

**SOCI 101**  
**INTRODUCTION TO**  
**SOCIOLOGY**  
**SOCIAL GROUPS**  
**& NETWORKS**  
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> **SOCI 101**

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**THEME: Social Groups and Networks**      **Artist: John Boswell**  
**Song: We Are All Connected**  
**Website: SymphonyOfScience.com**

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**F. Social Groups**

**"We are all connected,  
To each other, biologically;  
To the Earth, chemically;  
To the rest of the Universe,  
atomically."**

**- Neil deGrasse Tyson**

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## F. Social Groups



### 1. A social group is defined as:

Two or more people who identify with one another and who interact with *intent* or *purpose*.

A group is **NOT** a:

- "Crowd" - no identity, or a
- "Category" - people with a similar status but no interaction  
(for example, "women" or "Catholics")

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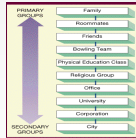
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## F. Social Groups



### a. Primary Groups are:

**Small, personal and long lasting;**  
Ex: close friends and family

Primary groups offers emotional and social security. These are some **Expressive Functions** of primary groups.

### b. Secondary groups are:

**Large in membership, impersonal & temporary;**  
Ex: a classroom, professional meeting, or the corporate workplace

They are not as important as primary groups and have weak emotional ties between persons -- *But* there is a **STRENGTH** in weak ties -- "it's who you know, not what..."

Secondary groups build **Social Capital**. Group relations in this sense are **Instrumental Functions**.

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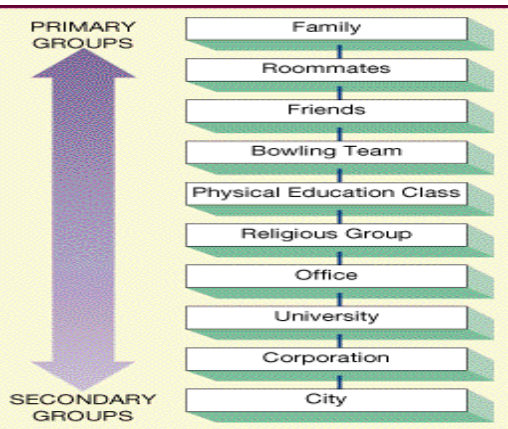
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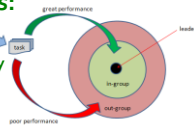
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## F. Social Groups

### 1. Social Groups, defined

#### c. In-groups and Out-groups:

Groups can be powerful through inclusion and exclusion. **In-groups** and **out-groups** are subcategories of primary and secondary groups that identify this social dynamic.



#### d. Reference group:

A **reference group** is a group that people compare themselves to — it provides a standard of measurement. In American society, peer groups (like sports teams) are common reference groups. We obtain **role-models** and base our **identities** on those people within our **reference groups**.



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## F. Social Groups

Reference groups help us evaluate ourselves and form identities. In-groups and out-groups divide people into “we” and “they.” Social networks extend our contacts and let us form links to many other people.



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## F. Social Groups

### 2. Network Theory

- or - 'Six Degrees of Separation'



Through a chain of just five or six people, *anyone in the world* can be linked to *anyone else*.

**a. Social Network Analysis (SNA)** or “Social Network Theory” more generally, is an area of sociological study emerging in the 1970s (long before Facebook, LinkedIn and MySpace existed).

What is the value of social network analysis?

- **the new media** is now driven by social networking;
- **careers** might emerge as a result of social networking;
- **neighborhood** groups are an example of social networking;
- **terrorist networks** can be tracked and better understood through SNA.
- **The Internet** is both a technical network and a social network.

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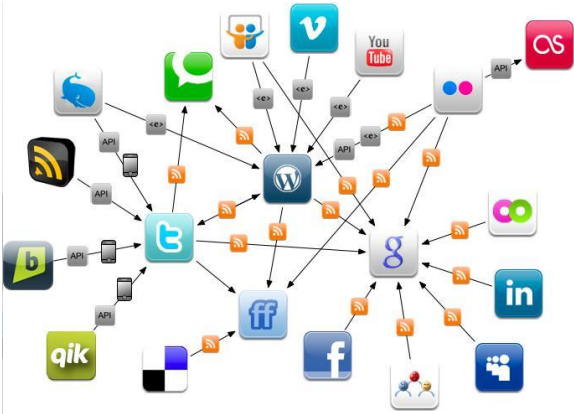
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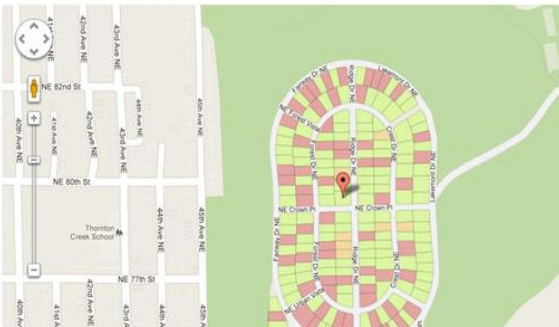
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**Map of Alta Hill**

Click on any property to see who lives there or [invite a neighbor](#) who is missing out.




