Development, structure & function of a wide variety of basic social institutions: Such as the family & kinship, religion & property, economic, political, legal, educational and scientific, recreational & welfare, aesthetic & expressive institutions.

Fundamental social processes: Such as cooperation & competition; accommodation & assimilation; social conflict including war & revolution; communication; social differentiation & stratification; socialization & indoctrination; social control & deviance (crime, suicide); social integration & social change.
Theories represent systematically related propositions that explain social phenomena. Sociological theories are mostly rooted in factual than philosophical.

**Venturing Specialization:** In the present era, sociologists go for specializations as well. Such as sociology of knowledge; sociology of history; sociology of literature; sociology of culture; sociology of religion; sociology of family etc.
The first departments of sociology in the U.S. were at the University of Kansas (1889) and at the University of Chicago (1892); the first in Canada was at McGill University (1922).

- Albion Small, founder of the Department of Sociology at the University of Chicago, also established the *American Journal of Sociology*.
- Other early sociologists from the University of Chicago were Robert E. Park, Ernest Burgess, and George Herbert Mead.
The situation of women in North America was similar to that of European women and their contributions to sociology met a similar fate. Denied a role in the universities, many turned to social activism, working with the poor and regarded as social workers.

*Jane Adams* is an example; she founded Hull House, a settlement house for the poor, and worked to bridge the gap between the powerful and the powerless. She is the only sociologist to have won the Nobel Peace prize in 1931.
According to Conflict theory, society is viewed as composed of groups competing for scarce resources. a) Karl Marx focused on struggles between the bourgeoisie, the small group of capitalists who own the means of production, and the proletariat, the masses of workers exploited by the capitalists. b) Contemporary conflict theorists have expanded this perspective to include conflict in all relations of power and authority. c) Divorce is seen as the outcome of the shifting balance of power within a family; as women have gained power and try to address inequalities in their relationships, men resist.
Sociologists Paul Lazarsfeld and Jeffrey Reitz divide sociology in the United States into three phases. a) In the first phase the primary concern of sociologists was making the world a better place. b) During the second phase sociologists sought to establish sociology as a respected field of knowledge. c) In the third (current) phase there has been an attempt to merge sociological knowledge and practical work.