Groups and Organizations

Social Group

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

- Not every collection of individuals forms a group.

- Many people with a status in common–women, homeowners, soldiers, millionaires, college graduates, and Roman Catholics–aren't groups but categories.

Not Quite a Social Group

- **Crowd**
  - **Temporary cluster of people**
  - **A group can have temporal status**
- **A crowd can become a group, then a crowd again.**
  - **A large gathering of people at a football game**
  - **A crowd that begins to riot might be considered a group.**

Primary Groups

Small social groups whose members share personal, lasting relationships.

- **Traits**
  - **Small**
  1. **Personal orientation**
     - **Share activities, spend time together**
  2. **Enduring**
     - **Members think of it as end in itself rather than means to end**

- **Primary relationships**
  1. **Family**
     - **First group experienced in life**
  2. **Members viewed as unique and irreplaceable**

Secondary Groups

A large, impersonal social group whose members pursue a specific goal or activity.

- **Traits**
  - ❖ **Large membership (impersonal)**
  - ❖ **Goal or activity orientation**
  - – **Formal and polite**
- **Secondary relationships**
  - ❖ **Weak emotional ties**
  - ❖ **Short term**
- **Examples**
  - – **Co-workers and political organizations**

Group Leadership

- **Two roles**
  - <u>Instrumental</u>: Task-oriented
  - <u>Expressive</u>: People-oriented

- **Three leadership styles**
  - Authoritarian: Leader makes decisions; Compliance from members
  - Democratic: Member involvement
  - Laissez-faire: Mainly let group function on its own

Group Conformity Studies

Groupthink: Tendency of group members to conform, resulting in a narrow view of some issue

- **Asch's research**
  - Willingness to compromise our own judgments

- **Milgram's research**
  - Role authority plays
  - Following orders

- **Janis's research**
  - Negative side of groupthink

Reference Group

A social group that serves as a point of reference in making evaluations and decisions

- **Stouffer's research**
  - **We compare ourselves in relation to specific reference groups.**
- **In-groups and out-groups**
  - **Loyalty to in-group**
  - **Opposition to out-groups**

Group Size

- **The dyad**
  - A two-member group
  - Very intimate, but unstable given its size

- **The triad**
  - A three-member group
  - More stable than a dyad and more types of interaction are possible

Social Diversity: Race, Class, and Gender

- **Larger groups turn inward.**
  - Members have relationships between themselves.

- **Heterogeneous groups turn outward.**
  - Diverse membership promotes interaction with outsiders. (other groups)
  - More Social parity= forming more ties w/ diverse backgrounds

- **Physical boundaries create social boundaries.**
  - If segregation of groups takes place, the chances for contact are limited.

- **Networks**
  - Web of weak social ties, <u>people we know of</u> or <u>who know of us</u>

Formal Organizations

Large secondary groups organized to achieve goals efficiently; date back thousands of years.

- **Utilitarian**
  - Material rewards for members
- **Normative**
  - Voluntary organizations
  - Ties to personal morality
- **Coercive**
  - Punishment or treatment
  - Total institutions

Bureaucracy

An organizational model rationally designed to perform tasks efficiently

- **Max Weber's six elements to promote organizational efficiency:**
  - Specialization of duties
  - Hierarchy of offices
  - Rules and regulations
  - Technical competence
  - Impersonality
  - Formal, written communications

Organizational Environment

- **Factors outside an organization that affect its operation:**
  - Economic and political trends
  - Current events
  - Population patterns
  - Other organizations
- **Informal side of bureaucracy**
  - In part, informality comes from the personalities of organizational leaders.

Problems of Bureaucracies

- **Bureaucratic alienation**
    - **Potential to dehumanize individuals**
- **Bureaucratic inefficiency and ritualism**
    - **Preoccupation with rules, interferes with meeting goals**
- **Bureaucratic inertia**
    - **Perpetuation of the organization**

Oligarchy: The rule of the many by the few

- **Helps distance officials from the public.**
- **Michels: Concentrates power and threatens democracy**

The Evolution of Formal Organizations
Scientific Management

Application of scientific principles to the operation of a business or large organization

1. Identify tasks and time needed for tasks
2. Analyze to perform tasks more efficiently
3. Provide incentives for worker efficiency

New Challenges to Formal Organizations

- **Race and gender**
  - Pattern of exclusion
  - "Female advantage"

- **Japanese organizations**
  - Value cooperation
  - Organizational loyalty

- **Changing nature of work**
  - Information-based organizations
  - Creative autonomy, competitive work teams, flatter organization, and greater flexibility

McDonaldization of Society

- <u>Efficiency</u>: Do it quickly
- <u>Uniformity</u>: Leave nothing to chance
- <u>Control</u>: Humans are most unreliable factor

Each principle limits human creativity, choice, and freedom.

Weber: Rational systems are efficient but dehumanizing.

Future of Organizations: Opposing Trends

- **Movement toward more creative freedom for highly skilled information workers**

- **Movement toward increased supervision and discipline for less skilled service workers**