

ANTHONY GIDDENS
AND PHILIP W. SUTTON

SOCIOLOGY

8TH EDITION



ANTHONY GIDDENS
AND PHILIP W. SUTTON

SOCIOLOGY

8TH EDITION



Copyright © Anthony Giddens and Philip W. Sutton 2017

The right of Anthony Giddens and Philip W. Sutton to be identified as Authors of this Work has been asserted in accordance with the UK Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

First edition published in 1989 by Polity Press

This eighth edition first published in 2017 by Polity Press

Polity Press

65 Bridge Street

Cambridge CB2 1UR, UK

Polity Press

350 Main Street

Malden, MA 02148, USA

All rights reserved. Except for the quotation of short passages for the purpose of criticism and review, 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 permission of the publisher.

ISBN-13: 978-0-7456-9667-6

ISBN-13: 978-0-7456-9668-3 (pb)

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Typeset in 9.5 on 12.5pt Utopia Std by

Servis Filmsetting Ltd, Stockport, Cheshire

Printed and bound in Italy by Rotolito Lombarda

The publisher has used its best endeavours to ensure that the URLs for external websites referred to in this book are correct and active at the time of going to press. However, the publisher has no responsibility for the websites and can make no guarantee that a site will remain live or that the content is or will remain appropriate.

Every effort has been made to trace all copyright holders, but if any have been inadvertently overlooked the publisher will be pleased to include any necessary credits in any subsequent reprint or edition.

For further information on Polity, visit our website:

politybooks.com

Sociology

Eighth Edition

Preface to the Eighth Edition

Almost thirty years ago now, in 1989, the first edition of *Sociology* was published. Many readers of this eighth edition were not even born then, but it was a period of world-historical change. The post-1945 Cold War was ending, the Berlin Wall came down, Germany was reunited, and the former Soviet-bloc countries of Eastern Europe became independent. For younger generations, the post-Cold War era is normal, but many other facets of daily life today, such as the Internet, the worldwide web and email had yet to make an impact in 1989. Similarly, the ubiquitous mobile phone, social media, digital television and all the other technological necessities we take for granted today were only in their infancy. Like sociology itself, the social world is much changed since that first edition, and yet some things remain the same. This book, despite its expansion and increasing weight, is still produced in satisfying hardcopy format.

Consecutive editions have mapped the myriad changes we have witnessed in societies and sociologists' attempts to understand them. This eighth edition is no different, though it has been carefully revised to take account of recent global developments and new ideas in sociology. Endless innovations in digital media, the long-term problem of climate change, a global financial crisis, the 'Arab Spring' and its aftermath, the rapid economic growth of China, India and Brazil, and the disruptive impact of global terrorism are all shaping the human world in new ways. This new edition examines all of these issues and is comprehensively revised and up to date.

Students sometimes find sociological ideas and evidence difficult to handle. In part, that is because sociology demands a concerted attempt to set aside our personal beliefs and opinions when analysing research findings and theories. In this sense, 'thinking sociologically' involves a profound intellectual and emotional challenge which can be unsettling. Little wonder that most people who study sociology are changed by the experience. The discipline offers a different perspective on the world from that which most people have when they start out. Sociology helps us look beyond the immediate context of our lives and brings us to a deeper understanding of the causes and consequences of our own and other people's actions. We hope you are both challenged and enlightened by reading and engaging with the book.

Acknowledgements

Researching, writing and producing this book is always a major undertaking, which involves a creative collective, not just two authors. First, thanks must go to all of the chapter reviewers, whose guidance and constructive comments on drafts have, once again, proved to be invaluable in helping us to keep the book at the forefront of sociological research and theorizing. Thanks also to the many lecturers and student readers of the seventh edition, whose experiences of actually working with the book enabled us to strengthen the links between contemporary research and undergraduate teaching. As ever, the Polity staff made the production process relatively painless, and a special mention must go to Neil de Cort, Sarah Dobson and Breffni O'Connor, who all helped to lighten the load. We are also grateful to Caroline Richmond, who never lets us get away with sloppiness or inconsistency, and the book is all the better for it. Our commissioning editor, Jonathan Skerrett, once again managed to remain sane during the process, and we thank him for his diligence, judgement and many suggestions for improvement. Finally, we thank Pat Sutton for more or less everything and Alena Ledeneva for her constant help and encouragement.

