

Duration of Change

Every social phenomenon lasts for some time, every event has some duration. The process of social change is directional in time: It has a beginning, a middle, and an end. This temporal component of change is called *duration*. It refers to the life span of a social phenomenon, event, or innovation after its introduction. It is concerned with the question of how long a change will be sustained after it is accepted at any level of the social system without major modification or replacement by a functional alternative. The goal of this chapter is to examine the notion of duration, which is a key dimension in social change.

Nineteenth-century evolutionary thinkers were already preoccupied with the duration or temporality of change (Ingold, 1986:128–133). They were concerned with spans of time in their study of growth or decay, progression or retrogression. But localizing events *in* time—that is, the study of duration—can be, and often is, a complicated and difficult undertaking. The investigation of the temporal dimension of a phenomenon requires information on its initial point of occurrence, the time frame during which it becomes established, and on its termination. On occasion, changes enter social life so slowly and imperceptibly that we remain unaware of them until they have been fully institutionalized. In other instances, the introduction of an innovation can set off a chain reaction of subsequent changes in a very short time period. For example, at the organizational level, the introduction of a new technology in a factory may alter existing work groups, which, in turn, leads to worker demands for union control over job assignments, which causes the union to grow in size and strength, which forces management to revise many of its policies and programs, which ultimately changes the structure and functioning of the whole organization.



Notwithstanding the difficulties, it is possible to isolate and study the duration of a variety of change phenomena. For some time now, social scientists are analyzing social change processes of disparate duration and in a wide range of societies (Boskoff, 1972:245). Such analyses are valuable and have potentially relevant implications for planning, forecasting, and making business decisions and marketing choices by providing an approximation of how long and under what circumstances a similar change phenomenon may be sustained in the future (see, for example, *Fortune*, 1996). One can even talk about the duration of certain change patterns such as diffusion, discussed in Chapter 3. Perhaps the most famous case of technological substitution is the automobile for horses. In this case, the diffusion of one technological artifact, the passenger car, began simply by replacing another, the riding horse and the carriage. Millions of horses and mules used for transport disappeared in less than 30 years. Similarly, diffusion trajectories can be established for other technologies (Grubler, 1996).

We shall begin this chapter with a brief discussion of the duration of broad historical trends. It is followed by a study of such transitory social changes as fads and fashion, lifestyles, social movements, and cults, and a related analysis of the conditions that have contributed to their demise. Table 5.1 provides a synoptic overview of the types of changes that will be considered and an indication of their approximate duration.

DURATION OF CHANGE FROM A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Social change always occurs in historical settings, and any sociological analysis of change must take account of sequences of events through which change becomes manifest. Moreover, most instances of broad-scale social change are directional in nature, and thus societies are seen as evolving along identifiable lines and evidencing new forms. Social scientists for a long time have identified historical eras with distinct characteristics. Some even assign dates to them. For example, Gerhard and Jean Lenski and Patrick Nolan (1995) suggest one way of designating human history:

- Hunting and gathering (from the origins of *Homo sapiens* to circa 7000 B.C.)
- Horticultural (from circa 7000 B.C. to circa 3000 B.C.)
- Agrarian (from circa 3000 B.C. to A.D. 1800)
- Industrial (since circa A.D. 1800)

In a similar fashion, one may talk about the duration of technologies in industry or agriculture. In a historical context, Delbert C. Miller (1957a:245–277), for example, identifies four major stages in the evolution of modern technology and calls them the modern craft age, the machine age, the



TABLE 5.1 Approximate Duration of Change Phenomena

Types of Change	Representative Change Phenomena	Approximate Duration	
Broad historical change	Horticultural era	10,000 years	
	Agrarian era	4,800 years	
Industrial technology	Modern craft age	285 years	
	Machine age	85 years	
Societal revolutions	Commercial revolution	200 years	
	Scientific revolution	100 years	
Economic development	"Takeoff" for the United States	60 years	
Transitory social changes	Fashion {	Clothing and adornment	6 months-60 years
		"Scientific" theory	2-50 years
		Material objects	1-30 years
	Fads		1 month-1 year
	Lifestyles		4-40 years
	Social movements		1-25 years
	Cults		1-15 years

power age, and the atomic age. Each age is unique and has left a technical heritage that remains in various forms even as the new emerges and becomes dominant. The principal elements in technology that shape a pattern are: power, tools, work skills, material, transportation, and communication.

The *modern craft age* in industry is dated as beginning with the fifteenth century, "which is often regarded as the threshold of modern civilization" (Miller, 1957a:253). The *machine age* was inaugurated by Watt's invention of the steam engine in 1785 and its application to the textile industry. The *power age* is characterized by the widespread use of electricity, which began in 1953 and is still in progress. Miller contends further that the evolution of machines in agricultural technology parallels the four-stage patterns of industrial technology. The dates and duration of each stage are somewhat different. The modern craft age began in the year 1000, the machine age in 1830, the power age in 1920, and the *atomic age* in 1960 (Miller, 1957b:336-337). It is also possible to ascertain the duration of specific shorter-term technological innovations in the context of the four ages of industrial and agricultural technologies and the reasons for their discontinuities. For example, one could establish how long the steam press for printing books and newspapers was sustained in a particular society and why and under what circumstances it was replaced by a more modern version.

Finally, let us recall Walt M. Rostow's (1961) idea that the lengthy process of economic development can be depicted by a series of five stages. Each stage, for the analysis of duration, may be considered as representing the acceptance of a unique configuration and constellation of novelties with more or less identifiable and designatable life spans. Rostow estimates that, for example, the mature economy is attained roughly sixty years after the beginning of "takeoff" (stage three). Thus, for the United States, the takeoff



was around 1840, and the mature stage was attained around the turn of the century. It remained in that stage until approximately 1920, when it entered into stage five, the age of high mass consumption. In the Rostowian framework of stages, the duration of each stage or phase of development is indicated. Using a crude analogy, his five stages may be compared to five flights in a staircase, which entail both a continuous progression upward and stops at the intervening. The length of the stay at each floor prior to embarking to the next one would be, in this analogy, the duration of change. Let us now turn to the consideration of short-term transitory changes.

TRANSITORY SOCIAL CHANGES

As Richard T. LaPiere (1965:66) points out: "To constitute a socially significant change, the new must be not only adopted by a sufficient number of the members of a social population to give it currency, but so integrated into the social system that it will endure. . . . No change may justly be deemed socially significant until the new has been so effectively transmitted from the generation in which it occurs to the next generation that it is thereafter considered as the normal and is taken for granted as an integral part of things as they are." Obviously, not all changes are socially significant and sustained for generations. Many social changes are transitory and of relatively short duration. Often "the new is in many instances adopted with great rapidity until the majority of the members of at least a class of the population have become involved; its appearance and spread are invariably recognized; and, like births and deaths and other events, it is usually the subject of much reporting and comment. At the time of its occurrence the new may have a considerable impact on social life; but it may be abandoned even more rapidly than it came into use, with the result that it never becomes an established part of the social system and rarely leaves any durable imprint" (LaPiere, 1965:59).

In the following pages, several forms of transitory changes will be examined, such as fads and fashion, lifestyles, and cults. Although it is argued that any given transitory change generally contributes little, if anything, to changes in the social system, "the occurrence of transitory changes in a society is symptomatic of conditions that are conducive to the appearance of significant changes in that society. In the modern world trying out something new is one way in which individuals attempt to resolve their frustrations or to secure satisfactions that are not otherwise forthcoming; and the occurrence of a great number of transitory changes is thus an indication that the felt needs of many of the members of the society are not being satisfied by the established practices of social life, that for many of the members of society life is in some respects frustrating or inadequate" (LaPiere, 1965:65).



At times, transitory changes operate as a substitute for important changes or socially significant changes by reducing tension and discontent and by diverting energies and abilities that might otherwise be applied to something else. It is also possible that "a social population may become so much engrossed in the excitements of transitory changes that it tends to ignore and neglect the inadequacies of the social system itself" (LaPiere, 1965:66).

Transitory changes tend to be of shorter duration than the changes LaPiere calls "socially significant." People are more conscious and more aware of short-term transitions than of long-enduring and continuous patterns of social life. Transitory changes also provide a good opportunity for social scientists to investigate events that influence the course of society and shape our lives. In the following pages, several such events of relatively short duration will be examined in the context of fads and fashion, lifestyles, and cults.

FADS AND FASHIONS

As Rolf Meyerson and Elihu Katz (1957:594) aptly remark, "The study of fads and fashions may serve the student of social change much as the study of fruit flies has served geneticists: neither the sociologist nor the geneticist has to wait long for a new generation to arrive." Fads and fashions provide an extraordinary opportunity to study the duration of change, the processes of influence, the diffusion of innovation, and a whole series of other social phenomena. For the present purposes, however, the discussion of fads and fashions will be limited principally to the duration of change.

Can fads be distinguished from fashions? *Fashions* are of a cyclical nature and typically exhibit a diffusion process resembling an S-shaped pattern, though more pronounced and more condensed in time. *Fads*, in contrast, tend not to repeat themselves and tend to exhibit much more rapid growth followed by generally complete collapse, although occasionally adoption can stabilize at a lower residual level. Figure 5.1 shows generalized diffusion patterns for fads and fashions. Fashions are culture patterns that are adopted by a given segment of a society for a relatively brief period of time and then abandoned. Fads, on the other hand, are culture patterns of even shorter duration that tend to appear suddenly and disappear as suddenly. Thorstein Veblen (1911) linked fashion to *conspicuous consumption*—the practice of spending money to display one's wealth, occasionally in the form of ostentatious luxuries such as diamond-studded watches that can cost up to \$500,000 or ultra-expensive furs or sports cars (Brown, 1997).

