



**ENCYCLOPAEDIC  
DICTIONARY  
of  
SOCIOLOGY**

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*Edited By*  
**B. B. SHARMA**

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**Discourse.** This is a domain of language use, structured as a unity by common assumptions. There may be competing discourses, and discourses will change over time. For example, M. Foucault describes the existence of discourses of madness—ways of talking and thinking about madness—which have changed over the centuries. He also suggests that there may well be similarities between discourses at any time. The discourse of political economy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, for instance, takes the same *form* as that of natural history. Attention has concentrated on the social function of discourses, most important on their ability to close off possibilities; within a discourse there are literally some things that cannot be said or thought.

**Discourse(s) and discourse formation.** Refers to the particular 'scientific' and specialist language(s), and associated ideas and social outcomes, which, according to *Foucault*, must be seen as a major phenomenon of social *power*, and not simply a way of describing the world. For example, as the result of medical and scientific discourse(s), conceptions and the social handling of *sexuality* or *madness* have changed profoundly, in the 20th century, from the previous 'non-scientific' view. It is an important aspect of Foucault's conception of discourse(s), that, in part at least, social phenomena are constructed from within a discourse; that there are no phenomena outside discourses.

**Discovery.** Refers to the recognition of phenomena or relationships that previously had not been perceived. To have any social significance a discovery must become interrelated with existing systems of belief and knowledge and thus integrated into the culture.

**Discovery complex.** Refers to a series of interrelated discoveries (or inventions—see below) of new methods of activity that together form a new system of techniques, such as agriculture or the domestication of animals. The term was proposed by H.S. Harrison.

**Discrimination.** 'Discrimination' refers to behaviour and to judgment the behaviour is based on the appreciation of certain distinguishing characteristics of an object or person.

In a welfare context reference may be made to the importance of the social worker's discriminatory response to a client, but more significant reference is to negative and positive discrimination. People can be discriminated against; i.e. treated unfairly on the basis of an irrelevant distinguishing mark, such as skin colour or gender.

**Discretion.** 'Discretion' consists in a certain liberty in the exercise of judgment or in the application of rules. Its importance in social welfare is twofold. First, discretion is seen as an essential element in the decisions of professionals, though research on *ideology* suggests, in the case of social workers, that decisions may be highly routinised. Second, debate about the dominance of discretion as contrasted with the application of public rules of entitlement has played an important part in the development of thought about supplementary benefits. Titmuss argued in favour of administrative discretion, but more recently Donnison stated: 'Growing reliance on discretionary additions makes it increasingly difficult for officials to discriminate between one equally needy case and another without resorting to moral judgments of the kind which we constantly try to exclude from our decision.' Hill has usefully distinguished between the elimination of discretion through a process of legalisation and its control and review through judicialisation (*Welfare rights*). Discretion can also be used to describe an attitude to information. The sociologist Simmel observed: 'discretion consists by no means only in the respect for the secret of the other, for his specific will to conceal this or that from us, but in staying away from the knowledge of all that the other does not expressly reveal to us.'

**Discursive consciousness.** 'What actors are able to say, or to give verbal expression to, about social conditions, including especially the conditions of their own action' (Giddens, 1984). For Giddens, it is important to notice that such consciousness is not all that actors 'know', the alongside 'discursive knowledge' there also exists *practical knowledge*:

what every actor knows, and needs to know, to get around in the social world, but cannot always express.

**Disorganized capitalism.** Refers to the tendency of modern *capitalism*, and its class structures to become increasingly disorganized in the following respects :

(a) The growth of a 'world market', a decline in the regulation of national markets by dominant corporations, by tariffs cartels, etc., and at the same a declining capacity of individual nation states to control their own economic destinies. This includes a breakdown in 'neocorporatist' forms of state regulation and the provision of social welfare, which is associated with the appearance of contradictions between these state forms and the accumulation of capital (e.g. the appearance of 'fiscal crises') ;

