

# Homelessness

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## Learning to Think Like a Sociologist:

Homelessness really stood out to me in this course as we do see it on a daily basis in Asheville it creates a visible picture of crisis around society and inequality that is within our community. With deeper research it change my whole perceptive on homelessness and how as a society we need to help our community.



<https://www.foxnews.com/us/charming-mountain-escape-battling-homelessness-homeowners-say-tuned-postcard-city-go-zone>

# Learning to Think Like a Sociologist - How Sociology Changed My Perspective

Understanding sociological perspectives and methods can show us to take a new look at the world we have always taken for granted, to examine our social environment with the same curiosity, this will hopefully help encourage self reflection and self awareness helping me and Others. “Socialization is critical both to individuals and to the societies in which they live. It illustrates how completely intertwined human beings and their social worlds are.” (5.2) “Socialization is just as essential to us as individuals. Social interaction provides the means via which we gradually become able to see ourselves through the eyes of others, and how we learn who we are and how we fit into the world around us. In addition, to function successfully in society, we have to learn the basics of both material and nonmaterial culture, everything from how to dress ourselves to what’s suitable attire for a specific occasion; from when we sleep to what we sleep on; and from what’s considered appropriate to eat for dinner to how to use the stove to prepare it. Most importantly, we have to learn language—whether it’s the dominant language or one common in a subculture, whether it’s verbal or through signs—in order to communicate and to think. Without socialization we literally have no self.” (5.2)

# **Groups, Inequality, and Social Forces - Personal Troubles vs. Public Issues**

Personal Troubles can be viewed as personal failure, which leads to self identity and hatred towards oneself vs public issues leads to structural failure (High costs of living, lack of affordable housing) and systemic issues (Economic downturns, failures in mental health systems, and high unemployment rates are broader societal issues).

# **Groups, Inequality, and Social Forces - Inequality, Conformity, or Social Movements**

Learning about conformity helped me better understand this feeling that I had. I was trying to match their “attitudes” and gain acceptance by publicly complying while disagreeing privately. Referring back to D5, The People’s Temple was a place for many people that felt like an outcast in their community. The Temple was a place for people to join and have a sense of belonging. With my friends I felt like an outcast until I found community within my church. “People can move from one group to another. A group of coworkers, for example, can start as a secondary group, but as the employees work together over the years, they may find common interests and strong ties that transform them into a primary group. As we will discuss in the chapter on Media and Technology, even online networks of people with common interests can sometimes move from secondary to primary group status.”(6.1),

Another example "Socialization is just as essential to us as individuals. Social interaction provides the means via which we gradually become able to see ourselves through the eyes of others, and how we learn who we are and how we fit into the world around us.

# **Groups, Inequality, and Social Forces - Growth Reflection**

Considering the difficult decisions people face because of inequality all around the world breaks my heart and I really feel for them and wish I could take that feeling away. I am so blessed to have a loving family and community around me, this changed the way I feel for the lives of others around me. Referring back to D6, the life simulation was a great example to show how people may live on a day to day basis. The life simulation was very overwhelming and hard to do, there were so many options but you had to think about you and about having a kid that was your responsibility and based on your actions and decisions it would make you gain money or lose money and that showed how living in certain conditions could cause certain things like homelessness, I could never do that, I am so grateful for the life I have and wouldn't change a thing.

# Homelessness & Social Interaction - Status

Homelessness as a status defines individuals lack of safety and stability in many areas, places not meant for human habitation or fleeing violence and facing discrimination often rooted in economic instability, lack of affordable housing, and insufficient income.

