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CULTURE AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

In the United States, women were once considered attractive only if they wore a corset—a rigid, tight-fitting garment that made their waist appear narrower and their bust larger. In ancient China, the definition of a beautiful woman included tiny, dainty feet; thus, from childhood Chinese women tightly bound their feet to keep them from growing. In the modern world, practices such as foot binding and the wearing of corsets have disappeared, but virtually every country still has standards of attractiveness for women.

Standards of attractiveness are one part of what sociologists call *culture:* They are a set of ideas that are shared within a society. As the above examples illustrate, culture is widely shared within a society, yet it also changes over time. If we think of standards of attractiveness *only* as a part of culture, however, we miss an important part of their significance. Standards of attractiveness also tell us something about the positions of men and women in society. The wearing of corsets and the practice of foot binding, for example, were both physically painful. Foot binding often led to serious physical deformity. It is highly significant that women in many societies have had to endure painful and sometimes harmful practices to make themselves attractive to men, while men in the same societies had to do no such thing to make *themselves attractive to* women. Thus, the wearing of corsets and the binding of feet reflect the subordinate social position of women in traditional American and Chinese societies. Such positions are a part of *social structure,* the system of social positions and rewards (or lack thereof) that are attached to these positions.

Just as culture changes, so does social structure. The elimination of corsets and foot binding suggests that the position of women has improved in these societies. However, women continue to be judged more than men on the basis of physical attractiveness; for example, a number of women in America today make themselves physically and emotionally ill trying to become or stay thin. The change has been far from complete.

In this chapter, we shall explore culture and social structure in greater detail. To understand these concepts, we must first understand the concept of **society**. A society can be defined as a relatively self-contained and organized group of people interacting under some common political authority within a specific geographic area. Societies exist over an extended period of time, outliving the individual people of whom they are composed. A society can refer to a nation-state with millions of people, such as the United States, Russia, China, Nigeria, France, and Chile. It can also refer to tribal groups with a population of only a few hundred. If a group has some type of governmental system, if its members interact with one another while limiting contact with outsiders, if it exists within some reasonably well-defined territory and persists over time, that group fits the definition of a society.

SOCIETY, CULTURE, AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Every society, large or small, has a culture and a social structure. **Culture** refers to the shared knowledge, beliefs, values, and rules about behavior that exist within a society. **Social structure** refers to the organization of society — its social positions and the ongoing relationships among these social positions; the different resources allocated to these social positions; and the social groups that make up the society (Smelser, 1988). Although culture and social structure are distinct, they are not separate. Each influences and is influenced by the other. This linkage is a major focus of this chapter.

WHAT IS CULTURE?

Social scientists use the term *culture* in a somewhat different way than it is commonly used. In popular use, we often talk of people as being "cultured" or "uncultured." "Cultured" people are well read and knowledgeable, and enjoy literature, art, and classical music. In the social-scientific sense, however, there are no "uncultured" people. Rather, the term refers to those things that are *shared* within a group or society: shared truths (that is, knowledge and beliefs), shared values, shared rules about behavior, and material objects that are shared in the sense that they are widely used or recognized. Sociologists generally recognize two kinds of culture: nonmaterial and material. **Nonmaterial culture** consists of abstract creations: knowledge, beliefs, values, and rules concerning behavior. **Material culture** consists of physical objects that are the product of a group or society: buildings, works of art, clothing, literary and musical works, and inventions. The two, of course, are linked: A society whose nonmaterial culture is based on scientific knowledge may, for example, produce a material culture including space shuttles and computers. In contrast, a society whose nonmaterial culture consists primarily of religious beliefs and traditions may produce elaborate temples and religious writings or music.

One final important point is that no society is without culture. For reasons explored in greater detail later in this chapter, every society requires *some* degree of common understanding of reality and common rules for behavior in order to function. Without this, people could not cooperate or even interact in a meaningful way, and nobody would know how to behave.

Shared Truths: Knowledge and Beliefs

The first item mentioned in our definition of nonmaterial culture is shared truths; that is, shared knowledge and beliefs. This item is mentioned first because knowledge and belief are at the core of the definition of culture. More than anything else, culture is a matter of what people in a society know or believe to be true (Goodenough, 1957). The concepts of *knowledge* and *beliefs* are very similar to each other in the sense that both refer to shared understanding of *truth*. Both concern what people believe to be true, and both are subject to testing, if the right information is available. However, in terms of understanding cultures, it does not really matter whether the knowledge and beliefs ever get tested, or even whether they are true in an objective sense. What

matters is that people within a society *agree* on a certain reality, a certain set of knowledge and beliefs. If "everybody knows" that something is true, then it might as well be true, because people will behave as though it were.

When sociologists and anthropologists study cultures, they are interested in such social agreements about truth and reality. These social agreements are what shape people's behavior, and they are what determine how people understand their world. In Europe for many centuries, "everybody knew" that the earth was flat. Hence, everyone behaved as though it were, and for many years nobody was so foolish as to attempt to travel around the earth. The first people who suggested that the earth might be round were treated the way you would be treated today if you said the earth was flat. Today, in modern industrial societies, "everybody knows" that the earth is round. Thus, shared knowledge and beliefs, and not reality, determine human behavior. Each society has its culture, and each culture is composed of a distinct set of knowledge and beliefs. Cultures can and do change over time, and what people "know" at one time will not necessarily be the same as what people in the same society will "know" at some other time.

Language   One particularly important area of knowledge carried by culture is **language**. Language can be defined as the set of symbols by which the people who share a common culture communicate. Language makes possible a type of communication among human beings that is unknown to animals, because of its use of **symbols**—in this case, words, which are used to represent concepts and ideas. Language also serves the function, through written records or oral traditions, of passing information from generation to generation. In this book, for example, use of the English language permits you to learn about the ideas of great social thinkers like Marx, Durkheim, and Weber, even though they have been dead for many years. Although language's main functions are to make communication possible and to preserve ideas across the generations, it also has important symbolic functions. Speaking the same language is an important symbol of cultural unity. For this reason, conquered or subordinate minority groups often cling vigorously to their language as a means of preserving their culture, and dominant groups try with equal vigor to get the minorities to speak their languages.

LANGUAGE AS A CULTURAL SYMBOL: AN EXAMPLE   An example of the cultural symbolism attached to language can be seen in the recent history of Canada (Porter, 1972). Canada has two major cultural groups, English and French. About two-thirds of the country's population is English-speaking; about one-third is French-speaking. The French-speaking group is concentrated almost entirely in one province, Quebec. In recognition of the desire of both groups to preserve their cultural heritage,

Canada has proclaimed itself to be officially bilingual. Both English and French are official languages of Canada, and all activities of the national government are carried on in both languages. In spite of this, it is hard to describe Canada as a truly bilingual country. Although most Quebecois can speak English, the province has declared French to be its only official language. In the remainder of Canada, the overwhelming majority of the population speaks English, and nobody but the federal government makes any serious attempt to be bilingual. In fact, official attempts at bilingualism are usually treated with scorn. In the province of Ontario, for example, some stop signs have the French ARRET printed below the English STOP. More often than not, the ARRET is covered with spray paint.

The ethnic and linguistic conflict in Canada has been severe. Canada's ability to survive as a nation was threatened in the early 1990s when various provinces were unable to agree on a constitution. Negotiations to create a new constitution recognizing Quebec as a "distinct society" and giving it autonomy on matters of language broke down in 1990; and, in 1992, changes proposed to address the concerns of both Quebecois and Native Canadians (who also sought autonomy), were rejected by several provinces, including Quebec, which viewed them as insufficient, as well as others that viewed them as excessive.

A similar conflict has developed recently in the United States with the growth of the Hispanic population. Like the French-Canadians, many Hispanic Americans have sought to preserve their native culture by speaking Spanish. Just as the English-speaking majority in Canada opposes bilingualism, the English-speaking majority in the United States has reacted strongly to the growing use of Spanish. Several cities and states, for example, have passed legislation specifying English as their only official language.

THE LINGUISTIC RELATIVITY DEBATE   Clearly, language can operate as an important symbol of a culture. Equally clearly, it can tell us a good deal about what is important in a culture. Eskimos have 12 different words to describe different types of snow; the Sami of Lapland have 80. This reflects the fact that snow is important in the Eskimo and Sami experiences and that differences in snow that would be unimportant to most people are noticeable to them. Americans have a large number of words to describe different types of automobiles. Although cultures where cars are not so common have only one word, it is important for Americans—the most auto-oriented society in the world—to distinguish among different types of cars. Thus, we speak of convertibles, station wagons, compacts, subcompacts, sport models, sedans, coupes, fastbacks, four-by-fours, T-tops, and clunkers.

We know, then, that the language spoken in a society reflects that society's culture to a large extent. However, does it also *influence* aspects of that culture? A group of

Language both reflects and influences culture. In the past, the sign above might have said "Men Working." As the roles of men and women have changed, so have our symbols.

specialists known as **linguistic-relativity** theorists (Sapir, 1921; Whorf, 1956) believe that it does. They argue that different languages categorize things differently, *thus forcing* people to create different categories in their own thinking. Different societies, for example, define colors differently. Where we see a spectrum of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple, other societies in the world see only two or three colors. Some, for example, lump together what Americans consider the "warm" colors in one category and the "cool" colors in another category. To cite another example, we already noted that Laplanders have 80 different words for snow. In contrast, some warm-weather cultures have only one word to cover snow, ice, frost, and cold. Finally, tenses vary. Some languages contain tenses that English lacks, and others lack tenses that we have, such as the past and future tenses. Sapir and Whorf argued that these differences affect how people think, and, thus, what they can know. How, for example, can a people conceptualize the future if their language has no tense for it?

In the sense of language strictly determining knowledge, the linguistic-relativity hypothesis is difficult to accept. Linguistic relativists undermine their own argument to a certain extent when they explain the meaning of different Eskimo words for snow, *or of tenses* in one language that do not exist in another language. Hence, language probably does not *determine* the content or organization of our knowledge and beliefs. However, language almost certainly does *influence* our knowledge and beliefs. For exam-

ple, the English language often uses "black" and "dark" to represent evil and hopelessness. This usage undoubtedly has subtle influences on people's thinking about race. In fact, experiments with schoolchildren have indicated strongly that this is the case (Williams and Stabler, 1973). Thus, although a determinist notion that language defines what we *can* know and think is clearly an overstatement, *there is good* evidence that language can influence how we *do* think and know.

Shared Values

In addition to the shared realities represented by common knowledge and beliefs, cultures also carry common values. This is not to say that people within a society agree on everything—merely that there are certain common values in their culture that most or all people agree on. In another society with a different culture, the commonly held values will be different.

Ideology

The system of knowledge, beliefs, and values that is shared in a society is often referred to by sociologists as an **ideology**; that is, a set of ideas. In fact, the term *ideology* is very similar in meaning to the term *culture*, except that culture also includes rules concerning behavior. The term ideology has one additional use, however. In the tradition of Marx (1967) and Mannheim (1936 [orig. 1929]), ideology is often taken to mean a set of knowledge, values, and beliefs that gives legitimacy to the social structure. Such ideology is promoted by those in influential positions in the society, but it may be widely accepted throughout the society. Although this notion is associated with conflict sociologists, the basic idea that the culture supports the social structure is something that sociologists of both the functionalist and the conflict perspectives generally acknowledge. This is one reason that functionalist theorists stress the need for consensus: They believe that society works best when people's values and beliefs are consistent with the organization of their society. In any stable society, what people believe to be true will generally support their social arrangements. If this is not the case, the society will experience pressure for change. Attempts may be made by the elite of the society to impose a new ideology, or the people in the society will attempt to change the social structure to match their ideology. Very often, both things happen.

Social Norms

Besides shared realities and shared values, culture also involves shared expectations about behavior. These expectations about behavior are called social **norms**. Sociologists

commonly recognize three types of social norms. The most informal are **folkways**—informal, minor norms that usually carry only minor and informal *sanctions,* or punishments, when they are violated. Being over- or underdressed for an occasion is an example of a behavior that violates folkways. Another type of informal norm, called **mores** (pronounced morâys), may or may not be written into law, but violations are usually taken seriously. This is so because mores are more likely than folkways to be viewed as essential to society. Reverence in church and respect for the flag are examples of mores. The flag is a symbol of the society and what it stands for; to challenge it is to challenge the very rightness of the society. Because mores are often seen as being critical to the maintenance of society, violations often evoke an emotional response. The sanctions for violating mores include ostracism, angry words, and sometimes physical violence. Finally, there are **laws**: formal, codified norms of which everyone is expected to be aware. Violations of laws carry specific sanctions, such as fines or imprisonment, that are usually stated as part of the law. Laws are usually consistent with mores. The concepts of folkways, mores, and laws, as well as the relationship among them, will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 8.

As is the case with values and beliefs, each culture contains some social norms that are held in common by most or all of the people in the society. Moreover, the norms that are held in common in one culture are different from those in another culture. This can lead to misunderstandings when people with different cultures come into contact with one another, as in international travel. It has been frequently observed, for example, that when North Americans interact with South Americans, different norms are at work concerning the proper distance between two people speaking to each other. South Americans stand closer together when speaking than do North Americans. This leads to an interesting dynamic when a North American and a South American get into a conversation. The South American will keep approaching, and the North American will keep backing away because the South American is "too close." Thus, the two may move across the room or around in circles as the South American keeps trying to get closer and the North American farther away.