Persons lacking the means to buy exactly what the rich can afford obtain less expensive imitations. Fashion often signals social status or rank (Coelho & McClure, 1993) and, as a particular fashion trickles downward in society,



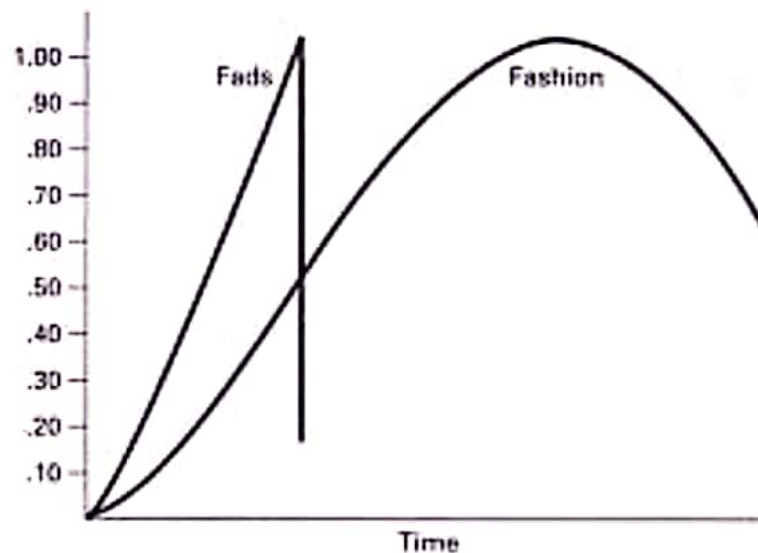


FIGURE 5.1 Generalized Diffusion Patterns for Fads and Fashion

the rich move on to something else. Thus, fashion originates at the top of the social hierarchy and then moves to mass popularity. This contention is not always tenable; for example, Elihu Katz and Paul F. Lazarsfeld (1955:247–270) found in their study of personal influence and fashion behavior that there were as many fashion leaders among women in the middle class as in the upper class, and only low-status women were underrepresented in fashion leadership. Furthermore, in recent decades, some fashions have originated in the lower classes and have been adopted subsequently by the more affluent. Witness, for example, the popularity of blue jeans, which were worn initially by manual laborers. For the purpose of analyzing duration patterns, fads and fashions will be treated separately in the next two sections.

Fashion

Fashion operates only in societies with an open class system. According to Georg Simmel (1957:541–558), the elite in such societies are engaged in a prolonged effort to set themselves apart from individuals of lower classes by distinctive customs, mannerisms, and lifestyles. But because individuals of slightly lower status who are closest to the elite are eager to raise their statuses, they no sooner become aware of a new pattern of elite behavior than they adopt it for themselves. Individuals on the next lower rung of the status ladder are drawn into adopting the new fashion next, for similar reasons, and this process goes on until the new item has spread to all the classes. In the interim, the elite, having observed that the new fashion no longer sets them apart from the rest of the population, abandon it in a hurry to take up some newer fashion, which begins the process of imitation and diffusion all over again.

In a complementary theory to Simmel's, Herbert Blumer (1968) proposed that fashion represents a spontaneous adjustment of large segments of a population in complex societies to a constantly shifting environment. This adjustment takes place in two stages: innovation and selection. In the innovative stage, all kinds of new fashions are proposed for adoption, but most of them are ignored. In the selection stage, the new fashions are selected by prestigious individuals and groups and are then diffused through the society by way of established channels of influence. As a result, consumers tend to imitate each other rather than gather information on their own to make purchasing decisions (*Economist*, 1994) and are likely to follow the behavior of others (Bikhchandani, 1992).

The transitory nature of fashion is evidenced by the intrinsic relationship of two common expressions to the concept of fashion—in fashion and outmoded. Blumer (1968:341–342) observes that “These terms signify a continuing pattern of change in which certain social forms enjoy temporary acceptance and respectability only to be replaced by others more abreast of the times.” Fashion under capitalism exhibits certain features such as planned obsolescence due to mass production and competition (Craik, 1994:6). Although most pronounced in the area of adornment patterns, fashion changes occur in many other aspects of social life “that are relatively independent and that can therefore change without seriously affecting other aspects of society” (LaPiere, 1965:61).

Changes in fashion are most noticed in clothing and adornment. Changes in dress and decoration patterns can be described in terms of a “fashion cycle.” However, the notion of “cycle” is misleading. It implies a repetitive rise and fall, as if a wheel had turned and the fashions that were “in” had to go “out” for a time and then reappear at predictable intervals. Of necessity, there are some recurrent variations of specific elements of style—such as dress length and width, which is cyclical within the limits of practicality and morality (see, for example, Hollander, 1994). There are revivals of styles from time to time, but the fashions of another day never quite come back in their entirety; neither history nor fashion ever plays itself back completely unchanged. For example, A. L. Kroeber's (1919) studies of fashion have shown that the periodicity of cycles in dress styles during recent centuries is different for different dimensions of the dress. Similarly, the ubiquitous and ever popular T-shirt was originally part of sailors' uniforms in the 1800s and has endured through several fashion trends. In the 1950s, T-shirts were a sign of conformity among youth, and, in the 1960s, they became a form of self-expression. Today the T-shirt is “hip” among the fashion elite (Jones, 1997).

Fashions are cyclical, however, to the extent that they go through stages of increasing and decreasing popularity. James M. Carman (1966) used mathematical time-series models to study fashion trends in women's clothes from 1786 to 1965. The predictive accuracy of his models is good, based on two



cyclical theories. One of these posits three cycles lasting approximately 100 years: a bell, or full-skirt, cycle; a bustle cycle; and a tubular, or sheath, cycle. The other theory suggests shorter cycles of thirty to fifty years. In a study by Dwight E. Robinson (1976:1136–1137) of fashions in shaving and trimming of the beard in England between 1842 and 1972, he found a “most remarkable” correspondence with “Kroeber’s width of skirt wave, which rose and fell between 1811 and 1926, and the beard wave, which rose and fell between 1842 (or very possibly 1840) and 1956.” The reasons that skirt width and beard frequency fluctuate together are open to speculation.

Marvin Harris (1973), in an article entitled “What Goes Up May Stay Up,” suggests that fashions reflect the dominant interests and values of a society at a particular time. Throughout history, clothing was designed to show the social position of its wearer (Lurie, 1987:193). For example, in the eighteenth century, elaborate clothing reflected an ornate and decorative upper-class culture. The end of the eighteenth century, however, saw some unusual fashions. To illustrate: “The last time well-bred Western women bared their nipples was during that elegant, albeit short-lived, period called the *Directoire*, a time of stylish *Græcisms* ranging from neopagan piety to pseudo-Pompeian household furniture, when women, at least those who could afford to do so, dressed as goddesses and also, for the first time since antiquity, showed their bare feet” (Rudofsky, 1984:44). The fashion of women baring their nipples lasted for four years, from 1795 to 1799. Its demise may have been brought about by the early signs of the upcoming Victorian era and Victorian prudishness.

There are many other instances in fashion in which the duration can be more or less specified. For example, the corset, which was fashionable for approximately sixty years, operated on three levels—mechanical, aesthetic, and moral. “The corset,” wrote Thorstein Veblen (1911:172), “is in economic theory substantially [an instrument of] mutilation for the purpose of lowering the subject’s vitality and rendering her personally and obviously unfit for work. It is true, the corset impairs the personal attractiveness of the wearer [Veblen, of course, refers to the naked woman], but the loss suffered on that score is offset by the gain in reputability which comes of her visibly increased expensiveness and infirmity.” The corset was a hallmark of virtue, and its use marked an advanced technique of disfigurement. Rustproof summer corsets were advertised as a necessity for summer wear and for swimming, and unbreakable electric corsets guaranteed quick cures for all kinds of diseases such as paralysis, rheumatism, spinal complaints, constipation, liver and kidney troubles, and so forth. According to the 1880s advertisements, the corsets were constructed on scientific principles, with an emphasis on their therapeutic values (Craik, 1994:121–126).

One would never guess what freed women from the corset. What brought about the corset’s disappearance was the necessity of conserving steel for armaments during World War I. In view of this patriotic objective,



women decided that corsets were nonessential. "Subsequently, a member of the War Industries Board revealed that the American women's sacrifice released 28,000 tons of steel during World War I, enough to build two battleships" (Rudofsky, 1984:189).

After World War I, there are other illustrations of fashion change with more or less specific duration. For example, "Following World War I and until about 1929, the female torso became a flattened tube, and the body was as wide at the waist as at the hips. . . . This was the era of the 'flapper' fashions, and the bust disappeared altogether in an effort to achieve a 'boyish flat appearance.' . . . Women with large breasts were forced to wear correctors or flatteners in an attempt to conform to prevailing fashion" (Morrison & Holden, 1973:571). Prior to attempting to acquire a male front, women enthusiastically accepted a "sweeping homogeneous front bulge, a highly artificial protuberance that I shall call the monobosom, to distinguish it from the double-breasted chest. It embodied a new concept of corporeal modesty—the merger of two pointed secondary sexual characteristics into a single mass of flesh that has no organic precedent in human history. Apparently, one bulge seemed less immodest than two" (Rudofsky, 1984:44).

In the context of fashion, almost every generation has its own ideas on supporting some part of the human anatomy. For about two decades around the turn of the century, almost everyone went through life ankle-supported. Young and old wore laced boots. A shoe that did not reach well above the ankle was considered disastrous to health. Then ankle support gave way to arch support. For almost another generation, "Western woman, whom nature forgot to endow with a magnificent rear end, had at times to rely on make-believe to render herself desirable; witness the bustle of the eighteenth-seventies, a gross illusion of steatopygia" [extreme accumulation of fat on and around the buttocks] (Rudofsky, 1984:99-100). And the illustrations could go on and on. The important point is that no part of the human anatomy is free of fashion, there is a tendency among people to "accentuate the appropriate," and, in many instances, changes in adornment patterns are documentable with more or less exact life spans.

