

EIGHTH • EDITION
DOWN TO EARTH
SOCIOLOGY
INTRODUCTORY • READINGS



JAMES M. HENSLIN

Down to Earth Sociology

Introductory Readings

EIGHTH EDITION

JAMES M. HENSLIN, Editor



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Down to Earth Sociology

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In Memory of Erving Goffman
1922–1982
Whose Example Is Our Legacy

Preface to the Eighth Edition

IT IS WITH PLEASURE that I introduce the eighth edition of *Down to Earth Sociology*, a pleasure akin to seeing a dear friend reach another cheerful milestone in his or her life. Adopters of earlier editions will find themselves at home, I believe, in this latest edition. They will see many selections they have already successfully used in the classroom, and I trust they will welcome the many newcomers.

Following the suggestions of those who have used earlier editions of *Down to Earth Sociology*, I have strived to continue to present down-to-earth articles in order to make the student's introduction to sociology enjoyable as well as meaningful. These selections reflect the experiences of people who have "been there" and who, with a minimum of jargon and quantification, insightfully share those experiences with the reader.

Focusing on social interaction in everyday activities and situations, these selections share some of the fascination of sociology. They reflect both the individualistic and the structural emphases of our discipline. Social structure is not simply an abstract fact of life; rather, it vitally affects our lives. The decisions of the rich, the politically powerful, and the bureaucrats provide social constraints that augment those dictated by birth, social class, and other circumstances. By social structure our vision of life is lifted or limited, our chances of success closed or opened. Social structure brings tears and laughter, hopes and despair.

Yet so much of sociology goes about its business as though data were unconnected to people, as though the world consisted of abstract social facts. From my own experiences I know that these suppositions are far from the truth—divorced from real life—and so I have sought authors who are able to share the realities that people directly experience. At least as I see it, sociology is the most fascinating of the social sciences, and it is this fascination that these selections are designed to convey.

It is my hope that I have succeeded in accomplishing this goal, because I believe sociology is able to open new windows of perception that can touch every aspect of the individual's world. If these readings even come close to this goal, I owe a great debt to the many who adopted the earlier editions, and especially to those whose reactions and suggestions have helped give shape to this one.

I wish to acknowledge the help provided by the following sociologists: Richard Ambler, Herbert Aurbach, Alfred Aversa, Jr., David Ayers, Roger Baldwin, Anthony Balzano, Ralph Bishop, Phillip D. Blood, Vincent Bolduc, John Bowman, Tom Boyd, Lori Brown, Jackie Burnside, Brian Byers, Jill M. Bystydzienski, Margo Capparelli, Robert Clark, Mary Clifford, Judith Coady, Donald L. Conrad, Gaylan Corbin, Lou Corsino, Marie Tobia Deem, Melissa Deller, Dorothy D. Delman, René M. Descartes, Robert W. Duff, M. G. Dunn, Jeff Ferrell, Stephen R. Finks, Brian Fogarty, Tanice G. Foltz, Timothy J. Frederiks, Jim Frey, David O. Friedrichs, Rohn R. Fuller, Robert Girvan, Frank Glamsen, George Gonos, W. H. Gordon, Michael Greenhouse, Susan F. Greenwood, Haldun Gulap, Brian Harrison, C. Larry Heck, Alan Horowitz, Wendel J. Hunigan, Charles E. Hurst, Yvonne Iwasa, Jeff Jackson, Dawn E. Jensen, Donna J. Jones, Phil Kayal, Richard A. Kochis, Paul Kooistra, Sunil Kukreja, Emily Labeff, Jeffrey A. Leavey, Janet Lohmann, Stephan L. Markson, Eleanor Krassen Maxwell, Katherine McDade, Dennis K. Nelson, Timothy J. Owens, Stephen Parker, Carolyn Egan Pesackis, Diane Pike, Randolph Quaye, Carol Axtell Ray, Keith A. Roberts, Ed Royce, Allen Scarboro, Eldon E. Snyder, Barbara Stenross, Mark Templeman, Edward A. Thibault, Irene Taviss Thomson, Kathleen Tiemann, Kathryn A. Trosen, Elizabeth Vance, Carol Warner, Margaret R. Willite, Bill Yoels, Fred Zampa, and Stephen Zehr. Suggestions from these individuals, who shared with me their experiences teaching from earlier editions of this book, proved invaluable in shaping this present version. It is to them, as well as to the many colleagues who gave more casual counsel, and to the students who shared with me their candid comments, that I owe a debt of guidance.