I had a similar experience while attending an international research conference in Sweden. At lunch one day, some Americans commented on the "rudeness" of people in Sweden. I was surprised at this statement because I had found everyone I had spoken to or done business with to be pleasant and polite. That evening, however, when a group of us attending the conference went out to a crowded nightclub, I realized the source of my fellow Americans' feelings. Almost immediately upon entering the nightclub, I was bumped by another person, who made no attempt to excuse himself. My reaction was "That was rude." In fact, had the same act occurred in the United States, it easily could


Misunderstandings and even conflicts can arise when people from different cultures are not aware of differences in values.

have caused a fight. A few minutes later, it happened again, and I soon noticed that it was not uncommon for people gently to push aside a person in their way without saying anything. Significantly, I also noticed that nobody (except the foreign visitors) seemed bothered by it.

As the week went on, I noticed that in any crowded situation gentle bumping and pushing without comment was common and accepted behavior among the Swedes. Not once did I see anyone get angry over it. From the American viewpoint, one could explain this behavior in two ways. One way was to conclude that "Swedes are rude." The other way was to conclude that "Swedes are exceptionally patient" because they never became upset over being bumped. Either conclusion, however, would reflect a misunderstanding of Swedish culture, as a result of looking at it only from the viewpoint of American culture. The correct explanation simply was that Swedes and Americans have different social norms about behavior in crowded places. In the United States, you are expected to avoid bumping people and to excuse yourself when you do. In Sweden, gentle bumping in crowded situations is acceptable and does not require excusing yourself. Imagine for a moment a Swede in the United States unfamiliar with American norms. If that Swede bumped someone and got yelled at, he or she would undoubtedly conclude that "Americans are impatient and belligerent." Any time people interpret the actions of people of another culture in terms of their own cultural norms, such misunderstandings can occur.
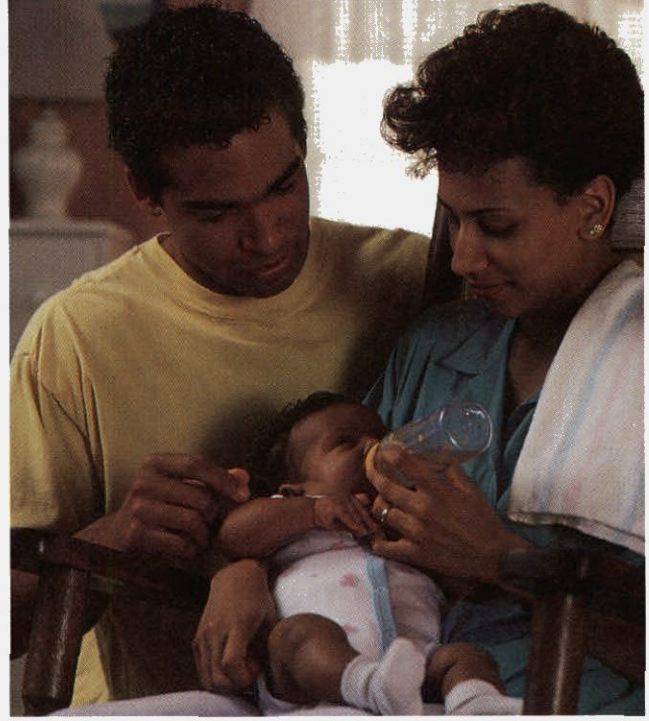
A person's educational level, such as college graduate, is an achieved status. The characteristics of the family into which you are born, including your family name, are ascribed statuses.

WHAT IS SOCIAL STRUCTURE?

Recall our discussion of corsets and foot binding at the start of this chapter. This discussion showed us that culture and social structure are closely related to each other. By way of review, the concept of social structure refers to the organization of society, including its social positions, the relationships among those positions, and the different resources attached to those positions. Social structure also includes the groups of people who make up society and the relationships that exist among those groups (Smelser, 1988). We shall begin our discussion of social structure by discussing social positions.

Social Status

Society can be thought of as being made up of a set of social positions. Sociologists refer to such a position as a **status**. Imagine that you are a single, black, 20-year-old female who is working part-time, attending college, and majoring in physics. You are occupying a number of social positions, or statuses. You are a young single female, an employee, a black person, and a college student majoring in physics. Each of these social positions is defined, in part, by its relationship to other positions in society, which are occupied by other people. Moreover, each of these social posi-

tions, or statuses, is occupied by a number of other people besides yourself. There are other black women, other physics majors, other part-time employees. You share a common status with these people, and you are very likely to share with them some common experiences and behaviors.

Continuing with the same example, some of your statuses were ones that you were born into. You were, for example, born black and female. Statuses that people are born into are called **ascribed statuses** (Linton, 1936). Besides race and sex, other ascribed statuses include characteristics of the family into which you were born, including your parents' family name, their economic level, their religion, and their national ancestry. In addition to ascribed statuses are statuses that result from something you did. You decided to go to college, to major in physics, to work part-time. Statuses that people get at least partially as a result of something that they do are called **achieved statuses** (Linton, 1936). Among the most important achieved statuses are occupations, educational levels, and incomes. Your religion could also be an achieved status, if you changed at some time from the religion you were born into. Achieved statuses need not be things that are seen by society as positive. You might, for example, become a school dropout, a runaway, or a prison inmate. These, too, are achieved statuses, because they result, at least in part, from things that people do. Figure 4.1 depicts ascribed and achieved statuses.
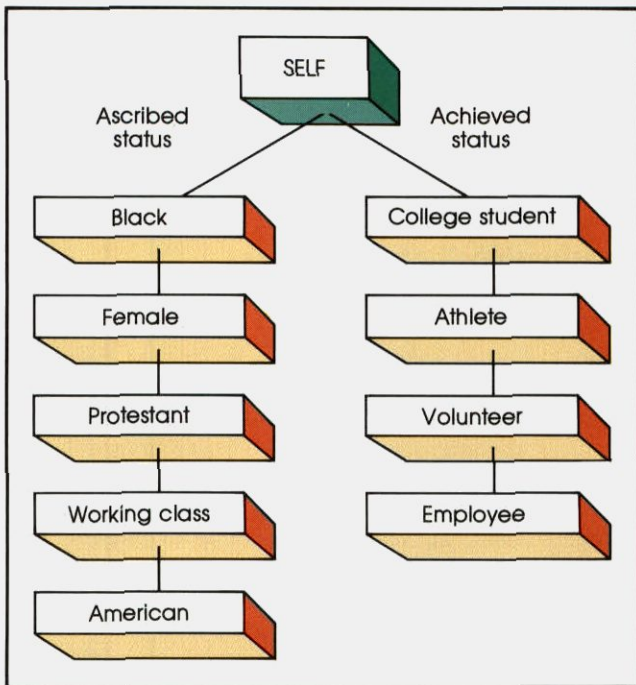
FIGURE 4.1 Achieved and Ascribed Statuses.
This diagram depicts the statuses occupied by a black female college undergraduate who works part-time, does volunteer work, and belongs to the track team. How many of these statuses do you share?

Obviously, some statuses are more central and important in people's lives than others. For most people, one status stands above all others in terms of its influence over the person's life. Such a status is called a **master status**. For adults, the master status is most likely to be occupation, or possibly a position in the family such as parent, husband, or wife. For children, it may be the status of student or simply that of male or female.

Roles

Each social status, in turn, is attached to one or more *social roles*. As was pointed out in Chapter 3, a social role is a set of expectations for behavior that is attached to a status. Thus, a status is a social position, and a role is a set of behaviors that are expected of anyone who fills the position. As Linton (1936) put it, we *occupy* statuses, but we *play* roles. Each role in society is related to other social roles, through relationships of interdependency and cooperation (as noted by functionalist theory) and through relationships of competition, domination, and subordination (as noted by conflict theory). These roles, of course, are played by people — but the roles and the relationships between them persist inde-

pendently of which people are playing the roles. Different people may play the same role somewhat differently, but there are certain things that anyone playing a given role (such as that of a physics major) must accomplish and certain other roles with which that person must interact in socially defined ways.

Role Conflict and Role Strain   Each person must play a number of different roles, and sometimes these roles carry conflicting expectations. Returning to our example, you might experience conflicting expectations between your roles of college student, part-time worker, and single woman. These conflicting expectations are called **role conflict**. Sometimes even the same role contains conflicting expectations. This condition is called **role strain**. Thus, you are told that the expectations of you as a college student include academic achievement and enjoying what is supposed to be one of the most "fun" times of your life. Obviously, too much of one can get in the way of the other.

One reason for role strain is that any given role often calls for interaction with a variety of other statuses. Thus, what appears to be one role may in some aspects really be several roles. Consider, for example, the status of retail sales employee. At first, this status seems to give you a clear role to play: Sell things to the customers in the manner expected by your supervisor. However, this role actually involves interacting with several different statuses: supervisor, fellow employee, customer. To some extent, each of these interactions defines a *different* role because it carries different expectations. What pleases the boss might not please your fellow employees, and what pleases the customer might not please either your boss or your co-workers. Yet, to some extent, you must please all of them in order to succeed in your job. Thus, the status of retail sales employee in one sense carries several roles: that of subordinate (with respect to your supervisor), that of co-worker (with respect to your fellow employees), and that of seller (with respect to your customers). Merton (1968, pp. 41–45) refers to these combined roles attached to one status as the **role set** of that status.

Roles and Social Structure   In large part, the organization of society, or what we call social structure, is determined by the nature of these roles, the relationships between them, and the distribution of scarce resources among the people who play them. Different societies define, organize, and reward their activities in different ways, and thus each society has its own distinct social structure.

Although each society has its own distinct social structure, almost all social structures contain certain common elements. Any society more complex than a simple hunting-and-gathering society, for example, has some system of *division of labor* and some system of *stratification*. These differences mean, among other things, that different roles exist, they carry different expectations, and the peo-

ple who play them are rewarded in different ways. More-over, the social structure is arranged into some set of social institutions. Let us address each of these areas in somewhat more detail.

Division of Labor

One reason for the existence of diverse roles in any social structure is that any society more complicated than a simple hunting-and-gathering society requires a **division of labor**, or specialization. In other words, there are a variety of jobs to be done, and it is more efficient for each person to do one job than it is to try to teach everyone to do all of the jobs. The larger and more complex the society, the more essential and complex the division of labor becomes. Each job can be thought of as a social role in that it has a particular set of expectations that must be met if the job is to be done properly. Moreover, in large, interdependent societies, each of these jobs or roles relates in some way to a number of other jobs or roles. Thus, the social structure becomes, in part, a system of roles that divides labor into specialized tasks, all of which are interdependent. How labor is divided will vary, even among societies (and organizations within the same society) that are otherwise similar. In other words, the content of work roles and the relationships between them will not always be the same. There is no set formula for the division of labor.

One factor that has a major influence on the division of labor is the level of development of a society. As societies develop economically, their division of labor becomes more complex. Thus, modern industrial societies have far more complex divisions of labor than do preindustrial societies. This issue, along with a number of other ways that level of development influences society, is discussed in detail in Chapter 12. However, even at a given level of economic development, there is no one formula for the division of labor. Exactly how that division is accomplished is a key question to be answered whenever a sociologist tries to describe or understand a social structure.

Stratification

Besides carrying different expectations, different roles carry different rewards. As we shall see in much greater detail in Chapter 9, different occupations carry different levels of prestige and different economic rewards. Ascribed statuses also vary widely in prestige and in economic rewards. This system of inequality is called social **stratification**, and it is an important part of virtually every social structure. Social stratification is related in part to a society's division of labor. Some jobs that require detailed technical training are more difficult to learn than others. In part, such jobs are rewarded because they are harder to fill with quali-

fied people, and some incentive is required to encourage people to get the necessary training (Davis and Moore, 1945). However, stratification exists for reasons independent of the division of labor. Even in modern societies, a good deal of economic inequality is inherited and is thus a product of an ascribed status: the family that a person was born into (Tumin, 1953).

Relationships between Roles and Statuses

Because of social stratification, relationships of inequality exist between different roles and statuses in the social structure. Because of division of labor, relationships of cooperation and interdependency also exist among different roles and statuses. These relationships largely define social structure. Imagine again that you are a single, black, female college student, 20 years old, majoring in physics, and employed part-time. We can see that you fit into both a stratification system and a system for the division of labor. You are in relationships of social inequality, or stratification, on the basis of both your ascribed statuses and your achieved statuses. Because of your ascribed statuses of race and sex, your society has placed you in a subordinate position relative to others with different ascribed statuses (whites and males). In other words, your opportunities may be restricted, or people may react to you in some negative way, because of your race and sex. The roles linked to your achieved statuses also in part define your position in the stratification system. You are in a subordinate, or lower, position relative to your professors and your supervisors. However, you are in an advantaged position relative to your peers who did not go to college, because going to college gives you a certain degree of prestige and a better chance of finding a well-paying job.

Besides fitting into a stratification system, you fit into a system of division of labor. In your part-time job, you fulfill a set of expectations (role) that relates in some way to the work roles of others and performs some function within the larger system of division of labor. In the role of student, you are undergoing preparation for some new, and possibly more central, role within that system of division of labor.

In short, social structure is composed of systems of stratification and division of labor, each of which is an interrelated system of roles and statuses. Each person living in a society occupies a number of statuses and plays a number of roles within both of those systems, which define the social structure of that society.

Institutions

Another key element of social structure is that of social **institutions**. Institutions can be defined as forms of organi-

zation that perform basic functions in a society, are strongly supported by that society's culture, and are generally accepted as essential elements of the social structure. Like the larger social structure, institutions are made up of relationships among statuses and roles that involve both division of labor and stratification. However, each institution consists of a particular set of such interrelated statuses and roles as well as specific systems of division of labor and stratification and is tied to a particular function or set of functions. Table 4.1 illustrates some of the key institutions in the social structure of the United States and identifies the functions those institutions perform. It also cross-references the chapters in this book in which each institution is discussed in greater detail.

