interaction is someone of the opposite sex.
- ❑ **Hispanics** A general term referring to Spanish-speaking persons. It includes many distinct ethnic groups.
- ❑ **Homosexual** Someone who is emotionally, erotically, and physically attracted to persons of his or her own sex.
- ❑ **Hospice** An organization designed to provide care and comfort for terminally ill persons and their families.
- ❑ **Incest taboo** The prohibition of sexual intercourse between fathers and daughters, mothers and sons, and brothers and sisters.
- ❑ **Inflation** An increase in the supply of money in circulation that exceeds the rate of economic growth, making money worth less in relation to the goods and services it can buy.
- ❑ **Interest group** A group of people who work to influence political decisions affecting them.
- ❑ **Keynesian economics** The economic theory advanced by John Maynard Keynes, which holds that government intervention, through deficit spending, may be necessary to maintain high levels of employment.



- ❑ **Labor-market segmentation** The existence of two or more distinct labor markets, one of which is open only to individuals of a particular gender or ethnicity.
- ❑ **Laissez-faire economics** The economic theory advanced by Adam Smith, which holds that the economic system develops and functions best when left to market forces, without government intervention.
- ❑ **Lobbying** The process of trying to influence political decisions so they will be favorable to one's interests and goals.
- ❑ **Location** In Kanter's view, a person's position in an organization with respect to having control over decision making.
- ❑ **Medicaid** A federal-state matching program that provides medical assistance to certain low income persons.
- ❑ **Medicare** A federal health insurance program. Individuals are eligible if they receive Social Security benefits, federal disability benefits, or sometimes if they have end-stage kidney disease.
- ❑ **Nation** A relatively autonomous political grouping that usually shares a common language and a particular geography.
- ❑ **Nation-state** A social organization in which political authority overlaps a cultural and geographical community.
- ❑ **Pluralism** In ethnic relations, the condition that exists when both majority and minority groups value their distinct cultural identities, and at the same time seek economic and political unity. In political sociology, the view that society is composed of competing interest groups, with power diffused among them.
- ❑ **Policy research** Research designed to assess alternative possibilities for public or social action, in terms of their costs and/or consequences.
- ❑ **Political order** The institutionalized system of acquiring & exercising power.
- ❑ **Political party** An organized group of people that seeks to control or influence political decisions through legal means.
- ❑ **Power elite** According to Mills, a closely connected group of the corporate rich, political leaders, and military commanders who decide most key social and political issues.
- ❑ **Prejudice** A "prejudged" unfavorable attitude toward the members of a particular group, who are assumed to possess negative traits.
- ❑ **Race** A classification of humans into groups based on distinguishable physical characteristics that may form the basis for major social identities.



- ❑ **Racism** The institutionalized domination of one racial group by another.
- ❑ **Rape** A completed sexual assault involving penetration and usually instigated by a male upon a female, although perpetrators and victims can be male or female.
- ❑ **Reform movement** A type of social movement that accepts the status quo but seeks certain specific social reforms.
- ❑ **Regressive movement** A type of social movement whose aim is to move the social world back to where members believe it was at an earlier time.
- ❑ **Resource mobilization theory** The theory that social movements are affected by their ability to marshal various key resources..
- ❑ **Riot** A destructive and sometimes violent collective outburst.
- ❑ **Rising expectations** A situation in which people feel that past hardships should not have to be suffered in the future.
- ❑ **Scapegoating** Blaming a convenient but innocent person or group for one's trouble or guilt.
- ❑ **Sex** The biological distinction of being male or female.
- ❑ **Social movement** A group of people who work together to guide or suppress particular changes in the way society is organized.
- ❑ **Sociobiology** The scientific study of the biological basis for human behavior.
- ❑ **Sovereignty** The authority claimed by a state to maintain a legal system, use coercive power to secure obedience, and maintain its independence from other states..
- ❑ **Structural change** Demographic, economic, & rank-order changes in society.
- ❑ **Tertiary economic sector** The sector of an economy that offers services to individuals as well as to business.
- ❑ **Totalitarianism** A form of autocracy that involves the use of state power to control and regulate all phases of life.
- ❑ **Underground economy** Exchanges of goods and services that occur outside the arena of the normal, regulated economy and therefore escape official record keeping.
- ❑ **White ethnics** White Americans who value and preserve aspects of their ethnic heritage.
- ❑ **World systems analysis** A form of sociological analysis that stresses understanding national behavior in terms of historical and contemporary relationships among nations and societies.



Fourth Set of Vocab Terms

- ❑ **Accomplishment by natural growth** American working class child-rearing strategy that upholds a philosophy that kids should play and explore without much supervision, gaining “street smarts” & forming lots of peer friendships.
- ❑ **Baby boom** The people who were born in the United States between 1946 and 1965. This group represented a sharp increase in birth rates and in the absolute number of births compared to pre-1946 levels.
- ❑ **Birth rate** Number of births per year per 1000 women 15 to 44 years old.
- ❑ **Civil religion** The interweaving of religious & political symbols in public life.
- ❑ **Cohort** Persons who share something in common, usually being born in the same year or time period.
- ❑ **Concentric-zone theory** A theory of urban development holding that cities grow around a central business district in concentric zones, with each zone devoted to a different land use.
- ❑ **Concerted cultivation** American middle class and upper middle class child-rearing strategy upholding a philosophy that kids should have many extracurricular activities, be highly supervised by adults, and should express themselves with words instead of being rowdy.
- ❑ **Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA)** A "supercity" with more than 1 million people. There were 21 such cities in the U.S.A in 1984.
- ❑ **Contest mobility** The educational pattern in which selection for academic and university education is delayed and children compete throughout their schooling for high positions.
- ❑ **Creationism** A theory that sees all major types of living things, including people, as having been made by the direct creative action of God in six days.
- ❑ **Crude birth rate** The total number of live births per 1000 persons in a population within a particular year.
- ❑ **Crude death rate** The number of deaths per 1000 persons occurring within a one-year period in a particular population.
- ❑ **Cult** An organized group of people who together act out religious feelings, attitudes, & relationships; may focus on an unusual form of worship or belief.
- ❑ **Demographic transition** The demographic change experienced in Western Europe and North America since the industrial revolution in which the birth rate has declined so that it is about equal to the death rate.



