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Q5(b)**Explain the concept of "definition of the situation" and its significance in sociology.**

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2026 · Sociology GS 1 · 10 marks · Sociology

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Sociology - The Discipline: Modernity and social changes in Europe and emergence of sociology; Scope of the subject and comparison with other social sciences; Sociology and common sense.

Facts & figures for this PYQ only.

Numbers move. Confirm the latest Budget, Economic Survey or census round.

W.I. Thomas (The Polish Peasant in Europe and America, 1918-1920)

Coined the foundational premise known as the Thomas Theorem regarding how situations defined as real become real in their consequences.

Herbert Blumer (Symbolic Interactionism, 1969)

Formalized the premise that human action is based on the meanings actors assign to social situations.

Erving Goffman (The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, 1959)

Applied situational definitions to dramaturgical analysis and impression management.

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