As the definition indicates, a society's institutions are strongly supported by its culture. As a result, people learn to regard these institutions as essential and frequently take them for granted. Specific individuals who play roles within institutions may be criticized, but it is less common for the institution itself to be questioned. Americans might, for example, deplore the behavior of abusive parents, but their disapproval would be directed at the people involved and not at the traditional American family. Suppose for a moment that you heard the following argument:

> The American family is by its nature a brutal, authoritarian institution that encourages abuse by making parents all-powerful authority figures over children. Therefore, abuse is not a problem of bad individuals, but is inherent in the family. If you want to stop abuse, stop blaming the people who abuse their children and put the blame where it belongs: on an authoritarian, antiquated structure that by its very nature encourages abuse. As long as parents have authority over their children, abuse will result in a sizable number of cases.

Most of you would not accept this argument, and some of you would be angry at the person who made it. Although a well-reasoned counterargument could be developed against this argument, many of you would not respond this way but, instead, would reject the argument out of hand. Why? Because, beyond whatever logical flaws it may have, this argument attacks a cherished institution that is close — important — to most of us. In other words, the importance of the family (and other key social institutions) is strongly supported by our social norms and is something that we don't have to think about because we take it for granted.

Institutions are so strongly supported by social values and norms that when a practice or social arrangement becomes widely accepted in society, sociologists say that it has become *institutionalized*. Some sociologists even in-

TABLE 4.1 American Institutions and Their Key Functions

Institution	Key Functions
Family (monogamous) (Chapter 13)	Replacement of generation
	Socialization of young/cultural transmission
	Status transmission
	Shelter; care for young and elderly
	Emotional support
Capitalist economic system (Chapter 12)	Economic production
	Provision of goods and services
	Means to distribute scarce resources
	Means to determine what is produced
Government (Chapter 12)	Provision of needed public services
	Representation of interest groups
	Protection from foreign powers
	Symbols of national unity
	Social control
Legal system (Chapter 8)	Protection of members of society from illegal actions by other members of society
	Orderly settlement of disputes
	Source of legitimacy for government
	Social control
Education (Chapter 14)	Socialization of young/cultural transmission
	Passage of knowledge between generations
	Creation of new knowledge through research (universities)
	Allocation of individuals to careers
	Personal development/ enhancement of awareness
Health-care system (Chapter 16)	Treatment of illness
	Extension of life
	Development of new medical technology
Judeo-Christian religion (Chapter 15)	Provision of societal belief system
	Socialization of young/cultural transmission
	Social control
	Personal support

clude the values and norms supporting an institution as part of the definition of an institution. At the very least, for a form of organization to qualify as an institution, it must be central to the culture of the society in which it exists.

This conflict took place during a demonstration against the Vietnam War, during a period when culture and social structure were incompatible, and a time of great social change.

PERSPECTIVES ON CULTURE AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

As we have already noted, social structure and culture are closely linked, and the normal condition is for a society's culture to be compatible with, and supportive of, its social structure. There are, however, at least occasional periods when culture and social structure are not compatible, and these are the times *when social change* is most likely to occur. Significantly, sociologists of both the functionalist perspective and the conflict perspective have developed explanations of the conditions that produce compatibility and incompatibility between culture and social structure. Not surprisingly, these explanations are often at odds, or at least emphasize very different processes.

The Functionalist Perspective: Adaptation of Culture and Social Structure to the Environment

As we saw in Chapter 3, functionalists see society as basically a stable, interdependent system that has adopted a particular form because that form works well. To maintain this stability requires a consensus in support of the society's basic social arrangements. Culture performs this function. It promotes cooperation by creating solidarity and provides specific support for the social structure, which operates in such a manner as to meet the basic needs of the society. This basic paradigm of an interdependent and harmonious social structure and culture has been recognized by sociological functionalists dating at least to Emile Durkheim. It is functionalists in *the tradition of social anthropology*, however, who have best addressed the closely related question of cultural and structural variation. If social structure and culture exist because they are basically functional, then why is there so much variation in social structure and culture

among different societies? In brief, their answer is that different societies have developed different structures and cultures as adaptations to the different environments in which they exist. Social structure and culture, then, are seen as being in harmony with each other, and both of them are adapted to the environment of the social system (Buckley, 1967).

Much of the early insight on this issue is attributable to social anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski, who conducted extended field observation in the Trobriand Islands in the South Pacific during the early twentieth century (Malinowski, 1922, 1926, 1948, 1967). Malinowski noted that arrangements among the people he studied existed not because they were merely functional but because they were *functional given the presence of a particular environment*. An example of this can be seen in the Trobriand Islanders' use of magic. Although they used magic extensively, they seemed to use it primarily when they were entering situations they perceived as dangerous. For example, they used magic when fishing on the treacherous open seas, but not when fishing in protected lagoons. Thus, Malinowski concluded that the function of magic was to alleviate fears and make fishing on the open seas seem less threatening.

Malinowski focused primarily on the individual, *psychological function* of magic in relieving anxiety in the context of a dangerous environment. However, because magic also enhanced the Trobriand Islanders' willingness to fish in the bountiful open seas, it also performed the clear function on the *societal level* of helping the Trobriand Islanders deal with their environment. The idea that culture (in this case, belief in magic) can be useful to a *society* in helping it adapt to its environment is generally associated with the theorist A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, who had been trained in the theories of Emile Durkheim. Radcliffe-Brown (1935, 1950, 1952), like Durkheim, saw society as being much like a biological organism, made up of many interrelated parts and having evolved in a way so as to adapt to its environment. To Radcliffe-Brown, then, the important aspect of

magic was not its contribution to the individual (alleviate anxiety), but its contribution to the larger society (facilitate fishing on the open seas). Implicit in the work of both Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown, as well as in that of theorists such as Walter Buckley (1967), is the idea that what is functional for a society depends on that society's environment, so that the social structure and culture that develop in any society will be in sizable part a product of that society's environment.

Aspects of the Environment What do we mean by a society's environment? The concept includes the full range of realities to which the society must adapt. There is the *physical environment,* which includes climate, terrain, plant and animal life, and presence or absence of bodies of water. There is the *social environment,* which includes any other societies with which a society must interact. Finally, there is the *technological environment,* which is defined by the level of technology available to a society. All of these represent realities to which a society must adapt, and they interactively define the conditions to which a society must respond. It is obvious that a society in a cold, wet climate will have different needs for shelter and clothing and different ways of obtaining or producing food than one in a desert. However, it is also true that for either the desert or the cold-climate society, reality will be quite different if it is a modern society with electric heating and cooling devices than it would be if it were a primitive one with no technological means of indoor temperature control. Hence, it is the *combination* of the physical, social, and technological environments that defines the total environment to which a

society must adapt. Functionalists see social structure and culture as reflecting adaptation to this total environment, and believe that this accounts for variation in culture and social structure from place to place and over time.

Cultural and Structural Variation: Do Cultural or Structural Universals Exist?

One question that sociologists and anthropologists have asked for many years is whether cultural or structural *universals* exist. The answer to this question probably depends on how specific something has to be in order to count as a cultural pattern or a structural arrangement. Consider the example of attempts to modify weather, cited by Murdock (1945) as a cultural universal. Are Indian rain dances really a common cultural element with modern cloud-seeding techniques? On the one hand, both are intended to induce rain. On the other hand, the assumptions and world-view behind the two are almost diametrically opposed. The Indian rain dances were based on tradition, religion, and mysticism: If one pleased the spirits, one could induce rain. Modern cloud seeding, in contrast, is based on rationalism, science, and technology.

When we speak of cultural universals, then, it makes sense to speak of broad patterns found in all societies. A list of these is shown in Table 4.2. Beyond these broad patterns, however, there are few, if any, specific cultural or structural universals. Weather is important, so people try to change it. But when we get down to *how* they try to change it, we find tremendous variation.

TABLE 4.2   Cultural Universals Identified by George Peter Murdock

Age grading	Etiquette	Inheritance rules	Personal names
Athletic sports	Faith healing	Joking	Population policy
Bodily adornment	Family	Kin groups	Postnatal care
Calendar	Feasting	Kinship nomenclature	Pregnancy usages
Cleanliness training	Fire making	Language	Property rights
Community organization	Folklore	Law	Propitiation of supernatural beings
Cooking	Food taboos	Luck superstitions	Puberty customs
Cooperative labor	Funeral rites	Magic	Religious ritual
Cosmology	Games	Marriage	Residence rules
Courtship	Gestures	Mealtimes	Sexual restrictions
Dancing	Gift giving	Medicine	Soul concepts
Decorative art	Government	Modesty about body functions	Status differentiation
Divination	Greetings	Mourning	Surgery
Division of labor	Hair styles	Music	Tool making
Dream interpretation	Hospitality	Mythology	Trade
Education	Housing	Numerals	Visiting
Eschatology	Hygiene	Obstetrics	Weaning
Ethics	Incest taboos	Penal sanctions	Weather control
Ethnobotany			

SOURCE: George Peter Murdock, 1945, ''The Common Denominator of Culture,'' pp. 123–142 in Ralph Linton, ed., *The Science of Man in the World Crisis* (New York: Columbia University Press).

Universal Social Tasks As was already noted in our discussion of social structure, there are certain issues that must be addressed in every society. We have already discussed the most critical ones: division of labor and stratification. In addition, there are other key tasks that every society must accomplish. Thus, every culture must carry some knowledge about these tasks, and every social structure must provide a means for accomplishing them (Aberle et al., 1950). Among these tasks are the following:

Dealing with the physical environment: Getting food and shelter, adapting to the physical terrain, protecting oneself from weather, disease, and natural hazards.

Governing reproduction and relations between the sexes: Establishing some rules ensuring that the society will reproduce itself and establishing some ground rules for sexual behavior.

Role assignment: Deciding who will play what roles within society's system of division of labor and how the stratification system will reward those who play various roles.

Communication: Enabling people to communicate with one another through language and other symbols.

Government: Having some system through which rules are established, disputes resolved, and common goals set up.

Norms concerning violence: A set of rules specifying conditions under which violence is and is not acceptable.

Socialization: Some way of teaching children and anyone else entering the society how to function and survive within its culture.

Although these issues must be addressed by all societies, the means by which they are addressed are almost limitlessly diverse. Thus, it can be said that cultural universals exist in two broad senses. First, there are regular practices or norms that occur in virtually all societies, although in different forms. Many of the items on Murdock's list fall into this category. Even the incest taboo, sometimes cited as the "only true cultural universal," is an example of this: There is no regularity among societies about what is considered incest and what is not. Second, there are issues that must be addressed by all societies, although in practice each society addresses them in different ways. Thus, cultural variation is much more the pattern than cultural or structural universals. Various aspects of cultural and structural variation, such as religion, sex roles, and marriage and family systems, will be discussed in greater detail in later chapters.

However much culture varies from one society to another, it is true that within any given culture various aspects of the culture tend to be fairly consistent with one another. This tendency is called *cultural integration*. An example can be seen in the consistencies between religious beliefs and the family system in Judeo-Christian societies. Christians and Jews believe that the law of God calls for monogamous marriage, as reflected in the commandments "Thou shalt not commit adultery" and "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife." Family norms are likewise supportive of religion, as in the saying "The family that prays together stays together." And, indeed, this particular saying appears to be largely true: Divorce rates are significantly lower among devoutly religious people than among the nonreligious.

Ethnocentrism Recall the example of the Americans in Sweden who misinterpreted the behavior of people in crowded situations as rude. This example illustrates a pattern known as **ethnocentrism**, in which people, consciously or unconsciously, view their own culture as normal and natural and judge other cultures accordingly. Throughout history, people of various cultural backgrounds have labeled those of different backgrounds as "savage," "barbaric," "hedonistic," and "primitive" because these people's behaviors differed from their own.

Ethnocentrism exists in all societies, for several reasons. First, we take much of our behavior for granted, not really thinking about why we do certain things and don't do other things. To many Americans, eating pork or beefsteak is appetizing, but the thought of eating worms or grasshoppers is repulsive. In other cultures, though, these same things are viewed very differently. Worms and grasshoppers are eaten in many societies, and in some societies few things could be more repulsive than eating the meat of a pig or a cow. In many Middle Eastern societies, eating pork is strictly forbidden; it is against the rules of the stricter segments of both Judaism and Islam. In India, cows are considered sacred, and people would be horrified at the thought of killing one, much less eating it.

FUNCTIONS OF ETHNOCENTRISM A second reason for the universality of ethnocentrism is that it performs a function: In a society where people have a common culture, ethnocentrism in relation to other societies helps to promote *solidarity* (Sumner, 1906). To a certain extent, any society can promote internal unity and cooperation by *comparing itself* favorably to those outside. Significantly, the ever-present tendency toward ethnocentrism becomes most pronounced during wartime, as each country in the conflict emphasizes its righteousness and civility as contrasted with its evil and barbaric enemy. From a conflict perspective, ethnocentrism is also useful for justifying or rationalizing one group's exploitation of another. "After all," the colonizers tell themselves, "they're just helpless primitives whom we're actually civilizing" in the process of

making them slaves or taking their land. With this type of thinking, even the most brutal exploitation can be made to seem acceptable.

