

Sociology is a diverse and pluralistic discipline. There are a variety of socially located standpoints, each with its own truths and an equal right to be heard in sociological debates. For this reason, no single and coherent body of ideas acceptable to all practitioners can be set down. Many commentators have drawn the conclusion that sociological concepts are, therefore, 'essentially contested': that there can be no agreed and binding definition of any of the principal concepts used by sociologists in their research. This would seem to pose serious problems for anyone attempting to compile a dictionary or glossary of sociological concepts