

Norms are based on
a kind of agreement



Norms Norm is an expected and accepted behavior by a society. We get our norms from our parents, cultures, or traditions, but sociologists disagree on where they can come from. Norms are based on a kind of agreement, so they can be changed by time which is called social construction. People also see norms as a 'social glue' as it binds different individuals together. A norm requires an action as it is a behavior. An example of a norm can be the fact that most of the people put on their seatbelts once they get in the car.

Norms are passed on from generation to generation and 'adapted to fit the social climate' which is the change of norms, values, family, gender, race, etc. However, there are people who don't follow the norms and they're called deviants. Fox is a sociologist who spent 3 years observing the English norms, cultures and wrote a book based on her studies. One of the things that caught her attention was the use of mobile phones which seemed to be in everyone's life regardless of class, gender, ethnicity and, increasingly, age.

Fox mentioned in her book that people use it for different causes, teenagers use them as a status symbol whereas men are interested in the technological aspects of what they can do. She also believes that women that are alone in coffee bars or anywhere else use it as a social barrier or a form of attachment. Values Values are everyday morals or beliefs which most of the people in society agrees on. They develop overtime and not easily but they can be changed. Values can also underline social norms, for example when you're at the shop and you get to the end of the queue you value fairness.

Also when you stay quite in the doctor's waiting room you value health and professional advice. Most people in the same societies have these values so they're not the same as attitudes, in which people can differ enormously. You may think there are some values that are only yours but the truth is they're shared with many others. You've learned them from other people; this doesn't mean you chose to them from different possibilities, but that you're picked them up during your life.

There is a debate between sociologists on whose values are the mainstream ones in society; it can be the dominant ethnic group, or even the values of the rich, but some consider it's the politician as they propose the laws of society. Values largely vary between societies, so what is normal here can be really strange in another country. Status can be held by one person or a group; it's formed on a social position. It can be linked with honor, prestige and social standing.

You can have a low and a high status in society at the same time, for example you're the leader of a gang, within that status and achieved status. Ascribed status cannot be changed easily, it's something that you did born into, for example your gender and ethnicity. Achieved status is what you worked for, it can be an educational qualification or entering the job you always wanted. Achieved status is believed to be a relevant feature of life in the contemporary I-J. Roles The set of norms that goes with a status are called roles.

A role is a series of behavior; routines or responses that we give in our everyday life. We all have roles in our lives which can change with our age

and adapt to our societies. You're role can be a student at school, sibling and friend at the same time and all these roles will come with expectations. As a student you'll be expected to learn and participate in class and do your homework. You as a student will place certain expectations on your teacher and school. Roles develop during social processes but we do born into some roles like being a daughter or a son and sibling, these are all ascribed to people.

Role conflict can occur as a person has many roles and sometimes these roles will conflict with each other. For example you can be a student expected to do your homework, but you also have a part time job and your boss expects you to be there, but you can't do both of them at the same time. Having a role conflict is an unavoidable part of life. Culture The word culture is used to describe the customs, beliefs and ways of life of a society within a society. It is also a contested concept, which means that sociologists vary on their exact definition of it.

William says it's a 'Way of life' and that it contains all details of the way people live their life in a society: their norms, interests, values and ideas on life. If we take the meaning of culture this way it becomes a comprehensive definition, allowing us to connect it to many different groups within and between societies. Some people argue that Williams view on culture is so wide that it has no meaning at all, because he practically says that anything can be a part of culture. Another sociologist Woodward says that the culture of society is formed on 'shared meanings, values and practices'.

This definition links culture with shared norms and values. Other sociologists approached that there are different types of cultures, saying that there is a high culture, and elite practices are part of it. High culture is the elite, upper class of the society, the people that have an ascribed status in life. This concept is linked to Leavis who was writing in the 1930s. People in high culture are often associated with arts such as classical music, opera or sports like polo and lacrosse and other posh activities.

They have a social closure which practically means that there is no entry for 'outsiders', which makes sure that high culture remains elite and exclusive.

People in high culture tend to have special positions in the I-J, both economically and socially. However, some sociologists questioned the existence of high culture as more people can achieve their statuses and become rich, so they can buy their access to elite groups. Subculture is practiced by a smaller group in society. They have distinct norms and values which makes them a little part of society.

These cultures can be memos and skaters, or religious groups such as cosmetologists. As some of these subcultures are quite little they need to raise more awareness for example religious movements. The members of these subcultures change over time and so does the subcultures within society and its concerns. People mostly are part of these subcultures in their young adulthood, and often they move away from them as they grow up. However, some people stay connected to their subculture in some way for the rest of their lives.