DYSFUNCTIONS OF ETHNOCENTRISM Despite the fact that it is functional in certain ways, most sociologists see ethnocentrism as generally dysfunctional, and they try to discourage it. For one thing, it can be a major source of conflict and inequality in any society with a significant degree of cultural diversity — which, in today's world, means most societies. Second, it is a major cause of international conflict because societies that view one another ethnocentrically create international conflicts through self-fulfilling prophecies. Third, as previously noted, it is often used as an excuse for one group to treat another in a brutal and exploitative manner. Finally, ethnocentrism creates misunderstanding of social reality. In fact, one of the greatest challenges of social-science research is to avoid ethnocentrism when studying human behavior.

Cultural Relativism In contrast to ethnocentrism, social scientists try to look at human behavior and culture from a viewpoint of **cultural relativism**. Cultural relativism recognizes that cultures are different but does not view difference as deficiency. Rather, it realizes that different societies develop different cultures and different social structures in response to the different environmental conditions they face. Thus, even if our ways seem natural and are best for us, they are not natural but a social product, and they certainly may not be best for someone else. Cultural relativism also

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One reason ethnocentrism exists is that people consider their cultural values to be "normal" and different values to be "bad." Do these grubs look appetizing to you? Why or why not?

means trying to understand the behavior of people in other cultures according to what it means to them and not what it would mean to someone in *our* culture. Even for social scientists trained in detached observation, this is not easy to do.

It should be stressed that cultural relativism does not always mean value neutrality. Occasionally, cultures become despotic, as in the case of Nazi Germany. Sociologists do not carry cultural relativism to the point of accepting such cultures, but they do try to understand the social forces that produce them.

The Conflict Perspective and Culture

Recall from Chapter 3 that, to the conflict theorist, a society's social structure is arranged so that whatever group holds power in that society controls a disproportionate share of scarce resources. To the conflict theorist, the function of culture is to justify such social arrangements — to get people in society to accept the notion that those who have a disproportionate share of scarce resources *should* have that large share. This view is expressed most clearly in the theories of Karl Marx (1964).

Marx on Social Structure and Culture Marx believed strongly that any society's culture is an outgrowth of its social structure. In other words, the basic social and economic arrangements in a society largely determine what people in that society will know and believe. All societies, Marx argued, have an *economic structure* and an *ideational superstructure*. By **economic structure**, Marx was referring to those elements of social structure that relate to production, wealth, and income. It includes the economic stratification system — the distribution of income and particularly wealth — but it also is defined by the society's production system (industrial versus agricultural, for example). By **ideational superstructure**, Marx was referring to those aspects of culture that we have called ideology. Marx used the term superstructure because he saw ideology and culture as arising from the social structure, not having a life of their own. The true structure of a society is defined by its distribution of wealth; culture is simply a product of that economic structure.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE The relationship between social structure (or in Marxian terms, *economic structure*) and culture (or *ideational superstructure*) is depicted in Figure 4.2. The blocks at the top and bottom of the figure represent the social or economic structure. As the figure shows, this structure is composed of a *ruling class* and a *subordinate class*. The ruling class is the group that owns the means of production, and the subordinate class is everyone else. In
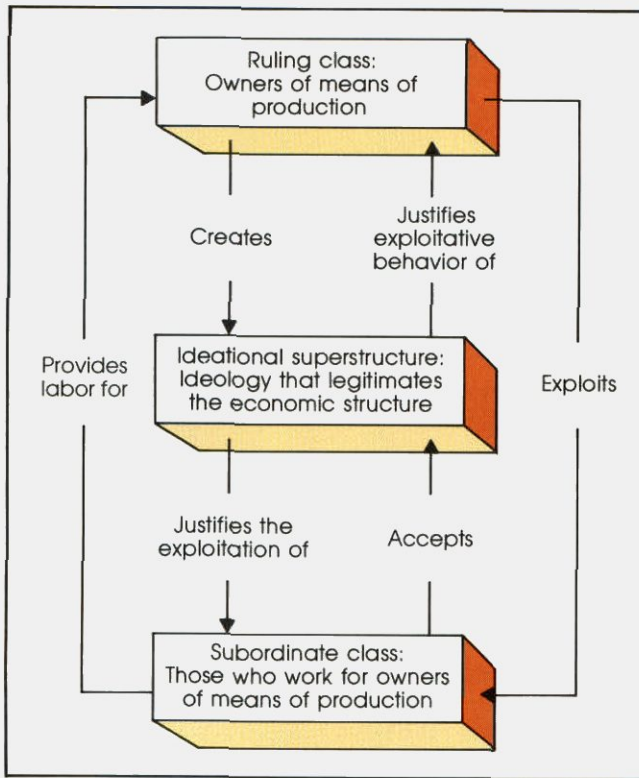
FIGURE 4.2   The Relationship between Economic Structure and Ideational Superstructure (Ideology) in Marxian Theory

SOURCE: Adapted from Dushkin Publishing Group, *The Study of Society*, p. 34. Copyright 1974, Dushkin Publishing Group, Guilford, CT. Used by permission.

general, people in the subordinate class work for people in *the ruling class. Thus, as shown on the left side of* Figure 4.2, the subordinate class provides labor for the ruling class. Those in the ruling class are able to sell the products of that labor for more than the cost of the labor, and this profit — or *surplus value of labor,* as Marx called it — enables the ruling class to enjoy a much higher standard of living than everyone else. Marx saw this as exploitation because the actual work is done by the subordinate class, who suffer a low standard of living while the ruling class monopolizes *the products of their labor. Thus, as shown at the right side* of the figure, the ruling class exploits the subordinate class.

IDEOLOGY   Of course, because the social structure is fundamentally one of inequality and exploitation, according to Marx, the ruling class always faces the risk of an uprising by the subordinate class. The function of ideology, or ideational superstructure, is to prevent this. A culture's ideology thus explains why the ruling class should enjoy

disproportionate wealth. In Figure 4.2, culture or ideology is represented by *the middle block. Note the arrows be-*tween the top two blocks. The ruling class creates the ideology, and the ideology justifies its exploitative relationship with the subordinate class.

How ideology justifies such exploitative relationships will depend, of course, on the broader characteristics of the society. Traditional, preindustrial societies might justify the social structure on the grounds that it is the will of God. Thus, the royalty and nobility of preindustrial Europe — the owners of wealth in feudal society — were protected by an ideology known as the *divine right of kings,* which held that kings received their authority from God. In a modern industrial society, the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few might be justified on the grounds of productivity and incentive: Placing any limit upon the wealth that people can earn might take away their incentive to come up with innovations that improve productivity. If this sounds more persuasive to you than God's willing that the king should rule, that is not surprising. You live, after all, in a modern society that values rationality, productivity, and innovation. However, Marx and those who follow his theories would hold that this argument is merely a cultural mechanism designed to uphold the great wealth of the economic ruling class, and that society could be just as productive without so much concentration of wealth. The relationship between stratification and productivity is explored further in Chapter 9, which deals with economic stratification.

False Consciousness   As the bottom half of Figure 4.2 illustrates, not only does the ruling class create and promote an ideology that justifies its exploitative behavior, but the subordinate class accepts this ideology. Marx referred to this acceptance as *false consciousness.* In medieval society, for example, what was critical was that people *believed* in the divine right of kings. Such a belief served the interest of the king, but it went directly against the interests of the serfs and peasants, who labored for long hours day after day, only to see the wealth that they produced taken away by a noble or king. **False consciousness,** then, can be defined as acceptance by a group of people — usually a subordinate group — of a belief or value that works against that group's self-interests.

False consciousness is a critical concept in conflict theories about culture and social structure because it is the *key means* by which the ruling class prevents protest or revolution. Why do subordinate groups so often accept ideologies that go against their own interests? According to Marx, the answer lies in the power of the ruling class over key institutions and sources of information.

FALSE CONSCIOUSNESS AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE Consider again the example of medieval European society. In that time and place, the key social institution was the

Church. Kings were crowned in cathedrals, and bishops were consecrated in the presence of the king. Bishops, like kings and nobles, were often major landowners. Thus, the Church and royalty shared a common position in the ruling class, and because religion was the source of truth in such traditional societies, the ruling class could promote its interests through the Church. Thus, the divine right theory was not seriously questioned until the beginnings of urbanization and industrialization created a new and powerful capitalist class whose interests often conflicted with those of the rural landowners.

In modern societies, false consciousness can be promoted through other means. Conflict theorists point out, for example, that the media are owned and controlled by large corporations, who are the wealthiest class in contemporary capitalist societies (Molotch, 1979). This does not mean that the media will speak with a unified voice, or even that they will not criticize the wealthy. However, conflict theorists do argue that there is a definite limit to how far the media will go in advocating fundamental change in the economic system, and that the media encourage people to take certain economic arrangements for granted. Often, too, the media focus heavily on entertainment rather than information, giving people largely what they want but also giving them little real information. According to some conflict theorists, this policy distracts the public from social issues that might lead to conflict that could threaten the ruling class (Gouldner, 1976, especially pp. 167–178).

FALSE CONSCIOUSNESS: A CASE STUDY   The concept of false consciousness can be illustrated by the 1972 presidential election, during which the Democratic candidate, Senator George McGovern, proposed a major revision of the nation's inheritance laws. The McGovern plan would have taxed away any money inherited by one individual in excess of $500,000. This proposal became so controversial that McGovern was forced to withdraw it, and many observers feel that it contributed to the candidate's landslide defeat by Richard Nixon.

As might be expected, McGovern's proposal aroused tremendous hostility among the wealthy. Significantly, however, although less than 1 percent of the population would have been affected by the plan, some of the major opposition came from the working class (Clelland and Robertson, 1974, pp. 204-205). Why did so many people who would never be in a position to pass along this sum of money react this way? Apparently, most Americans still believed strongly in the "American Dream"—the belief that they *might* someday possess that kind of wealth. To support McGovern's proposal would be to deny this possibility, which they were unwilling to do.

Working-class opposition to the McGovern plan can be interpreted as an act of false consciousness because, in terms of objective interests, these people would have bene-

Working-class rejection of George McGovern's proposal for an inheritance tax can be seen as an example of false consciousness.

fited from the proposal. Higher taxes for the wealthy could have meant lower taxes or expanded government programs (for example, college scholarships) for working people, as well as reduced deficits, which would have lowered the inflation rate. Because they were unable to distinguish their interests from those of a wealthy minority, working-class voters lost an opportunity to change government policy to their benefit.

INCOMPATIBILITIES BETWEEN CULTURE AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Both the functionalist and conflict perspectives agree that under certain circumstances culture and social structure are at odds with each other. We shall examine this issue from the viewpoints of the two schools.

Culture Against Structure: The Functionalist Perspective

Functionalist theory holds that a society's social structure and culture will help it adapt to its physical, social, and technological environment. This would seem to suggest that society could be very stable once it reached a state of equilibrium with that environment. However, the environment is always changing. The society comes into contact

with societies it did not have to deal with before, which represents a change in the social environment. New technologies are invented, which represents a change in the technological environment. Even the physical environment can change and force a society to adapt. In 1986, for example, as discussed in Chapter 20, the Chernobyl nuclear disaster contaminated the reindeer herd of northern Sweden and Norway with radiation, which forced many people who had been herding reindeer for centuries to change their lifestyle. Although this is a particularly dramatic change in the physical environment, there are many more gradual changes that require societies to adapt. Changes in climate, environmental damage, depletion of natural resources or discovery of new ones, changes in the mix of animal life, and even changes in lake or ocean levels can all require substantial adaptation by human societies. Thus, they can all be important sources of social and cultural change.

Cultural Lag   When a society must change in response to its environment, its social structure and culture often do not change at the same rate. The social structure, for example, can often adapt quickly to new technology. However, the culture is usually slower to change, because people resist giving up important values and beliefs. This creates a condition sociologists call **cultural lag**. When this situation *exists*, a value, norm, or belief that once was functional persists even though it is no longer functional or has become dysfunctional. Cultural lag occurs any time a society's culture fails to keep up with changes in its social structure, or when one part of the culture changes and another part does not (Ogburn, 1966 [orig. 1922]). Numerous examples of cultural lag can be found in American society.

You can see an example of cultural lag every time that you eat. Americans, after they cut their meat, put down the knife and switch the fork from the left hand to the right. Only then do they put the food in their mouths. This differs from *the European practice of simply raising the food to the* mouth with the fork in the left hand after cutting the meat. Why did Americans change this practice? Some experts conjecture that the change originated on the frontier, where people needed to keep a hand free in case they had to grab a weapon to fight off an attacker. Today, the frontier is gone, and putting down the knife and switching the fork to the other hand has no practical use. Americans continue to do it anyway, however, and to eat in the European style is considered to be "bad manners." Other examples of cultural lag—some of which are a source of serious social problems—are discussed in the box, "Tending a Headless Queen."

Cultural Diffusion   Another condition that can produce incompatibilities between culture and social structure is **cultural diffusion**, a condition that occurs when aspects of

The international popularity of U.S. rock stars is an example of cultural diffusion. What elements of Japanese culture have spread to Western countries?

the culture of one society are gradually adopted by other societies. Examples of cultural diffusion abound. One is the worldwide popularity of American and British rock music, which is often sung in English regardless of the local language. Another can be seen in the ease with which Americans today will identify certain forms of behavior as *macho*, a concept that originated not in the United States but in Latin America.