One of the more interesting tasks in preparing this edition was to gather information on the contributors' backgrounds. In addition to biographical data concerning the authors' education, teaching, and publishing, that section also contains their statements telling us why they like sociology or became sociologists. Assigning that section with the articles helps to personalize the readings and increase the student's awareness of biographical factors that go into the choice to become a sociologist.

The selections continue to be organized to make them compatible with most introductory textbooks. Through subjects inherently interesting, we cover the major substantive areas of sociology. Part I is an introduction to the sociological perspective; it invites students to view the world in a new way by participating in the exciting enterprise we call sociology. Part II is designed to answer the basic question of how sociologists do research. Part III examines the

cultural underpinnings of social life, those taken-for-granted assumptions and contexts that provide the contours of our everyday lives. In Part IV that essential component of our beings—sexuality and gender—is the focus. There we look at both the process by which we assume the social identity of male or female and how those identities provide the basis for interaction among adults.

Part V examines social groups and social structure, looking behind the scenes to see how people's assumptions, their location on social hierarchies, and the features of social settings establish both constraints and freedoms on human relationships and expressions of the self. The process of becoming deviant, the social context that shapes deviance, and social control are the subjects of Part VI. We examine social stratification in Part VII, beginning with the micro level of physical appearance and then looking at poverty, power, wealth, gender, occupation, education, and race as dimensions of social inequality. In part VIII, we analyze the social institutions of education, family, religion, sports, medicine, law, as well as our intertwining political, military, and economic interests. Social change is the focus of Part IX, wherein we look at the intrusion of technology on preliterate societies, a successful attempt to control social change in order to maintain a traditional way of life, the rationalization of society, and the search for personal roots in a rapidly changing social world.

These selections bring the reader face-to-face with the dual emphases of contemporary sociological research: the focus on the individual's experiences, and the analysis of social structure. Uncovering the basic expectations that underlie routine social interactions, these articles emphasize the ways in which social institutions are interrelated. It is to their authors' credit that we lose sight of neither the people who are interacting nor the structural base that so directly influences the form and content of their interactions.

About the Contributors

Elijah Anderson (article 16) received his Ph.D. in Sociology at Northwestern University and is the Charles and William Day Professor of Social Sciences at the University of Pennsylvania. He is the author of *A Place on the Corner: Identity and Rank Among Black Streetcorner Men* and *Streetwise: Race, Class, and Change in an Urban Community*, the book from which his selection is taken.

Anderson says, "I have always been interested in how individuals relate to society and how society relates to the individual. My interest in the social conditions that people experience—especially the marginality that so many blacks feel and how they relate to the wider social system—motivated me to go into sociology to look for some of the answers. I also had good teachers who inspired me. Later I found myself wanting to contribute in a meaningful way to correcting what I saw to be misrepresentations of reality in the academic literature about people who live in ghettos."

Peter L. Berger (article 1) received his Ph.D. in Sociology from the New School for Social Research. He is Professor of Sociology at Boston University and the author of numerous books, including *The Capitalist Revolution*, *A Far Glory: The Quest for Faith in an Age of Credulity*, and *Invitation to Sociology*, from which his selection in this book is taken.

Berger says, "I was born in Austria and came to the United States with my parents after the war. You might say that I became a sociologist by accident. I took some courses in sociology and liked them. I have always been curious about what makes people tick, and that is what sociology is all about."