# Homelessness & Social Interaction - Role Strain, Role Conflict, and Role Performance

The stress resulting from overwhelming demands within social roles, increases vulnerability, burnout, and higher risks of housing loss. If too much is required of a single role, individuals can experience role strain.”Consider the duties of a parent: cooking, cleaning, driving, problem-solving, acting as a source of moral guidance—the list goes on. Similarly, a person can experience role conflict when one or more roles are contradictory. A parent who also has a full-time career can experience role conflict on a daily basis. When there is a deadline at the office but a sick child needs to be picked up from school, which comes first? When you are working toward a promotion but your children want you to come to their school play, which do you choose? Being a college student can conflict with being an employee, being an athlete, or even being a friend. Our roles in life have a great effect on our decisions and who we become”(4.3).

# Homelessness & Social Interaction - Looking-Glass Self

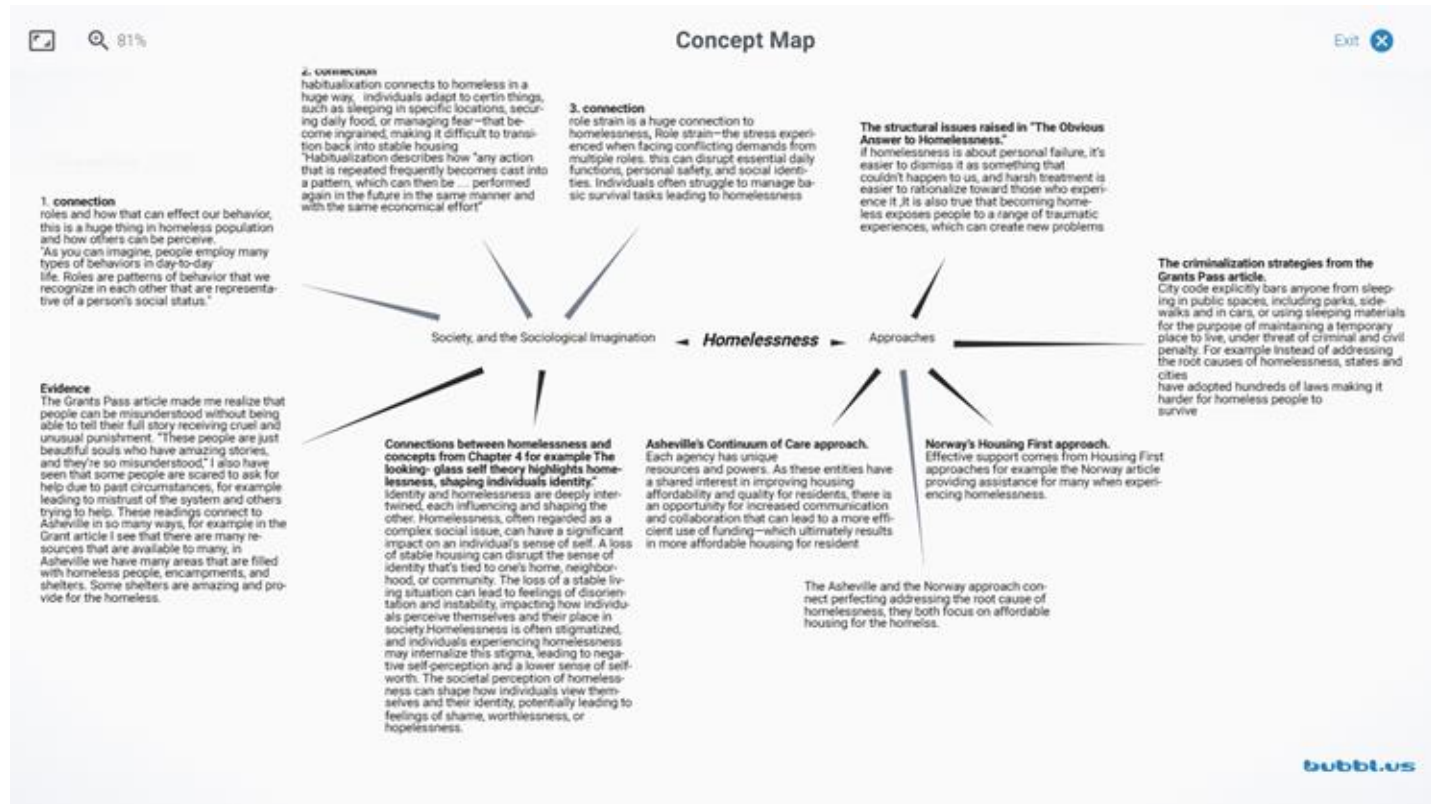
The looking-glass self theory highlights homelessness, shaping individuals' identity." Identity and homelessness are deeply intertwined, each influencing and shaping the other. Homelessness, often regarded as a complex social issue, can have a significant impact on an individual's sense of self. A loss of stable housing can disrupt the sense of identity that's tied to one's home, neighborhood, or community. The loss of a stable living situation can lead to feelings of disorientation and instability, impacting how individuals perceive themselves and their place in society. Homelessness is often stigmatized, and individuals experiencing homelessness may internalize this stigma, leading to negative self-perception and a lower sense of self-worth. The societal perception of homelessness can shape how individuals view themselves and their identity, potentially leading to feelings of shame, worthlessness, or hopelessness."(Jalma)