Like cultural lag, cultural diffusion can produce situations where the culture and social structure are incompatible. The culture of one society may not work very well with the social structure of another. In this case, the process happens in the opposite way from cultural lag: The culture changes in some way that may make it incompatible with the social structure. In the 1960s, for example, many young Americans were influenced by mystical Asian religious thought. Transcendental meditation, Zen Buddhism, and other forms of Eastern mysticism stressing inner peace and self-knowledge attracted sizable interest. To other Americans, however, a mode of thinking that emphasized introspection and inner peace seemed out of place in an economic system that required achievement motivation and a certain amount of interest in material wealth. Some even saw the spread of these new ideas as a threat to the productivity of the American economy.

When either cultural lag or cultural diffusion produces a situation where the culture and social structure are incompatible, several things can happen. The culture or the structure can change in ways that make the two more compatible. Sometimes a *subculture* will develop. In the case of cultural lag, some people will continue to hang on to the old culture, while others adopt new ways of thinking that are

SOCIOLOGICAL INSIGHTS

TENDING A HEADLESS QUEEN

Late in 1990, worker ants in an ant exhibit at Washington's National Zoo moved their colony's queen from one chamber to another in the exhibit. In doing so, they made a major misjudgment: The hole through which they tried to move her was too small, and they accidentally tore off her head. What makes this case interesting is what happened next: The ants continued to tend their queen as if nothing had happened. In fact, reported William Booth of *The Washington Post* ("The Day the Ants Lost Their Head," Dec. 13, 1990, pp. B1, B4), zoo caretakers said that the worker ants would continue to care for their headless queen as long as her body still smelled like that of a live queen, which would continue to be the case for weeks.

Columnist Katie Sherrod saw a parallel to human behavior in the ants' continuing to care for their beheaded queen. In a way, she argues, we humans are tend-

SOURCES: William Booth, "The Day the Ants Lost Their Head," *The Washington Post*, December 13, 1990, pp. B1, B4; and Katie Sherrod, "Beheaded, But Still Alive," *The Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, June 23, 1991, p. 3B.

ing many headless queens of our own. These headless queens are leftover ideas from the past that may have once made sense, but no longer do. She wrote,

"This story is almost impossible to read as other than a wonderful parable for our times. Just think how often we humans are busy about the work of tending headless queens: Our government does it, clinging tenaciously to the idea that even a bloodthirsty tyrant who professes to be a capitalist is better than anyone who espouses even remotely Marxist ideas. Countless institutions, from schools to clubs to corporations to appliance-repair services, base their schedules and demands on employees on the headless queen idea of the 'traditional American family' where the daddy worked and the mama stayed home to take care of the house, wait on repairmen, run errands and chauffeur children around. This profile fits less than 7 percent of American families these days. Still, we expect all families to be able to fit their lives into schedules and work demands based on this one model.

"Our whole society continues to operate as if we had unlim-

ited supplies of fossil fuels. So devoted are we to the 'headless queen' idea of unlimited oil that we are willing to exploit wilderness areas, put whole ecosystems at risk with massive oil spills and even go to war to ensure our supply rather than take even the simplest steps toward conservation.

"Our American nine-month school year is based on the headless queen idea that children must be free in the summer to help out their families with the planting and harvesting on farms.

"And as individuals, we often spend more energy tending headless queens left from our childhood than we do on the current realities of our lives. How many people do you know who still are hung up on old angers, old myths and old labels laid on them years ago by well-meaning parents, overzealous preachers or ill-informed peers?

"It's easy to be amused at the ants mindlessly minding their headless queen. But the ants have offered us an interesting example. We should all ask ourselves: Just how many headless queens are we tending?"

more consistent with the new structural realities. In the case of cultural diffusion, some people are usually quicker than others to borrow ideas from other cultures. In both of these cases, society becomes more culturally diverse as different belief systems and different sets of norms emerge among different groups of people in society. This can bring conflict if the groups confront one another, but it also can be an important source of social adaptation.

Subcultures in Mass Society

A **subculture** can be defined as a set of cultural characteristics shared among a group within a society that (1) are distinct in some ways from the larger culture within which the group exists, but (2) also have some features in common with the larger culture. Usually, a group that forms a subcul-

Through music and other symbols, such as wearing their clothes backwards, the rap group Kriss Kross expresses rejection of many middle-class values.

ture has some sense of identity, some recognition that people in the group share something among themselves that others in the larger society do not. A subculture can develop any time a group of people share some situation or experience that is different from that of others in their society. Some of the groups of people that commonly form subcultures are age groups; racial and ethnic groups; religious groups; people in a particular geographic area; and people with a common occupation, recreational interest, or economic situation. Each of these examples involves some common situation or experience among people in the group that is not shared with the larger society. It is important to stress that the preface "sub" does not imply that subcultures are inferior to, or less fully developed than, cultures. Rather, it is used to convey the notion that subcultures exist *within* some larger cultural context.

Case Studies: Hip Hop and Computer Jocks In some cases, the values, norms, and beliefs of a subculture are in conflict with those of the larger culture, whereas in other cases, they are largely irrelevant to those of the larger culture. An example of conflict can be seen in the "hip hop" subculture that emerged among inner-city African Americans in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Through rap music and other symbols, hip hop expresses anger toward American society over racism, poverty, and lack of oportunity, and rejects many of the values of the larger, mostly white, middle-class culture. Much of rap music's language and content seems intended to shock those who adhere to that culture. In contrast, an example of a subculture with norms largely irrelevant to the larger culture can be seen in what are commonly called "computer jocks." Like the inner-city hip hop culture, this group speaks a language different from that of most Americans. It speaks of bits and bytes, math

coprocessors, operating systems, RAM, ROM, and infinite loops. However, this group uses such terms not to rebel against middle-class culture, but because of its special interest in the details of computers that ordinary English doesn't describe very well. Computer jocks are not really in conflict with the larger culture. Rather, they are, at times, totally absorbed in their own subculture.

Though both the hip hop and computer subcultures share knowledge, beliefs, values, and norms that are different from those of the larger society, neither is totally apart from the larger American culture. Their members, for example, are for the most part capable of speaking ordinary, standard English when the situation calls for it and they wish to do so. Despite its rebelliousness, hip hop still incorporates some basic American values, ranging from material consumption to a desire for fairness. Moreover, people in both groups watch some of the same television shows and eat at some of the same chain restaurants. Thus, computer jocks and even the hip hop culture of inner-city youth fit in to the larger culture in some ways. That is what makes them subcultures rather than totally independent cultures.

A subculture's norms may conflict with those of the larger society, or they may simply be irrelevant to the larger society, as in the case of recreational subcultures. Although such recreational subcultures do not conflict with the larger culture, they do have distinct norms that are well understood by those familiar with the subculture but largely unknown to people outside it. For an example, see the box entitled "Drift Fishing: The Norms of a Subculture."

Jargon in Subcultures We have already seen examples of language and symbol variation in our discussion of hip hop and computer jocks. When a subculture develops its own distinct terminology, this terminology is often referred to as *jargon*. Jargon has both manifest and latent functions. Its manifest function can be seen in the example of the computer jocks. There are areas of particular interest to people sharing the subculture, such as technical computer procedures, that ordinary language is not sufficiently detailed to describe easily. The professions—including sociology—also have extensive jargon, for much the same reason. Sociology, chemistry, law, medicine, and other professions involve detailed and specialized subject matter that requires precise terminology.

Besides this manifest function of describing specialized concepts, jargon has the important latent function of setting boundaries concerning who is "in" and who is "out of" a particular subculture. This process of *boundary maintenance* is important to the group identity of those who share a subculture. Thus, part of becoming accepted among the community of professional sociologists is the ability to use the jargon. Similarly, computer jocks and other recreational subcultures use knowledge of the jargon to distinguish novices and outsiders from "insiders."

DRIFT FISHING: THE NORMS OF A SUBCULTURE

Some years ago, on a fishing trip, I received a good lesson in the extent to which recreational groups such as fishing people develop their own subcultures. At the lake where I was fishing, a method of fishing known as "drift fishing" is commonly used. Basically, drift fishing consists of fishing off the windward side of a boat that is allowed to drift with the wind. The boat will turn at a 90 degree angle to the wind direction and move sideways in the direction the wind is blowing, and the people fish facing into the wind. The motion extends the line away from the boat, and the moving bait is more attractive to the fish than a still bait. This fishing method also has the advantage that if the fish are concentrated in a small area, a number of boats can take their turns drifting over the "hot spot," and everyone gets a chance to catch fish as he or she passes over. This method is shown in the diagram below.

On this particular day, with about half a dozen boatloads of people fishing this way and catching lots of fish over a small spot, another boatload of fishermen suddenly arrived. To everyone's surprise, they used their motor to position themselves motionless over the spot where the fish were biting—thus blocking everyone else's access to the spot. In addition, they caught very few fish, because their bait wasn't moving enough. Everyone else was angry, but nothing was said; people just left in search of another spot.

That night in the lodge, however, plenty was said. The offending boat was the main topic of conversation, as several boatloads of people from the place I was staying had been fishing that spot. After a number of comments were made about the rudeness and selfishness of the people, the owner of our resort said, "Did you know those people are staying here? You know, what happened

on the lake isn't really their fault. They come here every year, but they just sit in their cabin in the evening and never come to the lodge. They never talk to anyone while they're here. They just don't know they're not supposed to fish that way."

Later, when I thought about this, I realized I had gotten a free lesson in sociology. The people in the lodge belonged to the local fishing subculture and knew the rules so well that they took them for granted and assumed everyone else did, too. Hence, they (perhaps a bit ethnocentrically) defined the behavior of the other group as selfish and inconsiderate. But because the other group of people never talked to anyone familiar with the fishing subculture, they were not part of it and had no way of knowing its norms. They probably would have been very surprised to find out that anyone was mad at them.

Fish biting in this area

Wind direction
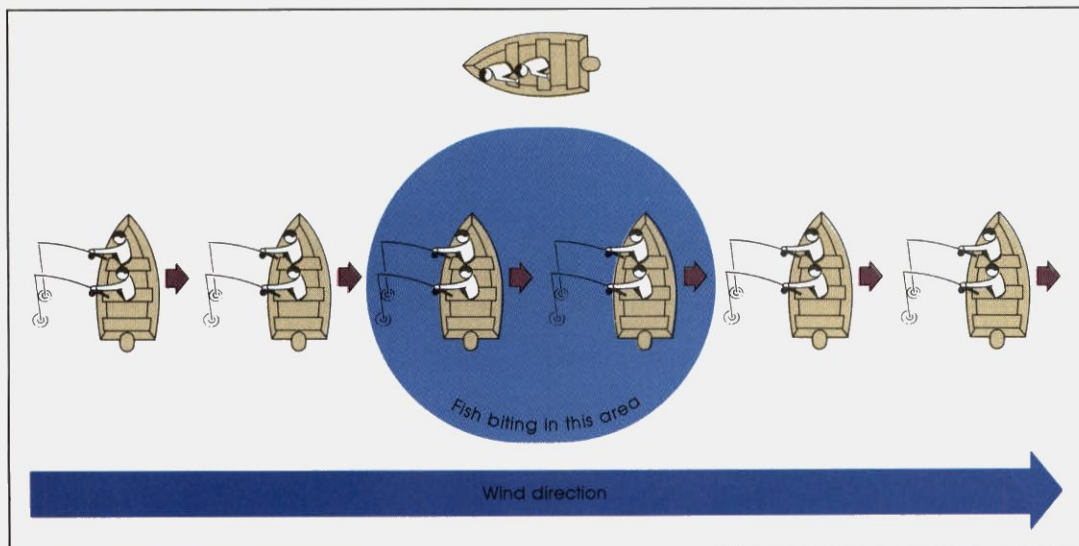
Functions of Subcultures We have already identified one of the functions of subcultures: permitting specialized activity. As we saw earlier in this chapter, the division of labor is essential in any society and becomes more so as society becomes larger and more complex. Because subcultures (particularly occupational subcultures) carry the knowledge necessary to perform specialized tasks, they are essential to the division of labor.

IDENTITY IN MASS SOCIETY Subcultures also provide a source of identity in mass society, thus preventing feelings of isolation and **anomie** (see Chapter 3). In modern mass societies, where people read the same newspapers and watch the same television programs, and where your account number, student number, and social security number are often more important than your name, it is easy for anomie to occur. People want to distinguish themselves from the crowd in order to feel that "I am somebody" (Reissman, 1961). Subcultures permit this by enabling people with a common interest, situation, or set of experiences to stand out from the crowd. They provide effective norms for the small group when the norms of the larger society seem meaningless.

CULTURAL ADAPTATION AND CHANGE Another important function of subcultures is to serve as a *source of adaptation* in society. Recall our previous discussion of cultural lag and cultural diffusion. Often a subculture is the mechanism through which cultural diffusion occurs. In such cases, some group of people in the society — often the young, the well-educated, or those at the forefront of developing new technologies — adopts a new set of values and beliefs that are better adjusted to the new realities. This group thus develops a subculture in response to the new conditions. Eventually, a process of cultural diffusion occurs within the society, and the values of this subculture spread to the larger society.

A process very much like this has taken place in the United States with respect to the roles of men and women. In today's highly technological and automated society, the notion of determining social roles by sex, which may once have had some basis in differences in physical strength, no longer makes much sense. The idea of more equal roles for men and women was first adopted by young, urban, well-educated people, particularly women (Yankelovich, 1981, 1974). Because the idea of different roles for men and women has been with us for centuries, there was considerable resistance to this new idea. Gradually, though, the notion that women belong in the workplace and can perform most jobs spread to the mainstream (Roper Organization, 1980; Yankelovich, 1981). Thus, what had been an adaptation to a new social and technological environment by a particular subculture gradually became accepted in mainstream American culture through a process of cultural diffusion.