Although it would be interesting to continue with illustrations of changes in clothes and adornment patterns, fashion is not limited to these aspects of social life. Fashionlike changes in technique, theory, academic styles (Yagoda, 1994), college curriculum (Stark & Lattuca, 1997), and the use of certain concepts such as "social capital" (Greeley, 1997) and interests occur in every field of science and in almost any aspect of group life. For example, the publication of *The Principles of Scientific Management* by Frederick W. Taylor (1911) started a fashion that lasted for almost four decades, with a tremendous impact on the entire field of organizational management. Taylor believed that a maximization of efficiency in organizations could be achieved by the segmentation of all tasks involved in production into a series of simple movements and operations. Each worker could be trained to



perform a few simple operations, and the combined efforts of all workers laboring for the common good would maximize efficiency and productivity. Taylor also believed that the average workers were interested in doing only what is minimally required by management. Therefore, in addition to the redesigning and simplifying of tasks, increased productivity could be achieved by the creation of incentives to work harder during a specified time period. He suggested that workers could be directed, like robots, to perform at command in a predetermined manner. He posited that if workers could be made to adhere to a mandatory schedule of rest pauses and work periods, the worker would be at peak efficiency at all times during the workday. This is basically the idea of scientific management, which was discredited, regretfully, too late.

Certain fashions in science not only are influential but can have serious implications. This is the case with phrenology. It is associated mainly with the work of Franz Joseph Gall (1758–1828), who investigated the bumps and other irregularities of the skulls of inmates of penal institutions and asylums for the insane. The theory of phrenology is based on the notion that the exterior of the skull corresponds to the interior and to the brain's conformation. The brain can be divided into faculties or propensities that are related to the shape of the skull. Furthermore, each proportion in the brain represents a distinct mental or moral disposition and, depending on the relative concentration of these propensities or faculties, they determine the conformation of the skull, which, in turn, can be detected by touching it (Schafer, 1969:110–115).

Phrenology spread rapidly in Europe. It had its own journal, called *Phrenological Journal*, and "the art of reading bumps," as it was called in the United States, was so successful that an American university established a professorship of phrenology. Observed *The Encyclopedia Americana* (1998:22): "The most necessary thing for a professor of phrenology was a happy faculty for flattering everybody, and the more they flattered, the more people paid to have their heads charted to get information as to other characteristics." As long as phrenology was concerned with squeezing heads in the form of a crude aptitude test, it was relatively harmless. But not so when it was adopted in prisons toward the end of the nineteenth century in the United States. At that time, phrenological profiles of inmates were a part of the prison records, and phrenology was used as an important criterion in probation and parole. It was even used in New York's Sing Sing prison until about 1910, when it was finally discredited.

When fashion centers around a material object, one of its most important characteristics is that replacement of that object is made before its life span ends. Quite often, such objects are acquired without regard for their durability. In modern societies, the public is ready to accept anything new, anything different; in fact, there is a demand for novelty and for continuous refinement of existing products. The greatly accelerated stylistic changes



have been used to create technological obsolescence, which is perhaps most pronounced in the United States—for example, in terms of trading automobiles in every couple of years or so.

Fads

"The more trivial, unpredictable, rapidly spreading, and rapidly disappearing changes are those of a faddish character. Changes of this sort occur when the value of the new to the individual who adopts it arises, not from what the new is or does, but from the fact that, being new, it attracts favorable attention from others. As more and more adopt it, its value rapidly diminishes, so that within weeks or months of its initial appearance, the new has become old and uninteresting; and the change has come to an end" (LaPiere, 1965:59–60). In many instances, the duration of fads can be determined with a fair degree of accuracy.

Although the terms fad and craze are frequently linked and both are instances of culture patterns of very short duration, they can, at times, be distinguished by "the quickness with which they alternate, the utter superficiality of their content, and the irrationality and intensity of the temporary fascination for them" (Davis, 1949:79). Neil J. Smelser (1963) notes that the craze may be superficial (hula hoops, celebrity fan clubs) or serious (war crazes); it may be political (bandwagons), expressive (dance steps), religious (revivals), or economic (speculative boom), just to mention a few types.

A fad often provides a way of ascertaining personal identity (Turner & Killian, 1987:146–148). It is a way of demonstrating that one is different and is worth noticing. Observe the popularity of punk attire and hairdo among some teenagers, the wearing of baseball-type caps backwards on college campuses (Trinkhaus, 1994), or the wearing of striped, spotted, and floral-patterned pajamas on the streets and at work places in Shanghai, China (Faison, 1997). Fads seem to be more numerous in periods of group crisis, which implies that certain recreational fads divert attention from the problems at hand. Many of the fads have little significance for participants beyond identifying them with an in-group and thus giving them prestige. Fears and belief in special formulas (megadoses of vitamin C against the common cold) may also have a faddish character. There are, of course, more serious fads such as war crazes, or those found in the social sciences, where fads determine the intellectual domination of ideas, as evidenced in the fluctuating distribution of publications over time (Peng, 1994).

For the present purposes of attempting to ascertain the duration of change, economic crazes are of particular interest. They are also unique because they involve a risk that other fads and crazes do not. Individuals are willing to gamble their entire fortunes because of the belief that they will get

rich quickly if they only seize the opportunity. The Florida land boom of 1925–1926 is an excellent illustration of an economic craze.

At the turn of the century, the southern part of Florida was rather isolated and thinly populated. With the advent of the railroad and automobiles, it entered a period of steady growth. This growth greatly accelerated during the early 1920s. For example, the population of the city of Miami grew from 30,000 in 1920 to an estimated 75,000 by 1925. It was a general period of prosperity in the United States, during which it seemed that everybody could become rich. Plans were announced for grandiose real estate development, and lots were offered for sale. One financier proposed to build a settlement on land dredged up from Tampa Bay. He sold \$3 million worth the first day, even before the dredging operation had begun. Rumors of tremendous profits spread, and the demands for lots for resale were so great that realtors could sell land that was still under water. Thousands of people flocked to Florida to participate in the boom, and lots were bought and sold, sight unseen, all over the United States. During the summer of 1925, a race was on to get into the market before prices increased, and eager buyers were easy to find. By January 1926, confidence in the boom began to falter, prices started to decline, and many people defaulted on their promises to buy land. In September 1926, a hurricane hit the Miami area, killing more than 400 people. "Now the rush to unload land began in earnest; buyers defaulted on their binders, and developers and realtors went bankrupt. There was an exodus of forlorn speculators from the state, most of them with scarcely enough money to get home. Promoters who, a few months previously, had been regarded as public servants, showing small investors the route to El Dorado, were now denounced as charlatans. Investors who had been envied by their neighbors as bold, shrewd adventurers were now pitied as gullible fools who had been fleeced" (Turner & Killian, 1987:150–151). The craze lasted for approximately one year, from the summer of 1925 until September 1926.

At times, a craze can become an obsession for its followers. For example, the use of LSD became a craze among a small number of college students, with an estimated 5 or 6 percent having tried it at least once at the peak of the craze in 1967 (Meyer, 1969:201). With Timothy Leary as its main prophet, LSD was to bring the world into a new nirvana of peace, love, creativity, and ultimate salvation. However, the growing fear of the hazards of LSD seems to have reduced its users to no more than 1 percent of college students by 1969 (Meyer, 1969:201).

Many other fads are of much shorter duration than the LSD craze. For example, in the popular music industry, the life span of a "hit" is about one month (Meyersohn & Katz, 1957:598). The pet-rock craze lasted a couple of months, as did the attempts by college students to set new records by crowding into telephone booths or Volkswagens. Pac Man, Cabbage Patch dolls, and Trivial Pursuit did not fare much better. In late 1997, the Beanie babies (tiny beanbag animals) have incited frenzies at toy stores for a short time.



along with the Tamagotchi, an electronic gadget that mimics something like a baby chick. It eats, sleeps, poops, gets cranky, and screeches—actually beeps—for attention. If the owner does not intervene electronically to cuddle it or clean up its messes, the creature dies (Wudunn, 1997). All this for about \$17, if one can get it.

Rubik's Cube endured a bit longer, possibly due to the challenge it posed. In some instances, fads catch on and become a permanent part of a culture. For example, three decades ago, soccer was limited to a handful of devoted, predominantly male aficionados, mostly of European or Latin American origin. Today it is played by both sexes all over the United States. Some other games caught on, such as Monopoly and backgammon, but many more lasted only for a short period of time. Fads of varying duration are present in diets, mission statements by universities, and even in health care. In psychiatry, for example, more than 450 different forms of psychotherapy are now being purveyed in the marketplace (Hunt, 1987:30). How many of these will be around next year or even next month is open to conjecture.

One of the most widely publicized fads of recent decades was "streaking" (racing nude through a public place)—practiced by few, but enjoyed by many. It lasted approximately four months in 1974. Let us examine it in the context of the natural history of fads, which "seeks to determine the origin of a given item, the conditions of acceptance by the first participants (the 'innovators'), the characteristics of those whom the innovators influence, the shifts from minority to majority acceptance, its waning, and where it goes to die" (Meyersohn & Katz, 1957:597).

Streaking was spearheaded by college students and spread like wildfire to all corners of the country. However, it was not confined to the United States. In the later stages, the fad was also found in Europe and Latin America. The fad cut across venous class lines and appealed to diverse age and sex groups. Granted the incidents of nudity on college campuses is nothing new, but the sheer numbers of those who became involved [one study analyzed data on 1,016 recorded incidents of streaking at colleges and universities (Aguirre, Quarantelli, & Mendoza, 1988:569)], the publicity they received, and the cycle of unbelief to mild indignation to popularity is unprecedented in modern times.

How, when, and where it all started is difficult to determine. The first mention of streaking in a national magazine appeared in a *Newsweek* (1974a:63) article dated February 4, 1974. By March 18, 1974, the streaking fad was at its peak of heightened popularity. At college campuses around the country, categories of streaking activity were being devised, and competition over a totally absurd phenomenon was clearly evident and highly publicized (*Newsweek*, 1974b:41–42). But streaking was no longer limited to the college campus; junior and senior high school students were emulating their elders in greater and greater numbers. En route to New York from London, an adult male streaker jogged up and down the aisles of a Pan American jumbo jet, and a senior citi-

zen was arrested in Lima, Ohio, for taking a bare stroll in the public square, which the participant called "snailing" (*Time*, 1974:58-59).

