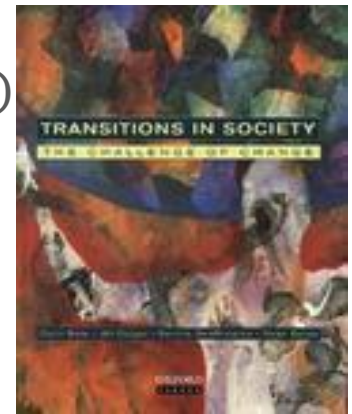


Sociology



What is Sociology?

- this social science discipline looks at the **development** and **structure** of human society and how it works (Bain, Colyer, DesRiveires, & Dolan,2002)
- sociology is the study of **social life**, **social change**, and the **social causes** and **consequences** of human behaviour. (American Sociological Association)



+ A Sample of Sociology Subject Matter...

- sociologists **investigate** the structure of **groups, organizations, and societies**, and how people **interact** (good and bad) within these contexts.
- all human behaviour is social so the subject matter of sociology ranges from the **intimate family** to the **hostile mob**; from **organized crime** to **religious cults**; from the divisions of **race, gender and social class** to the shared beliefs of a **common culture**; and from the **sociology of work** to the **sociology of sports**. (American Sociological Association)



+ Rules, Norms and Values

RULES

1. YOU CAN....
2. YOU CAN'T...
3. YOU CAN....
4. YOU CAN'T

- **rules** – these are developed by societies based on their system of values signs
- **values** – society carries with it a system of values (eg. diversity, freedom, individuality, family, money)
- **norms** – these are rules set out for a particular role that are considered standard behaviour (eg. Catholic Priests are expected to be celibate)



+ Sociologist methodology...

- **Surveys** -short answer, closed ended questions used to find out information from a large number of people at the same time
- **Observations** -a detailed study of behaviour
- **Cohort Studies** -studies larger groups of peers (people of the same age) at one time
- **Statistical collection & analysis** -of data to gain a better picture of society
- **Interviews** -more in depth answers to questions
- **Study of trends and patterns in society** – look at demography (the study of populations)

+ Schools of Thought in Sociology

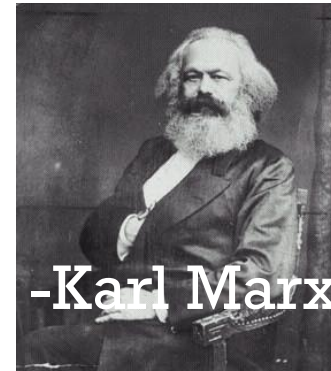


- sociologists have debated among themselves about the real nature of society
- as societies change and become more diverse, sociologists need to consider cultural diversity when considering sociological issues
- **who's position are we considering? Who is doing the research? Who is writing history?**

+ Structural-Functionalism

- according to structural-functionalism, each society should provide its members with the fundamental requirements for functioning
 - a society must have a way of meeting the material needs of its members, a way to both socialize and educate the young, and a way of regulating human reproduction (usually marriage)
 - structural-functionalists believe their role is to try to explain the role of society's **groups** or institutions in enabling human society to function. **All groups that are part of a given society have a role in maintaining the society and if each is functioning and playing their role then society functions**
 - structural-functionalists do not concern themselves with change unless there is a need to reform social institutions when they no longer meet the needs of its members.
 - **Question... who would benefit the most from this approach and who would not?**
 - They are more concerned with keeping society stable.

+ Marxism



- based on ideas originally proposed by -Karl Marx (1818-1883)
- Marx believed that economic power led to political power. This is the key to understanding societies
- the struggle for economic power means that society is not **static** but ever-changing – social change is the result of a change made to the economic system
- therefore, if we want to understand society, we must understand the economic system in place
- Marxists believe certain economic system create a rich class of owners and a poor class of workers
- they also believe that social institutions (churches, schools, prisons etc.) have been created to **perpetuate** the division between the powerful and the powerless

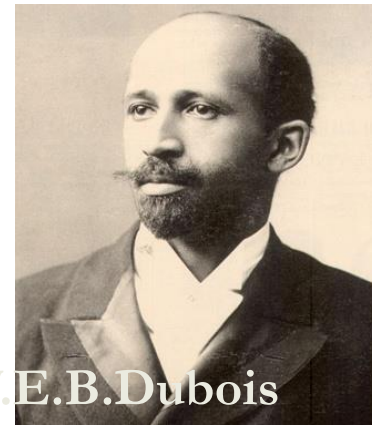
+ Feminist Theory



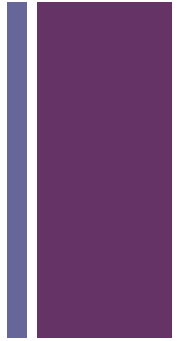
- Feminist Theorists focus on sex and gender issues, believing that women have traditionally been disadvantaged in society and men have had more advantages
- They believe that men have made most of the decisions in society and that these tend to favour men.
- There are several different types of Feminism such as...
 - Liberal Feminists... favour equality for women as a civil right
 - Marxian Feminists... think that if a society is unequal that this is mirrored in family life as well; and that women's' labour being undervalued affects society
 - Radical Feminism... patriarchy is entrenched and almost impossible to get rid of
 - Socialist Feminism... view other forms of oppression and the impact on women, such as class or race

+ Inclusionism

- the bulk of sociological research, theories and so on from the 1800s onward, has been conducted, developed and written from a largely white, Western European, male perspective
- there is and was a concern that this may result in a lack of inclusion of the voices and sociology of several groups within North America
- **inclusionism** strives to include all people in the perspective, research and so on... in order to be truly representative ~