Dysfunctions of Subcultures Although subcultures perform important functions in society, they can also be dysfunctional. The most important potential dysfunction, from the point of view of the functionalist perspective, is that they can erode society's consensus. If a culture contains subcultures whose attitudes are too different from one another, or who are excessively at odds with the larger culture, cooperation can be inhibited. Each group may think of itself first and the concerns of the larger society only later. Hence, functionalists generally seek to place bounds on cultural diversity, opposing policies that encourage it, such as bilingual education (Glazer, 1981; Thernstrom, 1980), and criticizing social programs that emphasize group rights rather than individual rights or the needs of the larger society (Bolce and Gray, 1979; Glazer, 1976).

Culture Against Structure: The Conflict Perspective

Unlike functionalists, conflict theorists see incompatibility between culture and social structure as something more fundamental than adaptation to the society's environment. They see such incompatibilities as inherent in the nature of the society itself. As we saw, conflict theorists hold that social structure is shaped in the interests of the dominant group in the society and survives because of the false consciousness of other groups. Eventually, however, the people in the society may come to attain **class consciousness**; that is, they will recognize that their true interests do not lie in maintaining the social structure as it was created by the dominant group. In other words, they have now adopted beliefs, values, and norms that support their objective self-interests. This, of course, places their culture at odds with the social structure, and, as a group, the subordinate class is in conflict with the dominant group. To conflict theorists, this conflict offers the possibility of social change.

Class Consciousness and Symbolic Interaction The process by which people's consciousness is altered involves communication within disadvantaged or oppressed groups, which leads people in those groups to redefine the meaning of their situation. Until rather recently, a shortcoming of conflict theories was their failure to focus sufficiently on the process by which such changes of consciousness occur. Several contemporary theorists who began as conflict theorists have set out to combine the insights of the symbolic-interactionist perspective with those of conflict theory in order to understand this process (Collins, 1981, 1985c; Giddens, 1978, 1985). These theorists point out that individual interpretations of meaning collectively define how

groups view their situation. They argue that in order for us to understand such changes as shifts from false consciousness to class consciousness, we must understand the processes of communication and interpretation through which individual views of reality are changed.

Subculture as a Weapon in Group Conflict

Because class consciousness develops in groups that share a common interest among themselves (and an interest opposed to that of the dominant group), it is clear that subcultures play an important role in social change. Conflict theorists emphasize the idea that subcultures develop among groups that share a common self-interest. To the conflict theorist, the most important function of subcultures is to enable groups to act on behalf of a common self-interest. Consider the hip hop example again. From a functionalist perspective, this subculture would give black inner-city youth a sense of identity in a mass society. However, from a conflict perspective, hip hop does more than that. It forms a basis for people to act upon the common self-interests they share as young, poor, inner-city African Americans. Thus, hip hop becomes more than a mere source of identity in mass society; it becomes a political statement that black youth reject the dominant culture and demand the opportunity to control their own destiny. To conflict theorists, such articulation of group interests and political expression is the most important function of subcultures.

Cross-Cutting and Overlapping Cleavages

Although diversity of culture can lead to conflict in some cases, it can also help to keep conflict under control. This depends on how the various subcultures in a society divide on the basis of different issues and social characteristics. If they always divide the same way, severe conflict is likely. If they divide differently, conflict is usually more manageable. When the divisions are always the same (or very similar), a society is said to have **overlapping cleavages**: issues that divide people generally along similar lines. A good example of this is Northern Ireland. The social characteristics of ethnicity and religion divide the population almost identically, and are also closely related to social class divisions. Americans think of Northern Ireland as being divided by religion: Protestants vs. Catholics. However, nearly all the Protestants are of British ancestry (either Scottish or English) and nearly all the Catholics are of Irish ancestry. Moreover, the British conquered Ireland and annexed it to the United Kingdom (UK), which is the original source of the conflict. The Republic of Ireland gained its independence, but Northern Ireland remains part of the UK today. Thus, religion and nationality divide the population identically, and both divisions have their origin in force and conquest. Social class is also closely related to ethnicity, with the poorest groups being concentrated among the Irish Catholics and the wealthiest among the English-ancestry Protestants. The

Scottish-ancestry Protestants fall between, and perceive themselves to be threatened by the Catholics. The result of all this is that, whether society divides along the lines of religion, ethnicity, or social class, the lines of division are much the same. Thus, Northern Ireland's subcultures are almost literally at war with one another.

This can be contrasted to the **cross-cutting cleavages**, situations in which divisions or issues of conflict divide a society in different ways on different issues, on these same social characteristics in the United States. There are ethnic differences between Catholics and Protestants in the United States, too, but here, both religions are composed of a wide diversity of ethnic groups. Irish, Italian, Polish, and Mexican-American Catholics may have little in common besides their religion; in Northern Ireland, however, all Catholics share a common ethnic background. The mix of social classes is also quite similar among American Catholics and Protestants. In short, ethnicity, religion, and class all divide the American population into subcultures *in different ways,* so everyone has different loyalties, depending on the issue. This situation of cross-cutting cleavages tends to keep conflict manageable (Lipset, 1959).

Countercultures

Sometimes, particularly when cleavages are overlapping rather than cross-cutting, subcultures become so opposed to the larger culture that sociologists call them **countercultures** (Roszak, 1969; Yinger, 1982). A counterculture exists when a subculture adopts values and beliefs that are predominantly in opposition to those of the larger society. Examples of countercultures are religious cults such as the Hare Krishnas, the Children of God, and the Rajneesh movement of the early 1980s; extremist political groups such as the Ku Klux Klan and the Aryan Nations on the right and the Weather Underground on the left; and groups espousing radically different lifestyles such as the Hell's Angels. Some groups combine lifestyle with politics, such as the hippies of the 1960s and today's "alternative" youth culture or, at the opposite end of the political spectrum, the neo-Nazi skinheads. Such groups often challenge authority and sometimes engage in direct conflict with its representatives.

At times, countercultures become widespread and influential in society, as in the 1960s when diverse groups of young people seemed to challenge nearly every social norm. Although these groups were popularly referred to as "the counterculture," it is not clear whether it was really one counterculture or many. Certainly there were some common threads that united these diverse groups— opposition to the Vietnam war; enjoyment of rock music; and new ideas concerning sexuality, the roles of minorities and women, and the recreational use of drugs. However, the diversity in this so-called counterculture was so great that it is hard to describe it as one counterculture. It is very doubtful whether middle-class college students, Black Pan-

thers, and societal "dropouts" who used psychedelic drugs really had much in common besides challenging authority. Each of these groups had very different lifestyles, experiences, and concerns. Some, for example, were out to change society (and not always in the same ways), whereas others were simply seeking to withdraw from it (Kenniston, 1971).

It should be mentioned that some social scientists question the entire notion of countercultures. They argue that even countercultures reflect a mix of rejection and acceptance of the larger culture. Extreme rightist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan, Posse Comitatus, and the Aryan Nations may engage in violence against the police and fellow citizens, but they also carry the American flag and call themselves "true patriots." In the 1960s and early 1970s, the youth counterculture was said to be rejecting materialism and questioning technology, but you'd hardly know it by looking at the stereos and amplifiers they used to play rock music (Slater, 1970). From this perspective, these elements of acceptance and rejection of the dominant culture make it very hard to draw the line between a subculture and a counterculture. Regardless of terminology, however, the development of subcultures that at least partly oppose the larger culture is an important source of social change.

SOCIAL ISSUES FOR THE '90s

THE MULTICULTURALISM DEBATE

While functionalists and conflict theorists point to different functions of subcultures, functionalists also see them as dysfunctional in certain ways. This has led to sharp debate in recent years concerning the question of whether societies should encourage the growth of diverse subcultures, or encourage common values and ways of life as much as possible. In no area has this debate been more intense than in the area of racial and ethnic cultural diversity. The debate centers around such questions as:

How can a diverse society best ensure that people from all backgrounds have the opportunity to contribute to its productivity and to benefit from its wealth?

In a society in which people come from ever more diverse cultural backgrounds, is it better to encourage groups to preserve their cultures or to assimilate?

Can people from diverse backgrounds cooperate with one another?

Does assimilation mean surrendering one's own values to those of a more powerful group?

These issues have taken on growing importance as the proportion of people of color from non-European backgrounds has risen in the U.S. population. Today, about one out of four Americans are from such cultural backgrounds, and this percentage will continue to grow for two reasons. First, the birth rate of these groups tends to be somewhat higher than that of Americans of European ancestry. Second, today's immigrants are coming mainly from Latin America, Asia, and the Caribbean, in contrast to earlier eras when most immigrants came from Europe.

It is clear that, in order to be productive, the United States must offer full opportunities to people of color to become well educated and to fill the jobs of the future, which will be more and more technically demanding. Unfortunately, patterns of discrimination and institutionalized inequality, described in greater detail in Chapter 11, have excluded many people of color—particularly African Americans, Mexican Americans, Puerto Rican Americans, and Native Americans, from such opportunities.

Today, many colleges and businesses have established programs in support of diversity and multiculturalism. These programs are based on research findings about the effects of social and cultural conflicts that lead people of color to feel outnumbered and unwanted in predominantly white schools and businesses. These feelings have led many people of color to leave or avoid such situations, or created tensions that have made it difficult for them to succeed. Studies have shown, for example, that social processes such as these are among the major reasons for retention problems among black college students, and that even the most successful black professionals and managers do not feel fully accepted in the places where they work (Allen et al., 1991; Zweigenhaft and Domhoff, 1991). The objective of diversity and multiculturalism programs is to encourage greater respect for people of diverse cultural backgrounds, as a means of promoting both greater racial and ethnic harmony and a more hospitable work and school environment for people of color.

Some people—mainly social scientific functionalists and political conservatives—have criticized multiculturalism on the grounds that it encourages divisions by encouraging people to maintain their cultural differences rather than assimilate so that people will have more in common. These critics of multiculturalism argue that the more people have in common, the more they will cooperate—but that when they are culturally different, these differences in values and outlook will lead to conflicts that divide different groups and inhibit cooperation. Thus, in this view, too much cultural diversity can be dysfunctional. These critics argue that other societies with which the United States is competing, such as Japan and many European countries, are less ethnically diverse than the United States, and that this facilitates their cooperation and productivity. According to this view, different groups in the

United States should be encouraged to assimilate into one common culture, and multiculturalism inhibits this.

There is, however, one important problem with this argument: There may be good reasons why some groups do not want to assimilate and why it may not be in their interest to do so. A variety of researchers have pointed out that groups whose original entry into a society is not voluntary nearly always resist giving up their own values and lifestyles in favor of those of the majority (Blauner, 1972; Lieberson, 1980; Zweigenhaft and Domhoff, 1991). Such groups have almost always been historically opppressed, and they do not want to accept the values of a group that has discriminated against them and economically exploited them. Moreover, conflict theorists argue that it may not be in their interests to do so; it may be a case of the false consciousness discussed earlier in this chapter. In the United States, most people of color fall into this category: African Americans, Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Native Americans all were, historically speaking, brought under American rule involuntarily and subjected to widespread discrimination and economic exploitation. Only Asian Americans originally came voluntarily, and they are indeed more culturally assimilated than other Americans of color. Hence, whatever the theoretical merits of a society with cultural consensus, it may be unrealistic to expect that to occur for many groups in the United States given its history.

The real question, then, may come down to one of whether or not people can learn to respect cultural differences and cooperate despite these differences. Initial successes with cultural diversity programs in such companies as Monsanto and Kodak suggest that they can, if it is made clear that such cooperation is valued and expected by the organization. Research has shown that as people become more educated and as society continues to urbanize, the tendency is for people to become more accepting of diversity (Tuch, 1987). Thus, the present social context may well be creating an environment favorable to the success of programs like those at Monsanto and Kodak.

We turn now to a broader discussion of American culture, with which we shall conclude the chapter.

AMERICAN CULTURE

Core American Values and Beliefs

What are the beliefs and values associated with American culture, and how do they differ from those of other cultures? A number of sociologists have addressed this question and have achieved a fairly broad consensus on some of the core values and beliefs that are shared by the majority of Ameri-

cans. Table 4.3 lists some of the most basic American values.

TABLE 4.3   Core American Values and Beliefs.

Freedom	Belief in personal rights, as expressed in the Bill of Rights of the U.S. Constitution, and the need to extend and defend these rights around the world.
Democracy	The belief that people should be free to choose their own government and that government decisions should be a product of the public will.
Individualism and individual responsibility	The belief that success and failure are individual, and not governmental or societal, responsibilities. People should support themselves and their family and not rely on "welfare."
Religion and morality	A concern with issues of right and wrong, which permeates most political issues. Might reflect the fact that Americans are more religious than most industrialized peoples.
Science and technology	The belief in solving problems through the application of scientific knowledge.
Equality of opportunity	The belief that all people should have the chance to succeed according to their own abilities, rather than because of special privileges.
Competition	Strong belief in outperforming others, as expressed by current rhetoric concerning the "failure" of U.S. schools and businesses to compete with foreign nations.
Work ethic	A major emphasis on achievement through hard work. Tied to the idea that success is measured in terms of material wealth.
Humanitarianism	Belief in assisting the "deserving poor" as well as the victims of serious diseases and natural disasters (floods, famines, earthquakes).
Practicality	Americans value those things they consider "useful." Business and the natural sciences are seen as more valuable than the humanities and social sciences.
Nationalism	Americans are highly patriotic and frequently label as "un-American" ideas that violate the public ethos.
Romantic love	Marriage is associated with romance and love. Differs from preindustrial societies, where marriage was often seen as an economic arrangement.
Sexual restriction	Despite changes in attitudes toward sexuality, Americans maintain more restrictive attitudes toward sex than most Western (and many non-Western) nations.