Mae A. Biggs (article 19) earned her M.A. in Sociology at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and is an associate of the Masters-Johnson Institute (Biological Research Institute) in St. Louis, Missouri.

Napoleon A. Chagnon (article 8) earned his Ph.D. in Anthropology at the University of Michigan. He is Professor of Anthropology at the University of California at Santa Barbara and the author of *Yqnomamö: The Last Days of Eden*, *Yqnomamö Warfare, Social Organization and Marriage Alliances*, and the book from which his selection is taken, *Yqnomamö: The Fierce People*.

William J. Chambliss (article 24) received his Ph.D in Sociology at Indiana University and is Professor of Sociology at George Washington University. His books include *On the Take: From Petty Crooks to Presidents*, *Law, Order and Power*, and *Exploring Criminology*. Professor Chambliss is a past President of the American Society of Criminology (1987–88) and a past President of the Society for the Study of Social Problems (1992–93).

Chambliss says, "I became a sociologist out of an interest in doing something about crime. I remained a sociologist because it became clear to me that until we have a greater understanding of the political and economic conditions that lead some societies to have excessive amounts of crime we will never be able to do anything about the problem. Sociology is a beautiful discipline that affords an opportunity to investigate just about anything connected with human behavior and still claim an identity with a discipline. This is its strength, its promise, and why I find it thoroughly engaging, enjoyable, and fulfilling."

James William Coleman (article 41) is Professor of Sociology at California Polytechnic State University. He has published *Social Problems* (with Donald R. Cressey) and *The Criminal Elite: The Sociology of White Collar Crime*.

Coleman says, "I was originally attracted to sociology because it seemed to offer a way of understanding that could contribute to the creation of a better society." He adds, "I guess the American in me sees knowledge as a means to achieve pragmatic ends. Certainly my work on white collar crime has been motivated by the desire to call this enormous problem to public attention and to try to suggest some ways of dealing with it." He says, "Like many sociologists, I have done a fair amount of international traveling, and I have found it an extremely enriching experience. My favorite pastime is hiking."

John R. Coleman (article 17) was the President of Haverford College from 1967 to 1977 and then President of the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation in New York City. He has decided to try his hand at business and now runs "The Inn at Long Last" in Chester, Vermont.

Peter Conrad (article 39) received his Ph.D. in Sociology from Boston University. He is Harry Coplan Professor of Social Sciences at Brandeis University. His books include *Deviance and Medicalization: From Badness to Sickness* (with Joseph W. Schneider), *Having Epilepsy* (also with Joseph W. Schneider), and *Health and Health Care in Developing Countries* (edited with Eugene Gallagher).

Conrad, who enjoys traveling in foreign countries, biking, hiking, white water rafting, and the movies, says, "I became a sociologist as an undergraduate in the 1960s. Sociology seemed to ask the most relevant questions that concerned me. I still find sociology the most insightful for understanding the workings of society and its parts, and for providing knowledge that can lead to social change. To me, one of the most important roles of sociology is to provide an informed and intellectual critique of society, especially in terms of social inequalities and injustices. An understanding of society's social institutions provides a tool by which we can build a more just, liveable, and satisfying society."

Kingsley Davis (article 11) received his Ph.D. in Sociology at Harvard University and is Distinguished Professor of Sociology at the University of Southern California and Senior Research Fellow at the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace at Stanford University. His books include *Human Society*, *The Population of India and Pakistan*, and *Contemporary Marriage*.

Davis, who often travels to remote places on the globe, likes sociology because "first, sociology deals with all aspects of society, not just economic behavior or political matters; second, in regard to social change, sociology takes a longer view than most other social science fields. I became a sociologist because I wanted to write and decided that I had better learn something to write, so I elected to learn sociology. Also, I wanted to know how the social system works. We were in the Great Depression at the time, so a social science should be able to analyze and explain that terrible catastrophe."