- **Demography** The scientific study of population size, composition, and distribution as well as patterns of change in those features.
- **Denomination** One of a number of religious organizations in a society with no official state church. Has some formal doctrines, beliefs, and practices, but tolerates diverse religious views.
- **Dependency theory** A theory about the place of developing nations in the world economy suggesting that major industrial nations take advantage of the cheap labor and raw materials of developing nations and hence are reluctant to see them become industrialized.
- **Ecological paradigm** A theory of land use and living patterns that examines the interplay among economic functions, geographical factors, demography, and the replacement of one group by another.
- **Ecological succession** In urban sociology, the replacement of one group by another over time.
- **Ecological view** An approach to the study of culture or other social phenomena that emphasizes the importance of examining climate, food and water supplies, and existing enemies in the environments.
- **Ecosystem** A system formed by the interaction of a community of organisms with its environment.
- **Elderly dependency ratio** The ratio between the number of the elderly (65 and over) and the number of working-age people (ages 18 to 64).
- **Evangelicalism** A form of Protestantism that stresses the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the validity of personal conversion, the Bible as the basis for belief, and active preaching of the faith.
- **Flow** An experience of total involvement in one's present activity.
- **Fundamentalism** A form of religious traditionalism characterized by the literal interpretation of religious texts, a conception of an active supernatural, and clear distinctions between sin and salvation.
- **Gentrification** The movement of middle-class and upper-middle-class persons (usually white) into lower-income, sometimes minority urban areas.
- **Green revolution** The improvement in agricultural production based on higher-yielding grains and increased use of fertilizers, pesticides, & irrigation.
- **Health maintenance organizations (HMOs)** Organizations that people pay a fee to join in return for access to a range of health services.
- **Horticultural societies** Societies in which the cultivation of plants with hoes is the primary means of subsistence.



- ❑ **Institution of science** The social communities that share certain theories & methods aimed at understanding the physical & social worlds.
- ❑ **Magic** According to Malinowski, "a practical art consisting of acts which are only means to a definite end expected to follow."
- ❑ **Marriage rate** Number of marriages in a year per 1000 single women 15 to 44 years old.
- ❑ **Marriage squeeze** A situation in which the eligible individuals of one sex outnumber the supply of potential marriage partners of the other sex.
- ❑ **Mass hysteria** Widely felt fear and anxiety.
- ❑ **Mass media** Widely disseminated forms of communication, such as books, magazines, radio, television, and movies.
- ❑ **Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)** A geographical area containing either one city with 50,000 or more residents or an urban area of at least 50,000 inhabitants and a total population of at least 100,000 (except in New England where the required total is 75,000).
- ❑ **Mortality rate** The number of deaths per thousand in a population.
- ❑ **Multiple-nuclei theory** A theory of urban development holding that cities develop around a number of different centers, each with its own special activities.
- ❑ **Panic** A frightened response by a group of people to an immediate threat.
- ❑ **Paradigm** In the sociology of science, a coherent tradition of scientific law, theory, and assumptions that forms a distinct approach to problems.
- ❑ **Population exclusion** The efforts of a society to prevent ethnically different groups from joining it.
- ❑ **Population** In demography, all the people living in a given geographic area. In research, the total number of cases with a particular characteristic.
- ❑ **Population transfer** The efforts of a dominant ethnic group to move or remove members of a minority ethnic group from a particular area.
- ❑ **Rate of natural increase** The difference between birth and death rates, excluding immigration.
- ❑ **Religious movement** An organized religious group with the primary goal of changing existing religious institutions.
- ❑ **Research and development (R&D)** Investments in basic research and in the practical application of basic research discoveries.



- **Ritual** In the sociology of religion, rituals are the rules of conduct concerning behavior in the presence of the sacred. Intended to produce feelings of reverence, awe, and group identity.
- **Scientific revolution** The dramatic overthrow of one intellectual paradigm by another.
- **Sect** An exclusive, highly cohesive group of ascetic religious believers. Sects usually last longer and are more institutionalized than cults.
- **Sector theory** A theory of urban development explaining that cities develop in wedge-shaped patterns following transportation systems
- **Secularization** The erosion of belief in the supernatural. Includes a growing respect for rationality, cultural and religious pluralism, tolerance of moral ambiguity, faith in education, and belief in civil rights, the rule of law, and due process.
- **Suburb** A fairly small community within an urban area that includes a central city.
- **Sustainable Development** Economic and environmental changes that meet the needs of the present without jeopardizing the needs of the future.
- **Technological determinism** The belief that technological development shapes social life in rather fixed ways.
- **Total fertility rate** An estimate of the average number of children that would be born to each woman over her reproductive life if current age-specific birth rates remained constant.
- **Zero population growth (ZPG)** The situation that occurs when the population of a nation or the world remains stable from one year to the next.