

Focus on Society An Introduction to Sociology

Norman W. Storer
The Bernard M. Baruch College
City University of New York



Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

Reading, Massachusetts

Menlo Park, California · London · Amsterdam · Don Mills, Ontario · Sydney

PHOTO CREDITS. Page 9, Joe Komarek, FPG. Page 28, Marc St. Gil, Black Star. Page 34, Stephen J. Potter, Stock, Boston. Pages 41 and 111, Barbara Marshall. Page 55, Lou Hartman, EPA Newsphoto. Page 58, Mary Ellen Browning, DPI. Pages 72, 95, 226, and 242, TNS/EPA Newsphoto. Page 85, Andrew Sacks, EPA Newsphoto. Page 102, Jerry Frank. Page 119, A. Devaney. Page 126, Ellis Herwig, Stock, Boston. Page 140, Sara Krolwich, EPA Newsphoto. Page 154, Stock, Boston. Pages 163 and 172, ©1972 Stephen Shames. Page 168, John H. Atkinson, Jr., DPI. Page 183, Chris Reeberg, DPI. Page 188, Michael Dobo, EPA Newsphoto. Page 204, R. L. Stack, Black Star. Page 237, Daniel S. Brody, Stock, Boston. Pages 250 and 254, H. Armstrong Roberts.

Third printing, April 1974

Copyright © 1973 by Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc. Philippines copyright 1973 by Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher. Printed in the United States of America. Published simultaneously in Canada. Library of Congress Catalog Card No. 72-585.

ISBN 0-201-07304-8 BCDEFGHIJK-HA-79876 To my wife, Ada—who for more than twenty years has made our part of society so very rich and rewarding.

Preface

This book is purposely intended as an introduction to the field of sociology rather than an encyclopedic summary of everything that is included in the field today. In writing it, I have not assumed that the student has internalized the same critical skepticism that my professional colleagues have. I have assumed, rather, that he wants to learn what sociology can tell him about the society in which he lives and that he does not demand "hard" data or scholarly footnotes to help him decide whether this is an academic discipline that interests him.

The vast majority of students who take the introductory course in sociology do not go on to further work in the field, and so the single course constitutes their only detailed exposure to it. For these students, I believe it is more important that they be given a broad sense of the scope and perspective of sociology than that they be thrown immediately into the complexities of research methods and the intricate details of the sociological literature.

For those students who do want to learn more about a particular topic in the field—and most colleges offer separate courses on at least ten of the topics treated here in brief chapters—or for those who want to explore the possibility of majoring in the subject, there is time enough to learn that assertions about social structures and processes should not be made without research-based information to support them. There is time enough for them to become acquainted with the individuals who have contributed to the growth of sociology, and to develop some knowledge

of the history of the discipline. But the introductory course, in my opinion, should serve mainly as a showcase of what the field has to offer and a chance for the student to see whether "sociology-colored glasses" fit him comfortably, enabling him to achieve a more meaningful understanding of the social forces that shape his life and the life of every other member of society.

This text, then, is written for the student rather than for the professional. It is written for the student who does not yet feel that he should be able to evaluate the significance and validity of someone's new research findings, and who has not yet accepted the principle that he should be able to discuss the relationship of a recent article in a sociological journal to a book on the same topic published ten years ago. If the topic is sufficiently attractive to him, then the student will ask for the further training that will bring him closer to a truly professional attitude toward sociology. It seems to me too much to demand that the introductory course accomplish all these laudable purposes in a span of four months or less.

An additional word may be useful to the instructor who uses this book with his students. I have decided, reluctantly, that there is no way to organize the subject-matter of sociology so that topic A must come first and must be followed by topic B. Instead, I have concluded that after the central concepts and perspective have been set forth, there are three different approaches to the analysis of society—and that the order in which they are taken up is more a matter of pedagogical preference than of any logic inherent in the material itself.

In this regard, my own belief is that it is best to build a framework first: to establish the extent and basic structure of the phenomenon under consideration, so that specific details and processes can be more meaningfully fitted into place later on. I have thus arranged things here so that social institutions are taken up immediately after the foundation chapters, then the various types of human groups, and finally some of the basic social processes.

It is my belief also that since students see society from the "inside" rather than from a distance, it is important to link their own perceptions and motives to the social structures and processes that the trained sociologist sees more directly. Some attention, then, is always paid to why the participants in a structure, group, or process should want to behave in ways that produce the patterns studied by sociologists.

