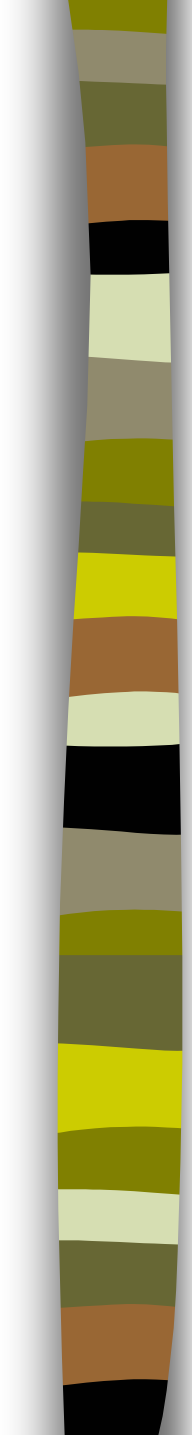# What is Science:

The development of generalizations, such as laws and theories, based on the systematic examinations of facts
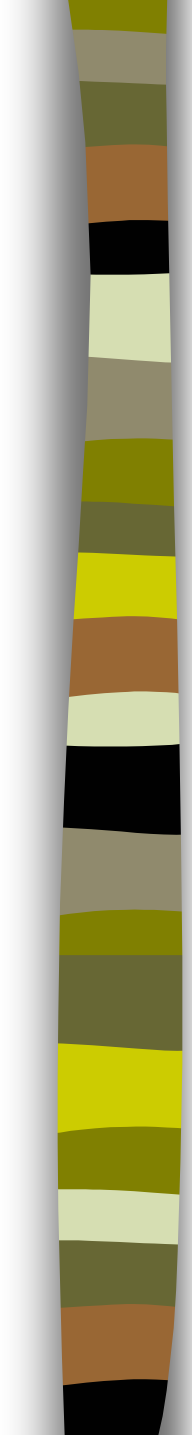
What is Sociology:

The scientific study of society and social behavior.

Sociology develops and tests generalizations or theories about society and social behavior.

When people make generalizations, what gives them confidence that their generalizations are true?

- Tradition (accepted belief)

- Authority

- Human inquiry (observation)

- Science (systematic examination)

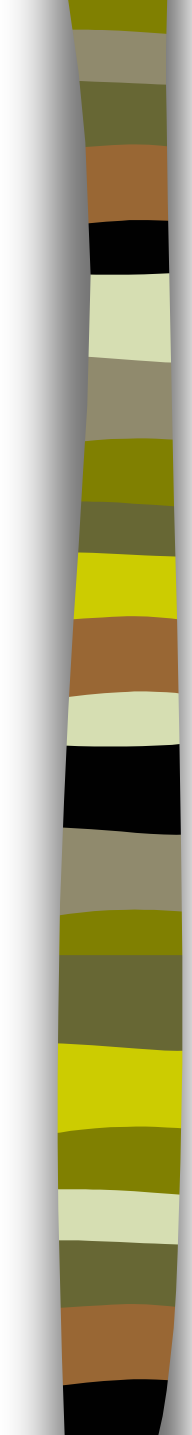# Why isn't human inquiry or observation good enough to determine what is real? Why do we need science?

- **Inaccurate observation** (can't remember)
- **Overgeneralization** (if one does it they all do it)
- **Selective observation** (remembering what one wants to remember)
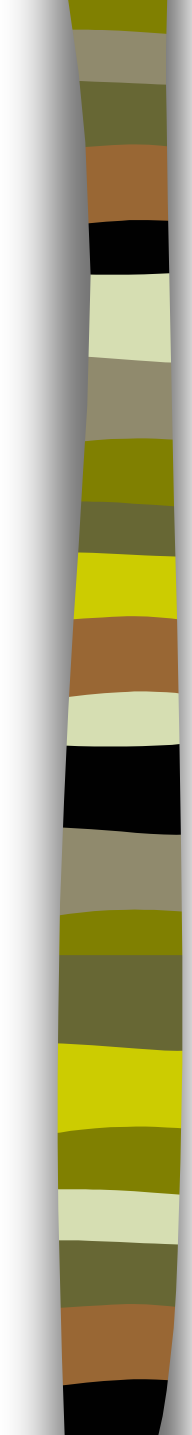
Is science good enough?

Some have concluded that our systematic examinations cannot be free of our learned values. Do you agree?

"There is ultimately no way people can totally step outside their humanness to see and understand the world as it "really" is—that is, independent of all human viewpoints (postmodern view, p.12)"

What are some different "paradigms" for viewing reality? (that is, how do different perspectives view reality?)

- **Pre-Modern** view is based on observation (the earth is flat).
- **Modern** view recognizes subjectivity and believes it can be overcome (what one sees as beautiful another doesn't).
- **Post-Modern** view believes we can not overcome our value systems to see what is real.

Sociology assumes we can discover what is real.

Sociology develops "theories" of what might be real and then uses the scientific method to determine whether the theory is real.

What is a theory?

- A systematic explanation for observations that relate to a particular thing (e.g., gravity, social cohesion).

Hypotheses are derived from theories

Concepts are derived from hypotheses

Variables are derived from Concepts.

Attributes are derived from variables.

Example of a "Mid-range" theory:

A job's characteristics affects an employee's job satisfaction.

- What hypothesis could be drawn from this theory?
- What concepts?
- What variables?
- What attributes?

"Dialectics" of Social Research:

- Inductive vs deductive theory

- Quantitative vs qualitative data

- Pure vs Applied research

Thanks!