W.E.B. Dubois



+ Sociology & Social Change

- Social change refers to changes in the way society is organized, changes in the beliefs and practices of the people, and specific changes in the culture, social structure and institutions of society
- Sociologists determine whether changes in society are predictable or not, gradual or sudden, and whether or not they are spontaneous or follow a specific process
 - According to **Emile Durkheim**, a functionalist and evolutionist for whom society is made up of customs & institutions that exert control over those in society, changes are inevitable and follows a logical path, but they should be gradual
 - According to **Karl Marx**, change is the result of competition and conflict between the classes – a power struggle for resources, change can be revolutionary
 - According to **Max Weber**, change is the result of culture and individuals who interpret and act from within society which end up shaping human society through actions, change is personal

the
“founding
fathers”

■ Significant changes will happen in Canada during our lifetime

■ Political changes

■ Economic changes

■ Social changes

- In order to see what changes have happened, sociologists examine current and past trends

■ Some changes are predictable using statistics and demographic data,

- Ex. social trends regarding the Baby Boomers
 - the inevitability of an aging population in Canada

- However, some changes are hard to predict

■ So instead, most social scientists try to

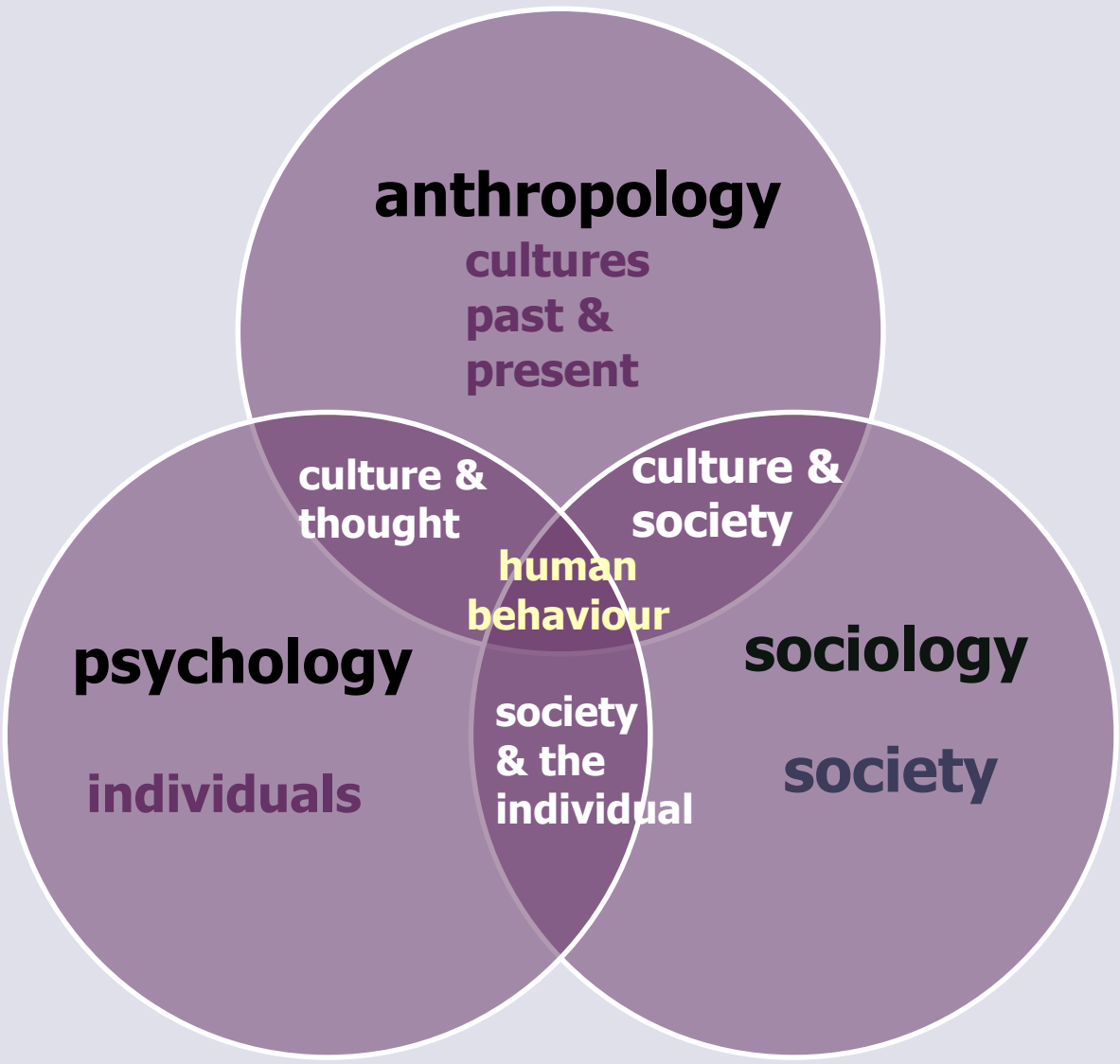
- understand the nature of social change
- and the forces that drive it





- anthropology, psychology & sociology are **related** fields of study that each examine human behaviour

- they overlap, much like a venn diagram



+ Consolidation... Which ology is it?



Why is Lady Gaga so popular among the LGBT community? _____

Why do more teens approve of gay marriage than their parents? _____

What are the cultural characteristics of a wedding in China? _____

How can Jane deal with her addiction? _____

Who's body is in the dumpster behind the gas station?

Why would anyone put a body in the dumpster?
