



# Section A: What is Sociology?

**Sociology** is the study of society, patterns of social relationships, social interaction, and culture that surrounds everyday life.

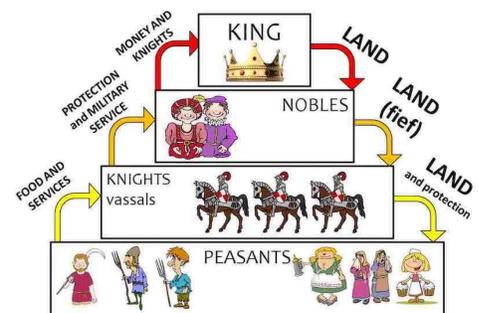
It is a social science, meaning that we try to use scientific methods (like observations, interviews, questionnaires, government data) to try to identify trends and patterns in society and seek to explain them.

**However, lots of sociologists disagree over how society works.**

Some sociologists (called **FUNCTIONALISTS**) believe that society works (functions) well. They say all the separate parts of society fit together like a jigsaw, because everyone is brought up with the same values and knowledge and they all get along well.



Other sociologists believe that society is based on inequality. They believe some groups have more control and use this to their advantage. A bit like the feudal system in Britain during medieval times. These are called **CONFLICT** sociologists because they believe society is based on conflict.



Feudal Pyramid of Power

**We don't ever know which sociologist is correct and spend most of our time evaluating the extent to which the statements put forward by sociologists is valid.**

## TASK 1:

Read the information on the next few pages and complete the tasks on Page 6.

### Social structures and processes

In investigating society and how it is organised, sociologists examine the various parts that make up society. They use the term '**social structures**' to refer to the parts of society such as families, the education system, the political system and the criminal justice system. Sociologists are interested in understanding the connections or relationships between the different structures (or parts) of society. They might study, for instance, the relationship between students' family backgrounds and their achievements at GCSE.

Sociologists are also interested in exploring **social processes** such as socialisation and social control.

The term 'socialisation' refers to the process by which we learn the culture or the way of life of the society we are born into. In exploring how this process operates, sociologists focus on how we learn the culture, who is involved in this learning and what role social structures such as families and schools play in the process.

The term 'social control' refers to the way our behaviour is regulated. In exploring how this process works, sociologists ask questions about:

- how control is exercised
- who exercises control
- how far individuals or groups resist or challenge the processes of social control
- in whose interests social control operates.

By studying these social processes, we can understand more about the workings of society. For example, we learn how such processes take place (the means or mechanisms) and why they take place.

### Social issues

**Social issues** are the issues that affect communities, groups and people's lives. Contemporary social issues relating to education, for example, include academies and grammar schools. Issues relating to families include care of the elderly and forced marriage. Often, social issues are also **social problems**.

Social problems are the problems facing society such as racism, sexism, ageism, **poverty**, domestic violence and hate crime. Social problems are damaging to society and, as a result, they need to be tackled through social policies.

The table below gives some examples of social structures, social processes and social issues. As you read through the different chapters in this book, you will learn more about these key sociological themes.

Social structures	Social processes	Social issues
Families	Socialisation; Social control; The exercise of power	The quality of parenting; Forced marriage; Care of the elderly; Relationships between parents and children
The education system	Socialisation; Social control; The exercise of power; Labelling; Discrimination	Educational reform; Higher education funding; Academies
The criminal justice system	Social control; Social order; The exercise of power; Discrimination; Labelling	Violent crime; The media coverage of crime; The treatment of young offenders; The prison system
Social stratification systems	Discrimination; The exercise of power; Globalisation	Inequalities linked to class, gender, ethnicity, age, disability and sexuality; Racism, sexism and ageism; Homophobia; Poverty

**Sociologists** draw on key concepts (ideas) including **culture, values** and **norms**. They believe people are socialized into these norms (taught to behave this way).

## Culture

The term 'culture' refers to the whole way of life of a particular society. It includes the values, norms, customs, beliefs, knowledge, skills and language of a society. Sociologists appreciate that culture is not the same in different societies around the world. It varies according to place (where you are) and time (when). You can see this when looking at food and diet. For example, roast guinea pig is a traditional delicacy in Ecuador, while guinea pigs are often kept as family pets in the UK.



## Values

Values are ideas and beliefs that people have about what is desirable and worth striving for. For example, privacy and respect for human life are highly valued by most people in Britain. Values provide us with general guidelines for conduct.

Not all societies or groups value the same things. Values vary cross-culturally, which means that they differ from one culture to another. In Western societies, for example, wealth and material possessions are often highly valued and considered worth striving for. In contrast, the Apache of North America gave away the property of relatives who died rather than inherit it. They believed that keeping this property might encourage the relatives who inherit it to feel glad

## Norms

Values provide us with general guidelines for conduct. Norms are more specific to particular situations. For example, we value privacy, and the norms or rules related to this include not reading other people's emails or text messages without permission. Norms tell us what is appropriate and expected behaviour in specific social settings such as classrooms, cinemas, restaurants or aeroplanes. They provide order in society and allow it to function smoothly.

Norms are enforced by **positive sanctions** and **negative sanctions**. This means that people are rewarded for conforming to (or following) the norms, for example, by getting promoted at work. People are punished for deviating from (or breaking) the norms, for example by being 'told off'. Norms and **sanctions** vary depending on time and place. For instance, among the Apache of North America, rule breakers were banished from the group.



# Primary and secondary socialisation

**Primary socialisation** refers to early childhood learning during which, as babies and infants, we learn the basic behaviour patterns, language and skills that we will need in later life. The agencies of primary socialisation are the groups or institutions responsible for primary socialisation. These are usually families and parents. Through interaction within their families, children acquire language and other essential skills.

**Secondary socialisation** begins later in childhood and continues throughout our adult lives. Through this process, we learn society's norms and values. The agencies of secondary socialisation are the groups or institutions that contribute to this process. Examples include: peer groups, schools, workplaces, religions, mass media.

## Peer groups

Peer groups are groups of people who share a similar social **status** and position in society, such as people of a similar age or occupational status. They can exert pressure on their members to conform to group norms and values in settings such as schools or workplaces.

People who do not conform to the group's norms risk being rejected.

## Schools

During compulsory schooling, students learn how to interact in groups larger than the family. They develop important new skills. They also learn that they are expected to conform to rules and regulations – regarding punctuality and dress, for example. Some students, however, resist the rules and oppose their teachers' authority.

## Workplaces

On starting a new job in an office, factory or hospital, for example, newly appointed employees must learn the culture of the workplace. They learn the formal rules regarding dress, punctuality, and health and safety. They may also pick up tips informally from colleagues on things such as how much work is expected and which of the bosses to avoid.

## Religions

**Religions** provide guidelines for behaviour and sanctions when those guidelines are broken. Christianity, for example, provides the Ten Commandments as a guide to how followers should behave. Muslims are expected to put into practice the Five Pillars of Islam, including the alms tax (giving a proportion of one's wealth to the poor). However, some sociologists argue that a process of **secularisation** is taking place and the influence of religion is declining in society. For example, church attendance within the Church of England (the **established or state church**) is falling. If secularisation is occurring, it would suggest that religion has less of a role in the socialisation process today.

## Mass media

The mass media, which include television, radio and newspapers, are a powerful source of information and knowledge about the world. Magazines, for example, often give advice on life and relationships. The media sometimes put forward messages about **gender roles** by, for example, showing women advertising washing-up liquid and men advertising cars. In this way, the media contribute to **gender socialisation**. The media (along with families and workplaces) also contribute to **political socialisation**, that is, the process by which people acquire their political views.



**TASK 1: Complete the following tasks (typed) Use headings and sub-headings to structure your work appropriately.**

**Social structures, processes, and issues**

- a) Define the following words. Social structure/institution, social processes, social issues, socialisation, social stratification and social control.
- b) Choose ONE social structure/institution and identify 2 social processes and 2 social issues linked with it.

**Culture norms, values**

- c) Think about the following social settings: a cinema, an aeroplane, a GP's waiting room.
  - i. Choose one setting and identify two norms related to this setting.
  - ii. Identify two sanctions that might be applied to people who deviate from the norms in this setting.
- d) Explain the norms for giving and receiving gifts such as birthday presents.
- e) In your view, which of these values in the blue box below is most important to people in British society today? Briefly explain your answer

- f) Which is least important? Explain your answer

privacy	honesty and truth	respect for life	respect for elders
acquiring more consumer goods	educational success	'getting on' in life at any price	helping the poor

- g) Explain what sociologists mean by the term "culture"

**Socialisation and agents of socialisation**

- h) Define the following keywords: primary socialisation, secondary socialisation, agent of socialisation
- i) Complete a table showing who the different agents of socialisation are and how they socialise people into their cultures, norms and values.
- j) Identify and explain how two agents of socialisation have affected you.

**Judgement:**

- j) How far do you think human behaviour is learned and how much is instinctive? Explain using a PEEL paragraph. Use as many keywords as you can.

Now we're going to have a look through the key ideas of the main sociological perspectives:

- Functionalism
- Marxism

Read through the information and answer the questions on page 10.

## Karl Marx and Marxism

Marx argued that in order to understand the development of societies in the past and today, we must begin by examining production. In other words, it is necessary to examine how people go about producing the things they need in order to subsist. Marx used the term 'mode of production' to describe how people produce the things they need to subsist. One example is the **capitalist** mode of production. Marx identified two key aspects of a mode of production: the means of production and the social relations of production.