AG & PWS

Introduction

However fixed and solid they may appear on the surface, human societies are always in the process of change. When we began to write this eighth edition of *Sociology*, the UK was an important member of the European Union. By the end, a UK-wide referendum had produced a majority vote to leave the EU, with all of the political, economic, social and cultural consequences that follow. For instance, in Scotland, a majority voted to stay inside the EU, and the Scottish government began planning for a second referendum within three years on whether Scotland should leave the UK. It is feasible that, before our ninth edition, the union of the UK will have broken up and the process of EU expansion will have gone into reverse. Institutions in the human world, such as the UK, the EU and nation-states, are always open to change and major transformation.

As the academic discipline which studies and tries to make sense of societies and social life, sociology cannot stand still or rest on its laurels. If it did it would quickly become irrelevant and would certainly fail to provide adequate and realistic accounts of and explanations for social life. This basic fact helps to explain why, from the outside at least, sociology's constantly changing theories often appear quite unfathomable. Because the task of sociology is to understand and explain the ever-changing social world, we cannot afford to cling to comfortable, yet increasingly outdated theories and explanations. We must be prepared to test these against new realities and, if found wanting, to jettison them and devise new theories and explanations that are adequate to the task.

This eighth edition of *Sociology* introduces the latest theories and ideas alongside older 'classical' ones, enabling readers to see how sociology has developed in parallel with the societies of which it is a part. One of our main aims is to inspire a new generation of sociologists by presenting some of the most exciting research across a wide range of subject areas, from crime, inequality and education to sexuality, cyberbullying and global terrorism. But there is not much abstract or mere conceptual discussion in the book. Instead, we have tried to illustrate ideas, concepts and theories using concrete examples taken mainly from sociological studies, though we also make use of material from other sources (such as newspaper reports) where these stimulate discussion.

The writing style is as straightforward and direct as we can make it and, by creating a quite seamless narrative throughout each chapter, we hope the book is 'a good read'. The chapters follow a sequence designed to help readers achieve a progressive mastery of the different fields of sociology, but the book can also be used flexibly and is easily adapted to the needs of teachers. Chapters can be ignored or studied in a different order, as each one is written as an autonomous piece, with substantial cross-referencing to help readers see the connections across the varied subjects.

Sociology has a central place within the social sciences and a key role in modern intellectual culture. Like all scientific disciplines, sociology has its own technical language which is absolutely necessary if sociologists are to make their arguments with clarity. However, we try hard to avoid the 'jargon' that finds its way into social science, which we know most newcomers to the discipline (and many professional sociologists!) find impenetrable and unnecessary. Findings drawn from the cutting edge of the discipline are presented alongside contemporary events, issues and data, and we endeavour to cover these in an even-handed, though not indiscriminate, way. Underpinning the whole enterprise is our shared vision that a general sociological approach

continues to be the best way of setting our personal life experience into a broader social context so we are able to make sense of the intimate connections between the individual and society.

Central themes

The book consists of twenty-two chapters, each of which deals with a specific subject such as crime, ethnicity, social class, work or the environment. There are some recurring themes across the whole book, three of which reflect key issues shaping contemporary sociology.

One central theme is **social change**, but particularly globalization. Sociology emerged in the wake of the major transformations wrought by the Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, which changed the human world forever. But social change did not stop in the nineteenth century. Indeed, many sociologists argue that, since the 1970s, the pace of social change has actually speeded up and, with it, the key organizing structures of social class, the traditional family and manufacturing industry have lost their previously strong hold over individual lives. Part of the reason is that we now live in an increasingly global human world with a global economic system, the mass movement of people around the world and the internationalization of politics. Processes of **globalization** also connect the countries of the relatively wealthy developed world more closely to those of the relatively poor developing world. The book covers globalization in all of its varied manifestations, from the international politics of climate change to viral pandemics, organized crime and global inequality. Rapidly developing globalization is perhaps the clearest demonstration of the necessity for sociologists to stay close to major social changes in the real world.

