Glossary

Agency 'Agency' is derived from 'agent', or an actor who exercises some control over the world. It is a word which has become fashionable in sociology and political science in recent decades because of the decline of popular faith in big government and global business. Scholars often speak of how public citizens or the non-political elite can exercise 'agency' over democratic and non-democratic processes of government in order to effect grassroots change. The word is sometimes contrasted with 'structure', or the institutions which act either to enable or hinder 'agency'. The structure/agency debate is an ongoing one in academic circles and one can take sides depending on how one regards the balance of power between individuals and the larger, socio-economic and political structures which operate in society.

Alienation A term used by different thinkers to refer to the separation of individuals from their humanity and innate creativity. For Karl Marx, the capitalist labour process created the conditions for different forms of alienation: the separation of the worker from their work through the external ownership, control, and direction of the labour process; the separation of individuals from each other through competition in the labour market; and the inability of the individual to express their innate creativity through an extemally controlled work process.

Carnivalesque The carnivalesque – derived from 'carnival' – was made famous by Mikhail Bahktin (1895–1975), a Russian intellectual who lived through some of the most significant events of the twentieth century, including the Russian Revolution, the excitement of the 1920s, Stalinism, the Cold War and the beginnings of the dissolution of Communism. Bakhtin first used the word in his book, *Rabelais and His World,* translated into English in 1968. For Bakhtin, the carnivalesque personifies the joyful and uninhibited acceptance of the body and of an aesthetic which celebrates affirmation and freedom, even anarchy.

Civil Society The concept of a 'civil society' has a long history. In the twenty-first century, political scientists, sociologists, politicians and journalists have taken up the term and used it to refer to societal arrangements which reflect the collective will or desire on the part of a people for a democratic, open and communal society or world. With the fall of the Berlin Wall and communism in many parts of the world, it has come to mean a radical alternative – the voice of the people or many peoples united in the vision for a fairer society -to dictatorial regimes and politicised agendas which exclude or oppress large sectors of society.

Citizenship The idea of the citizen is associated with membership of a political community. Citizenship confers a sense of identity and belonging to the individual along with rights and duties that arise with membership. The relatively free movement of economic trade and digital media across national borders has been coupled with movements of people, particularly from poorer to wealthier countries. Governments, in an attempt to control migration and also to promote a sense of national identity, have used citizenship as part of a divisive policy to judge who is allowed to belong to the political community.

Commodification This describes the process by which goods, services and, increasingly, ideas are produced for, and subsequently bought and sold in, a 'market'. This market may be a literal physical space or a much more intangible, even metaphoric, trading arena. Thus

organisations like consultants, adverting agencies, professional associations and universities can be argued to be trading in various forms of commodified knowledge.

Conspicuous Consumption Thorstein Veblen (1899) coined the term 'conspicuous consumption' to refer to the purchase of objects and a kind of consumer behaviour which signals to others that one belongs to a certain privileged class. Although other scholars had written about the phenomenon before him, conspicuous consumption had not, up till then, attracted the attention of economists because it was felt that the macro-social effects of such consumption were impossible to measure. Few people today would admit to such behaviour, but Veblen noticed that its effects on society as a whole at the turn of the nineteenth century were deleterious. A key aspect of conspicuous consumption is that it should be seen as extravagant and wasteful, thus denoting extreme wealth on the part of those indulging in it.

Culture The creation and use of symbols and artefacts by people. Culture can be seen as 'a way of life' for a society, including norms of behaviour, manners, rituals, dress, language and systems of belief. People are 'acted on' by culture and act on culture: in this way they can generate new cultural forms and meanings. Cultures are thus characterised by their historical nature, relativity and diversity, and undergo change alongside the economic, political and social components of society.

Cultural Intermediaries A term often associated with French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu in his book *Distinction.* He was referring to the emergence of a 'new petite bourgeoisie' in France of marketers, designers, advertisers and public relations specialists whose task was the production and distribution of symbolic goods and services. Cultural intermediaries have a central role in the reproduction of particular aspirational lifestyles and associated ideas ofwhat is cool.

Culture Jamming/Jammers Culture jammers are groups of people who want to encourage consumers to think more critically about the consumer society in which they live, and to 'de-cool' marketing and advertising. Culture jamming refers to different tactics and processes for achieving this goal including defacing billboards or online ads, or producing satirical and subversive counter ads.

