



Society

Characteristics
 Social Structure
 Sociocultural Evolution




Society

- a 1) group of **people** who 2) occupy a common territory and 3) interact 4) within a common culture
 - culture = products
 - society = people



Characteristics of Society

- 1) interaction between society and its members
- 2) society "shapes" us; we "shape" society
- 3) societies tend to be self-sufficient
- 4) provide for the maintenance of members
- 5) perpetuate themselves through reproduction and/or recruitment
- 6) socialize new members, transmit culture
- 7) change (adapt) while providing stability
- 8) compete successfully with other groups for resources




Social Structure

- the organized framework of relationships within a society
- basic components:
 - statuses
 - roles
 - social situations
 - social groups
 - organizations
 - institutions




Statuses

- socially defined positions in society
 - determine "fit"
 - determine relationships




Types of Statuses


- ascribed - assigned
- achieved - achieved/assumed voluntarily
- graduated - vary by degree
- nominal - named
- master status - determines identity




Class




consists of people of roughly equivalent status in an unequal society




Status Set




the totality of statuses that an individual occupies at any particular time



Roles



- sets of expected behavior patterns, obligations, and privileges that go with a particular status
- we occupy a status
- we play a role




Concepts Associated with Roles

- role expectations
- role performances
- role set
- role repertoire
- role strain - single status
- role conflict - more than one status



Dealing with Role Conflicts

- awareness
- decision-making
 - prioritizing
 - compartmentalizing
 - simplifying



Concepts Associated with Roles

- role exit - process of disengagement
 - critical reflection
 - grappling with doubts
 - imagining alternative roles
 - deciding to pursue a new life




Social Situations

- complex social settings involving multiple actors playing multiple roles
 - behavior is reciprocal
 - **"definition of the situation"**




Social Groups

- a collection of people interacting together in an orderly way on the basis of shared expectations about each others' behavior
- a group whose statuses and roles are interrelated



Institutions


- stable clusters of values, norms, statuses, roles, and expectations that develop around a basic need in society
- characteristics:
 - develop unplanned
 - change - slow
 - highly interrelated
 - sociocultural diversity



Sociocultural Evolution


- the changes that occur as a society gains new technology

Gerhard and Jean Lenski




Jean Lenski
1928-1994

Gerhard Lenski
b. 1924



Sociocultural Evolution


- technology shapes cultural patterns
 - simple technology ⇒ small numbers ⇒ simple lives
- ↑ technology = ↑ change
- high-tech societies ⇒ large numbers ⇒ division of labor



Types of Societies


(based on "core technology")

- preindustrial
 - evolutionary
 - foraging (gathering)
 - hunting and gathering
 - horticultural
 - agricultural
 - pastoral
- industrial
- postindustrial




Evolutionary Societies

- evolution of triune brain
 - speech/communication development
- changing pelvis and brain size
- disappearance of estrus
 - sexual urges come under measure of control
 - sexuality becomes multifaceted
- impact of hearth



Foraging (Gathering) Societies

- subsistence:
 - wild nuts, berries, fruits, roots, and other plants
 - may hunt small game
- women dominant or equal
- patrilineal or matrilineal
- small
 - sharing
- leisure common
 - work-play



Hunting & Gathering Societies

- division of labor by gender develops
 - majority contributed by women
 - men contribute protein
 - hunting greater status
- equality variable
 - ~~private property~~
 - cooperative economics
- differences based on sex, age, personality
- larger territory
- bands under 50



Horticultural Societies

- small scale cultivation by hand
- sedentary community
- women cultivate
 - men hunt
- ↑ specialization
 - ↑ possessions, inequality, political organization, warfare
- matrilineal or patrilineal



Agricultural Societies

- larger scale cultivation
 - fertilizer, animal power, irrigation, more complex tools
- ↑ productivity, specialization, population density, political organization, social stratification, organized religion
- men primary providers
- private ownership
 - land, labor, sexuality
- development of states



Pastoral Societies

- domestication and herding of animals
- patriarchal tendency
 - own herd
 - dairy, garden, convert herd resources
- Western religions   



Industrial Societies



- mechanized production - goods, services



- ~~family~~ unit of production
- sole provider, dependent
 - split of psyche



- homemaking, professional motherhood, adolescence



Industrial Societies



- ↑ mobility



- families privatized
 - marital success = happiness



- ambivalence - sexuality, contraception
- ↑ achieved statuses



Postindustrial Societies Bell



- services



- "white collar"
- theoretical knowledge
- change planned, controlled - technological forecasting



- intellectual technology (utilizing mathematical problem-solving)



Postindustrial Societies Toffler



- services/information

- death of permanence

- ~~hierarchical power~~



- multitude family/work forms

- work and family integrated

- electronically extended families/work relations

- role redefinitions complex



- new technology, including reproductive

- multiplicity of options