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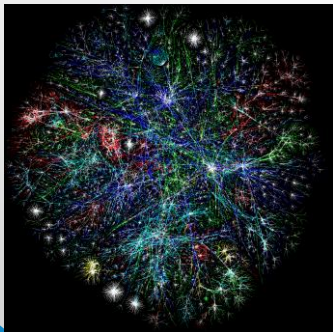
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**F. Social Groups**



A Network Map of the Internet

(Castells 2001, *The Internet Galaxy*)

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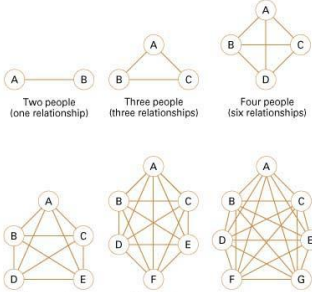
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## F. Social Groups

**b. Metcalfe's Law:** As you add members to a "perfect" social network (where everyone knows everyone else one), it's *value* to each member grows *exponentially*.




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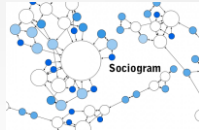
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
## F. Social Groups

### c. Sociograms



i. "Sociograms" are social network diagrams.

They consist of these symbols:

 = node (one person) |  = weak link |  = strong link

ii. A group of **2** is a **dyad**; **3** is a **triad**. Additional people add to the strength of networks exponentially (Metcalfe's Law). A person to which many people are connected is known as a **hub**.

iii. **In-groups, Out-groups and References-Groups can be mapped by sociograms**, discovering connections and patterns of associations between people (the **shape of the "social web"**) in a highly visual way.

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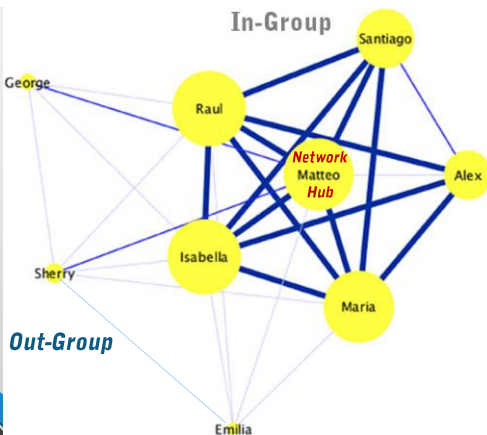
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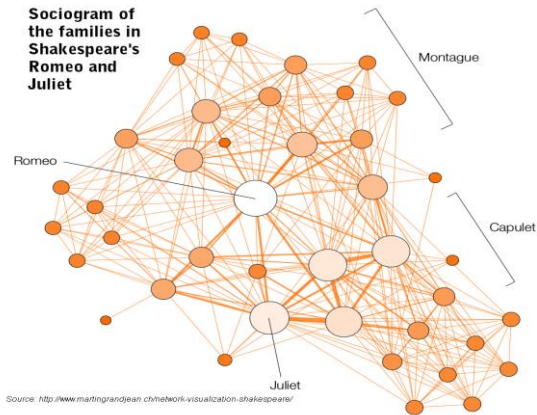
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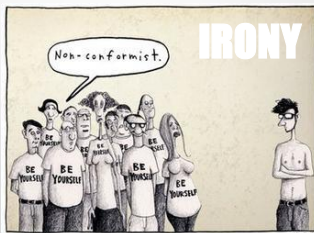
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## F. Social Groups

### 3. Group Conformity

Groups offer comfort in the **anonymity** (also called "deindividuation") they allow us and the **reassurance that we get from shared agreements** on our socially constructed realities (like statuses and roles).

The price we have to pay for that comfort, however, is **CONFORMITY**. The less we conform, the greater our chance of **ostracization** (expulsion) from the group.



How then is group conformity *created*?