Determinism The idea that all actions and events are governed by causal laws. Determinism is predicated on a belief that future events are necessitated by past and present events.

Dramaturgy An approach to sociological analysis in which the theatre is treated as an analogy for everyday life. Social action is viewed as a 'performance' in which actors (people) play parts and stage-manage their actions in an attempt to manage the impressions they make on other people. Social actors can cooperate as members of teams or organisations in order to maintain a 'front' while they hide from view the 'back-stage' processes of social relations.

Epistemology Epistemology is the branch of philosophy that examines issues relating to knowledge, that is, it is concerned with how we can ever claim to possess knowledge, what criteria we use to determine the status of knowledge and when ultimately, we would hope, our beliefs can be corroborated and certified by members of our social and academic community.

Emic An emic approach involves the consumer researcher listening to the respondent's own understanding of any given behaviour and during analysis and reporting, staying as close to the language and terminology employed by the respondent as possible.

Etie An etic approach refers to a research project that involves a consumer or marketing researcher using some theoretical perspective as a means to interpret a respondent's behaviour or actions.

False Consciousness The Marxist thesis that material and institutional processes in capitalist society mislead the proletariat, subaltern groups and other classes. These

processes betray the true relations of forces between those classes, and the real state of affairs under capitalism. The resulting condition of false consciousness is essentially explained as a result of ideological control (see ideology).

Grand Narrative Regarded as characteristic of modernity, grand narratives are usually self-legitimating and purport to be a comprehensive explanation of historical experience or knowledge. The grand narrative is usually a 'totalising' ideological system (e.g. religious fundamentalism or patriarchy). The narrative is 'grand' in that it is a story *about* a story, encompassing and explaining other 'little stories' within totalising schemes.

Habitus A term introduced in the work of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu in his book *Distinction*. It refers to a set of intellectual and emotional dispositions – values, attitudes, feelings and worldviews – that individuals acquire during primary processes of socialisation in the family and through education systems. For Bourdieu, social class is reproduced and transmitted through the habitus. It structures our subjective tastes and preferences, and enables us to make judgments about the tastes and preferences of others. The habitus is not fixed, but will adapt over our life cycle.

Homo Economicus The concept from economic theory of people as rational and broadly self-interested actors who have the ability to make judgments towards their subjectively defined ends. The term was used for the first time in the late nineteenth century by critics of John Stuart Mill's work on political economy, although it is often associated with the ideas of eighteenth century thinkers like Adam Smith and David Ricardo. The concept of Economic Man has since led to rational choice theory and taken on the specific meaning of a person who acts rationally on complete knowledge out of self-interest and the desire for material gain.

Hyperreality Hypperreality is found in branches of study like semiotics and postmodern philosophy and is closely related to words like 'simulacra'. The 'hyperreal' literally means that which is 'more than real' or 'more real than real', a state where the 'real' is indistinguishable from 'fantasy' or artifice. In a world dominated by the image, the internet and other tecnologies of virtual reality, scholars have argued that the hyperreal now substitutes for reality, so that many consumers today can experience feelings, emotions and events without having to undergo those actual experiences themselves.

Hypothesis A proposed explanation for an observable phenomenon. Usually based on a theory it is a tentative conjecture explaining an observation, phenomenon or scientific problem that can be tested by further observation, investigation or experimentation.

Identity An individual's sense of 'self. Some scholars view the development of identity as a process driven by social structures and characterised by continuity and coherence; whereas others see it as much more fluid. Thus a social constructionist might argue that identity is constructed (and re-constructed) out of the many 'big' discourses culturally available to people, such as those offering a different notion of what it means to be educated, Muslim, entrepreneurial, fashionable, etc. These discourses are constantly 'at work' in helping to produce a person's identity.

Ideology A belief system or worldview. A coherent structure of thinking which obscures incongruous elements in order to uphold a particular social order.

Individualism Individualism refers to social and political ideas that emphasise the importance of the individual in our understanding and organisation of society. The promotion of individualism has been a key political objective for neo-liberal economic and social policies in recent decades. It is usually contrasted with collectivism where the concern and interests of the collective is prioritised over the interests of individual. The encouragement for individuals to enjoy the freedom to consume goods privately has led some social commentators (e.g. Zygmunt Bauman, 2007) to suggest that

society and the experience of life has become increasingly fragmented.

