

Three Column Notes Example

| Reading Text | My Notes | Connections & Real Life Examples |
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| <p>Introduction to Sociology</p> <p>We all belong to many groups; you're a member of your sociology class, and you're a member of your family; you may belong to a political party, sports team, or the crowd watching a sporting event; you're a citizen of your country, and you're a part of a generation. You may have a somewhat different role in each group and feel differently in each. Groups vary in their sizes and formalities, as well as in the levels of attachment between group members, among other things. Within a large group, smaller groups may exist, and each group may behave differently. At a rock concert, for example, some may enjoy singing along, others prefer to sit and observe, while still others may join in a mosh pit or try crowd surfing. Why do we feel and act differently in different types of social situations?</p> | | |

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| <p>Why might people of a single group exhibit different behaviors in the same situation? Why might people acting similarly not feel connected to others exhibiting the same behavior? These are some of the many questions sociologists ask as they study people and societies.</p> <p>1.1 What Is Sociology?</p> <p>What Are Society and Culture?</p> <p>Sociology is the study of groups and group interactions, societies and social interactions, from small and personal groups to very large groups. A group of people who live in a defined geographic area, who interact with one another, and who share a common culture is what sociologists call a society. Sociologists study all aspects and levels of society. Sociologists working from the micro-level study small groups and individual interactions, while those using macro-level analysis look at trends among and between large groups and societies. For example, a micro-level study might look at the accepted rules of conversation in various groups such as among teenagers or business professionals. In</p> | <p>Sociology is how groups of people are how they interact with one another.</p> <p>Sociology can be macro-level and also micro-level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macro: trends • Micro: how a conversation is | <p>Macro & Micro - like Economics last semester</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macro - big picture • Micro - smaller scale |
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| <p>contrast, a macro-level analysis might research the ways that language use has changed over time or in social media outlets. The term culture refers to the group's shared practices, values, and beliefs. Culture encompasses a group's way of life, from routine, everyday interactions to the most important parts of group members' lives. It includes everything produced by a society, including all of the social rules. Sociologists often study culture using the sociological imagination, which pioneer sociologist C. Wright Mills described as an awareness of the relationship between a person's behavior and experience and the wider culture that shaped the person's choices and perceptions. It's a way of seeing our own and other people's behavior in relationship to history and social structure (1959). One illustration of this is a person's decision to marry. In the United States, this choice is heavily influenced by individual feelings; however, the social acceptability of marriage relative to the person's circumstances also plays a part. Remember, though, that culture is a product of the people in a society; sociologists take care not to treat the concept of "culture" as though it were</p> | | |
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alive in its own right. Reification is an error of treating an abstract concept as though it has a real, material existence (Sahn 2013).

Studying Patterns: How Sociologists View Society

All sociologists are interested in the experiences of individuals and how those experiences are shaped by interactions with social groups and society as a whole. To a sociologist, the personal decisions an individual makes do not exist in a vacuum. Cultural patterns and social forces put pressure on people to select one choice over another. Sociologists try to identify these general patterns by examining the behavior of large groups of people living in the same society and experiencing the same societal pressures. Changes in the U.S. family structure offer an example of patterns that sociologists are interested in studying. A “typical” family now is vastly different than in past decades when most U.S. families consisted of married parents living in a home with their unmarried children. The percent of unmarried couples, same-sex couples, single-parent and single-adult

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| <p>households is increasing, as well as is the number of expanded households, in which extended family members such as grandparents, cousins, or adult children live together in the family home (U.S. Census Bureau 2013). While mothers still make up the majority of single parents, millions of fathers are also raising their children alone, and more than 1 million of these single fathers have never been married (Williams Institute 2010; cited in Ludden 2012). Increasingly, single men and women and cohabitating opposite-sex or same-sex couples are choosing to raise children outside of marriage through surrogates or adoption. Some sociologists study social facts, which are the laws, morals, values, religious beliefs, customs, fashions, rituals, and all of the cultural rules that govern social life, that may contribute to these changes in the family. Do people in the United States view marriage and family differently than before? Do employment and economic conditions play a role? How has culture influenced the choices that individuals make in living arrangements? Other sociologists are studying the consequences of these new patterns, such as the ways</p> | | |
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| children are affected by them or changing needs for education, housing, and healthcare. | | |
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