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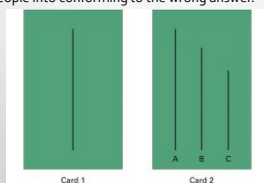
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## F. Social Groups

### 3.a. The Asch conformity experiments (1951)



- Solomon Asch studied our willingness to **compromise our own judgments and go along with group opinion**
- He asked subjects to simply compare the length of lines on two cards; his goal was to pressure people into conforming to the wrong answer.




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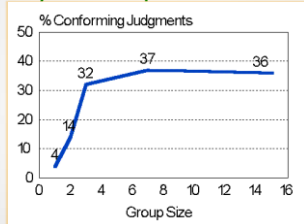
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## F. Social Groups

### 3.a. Group Conformity – Asch Experiment

Note how the level of conformity rises sharply as the group size approaches a triad, then roughly levels off thereafter.

This indicates that *it only takes a "third wheel" to influence decisions one way or the other.*



- i. Informational Conformity: distorting our own judgment
- ii. Normative Conformity: wanting to fit in, not make waves

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## F. Social Groups

### 3. Group Conformity

#### b. Milgram obedience experiment (1963)

Looked at the role authority plays in group conformity.

It's not as easy for us to exercise our free will as we think!

Psychiatrists had predicted that only 1/10 of 1% of Milgram's subjects would give the maximum shock. Graduate students and faculty, college sophomores, and middle-class adults had predicted that only 1% or 2% of subjects would obey completely.

Reportedly, **nearly 65% of Milgram's subjects obeyed fully.** Our common sense about our independence was wrong. [The Context \(map\)](#)



Fig. 3  
Shock generator.

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## F. Social Groups

### 3. Group Conformity

#### c. Zimbardo prison experiment (1971)

*The illusion* of turning college students into prisoners and guards **became the reality.**

A planned two-week experiment had to stop after 6 days, as prisoners and guards were displaying severe **stress reactions.**

**In light of the power of the situation, the "distance" between social role and personal identity disappeared.**



Images from the Stanford experiment (with thanks to Philip Zimbardo)

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## F. Social Groups

### 4. Secondary, large-group organization: BUREAUCRACY

a. A rational organizational model for social groups, designed to perform complex tasks efficiently. acronym memory trick: S.H.R.I.F.T.

Max Weber, in his (posthumous) 1922 book *Economy and Society*, outlined six general characteristics of bureaucracies:

Characteristic	MSC example
i. Specialization of Duties	Pres, VP, Dean, Faculty, Staff, Student
ii. Hierarchy of Offices	Whipple Hall - Admin
iii. Rules and Regulations	Student/Faculty Handbook
iv. Impersonality	M-Number
v. Formal Written Communications	Student/Faculty File
vi. Technical Competence	GED, A.A., B.S., M.A., Ph.D., M.D., etc.

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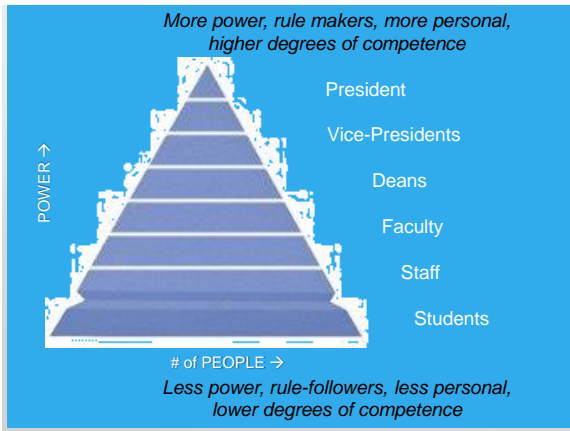
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## F. Social Groups

### 4.c. Large Groups -- Bureaucracy

#### ii. Four Big Problems With Bureaucracies: A.R.I.O.

##### i. Bureaucratic Alienation

- Potential to "dehumanize" individuals – people become merely a "cog in the machine";

##### ii. Bureaucratic Ritualism

- Following the organizations rules becomes a primary concern - bureaucratic "red-tape";

##### iii. Bureaucratic Inertia

- Perpetuation of the organization for its own benefit;

##### iv. Bureaucratic Oligarchy

- Centralized control and power in a small number of individuals.

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## F. Social Groups

### 4. Example of Bureaucracy run amok:

#### McDonaldization <sup>1</sup> | <sup>2</sup>

b. George Ritzer sez: Many of societies' organizations are beginning to reflect these **four basic principles**, introduced by McDonald's: E.C.U.C.

##### i. EFFICIENCY (speed)

- Do it **quickly** (drive-thrus, microwaves self-serve soda fountains, etc.)