By April 1974, streaking was on the decline, and altogether the fad lasted roughly four months. The post mortem for streaking in the popular literature endured for another month or so, and then interest rapidly waned. Streaking as an activity became too diffused, too popular, and was no longer differentiated by age, sex, or occupational groups. Because everyone could participate in it, the fad, in its later stages, left no one astounded. Positive rewards and reinforcement for the activity were no longer forthcoming and, because of mass participation, its novelty value quickly wore out. In the next section, the duration of various changes in lifestyles will be considered.

LIFESTYLES

The term *lifestyle* was introduced into the sociological literature by Max Weber. He posited that social status was determined primarily by one's style of life, how one consumed, rather than how one produced. "Certain goods become objects for monopolization by status groups. . . . The decisive role of a 'style of life' . . . means that status groups are the specific bearers of all 'conventions.' In whatever way it may be manifest, all 'stylization' of life either originates in status groups or is at least conserved by them" (Weber, 1966:26). The notion of lifestyles, however, goes beyond the differences in consumption patterns. They also include specific sets of values which provide the grounds for classifying populations. For instance, in one recent study, three broad categories were identified: the Traditionalists, or Heartlanders, who believe in small town life and strong churches; Modernists, who advocate features of modern economy; and the Cultural Creatives, who support globalism and environmental issues (Ray, 1997). The term also refers to those patterns of conduct over which individuals have options or choices, although they may have the same resources. These options include modes of dressing, utilizing leisure time, spending vacations, using drugs, joining groups, and pursuing health lifestyles (Cockerman, Abel, & Luschen, 1993; Bensman & Vidich, 1987:101-151; Gilbert & Kahl, 1993; Ray, 1997; Tumin, 1985:99). Lifestyles often pervade many aspects of life and imply a central life interest (Feldman & Thielbar, 1975:2).

Social Class and Lifestyles

To a great extent, lifestyles are determined by one's social class. "To the extent that the various classes live apart from one another, they develop recognizable subcultures with values that give a special and unique flavor to life" (Kahl, 1957:186). Lifestyles based on class position are temporal and tend to be of relatively short duration. The major traditional lifestyles of the nine-



teenth century are now defunct and have been replaced by new sets of living patterns. Consider, for example, the traditional aristocratic lifestyle of the American South, which emphasized elegance, leisure, noblesse oblige, chivalry, and slavery. Over time, this lifestyle was subjected to a continuous process of dilution and has all but disappeared (Bensman & Vidich, 1987:123–124).

Similarly, class-based lifestyles, which were described in the section on stratification in Chapter 4, between the Great Depression and the 1960s are all but passé. The wealthy can no longer be characterized by charity work or elaborate codes of etiquette. For them, there is more to life than selective social ties and memberships in exclusive clubs. They do not follow the pattern of European feudal aristocracy and have their children study liberal arts rather than vocational subjects. By the same token, lower-middle-class lifestyles are no longer dominated by respectability, religion, home ownership, and patriotism, nor can the poor be characterized as apathetic or fully resigned to a life of relative misery and deprivation.

The lifestyles of professionals and managers, as epitomized by William H. Whyte's (1957) *The Organization Man*, endured about four decades. As Whyte paints the portrait of the organization man, he emerges as a rather frightening character, totally identified with organizational goals, a belief in the group as the source of creativity, rather than in the individual, a belief that belongingness is the ultimate need of the individual. The "organization man" was satisfied to devote his entire life to one organization, with no thought of changing employers and with no concern for family. The problems of society were decidedly secondary. This particular lifestyle again may have had its beginning during the post-Depression years, climaxing in the 1950s, and, to a great extent, coming to an end by the mid-1960s. Today, it seems that more and more individuals view their work life as one part of a broader life experience, which involves not only job but family, community, social responsibilities, and concern for political and economic issues. In other words, one's commitment to careerism, to an organization, appears to be on the decline.

Since the 1960s, the American class structure has undergone some important changes. Proportionately, the size of the working class has declined, while the upper-middle and middle classes, the working poor, and the *underclass* (formerly known as the poor) have expanded. In 1996, American sociology witnessed an epochal moment, the birth of a new class: the *overclass*, a group of 12.5 million people representing the top 5 percent of household income, whose annual incomes start at around \$132,000 (Lind, 1996). This is more than three times the median household income and may seem a tad extravagant to most, but business magazines proclaimed in the same year that the new standard for executive pay is "four times your age"—in other words, \$120,000 at the age of 30. The overclass is national, even transnational, in outlook, although its members are primarily concentrated on both coasts. They judge each other on the basis of merit and they value competitive achievement: books published, products launched, merg-



ers completed; elections won. They are, in the catchy terms of *Newstavek* (1997), the "cyber rich," the "Wall-Street rich," the "entrepreneurial rich," the "media rich," and the "info-rich."

The overclass is composed primarily of the baby-boom generation—people who were born between 1946 and 1964. The baby boomers, some 77 million strong, are being followed by the "baby busters," or "Generation X" as they were dubbed in the early 1990s. Today, there are some 44 million X'ers (Losyk, 1997). They are mainly in their twenties, about 40 percent are products of divorce, and many were brought up in single-parent homes. They have a negative view of the world, shaped by trends and events such as escalating crime, riots, AIDS, environmental concern, the Gulf War, and economic uncertainty. They see their economic prospects as gloomy and feel that they may not get the job and pay they want. They look upon jobs as temporary instead of as part of a career and feel that there is no such thing as job security. This is also the first generation of workers that is truly computer literate, having grown up with information technology. Authority figures and bosses are an anomaly to X'ers. The twenty-somethings also average \$2,400 in credit-card debts and are more likely to file for bankruptcy than are members of earlier generations (Ellerson, 1997).

The distinction between white-collar and blue-collar workers has all but disappeared. Generally, those in the top half of the class structure seem to be gaining privilege and power at the expense of those in the bottom half (Gilbert & Kahl, 1993:340). These changes have been accompanied by a decline in the monolithic class-based lifestyles. New lifestyles, and a much greater variety of them in any one socioeconomic group, have replaced or supplemented older ones. We no longer talk about the lifestyle of, say, the upper middle class. Rather, the emphasis is on several (although overlapping) characteristic lifestyles. Today, the lifestyles of the upper middle class and segments of the overclass, for example, include the following (Bensman & Vidich, 1987:145–148):

1. The style of the *Country Gentleman* puts the emphasis on sports or on nautical activities. An advocate of this lifestyle spends a considerable amount of his income on his chosen pleasure. He may build his life around a boat, nautical dress styles, and involvement in cup races. This may be combined with elaborate entertainment in country or golf clubs involving all members of the family. Fresh air, sun, and fun are preferred to books and intellectually demanding activities.

2. The style of the *Culture Vulture* involves intellectual and cultural activities. Books, talk, theater, music, and museum attendance are part of daily activities. Publishers, book and record clubs, dance, theater, and music groups all depend on the cultural demand created by this segment of the upper middle class.



3. The *Cultural Academic*, who may not be a professor, finds the university community to be an ideal place of residence. Many professionals, business persons, and managers have opted to live in the vicinity of universities such as Cambridge, MIT, or Princeton. They participate in university-sponsored cultural events, maintain old school ties, and tend to blend into the academic environment. The Ph.D. *nouveau riche* (a scientist turned entrepreneur who became rich because of a good idea related to space, electronics, etc.) contributes to this lifestyle because it offers a compromise between an intellectual past and newly gained economic success.

4. The *Fun Lover* prefers to be a participant in sports, parties, dancing, safaris, flying, and skiing. In this group, the accent is on "fun" of the jet-set variety. This type of person prefers to be continuously on the move and conveys the impression of being "in." He or she likes to think of himself or herself as being influential in science, technology, and administration. Examples of this lifestyle would include the world-traveling junior executive, the international consultant, or the youthful college president.

5. The old upper-middle-class *Vulgarian* emphasizes conspicuous consumption. For the most part, these are people who own their own businesses and have succeeded beyond their expectations. They have plenty of money but do not know exactly what to do with it. So they spend it on Cadillacs and Caribbean cruises and other symbols of material success.

Another interesting recent development is the emergence of so-called *lifestyle enclaves* that have sprung up around the country, where people who share interests live together—an affluent retirement village, a yuppie neighborhood in a big city, a "DINK" (double-income, no kids) condominium development, or a community of pilots who build homes around a shared airstrip (Koten, 1987:19). Thus, lifestyles are not solely class-based. The term *lifestyle* essentially implies a focus in life, and a number of things can be of central interest to the individual: work, ethnic heritage, politics, or sexual orientation. A distinctive lifestyle is evident when one single activity dominates a person's other interests and activities, such as the lifestyles of openly lesbian women (Buening, 1992).

There have been several lifestyles of relatively short duration in the past three decades in the United States for which it is fairly easy to ascertain temporal dimensions. Of these, the ones under the general label *counterculture* have received a great deal of scholarly and popular attention.

Counterculture Lifestyles

The term *counterculture* refers to a subculture with distinct beliefs, values, symbols, and norms that stand in opposition to those of the larger culture and is often used to embrace a cluster of recent lifestyles of rela-

tively short duration. These lifestyles represent a distinct subculture, and the term *counterculture* is used because it is "so radically disaffiliated from the mainstream assumptions of our society that it scarcely looks to many like a culture at all, but takes on the alarming appearance of a barbaric intrusion" (Roszak, 1995:42). A well-known spokesman for the merits of this counterculture is Charles Reich (1970), who in his book, *The Greening of America*, analyzes and cites some of the alternatives that are emerging and affecting the overall society. Central themes of Reich's analysis are that America has veered from its original humanistic purpose and that the "corporate state" has become a death-dealing machine. In examining America's earlier "levels of consciousness," he describes the manner in which America has moved off course. He first analyzes the drive that made it a corporate state and led it into becoming a death-dealing, machine-enslaved society. In Reich's terminology, *Consciousness I* involved the enormous promise of America, and *Consciousness II* relates to the lifestyle that emanated from the rise of the corporate state. *Consciousness III*, according to Reich, is the adaptation of the new young revolutionary and dropout. It rests, he asserts, on various premises: respect for each individual, for his or her uniqueness and for his or her privacy; abstention from coercion or violence against any individual; abstention from killing or war; respect for the natural environment; respect for beauty in all its forms; honesty in all personal relations; equality of status between all individuals; genuine democracy in the making of decisions; and freedom of expression and conscience.