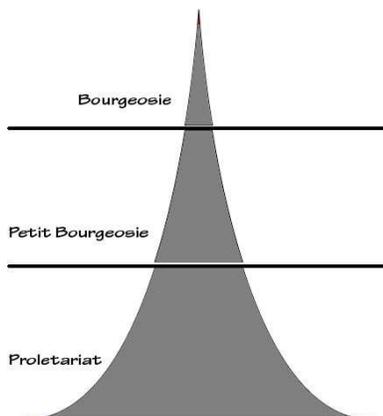
- **Means of production:** the materials, such as the raw materials or machinery, that people use in production. Under capitalism, these include capital, big businesses, machinery, factories and land.
- **Social relations of production:** the relations between people as they engage in production. Under capitalism, there are two main social classes: the **bourgeoisie** and the **proletariat**.



**Karl Marx**  
Born: Germany  
(1818-1883)

### Pronounce bourgeoisie

"bore – jwa - zee"  
*It's French, so say "jwa"  
with a French accent!*



### Social classes

Marx identified two main social classes under capitalism: the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

- The bourgeoisie are the capitalist class who own the means of production and private property. Marx saw the bourgeoisie as the ruling class in capitalist society. As owners, they have economic power and this gives them political power.
- The proletariat – the working class – own nothing but their ability to work as wage labourers and Marx saw them as the subject class.

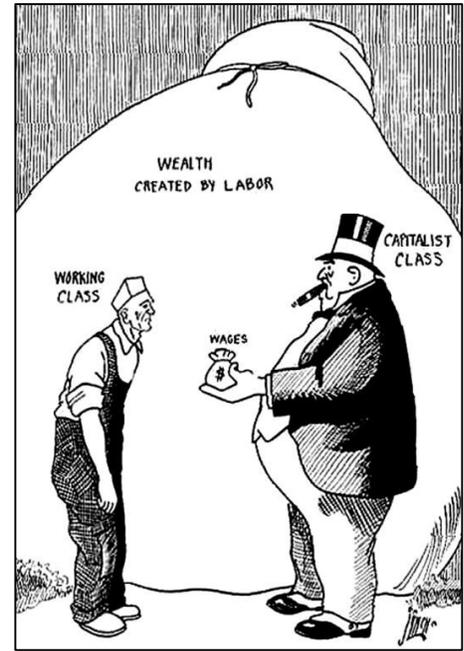
Other classes under capitalism included:

- the **petty bourgeoisie**, who own small businesses
- the **lumpenproletariat**, the 'dropouts' who sometimes sell their services to the bourgeoisie.

Marx saw the relationship between the bourgeoisie and proletariat as based on exploitation. The bourgeoisie exploit the proletariat by profiting from their labour. The bourgeoisie aim to maximise their profits and do this by paying low wages. The proletariat's interests lie in ending exploitation. These different interests lead to conflict between the classes.

Marx argued that the gap in the resources of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat would get much wider over time. Members of the petty bourgeoisie would be unable to compete with bigger companies and would sink into the proletariat.

Over time, society would split more and more 'into two great hostile camps'. In Marx's view, the **class struggle** between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is the key to bringing about social change. Eventually, members of the proletariat would come to see themselves as a social class with common interests and they would take action to overthrow the capitalist class. This would lead to a period of social revolution and the move to **communism**. Under communism, the means of production would be held communally rather than by a small minority. In this situation, there would be no private ownership, no exploitation and a **classless society**.



However, we can't believe everything Marx says about society, it's important for us to be **critical** of his ideas, and to try to poke holes in it. These criticisms are essential for top grades at A Level Sociology.

## Criticisms of Marx

- Marx analysed class but overlooked other social divisions such as gender and ethnicity.
- He saw social class as based on economic divisions. However, critics argue that class is also based on status (social standing or prestige) differences between groups.

# Émile Durkheim and Functionalism

Emile Durkheim is one of the founders of sociology as an academic subject. His **worldview** or perspective is very different from that of Marx in important respects.

## The functionalist perspective

The functionalist approach explains social institutions (such as families, education systems and social stratification systems) in terms of the functions they perform for the wider society.

To understand functionalism, a biological analogy (or comparison) can be used. In other words, we can compare society to the human body. If we want to understand the human body and how it works, we could start by identifying the vital organs such as the heart, lungs or liver. We might then focus on one organ such as the heart and look at its job or function in pumping blood around the body. Next, we might examine how the heart is connected to other parts of the body such as the blood vessels. Finally, we could look at how the heart contributes to the survival of the body as a whole.

In the same way, functionalism views society as made up of different parts that interlock and fit together. The different social institutions such as the family, education and religion are important organs in the body of society. Functionalism examines these institutions in terms of their functions, that is, the job they perform to help society run smoothly. The different social institutions meet the needs of society by performing functions to ensure its survival.

Durkheim studied crime, religion and education by focusing on the functions they fulfil in meeting the needs of society. For example, he argued that the punishment of criminals has an important function in helping to bring people together. Punishment reinforces the values and beliefs that the majority of people in society hold. By binding people together in this way, crime can contribute to **social cohesion**.

## Similarities between functionalism and Marxism

Although functionalism and Marxism are different in important ways, they are both **structural approaches**. This means that they focus on the structure of society and how this influences and directs human behaviour.

However, not all sociologists agree with structural approaches. Critics argue that these approaches view people as being like puppets who are at the mercy of social forces beyond their control.



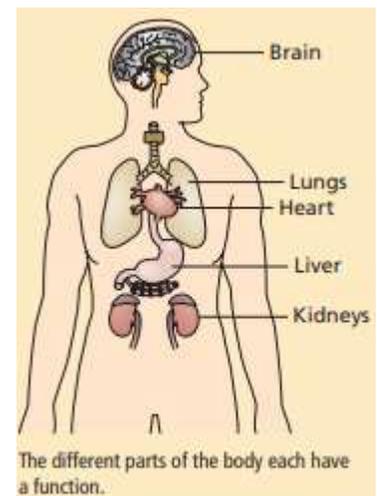
**Émile Durkheim**

Born: France  
(1858-1917)

## Pronounce Émile

"eh-meal"

*It's French, so say "eh"  
with a French accent!*



## Criticisms of functionalism

The functionalist approach focuses on the positive functions that things such as crime and religion perform for society. However, critics argue that functionalism overlooks their dysfunctional (or negative) aspects. In reality, crime and religion do not always perform positive functions for society. For example, knife crime can have devastating effects on individual victims and on communities; religion can cause long-term conflicts between different social groups such as Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland.

## **TASK 2: Complete the following tasks (typed) Use headings and sub-headings to structure your work appropriately.**

### **Karl Marx and Marxism**

- a) Draw an annotated hierarchy of the four social classes identified by Marx. Include a description of their position in society, examples of these people and a picture\*
- b) What is capitalism?
- c) How did Marx say capitalism was exploiting the proletariat?
- d) Give an example of how the bourgeoisie may benefit from the capitalist system
- e) What did Marx say would eventually happen to
  - i) The petty bourgeoisie?
  - ii) The proletariat
  - iii) The bourgeoisie

### **Emile Durkheim and Functionalism**

- f) In the “biological analogy”, what social feature takes the place (metaphorically) of human organs?
- g) Explain what would happen to a human if a vital organ stopped working. According to functionalists, why is this similar to society?
- h) Explain one similarity between Functionalism and Marxism.

### **Judgement essay:**

- i) Explain the different views on society and evaluate who you agree with most and why.

*To structure this, write a PEEL paragraph explaining each view (feel free to include criticism of them too!). Then write a conclusion saying which perspective you agree with and why.*

### **\*\*Need help drawing this for typed work:**

- 1) If in Word or Powerpoint: Along the tabs at the top click Insert>Smart Art and choose a template. Copy and paste pictures from the internet.
- 2) Draw by hand, take a photo on your phone and email to yourself. Then copy and paste the photo from your email to your document.

# **WELL DONE!**

You've now finished Section A “What is Sociology?”

## Section B: Durkheim - the 'father' of sociology

For the next part of your transition work we are going to study the work of Durkheim, the most famous sociologist. He's important because he effectively created the academic field of sociology by introducing the methodologies for it to be a 'science'. This section will go through the following areas of his work:



1. The social context of Durkheim's work.
2. Social facts and sociology as a science.
3. Collective consciousness.
4. Study on suicide

This section will be challenging – to support your thinking we will be following this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZfGGF-YYzY>

# Part 1: Social context of Durkheim's work

Using the clip below watch from the start until 02.00 minutes:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZfGGF-YYzY>

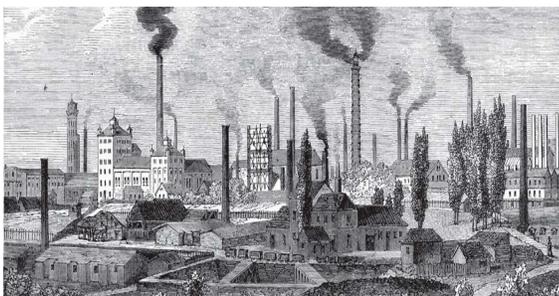
Durkheim lived in France from 1858-1917 during a time of great **social change**. Some of these changes include the following:



Political turmoil (change) – during the 1800's there was a revolution and a change of government 3 times



A weakening Catholic Church – religion had less authority in peoples lives.



New technologies and industrialisation



Urbanisation – people now lived in cities as opposed to close knit communities.