Induction Induction is usually discussed in relation to the respective works of David Hume and Karl Popper. Essentially what Hume was concerned with was answering the question, how can we be justified in asserting that because we have observed a limited number of examples of black Ravens (the bird), that all Ravens are black. What we have here is a move from a specific number of examples to a general statement. Early marketing scholars were interested in producing generalisable knowledge. They wanted to move beyond specific examples to produce general statements about market relations that could be extrapolated to other contexts. The problem with induction is that we can never have full knowledge of all available empirical examples.

Institution A structure, organisation or process involved in the creation, maintenance and reproduction of social order. Institutions exert control and authority on individual conduct and action in society. Institutions include entities such as the law, the military, the media., and education.

Langue and parole These terms come from the field of linguistics. They distinguish between language as a socially established system of linguistic units such as words and grammatical rules (i.e. langue); and as actually produced 'everyday' speech (i.e. parole). The former term emphasises the structural relations of language, while the latter recognises that language and meaning is constantly changing as a result of language in use.

Legitimise The way that certain activities or ideas become legitimate ('legal'). It is the process of making something acceptable. Some social critics would argue that advertising legitimises certain activities that it might be best not to legitimise. For example depicting alcoholic products and consumers in a positive and normal way, and by showing that drinking alcohol is a normal and acceptable activity to undertake.

McDonaldization Refers both to a phenomenon and the title of a book, *The McDonaldization of Society* (1993) by George Ritzer. Ritzer popularised the notion of a world where products and services conformed to a certain standard 'look and feel' in a globalised world, in the same way that a McDonald's burger looks and tastes exactly the same wherever in the world one happens to eat them. McDonaldization has, thus, become a byword for assembly-line products lacking in 'local' flavour and culture and is, therefore, used pejoratively by many academics.

Methodology The study and analysis of the principles, procedures and theories of inquiry in a discipline. It includes the analysis of particular methods as well as ontological or epistemological considerations.

Morality Morality is a concern with the question of what is considered to be good and bad forms of thinking and behaving within a society. It is an ambiguous term that overlaps with, but also informs, social etiquette, law and religion. Morality can be used descriptively to refer to the code of conduct which guides an individual or a group of individuals, or it can be used normatively to indicate what conduct ought to be followed in a given situation.

Normative Something that is based on norms. Norms are rules or standards that regulate behaviours in a social setting. They acknowledge that an ordered social life is dependent on a large number of shared expectations and obligations. It is widely thought that normative prescriptions function at all levels of society, from an individual consumer's appropriate behaviour in a retail environment, to the formation of legal systems to regulate trade between firms and indeed nations.

Ontology Ontology is concerned with being, that is, with the issue of existence and whether or not we can really understand reality.

Paradigm A paradigm provides a way of thinking about, researching and understanding the social world.

Philanthropy Philanthropy refers to the act of giving large sums of money or gifts to charitable organisations.

Positivism A term widely used in marketing and consumer research and beyond to

describe research practices that seek to employ principles from the natural sciences to understand social phenomena. Positivism is closely linked to empiricism, in which the only legitimate form of knowledge is that which can be grounded in sensory experience. Positivism tends to prioritise scientific methods of data collection and analysis and seeks to establish likely truths from likely falsehoods through the use of hypothesis testing and the systematic application of statistics. In marketing and consumer research positivism tends to be contrasted with interpretivism.

Postmodernism Sometimes described as the cultural logic of late capitalism, postmodemism is not simply a stage after modernism, but rather, in the terminology of French philosopher Jean-Francois Lyotard, postmodernism is an impulse to deconstruct totalising systems of knowledge, meaning or believe such as religions, grand political theories such as capitalism or communism, or nationalisms, or humanist theories of identity (see Grand Narrative). For Lyotard, the postmodern condition is that of living without such systems or myths and for Jacques Derrida it is about celebrating this advent of an open future and the fragmentation of identities.

Poststructuralism Along with its close associate postmodernism, poststructuralism is a ubiquitous but contested term that is generally seen as an extension and critical response to the assumptions and scientific methods of structuralism. Poststructuralism has its origins in literary criticism and cultural analysis, and the term is usually employed to provide a convenient label for the diverse work of theorists such as Jacques Derrida, Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault. poststructuralists have extended Saussure's theory of signifiers and signified to suggest that the sign does not need to be anchored to a non-linguistic referent. In the process the authority of the author and the stability of meaning within speech and the written word ('texts') become subject to debate and negotiation.