I have found that an exchange-theory model is particularly valuable in explaining the dynamics of and differences between the fundamental structures of society—social institutions. Although this approach is applicable also to the analysis of various types of groups (categorical, territorial, and purposeful), it has seemed to me that in these cases exchange the-

ory is more appropriate at a higher level of sophistication, and that it is more effective to stress the foundations and special characteristics of such groups when introducing them as particular foci of sociological attention. Similarly, the major processes that animate society extend well beyond exchange, so that yet another perspective is called for in the concluding section. The aim throughout is to lead the student into each topic as easily and persuasively as possible, rather than to sustain a rigorously consistent theoretical scheme, and I can only plead pedagogical pragmatism in defense of this systematic eclecticism.

No introductory text can satisfy everyone's needs or everyone's criteria of what ought to be included. For reasons explained above, this book does not include separate chapters on social research or sociological theory, and it has seemed beyond the purview of a strictly sociological text to devote space to either social psychology (the study of "small groups") or to population. Yet I believe this text can provide a sufficiently comprehensive bird's-eye view of the major concerns of the field to be effective, especially when used in conjunction with other books and assigned readings.

However, unless it is used for private study, completely apart from the classroom, the text must always be subordinate to the instructor, for it is in the classroom that the subject becomes "real" to the student; it is here that the instructor must add the sense of meaning and challenge that makes a subject come alive for the student.

I would like to express my gratitude to Dean Reginald H. Phelps, Director of the Commission on Extension Courses at Harvard University, and to his secretary, Mrs. Alice E. Kendall, for their initiative in suggesting and arranging the original television series out of which the idea for this book came. Stephen Gilford, producer of the series for WGBH—TV (Boston's famed Channel 2), kept the complicated affair on schedule and made the entire undertaking a highly satisfying experience for me.

To my wife, Ada, and my sons (Marty, 16, and Tom, 14) must go a heartfelt thank-you for their patience in watching me disappear into my study night after night to work on the book. They have all been marvelous.

The staff at Addison-Wesley has been patient and constructive, the kind of support every author should have.

Finally, it must be obvious that my teachers, colleagues, and students have contributed in diverse ways to the formation of my own sociological perspective, but they are in no way responsible for whatever errors or weaknesses they may find in this book.

White Plains, New York August 1972 N.W.S.

Contents

Introduction	1
Part I: The Field of Sociology and Its Central Ideas	5
1. Sociology: The Study of Society	8
Defining Sociology	8
The Usefulness of Sociology	10
The Historical Development of Sociology	11
The Sociological View of Man	12
The Sociological Perspective	14
Conclusion	19
2. Basic Sociological Concepts	22
Interaction	23
Social Status	25
Group	27
Reflective Pause	30
Norms	31
Role	33
Status-Set, Role-Set	35
Summary	36

x Contents

The Nature of Symbols The Definition of Culture Culture and the Group Culture as a Property of the Group Culture and Subculture Culture and Reality Summary 4. Social Institutions and Social Exchange The Motivational Bases of Institutions Social Exchange	38 42 43 46 46 47 50
Culture and the Group Culture as a Property of the Group Culture and Subculture Culture and Reality Summary 4. Social Institutions and Social Exchange The Motivational Bases of Institutions	43 46 46 47 50
Culture as a Property of the Group Culture and Subculture Culture and Reality Summary 4. Social Institutions and Social Exchange The Motivational Bases of Institutions	46 46 47 50 52
Culture and Subculture Culture and Reality Summary 4. Social Institutions and Social Exchange The Motivational Bases of Institutions	46 47 50 52
Culture and Reality Summary 4. Social Institutions and Social Exchange The Motivational Bases of Institutions	47 50 52
Summary 4. Social Institutions and Social Exchange The Motivational Bases of Institutions	50 52
4. Social Institutions and Social Exchange The Motivational Bases of Institutions	52
The Motivational Bases of Institutions	
Social Exchange	53
	54
Commodities	57
Scarce and Joint Commodities	59
The Maintenance of Social Exchange	60
The Principles of Social Exchange	62
Summary	65
Part II: Social Institutions	a ==
	67
5. The Economic Institution	69
Property	70
Forms of Economic Exchange	73
Gift Exchange	73
Barter	74
Money Barter	75
Money Economy	75
Finance Economy	76
Economy and Society	77
Economy and Religion	78
	80
Economy and Polity	
	81
Economy and Polity	
Economy and Polity Summary	81
Economy and Polity Summary 6. The Political Institution	81 83
Economy and Polity Summary 6. The Political Institution Three Types of Power Inducement Influence	81 83 86
Economy and Polity Summary 6. The Political Institution Three Types of Power Inducement Influence Authority	81 83 86 86
Economy and Polity Summary 6. The Political Institution Three Types of Power Inducement Influence Authority The Legitimation of Authority	81 83 86 86 87
Economy and Polity Summary 6. The Political Institution Three Types of Power Inducement Influence Authority The Legitimation of Authority Traditionalistic Authority	81 83 86 86 87 87
Economy and Polity Summary 6. The Political Institution Three Types of Power Inducement Influence Authority The Legitimation of Authority	81 83 86 86 87 87 89

