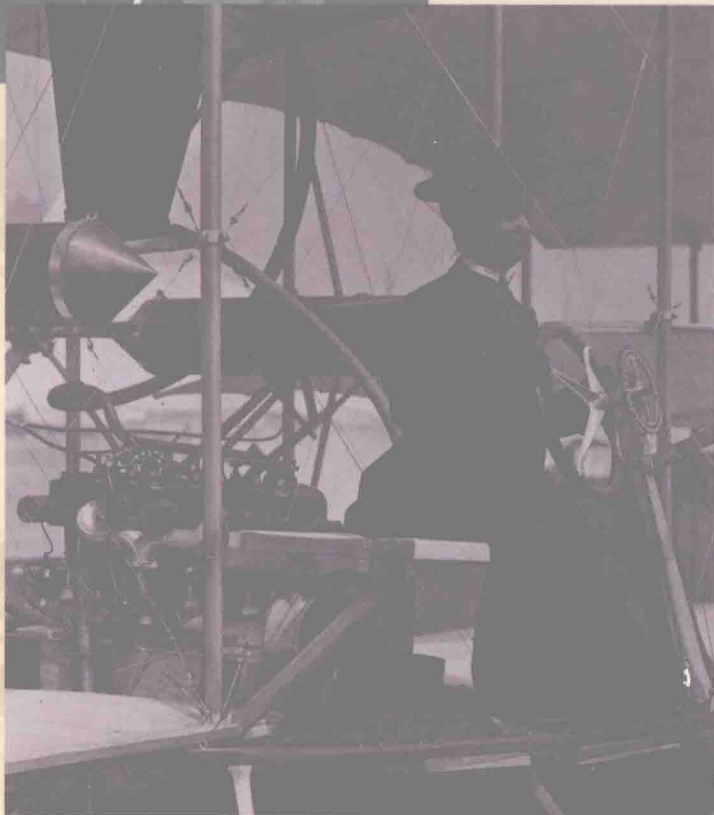


# Sociology

Seventh Edition

RODNEY STARK



# Sociology

Seventh Edition

**RODNEY STARK**

University of Washington



Wadsworth Publishing Company

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## About the Author

Rodney Stark grew up in Jamestown, North Dakota, and received his Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley, where he held appointments as a research sociologist at the Survey Research Center and the Center for the Study of Law and Society. He left Berkeley to become Professor of Sociology and of Comparative Religion at the University of Washington. He has published eighteen books and more than a hundred scholarly articles on subjects as diverse as prejudice, crime, suicide, and city life in ancient Rome. However, the greater part of his work has been on religion. He is past president of the Association for the Sociology of Religion and has been chair of the Section on Religion of the American Sociological Association. Several of his books and some of his articles have been republished in foreign languages, and he has won several national and international awards for distinguished scholarship. Among his most recent books are *The Rise of Christianity: A Sociologist Reconsiders History*, 1996; *Contemporary Research Methods* (with Lynne Roberts), 1996; and *Religion, Deviance, and Social Control* (with William Sims Bainbridge), 1997.

# p r e f a c e

Philosophers of science claim that the progress of a field can be measured by its increasing simplification—by the unification of many concepts and theories into fewer, so that what once were regarded as many independent issues are redefined into a smaller, more inclusive set. This process also has its counterpart in the maturation of individuals in relation to their fields. For beginners, any field consists of a huge array of things they need to find out. But, as we come to understand a field better, things begin to simplify. An appropriate, if overworked, comparison might be with replacing close-ups of each of thousands of trees with a wide-angle shot of a forest which allows us to see that it consists of hills and valleys and that the trees on the hills are pines and those in the valley are maples.

At the beginning of my career, had I been asked to identify the primary topics of sociology and the vital questions to be answered about each, I am sure my list would have run to 40 topics, with 40 or 50 pressing questions about each. A few years later I probably could have done it in 10 topics, each with 20 questions. When I wrote the first edition of this book I knew that there were only a few fundamental sociological concerns and that these applied to all of the specific features of social life. Then, as I prepared this edition of the book I had some very useful discussions with Randall Collins who convinced me that there is really only one sociological topic: the group; and that there really are only two basic sociological questions which underlie everything else: What unites us? What separates us? Put another way, sociology is about group solidarity and intra- and inter-group conflict. Subsumed under these two basic topics are many less general questions clearly implied by each basic question, such as: How do groups form? How do they stick together? How do they divide or fall apart? Why do groups conflict? These two basic topics—solidarity and conflict—thus include everything sociologists want to find out and everything we learn pertains to one or the other, or in many cases, to both.