**With these rapid social changes and the change to a society where many people believed in different things Durkheim asked himself 'what keeps a society together'?**

## Part 1: Social context of Durkheim's work

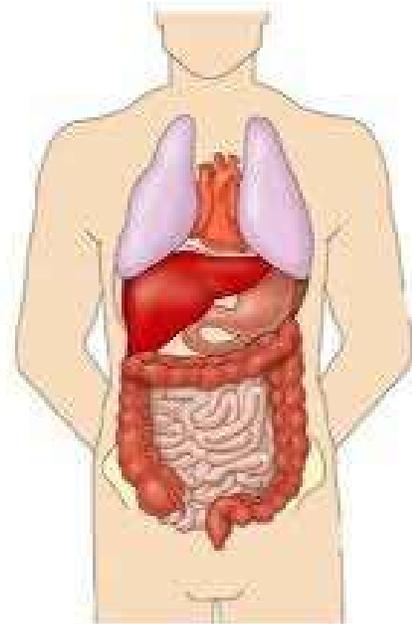
The question of '*what keeps society together*' was the foundation of a new science called 'sociology'. According to Durkheim, sociology could do the following things for society:

- Understand its normal and abnormal functioning
- Diagnose how it is changing
- Deal with the consequences of societal change

Durkheim hoped that by studying society in this way France could deal with its rapidly changing society and avoid any further turmoil in the future.

For Durkheim, sociology was for society what biology was for the body. It was a method to understand how society functions, how to structure a society which is optimal for its functioning.

Each organ represent a part of society (such as family or education) which must all function correctly for the organism (or society) to work.



This made Durkheim a **STRUCTURALIST** thinker as he believed the structure of society influenced the behaviour of individuals and groups.

## Part 2: Social context of Durkheim's work

Once you have watched the video and read through the information complete the tasks below:

**Task 1:** Create a fact file about Durkheim and ensure you include the following:

- a) Type of sociologist he was
- b) Some of his famous studies
- c) Information about the time he lived in – this should include things such as political turmoil, industrialisation and a decline in religious authority.
- d) What he wanted to achieve in his study of society

**Task 2:** Use the internet to research two key events which influenced Durkheim. Write a short summary of each explaining what happened.

- a) French revolution (make sure you also think about how it affected the power of the Catholic Church)
- b) Industrial revolution

### Links for support:

1. French Revolution: <https://learnodo-newtonic.com/french-revolution-effects>

2. Industrial revolution:

<https://sites.google.com/site/5effectsofindustrialization/effects-in-the-1800s-1900s>

## Part 2: Social context of Durkheim's work

Using the clip below watch from 02.00-04.45 minutes:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZfGGF-YYzY>

**If sociology is a science, then what does it study?**

### Social Facts

"Social facts consist of manners of acting, thinking and feeling external to the individual, which are invested with a coercive power by virtue of which they can exercise control over him"



There are three important things to note about what social facts are:

- 1) They are very broad** – it essentially means anything in society which can influence how groups or individuals behave. For example, family, religion, laws, social class, urbanization, population distribution.
- 2) They are external to us** – social facts live independently to us. For example, you may think the act of giving gifts at Eid is something you have decided. However, you did not originally come up with this idea yourself - it was already there.
- 3) They exercise coercive (forceful) control over us** – Durkheim argued we have little control over these social facts. For example, imagine if you wanted to stop believing in birthday celebrations. If we don't believe in them, we tend to just go along with it anyway – that's the power of social facts. Language is another – it is external and constrains our ability to express ourselves.

## Part 2: Social context of Durkheim's work

Once you have watched the video and read through the information complete the tasks below:

**Task 1:** Create a spider diagram and write down as many social facts as you can. For example you could put – religion, the law, rules at school, reality TV etc. Think about what your values and beliefs are.

**Task 2:** Use two examples of the social facts you have identified and explain why it is external to you and how it controls your behaviour.

E.g. Language

*Language is external to the individual as individuals do not make up their own language. The language we have is simply a lottery of geography – every society has a different language.*

*It control the individual as it limits their ability to express themselves.*

## Part 3: Collective consciousness

Using the clip below watch from 04.45-06.25 minutes:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZfGGF-YYzY>

The study of 'social facts' can help us to understand how societies hold together as well as how they fall apart:



Social facts create the common consciousness...

**THE COMMON CONSCIOUSNESS IS BASICALLY THE COLLECTION OF ALL THE BELIEFS, MORALS, AND IDEAS THAT ARE THE SOCIAL FACTS IN A GIVEN SOCIETY.**

If these social facts are good and functional = **functional society**

If they weaken or are replaced by bad social facts = **dysfunctional society**

## Part 3: Collective consciousness

**Social dysfunction** is when parts of society do not function well – it is like a disease to the body. A disease will cause part of your body to not function well which will potentially cause damage to all your body. The same thing can happen in society. For example, dysfunction in the family such as poor parenting may cause a child to distrust authority and lead to harm in wider society such as criminal behaviour. Remember society is interconnected (all parts of society affects each other).

Let's look at a contemporary example:

**Social issue:** High rates of depression

You might say that **depression** is caused by the brain. However, Durkheim would argue that you need to look beyond the individual and study **social facts** to understand the causes of this dysfunction. The cause of depression is not just biological is caused by society. For example two of these social facts may be:

**Societal values** – we view money and glamour as the benchmark for success over more meaningful values like love and compassion.

**Weak identity**– today we are a collection of individuals as opposed to a community. We are much lonelier than ever before.

**Did you know:** A survey in the USA found 39% of Americans would describe themselves as 'not close to anyone'!

## Part 3: Collective consciousness

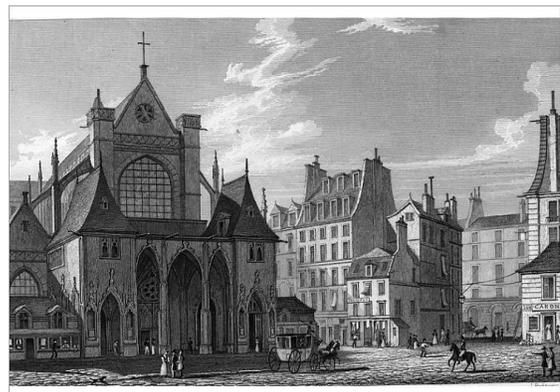
### How do you stop social dysfunction?

How do you treat disease? You understand the causes!  
Durkheim argued that to understand the **causes** of social dysfunction you must study the **structure** of society (social facts).

The main cause of social dysfunction was 'social change' – as explained in part 1...

### Remember this change:

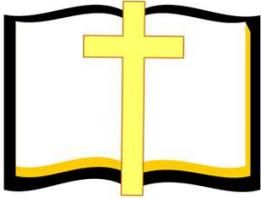
When people all live in a tiny community in the middle of nowhere it is easy for there to be a collective consciousness. Everyone knows their place and life is straightforward. Identity is clear as the community is small. However, as people moved to cities and became part of a fragmented (broken up) community their sense of community was lost. This weakens collective consciousness because society is made up of people who have different values, cultures and norms. It causes more social dysfunction!



Urbanisation – people now lived in cities as opposed to close knit communities.

## Part 3: Collective consciousness

**Task 1:** Below are several things in society which arguably help to create a collective consciousness. For each one explain why it does this:



Religion



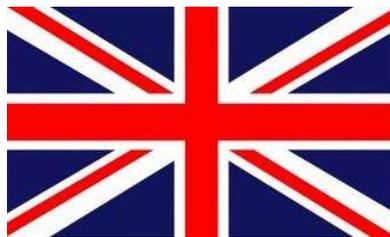
Football World Cup



The Law



Christmas



The Flag



Human Rights

**Task 2:** Below are three things in society which arguably erode (stop) collective consciousness. For each one explain why it does this:



Unemployment



Materialistic Values



High Crime<sup>20</sup>

## Part 4: Suicide

Using the clip below watch from 06.25 minutes to finish:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZfGGF-YYzY>

To prove his theory that social facts drive our actions, Durkheim studied the causes of suicide. He used official statistics to show how a range of **social facts** caused suicide:

Religion

Political or national crisis

Economic problems

Family size

Divorce rates

Occupational groups

### Conclusions

- Suicide rate varies between societies.
- Suicide rate varies between different groups within the same society.

Durkheim, therefore, discounted **individualistic** explanations of suicide. He also eliminated statistically factors such as climate, seasons, alcoholism, heredity and mental state.

## Part 4: Suicide

Durkheim found there were four types of suicide:

<b>Egoistic</b> – bonds which unite groups weaken, and individuality increases. Too little integration	<b>Anomic</b> – individuals are not regulated by norms and values of the group, or social order. Too little regulation
<b>Altruistic</b> – bonds between groups too strong, so individuals sacrifice themselves. Too much integration into norms/values	<b>Fatalistic</b> – norms of society oppress too much and stifle individuals. Too much regulation by rules of society

The blue represents types of suicide found in modern society whereas the orange is types of suicide found in traditional society.