		Contents	XI
	The Political Exchange System		94
	Authority in Complex Societies Summary		96 98
7.	The Family Institution	Ć	99
	Biological Bases of the Family	Ć	99
	Psychological Bases of the Family		04
	Major Family Forms		05
	Marriage Patterns Rules of Residence and Family Organization		07 09
	The Family in Society		10
	Problems of the American Family		12
8.	The Religious Institution	1!	17
	The Religious Impulse	11	17
	Beliefs and Social Exchange		18
	Origins and Ends		20
	Evil, and Also Good Major World Policions and the Poloneing Process		21 24
	Major World Religions and the Balancing Process The Social Structure of Religious Activity		24 27
	Participation		27
	Social Organization		28
	Religion and Society	13	30
	The Future of Religion	13	31
Pa	rt III: Groups in Society	1:	35
9.	Social Stratification	15	38
	Sources of Stratification	13	39
	Criteria of Stratification	14	41
	Status Consistency and Inconsistency	14	44
	The Reality of Social Classes		45
	Social Mobility		47
	Stratification and Society	13	50
10.	Intergroup Relations	15	53
	The Naturalness of Intergroup Hostility		55
	The Establishment of Inequality		58
	The Civil Rights Movement in the U. S. The Future of the Civil Pichts Movement		61
	The Future of the Civil Rights Movement	16	65

xii Contents

11.	Communities	161
	Basic Characteristics of the Community	17.
	Approaches to the Study of Communities	174
	Human Ecology	175
	Social Organization	176
	The Social Psychology of the City	178
	Summary	180
12.	Formal Organizations	182
	Rules: Formal and Informal	184
	Individual Goals and Organizational Goals	186
	Types of Organizational Control	189
	Criteria of Organizational Success	191
	Informal Organization	192
	Summary	194
Par	t IV: Social Processes	197
13.	Public Opinion	197
10.		
	Public Opinion as a Part of Culture The Origins of Public Opinion	202
	Prophecies: Self-Fulfilling and Self-Defeating	203
	The Manipulation of Public Opinion	206
	Dynamics of Public Opinion: Some Implications	209
14	Deviance Deviance	211
IT.		213
	Definitions of Deviance	213
	Deviance, Social Problems, and the Sociologist	216
	The Major Types of Deviance	217
	Sources of Deviance	222
	Foundations of Deviance-Generating Situations	228
15.	Social Control	232
	Background	233
	Informal and Formal Social Controls	234
	Strategies of Informal Control	235
	Strategies of Formal Social Control	236
	The Development of Formal Controls	239
	Punishment	240
	Adaptation	243
	Summary	244

		Contents	xiii
16.	Social Change		247
	Defining Social Change		248
	Sources of Social Change		249
	The Direction of Social Change		257
	The Pace of Social Change		259
	Conclusions		260
	Glossary		262
	Index		268

-

.. ... -

- -

Introduction

Sociology is the science that focuses on society. To define it succinctly, we can say that sociology is the study of human groups as natural phenomena in their own right.

It is not a science because its practitioners perform laboratory experiments, quantify their data, or have established a complete set of verified laws of social behavior. It is a science because they are trying to be systematic and objective in their observations and analyses of society in order to develop generalizations that can yield valid predictions. This is as much as one can ask of any science.

More important, however, is the sociological perspective--the basic assumption that society and the groups of which it is composed can be treated as "things" that are just as "real" as stones, automobiles, protozoa, roses, thunderstorms, and individual human beings. Perhaps the most important single thing an introductory course in sociology can accomplish is to demonstrate that this is indeed a legitimate assumption, and that it can expand our awareness and appreciation of society.

For most students, the course in which they read this book will be their first systematic exposure to the field of sociology. It will not be their first acquaintance with the word sociology, however, for in recent years the sociologist has become a standard authority, quoted in magazine and newspaper articles whenever some part of the current social scene is treated "in depth."

But the student's image of the field is blurred and uncertain. Who are these characters who go around discovering that stripteasers tend to have larger-than-average bust measurements, or who study the home medical practices of families in different social classes, or who write jargony articles about the use of factor-analysis in identifying patterns of political behavior?

A standard liberal arts course in sociology does not usually tell the student much about the personal habits and motives of sociologists; it seeks rather to introduce him to the body of knowledge with which these people identify themselves and to which they are contributing. The student is taken on a relatively short tour of a specialized body of knowledge that other people, past and present, have put together and that exists now as a definite feature of the intellectual world around him.