"There is a revolution coming," he writes. "It will not be like revolutions of the past. It will originate with the individual and with culture, and it will change the political structure only as its final act." He asserts that "the revolution will not require violence to succeed and it cannot be successfully resisted by violence" (Reich, 1970:2). One characteristic of the revolution, on the part of the young, affluent dropout, is the development of lifestyles that are alternatives to the status quo, and is based on opposition to the status quo. Hippies [or "zippies," the counterculture of hippies in England (Caniglia, 1994)]; yippies; Weathermen; committed psychedelic drug trippers; and black-, brown-, and white-power advocates are all characterized by a disenchantment with the dehumanization of the larger society and a subsequent involvement with alternative lifestyles which, they believe, are more humanistic (although it should be noted that the Weathermen, yippies, and similar groups could hardly be considered as humanists).

Both in the United States and abroad, the 1960s witnessed the rise of several alternative lifestyles challenging mainstream values and embracing antimaterialistic and pacifist nonaggression ideals (Harrison, 1993). Sixties activists confronted the institutions of American postwar culture (Farrell, 1997). This was a period of turbulence, an era of rapid social change, when



many American youth played important roles of challenger and innovator. They viewed the so-called "establishment" as threatening, and its institutional norms and traditional values were seriously questioned. Many rejected the material values of their parents, and "In phrases redolent of nearly all utopian thought of the past, they proclaim that happiness and a meaningful life are not to be found in things, but in the cultivation of the self and by intensive exploration of inner sensibilities with like-minded others" (Davis, 1971:106).

There were several ways of exploring "inner sensibilities." Many began to experiment with mind-altering substances, such as LSD, peyote, and, especially, marijuana. Timothy Leary's admonition to "turn on, tune in, and drop out" progressively captured the imagination of millions of young people during this period. An important consequence of these experiments was the evolution and development of alternative lifestyles and a different perception of the world. Hippie communal colonies began to emerge in both urban and rural areas. The best known of these is the Haight-Ashbury district in San Francisco, initially populated by the so-called "flower children." It lasted about two years, and "The Haight, as a youth community, was dead. However, the anti-values expressed and acted out by those in the Haight of 1966 were diffused (even as they were romantically distorted) across America by both under- and overground media" (Lewis, 1974:379). Many hippies later formed tribes and lived in communes, some lived near native American tribes or in simulated native American styles, and others established nonviolent subgroups. However, some groups dedicated to violence developed as the original hippie lifestyle waned.

In the quest for a new humanistic community, a militant and sometimes violent lifestyle became, for some, a methodology for change. Unlike the more retreatist classic hippies, such diverse and transient groups as the yippies, white panthers, Weathermen, and various self-labeled "freaks" are more apt to engage in aggressive behavior against a system they find oppressive. In the optimistic words of Abbie Hoffman (1969:77):

In the past few years our numbers have grown from hundreds to millions of young people. Our conspiracy has grown more militant. Flower children have lost their innocence and grown their thorns. We have recognized that our culture in order to survive must be defended. Furthermore we have realized that the revolution is more than digging rock or turning on. The revolution is about coming together in a struggle for change. It is about the destruction of a system based on bosses and competition and the building of a new community based on people and cooperation. That old system is dying off all around us and we joyously come out in the streets to dance on its grave. With our free stores, liberated buildings, communes, people's parks, dope, free bodies and our music, we'll build our society in the vacant lots of the old and we'll do it by any means necessary. Right on!

The yippies, perhaps more than the other groups, epitomized this lifestyle of militancy and violence. The "formal" origin of this lifestyle was clearly spelled out by Jerry Rubin (1970:86):

We started yippee with an office, a mailing list, three telephone lines, five paid staff organizers, weekly general meetings and weekly Steering Committee meetings. We were the hardest workers and the most disciplined people you ever met, even though we extol sloth and lack of discipline. We are a living contradiction, because we're yippies. Marijuana is compulsory at all yippee meetings.

Yippies take acid at breakfast to bring us closer to reality. Holden Caulfield is a yippee. The Old Nixon was a yippee, the New Nixon is not. Yippies believe every nonyippee is a repressed yippee. We try to bring out the yippee in everybody. Yippies proclaim: Straights of the world, drop out! You have nothing to lose but your starched shirts! . . . America says: DON'T! The yippies say: DO IT!

The goal of the yippies was to turn on everybody who can be turned on and turn off everybody else. In the words of Abbie Hoffman (1968:157):

Our message is always: Do what you want. Take chances. Extend your boundaries. Break the rules. Protest is anything you can get away with. Don't get paranoid. Don't be uptight.

The lifestyles of the counterculture persisted for a relatively short time, along with the unsuccessful attempts to try to revive them (see, for example, Marks, 1997). Their celebrated prophets are today part of the "establishment," and many former advocates of these lifestyles have embraced more pragmatic middle-class values and jobs. Jerry Rubin in his later years embraced capitalism and had a lucrative Wall Street job at the time of his death in 1994. Abbie Hoffman, who committed suicide in 1989, became a reporter. In general, lifestyles endure as long as they serve a set of more or less clearly identifiable needs. These needs may be emotional and personal for the individuals involved, or they may be dictated by utilitarian or ideological principles and objectives. In some cases, it may be a combination of both. But regardless of whether a particular lifestyle is more personal or utilitarian, one is concerned with how long it may be expected to endure. Some lifestyles may persist for a period of many years, while others may dissolve in a relatively short time. At the most general level, the duration of a lifestyle can be ascertained in terms of the functions it performs for the society in which it is a part, the degree to which it provides certain satisfactions to its advocates, and the extent to which new adherents to that lifestyle can be recruited.

At the present time, there are many ongoing countercultures with known beginnings but with no demise in sight. They include Skinheads, the Unification Church, the Ku Klux Klan, the Church of Scientology, and Survivalists (Zelner, 1995). In the future, duration of lifestyles may be established with a greater degree of accuracy. But for now, the analysis of the dura-



tion of class-based or counterculture-based lifestyles is hampered by the lack of reliable data. One can only assign rough temporal dimensions, and even then questions of reliability pop up. Even in the cases of hippie or yuppie lifestyles, the life span can vary from analyst to analyst. In some instances, however, the duration of lifestyles can be approximated with a great degree of accuracy. This is the case with experiments in communal living. There have been several such ventures of discernible duration. The Oneida community is one of the most successful American experiments in communal living to date. It began in the 1840s, its radical family form lasted about thirty years, and, at its peak, it served 288 persons. It is an excellent sociological example of unique lifestyles and will be examined in some detail in the following pages.

The Oneida Community

William M. Kephart and William W. Zellner (1997) provide a comprehensive account of religious community known as Oneida. The beginnings are traced back to Putney, Vermont, in 1831, where a fierce religious revival was in progress (White, 1996). One of those deeply affected was John Humphrey Noyes, a young Dartmouth graduate intent on the practice of law. He gave up law for the ministry, and was licensed to preach after graduation from Yale's Theological Seminary in 1833. He had been a minister only a short time when he announced that he was perfect—sinless. This statement alienated him from the mainstream of Christian orthodoxy, cost him his license, and forced him to reexamine his own principles.

His doctrine of "perfectionism"—the attainability of the sinless or perfect state—attracted a small group of followers. Noyes began to publish Perfectionist literature and began to develop a complex marriage system—a form of group marriage that was to be the basis of Oneida's social structure. Monogamous marriage was considered as a sign of selfishness.

In 1846, the Putney community was formed, and members followed a "share-the-wealth" type of economy in which private ownership was condemned. They also practiced group marriage; that is, every adult male had marital privileges with every adult female, and vice versa. As might be expected, the citizens of Vermont were up in arms, and in 1847, Noyes was arrested and charged with adultery. He did not want to stand trial and escaped to New York State, followed by his flock. In 1848, they took up residence on the banks of the Oneida Creek in New York, and the small group had some difficulties surviving the first few winters. Fortunately, one of the members invented a steel trap, which turned out to be a very profitable venture. A substantial part of the Oneida economy came to be based on the manufacture of the steel traps, and the group became free of financial worries.

The entire community was housed under one roof, the famous Mansion House. Although each adult had his or her own small room, the build-

ing was designed to encourage a feeling of togetherness, hence the inclusion of a communal dining hall, recreation rooms, library, concert hall, and the like. The community was a close group, with members seldom going very far from home. The system of sustained cultural enclosure served as a solidifying force. They raised their own food, made all their own clothes, did their own laundry, ran their own school, and performed a number of other collective tasks. But their unique social organization was not the only thing that held the Oneida community together. As the membership increased, three basic principles of Noyes' teaching combined to form the very heart of the Perfectionist lifestyle: (1) economic communism; (2) mutual criticism; and (3) complex marriage.

Economic Communism A principal feature of the Oneida community was its adherence to *economic communism*. Throughout their existence, members rejected all forms of individual wealth and private property. They had no concept of private ownership, not even in the realm of personal belongings such as clothes, trinkets, or children's toys. The needs of individual members were taken care of, and they never once had second thoughts about private property.

In addition to the manufacture of steel traps, members of the community found a ready market for their crops, and their prosperity slowly increased. At one point it became necessary to hire outside help, and, eventually, the Perfectionists were employing several hundred local workers. Beginning in 1877, they embarked on the manufacture of silverware. It proved so successful that when the community dissolved, the silverware component was perpetuated as a joint stock company (Oneida, Ltd.), whose product is still widely used today.

