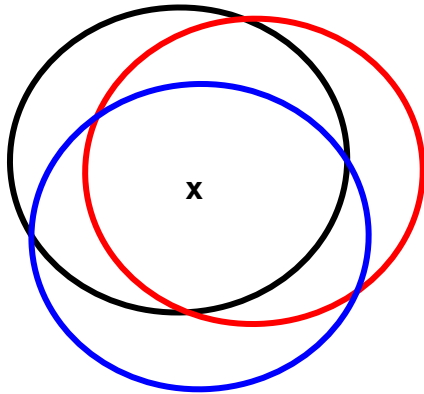


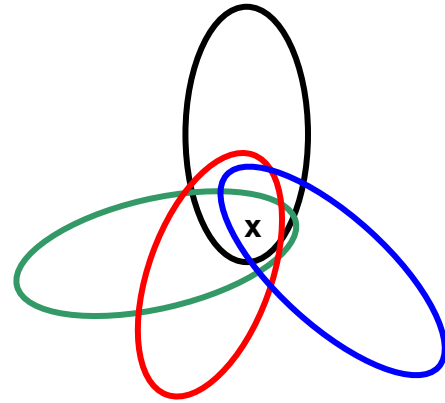
Georg Simmel's Theory of Intersecting Social Circles



x = a given individual

Circles intersect a lot

Characteristic of smaller, more homogeneous societies. (In Spencer's functionalism, a society at an early stage of development.) Social groups overlap/intersect a lot, so most people are in the same group with lots of the same people. A person's various social roles or personality aspects tend to reinforce each other. There may be pressure to conform, and the individual may feel strongly embedded in society.



Circles intersect only a little

Characteristic of larger, more diverse societies with much specialization or division of labor. (In Spencer's functionalism, a society at a later stage of development.) Social groups overlap/intersect only a little, so few people are in the same groups with each other. A person's various social roles or personality aspects tend to diverge from each other. The individual may feel free but isolated.