A second theme is the **digital revolution** in communications, which has not just facilitated globalization but is transforming almost every aspect of the way we live, work and enjoy our leisure time. Younger generations are today growing up with a range of technological devices and new opportunities for communication that seemed like pure science fiction fantasy to their parents and grandparents. Thanks to the Internet, instantaneous contact can be made between people many thousands of miles apart by email and social media on smartphones and tablets. Continuing developments in microprocessing have made the personal computer so powerful that it dwarfs the amount of computing power available to the world's largest corporations just thirty years ago. The advancement of robotics is also gathering pace and, though we are used to seeing robots at work in industrial factories, the next stage will see driverless cars on the roads and robots in the home. Yet it is the integration of the Internet, supercomputing and robotics which makes digitization genuinely revolutionary, enabling work tasks – many of them the preserve of the middle classes – to be performed without human beings, with serious consequences for future employment levels. We may be in the early stages of this revolution, but the book covers many aspects of it as it spreads across the whole of social life.

A third theme takes us right back to the origins of sociology – **social inequality**. The book has discrete chapters covering gender and sexuality, 'race' and ethnicity, ageing, social class and disability, and each looks at sociological research in that particular field. Yet sociologists increasingly recognize that important social inequalities are interrelated, producing a complex set of individual life experiences. For example, a young, working-class, white woman may have a very different life experience to an older, middle-class, black woman, which makes it difficult to discuss the common experience of 'women' in general. Hence, today there are many more studies of the complex diversity of individual life experiences. Exploring the ways in which social inequalities intersect is a continuous theme throughout the book. We also explore inequalities between countries and look at the evidence suggesting that, in many aspects, these are decreasing in the twenty-first century.

Key elements of our approach

Our approach to sociology in this book is shaped by three main concerns. First, we seek to connect the small-scale or micro level of social encounters and interactions with the large-scale, macro level of societies and their institutions. Individual interactions in micro-level contexts can impact on the larger world of social institutions, but the latter also influence our daily lives in very profound ways. This two-way interchange is at the heart of many social processes, and it is our view that comprehensive sociological analysis requires situations and events to be understood at both the micro and macro levels.

Second, the book adopts a comparative-historical standpoint. Sociology cannot be limited to understanding a single society but must investigate the relationships between a range of societies and the varied ways in which they influence each other's development. The globalization of social life has made this an urgent necessity, and the book introduces a wide variety of source material drawn from around the world. In particular, many of the chapters cover both the developed and developing countries, which makes for some intriguing comparisons. In our view, comparative historical sociology is essential if we are to understand today's global social life.

Finally, we try to connect the social with the personal. Sociological thinking is a vital source of self-understanding, helping to situate our personal experiences in a broader social setting. But our self-understanding can in turn be focused back on an improved understanding of the social world at large. Studying sociology should be a liberating experience that enlarges our imaginations, opens up new perspectives on the sources of personal behaviour, and creates an awareness of cultural settings that are very different from our own. This aspect of our approach is the starting point for developing a sociological way of thinking, or what sociologists themselves call a **sociological imagination**.

Interactive features

The eighth edition continues with the interactive features designed to engage readers actively with the text. These include *Classic studies* boxes, introducing readers to some of sociology's most influential pieces of work. It is important to be aware that 'classic' is not merely another word for 'old'. Sociology makes progress through the constant testing of ideas and methods in the thousands of research projects, journal articles and books that constitute academic sociology. This means that the majority of research studies do not achieve the status of 'classics', but this doesn't mean they are not valuable – far from it. But, sometimes, significant new discoveries are made, a novel research method is devised or a new theory exerts a special influence on the future direction of the discipline. In such cases these examples may come to be recognized by professional sociologists as 'classics'. In this sense, a 'classic' can be any age, and our selections in the book reflect this. Of course, not everyone will agree with all of our choices, but we have tested them on numerous anonymous reviewers, lecturers and readers and have been reassured that they are not randomly chosen or the result of our own preferences. Hopefully, these examples will help students to appreciate the possibilities opened up by thinking sociologically.