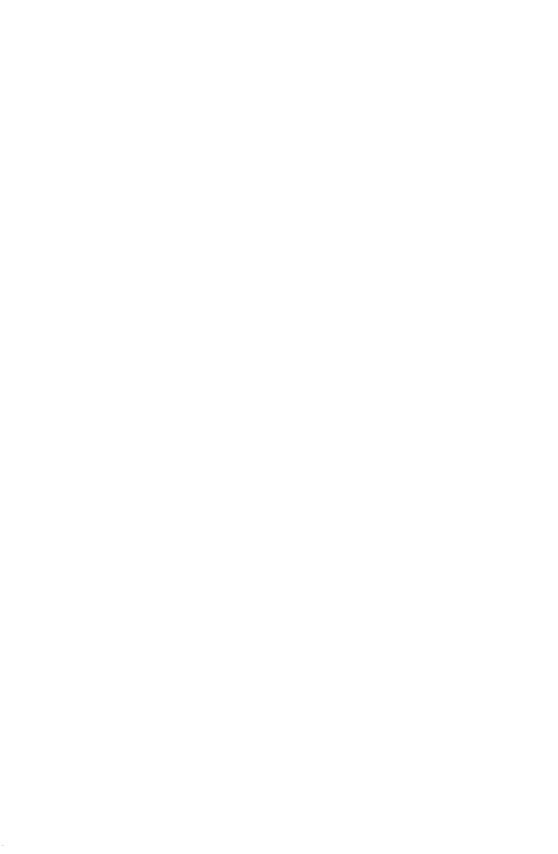
There are many ways in which a student can be introduced to a new field. Emphasis may be placed on the chronological development of its knowledge--the names and historical importance of those who have made major contributions to it. Emphasis may be placed on the research techniques used to acquire and validate new knowledge in the field, or an introduction may emphasize the latest knowledge we have of a few illustrative topics within the field. Each approach is sure to be especially attractive to some professors and to some students.

The present book employs a different approach. It is intended essentially as a brief introduction to the way of thinking that characterizes the sociologist's attempts to understand the makeup and workings of human society. It seeks to convey to the student a sense that each special area of interest within sociology can be identified, outlined, and comprehended logically, even though it does not try to fill in all the details (terms, empirical findings, specific contributors, and unresolved problems) pertinent to each. The aim is thus to give the student confidence that it is possible to understand society systematically and rationally, that its component parts and processes can be pictured in a meaningful way, and that the sociological enterprise may be worthy of further investigation.

The book is divided into four sections of four chapters each-an aesthetically pleasing arrangement that is not necessarily indicative of the orderly structure of sociology as a whole. The first four chapters set forth a bare-bones set of concepts-the basic terms the sociologist uses when he is thinking, talking, or writing about one aspect of society or another. These constitute the major points of reference for what might be called "the sociological paradigm." You know, for instance, how to get from your home to a particular movie theater, but if you didn't have names for the directions, streets, landmarks, and distances involved, you would find

it impossible to tell someone else how to get there. In the same way, sociology is more than just individual understanding; it is explicit understanding that can be shared, discussed, and corrected when necessary.

The first four chapters, then, are devoted to laying out the sociologist's basic set of conceptual tools. How these tools are used and what they have enabled us to understand about society is the focus of the remaining three sections. The second four chapters examine the major social institutions of society, or the basic structures of interaction through which the members of society satisfy their private and collective needs. The third section is concerned with the various types of groups into which people are organized in society, and the fourth section concentrates on some of the most important social processes as they serve both to maintain and to change society. Suggestions for further reading follow each chapter.



Part I

The Field of Sociology and Its Central Ideas

The study of man, singly and in groups, is probably the most complex and challenging task to which scholars can address themselves. The path of a falling stone can be understood with reference to only a handful of variables: gravitational pull, air resistance, mass, wind, and so on. Understanding the growth of a simple plant requires the scientist to consider (or hold constant) hundreds of variables, ranging from genetic endowment to solar radiation. The number of variables that may influence a human being's behavior is at least several orders of magnitude greater; and those that must be taken into consideration if we are to make accurate predictions about an entire society are obviously still greater in number.

Seen in this perspective, it is no wonder that the social sciences are at least three hundred years behind the physical sciences, and certainly a century behind the biological sciences. The more complex the phenomenon under investigation, the more time is required to conceptualize it adequately and to trace out the cause-and-effect relationships that shape it. Yet the social sciences are making progress, more rapidly now than at any time in the past, and whatever frustration one may feel when contemplating the amount of work that remains to be done should be more than balanced by the knowledge that so much intellectual excitement still lies ahead.

Fortunately, no one has to do the whole job. Because mankind is so complex, several distinct social science disciplines have grown up around