SOURCES: Ford and Beach, 1981; Henslin, 1975; Jones et al., 1986; Kluegel and Smith, 1986; Myrdal, 1944; Williams, 1970.

Ideal versus Real Culture

The core values contained in Table 4.3 raise certain questions and issues. Clearly, some of these values conflict with others. For example, our humanitarian belief in helping the "deserving poor" is not always compatible with our emphasis on self-sufficiency and our disdain for "welfare." To resolve this tension, our society continually distinguishes between those we consider to be victims of misfortune and those we feel are responsible for their situation, however unfortunate it might be.

In examining this list you might also have concluded that our actions, both as individuals and as a nation, frequently do not reflect these values. Although we claim to believe in equal opportunity, we have erected numerous obstacles, such as racism, sexism, and poverty, that prevent entire sections of the population from competing on equal terms (Myrdal, 1944). We consider ourselves a "freedom-loving" people, but we sometimes prevent dissenters from expressing unpopular views, and our government has supported, and in some cases helped to install, authoritarian regimes throughout the world. These examples illustrate the gap between **ideal culture**, the norms and beliefs that a people accept *in principle,* and **real culture**, those norms and principles *that are actually practiced* (Myrdal, 1944). Look again at Table 4.3. What other discrepancies between real and ideal culture can you think of?

As was previously suggested, there is evidence of some change in American core values over the past three decades. Some sociologists see the 1960s and 1970s as a time in which some key American values underwent rather fundamental change. We shall conclude our discussion of *American culture* by looking at some of these changes.

Recent Changes in American Values and Beliefs

Seeds of Cultural Change: The 1960s and Early 1970s In large part, the social and political activism of the 1960s and early 1970s developed out of opposition in a large segment of the population to the Vietnam War and racism within U.S. society. This activism was most pronounced among young, well-educated children of the middle class (particularly college students) and minority-group members (Bensman and Vidich, 1984, Chap. 16). These two groups, of course, had somewhat different concerns, but they did share a sense of rebellion against the system, and they were targets of efforts by the government to restore order and repress dissent. Thus, both middle-class college youth and minority-group activists increasingly thought in terms of "us versus them," creating a situation in which it was easy to challenge a wide variety of cultural norms, values, and beliefs.

Homelessness did not seem to be as great a problem in the 1960s and 1970s, but the new values that emerged during that time may be affecting how we view this problem today.

Before long, issues of conflict in American society had expanded from war and racism to include the roles of men and women; norms about sexuality, drug use, and the importance of work; the role of authority; and such cultural elements as music, style of dress, and hair length. There was a surge of political activism, both in the traditional electoral arena (as young people campaigned for Eugene McCarthy, Robert Kennedy, and George McGovern) and in less traditional forms such as teach-ins, marches, sit-ins, boycotts, and, occasionally, riots.

By the late 1970s, the counterculture appeared to have faded. Young people returned to their historic pattern of low voting rates and limited political participation. The election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 and 1984 brought an era of conservatism, and many young people were among Reagan's strongest supporters. Nonetheless, the effect of the youth and minority subcultures of the 1960s has been lasting. By the early 1970s new values in the areas of gender roles, race relations, human sexuality, and self-fulfillment had spread from college students into the larger group of non-college youth (Yankelovich, 1974). These values continued to spread to the point that they became the dominant point of view among non-elderly adults by the beginning of the 1980s (Yankelovich, 1981), a classic example of cultural diffusion. Moreover, by the early 1990s, many of the values and lifestyles of the 1960s — now popularly referred to as "alternative" — were enjoying resurgent popularity among young people, and issues such as the environment, racism, and women's rights were receiving renewed attention.

In 1992, the election of Bill Clinton and Al Gore, who stressed multi-cultural unity and environmental issues and

played rock music at campaign rallies, occurred with strong support of younger voters. The extent to which these events are leading to renewed political activism among young people is uncertain, but it is clear that in many areas of life, the influence of the cultural rebellion of the 1960s has been lasting. In fact, the clash between the new values of the 1960s and older, more traditional values has become a dominant theme in American political debates (Dionne, 1991), as illustrated by debates in the 1992 presidential campaign over issues such as "freedom of choice" and "family values."

Rights of Racial and Ethnic Groups

When Robin Williams published the third edition of his *American Society* in 1970, it still listed *group superiority* as one of the 15 core American values. Although this idea has not disappeared from American thought, it would be hard to list it as a core value in today's America. Survey instruments of all types indicate that most Americans reject notions of one group being superior to another and in principle support racial integration and oppose deliberate acts of segregation and discrimination. Contrast these responses to 1968, when only 60 percent agreed that "white children and black children should attend the same schools." In contrast, by the 1980s, 89 percent agreed (Skolnick, 1969; National Opinion Research Center, 1983). This does not mean we have eliminated racial inequality or have developed the attitudes necessary to accomplish that goal (see Chapter 11). As shown in Harry Edwards' Personal Journey into Sociology, this is true even for areas such as sport that are

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Many jobs that were considered just for men in the past are now open to women; this does not mean that women receive equal pay, only that norms now support such an idea.

seen as sources of opportunity. It does, however, indicate a fundamental shift in attitudes and beliefs.

Gender Roles

A similar shift has occurred in American beliefs about the roles of men and women. Most Americans today, for example, reject the notion that the woman's place is in the home, and in principle they support equal pay for equal work. In fact, work outside the home for pay, not the housewife role, has become the norm for most American women. Some, though not all, historically male professions have witnessed a major surge in the number of women seeking and gaining entry. By the late 1980s, for example, over one-third of medical-school graduates and two-fifths of law-school graduates were female (National Center for Education Statistics, 1989). As in the case of race relations, attitudes have in many ways outstripped reality when it comes to attaining real social equality for men and women. The important point, though, is that today the norms support the idea of equal opportunity for women; as recently as three decades ago, they did not.

Human Sexuality

Although the "free love" mentality of the 1960s was on its way out even before the AIDS epidemic, the "sexual revolution" has had a lasting legacy. Today, marriage is no longer a prerequisite for having sex. The majority of Americans today do not object to a sexual relationship between two unmarried people who love and care about each other. As recently as 1969, a Gallup poll showed that two-thirds of Americans viewed premarital sex as "wrong"; just five years later, 80 percent of men and 70 percent of women believed that premarital sex was permissible under at least some conditions (Hunt, 1974). The practice of unmarried men and women living together, which once brought social ostracism, is commonplace today. Another major change is the much greater acceptance of divorce and remarriage. Thus, even if American sex norms remain restrictive compared with those in other industrialized countries, they are far less restrictive than they were just 25 years ago.

Self-Fulfillment

What some people regard as the most fundamental of all the value changes is a greatly increased emphasis upon *self-fulfillment* (Yankelovich, 1981; Bellah et al., 1985). Self-fulfillment represents a different form of individualism than has traditionally characterized American culture. The self-fulfillment norm emphasizes attaining your potential, but not in the economic sense of maximizing wealth. Rather, you attain your potential to know yourself, to attain a higher consciousness, to perfect a skill, or to experience the world. Thus, work becomes important not as an end in itself but as a means to self-fulfillment. The goal becomes to have a fulfilling job or a job that provides income to support activities (such as travel, sports participation, or creative pursuits) that bring self-fulfillment.

THE SOCIOLOGY OF SPORT / *Harry Edwards*

From my earliest days as a graduate student in the Department of Sociology at Cornell University, I have considered myself a "scholar-activist." Over the ensuing years, my career in sociology has coalesced into virtually a seamless tapestry of academic and activist pursuits and projects.

It now seems clear, in retrospect, that two principal influences propelled me along my established path of professional development. First, there were my experiences growing up Black, poor, and athletically inclined in East St. Louis, Illinois, at the dawn of both the civil rights movement and the age of televised, racially integrated sports. This convergence of history and biography had an enduring impact upon my perceptions of myself and what I eventually came to define as priority challenges confronting me as a Black citizen of this nation.

Second, and perhaps even more important, I was profoundly influenced by "significant others." Initially, these were Black men and women of high status and accomplishment who lived and worked in my community and who took the time and had the patience to become involved with me as informal mentors and counselors. Later the "significant others" in my life came to be composed mostly of people with whom I had no personal contact at all, but who, through striving to
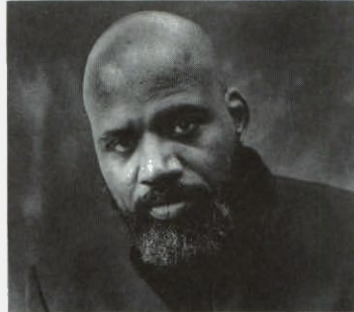
Harry Edwards
Athletic sports are among the cultural universals identified by George Peter Murdock that are listed in Table 4.2. Because all cultures practice some sort of athletic activity, sociologists study sports to gain insights into the values, behaviors, and social structure of a people. Perhaps no individual is as closely identified with this area of study as Harry Edwards. Professor Edwards first achieved prominence when he helped organize a boycott by black American athletes of the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico City. More recently, he was hired by several professional sports teams as a consultant on a broad range of institutional, intergroup, and interpersonal problems potentially having an impact on goal achievement in the sports world. He also teaches at the University of California at Berkeley.

fulfill the promise and potential of their own lives and careers, achieved levels of excellence that gave direction to my own aspirations and goals. Through their works, writings, and public involvements, E. Franklin Frazier, W. E. B. DuBois, Paul Robeson, C. Wright Mills, Malcolm X, Richard Wright, Martin Luther King, Jr., Bill Russell, Maya Angelou, and James Baldwin, along with other writers, academicians, political

activists, and athletes, became my role models during what, for me, were my intellectually and politically formative years as an undergraduate sociology major and scholarship student-athlete at San Jose State University in California.

It was against this background that I developed my interest in relationships between sport and society in general, and between race and sport in particular. Following completion of my master's degree and a good deal of research into the role, status, and circumstances of Black people in American sport, I organized a movement among Black athletes aimed at both dramatizing and provoking rectification of widespread, deeply rooted social inequities in American domestic and international sports. In domestic sport, this effort culminated in what was popularly termed "The Revolt of the Black Athlete." This "revolt" was manifested in a series of incidents occurring on over 100 traditionally White college campuses across the nation, where Black athletes and their student supporters, threatening boycotts or disruptions of athletic events, made demands upon athletic directors and campus administrations for more equitable treatment and opportunities for Blacks involved in their sports programs.

At the international level, the movement produced "The Olympic Project for Human Rights," which proposed a Black American boycott of the 1968 Mexico City Olympic Games. The "OPHR" was also the motivating

force behind the demonstration atop the Olympic Podium by Tommie Smith and John Carlos during victory ceremonies for medalists in the 200 meter dash.

Following the 1968 Olympics, I returned to Cornell University to complete a Ph.D. in sociology. I subsequently joined the faculty of the Department of Sociology at the University of California at Berkeley, where I have continued my academic and activist involvements, the results of which, I believe, have been of both practical and sociological significance.

One important product of my work is what I term "the first principle of the sociology of sport": *Sport inevitably recapitulates the character, dynamics, and structure of human and institutional relationships within and between societies and the ideological sentiments and values that rationalize those relationships.* Nowhere is the validity of this principle more evident than in my ongoing work on relationships between race, sport, and society.

In sum, a society with long-standing, ongoing traditions of discrimination and inequality that are rationalized by ideologies that associate certain deficiencies or behaviors with particular social groups inevitably exhibits powerful strains of inequity in its sports institution. In the case of the United States, then, institutional racism within professional and college sports is inextricably intertwined with the broader Black experience in America.

Black families are four times more likely than White families to push their children toward sports-career aspirations, often to the neglect and detriment of other critically important areas of personal and cultural development, largely because of: (1) a long-standing, widely held, and *racist* presumption of innate, race-linked Black athletic superiority and intellectual deficiency, (2) media propaganda about sports as a broadly accessible route to Black social and economic mobility, and (3) a lack of comparably visible, high-prestige Black role models beyond the sports arena. Indeed, the single-minded pursuit of sports fame and fortune is today approaching an institutionalized *triple tragedy* in Black society: the tragedy of thousands and thousands of Black youths in obsessive pursuit of sports goals that the overwhelming majority of them will never attain; the tragedy of the personal and cultural underdevelopment that afflicts so many successful and unsuccessful Black sports aspirants; and the tragedy of cultural and institutional underdevelopment in Black society overall, partially as a consequence of the *talent drain* toward sports and away from other vital areas of occupational and career emphasis, such as medicine, law, economics, politics, education, and the technical fields.

Only *5 percent* of high-school athletes go on to compete in their sports at the collegiate level —including those who participate in junior college—which is to say that over 95 percent of all athletes must face the realities of life after sports at the conclusion of their last high-school athletic competition. Of those Black athletes who do attend four-year institutions on athletic scholarship or grants-in-aid, 65 to 75 percent *never* graduate from the schools they represent in sports. Of the 25 to 35 percent who do graduate, an unconscionable proportion graduate in what are often less-marketable academic majors riddled with "keep 'em eligible," less-competitive "jock courses" of dubious educational and occupational value.

Of the Black athletes who participate in collegiate football, basketball, or baseball, less than 2 percent ever make a professional roster. Among these chosen few, 60 percent are out of professional sports within three to four years and, more often than not, financially destitute or in debt or simply on the street without either the credentials or the skills to succeed in our society.