The various jobs within the community were rotated from year to year in order to prevent feelings of discrimination. It was quickly pointed out to members that at one time or another almost everyone took a turn at the necessary menial tasks. Still, although jobs were generally rotated, individual variations in ability were recognized, and members were not placed in positions beyond their capacities. Any kind of social differentiation by occupational status was played down. Plant superintendents and farm laborers, as a result, had the same status.

Members of the community, in their efforts to promote equality, were required to eat the same kind of food, wear the same type of clothing, and live in the same home. For both sexes, dress was uniformly simple, and no adornments or jewelry were allowed. It is interesting to note that Noyes was responsible for a genuine innovation in the women's clothing style. Being dissatisfied with ordinary female attire, he set up a committee to work on the problem of designing an appropriate dress. The costume they decided upon—a short, knee-length skirt with loose trousers down to the shoes—became the standard dress of all Oneida women.



Mutual Criticism The community had neither laws nor law-enforcing officers, but there was little need for them as major infractions were non-existent. As in any organization, however, problems of human conduct are likely to occur. And, even though the Oneidans considered themselves to be Perfectionists, they acknowledged that individual idiosyncrasies did exist. *Mutual criticism* was the method by which such problems were handled. When someone deviated from the group norms, whenever there was a manifestation of a personality or character witness, a committee of peers would meet with the offender to discuss the matter. The experience was, at times, traumatic for certain members. Some, in fact, left the community rather than submit to what they considered unwarranted censure. There is no question that mutual criticism served as a measure of social control. The only exception was Noyes, who was never criticized by the community.

Members of the community were so convinced of the effectiveness of mutual criticism that they actually used the technique as a cure for illness. Known as *krinopathy*, the criticism cure was applied to both adults and children and was often used for everything from common colds to more serious diseases. According to their organ, the *Circular*:

It is a common custom here for everyone who may be attacked with any disorder to send for a committee of six or eight persons, in whose faith and spiritual judgment he has confidence, to come and criticize him. The result, when administered sincerely, is almost universally to throw the patient into a sweat, or to bring on a reaction of his life against disease, breaking it up and restoring him soon to usual health. (Quoted by Kephart & Zellner, 1997:67-68)

Even death did not necessarily put a stop to the process. "Deceased members whose diaries or letters were found to be incriminating might find themselves subjected in absentia to a 'rousing criticism'" (Kephart & Zellner, 1997:68).

Complex Marriage The world remembers the Oneida community not for its social and economic system, but for their practice of complex marriage. Just as the term Mormon brings to mind polygamy, so the name Oneida conjures up thoughts about unique and advanced sex practices. It was the founder, Noyes, who coined the term *free love*, but it was discarded in favor of *complex marriage*. Noyes had no time for romantic love or monogamous marriage, and he considered such practices as signs of selfishness and personal possession. Romantic love, or "special love" as it was referred to in the community, was considered to give rise to jealousy and hypocrisy and made spiritual love impossible to attain.

Consequently, the Perfectionists promulgated the idea of complex marriage because it was natural for all men to love all women and women to love all men. It followed that every adult should consider himself or herself

married to every other adult of the opposite sex. In extolling the virtues of group marriage, Noyes stated:

The human heart is capable of loving any number of times and any number of persons. This is the law of nature. There is no occasion to find fault with it. Variety is in the nature of things, as beautiful and as useful in love as in eating and drinking. . . . We need love as much as we need food and clothing, and God knows it; and if we trust Him for these things, why not for love? (Quoted by Kephart & Zellner, 1997:75)

It should be pointed out, however, that the members of the community abided by the doctrine of complex marriage, not for reasons of lust, as it was sometimes charged, but because of the conviction that they were following God's word.

The system of complex marriage was relatively uncomplicated. As everyone lived in the Mansion House, sexual relations were easy to arrange. If a man desired sexual intercourse with a certain woman, he simply asked her. If she agreed, he would stay with her overnight in her room. In case of a shortage of single rooms, the couples could use one of the "social" rooms set aside for that purpose.

Even in complex marriage, sex is never a simple matter. And, from the very beginning, there were a number of prohibitions and restrictions. Sex was not to be considered a "wifely duty," that is, something accepted by the female to satisfy the male.

Noyes preached the separation of the "amative" from the "propagative" functions of sex. He believed that only when the two were separated could the true goals of Perfectionism be attained. "In practice, this meant that males could have sexual intercourse up to, but not including, ejaculation. (Females, of course, could achieve sexual climax at any time.) There were two exceptions to the nonejaculatory rule: (a) when the male was having intercourse with a female who was past menopause, and (b) when a child was desired" (Kephart & Zellner, 1997:76). As the community grew, men became more enthusiastic than women in the sexual domain, and the practice of having the man ask the woman for sexual relations was replaced by a new system.

Under the new system, if a man desired sexual relations, he would transmit the message to a central committee member, usually an older woman, who would thereupon make his request known to the woman in question. In practice, the use of a go-between served a number of purposes, such as sparing women the embarrassment of voicing a refusal or conjuring up an excuse. The use of a go-between also provided a measure of control over the sexual system. It helped to prevent their members from falling in "special love," and when a particular couple were having too-frequent relations, the go-between would simply disallow further meetings between



them. The Oneidians were presumed to act like ladies and gentlemen at all times: inappropriate behavior, suggestive language, and overt displays of sexuality were not tolerated. Sexual behavior was not openly discussed within the community, and the subject of "who was having relations with whom" never became common knowledge. A male member who became too inquisitive on this score was literally thrown out of the community. He "found himself, one winter night, suddenly, unceremoniously, and horizontally propelled through an open window, and shot—harmlessly but ignominiously—into the depths of a snowdrift. It was the first and only forcible expulsion in the history of the community" (Quoted by Kephart & Zellner, 1997:77).

As may be expected, John Humphrey Noyes also had some "advanced" ideas about the subject of children. He felt that only those who possessed superior physical and mental abilities should have children. In the words of the *Circular*:

Why should not beauty and noble grace of person and every other desirable quality of men and women, internal and external, propagated and intensified beyond all former precedent by the application of the same scientific principles of breeding that produce such desirable results in the case of sheep, cattle, and horses? (Quoted by Kephart & Zellner, 1997:83)

The term *eugenics* had not yet been coined. However, he proposed, in effect, a eugenic program in which specially chosen adults would be utilized for breeding purposes. A committee would decide on the individuals who could become parents, and there would be no appeal. Noyes called this program *stirpiculture*, and it was not long before the scientific world was discussing the implications of this unique experiment.

For the first two decades, members of the community had largely refrained from bearing children. They reasoned that procreation should be delayed until such time as the group had the facilities for proper child care. Noyes rejected all forms of contraception and advocated the birth control technique of *coitus reservatus*, that is, sexual intercourse up to, but not including, ejaculation on the part of the male. Until they had mastered the necessary coital control, younger men in the community were required to limit their sexual relations to women who had passed menopause.

At the beginning of the eugenics program, fifty-three women and thirty-eight men were chosen to be parents by the committee. During the decade or so of the program, there were fifty-eight live births. Noyes himself fathered upwards to a dozen children. For the first fifteen months, children remained under the care of their mothers. After that, they were transferred to a special section of the Mansion House, called the "children's house," where they were raised communally. They would spend most of their childhood in age-graded classes. Although they were treated with kindness by



their parents, sentimentalizing was frowned upon, the feeling being that under Perfectionism all adults should love all children, and vice versa. The children were well adjusted, and as a group they were remarkably healthy. Mortality comparisons indicate that the products of stirpiculture had a significantly lower death rate than children born outside the Oneida community.

The Breakup Outside pressures against the community, as might have been predicted, were becoming irresistible. Professional crusaders and self-appointed watchdogs of American morals complained about such practices as "free love," "lust," and "animal breeding," and were successful in creating a storm of adverse public criticism. As a result of ever-increasing pressure campaigns, the Oneidans were forced to give up their practice of complex marriage. In 1877 Noyes resigned, and in 1879, he left the community for the same reason that he fled Putney thirty-two years before: to escape the law. No new leader appeared, and, during 1880, plans for dissolution were discussed and approved. On January 1, 1881, the Oneida community officially ceased to exist.

At that time the community gave up its distinctive style of life, its complex form of marriage, and its stirpiculture children. The members entered into monogamous marriages, retained their accumulated capital, and launched Oneida Company, Ltd., a venture in silversmithing that still continues today. The style of this corporation was much influenced by idealism, and its board of directors and managerial staff frequently took cuts in salary in order to help the company. This practice, along with the habit of generally low wages for executives, has disappeared as the company had to compete in the larger markets for top executives. Today, Oneida Ltd. is a worldwide organization with thousands of employees, and its stocks are traded at the New York Stock Exchange.

Explanations for the community's disintegration vary. Internally, the aging Noyes was apparently unable to turn the leadership over to his son. The son was more interested in biology than in experimental communities. Although the power of the community was formally vested in the council of elders, Noyes usually tipped the balance of power in matters that concerned him. He was, however, unable to provide for his succession. The community also outraged official morality, and the worsening community relations may have contributed to the disbanding. Noyes also had a habit of initiating young virgins into the sexual life of the community, and apparently some girls were under the age of consent. As a result, he was charged with rape and fled the community in an attempt to avoid prosecution. There was also conflict between the generations; some younger members objected to the principle of ascendancy, and some preferred monogamous marriage over complex marriage. This conflict between the generations may have contributed to the internal tension. However, any explanation offered must be



less than adequate because much of the data—the diaries and the personal accounts of the community—were burned to protect the reputation of those involved after the establishment of the corporation. All that remains are in the recollections of children of members and the published accounts of the community's life. Thus, the case of the community raises questions that must finally remain unanswered.

