Sociology 200

Photo from: http://www.zbigniewkosc.nl/Shelatin%20gallery/pages/Shelatin%20conversation.html accessed 3/8/07

Ch. 5 Society and Social Interaction

Social Organizations

- Five areas of society have basic needs to be fulfilled
  - Family
  - Education
  - Economic
  - Religious
  - Political
- For each area social groups and associations carry out the goals and meet the needs of society

Definition

- A **social institution** is *the ordered social relationships that grow out of the values, norms, statuses, and roles that organize those activities that fulfill society's fundamental needs.*
- Examples: economic institutions organize the ways in which society produces and distributes goods and services, religious institutions organize the ways that societies deal with religious activities and share their ideals

- The most basic social institution is the family
  - Serves to regulate sexual behavior
  - Provides for care of children and raising children to fit into society

Photo from: http://keep3.sjfc.edu/students/dmt1122/e-port/unitplan/culture.htm accessed 3/8/07

Differentiating groups from institutions

- A **group** is *a collection of specific, identifiable people*
  - Example: the Smith family consisting of James, Susan, Sally, and Jason
- An **institution** is a *system for organizing standard patterns of social behavior*
  - *The* family as an institution is the *cluster of statuses, roles, values and norms that organize the standard patterns of behavior we expect to find within family groups,* eg. Father, mother, husband, wife, child

Social Organization

- In looking at society and its interactions, the choices are not random, but an outgrowth of the society's social organization.
- **Social organization** is *the relatively stable pattern of relationships among individuals and groups in society*
  - Again, these relationships are based upon the roles, norms and shared meanings that provide regularity and predictability in social interaction

- Examples
  - Marriage
    - US – single spouse (monogamy), Judeo-Christian religions predominate
    - Islamic societies – may have as many as four wives (polygamy/polygyny), Islamic religion
    - Yanomamo – may have multiple husbands (polyandry), religion: Animism (the belief that personal forces exist in inanimate, animate, or natural phenomena)

- Social organization tends to be very stable; however, for the US this may be less so than other places
  - More complex, so new values and norms are being introduced frequently
    - May be by immigrants or by adaptation of ideas from other parts of the world (remember innovation, diffusion, and reformulation??)
  - Complexity (in actuality, diversity) means that many cultures are found within the US society which might not be in other parts of the world, for example, until it became something of a tourist destination, Nepal.

Types of Societies

- **Hunter-Gatherer**
  - *These societies survived by foraging for vegetable foods and small game, fishing, collecting shellfish and hunting large animals*
  - These societies do not and did not plant crops or raise animals, they subsisted on what was available,
    - Tend toward nomadism (to maximize resource availability), although rich resources may lead to sedentism
    - Tend toward small groups living together, due to high spatial requirements for resources

– Characteristic of humans from over 1 mybp – 10,000 ybp, some societies still exist in Australia, Africa, and South America

Photos from: http://donsmaps.com/aboriginals.html accessed 3/8/07

Fish traps in Australia

Australian native with pearl shell necklace in central Australia

- **Horticultural**
  - *Societies in which human muscle power and hand held tools are used to cultivate gardens and fields*
  - Involves a major change in conception – planting and tending seeds for future food, and recognizing defense of the food resources
    - Tended toward sedentism (people stayed in one place)
    - Started about 12,000 ybp
    - Leakey and Lewin (1977) contend that modern violence stems from the protection of or desire to access the resources of horticultural communities.

Katchina dancer at Jemez Pueblo, ca. 1960. He is carrying cattails

Photo from: http://www.ewebtribe.com/NACulture/arthistory.html accessed 3/9/07

Taos Pueblo in winter – note mountain in background

Photo from: http://www.newmexico.org/place/loc/food/page/DB-place/category/300/place/158.html accessed 3/9/07

- **Pastoral**
  - *Pastoral societies rely on herding and domestication, and breeding of animals for food and clothing to satisfy most of the groups needs.*
  - Animals provide food, fur, skins, milk, dung for fuel (bison and cow chips were used by Anglos in the Great Plains until the turn of the last century), and even blood as a food product (Maasai)
    - Did not occur in Americas prior to European contact, although some groups are more pastoral now, e.g. the Navajo
    - Tended to be found in savannah and grassland habitats with moderate climate

Massai cattle milking in kraal, photo from
http://www.ansi.okstate.edu/breeds/cattle/masai/ accessed 3/9/07

- **Agricultural**
  - *These societies use the plow in food production*
    - Began about 5500 B.C. in the Middle East, in addition to using the plow, they also were using irrigation (controlled water flow to crops)
    - Permitted enhanced population growth
    - Society became organized based on occupational diversification and institutional specialization (there was division of labor that was more complete than in other societies)
    - Societies became more complex – led to emergence of centralized state (what we recognize as countries)

Photo from:
http://www.jmundyphotography.com/china/pages/Man%20plows%20with%20water%20buffalo.htm accessed 3/9/07

Photo from
http://www.toytractorshow.com/jd_plows.htm accessed 3/9/07

- **Industrial**
  - *These societies use mechanical means (machines or chemical processed) to produce goods.*
    - Machinery developed prior to this time period, but by the mid-1800s was the height of the Industrial Revolution for North America and Europe
    - Large scale production progressed with the development of the steam engine in 1858.
    - The new society needed a mobile, diversely specialized, highly skilled and well-coordinated labor force
    - **Educational systems open to all become highly important.**

- Industrial societies are divided along class lines – labor vs. those who decide what is produced and how it is distributed
  - May be capitalist (private ownership of capital, ie. the companies) or socialist (the state owns the capital)

Photo from http://www.trocadero.com/MuseXX/items/470453/item470453store.html accessed 3/9/07

- **Postindustrial**
  - *Postindustrial societies depend on specialized knowledge to bring about continued progress in technology*
    - Requires highly educated populations
    - Access to large quantities of information and technical knowledge
    - Economies are more service oriented
    - Rapid change in technology has a major impact on lifestyles

Guggenheim museum, Bilbao, Spain

McDonalds as an example of the service economy