All previous editions of the book really have been based on this simple division of the field, but not nearly as explicitly as might have been. So this

time, Chapter 1 introduces the sociological subject matter and the two primary sociological questions and everything follows from them.

Moreover, once the basis of the field is so clearly identified it becomes obvious that any proper introduction to sociology must give substantial attention to some new concepts and methods known as network analysis. Network analysis allows us to display the inner workings of groups, exploring the connections that unite groups and the factions and fissures that separate them. Thus, the first figure in Chapter 1 displays a network diagram, and other diagrams appear and are discussed in a number of chapters, greatly increasing the effectiveness of the book in explaining social life. And this is only the start of the major revisions I have made.

Let me be frank. The satisfaction I get from doing a new edition of the book is proportional to the progress of the field (and/or my understanding of it). In some editions I have had to settle mainly for updating the research. The sixth edition was a lot of fun because important new things had happened in several fields. For example, I was able to entirely rework the chapter on crime and deviance to reflect the "breakthrough" made in defining the concept of "crime." In the chapter on social biology a large new section on testosterone needed to be added. But these changes were minor compared with what happened this time.

In previous revisions I have made few changes in the first four chapters—everyone liked them and they cover material that is less subject to new findings than is the rest of the book. But, this time around I gave the first four chapters my primary attention. Although I retained the fundamental structure of each, I made major changes in specific sections, added new sections, and dropped some. Thus, at first glance Chapter 1 looks a lot like it did in the previous edition. But there are major differences, in addition to substantial new sections on solidarity and conflict and on social networks. Other new topics include "A Global Perspective" and "The Sociological Imagination." Of particular importance is the integration of the "Social Scientific Process" (which previously was the introduction to Part I) into the text.

Chapter 2 also will seem familiar. It still introduces basic concepts by comparing the social mobility and assimilation of Jewish and Italian Americans. But the discussions of the concepts are almost entirely new. The field long has been plagued by ambiguities in the definitions of society and culture. I think I finally have them defined clearly and efficiently, which also enables me to more easily distinguish major sociological concepts as to being primarily about society or about culture.

Micro sociologists will find Chapter 3 far more complete and informed, especially the entire section on symbolic interaction (and not just because I found a picture of Herbert Blumer from his days as a football star). But I did not stint in revising the section on exchange theory either. In keeping with the new emphasis given to solidarity and conflict, I have moved the Asch experiment from Chapter 8 to Chapter 3, both to serve as an example of the experimental method and to display the power of groups to generate solidarity. Finally, the field study of conversion to a deviant religious group has been refined and the principles of conversion applied to the recent episode involving Heaven's Gate.

Chapter 4 now begins with an explanation of sampling within the context of the need for formal data collection methods when large units of analysis are studied. In doing so it equips students to detect the pseudo-samples which are the basis for so much of the nonsense reported in the news media. The chapter then greatly clarifies the link between micro and macro sociology as revealed by inconsistent findings in the study of religion and delinquency and by introducing contextual effects which show that married people are more likely than the unmarried to be "very happy" in Canada and United States, but that this doesn't hold for Mexico. Studies based on groups as the units of analysis are exemplified by examining Benjamin Zablocki's work on love and jealousy in communes, allowing reinterpretation of earlier lessons about solidarity and conflict as well as additional illustrative use of network diagrams.

In the remainder of the book I have added some sections, deleted some others, and updated the research. In Chapter 8 I added a very substantial opening discussion of social control in Japan, permitting students to see the trade-offs between personal freedom and deviance. Chapters 9 and 10 have been greatly strengthened by the addition of sections applying network principles and research findings. Chapter 9 now includes an extended dis-

ussion of "cultural capital" and analyzes variations in the network aspects of classes. Chapter 10 includes a careful examination of how networks produce class variations in the "amount" rather than that "character" of culture, giving advantages to elites. Chapter 12 now gives more extended attention to cross-national differences in the status of women based on the gender power ratios recently created and calculated by United Nations' staff social scientists. For Chapter 14, I included a major section on what appear to be universal gender differences in religiousness, connecting these to similar differences in crime and delinquency.