# Comparing Social Responses - Three Approaches

Structural forces play a big role in homelessness

Norway	Asheville	Grant Pass article
<p data-bbox="189 358 633 623">the Norway article the governments supports individuals and is considerate of the problem and needs and provides housing.</p> <p data-bbox="189 674 658 980">Effective support comes from Housing First approaches for example the Norway article providing assistance for many when experiencing homelessness.</p>	<p data-bbox="701 358 1155 663">In Asheville the system depends on many things including support systems and organizations for the homeless and lacks affordable housing which is an economic issue.</p> <p data-bbox="701 721 1151 936">The Asheville article is a barrier with shortages in affordable housing and not having enough economic help and financial stability.</p>	<p data-bbox="1209 358 1653 568">Social institutions and policies act as either essential or unfair, largely determining the stability of individuals</p>

# Comparing Social Responses - Concept map



# Comparing Social Responses - Structural Causes & Solutions

Addressing the root cause of homelessness I personally think the best solution would be the housing first approach, starting at the root and expanding off that can be beneficial. Builds a foundation for rehabilitation by addressing immediate safety needs, allowing individuals to focus on health, employment, and personal recovery and can get more people into safer living conditions and off the streets. Starting at the root can be life changing for many, we would be prioritizing structural economic changes and strengthening the safety nets of our society.

## **Local Application - Local Evidence**

Based on the article Mutual aid in western North Carolina plays lead role in community needs, resources to meet immediate survival needs, such as food distribution, disaster relief, and direct financial aid. This is an example and shows how action can help and be beneficial for homelessness, helping and being a resources can be a powerful things for people in need.

# Local Application - Sociological Analysis

In chapter 6.2 expressive leaders is a great explanation and connects to the local evidence. Expressive leaders care and support others in many ways, this example shows how expressive leaders can be beneficial for the homeless having support and getting the help that they need from different groups and having that support can change the outcome for many. In chapter 10.1 Global Stratification connects to homelessness by concentrating wealth in high-income nations while creating systemic disadvantages, poverty, and structural failures in lower-income area for example, Asheville has the riches of rich and poorest of poor in certain areas.

# Reflection & Meaning - Personal Growth

The life simulation was a great example to show how people may live on a day to day basis. It made me think hard and cause lots of emotions. I could never imagine being homeless and I am so grateful for the life I have and wouldn't change a thing, with that being said I wish that others would take into consideration of how hard it is to be homeless and you will never understand until you are in that situation or in that person shoes.

# Reflection & Meaning - Why This Matters

Understanding homelessness sociologically matters beyond this course because it shifts the focus from individual blame to systemic issues. It moves understanding from stereotypes to acknowledging that economic forces, lack of affordable housing, and weak safety nets are the primary drivers of housing instability and homelessness.