We have also retained all of the other interactive elements for this new edition. We have kept the *Thinking critically* boxes, which mark 'stopping off' points where the reader can reflect on what they have been reading and think through the significance of what they have learned. We strongly recommend that readers work through these boxes to get the most from the book. *Global society* boxes encourage students to think globally about even the most apparently local or domestic issues. Boxes labelled *Using your sociological imagination* often contain unusual or arresting material designed to illustrate or expand on themes found in the chapter, and the *Glossary*

continues to expand as sociologists devise new concepts. All *Glossary* terms are highlighted in bold in the text for easy reference.

The 'sociological workshops' at the end of each chapter have proved useful for teaching and learning, and these have also been retained and revised. The *Chapter review* asks questions based on that chapter's material, and it is a good idea to work through these immediately after reading the chapter, though they are also designed to form the basis for revision at a later date. *Research in practice* follows, which concentrates on sociological research methods and their application in real-world studies. Here, we point readers to a piece of contemporary research, usually in a journal article, and ask them to track it down, read it and make notes as they do so. A series of questions then allows readers to think about the different types of research and methods, what they are used for and how successful their application has been. Many lecturers tell us that this approach helps them to convey how essential an understanding of research methods is for the practice of 'doing' sociology.

Next, we shift the focus from methods to theories with *Thinking it through*. For most of these activities, we have chosen a theoretical paper, an online discussion or a newspaper article which raises issues of theory and explanation. Part of the activity is simply to make sure readers understand the concepts used and the meaning of the paper. A fair number of students tell us they find 'theory' difficult to grasp, mainly because it seems abstract and distant from their own lives. We have therefore selected theoretical pieces which bear directly on real events to bridge the apparent divide between theory and daily life.

Society in the arts takes us outside academic social science and into the arts and humanities. In this section we suggest films, TV programmes or plays, novels, artworks or sculptures, music and exhibitions. All of our recommendations are closely linked to the chapter material, and we ask readers to consider how these add to their knowledge of society. For example, it has been suggested that most people's understanding of nineteenth-century industrialization as a time of huge factories, chimneys belching out pollutants and grimy expanding cities is not taken from social scientific evidence, but from the novels of Charles Dickens and other novelists and writers. How is *contemporary* social life and the emerging digital revolution represented in the arts? Do the arts just tell us something different about the world that social sciences never could? We encourage readers to consider such questions carefully as they work through the exercises in this section.

Finally, the *Further readings* have again been updated and are annotated, so readers can make a more informed choice about what they choose to read. Similarly, the *Internet links* have been checked and updated, so readers can explore some of the mass of material now available online. In addition, the book is designed to be used in conjunction with the extensive material on its own website: www.politybooks.com/giddens. Both lecturers and students will find a wealth of resources to aid further research and support teaching and learning.

Contents

Preface to the Eighth Edition	vi
Acknowledgements	vii
Introduction	viii
1 What is Sociology?	1
2 Asking and Answering Sociological Questions	31
3 Theories and Perspectives	67
4 Globalization and Social Change	108
5 The Environment	152
6 Cities and Urban Life	200
7 Work and the Economy	244
8 Social Interaction and Daily Life	294
9 The Life Course	330
10 Families and Intimate Relationships	376
11 Health, Illness and Disability	427
12 Stratification and Social Class	475
13 Poverty, Social Exclusion and Welfare	521
14 Global Inequality	563
15 Gender and Sexuality	613
16 Race, Ethnicity and Migration	659
17 Religion	704
18 The Media	749
19 Education	800
20 Crime and Deviance	853
21 Politics, Government and Social Movements	904
22 Nations, War and Terrorism	953
Glossary	990
References	1021
Picture Acknowledgements	1075
Index	1078

CHAPTER 1

What is Sociology?



Contents

What to expect from this chapter	4
The sociological imagination	5
Studying people and societies	7
The development of sociological thinking	9
Theories and theoretical perspectives	9
Founders of sociology	11
Three theoretical traditions	18
Levels of analysis: microsociology and macrosociology	24
What is sociology for?	25
Public and professional sociology	26
Conclusion	27
<i>Chapter review</i>	27
<i>Research in practice</i>	28
<i>Thinking it through</i>	28
<i>Society in the arts</i>	29
<i>Further reading</i>	29
<i>Internet links</i>	29



The digital revolution in communications is transforming everyday life, enabling communication and information sharing almost anywhere. Although commuters today may be no more 'antisocial' than in the past, there is a world of difference between the immediacy and interactive potential of contemporary mobile devices and older, more passive media forms such as newspapers.