Marion V. Dearman (article 37) received his Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Oregon. He is Professor of Sociology at California State University at Los Angeles. He publishes in the sociology of knowledge, belief, and religion.

Dearman says, "I became a sociologist because I wanted to find out why people think and believe the way they do. There is no belief too far out for human beings to share. Focusing on this in sociology has been fun. The most interesting thing about me is that I never finished high school. After working as a printer for twenty-five years, I went to college, got my B.A. when I was forty-one, the M.A. at forty-three, and the Ph.D. at forty-five. In most of my classes, I was older than my professors."

G. William Domhoff (article 32) earned his Ph.D. in Sociology at the University of Miami. He is Professor of Psychology and Sociology at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Among his books are *Blacks in the White*

Establishment: A Study of Race and Class in America, The Power Elite and the State: How Policy Is Made in America, and the book from which his selection is taken, *The Bohemian Grove and Other Retreats: A Study in Ruling-Class Cohesiveness*.

Domhoff says, "I feel an attraction to sociology because I like anything that has to do with people and what makes them tick. I especially would like to understand how to bring about greater equality and freedom in all societies." He counts sports and his work among his hobbies.

Robert B. Edgerton (article 33), who received his Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of California at Los Angeles, is also Professor of Anthropology and Psychology at UCLA. His books include *Like Lions They Fought*, *Mau Mau: An African Crucible*, and *Sick Societies*, from which his selection is taken.

Douglas E. Foley (article 38) received his Ph.D. in Anthropology of Education at Stanford University and is Professor of Anthropology at the University of Texas. He is the author of *From Peones to Politicos: Class and Ethnicity in a South Texas Town, 1900–1987* and *Learning Capitalist Culture: Deep in the Heart of Tejas*.

Foley says that he likes to write cultural critiques of American society, with the hope of changing it, of helping to make it more egalitarian and humane.

Herbert J. Gans (article 29) received his Ph.D. in City Planning and Sociology from the University of Pennsylvania. He is Robert S. Lynd Professor of Sociology at Columbia University and has written such books as *The Urban Villagers*, *Middle American Individualism: The Future of Liberal Democracy*, and *People, Plans, and Policies: Essays on Poverty, Racism, and Other National Urban Problems*. Professor Gans is a past President of the American Sociological Association (1987–88).

Gans "finds sociology more interesting than hobbies." He says: "When I was in high school, I thought I would become a journalist, but then when I got to college I discovered that the articles I enjoyed writing most were sociology. From then on I was pretty sure I would become a sociologist." He adds, "The deeper reason I became a sociologist is because I am a refugee from Nazi Germany, and ever since I came to the United States as a teenager in 1940, I have been trying to understand the country which took me in." Whenever possible—and his family agrees—Gans rents an apartment for a month in a European city or medieval town and "explores it, living in it fully."

Barbara Garson (article 45) earned a B.S. in classical history from the University of California and is a professional author and playwright. She is the author of *MacBird*, a play which sold over half a million copies. Her classic

book about how people keep from going crazy on factory jobs, *All the Livelong Day: The Meaning and Demeaning of Routine Work*, has been revised to include the closing of traditional factories and the transition to computer work in our postindustrial society. She is also the author of *The Electronic Sweatshop*, from which her selection is taken. Garson says, "I like sociology because I like people, and I like the truth."

Erving Goffman (article 10) earned his Ph.D. in Sociology at the University of Chicago and at the time of his death in 1982 was Director of the Center for Urban Ethnography at the University of Pennsylvania. His many books include *Stigma*, *Behavior in Public Places*, and the book from which his selection is taken, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*.

Harry L. Gracey (article 35) received his Ph.D. in Sociology at the New School for Social Research. He is in private practice in organizational development in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and has published *Curriculum or Craftsmanship?: The Dilemma of the Teacher in the Bureaucratic System* and *Readings in Introductory Sociology* (with Dennis H. Wrong).