**What examples are there:**

**Egoistic suicide** – Not being part of a social group = isolated and helpless in times of crisis.

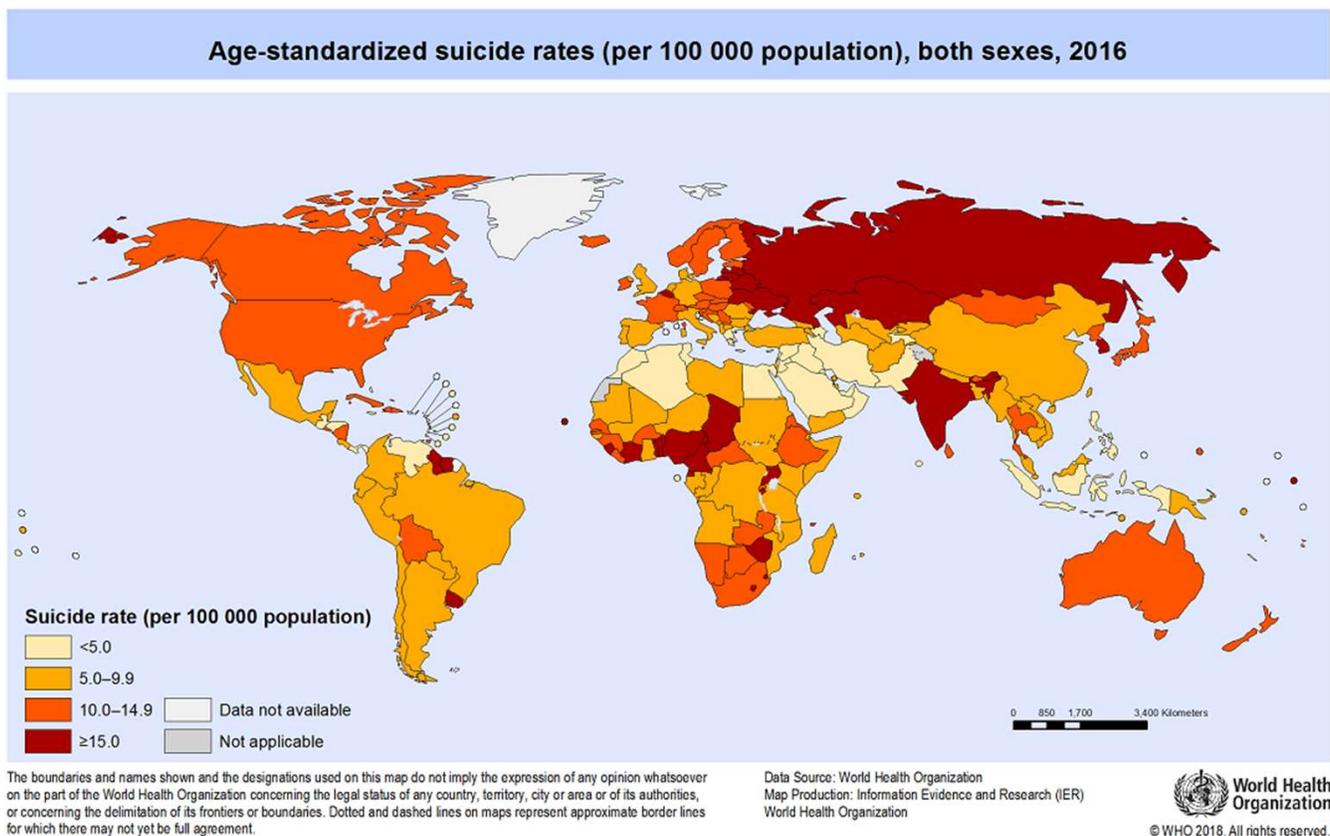
**Anomic suicide** – No clear modes of behaviour or morality to guide the individual = confusion that life is meaningless when there is major disruption in life.

E.g. Durkheim found that suicide rates are much higher among Protestants than Catholics – this could be due to suicide being a sin in Catholicism and not in Protestantism.

## Part 4: Suicide

His study was revolutionary as he was the first person to put forward the idea that a very personal act like suicide is determined by social forces external to the control of the individual.

In some ways we can apply this today:



You may, for example, notice that Middle Eastern countries have relatively lower suicide rates. Most people in those countries are Muslim and in Islam suicide is a sin. Durkheim would argue that 'anomic suicide' is less likely there.

## Part 4: Suicide

Over the past decade depression rates for young people in the UK have nearly doubled. Throughout history the cause of depression was often seen as biological such as low serotonin levels. However, Yohan Hari suggests this is only partly true. Like Durkheim, he argued that social forces (or the way we live) is causing depression.

**Task:** Watch the following Ted Talk clip by Hari:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MB5IX-np5fE> and write a summary of his finding (thinking mainly about how it is like the ideas of Durkheim).

**Your summary should include the following:**

- How have doctors traditionally diagnosed depression?
- What biological factors can cause depression?
- What social factors cause depression (these are social facts!)?
- Focus on 'loneliness' and 'junk values' and explain how they can cause depression.
- According to Hari, how should we therefore treat depression?
- What are the similarities to Durkheim's study of the causes of suicide?

## WELL DONE!

You've now finished Section B "Durkheim Suicide Study"

# Section C: Social Stratification

**Social inequality** refers to the unequal distribution of:

- Resources such as power, wealth and income
  - Opportunities (related, for example, to health, education and employment)
- Social class, gender, ethnicity and age are all sources of inequality in modern British society.

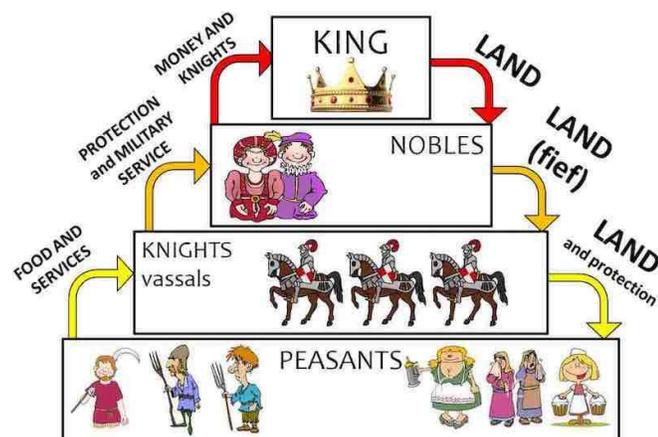
**Social stratification** refers to the way society is structured into a hierarchy of strata that are unequally ranked. A social hierarchy is shaped like a pyramid with each stratum more powerful than the one below it. The most privileged group forms the top layer and vice versa.

Stratification involves inequalities between groups in the distribution of socioeconomic resources such as wealth, income, status and power. These inequalities persist or continue over time.

In Britain, gender, class, ethnicity and age are the main criteria by which people tend to be stratified.

If someone is able to work hard to change their status, we refer to this as a system with “achieved” status.

If someone is born into their status and can't change it, this is “ascribed” to us.



Feudal Pyramid of Power

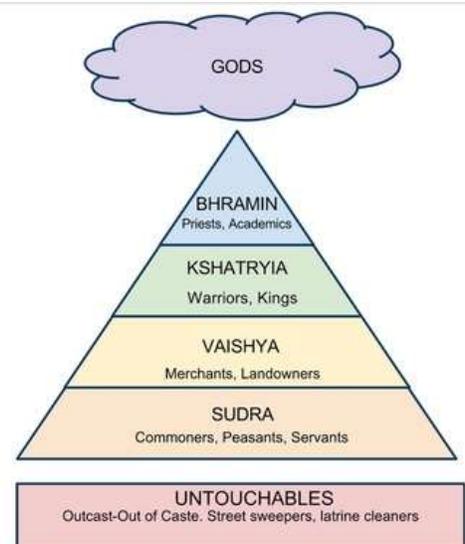
So we're going to look at some of the issues around social inequality and social class in the UK today. We'll start by looking at the concept of stratification and the different forms in different times / places. Read the information and answer the questions on the Page 28.

## Mobility, status and stratification

Keywords and ideas for this section		
Social mobility	The idea that you can move up or down the social ladder/strata of society	e.g. a job promotion can improve your social status/class
Social status	<b>Ascribed status</b> – your status is determined when you are born. You cannot change it.	e.g. Prince William was born with the status and title of "Prince". One day he will be King.
	<b>Achieved status</b> – Your status is dependent on what you achieve in your lifetime.	e.g. Mr Jones and Ms Gillam worked hard, excelled at being teachers and through hard work and dedication, became headteachers.

### DIFFERENT FORMS OF STRATIFICATION

The caste system in traditional India, slavery in the southern states of the US in the 19th century, Apartheid in South Africa and the social class system in modern Britain are all types of stratification. Various forms of stratification differ according to whether status is ascribed or achieved. They also differ in terms of how open or closed they are. In an open system of stratification, status is achieved and social mobility is possible (**meritocratic**). In a closed system, status is ascribed so social mobility is highly unlikely.



# SOCIAL CLASS AND STRATIFICATION

**Social class note:** Remember this is slightly different from Marx's ideas. Marx argues the bourgeoisie exploit the proletariat. Social class does not claim this relationship exists, but identifies differences in wealth and culture between groups.

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SOCIAL CLASS

One view is that social class divisions are less clear-cut in Britain today compared with the 1950s. For example, it is argued that:

- Traditional working-class communities have declined  
*E.g. communities centered on heavy industry, coal-mining and shipbuilding have declined*
- Class identities have weakened and people no longer strongly identify themselves as working or middle class

Think! Watch this video: How important do you think social class is **REALLY** today?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wVPSdtE99E8>

Another version of the decline of class view suggests that class divisions have become less significant than those based on gender, ethnicity and age:

- Women, some minority ethnic groups, **children and older people** are more risk of poverty than other groups
- Divisions based on **gender** can be seen in the gender inequalities in the workplace, the gender pay gap and the under-representation of women in political life
- **Ethnic inequalities.** Divisions based on ethnicity can be seen in the over-representation of some minority ethnic groups among low income households, and the underrepresentation of some minority ethnic groups among MPs and in the professions



Some say social class was more obvious in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain (above) or even the 1950s (below) but not clear-cut today.



Other sociologists will argue that inequalities based on class, gender, ethnicity and age are all significant in modern Britain.

In this view, class, gender, ethnicity and age are seen as interlinked aspects of inequality rather than as completely separate aspects. Many sociologists argue that social class remains a central concept in sociology because social class still impacts on people's daily lives. Class-based inequalities in life chances persist in the 21st century. So, while class may have changed, it has not declined.

<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20160406-how-much-does-social-class-matter-in-britain-today>

## **TASK 1: Complete the following tasks (typed) Use headings and sub-headings to structure your work appropriately.**

**Feel free to refer to the video and the article to help you in your answers.**

### **Mobility, status and stratification**

- a) Define social stratification and give 3 examples of how society can be stratified.
- b) Choose ONE social structure mentioned under “different forms of stratification” and identify
  - i. What are the strata (layers) in that social hierarchy?
  - ii. Is status ascribed or achieved?
  - iii. Is there social mobility in this system?
- c) What does meritocracy mean?
- d) Explain one way in which British society is meritocratic and one way in which it is not.