The world we live in today can feel liberating and exciting but, at the same time, confusing and worrying. Global communication and friendships across national boundaries are in many ways easier to sustain than in previous times, yet we also see violent crime, international terrorism, emerging wars and persistent economic and social inequality. The modern world presents us with many opportunities and possibilities, but it is also fraught with high-consequence risks, most notably the damaging impact of our high-consumption lifestyles on the quality of the natural environment. Most people within the relatively rich countries are materially better off than ever before, but in other parts of the world many millions live in situations of poverty where children die for the lack of fundamental things such as food, safe water supplies and basic healthcare. How can this be, when humanity as a whole has the capability to control its own destiny that would have been unimaginable to previous generations?

How did this world come about? Why are the conditions of life today so different from those of the past? Why is the human world riven with such gross inequalities? Where are today's societies heading in the future? If you have ever asked yourself such large questions, then consider yourself a novice sociologist. These and many more are among the prime concerns of sociology, a field of study that has a fundamental role to play in modern life.

Sociology can be simply defined as the scientific study of human life, social groups, whole societies and the human world as such. It can be a dazzling and compelling enterprise, as its subject matter is our own behaviour as social beings in relationships with many other people. The scope of sociology is extremely wide, ranging from the analysis of passing encounters between individuals on the street to the investigation of crime, international relations and global forms of terrorism.

Most of us see the world in terms of the familiar features of our own lives – our families, friendships and working lives, for example. But sociology insists that we take a broader view in order to understand why we act in the ways we do. It teaches us that much of what we regard as natural, inevitable, good and true may not be so, and that things we take for granted are actually shaped by historical events and social processes. Understanding the subtle yet complex and profound ways in which our individual lives reflect the contexts of our social experience is basic to the sociologist's outlook.

What to expect from this chapter

This chapter is the first of a block of three. Taken together, these provide a broad introduction to sociology: what it is, where it came from, how it developed over time, how sociologists go about their work and what kinds of explanations they use. As the opening to the whole book, this chapter provides a brief introduction to what sociology is, how and why

it came into existence and what it is used for. Chapter 2 then covers how sociologists actually 'do' sociology. It describes the questions they ask, the wide range of research methods they use to answer those questions and how they assess their findings. It also tackles the thorny issue of whether sociology is a science at all.

Chapter 3 looks at sociological theories. Theories are an essential part of all academic subjects because they allow us to provide explanations rather than simply listing a series of facts. For example, we might find that the proportion of married women in the UK who are in work today is higher than in the 1950s. The bare statistics are certainly useful, but they are crying out for an explanation – *why* are more married women working today than in the past? – and that is what good theories provide. They try to tell us why something has happened or changed and in that way they broaden our knowledge. In chapter 3 you will find some important modern sociological theories such as feminism, functionalism, structuration theory, figurational studies, postmodernism and more. You should not be put off by these apparently difficult terms. They are really just a shorthand way of describing the different ways that sociologists interpret and understand the social world.

In the rest of this chapter we first discuss sociology as *a way of thinking* about the world or as a different way of seeing which, once you have mastered it, becomes very difficult to avoid. In short, once a sociologist, always a sociologist! World events, personal relationships, family life, international politics and much more: you will see all of these in a different light once you have developed a sociological way of seeing and thinking.

Second, we introduce the ideas of some of the very earliest sociological thinkers of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – those who essentially founded modern sociology as an academic discipline. We connect these thinkers to the times they lived through in order to illustrate the new social problems they tried to solve and how they went about

it. We then discuss some of the approaches to sociology that came afterwards. However, this is not a comprehensive list, and you will need to read chapter 3 on 'Theories and Perspectives' for the more recent theories.

Third, we look at some of the uses of sociology. Many students are attracted to sociology because they have a desire to help others and see the subject as a way into a suitable 'people-centred' career. For example, sociology graduates find careers in the caring professions, social work, teaching or the criminal justice system. Others use their research skills and knowledge to good effect in management, market research, local and national government administration or research consultancy. Still others (after more study) become professional sociologists working in universities and colleges. Studying sociology can be the first step on the path to a rewarding and satisfying career. However, others study sociology simply because they want to understand better the world we live in. This is sociology as a kind of personal enlightenment, which may or may not lead down a particular career path.