Treatment of "depopulation" trends in the more developed nations has been expanded in Chapter 18. These are but some of the major differences. I have updated the research and/or sharpened the prose on nearly every page.

Each edition of the book has become more global in outlook. This has been made possible by the rapid expansion of available data and of cross-national research findings. In the previous three editions I was able to make increasingly greater use of the World Values Surveys—the 1990–1993 edition, including comparable surveys conducted in 41 nations. I continue to use these data in this edition, but now I am able to supplement them from a new data base: Nations of the Globe, which includes data on all 174 nations having a population of 200,000 or more. Nations of the Globe is prepared, updated, and distributed by Microcase Corporation and is available for use on ShowCase software for classroom presentations.

As noted in previous editions, I am overwhelmed by the generosity of my colleagues across North America, who have volunteered so many useful suggestions. I thank each of you for taking the time to write.

However, if I was surprised by the supportive and valuable mail I received from sociologists, I remain absolutely astonished at the number of students who write to me. It seems clear from their comments that the reason hundreds of them have written is because the "over-the-shoulder" style lets students recognize that sociology is a human activity and that by writing to me they can participate. Not only have I greatly enjoyed these letters but several brought new material to my attention—one letter even caused me to write an entirely new chapter on gender for the Third Edition.

I think this level of student response justifies my initial decision to break some norms of college



textbook writing. Most textbooks take pains to sound as if they had no authors but were composed during endless committee meetings. Moreover, human beings are equally indistinct within most texts; the books present a field as consisting mainly of printed matter—of papers and books, of principles and findings. This misleads students about the real nature of scholarly disciplines, which consist not of paper but of people. Moreover, a Nobel laureate once told me that if, after the first ten minutes of the first day of introductory physics, his students didn't know that people go into science primarily because it's fun, he would consider himself a failure as a teacher.

So this is a book with a voice, in which a sociologist addresses students directly and describes the activities of a bunch of living, breathing, human beings who are busy being sociologists for the fun of it. Moreover, it attempts to show students that the single most important scientific act is not to propose answers but to ask questions—to wonder. As I let students look over the shoulders of sociologists, be they Émile Durkheim or Kingsley Davis, I want students to first see them wondering—asking why something is as it is. Then I want students to see how they searched for and formulated an answer. For, as an advertising copywriter might put it, I want students to realize that sociology can be a verb as well as a noun.

### **Point of View and Approach**

Sociologists considering a textbook often ask what “kind” or “brand” of sociology it reflects. What are the author's theoretical and methodological commitments? I find some difficulty framing a satisfactory answer to such questions, because I don't think I have a brand. First of all, my fundamental commitment is to sociology as a social science. Hence, I want to know how societies work and why, not to document a perspective. Moreover, in constructing sociological theories I am a dedicated, even reckless, eclectic. Competing theoretical sociologies persist, in part, not only because they tend to talk past one another but also because each can explain some aspect of social life better than the others can. Therefore, in my own theoretical writing I tend to take anything that seems to work from whatever school can provide it. The textbook does much the same, but with care to point out which elements are being drawn from which theoretical tradition.

I also have not written a book that favors either micro or macro sociology. Both levels of analysis are essential to any adequate sociology. Where

appropriate, the chapters are structured to work from the micro to the macro level of analysis. And the book itself works from the most micro topics to the most macro.

Methodologically the text is equally eclectic. In my own research I have pursued virtually every known technique—participant observation, survey research, historical and comparative analysis, demography, human ecology, even experiments. My belief, made clear in the book, is that theories and hypotheses determine what methods are appropriate (within practical and moral limits). That is why there is not one chapter devoted to methods and one devoted to theory. Instead, Chapter 3 first introduces basic elements of micro theories and then demonstrates how such theories are tested through experiments and participant observation. Chapter 4 introduces social structure within the context of survey research methods. The chapter then assesses basic elements of major macro schools of sociological theory and concludes with an extended example of testing macro theories through comparative research using societies as units of analysis. Throughout the book, the interplay of theory and research is not asserted but demonstrated. No sooner do readers meet a theory than they see it being tested.