(b) The expansion of the *service class(es)*, existing between *capital* and *labour*, and the appearance of 'new social movements' (e.g. ecological and women's movements), and a movement away from old 'class politics' ; these developments are associated with the decline of labour-intensive traditional heavy industry in the West, as the result of the export of jobs to the Third World and with the introduction of new 'flexible', knowledge-based and labour-saving forms of work organization in new high tech and service areas of production ;

(c) An increasing cultural fragmentation, pluralism, etc., including political pluralism, and the undermining of distinctive national identities, cultural values etc. ; and

(d) A tendency for societies to be continuously transformed 'from above', and 'from below', so that ideas and cultures, industries and cities, as well as classes, are kept in a state of flux.

**Displacement.** Displacement of crime can be defined as the reappearance of criminal activity following preventive measures which increase the difficulty of committing a particular offence or which increase the risks of being caught. Various types of displacement are possible; offenders can choose a different *time* to offend ; they can shift



their attention to other *places* where there are unprotected targets ; they can employ a different *method* of committing crime; or they can turn to different *forms* of illegal activity. Displacement effects are crucial in assessing the value of opportunity-reducing crime-prevention measures, since any gains made may be ruled out by displacement. It is, however, difficult to measure in all its various forms, and to date geographic displacement has received most attention. What evidence there is suggests that some displacement often follows restrictive practices, but this is often less than the amount of crime prevented. Intuitively, one would expect differences in motivation underlying different sorts of crime to be important. Displacement among 'professional' criminals is relatively likely, as evidenced, for example, by the switch to over-the-counter armed bank robbery when safe security was improved. Conversely, 'opportunistic' offenders who commit crimes which are easy and unriskey may be unlikely to persist in offending when crime is made harder. For what may be the bulk of offenders in the middle, displacement effects are more at issue ; the balance between deliberate intent and opportunities for offending is less easy to judge, as is the degree to which different crimes can be functionally equivalent. However, for many offences, displacement may be likely to the extent that there are other targets for the offender to switch to—or other methods to apply—which do not present greater risks or costs for the same reward.

**Dispositional theory.** A conception characterising an individual's social behaviour by the state of his readiness to behave in a certain way. D.T. links the individual's readiness to behave in a certain social situation with the social conditions under which the individual had acted previously and under which a stable predisposition to realise the subject's needs under corresponding appropriate conditions was formed. D.T. was proposed by Vladimir Yadov. It regards *dispositions* as a hierarchy, the top of which is formed by the general orientation of *interests* and the system of *value orientations*, as a result of the influence of general social



conditions ; its medium levels are made up of a system of generalised *attitudes* towards various social objects and situations ; the lower level is composed of situational social attitudes as a readiness to evaluate and act in concrete ("microsocial") conditions of activity. Higher dispositions are more stable, which is in conformity with the individual's activity (stable traits in the way of life of large social units), they actively influence the lower-level dispositions.

**Distribution of income and wealth.** Refers to the spread of material resources in a society. This is an indicator of social inequality for, by identifying the trends in the spread of resources, it is possible to ascertain whether a society is becoming more or less equal.

Examining the distribution of income and wealth is very difficult for three reasons :

(a) the data is often inaccurate ;

(b) the most appropriate unit of analysis is difficult to determine and might refer to individuals or families or households ; and

(c) it is difficult to evaluate non-monetary assets.

**Diversion.** This mainly involves the use by prosecuting authorities of alternatives to traditional criminal justice measures in dealing with breaches of the criminal law. The effect is to remove a suspected offender from the criminal process. This may occur at any stage. It is achieved informally through the exercise of official discretion in proceeding with a case, and through the implementation of formal schemes. Use of police discretion is well documented in the literature.

The decision by the prosecuting authority (whether police or other, such as the Procurator-Fiscal in Scotland) not to initiate or proceed with a prosecution may be taken at any time before the trial. Charges may be withdrawn, or no evidence offered.

**Division of labour.** Refers to a functionally integrated system of occupational roles or specializations within a society.