Some sociologists use their training and skills to try to improve the world by intervening to change an existing situation. This is 'applied sociology', and much of the research on social problems such as homelessness, poverty, unemployment, drug addiction, self-harm, and so on, is applied research. Based on their findings, applied researchers may try out possible solutions or make recommendations for changes to government policies or service provision.

Finally, the chapter ends with recent ideas of the need for sociologists to engage with the general public and the media if sociology is to have a greater impact on society. We are used to seeing psychologists, historians and political scientists as experts on television news and documentaries, but rarely do we see sociologists. This section discusses why this is so and what sociologists can do about it. However, we begin by outlining what it means to 'think sociologically' – a basic prerequisite to the practice of 'doing sociology'.

The sociological imagination

Learning to think sociologically means cultivating our imagination. Studying sociology is not just a routine process of acquiring knowledge from books like this one. A sociologist has to be able to break free from the immediacy of their personal circumstances to see things in a wider social context. Doing sociological work depends on developing what the American sociologist C. Wright Mills (1970), in a famous phrase, called a **sociological imagination**.

The sociological imagination demands that we should 'think ourselves away' from the familiar routines of our daily lives in order to look at them from a new point of view. The best way to illustrate this is with something many millions of people do every day without a second thought, the simple act of drinking a cup of coffee. What could we possibly find to say, from a sociological point of view, about such a commonplace and uninteresting act?

First, coffee is not just a refreshing drink but it has symbolic value as part of our day-to-day social activities. Often the rituals associated with coffee drinking are more important than consuming the drink itself. The morning cup of coffee is often the centrepiece of a personal routine and an essential first step to starting the day. Morning coffee can then be followed later in the day by coffee with others – the basis of a group, not just an individual ritual. Two people who arrange to meet for coffee are probably more interested in socializing and chatting than drinking coffee. In all societies, drinking and eating provide occasions for social interaction, and these offer a rich subject matter for sociological study.

Second, coffee contains caffeine, a drug which has a stimulating effect on the brain, and many people drink coffee for the 'extra lift' it provides. Long days at the office or late nights studying sociology – some students do this, we are told – are made more tolerable by regular coffee breaks. Coffee is a habit-forming substance, but coffee addicts are not regarded as 'drug users'. This is because, like alcohol,



Meeting friends for coffee is part of a social ritual which also situates people within their broader social context.

coffee is a socially acceptable drug, whereas cocaine and heroin, for example, are not. Yet some societies tolerate the consumption of cocaine but frown on both coffee and alcohol. Sociologists are interested in why these differences exist and how they came about.

Third, when we drink a cup of coffee we are unwittingly caught up in a complex set of social and economic relationships that stretch right across the planet. Coffee links people in the wealthiest and the most impoverished parts of the world. It is consumed mainly in the relatively rich countries but grown primarily in relatively poor ones. Coffee is one of the most valuable commodities in international trade, providing many countries with their largest source of foreign exchange. The production, transportation and distribution of coffee require continuous transactions between people thousands of miles away from the coffee drinker. Studying such global connections is an important task for sociologists.

Fourth, sipping coffee is not 'natural' but presumes a long process of social, politi-

cal and economic development. Along with other familiar items of Western diets – like tea, bananas, potatoes and white sugar – coffee became widely consumed only from the late 1800s, though it was fashionable among social elites before then. The drink originated in the Middle East, but its mass consumption dates from the period of Western colonial expansion more than 200 years ago. Virtually all the coffee we drink today comes from areas such as South America and Africa that were colonized by Europeans. The drink is not a 'natural' part of the Western diet, however normal buying and consuming coffee appears to people today.

Finally, coffee has been 'branded' and politicized within current debates about globalization, international fair trade, human rights and environmental damage. The decisions consumers make about what kind of coffee to drink and where to buy it are political as well as lifestyle choices. Some people drink only organic coffee, decaffeinated coffee or coffee that is 'fairly traded' through schemes that