Still, the case of Oneida is perhaps the best-documented illustration of a lifestyle of specific duration. Its complex marriage, economic communism, mutual criticism, and unique child-rearing program lasted approximately thirty years. It had a high degree of internal cohesion; it was highly homogeneous, dominated by upper-middle-class literate people; and it drew on the prior organization of Perfectionist circles. The commitment to remain aware of the community's development and one's own progress toward a more perfect being further contributed to social solidarity and to its distinctive character. Although this venture in utopia was not durable, it provided an excellent case study of unconventional lifestyles. In the next section, duration of another type of transitory social phenomena, cults, will be examined.

CULTS

Cults and social movements are considered transitory social phenomena because of their relatively short duration (LaPiere, 1965:59-66). In the sociological literature, both cults and social movements are generally subsumed under the heading of *collective behavior*. A *cult* is a religious group that advocates a belief that is new and unconventional in society (Curtis & Curtis, 1993). It has the continuity of a social movement and usually makes demands only on the behavior of its members. A *social movement*, by definition, is a collectivity acting with some continuity to promote or resist change at various levels in society (McAdam & Snow, 1997:xxiii). Leadership in a movement is determined by the informal response of participants rather than by formal procedures legitimizing authority (Turner & Killian, 1987:223). Often, social movements are expressed through new trends in literature, art, the popular press, and the adoption of novel lifestyles. Thus, as a collective activity, successful social movements have an identifiable life span. For example, William A. Gamson (1990), in a study of fifty-three "challenge" groups in the United States between 1800 and 1945, in addition to analyzing the strategies and outcomes of these movements, also indicated the approximate duration of each. As we shall discuss in Chapter 7, social movements cover an extremely broad spectrum of human activities. Important social movements in the United States, and abroad, to a lesser extent, have focused on the abolition of slavery, temperance, civil rights, resistance to war, environmentalism (Oberschall, 1993), and feminism and the "gendered" experience of the femocrats in Australian politics (Eisen-

stein, 1996). But there have been literally hundreds of other social movements in the United States aimed at solving a wide range of problems using a variety of strategies and tactics (see, for example, Tarrow, 1996). Even though in this section the emphasis is on cults, let us for a moment consider the nature of social movements.

There are several types of social movements based on the objectives of participants. Some examples are as follows:

1. *Revolutionary movements.* Participants in these movements are deeply dissatisfied with the existing social order and promote change in accordance with their ideology. Such movements can bring about sweeping social changes, as happened, for example, in countries such as Russia, China, Cuba, and Iran.

2. *Reactionary movements.* These are social movements whose members oppose certain changes and aim to return to the "good old days." Examples include the Moral Majority, the Ku Klux Klan, the John Birch Society, and the American Nazi Party. They all oppose social changes advocated by other movements.

3. *Reform movements.* Participants are generally satisfied with the existing social order but feel that certain reforms are necessary in specific areas. Reform movements generally work with the system, often through the legislative process. Examples include the consumer, environment, and anti-nuclear movements.

4. *Expressive movements.* Instead of changing external conditions in society, followers of expressive movements are concerned with the modification of the attitudes and behavior to enable them to cope better with the outside world. They accept society as is, and any change must come from within. Many expressive social movements have a religious focus, seeking to transform people's lives radically, as is the case with the various fundamentalist Christian sects. Participants in such movements seek to achieve mastery over their feelings and emotions and search for inner ways to accept current conditions.

Like all transitory social phenomena, every cult and social movement has a life cycle, a series of stages in its natural history, during which it arises, develops, goes through various phases, decays, and comes to some kind of end (Sztompka, 1994:285-292). Armand L. Mauss (1975:61) calls these stages (1) incipency, (2) coalescence, (3) institutionalization, (4) fragmentation, and (5) demise. In the *incipient* phase, early advocates of the movement formulate its essential definition and orientations. This is accompanied by a period of popular excitement in which the goals and orientations of innovators gradually spread through relevant segments of the popula-



tion. The next stage is *coalescence*, in which one or more groups form around leaders and develop patterns of formal organization, specifying goals, norms, a division of labor, social controls, and so forth. As these groups interact with the larger society, *institutionalization*, the process of "strengthening, stabilizing, and perpetuating a pattern of social ordering" (Olsen, 1978:117) gradually occurs through the establishment of definite norms that assign status positions and role functions. The movement becomes a recognized part of society that must somehow be taken into account by the public. But "an irony in the natural history of social movements is that their very success leads to fragmentation" (Mauss, 1975:64). *Fragmentation*, in turn, leads to the final stage of movements, to their eventual *demise*. A social movement to promote change may reach this final stage for various reasons. Its goals may become official policy, as happened to the Townsend movement of the 1930s, when Social Security provided its goal of old-age pensions.

A movement may become part of the establishment itself; for example, organized labor movements and unions for a long time have been the recognized bargaining agents with management. A movement can also be repressed by the larger society, for example, the New Left, or its leaders, are co-opted, or "bought off." Finally, it should be noted that not all movements pass through stages. A movement may collapse and vanish at any stage, and a large number of movements—because of their objectives, strategies, or internal makeup—never reach the institutionalization stage of stability and recognition and thus fail to exert any effect on the larger society. The life span of a movement that passes through these five stages can be determined with some degree of accuracy.

Two cults, the Ghost Dance and the Cargo cult, which will be considered here, have proved to be objects of intense fascination for students of social movements and social change, and they have received a great deal of attention both from anthropologists and sociologists. Of course, there have been many other examples of cults in the annals of anthropology and sociology, and their numbers vary from 700 to 5,000, depending on who does the counting (Neusner, 1993:60). They range from the religious cults at the dawn of human civilization to, for example, the belief in the ultimate salvation through drugs during the Middle Ages, to Normal Vincent Peale's "power of positive thinking" in modern times. More recently, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (a cult of purported Indian origin), Reverend Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church (whose members are called "Moonies"), Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh's now-defunct communal cult in Oregon, and the Los Angeles Church of Christ have attracted many followers. After the grisly events at the People's Temple in Guyana, where more than 900 cult members committed mass suicide in late 1978; the storming of the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas, in 1993; the mass murder-suicide of fifty-three members of Solar Temple in Switzerland in fall of 1994

(Serrill, 1994); and the suicide of thirty-nine people in San Diego in 1997 linked to a cult called Heaven's Gate (Purdum, 1997), many such cults are viewed with skepticism and encounter strong opposition, especially when they start recruiting children from middle-class families (see, for example, Wright, 1993).

The Ghost Dance Cult

A cult that has received considerable attention from social scientists is the well-known Ghost Dance religion (Hittman, 1992; Kracht, 1992; Mohrbacher, 1996). This cult, which lasted only a short period of time and involved relatively few native Americans, has generated an inordinate amount of interest among sociologists and anthropologists. "The reason seems to be that it now acts as something of a symbol or representational drama of the agony of the native Americans, faced with the inevitability of defeat at the hands of the predatory white and feeling that his old gods had failed him" (Wilson, 1973:48).

By the 1870s, the plight of the Plains Indians of North America had reached its lowest ebb. They had been driven into the most barren wastelands as reservations; the white man had killed many of their finest warriors (along with a number of women and children). Venereal disease, tuberculosis, and alcoholism greatly diminished the population, and near-starvation was commonplace.

In 1870, a prophet appeared to the Paiute Indians of Nevada. He called himself Wovoka, the Messiah. When he was twenty years old, the sun went into an eclipse, and Wovoka fell asleep and was taken into the spirit world.

After showing him all, God told him he must go back and tell his people they must be good and love one another, have no quarreling, and live in peace with the whites, that they must work, and not lie or steal . . . that if they faithfully obeyed his instructions they would at least be reunited with their friends in this other world, where there would be no more death or sickness or old age. He was then given the dance which he was commanded to bring back to his people. By performing this dance at intervals, for five consecutive days each time, they would secure this happiness to themselves and hasten the event. (Mooney, 1965:14)

There was a strong belief that the white man and his destructive ways would disappear. How was this to occur? As the Ghost Dance spread from tribe to tribe, different answers were given to this question. Although it originated among the Paiute, the more warlike and proud Sioux gave this belief a more militant interpretation, believing that they themselves must participate in some way in the expulsion of the whites—with the help of "ghost shirts," which would make the wearer invulnerable to the white man's bullets:



... the white man's gunpowder would no longer have power to drive a bullet through the skin of an Indian. The whites themselves would soon be overwhelmed and smothered under a deep landslide, held down by sod and timber, and the few who might escape would become small fishes in the rivers. (Monney, 1965:29)

There were rumors of increasing belligerence among the Sioux, which caused the white settlers to take precautionary military measures. The conflict between whites and the Sioux escalated, and the whites attempted to arrest the leader of the Ghost Dance cult among the Sioux, Sitting Bull. In one of the bloodiest encounters between any native American tribe and whites, the Battle of Wounded Knee on December 29, 1890, more than 350 Sioux, including many women and children, were massacred. This massacre was triggered by a tragic misunderstanding. While the Indians were surrendering their weapons to federal troops, a great deal of tension arose in the camp as soldiers overturned teepees, beds, and furniture in their search for guns. A medicine man kept walking among the warriors assuring them that the whites would be helpless against the ghost shirts and, therefore, the Sioux should resist the troops. Somehow, a shot was fired at the soldiers. Their retaliation resulted in the well-known massacre.

This defeat signaled the end of the Ghost Dance cult among the Sioux. Before the battle with the federal troops at Wounded Knee, the cult had lasted slightly over one year.

The occurrence of the Ghost Dance is explained in the literature as the result of the wholesale disintegration of Sioux social organization, which had followed the arrival of the white man to the plains (Wilson, 1973:49-50). The loss of their hunting grounds, the influx of settlers, the extension of the railroads, the steady and often illegal takeover of land by federal authorities, and the official encouragement of the decimation of the buffalo herds all contributed to a severe strain on the native American community. The loss of the buffalo was particularly devastating to the Sioux. It was a source of food, shelter, clothing, and an article of trade. Social status was measured in terms of buffalo-hunting skills. The buffalo also represented a sacred significance in the culture of the Sioux, acting like a totem animal to the tribe. The loss of the sacred aspects of a culture, particularly when it is brought about by outsiders, can be very disturbing to any community, and this particular event further enhanced the receptivity of the Sioux to the Ghost Dance. The Ghost Dance, with its belief in imminent extinction of the white man and its magical belief in the protective powers of the ghost shirt, seems to have met the needs of the Sioux during this stage of disorganization.

