SOCIOLOGY: STUDYING SOCIETY

KEYWORDS:

- **Agencies of socialization**: Social groups or institutions responsible for providing socialization, either primary (family only) or secondary (mass media, workplace, religion, school, peers).
- **Covert Participant Observation**: Undercover participatory study, only the researcher knows the truth.
- **Culture**: A way of life for a particular social group. Including norms, values, customs, beliefs and language.
- **Ethnic group**: A group whom share an identity based on their cultural traditions, like religion or language.
- **Gender**: The social or cultural differences between men and women.
- **Overt Participant Observation**: The participants are aware of the observation.
- **Stratification**: The way society is divided into a hierarchical layers, with privileged at the top and less so at the bottom. Social class is an example of stratification in our society.
- **Subcultures**: Social groups that differ from the dominant or main culture in society, their members values and so forth may differ. An example is Goths.
- **Qualitative Data**: Data rich in detail and takes the form of written text, lots of detail but takes a long time to analyse.
- **Quantitative Data**: Numerical data, easy to analyse but lacks detail.

Researching:

When researching, certain things need to be thought about. The hypothesis, your sample, your research method, ethical issues that may need to be considered, how you intend to interpret your data and how you plan to use it.

Will you need to conduct a pilot study? A pilot study is important in considering how the real study may go, faults can be found at this point and therefore they are useful. Is the data you are finding relevant to your hypothesis (the **STATEMENT**, not the goal) and can it be used in real life?

**Sampling Methods:**

- **Random sample** - Picking participants at random, usually done by computers.
  
  **ADVANTAGE**: There is no bias in participants.
  
  **DISADVANTAGE**: Occasionally the results reflected may not be representative of the population simply by random.

- **Systematic sample** - Picking every nth value on some kind of register.
  
  **ADVANTAGE**: Not biased.
  
  **DISADVANTAGE**: Could be unrepresentative.

- **Stratified sample** - The population will be broken into categories and a group (in relation to the size of the population) will be taken out.
  
  **ADVANTAGE**: No bias and representative of the population (to a degree).
  
  **DISADVANTAGE**: Time consuming and difficult.