Countless publishers have stressed to me that introductory sociology textbooks, unlike texts in other fields, must not have an integrated structure. Because sociologists, I am told, have idiosyncratic, fixed notions about the order of chapters, books must easily permit students to read them in any order. That would be a poor way to use this book. The fact is that later chapters build on earlier ones. To do otherwise would have forced me to eliminate some of sociology's major achievements or else to write a redundant book that repeats itself each time basic material is elaborated or built upon. Clearly, some jumping around is possible—the institutions chapters work well enough in any order (and could even be omitted without harming subsequent chapters)—but the basic ordering of the major parts of the book is organic. Thus, for example, the chapter on socialization expands upon material already presented in the biology chapter. And the discussion of theories of intergroup relations included in Chapter 11 is basic to the examination of models of urban segregation taken up in Chapter 19. In my judgment textbooks can only be highly flexible at the risk of being superficial (imagine a chemistry book with chapters that could be read in any order).



### Study Aids

To assist readers, each chapter ends with a complete review glossary that includes concepts and principles. For example, the glossary for the population chapter includes not only concepts such as “birth cohort” and “crude birth rate” but also a succinct restatement of “Malthusian theory” and of “demographic transition theory.” The glossary is ordered in the same way as the chapters, so it serves to summarize and review the chapter.

Anyone who reads all of the books and articles recommended for further reading at the end of each chapter will know a lot of sociology. To choose them I asked myself what I had read that was of broad interest and had helped me to write the chapter. Obviously I did not think anyone would rush out and read them all. But students attracted by a particular topic may find useful follow-up reading provided in these suggestions. I also have found these works useful in composing lectures.

I have prepared a set of student laboratory assignments: *Doing Sociology: An Introduction Through MicroCase*, published by Wadsworth. Each book comes with a student version of MicroCase and four substantial data sets. Now students can go to the computer lab on their own, without coaching, and do real analysis, pursuing real questions, and get real results. They will come back with a lot to discuss in class. And a by-product of their efforts is that they become extremely well prepared for subsequent methods and statistical courses.

### Instructor’s Manual

Lawrence Mencotti of Edinboro University has created an Instructor’s Manual that is available separately to all instructors. In addition to summaries of the pedagogical goals of each chapter, the Instructor’s Manual contains topics for class discussion and suggests materials that could be turned into lectures—a rich assortment of “good stuff.”

### Other Supplements

Testing is a neglected subject in graduate education that receives precious little space even in *Teaching Sociology*. Yet it is one of the most important things we do. For this reason I am grateful to Edward Rowe of Southwest Texas State University for developing an entirely new Test Bank for the Seventh Edition.

As she did for the previous editions, Carol Mosher of Jefferson County Community College

in Louisville, Kentucky, has prepared a Study Guide for students. It begins with practical suggestions on studying a text, effective test taking, and essay tests. Each chapter of the Study Guide begins with an overview of the text chapter and narrative summary of major topics, followed by lists of key concepts (with accompanying test page numbers), key research studies discussed, and key theories. These sections help students identify and focus on what they need to study and remember. They can then follow up their review with multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and sample essay questions that dovetail with but do not duplicate the test items included in the Test Bank.

### Acknowledgments

I do not create this book by myself. For one thing, I usually have a cat or two dozing on my monitor, inspiring me by example to always take a relaxed approach. In addition, I am helped in a more direct way by some extraordinary people. My debts to Lynne Roberts, president of MicroCase Corporation, and to her staff can only be expressed, not repaid. Bill Seabright and his associates have given the book a dynamic new design. Michele Gitlin and Martha Simmons combed the proofs for errors. Cathy Linberg and Sandra Craig made everything happen on time, for the umpteenth time. I am grateful to them all.

I am especially indebted to all of my colleagues who devoted time and effort to assessing portions of the manuscript.

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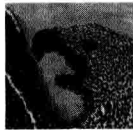
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