Gracey says, "What led me to study sociology was a curiosity about how things work, which in my case got focused on the world of social life, rather than on the physical or biological world. Sociology, uniquely among the social sciences, I think, 'lifts the veil of ideology' on the working of society to see what is really going on—and who is doing it and how it is being done."

Edward T. Hall (article 9) was awarded his Ph.D. at Columbia University. He is Emeritus Professor of Anthropology at Northwestern University. His books include *The Silent Language*, *The Hidden Dimension*, and *An Anthropology of Everyday Life: An Autobiography*.

Mildred R. Hall (article 9) received her B.A. from Barnard College and (with Edward T. Hall) has written *The Fourth Dimension in Architecture*, *Hidden Differences: Studies in International Communication*, and *Understanding Cultural Differences*.

Mykol Hamilton (article 14) earned her Ph.D. in Psychology at the University of California at Los Angeles. She is Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology at Centre College in Danville, Kentucky.

Hamilton, a social psychologist says, "I like an approach that looks at the greater social issues and causes of human behavior, rather than seeing the individual as the cause. When we look at situational or social factors, we get away from blaming the victim."

Nancy Henley (article 14) received her Ph.D. in Psychology at Johns Hopkins University and is Professor of Psychology at the University of California at Los Angeles. Her books include *Body Politics: Power, Sex, and Nonverbal*

Communication, Language and Sex: Difference and Dominance (with Barrie Thorne), and *Gender and Nonverbal Behavior* (with Clara Mayo).

Henley says, “Although I am a psychologist, one of my specialties is social psychology; thus I feel close ties to sociology. One reason social psychology fascinates me is that it addresses some of the key concerns of our time, such as prejudice, conformity, social power, and cooperation. To understand human behavior, we need both psychological and sociological facts and insights.”

James M. Henslin (articles 2, 4, 12, 17, and 23) earned his Ph.D. in Sociology at Washington University in St. Louis. He is Professor of Sociology at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. His books include *Marriage and Family in a Changing Society*, *Social Problems*, and *Sociology: A Down-to-Earth Approach*.

Henslin says, “My early childhood was marked by poverty. I was born in a rented room in a minister’s parsonage. Then my parents made a leap in their economic status—we moved into our own home, a converted garage, with no running water or indoor plumbing! My parents continued their climb in status, and when I was thirteen they built one of the nicest houses in town. These experiences helped make me keenly aware of the significance of ‘place’ and opportunity in social life.” He adds, “I like sociology because of its tremendous breadth—from social class and international stratification to the self and internal conflicts. No matter how diverse your curiosities, you can follow them and they are still part of sociology. Everything that is part of the landscape of human behavior comes under the lens of sociology.”

Arlie Hochschild (articles 20 and 36) received her Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of California, Berkeley, where she is now Professor of Sociology. She has published *The Managed Heart: Communication of Human Feeling*, *The Unexpected Community: Portrait of an Old Age Subculture*, and *The Second Shift: Inside the Two-Job Marriage*, the book from which her selection is taken.

Hochschild says, “I majored in international relations at Swarthmore College (a combination of history, economics, and political science) in the early sixties when my college had no sociology department. By chance I discovered David Riesman’s *The Lonely Crowd*, his *Individualism Reconsidered*, and C. Wright Mills’ *People, Politics and Power*. It was between the covers of these exciting books that I decided that there was a powerful lens through which to see the world—and I wanted to get on the other side of it.

Lawrence K. Hong (article 37) earned his Ph.D. in Sociology at the University of Notre Dame. He is Professor of Sociology at California State University at Los Angeles and has written articles on sex, religion, family, popular culture, computer applications, and Asian Americans.

Hong says, “I became a sociologist because I’m curious about the flux, the diversity, and the complexity of social phenomena. They keep me intellectually stimulated.”