Psychoanalysis The body of ideas developed by Sigmund Freud, otherwise known as the 'father of modern psychoanalysis'. It has attracted fierce devotion and rabid criticism, in equal measure, due both to the nature of its subject matter and Freud's own unique methods. Although there are many psychoanalytic schools of thought, Freudian theories of sexuality and human behaviour remain the most famous and controversial. In psychoanalysis, the patient is encouraged to verbalise thoughts, dreams and associations which the analyst interprets as symptoms of unconscious drives -the 'death wish', 'the Oedipal complex' and so on – which can then be brought to the surface to be resolved.

Realism In the most general sense of the term refers to a philosophical claim that the physical world (objects and materials for example) exists independently of anyone perceiving it. It is often contrasted with relativism. There are many different variations of realism, including critical realism – that at least some of our sensory perception accurately represents reality, and scientific realism – that science can reveal knowledge about the real world.

Relativism A philosophical view that truths are relative rather than absolute. From a relativist perspective there is no one truthful or authoritative meaning or reading (of an advertisement for example) but rather multiple and varied meanings which might depend on a particular perspective, background and expectation.

Semiotics Simply put it is the study of signs. More fundamentally, semiotics is the art and science of decoding sign-systems and symbolic structures which shape our view of 'reality' and how the world works, from the study of body language, for instance, to advertising, fashion, food and all other manifestations of popular culture. Some of the famous theorists with whom the word is associated include Mikhail Bakhtin, Roland Barthes, Ferdinand de Saussure, Umberto Eco and Claude Levi-Strauss. Semiotics has influenced a wide range of fields, including psychoanalysis, anthropology, media studies and consumer culture.

Sense-making Sense-making is a retrospective social process of rationally constructing reality from informational cues in order

for social actors to make decisions and undertake actions. Sense-making involves the study of language, talk and communication. It is a theory usually associated with the work of Karl Weick (1995) who uses the framework of sense-making to examine the processes through which members of organisations construct meaning from the ambiguous and emergent information around them. He argues that through the interplay of bracketing, labeling and retrospection, the chaotic and complex flows of informational cues are given meaning. We literally organise reality through the spoken and written language we employ and deploy.

Simulacra Conventionally, simulation and simulacra mean 'in the likeness of (something)', that is, they are a kind of second-order reality which is dependent on an 'original' meaning or thing. The philosopher and cultural theorist, Jean Baudrillard, however, revolutionised their meanings by insisting that simulacra now stood in place of the 'real'. In his typically subversive style, he argues that 'simulacra is never that which conceals the truth – it is the truth which conceals that there is none'. In other words, the 'truth' of appearances and images can only be found in surfaces: the real is the Image.

Social constructionism A view in which social reality is seen as something that is created (constructed) within and by social groups. Rather than seeing reality as something that is fixed, external and in some way essential, constructivists tend to view reality as an emergent, fluid and socially contingent phenomenon.

Structuralism A theoretical approach which assumes that culture can be understood as a complex system of signs operating as part of a deep underlying structure. Consumer researchers might use structuralism to describe the fashion system for example, in which the meanings of different styles, colours and 'looks' operate as a complex cultural structure. Structuralists often choose to understand social practices as text or discourse. We might say that we use fashion like a kind of language, to tell a story about ourselves to others.

Structure That which makes up the social world. In marketing theory discussions about structure normally refer to social structure which describes how institutions and norms shape and determine behaviour. Structure is often contrasted with agency.

Subculture A culture within a culture. A subculture is a group of people that exhibit a particular set of values, norms and behaviours that mark them out as different from the wider culture or society they inhabit. Subcultures could be anything from youth culture, punks and rock fans, to Harley Davison owners, rave-goers and online communities.

State The state is a set of governing institutions. Modern nation states are often characterised by the presence of various forms of government, political institutions and bureaucracy. In marketing and business theory, the state is often contrasted with the free market, leading to questions such as how much state intervention in the. market is legitimate, necessary or appropriate.

Truth effects Presupposes the notion of a 'general politics of truth' which Michel Foucault first proposed that each society possesses. That is, the types of discourse it accepts and makes function as true. Truth effects are normally regarded as being 'staged'. This refers to a) performative and other techniques which can be mobilised in order to generate true as opposed to false statements; b) how true and false are sanctioned and c) the status given those who speak that which is recognised as true ('truth-tellers').