### **Social class and stratification**

- a) What is social class in Britain?
- b) How was social class more clear-cut in the past? Why is it harder to define now?
- c) What other division/factors could be considered more important in Britain today other than social class?
- d) What do some people still claim that social-class is still important in dividing people in Britain today?

### **Challenge yourself:**

Read the article and/or video and summarise what it says. How far do you agree? (give a two sided answer).

# Functionalism and Social Inequality

According to the functionalist approach, modern society requires a system of unequal rewards. This provides an incentive for the most talented people to train for the key occupations that are essential for society to continue. These top positions must provide scarce rewards such as high pay/status to attract the most able people. They believe that the stratification system fulfills the function of ensuring that the most important jobs are filled by the most talented and highly qualified people. They see modern societies such as Britain as meritocratic, to a large extent.

According to Functionalists like Davis and Moore, a job's "functional importance" is determined by the degree to which the job is unique and requires skill, meaning whether only a few, or many other people, can perform the same function adequately.

Garbage collectors are important to public sanitation, but Functionalists claim they do not need to be rewarded highly because little training or talent is required to perform their job. For example, according to this theory doctors should be rewarded highly, because extensive training is required to do their job. It is logical that society must offer greater rewards (e.g., income, vacations, promotion) to motivate the most qualified people to fill the most important positions.

## Davis and Moore 1945 **Functionalist perspective – Consensus theory**

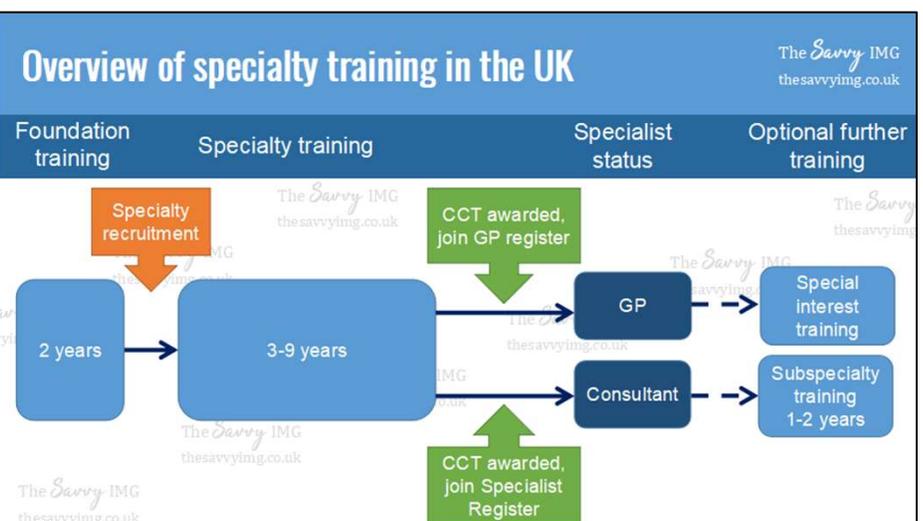
- ❖ **Social stratification** is a **universal necessity** for every human society
- ❖ For a society to and function successfully 4 things must happen:
  1. **All roles must be filled**
  2. **They must be filled by those best to perform them**
  3. **Necessary training must take place**
  4. **Roles must be formed diligently**
- ❖ **Unequal reward and privileges** attached to different positions in society was the **mechanism** to allow the above to take place
- ❖ This system allowed the most able people to be matched with the most **functionally important** positions in society – e.g. doctors paid highly
- ❖ Giving high rewards to these positions gives incentives for people to compete with the most talented achieving success



### Criticisms:

- ✓ Occupations with lower rewards can also be seen as **functionally important** e.g nurses
- ✓ Differences in pay and status may be due to differences in power e.g. MPs versus nurses
- ✓ No proof that exceptional talent is always linked to the most important positions
- ✓ Unequal rewards may not be the best way of finding talent

28



**Image:** Time in training to become a medical specialist in the UK required after A Level.

29

# Economic and Social Inequality

Marx, Weber and functionalists have all shaped sociological views on social class.

## **MARX**

Karl Marx believed that class membership was determined by economic factors (ownership & non-ownership).

He identified two main classes in capitalist society:

- Bourgeoisie (capitalist/ruling class): Wealthy and own property, big businesses, land and factories. Their main interests are higher profits - Proletariat (working classes): Own no property and are forced to sell their labour to the bourgeoisie in order to survive. Main interest is higher wages.

These two classes have very different interests and this leads to conflict between them (conflict theory).

**Karl Marx 1818-1883**

**Marxist perspective –  
Conflict theory**

❖ **Social stratification** – a mechanism to allow the privileged few to exploit the many. **Social stratification** came from the relationships of social groups to the **means of production** – those who owned the means of production and those that did not. His theory of history shows Western capitalist society developing through 4 epochs (periods of time):

**1. Primitive communism 2. Ancient society 3. Feudal society**

**Capitalism** – the most exploitative. Capitalism stratifies into 2 groups:

r/c = bourgeoisie, oppressors, own means of production

w/c = proletariat, oppressed/exploited, own labour

❖ As agriculture developed it produced **surplus wealth** and the accumulation of private property. The **ruling class** gained control of the means of production obliging others to work for them – **the subject class**. The power of the **ruling class** is rooted in its **ownership of the means of production**. **Ruling class** justify its position as being natural and normal – with ideas such as the **free market**

❖ **Capitalism** was very unstable as its conflict lay in the interest of the **subject class** whose labour was exploited and the **ruling class** who exploit that labour. Ultimately, classes would **polarise** as the gap between the subject class and ruling class work grow and differences be more extreme – revolution and **communism** would be the remedy

❖ **Criticism** – **New Right and functionalist** argue that capitalism is beneficial for society and creates opportunities for social mobility



29

## **TASK 2: Complete the following tasks (typed) Use headings and sub-headings to structure your work appropriately.**

### **Functionalism and Social Inequality**

- a) Go back to page 9 information on Functionalists. What do functionalists believe about society?
- b) Using this, and the information on page 29, explain why Functionalists believe it is a good idea to have inequality in society.
- c) What does the word incentive mean?
- d) What is a disincentive?
- e) What incentives are there for working hard in school? List 3.
- f) Read the research by Davis and Moore (1945). They are functionalists who believe that some jobs are more “functionally important” than others. Why is this?
- g) According to functionalists like Davis and Moore, why should society incentivise (provide incentives for) “functionally important” jobs?

### **Economic and Social Inequality**

- h) Think about a large global company. Look up the following:
  - viii. The name of their owner/CEO and estimation of company profits/net worth of owner.
  - ix. The amount they pay their lowest paid workers  
*I have done an example for McDonald's on the next page. Pick a different company for yours.*
- i) How might this (task h) support Marx's theory?
- j) What is there conflict over between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat?
- k) What is capitalism?
- l) Why did Marx say capitalism was exploitative?
- m) Do you agree with Marx?

### **Judgement:**

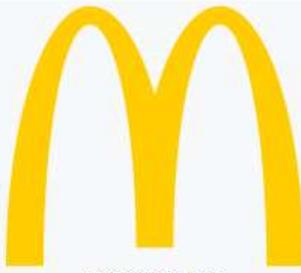
Who do you agree with the most about social inequality? Davis & Moore OR Marx? *To structure this, write a PEEL paragraph explaining each view (feel free to include criticism of them too!). Then write a conclusion saying which perspective you agree with and why.*

## HELP PAGE

### How I researched McDonald's CEO and earnings of their lowest paid-workers...

*Note: be careful not to just click on the first article/number that comes up in google. I looked at a couple to confirm they all said a similar number.*

### McDonald's Corporation



McDonald's logo

Type: Public

Traded as: NYSE: MCD, DJIA component, S&P 100 component, S&P 500 component, TYO: 2702, BMV: MCD

ISIN: US5801351017

Industry: Restaurants

Genre: Fast food restaurant

Founded: May 15, 1940; 79 years ago in San Bernardino, California

Founders: Richard and Maurice McDonald

Headquarters: Chicago, Illinois, U.S.<sup>[1]</sup>

Number of locations: ▲ 37,855 restaurants (2018)

Area served: Worldwide

Key people: Enrique Hernandez Jr.<sup>[2]</sup> (Chairman), Chris Kempczinski (president and CEO)

christopher john kempczinski net worth

About 21,800 results (0.39 seconds)

**Christopher Kempczinski Net Worth (2020) | wallmine GB**  
<https://gb.wallmine.com/people/christopher-j-kempczinski>  
10 Mar 2020 - The estimated **Net Worth** of **Christopher J Kempczinski** is at least **\$14.4 Million** dollars as of 8 March 2020. Mr. Kempczinski owns over 11,055 ...

christopher kempczinski salary

About 6,820 results (0.58 seconds)

**\$4,678,340**

As President, McDonald's USA at MCDONALD'S CORP, **Christopher Kempczinski** made \$4,678,340 in total **compensation**. Of this total \$725,000 was received as a **salary**, \$336,869 was received as a bonus, \$1,000,005 was received in stock options, \$2,500,183 was awarded as stock and \$116,283 came from other types of **compensation**.

**Compensation Information for Christopher Kempczinski ...**  
<https://www1.salary.com/Christopher-Kempczinski-Salary-Bonus-Stock-...>

So the McDonalds CEO earns US\$4.6 million a year, and the server earns \$8.7 an hour.