After this defeat at Wounded Knee, large numbers of Indians turned to the use of peyote, a carrot-shaped cactus that produces visual and auditory hallucinations. It was no accident that the popularity of the peyote cult followed the demise of the Ghost Dance. "The Ghost Dance promised redemption and

liberation at a time when the Indians were ready for rebellion, and provided the motivating force for uprisings such as that of the Sioux; the peyote cult emerged when the Ghost Dance was being snuffed out and the Indians were forced to admit defeat, but when, however, the white man had changed his attitude and substituted assimilation in place of destruction" (Lanternari, 1965:59).

The Cargo Cult

Cargo cult is the designation of a kind of movement, primarily restricted to Melanesia, which is centered around a belief in the coming of a cargo ship, staffed by ancestral spirits, which would contain European goods such as radios, tobacco, steel axes, alcohol, trucks, and occasionally arms. The arrival of the Cargo ship, the natives believed, would initiate a new era of plenty and would release them from their present sufferings. The Cargo cultists devoted their lives to preparations for the arrival of the Cargo; they built piers for the ship and warehouses for the goods; they imitated European ceremonials; and renounced their old lifestyles and destroyed the crops and livestock in the belief that these would hasten the coming of the Cargo (Kempf, 1992).

One of the most spectacular of these Cargo cults was the Vailala Madness, which broke out in the Gulf of Papua after World War I. It was supposedly initiated by an old man named Evara. Evara went into a trance at the death of his father and awoke giving forth prophesies.

He prophesized the coming of a steamer carrying the spirits of dead ancestors on board, who would bring them the "cargo." . . . The spirits had revealed that all the flour, rice, tobacco, and other "trade" belonged to the Papuans, not the whites. The latter would pass into the hands of its rightful owners, the natives. To obtain these goods it was necessary to drive out the whites. (Worsley, 1957:81)

Once started, the cult

involved a kind of mass hysteria, in which numbers of natives were affected by giddiness and reeled about the villages. So infectious was it that almost the whole population of a village might be affected at one time. The leaders of the movement poured forth utterances in "djaman" ("German"), which were in fact a mixture of nonsense of syllables and pidgin English. Sometimes these were incomprehensible, but sometimes the leaders gave intelligible utterances to prophesies and injunctions. The central theme of the former was that the ancestors would soon return to the gulf in a ship, bringing with them a cargo of good things. The leaders of the movement communed with them by means of flag-poles, down which messages were transmitted to the base where they were received by those who had ears to hear—an obvious adaptation of the idea of a wireless mast. Elaborate preparations were made to receive the ancestors, and offerings of food for them were placed in special houses under the control of the leaders. (Piddington, 1957:739)



The leaders of the cult claimed that they were told by their ancestors to have the people abandon the old ceremonial customs and to burn their noisemakers and ceremonial masks. The Vailala Madness, in its intense form, lasted only about three years. It was unrealistic and therefore ineffective in coping with the stressful situation in which the natives found themselves.

Another version of the Cargo cult, the Taro cult, started about 1914, when a native prophet, Buninia, emerged from a trance in which he had been visited by a Taro or food spirit. The "Taro men" designed dances, singing, and community eating rituals that were followed by trances, seizures, and ecstatic experiences. Followers of the cult were assured that their ancestors would bring them food as well as European garments and tools. The natives were reacting to the relative wealth of their new white neighbors, and the Taro cult was able to offer them what they lacked—that is, hope for material improvement. Whites came into the area around the turn of the century in search of gold. Gold mines were established with the aid of the native labor. The working conditions of the natives were anything but ideal, resulting in the development of hostility toward the white man. The cult helped them to channel this hostility and, at the same time, contributed to the development of some unity among the traditionally antagonistic tribes in the area. By 1930, however, the Taro cult started to decline in importance. Its decline was facilitated by the perception of the British administrators of the Taro cult as an antiwhite, antigovernment organization. However, it was not seen as a great enough threat to the colonial system to be harshly suppressed.

Another New Guinea Cargo cult resulted in unanticipated consequences. The disciples of the cult went to the mission station and presented the missionary with their belief, asking him what he thought of it. In the words of Ward Goodenough (1963:314-315):

He did not sneer, but expressed approval of its obvious Biblical content, of the aspirations it revealed, and what it was they were trying to conceptualize within the outwardly fantastic myth. Finding that he was not hostile, they asked him if he could show them the road by which they might achieve their aspirations. By agreeing to teach them the way, he came to occupy the position of "prophet" for the revitalization movement, at least in the people's eyes. In this way he acquired considerable control over its adaptation and transformation phases. He succeeded, accordingly, in getting the several villages in the movement to revise a number of their marriage and family customs in the direction endorsed by his religious denomination.

In this particular instance, the missionary had found a way of working from the "inside" to the "out," introducing many changes in the pattern of village life that were in keeping with the aims of his mission. This entailed



the co-optation of cult leaders, which, in turn, resulted in the rapid demise of the original belief system.

There have been a number of other Cargo cults that have made their presence felt in a wide variety of locales throughout Melanesia. The principal theme of the cults is that the returning ancestors will drive out the whites—in some cases, with the help of the cultists; in other cases, by themselves (Wilson, 1973:51-52). In the former instance, which marks a more militant interpretation of the Cargo cult, the Cargo is always thought to contain artifacts of war, such as weapons, radios, and trucks. All of the Cargo cults were basically anti-European in character, and they rarely lasted for long. "They have succumbed either to the frustrations of repeated failure of the Cargo to arrive or to the antagonism of fearful colonial authorities" (Wilson, 1973:51). In addition to its bizarre manifestations, the Cargo cult has attracted attention because of the fact that it often erupted in a relatively stable and homogeneous community. Just as in the case of American Indians, the coming of the white man meant the loss of land and the disruption of native social organizations. Social disorganization was also brought about by the use of native labor in mines and plantations, which often resulted in a separate residence away from their villages. This, in turn, affected the network of family obligations to which the islanders felt traditionally bound. Finally, the coming of the white man meant the arrival of highly divisive Christianity. There were competing missionaries, but they managed to renounce uniformly many traditional sacred practices as sinful. Simultaneously, they preached the value of obligations and associations that ignored the old tribal and kinship ties. On top of this, the Europeans brought a new lifestyle and new models of consumption, which the natives were able to envy but not to emulate.

In the words of a frustrated old villager: "When we followed our customs, we lived in peace and honor. Now everything is new and pulls us in different directions. We are confused" (Kristof, 1987:6). At the same time, the unrealistic, bizarre, and fanatic nature of cults greatly contributed to their own demise. One can only wait so long for the Cargo to arrive.

SUMMARY

In this chapter, we have considered the question of how long change will be sustained after its introduction and before its demise or drastic alteration in a social system. In a historical context, the study of the duration of change is problematic because of the broad and amorphous time dimensions. Still, it is possible to talk about general longevity patterns for historical periods in terms of distinct eras of considerable life span.

The discussion of the duration of change becomes more concrete and meaningful in the framework of transitory social changes. Here we are deal-



ing with datable, recognizable, and, in many instances, measurable events of relatively short duration.

Fads and fashions provide an extraordinary opportunity to study the life span of changes. Both are culture patterns that are adopted by a given segment of a society for a relatively brief period of time and then abandoned. Of the two, fads are of shorter duration; they tend to appear suddenly and disappear as suddenly. Fashion and faddish changes are present in most aspects of group life, and some, such as phrenology or the Florida land boom, can have serious implications.

The study of lifestyles affords another occasion for the analysis of the duration of change. Class-based lifestyles tend to endure longer than the so-called counterculture lifestyles of hippies or yippies. An excellent sociological example of a unique lifestyle of discernible duration is found among the members of the Oneida community, which endured approximately three decades.

Cults and social movements are considered transitory social-change phenomena because of their relatively short duration. Both have a life cycle, a series of stages in their natural history. The Ghost Dance and the Cargo cults, both of short duration, proved to be objects of intense fascination for social scientists. In the next chapter the various reactions to change will be examined.

SUGGESTED FURTHER READINGS

- AGUIRRE, B. E., E. L. QUARANTELLI, AND JORGE L. MENDOZA. "Streaking." *American Sociological Review*, 53, August 1988, pp. 569–584. The major collective behavior themes on the effect of participation, identification, and career of fads are tested with data on 1,016 incidents of streaking on college campuses.
- BENSMAN, JOSEPH, AND ARTHUR J. VIDICH. *American Society: The Welfare State & Beyond*, rev. ed. South Hadley, MA: Bergin & Garvey, 1987. See, in particular, Part III on emerging lifestyles and the new classes.
- CRAIK, JENNIFER. *The Face of Fashion: Cultural Studies in Fashion*. London: Routledge, 1994. An entertaining and insightful treatment of fashion changes and the prejudices and inhibitions that entrap the human body.
- FARRELL, JAMES J. *The Spirit of the Sixties: The Making of the Postwar Radicalism*. New York: Routledge, 1997. A good account of the 1960s activists in various contexts such as the civil rights movement, Ban-the-Bomb protests, and the Beat generation lifestyles.
- KETHART, WILLIAM M., AND WILLIAM W. ZELLNER. *Extraordinary Groups: An Examination of Unconventional Life-Styles*, 6th ed. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997. A highly readable account of the Old Order Amish, the Oneida community, the Gypsies, the Father Divine Movement, the Mormons, and some contemporary other lifestyles.
- MCADAM, DOUG, AND DAVID A. SNOW (eds.). *Social Movements: Readings on Their Emergence, Mobilization, and Dynamics*. Los Angeles: Roxbury, 1997. An up-to-date compendium and source material on the diverse facets of social movements.

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