##### ii. CALCULABILITY (amount)

- Emphasize **quantity over quality** ("Over 99 billion served")

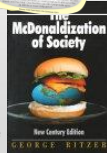
##### iii. UNIFORMITY (predictability)

- Do it the same each time and leave nothing to chance;

##### iv. CONTROL THROUGH AUTOMATION (human error)

If possible, do it by machine: humans are the most unreliable and costly factor in the production process.

Some Problems with McDonald's Operating Principles:



### 4. The Irrationality of Efficiency

#### c. The Problem of Bureaucracies

##### i. Max Weber "The Iron Cage of Reason"

- The "Iron Cage" represents our feeling of being "trapped";
- The system of a bureaucracy (and its form of reason) is based on **what's good for the institution**, not necessarily the **individual**.



##### ii. Life becomes "dysfunctional," and our social participation lacks **meaning** ("anomie")

because the social institution **defeats** the individual; a sense of "calling" cannot exist when life is meaningless.

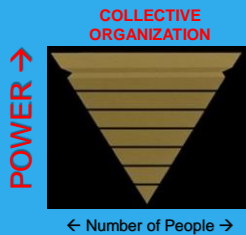
##### iii. The solution? We must work collectively to **change the system**.

Protests, boycotts, and other social movements have historically been the way in which old "paradigms" or models for institutional organization give way to new ones. The rise of Western democracies, civil rights for African-Americans, and the "Occupy Wall Street" movement are examples.

## Social Movements (SOCl 360) involve

### Cultures of **Resistance**

*Less power, new rule followers, rapid change*



*More power, redefine rules, more communal*

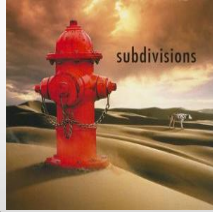
Growing up it all seems so one-sided  
Opinions all provided  
The future pre-decided  
Detached and subdivided  
In the mass production zone

Nowhere is the dreamer  
Or the misfit so alone

Subdivisions ---  
In the high school halls  
In the shopping malls

**Conform or be cast out**

Subdivisions ---  
In the basement bars  
In the backs of cars  
Be cool or be cast out  
Any escape might help to smooth  
The unattractive truth  
But the suburbs have no charms to soothe  
The restless dreams of youth



Theme: Conformity and Social Control

Artist: Rush

Song: Subdivisions

Album: Signals

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Now, let me begin by letting you in  
I've got a way about getting up and doing my thing  
See I could never front and act like something I'm not  
Talking about cribs and cars that I haven't really got

But I can tell you this I'm gonna change your mind  
From my persuasive energy that I project through the rhyme  
See, it's all about doing what ya need to do  
To get where ya wanna go  
And be who ya wanna be

But don't relax; it won't come to you,  
'Cause theirs a million other cats out competing with you  
But not doin' it the same way  
Ya see, seeing the world through different eyes is your gateway  
A special gift from your consciousness an individual-ness  
For you to rock to this



**Theme: Conformity**

I'm just a cog in the machine  
A part of the process, I'm here  
to express  
That we need some progress  
I'm not cool...

I'm not cool, I just pretend I am  
I'm not a fool but yet I say I am  
I'm old school 'cause I know I am  
Rockin' the mic every night  
In my jimmy-jams

Artist: DubFX

Song: Not Cool

Album: *Everythinks  
A Ripple*



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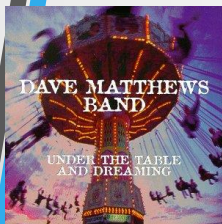
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Theme: Group Conformity



Driving in on this highway  
All these cars and up on the sidewalk  
People in every direction  
No words exchanged  
No time to exchange them

And all the little ants are marching  
Red and black antennas waving  
They all do it the same  
They all do it the same way

Artist: Dave Matthews Band

Song: Ants Marching

Album: Under the Table and Dreaming

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(alarm clock: "It's 6:03 A.M.")  
Happily dreaming  
Wake up now its time to go –  
Go to work.

Drive to the plant  
Wondering why the neighbor's such a –  
Such a jerk.

Build the missile  
Plutonium load  
Warhead armed  
Waiting for it's moment to explode...

*Unfettered conscience  
Ideologically blind  
Not to be bothered  
with thoughts of this kind*

Looking the other way  
Moving forward day by day  
Putting together the end of forever  
"What does it matter – the work's well paid."

Theme: *Bureaucratic Irrationality*

Artist: Riley

Song: [Going to Work](#)

Album: Blueprint

(Lyrics and drums by Reymers)



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