McDonalds server salary UK

About 1,350,000 results (0.69 seconds)

**McDonald's Server Hourly Pay | Glassdoor.co.uk**  
<https://www.glassdoor.co.uk/Salaries/Server>  
19 Oct 2019 - Average hourly **pay** for **McDonald's Server** is **£7**. **McDonald's** hourly **pay** trends based on hourly **pay** posted anonymously by **McDonald's** ...

£7 in us dollars

About 580,000,000 results (0.96 seconds)

7 Pound sterling equals  
**8.77 United States Dollar**

# Gender and Social Inequality

Feminist approaches explore gender inequalities in society.

Over the last 40 years, reforms in areas such as education and employment have addressed aspects of gender inequality. For example, governments have introduced anti-discrimination laws such as the Equal Pay Act (1970) to reduce gender inequalities.

Today, women are increasingly likely to achieve high level education qualifications, high status jobs and good salaries.

Feminists would still argue that gender remains the most significant social division in contemporary society. They see society as patriarchal. They see society as a patriarchal one in which men:

- Have a lot of power within families, politics and the workplace
- Generally receive a bigger share of rewards such as wealth and status

Often, men and women do not work in the same occupations. For instance, fire fighting is male dominated and nursery nursing is female dominated. When men and women do work in the same occupations, women are more likely to be in lower-level or middle-level jobs while men tend to hold the higher grade and senior management posts. For example, in 2007, 19% of men and 11% of women worked as managers or senior officials. Women on average still earn less than men. One reason for this is that women are more likely than men to work in low-paid jobs. Women are also more likely than men to be employed part-time rather than full time. One explanation for the persistence of gender inequality at work focuses on discrimination in the workplace. Another explanation suggests that women are held back when applying for promotions or developing their career because they have the main responsibility for housework and childcare. A third explanation argues that inadequate or expensive childcare provision presents some women from participating in full-time paid work or staying in employment long enough to progress in their career.



## Silvia Walby 1990

### Feminist perspective- CONFLICT theory

- ❖ **Patriarchy** is central to an understanding gender inequality
- ❖ Identifies **six patriarchal structures** which allow men to dominate and oppress women:
  1. **Paid work** – despite legislation (Equal Pay & Sex Discrimination Acts) women continue to be disadvantaged, restricted by cultural values (e.g. expectation of mother/housewife role)
  2. **Patriarchal relations of production** – men benefit by women's unpaid domestic labour
  3. **Patriarchal culture** – women gained more freedom but still subject to social expectations in terms of standards of behaviour (e.g. deviant behaviour)
  4. **Sexuality** – greater freedom to express sexuality but subject to doubled standard of sexuality
  5. **Male violence towards women** – threat of violence discourages women from challenging patriarchal authority
  6. **The state** – now not as patriarchal but does relatively little to protect women from **patriarchal power** (e.g. gender pay gap, equal opp's laws are rarely enforced)
- ❖ **Patriarchy** has changed from **private patriarchy** where women were dominated in the home to **public patriarchy** which now dominates where women are mostly segregated into low paid, low status jobs and collectively exploited

# ETHNICITY and Social Inequality

**Ethnicity:** cultural norms and values that distinguish one ethnic group from another. Different from race.

Over the last 40 years, reforms and policies have addressed inequality based on ethnicity in areas such as education, employment and criminal justice.

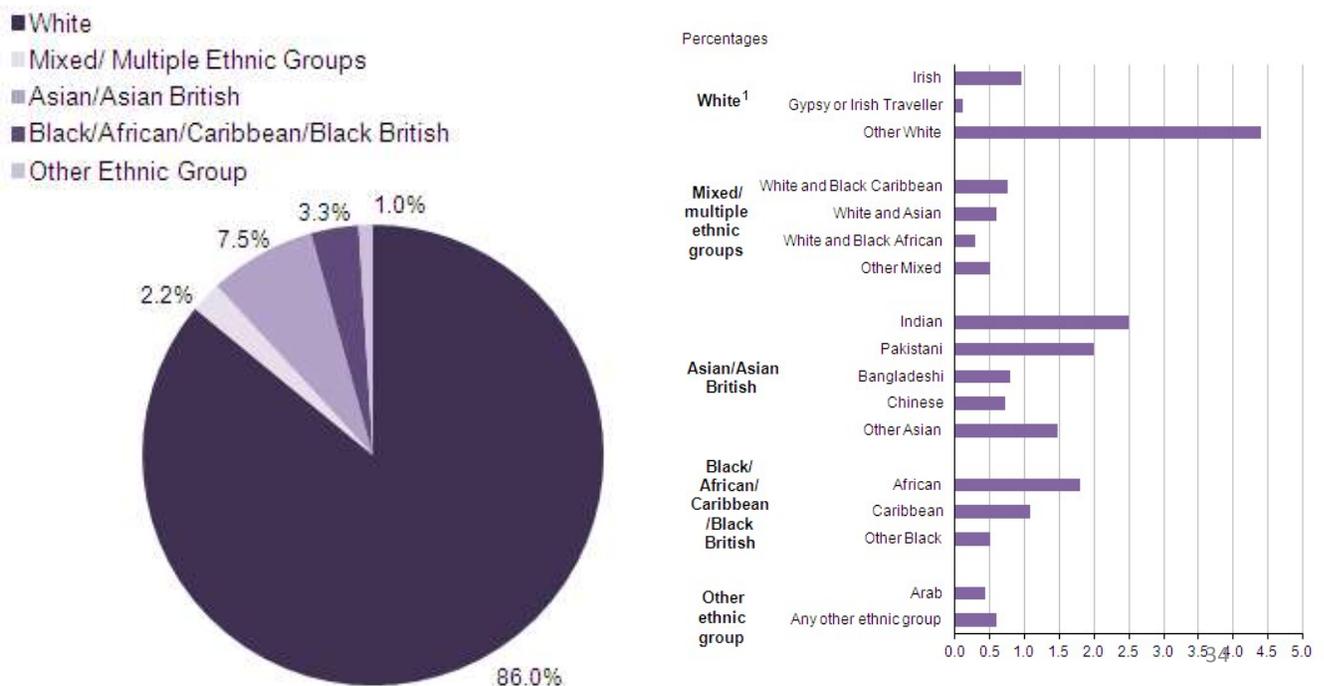
**For example:**

- Many employers have equal opportunities policies to support equality and diversity
- The 1976 Race Relations Act outlawed discrimination based on ethnicity
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission has powers to enforce the equality laws and to shape public policy on equality issues
- Within organizations, awareness of institutional racism has been raised

As a result of such changes, many commentators will argue that inequalities based on ethnicity are much less significant than they were 40 years ago. However, others will argue that there has been little real change in the fields of employment, education and criminal justice. For example, unemployment rates in England & Wales are higher among ethnic minorities such as Pakistani and Bangladeshi in comparison to White British or White Irish people.

Research has also found that men and women of Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage have much worse chances of getting professional and managerial jobs than their white peers of the same age and educational level. Governments have tried to reduce inequalities between different ethnic groups by funding bodies such as the Equality and Human Rights Commission which enforces equality laws, as well as through legislature such as the Race Relations Act in the 1970s.

**Figure 1: Ethnic groups, England and Wales, 2011**



# AGE and Social Inequality

## KEYWORDS

Ageism: prejudice/discrimination upon the basis of age

Sociologists argue that age is socially constructed.

This can be seen in the historical and cross-cultural differences in expectations surrounding age. For example, although child labour is now illegal in Britain, it was the norm among working-class families in the 19th century and exists in some parts of the world today.

The status of older people can vary between cultures. In some cultures, ageing is seen as something to be avoided. In others, however, age is seen as something to look forward to and older people have a high status in society. The term ageism describes a situation in which someone is treated differently and less favourably based on their age. In Britain, there are now regulations against age discrimination in employment and training.



## Ageism widespread in UK, study finds

**Millennials hold most negative attitudes, with 40% believing dementia is inevitable**



▲ Two thirds of people surveyed had no friends with an age gap of 30 years or more. Photograph: BSIP/UIG via Getty Images

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/jun/08/ageism-widespread-in-uk-study-finds>

**TASK 3: Complete the following tasks (typed) Use headings and sub-headings to structure your work appropriately.**

**Gender, ethnicity and age**

*(you may wish to do some further research to help with this)*

- a) For each of the following (gender, ethnicity and age) complete a brief summary with bullet points identifying
- i. 2 facts/statistics about social inequality for this group.
  - ii. Explain one suggested reason why this group is more likely to find themselves lower in social hierarchy.
  - iii. Explain one way that the government have tried to improve their situation and “level the playing field” (improve opportunities for disadvantaged groups)?
  - iv. How far have these government initiatives/plans been useful?

# Stratification and Poverty

## KEYWORDS

- **Absolute poverty:** people experience absolute poverty when their income is insufficient to obtain the minimum needed to survive
- **Life cycle of poverty:** movement into and out of poverty at different stages during the course of a person's life
- **Poverty line:** a government-approved line that divides people who are living below a set income level (living below the poverty line) from those who are living above it. In Britain, there is no official poverty line
- **Relative poverty:** people experience relative poverty when they cannot afford to meet the general standard of living of most other people in their society

Poverty can be defined as:

- **Absolute poverty** when people's income is so low that they cannot obtain the minimum needed to survive
- **Relative poverty** which is when people's income is well below average so they are poor compared with others in their society. They cannot afford to have the general standard of living that most other people in their society enjoy

Poverty can also be defined in terms of exclusion from everyday activities and customs. This is about people who experience poverty from the activities and living patterns that most people take for granted.

