

MODERN SOCIOLOGY

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SECOND EDITION

OR: PETER WORSLEY

DE MITCHELL, PETER MARTIN, D. H. J. MORGAN,
D PONS, W. W. SHARROCK, ROBIN WARD



Modern Sociology Introductory Readings

Selected Readings

Edited by Peter Worsley

Second Edition

Contributing Editors: J. Clyde Mitchell, Peter Martin,
D. H. J. Morgan, Valdo Pons, W. W. Sharrock,
Robin Ward, Peter Worsley

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Introduction

This book of Readings has been designed principally to accompany our textbook, *Introducing Sociology* (Penguin Books, 1977), and the rationale of the general organization of the subject matter is fully explained in the Introduction to that book. But we hope that the Readings will also serve as an introduction to the source materials of sociology in their own right.

We have assumed that the reader is approaching the subject for the first time, and have tried to take him through three stages in introducing him to sociology. Firstly in Part One, we discuss the general status of the social sciences and the place of sociology among those sciences, and in Part Two the special characteristics of human society which call for special methods of study also: methods and techniques appropriate to the social sciences. They also involve ethical problems of a unique kind.

In Part Three, we examine the main contemporary kinds of societies, and relate their present condition of development or underdevelopment to the general study of the emergence of a world social system.

In Part Four, we move to the discussion of key institutions and social milieux in which all individuals are involved as they move through the life-cycle: the family, education, work, organizations and 'the community' at various levels (Parts Three to Eight).

In the last stage, Parts Nine and Ten, we move to the larger issues of societal cohesion and conflict, with an examination of the major lines of division in society, notably social stratification, and an analysis of the forces which make it possible for society to persist at all.

The over-all strategy of the book is progressively to increase the level of theoretical generalization, to move from the concrete to the abstract, from the familiar to the unfamiliar.

Many of the books and articles referred to in the textbook are not easily accessible to interested readers, either because they are only to be found in specialist libraries or because even the best libraries rarely contain more than a few copies, which may be in demand by large numbers of readers.

We have therefore selected key passages from such works, usually from works referred to in the textbook, but by no means always so. We have attempted to provide the reader with materials which bear upon the main themes developed in each chapter of the textbook, though we have divided the subject matter of the original chapter 'Work, industry and organizations' into two separate chapters in this book.

The nature of the selections inevitably varies. They include important statements of general theory, analyses of particular institutions, excerpts from case-studies and classical community studies. Some of these you will find written in an easily assimilable manner; others involve more complex arguments and use more technical language. We hope that in this way readers will be introduced to the range of styles that are involved in sociological writing.

We hope, too, that those who are stimulated by any of these excerpts will be encouraged to turn to the original book or article and read more, and we trust that we have presented a sufficient variety of approaches to sociology to cater for people's manifold interests.

Because of the general and introductory nature of these Readings, which makes it desirable that they should be fluent and straightforward to read, we have retained footnotes from the original texts only when they are a necessary amplification of points contained in the text: most references to sources have been deleted. Readers who are sufficiently interested in particular topics to delve further will of course find the references in the original texts.

Editor's Note

The Readings in Part One, Part Three and Part Nine were selected by myself; those in Part Two by J. Clyde Mitchell; in Part Four by D. H. J. Morgan; in Part Five by Peter Martin; in Part Six by D. H. J. Morgan; in Part Seven by Robin Ward; in Part Eight by Valdo Pons; and in Part Ten by Wesley Sharrock.