The conception of the division of labour in society has been a theoretical tool used frequently in sociological analyses. It is assumed to exist in all societies. Sex and age are usually the most important bases for differentiating occupational activities in nonliterate societies. In more complex societies the division of labour is more elaborate. Extreme elaboration of the division of labour is one of the outstanding characteristics of industrialization.

**Division of labour, anomic.** This type of division occurs when extreme specialization is accompanied by a decline in communication between persons performing different functions. Instead of being drawn together by mutual dependence, individuals are separated and isolated from each other by lack of understanding and narrowness of perspective. Moreover, meagerness of communication results in a lack of clearly defined rules regulating the interrelationships of persons isolated in their specializations. The vagueness of these rules, in turn, increase the likelihood of conflict.

**Division of labour, forced.** The forced division of labour occurs when individuals are compelled to take on occupational roles which they do not like and to which they are not suited. Durkheim regarded caste and social class systems as the principal cause of forced division of labour. Custom or law prevents persons from the lower classes from performing certain functions even if they have the ability. Durkheim regarded this as the primary source of class conflict. "The lower classes not being, or no longer being, satisfied with the role which has developed upon them from custom or by law aspire to functions which are closed to them and seek to dispossess those who are exercising these functions. Thus civil wars arise which are due to the manner in which labour is distributed."

**Divorce.** This term denotes the dissolution of a valid marriage while both partners are still alive, who are then free to remarry. Divorce rates have increased markedly in most industrial societies in recent times, from less than 3 people per thousand of the married population in Britain in 1961

to nearly 12 people per thousand in 1981. For approximately every three marriages per year there is one divorce in Britain. Rates vary : people who marry in their teens or early twenties are more likely to divorce than those who marry later.

**Documentary sources of information.** Published and unpublished documents that provide data of sociological significance, including census reports, reports of governmental agencies, public and private records, manuscripts, letters, and diaries. Documentary sources are usually divided into *primary sources* and *secondary sources*.

**Doll-play procedure.** Refers to a *projective technique* for studying personality and attitudes, in which a subject is observed acting out a situation with dolls. The subject is usually given dolls representing adults and children of both sexes. He may be instructed as to the situation he is to enact with them, or encouraged to play with them as he chooses. This technique is, of course, particularly suitable for children.

**Domestic cycle or developmental cycle of domestic group.** The fact that any domestic group will experience different compositions over time as children are born and, when older, may leave the group, and as elderly members die. However, even in the same society, not all domestic groups will have the same developmental cycle.

**Domestic labour.** This term refers to those tasks in the household performed by men and women, that are needed to keep it going from day to day, including cooking, cleaning, child care and looking after the sick and elderly. The domestic division of labour, that is the allocation of domestic tasks between men and women, is notably unequal with women taking on the very much greater burden. There is not a great deal of evidence that it is becoming any more equal or that women are spending less time at domestic labour. The introduction of machines of various kinds, for example, has not helped greatly. For this has often meant the transfer of a task from men to women as it has become

mechanized, and women have set higher standards which their family come to expect. Nor has the growth of women's paid employment outside the home altered the division and women continue to perform the same domestic chores as well as working outside.

The division of labour between men and women in the home is reproduced in employment, for women also tend to have routine and badly paid jobs. Furthermore, women's domestic work is largely unpaid, although it is absolutely necessary for society for people to be fed, cared for and reproduced. Two interpretations have been offered of this apparent paradox. Firstly, it has been argued that women are exploited by men who have services performed for them free of charge. Secondly, a number of writers have suggested that women's work, and the institutions of the family generally, serve a function for capitalism in feeding, clothing and caring for workers (and future workers) without any cost : it is capital that exploits women.

**Domestic production.** Refers to the economic production located in the immediate producer's own home. This production may be for the producer's own use, for direct sale, or financed by and under the control of a capitalist. Domestic production in this last sense was one of the standard forms of capitalist production in the early stages of capitalism, before the introduction of the *factory system*. Although it has since become a marginal element of modern capitalist production, there are some suggestions that, partly as a consequence of the introduction of new forms of *information technology* which permit office work to be done from home, domestic production may again come to play a significant role in production.