There are different ways of measuring poverty: -

- Low incomes – this is the main official UK government way of measuring poverty
- Lack of items that the majority of the population see as necessities
- Subjective measures – in which people judge themselves to be living in poverty



## - IMAGINE -

*Imagine you were carrying out sociological research.*

*It's a bit like science, you come up with a hypothesis and test it based on evidence.*

*So, if I wanted to see if people in poverty had the same life chances (chance of being happy, healthy, successful) as people not in poverty.*

*You get 100 respondents/subjects who you can interview as part of your research.*

*How would **YOU** decide which of your respondents are actually poor?*

*How might it affect your research if you don't? Why is this surprisingly difficult?*

# Stratification and Poverty

Poverty is linked to different social divisions like ethnicity, gender and age.



Children and pensioners are more at risk of poverty than other age groups. Possible reasons for this include living on a low income such as state retirement pension and not claiming the benefits to which they are entitled to. This is all captured in the idea of the life cycle of poverty. The life cycle of poverty shows that people may move in and out of poverty at different points during their lives. For example, an individual may live below the poverty line during childhood. As a young adult, they can earn money and move out of poverty. If they have children, the added expense may mean they move back into poverty. When their children leave home, they may escape poverty. During old age, they no longer get a wage so they may move back into poverty. So, children and pensioners are more at risk of poverty.



People living in households headed by someone of Pakistani or Bangladeshi heritage are at risk of living in low-income households. Possible reasons for this could include racism and discrimination in the labour market. Members of some minority ethnic groups are less likely to take up the welfare state assistance to which they are entitled. Members of some minority ethnic groups are also more likely to experience unemployment and are more likely to live in low income households.

In the UK, **20% of women** are in poverty compared to **18% of men**



that's **5.1 million women** to **4.4 million men**

JRF  
JOINT  
ROYAL  
FOUNDATION

Source: Households Below Average Income

twitter @jrf\_uk

Women face a greater risk of poverty than men. Possible reasons could include the fact that women earn less than men, on average, because they are more likely to work in low paid jobs and to work part-time. In general, women live longer than men so there are a larger number of older female pensioners living alone. Women are less likely than men to have an income from an occupational pension. Women are also more likely than men to head single-parent families which often have to live on low incomes

# Poverty Explanations Part 1

Some approaches focus on individuals and groups while others focus on structural factors.

## 1. INDIVIDUAL EXPLANATIONS OF POVERTY

Individual explanations highlight the behavior/lifestyles of individuals and groups who experience poverty. They suggest that the poor are responsible in some way for their own situation:

- **Culture of poverty**

In this account, people from the poorest sections of society are socialized within a subculture of poverty. They develop a way of life and a set of values to cope with their position. For example, they live for the moment and see no point in planning ahead. However, these values prevent them from taking up educational opportunities or saving for the future, and in this way, escaping poverty

- **Cycle of deprivation**

In this view, poverty involves both material and cultural deprivation. It persists from generation to generation, locking families into a cycle of deprivation

- **Welfare dependency and the underclass**

In the 1980s and '90s, New Right approaches identified the emergence in Britain of an underclass - a group of undeserving poor whose attitudes and values are different from those of mainstream society. This group remains in poverty because they are encouraged by welfare.

### Charles Murray 1984

#### New Right perspective

❖ Government welfare reforms in American society led to a **dependency culture** and a growing **underclass**. Increased benefits leads to:

1. **Discouragement of self sufficiency (people become dependent on benefits)**
2. **More single parents and breakdown of traditional nuclear family**
3. **Young people losing interest in getting a job as they can live off the state**

❖ **Underclass** threaten economic and social fabric of society as they are a burden on tax payers and responsible for rising crime rates

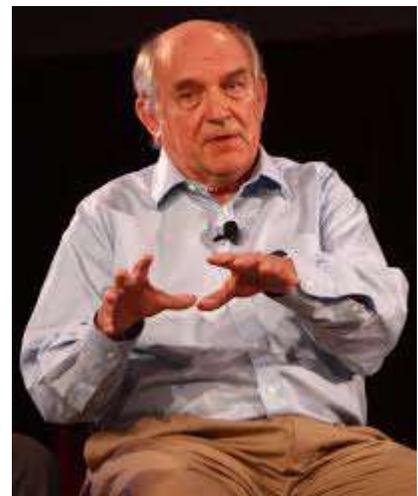
❖ Late 1980s Britain – Murray also found growing underclass

❖ Saw a **moral decline** in values such as honesty, family life and hard work being undermined by underclass. Whilst alternative **value system** of criminal and anti-social behaviour thrived

#### Criticisms:

- ❖ Ignores economic reasons that may create such a class
- ❖ Many of the so-called **underclass** hold traditional values, want stable relationships and want to work
- ❖ **Marxists** and others argue that these people are victims of **social inequality** not the cause of social problems

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The idea of social exclusion can be used to criticize individual explanations of poverty. Socially excluded people are shut out from participating in society's socioeconomic, political and cultural life by factors beyond their control. The idea of social exclusion stresses society's role in excluding some people from full participation.

# Poverty Explanations Part 1

Some approaches focus on individuals and groups while others focus on structural factors.

## 2. STRUCTURAL EXPLANATIONS OF POVERTY

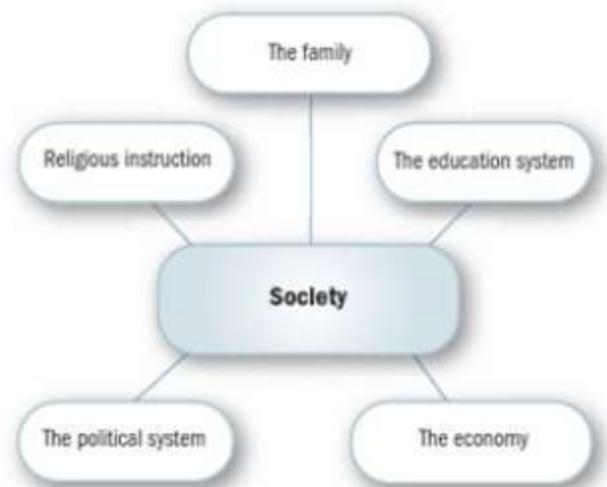
Structural approaches look at the way society is structured economically, socially and politically to create poverty and perpetuate it over time

### **MARXIST APPROACH**

This view states that poverty is the inevitable result of the class-based inequalities that are built into capitalist society. Capitalism is an economic system that generates extreme wealth for the bourgeoisie/ruling class while producing poverty among sections of the proletariat

### **UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE INADEQUACIES OF THE WELFARE STATE**

Unemployment is seen as a key issue in understanding the causes of poverty. During economic recessions, unemployment levels rise and, as a result, the number of people experiencing poverty also increases. Another view is that welfare state benefits are too low. In this view, the solution to the problem of poverty is to give more money to the people in poverty by increasing the value of pensions and welfare benefits.



### **To summarise...**

- Critics argue that the culture of poverty and cycle of deprivation explanations ignore structural factors and fail to explain why people are poor in the first place
- New Right approaches focus on the underclass whose members are seen as dependent on welfare provision. Critics argue that the term underclass is used to label and blame the victims of poverty

<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/usappblog/2017/10/03/a-generous-welfare-state-can-help-reduce-unemployment-if-there-are-good-job-opportunities-for-the-jobless/>

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/poverty-human-rights-society-echr-theresa-may-disadvantaged-equality-commission-a8599306.html>

**TASK 4: Complete the following tasks (typed) Use headings and sub-headings to structure your work appropriately.**

**Poverty and social inequality**

- a) What is poverty?
- b) Why is poverty hard to define for sociologists?
- c) Which social groups are more likely to live in poverty and why?
- d) What is material deprivation? Give two examples.
- e) What is cultural deprivation? Give two examples.
- f) What does the New Right (Charles Murray) believe about the causes of poverty?
- g) What is the cycle of deprivation?
- h) How can capitalism cause poverty?

## **TASK 5: Complete the following essay (typed) using the guidance below**

**Task:** Using everything you've learnt so far, write an essay explaining the sociological causes of social inequality and poverty. Try to incorporate as much of your learning as possible.

Evaluate the view that people in poverty are to blame for their own situation

### Success Criteria

#### **Introduction**

- Describe some details and statistics about poverty
- Outline which sociological arguments you will evaluate (New Right, Marxism, Functionalism)

#### **Paragraph 1**

- Identify sociological perspective which agrees with the statement (for example New Right)
- Write a PEEL paragraph (point, evidence, explain, link (evaluate the extent to which))

#### **Paragraph 2**

- Identify a competing theory (for example Functionalism or Marxism)
- Write a PEEL paragraph (point, evidence, explain, link (evaluate the extent to which))

#### **Paragraph 3**

- Identify a competing theory (for example Functionalism or Marxism)
- Write a PEEL paragraph (point, evidence, explain, link (evaluate the extent to which))

#### **Conclusion**

- Weigh up the arguments and come to a judgment over which perspective is the most accurate reflection of reality today.

# WELL DONE!

You've now finished Section C "Social Stratification"

# Section D:

## The London Riots

### The 2011 London Riots – Background/ Context

**Between 6 and 10 August 2011, several London boroughs and other cities and towns across England suffered widespread rioting, looting and arson.**

The first night of rioting took place on 7 August 2011 after a peaceful protest in Tottenham, following the death of Mark Duggan, a local man from the area, who was shot dead by police on 4 August 2011. Police failed to notify Duggan's family of his death and no senior police officer was available to meet the protest, creating anger at perceived disrespect. The protesting crowd outside the police station set light to two police cars, and the pictures of this circulated on social media attracted other people to the area – what started as a relatively peaceful protest quickly descended into a riot involving mass looting.



The following days saw similar scenes in other parts of London with the worst violence taking place in , Brixton, Chingford, Peckham, Enfield, Croydon, Ealing and East Ham. The city center in Oxford Circus was also attacked. From 8 until 10 August, other cities in England including Bristol, Manchester, Birmingham and Liverpool, along with several towns, saw what was described by the media as ‘copycat violence’.

