

Social Structure

Social Structure

- Social Structure
 - The network of interrelated statuses and roles that guide human reaction
- Status
 - A socially defined position in a group or society
- Role
 - The behavior (including the rights and obligations) expected of someone occupying a particular status

Status

- Ascribed Status
 - Statuses that are assigned and beyond a person's control
 - Not based on abilities, efforts, or accomplishments
- Achieved Status
 - Statuses acquired by an individual through their actions and efforts

Status

- Master Status
 - The status that plays the greatest role in a shaping a person's life and determining their social identity
 - Can be achieved or ascribed
 - Can change over time

Roles

“You *occupy* a status, but you *play* a role” - Ralph Linton

Humans play many different roles each day as expectations of behavior are different for the various statuses we occupy.

- Role Theory

- Like a play, each role has props and is performed in a certain setting

Roles

- Reciprocal Roles

- Roles that require corresponding roles that define the patterns of interaction
- Ex: doctor-patient, teacher-student, employer-employee, etc.

- Role Expectations

- The socially determined behaviors expected of a person performing a role
- Ex: parents are expected to provide physical and emotional security for their children, police officers are expected to uphold the law, doctors are expected to treat their patients with skill and care, etc.

Roles

- Role Set
 - The different roles attached to a single status
 - Ex: Son, brother, husband, teacher, coworker, employee, band member, friend, neighbor, gym member, citizen, customer, and probably a lot more

Roles

- Role Conflict

- When fulfilling the role expectations of one status makes it difficult to fulfill the role expectations of another status
- Ex: to be a good employee you need to go to work, however to be a good parent you need to stay home and take care of a sick child.

- Role Strain

- When a person has difficulty meeting the role expectations of a single status
- Ex: A student is tardy to school because they had to drive their little sibling to elementary school

Social Institutions

- Social Institutions
 - When statuses and roles are organized to satisfy one or more of the basic needs of society
 - Physical and emotional support, transmitting knowledge, producing goods and services, and maintain social control

Social Institutions

- The Family
 - responsible for raising the young and teaching norms/values
- The Economic Institution
 - organizes the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services
- The Political Institution
 - The system of norms that governs the exercise and distribution of power in society
- Education
 - Ensures the transmission of values, patterns of behavior, and certain skills and knowledge.
- Religion
 - Provides a shared, collective explanation of the meaning of life