**Domestic system.** Refers to a system of production that preceded the development of the *factory system*. Under the domestic system a merchant paid a worker at an agreed-upon rate to produce goods in his home, with the merchant providing the raw materials and sometimes the

tools. The finished products belonged to the merchant, who would then market them. The system was prevalent in Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and may still be found in some parts of the world today. Some writers prefer the name putting-out system, which they regard as more precise because the production of goods in the home long preceded and is not necessarily related to this specific system

**Domestication.** The term used for the taming and selective breeding of animals by man to obtain desired characteristics, for example, docility, strength, a high level of food production, disease resistance. The term is often also applied to the cultivation and selective breeding of plants. The domestication of animals and plants enabled man to move from a hunting and gathering economy to a pastoral or agricultural economy.

**Dominance (Marxism).** The 'dominant element' within a social formation—be this ideology, politics, or the economy—as determined by the particular requirements of the economic base at a point in time (*Althusser* 1966). Althusser wished to draw attention to the internal complexity of social formations, even though these are determined by the economy 'in the final instance'. He contrasted this view with the 'Hegelian' conception of social 'totality'.

**Dominant ideology thesis.** Modern Marxists frequently explain the political passivity of subordinate classes as the consequence of ideological incorporation. They interpret K. Marx as claiming that the ruling class everywhere establishes its own ideology as dominant in society, and that this indoctrinates subordinates who uncritically accept it as true. The thesis has been criticized both on theoretical grounds, that it is not a correct interpretation of what Marx actually believed, and empirically, that throughout history subordinate groups have developed their own beliefs and frequently rejected those of dominant classes.

**Dominant ideology thesis (Marxism).** The thesis that working-class subordination in capitalist societies is largely the

outcome of the cultural dominance achieved by the capitalist ruling class.

**Domination.** 1. In a general sense, the *power* exerted by one person or group over another person or group.

2. In the more specific sense, used particularly by *Weber* (1922) (a translation of the German word *Herrschaft*), the 'likelihood that a command within a given organization or society will be obeyed', which is distinguished from 'power' (*Macht*), the capacity of a social actor to impose his or her will on others despite resistance from them.

**Double bind.** To be in a double bind, according to Evans, is to be subject to a contradictory communication from a person with whom one is in an intense relationship which has high survival for at least one partner in the relationship. The communicator asserts something and also makes or implies a comment on the assertion, and the recipient of the double bind is unable to step outside, as it were, the framework of the message. An example of a double bind can be found in the assertion of a mother saying to her child: 'Let Mummy comfort you', but behaving in a rejecting manner. Bateson in America first drew attention to the possible significance of repeated double binds in the aetiology of *schizophrenia*, but it has proved difficult to substantiate this possibility since double binds are very difficult to identify unambiguously. The idea of double bind can be used in a positive and ironic manner in therapy: it is termed in that context the therapeutic paradox, and it is used to reveal and study *ambivalence*.

**Double bind situation.** Refers to a situation in which an individual is receiving contradictory messages from a highly significant other person. The concept was introduced by Gregory Bateson and his associates in formulating a theory of the origin of schizophrenia as based upon confusion in communication. In the double bind situation an individual is involved in an intense relationship with another person and feels it is vitally important that he understand the

message the other person is communicating so that he can respond properly, but the other person is expressing contradictory messages which deny each other. The double bind situation most often occurs in the mother-child relationship when the mother cannot tolerate an affectionate relationship with the child but cannot admit her feelings to herself. The contradictory messages communicated by the mother "can be roughly characterized as (a) hostile or withdrawing behaviour which is aroused whenever the child approaches her, and (b) simulated loving or approaching behaviour which aroused when the child responds to her hostile and withdrawing behaviour; as a way of denying that she is withdrawing." The consequences of this situation seem to be most severe when a strong father who might help the child to understand the situation is lacking.

**Double descent.** Refers to a system of descent in which every individual belongs to two groups of kindred, one through his father and one through his mother, both of which are based on *unilateral descent*.