The riots were characterized by rampant looting and arson attacks of unprecedented levels. As a result, Prime Minister David Cameron returned early from his holiday in Italy and other government leaders also ended their holidays to attend to the matter. All police leave was cancelled and Parliament was recalled on 11 August to debate the situation.

There were a total 3,443 crimes across London linked to the disorder, including 5 deaths and at least 16 others injured as a direct result of related violent acts. An estimated £200 million worth of property damage was incurred, and local economic activity was significantly compromised.

The riots have generated significant on-going debate among political, social and academic figures about the causes and context in which they happened.

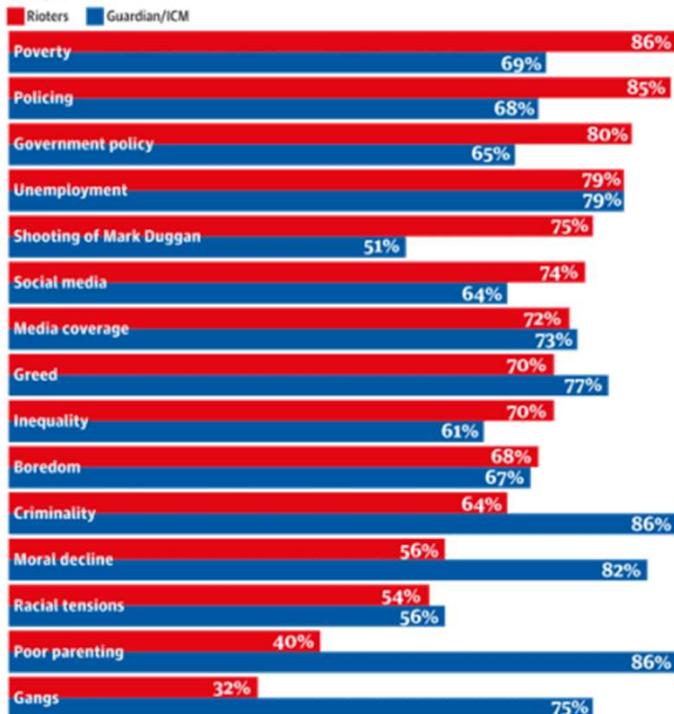
# London Riots

## What were the main causes of the riots?

The findings below are based on the research findings taken from Reading the Riots. Researchers spoke to 270 rioters: 185 people in London, 30 in Birmingham, 29 in Manchester, 16 in Liverpool, seven in Salford and three in Nottingham. Thirteen were in prison

### Cause of the riots

Respondents who said listed item was an 'important' or 'very important' cause of the riots, %



### Riots happening again

The riots will happen again



Of respondents expressing a view When?



Would you get involved again?



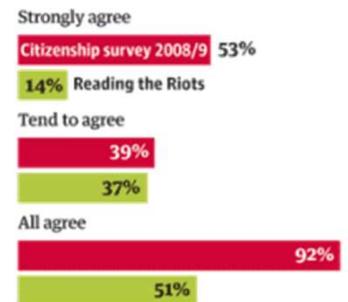
### Policing

Respondents saying police in their area generally do an 'excellent' or 'good' job



### Integration

'I feel I am part of British Society'

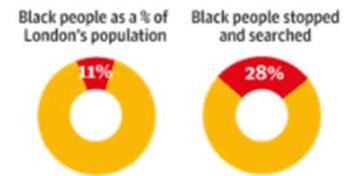


### Stop and search

Have you been stopped and searched in the last 12 months?



Stopped and search in London, 2009/10



SOURCE: ICM/BGS/GUARDIAN RESEARCH/ POLICE POWERS & PROCEDURES BULLETIN

Based on the above interviews, the rioters themselves stated the following five main causes (percentages reporting this as a factor in brackets)

- Poverty (86%)
- Policing (85%)
- Government Policy (80%)
- Unemployment (79%)
- The shooting of Mark Duggan (75%)

However, what the rioters said isn't necessarily valid (true).

# London Riots

**Task 1:** Watch the documentary linked below (1hr) which explains the causes of the riot and make notes outlined below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OkeKQI56-7c>

**Task 2:** Make notes under the following subtitles:

1. Where did the riots take place (specific areas of London/UK)?
2. What was the 'trigger' cause of the riot?
3. Why do some people argue that the main cause of the riots was due to racism?
4. Why do some people argue the main cause of the riots was due to poverty?
5. Why do some people argue the main cause of the riots was due to the influence of gangs?
6. Why do some people argue the main cause of the riots was due to poor socialisation (upbringing)?
7. Why do some people argue the main cause of the riots was due to mindless young 'thuggery'?
8. Any other notes.

# London Riots

The London Riots are a clear example of societal dysfunction which means it is a very important case study for sociologists to study. As you know, there are many different perspectives in sociology who all analyse society and the causes of crime in society differently. Read the summaries below which outlines how each sociological perspective would interpret the riots.

**Functionalism** – argues that society needs crime. Rather than looking at crime as a purely negative phenomenon, crime also has positive social functions. The riots, for example, lead to a temporary suspension of inter-gang violence, and, as a media event, it gave the rest of us something unite against, thus increasing unity in society more generally.

**Bonds of Attachment Theory (Functionalism)** – The cause of deviance is the breakdown or weakening of informal agencies of social control such as the family and community. Criminal activity occurs when the individual's attachment to society is weakened. This theory would blame poor parenting as the main cause of the riots.

**Consensus Subcultural Theory** – argues crime is a collective response to the above situation of frustration – If you can't gain status by getting a job, you seek status by some other means within a subculture (possibly a gang) and riots can offer you an opportunity to gain status by 'going further than the next person'.

**Left-Realism** – Argues there are two main causes of crime – Marginalisation and Relative Deprivation – largely borne out by the Guardian research above.

# London Riots

**Traditional Marxism** – Argues that crime is a response to a Capitalist system that breeds materialism, greed and selfishness. They also point out that many members of the Elite classes are criminals themselves, but it is generally only the powerless that get punished for their criminal acts, while elites tend to avoid punishment. The rioters were largely teenage youths living in poor areas and many got disproportionate punishments for their involvement in the riots, while politicians engaging in criminal acts often get away without punishment.

**Interactionists** – See criminal behaviour as a response to labelling by agents of social control – mainly the police. Focusing on the riots – Interactionists would argue that police racism over the last 3 decades has led to black youths being disproportionately targeted by stop and search – and it was this history of negative attention from the police that sparked the riots.

**Right Realists** – Argue that the riots were caused because of a basic breakdown of both informal and formal social control – weak communities and too few police on the streets, and society not being tough enough on crime. Rioters had too much freedom and felt like they could get away with their crimes.

**Post-modernism** – Argues that the riots are a response to a postmodern society characterised by consumerism, an obsession with self-identity and a quest for excitement. For many the riots were a 'scene' where they could 'play a game' – engaging in vandalism and challenging the police provide both status and excitement – much more than any nightclub could offer.

# London Riots

**Task:** Write an essay explaining the sociological causes of the London Riots, 2011.

*“The main cause of the London Riots was poverty”* – to what extent do you agree?

## Success Criteria

### **Introduction**

- Describe some details about the riots
- Outline which sociological arguments you will evaluate

### **Paragraph 1**

- Identify sociological perspective which agrees with the statement (for example Left Realism)
- Write a PEEL paragraph (point, evidence, explain, link (evaluate the extent to which))

### **Paragraph 2**

- Identify a competing theory (for example Functionalism or Post Modernism)
- Write a PEEL paragraph (point, evidence, explain, link (evaluate the extent to which))

### **Paragraph 3**

- Identify a competing theory (for example Interactionalism or Right Realism)
- Write a PEEL paragraph (point, evidence, explain, link (evaluate the extent to which))

### **Conclusion**

- Weigh up the arguments and come to a judgment.

**WELL DONE!**

You've now finished Section D "The London Riots"

# COMPLETED

## WELL DONE!

**Please can you ensure that your name is on the document / documents you upload/submit.**



You've now finished the Sociology A Level Transition work. If you've enjoyed this and want to know more, you should do Sociology A Level! Here's some suggested readings and videos if you want to look up more.

### Reading List - Sociology

- Brave New World – Aldous Huxley
- Animal Farm – George Orwell
- 1984 – George Orwell
- Chavs: The Demonisation of the Working Class – Owen Jones
- The Establishment and How They Get Away With It – Owen Jones
- The Handmaid's Tale – Margaret Atwood (also a series)
- Vox – Christina Dalcher
- The God Delusion – Richard Dawkins
- Outsiders: Studies in Sociology of Deviance – Howard S Becker
- Folk Devils and Moral Panics – Stanley Cohen
- A Glasgow Gang Observed – Patrick James
- Gang Leader For A Day – Sudhir Venkatesh
- Haralambos
- A wide range of newspapers including The Guardian and Independent

### Watching List - Sociology

- Any documentaries, including Panorama, Louis Theroux, Stacey Dooley, Mind of a Murderer etc
- Black Mirror series (Netflix)
- Years and Years (BBC i-player)
- Goodfellas
- The Godfather (part 2 is the best)
- Legend
- My Scientology Movie
- The 'Up' series (eg. 56 Up, 63 Up) on Netflix or Youtube
- The Secret Life of 5 year olds
- McMafia (previously BBC i-player)
- Freedom Writer's Diary
- Dangerous Minds
- Chernobyl (drama)
- When They See Us (Netflix)
- The Society (Netflix)
- Blood Diamond
- A Bug's Life or Antz (for Marxism)
- Ted Talks/Sociology

**Quick read/videos:**

<https://www.dukeriesacademy.atrust.org.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=330&type=pdf>