Even in sports in which Blacks predominate as athletes, they are routinely passed over as candidates for top coaching and sports-administration jobs, often despite having the combination of academic preparation in physical education and substantial practical experience at the *assistant* level in major athletic programs. At the beginning of the 1992–1993 academic year, there were only two Black athletic directors at traditionally White Division I NCAA colleges and universities, fewer than 30 Black head basketball coaches, no Black head football coaches, and no Black head baseball coaches at such institutions.

THE SOCIOLOGY OF SPORT (Continued)

In the professional ranks the record concerning Black access to top positions has historically been dismal, although there has been some recent progress. While 62 percent of the players in the National Football League are Black, only *two* of 28 head coaches are Black; 66 — or roughly 23 percent — of 297 assistant coaches are Black; and 8 percent of all front office personnel are Black. There are no Black general managers or franchise presidents in the National Football League. In Major League Baseball, there are four Black managers out of 28 men managing teams on the field, while 17 percent of professional baseball players are Black. In the National Basketball Association at the begining of the 1992–1993 season, 75 percent of the players were Black while only *two* of 28 head coaches were Black. The number of Black head coaches rose to five by early 1993 owing to the firing of White head coaches and the elevation of assistants to interim head coach positions or the outright hiring of Black head coach replacements, as in the case of John Lucas at the San Antonio Spurs franchise. Today the overwhelming majority of all NBA head coaches have playing experience in the league; consistent with the history of Black head coaches hired in the NBA, *all current Black head coaches were once NBA players.* This appears to be a result of both a lack of widespread access to head coaching jobs at high-profile colleges and universities where they would attract the attention of *professional franchise owners and general managers,* as well as a presumption that Black coaching candidates must be demonstrably superior to their White counterparts in professional basketball experience to gain access to head coaching jobs in the NBA. (Incidentally, every Black manager in Major League Baseball is a former professional player, while both Art Shell and Denny Green, the NFL's two Black head coaches, had careers as players before they became coaching candidates.)

American sport, like American society overall, practices a virtual "plantation system" of relations wherein Whites hold a near-monopoly on high-prestige, high-authority occupational positions, while Blacks, when they have access at all, are consigned in disproportionately high numbers to the most vulnerable, most exploitable, most expendable, least powerful production roles — in the case of sport, that of athlete.

There are today ongoing efforts by a broad array of media, academic, civil rights, and sports interests to publicize and rectify the tragedies of Black sports involvement. These efforts have met with only fair success. The challenges are many and complex. Aside from the problems of racism and discrimination are difficulties perpetuated by Black people themselves. Black families and Black athletes must assume greater responsibility for remedying the situation. Through a blind belief in the ability of sports to serve as a socioeconomic mobility vehicle, Black families have unwittingly contributed to the tragedies of Black sports involvement. Too many of us have set up our children for personal and cultural underdevelopment, academic victimization, and athletic exploitation by our encouragement of the

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Based on survey research, Yankelovich (1981) estimates that about 80 percent of the U.S. population had been affected by this new norm by the beginning of the 1980s; about one in six considered it the dominant force in their lives. As you might expect, different social observers view this and other new norms differently. Many functionalists have argued that the search for self-fulfillment has caused parents to be irresponsible toward their children; husbands and wives to be irresponsible toward each other; workers to be irresponsible toward their jobs (Etzioni, 1982; Packard, 1983; Popenoe, 1988; see also Bell, 1976).

In all these cases, they argue that people place fulfilling experiences ahead of meeting responsibilities, so key social functions go unfulfilled.

Conflict theorists, in contrast, argue that the decline of racism and sexism in part reflects the fact that these discriminations are seen as barriers to people's self-fulfillment. They also argue that a de-emphasis on the maximization of wealth could lessen the greed that leads people to exploitation. Finally, they note that the search for self-fulfillment is an effort to extend to everyone the opportunities that once were reserved for a small, privileged group.

primacy of sports achievement over all else. We have then bartered away the services of the more competitive among our children to the highest bidders among collegiate athletic recruiters in exchange for what are typically hollow promises of ethical educational opportunities or, even worse, promises of sports fame, fortune, and Fat City forever.

Black families have the responsibility to inform themselves about the realities of Black sports involvement — its advantages and liabilities, its triumphs and tragedies. As a culture and as a people, we simply can no longer permit many among our most competitive and gifted youths to sacrifice a wealth of human potential on the altar of athletic aspiration, to put playbooks ahead of textbooks. This does not mean that Blacks should abandon sports, but that we *must* learn to deal with the realities of sport more intelligently and constructively. Black parents must insist upon the establishment and pursuit of high academic standards and personal development goals by their children, *high goals and standards that*

will be principally established and enforced not on the campus, but in the home.

And, finally, it must be stated unequivocally that Black athletes themselves must shoulder a substantial portion of the responsibility for improving Black circumstances and outcomes in American sports. Black athletes must insist upon intellectual discipline no less than athletic discipline among themselves, and upon educational integrity in athletic programs rather than, as is all too often the case, merely seeking the easiest route to maintaining athletic eligibility. If Black athletes fail to take a conscious, active, and informed role in changing the course and character of Black sports involvement, nothing done by any other party to this tragic situation is likely to be effective.

Currently, along with my full-time position on the Berkeley faculty, I am staff consultant with the San Francisco 49ers of the National Football League and the Golden State Warriors of the National Basketball Association. I have also served as special assistant to the Commissioner of Major

League Baseball (between 1987 and 1992). My role in all of these positions has been, among other responsibilities, to generate progress in resolving problems of race-based inequities. This is an old and continuing struggle that has changed only in the character of the immediate battles.

In the 1930s, Paul Robeson, Joe Louis, and Jesse Owens led the fight for Black *legitimacy* as athletes. In the late 1940s and into the 1950s, Jackie Robinson, Althea Gibson, Larry Doby, Roy Campanella, and others struggled to secure Black *access* to the mainstream of American sports. From the late 1950s through the 1960s and into the 1970s, Jim Brown, Bill Russell, Curt Flood, Tommie Smith and John Carlos, Muhammad Ali, Arthur Ashe, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Michael Warren, and Lucius Allen fought to secure *dignity and respect* for Blacks in sports. Even as all of these battles continue, today we have embarked upon yet another phase of the struggle — the battle for minority access to power and decision-making authority in executive-level roles in American sport.

SUMMARY

In this chapter, we have seen that every society has a culture and a social structure that are closely linked to each other. Culture consists of common knowledge, beliefs, values, and norms, whereas social structure consists of a set of social arrangements. These arrangements consist of interlinked social positions organized into a set of institutions. Each social position, or status, carries behavioral expectations

known as roles. Social positions also carry unequal rewards, which are a part of society's system of stratification by which scarce resources are distributed unequally.

Both functionalists and conflict theorists agree, for different reasons, that culture and social structure are usually in harmony with each other, but sometimes at odds. The functionalist perspective sees social structure and cul-

ture as meeting basic needs, the specifics of which depend largely on the society's outside environment. For this reason harmony between the culture and the social structure is important. To conflict theorists the social structure is seen as providing disproportionate wealth and reward to the dominant group, or ruling class. Culture serves the function of justifying this privileged position. Its success in doing so is illustrated by false consciousness: the tendency of disadvantaged groups to accept the dominant group's ideology, *even though it is against their self-interests to do so.*

According to functionalists, culture and structure can become imbalanced with each other through the combination of structural change and cultural lag. Cultural diffusion resulting from contact with another society can bring a similar result. When this happens, either the culture or the structure must change to restore the balance, but must not change so much that key functions can no longer be per-

formed. Conflict theorists, in contrast, see opportunities for society to change and improve when culture and social structure become incompatible. Often this occurs when subordinate groups attain class consciousness: They become aware of their true interests and reject the dominant group's ideology.

Both the functionalist and conflict perspectives recognize the importance of subcultures, which arise among groups in society with some shared experience that is different from that of others in the society. Through cultural diffusion, the values of subcultures can spread into the larger society; thus, subcultures are important sources of cultural change. This has been the case in the United States, as certain values that began with youth and minority subcultures have spread into the larger culture. Still, a number of enduring features distinguish American culture from the cultures even of other industrial, democratic societies.

GLOSSARY

society A relatively self-contained and organized group of people who interact under some shared political authority within some reasonably well-defined geographic area.

culture A set of knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, and rules for behavior that are held commonly within a society.

social structure The organization of society, including institutions, social positions, the relationships among social positions, the groups that make up the society, and the distribution of scarce resources within the society.

nonmaterial culture Abstract creations, such as knowledge and values, that are produced by a society.

material culture Physical objects that are the product of a group or society.

language A set of symbols through which the people in a society communicate with one another.

symbol Anything, including words, signs, and gestures, that is used to represent something else.

linguistic relativity A theory holding that language not only reflects but also helps shape people's perceptions of reality.

ideology A system of beliefs about reality that often serves to justify a society's social arrangements.

norms Socially defined rules and expectations concerning behavior.

folkways Relatively minor, informal norms that carry only informal sanctions, such as mild joking or ridicule, when they are violated.

mores Informal but serious norms, violations of which result in strong sanctions.

laws Officially stated social norms that carry formal, specific, and publicized sanctions when violated, and which are enforced through formal agencies of social control.

status Any position within a social system.

ascribed status Any status that a person receives through birth, including race, sex, and family of origin.

achieved status Any status that a person has attained at least in part as a result of something the person has done.

master status A status that has a dominant influence in shaping a person's life and identity.

role conflict Conflicting or opposing expectations attached to different roles played by the same person.

role strain A condition in which one role contains conflicting expectations.

role set A set of related roles attached to one social position or status.

division of labor A characteristic of most societies in which different individuals or groups specialize in different tasks.

stratification A pattern whereby scarce resources, such as wealth, income, and power, are distributed unequally among the members of a society.

institution A form of organization, with supporting sets of norms, that performs basic functions in a society, is strongly supported by that society's culture, and is generally ac-

cepted as an essential element of the society's social structure.

ethnocentrism A pattern whereby people view their own culture as normal, natural, and superior, and judge other cultures accordingly.

cultural relativism A view that recognizes cultures other than one's own as different, but not odd or inferior; other cultures are not judged by the standards of one's own.

economic structure In Marxian terminology, those aspects of social structure that relate to production, wealth, and income.

ideational superstructure A Marxian name for ideology; so named because Marx considered ideology an outgrowth of the economic structure.

false consciousness A condition in which people, usually in groups that are relatively powerless, accept beliefs that work against their self-interests.

cultural lag A pattern whereby some aspect of culture that was once functional persists after social or technological change has eliminated its usefulness.

cultural diffusion A process whereby a belief, value, norm, symbol, or practice spreads from one culture into another, or from a subculture into the larger culture.

subculture A set of knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, symbols, and norms held by a group sharing some common experience or situation within a larger society.

anomie A situation in which social norms either do not exist or have become ineffective.

class consciousness A situation in which a group of people with a common self-interest correctly perceive that interest and develop beliefs, values, and norms consistent with advancing that interest.

overlapping cleavages Divisions or issues of conflict in society that divide people along generally similar lines on different issues.

cross-cutting cleavages Situations in which divisions or issues of conflict divide a society in different ways on different issues.

counterculture A subculture that has developed beliefs, values, symbols, and norms that stand in opposition to those of the larger culture.

ideal culture The norms and beliefs that people in a society accept in principle.

real culture The norms and principles that people in a society actually practice.

FURTHER READING

BELLAH, ROBERT N., RICHARD MADSEN, WILLIAM M. SULLIVAN, ANN SWIDLER, AND STEVEN M. TIPTON. 1986. *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*. New York: Harper & Row. An analysis of American cultural values and beliefs, with emphasis upon the strain between individualism and achievement on the one hand and commitment to community on the other. Discusses a trend toward placing greater emphasis on self-fulfillment.

CHUDACOFF, HOWARD P. 1989. *How Old Are You? Age Consciousness in American Culture*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. A historical, descriptive account of the increasing significance of age norms. Includes discussions of how popular culture has contributed to the dissemination of the idea of appropriate ages for experiencing different life events, changes in age grading and age consciousness, and the controversy over the "chronologuption" of life.

COAKLEY, JAY. 1986. *Sport in Society: Issues and Controversies*, 3rd ed. St. Louis: Mosby. An introduction to the sociology of sport, showing how the social structure of sports reflects the social structure of the larger society. Expands upon issues addressed in Harry Edwards's *Personal Journey into Sociology* vignette in this chapter.

HARRIS, MARVIN. 1986. *Good to Eat: Riddles of Food and Culture*. New York: Simon & Schuster. This book provides firsthand evidence of how the need to adapt to different environments produces different beliefs and practices in different cultures. It does so in a highly entertaining way, by examining the origins of different eating habits in different cultures.

JONES, ELISE F., ET AL. 1986. *Teenage Pregnancy in Industrialized Countries*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. By studying the reasons for the very different levels of teenage pregnancy in five industrialized countries, this book tells us a great deal about how the cultures and social structures of these countries differ, despite their similar levels of industrialization. Also illustrates the intricate relationships between culture and social structure by showing how cultural values influence the levels of teenage pregnancy, which in turn shape (but also reflect) the stratification systems of the various countries.

KLUEGEL, JAMES R., AND ELIOT R. SMITH. 1986. *Beliefs About Inequality: Americans' Views of What Is and What Ought to Be*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter. Another powerful illustration of the interrelationship between culture and social structure. Kluegel and Smith examine American ideas about what is "fair" and perceptions concerning the fairness of American society. They show how these values and beliefs both reflect and shape the American social and economic structure.