**Double hermeneutic.** The assumption that understanding in sociology and social science involves an understanding of social *action* at two levels :

(a) the understanding of the 'meaningful social world as constituted by lay actors' ; and

(b) the 'meta languages invented by sociologists and social scientists to understand and explain social action'.

**Dramaturgical.** This approach within symbolic interactionism (q.v.) is particularly associated with E. Goffman (q.v.). The basic is that in interaction people put on a 'show' for each other, stage-managing the impressions that others receive. Social roles are thus analogous to those in a theatre. Thus people project images of themselves, usually in ways that best serve their own ends, because such information helps to define the situation and create appropriate expectations.



**Dramaturgy.** Refers to an approach to social analysis, especially associated with Erving *Goffman*, in which the theatre is the basis of an analogy with everyday life. In this analogy, social action is viewed as a 'performance' in which actors both play parts and stage-manage their actions, seeking to control the impressions they convey to others (*impression management*). The aim of actors is to present themselves in a generally favourable light and in ways appropriate to particular roles and social 'settings'.

**Drive.** 1. An internal impulse motivating the individual to activity to reduce feelings of tension or discomfort. The tensions may result from physiological imbalances or socially learned needs. A drive impels an individual toward generalized activity and not toward a specific goal. Today many sociologists prefer the term *need*.

2. A physiological drive.

**Drug abuse/addiction.** Source books on abuse in general are A. Schecter *et al.* (1978) and National Drug Abuse Conference Inc. (1978). The sheer range of substances and their varying effects complicates generalisation, and in recent years the expanding list of both *materia medica* and abusable chemicals [(e.g. the problem of solvent inhalation; J.M. Watson (1976)] has created new opportunities for drug dependence which may bear on crime. Addicts have little involvement with crime (being-preoccupied with their addiction), except possibly through prostitution or theft to support their addiction, whereas experimenters and other users *may* show more involvement either because of uncontrolled behaviour facilitated by consumption of the drug in question, or as part of the general life-style of such groups.

**Drug taking for pleasure.** The drug taking, where the aim is merely to gain or enhance gratification. Rather than ascribing some set of deviant impulses or motives which lead to drug 'abuse', some sociologists (e.g. *Becker*, 'Becoming a Marihuana User', 1953) have been interested in exploring the social mechanisms which lead to drug taking for pleasure. *Becker* argues that the motivational chain involved

in such cases is the reverse of that usually suggested by psychologists : the 'motivations' involved arise, like any other taste, as a socially acquired taste, in which the *social actor* is first introduced to the drug and then learns to enjoy it as a pleasurable sensation. As such, 'drug takers' do not differ 'psychologically' from other social actors ; their drug taking can be explained primarily in sociological terms.

**Drug trafficking.** The illegal supply of drugs can take place at several levels : at the level of the 'capitalist' who organises and controls the availability and distribution of the drug in question, or at the level of the street pedlar who sells small amounts to addicts, passing the gains back up the 'system' via middlemen to the capitalist. Trafficking is punished under.

**Dual economies or dual societies.** Refer to the coexistence of two different types of economies or societies within one nation state or colony. The term was originally coined by Boeke (rev. ed., 1953) to describe the situation in colonial countries in which capitalist and noncapitalist sectors coexisted, but operated according to separate social and economic logics. Later, in *modernisation* theory, the meaning was taken up to refer to modern and tradition sectors within *third world* societies. More recently, the term has been applied to economies, such as Japan's, which are structured around a few very large corporations and a mass of small firms with very different labour relations, profitability, market control and security. The concept was criticized by Frank (1967a) and other *dependency* theorists. It implies that the two sectors are separate, whereas the counter-argument is that they are closely interlinked, with the modern, capitalist, large-scale sector dominating and shaping the other.

**Dual consciousness.** People are said to manifest a dual consciousness when they hold two apparently inconsistent sets of beliefs at the same time. The term is most commonly applied to members of the working class in contemporary European societies, who have sets of beliefs formed by the