

SIXTH • EDITION

DOWN TO EARTH SOCIOLOGY

INTRODUCTORY • READINGS



JAMES M. HENSLIN

Down to Earth Sociology

Introductory Readings
SIXTH 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 Sixth Edition

IT IS WITH PLEASURE that I introduce the sixth 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 the 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 that 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, Ralph Bishop, B. E. Blakely, Audie Blevins, Deirdre Boden, Vincent Bolduc, Jacqueline Burnside, Ralph M. Carter, René M. Descartes, Ann Marie Ellis, Jeff Ferrell, David O. Friedrichs, Ursula R. Gaertner, Roberta Garner, Sandy Gill, Frank Glamser, Carol Gourlie, C. Larry Heck, Wendel J. Hunigan, Philip M. Kayol, Phyllis Kitzerow, James W. Loewen, Stephen R. Marks, Steve McGuire, Dennis K. Nelson, Gordon Nelson, Rod Nelson, Jim Ostrow, Richard D. Reddy, Dave Rudy, Thomas Shey, James P. Sikora, Layne A. Simpson, Robin L. Steinback, Kandi Stinson, and Kathryn Talley. 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 expand the section 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, new to this edition, 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 hierar-

chies, 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, looking at power, wealth, gender, occupation, education, and race as dimensions of social inequality in our society. 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 workers' struggles against oppression, at adaptations to changing technology and international economic competition, and at 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

Nijole V. Benokraitis (article 29) received her Ph.D. in Sociology at the University of Texas at Austin. She is Professor of Sociology at the University of Baltimore and the author of *Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity* (with Joe Feagin), the editor of *Seeing Ourselves* (with John Macionis), and the author of *Modern Sexism* (with Joe Feagin), from which her selection in this book is taken.

Benokraitis, who came to the United States during World War II as a political refugee from Lithuania, says, "I became a sociologist because I grew up in the slums of South Boston, watched my parents work double shifts in factories and sweatshops most of their lives, and lived in abject poverty for many years. I was determined to save America from poverty, injustice, inequality, discrimination, and other social problems. So I majored in sociology as an undergraduate and for graduate school chose sociology rather than law, social work, or business. But instead of changing the world, I became a sociology professor—and am almost as poor as my parents!"

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 Social Construction of Reality* (with Thomas Luckmann), *The Capitalist Revolution*, 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 18) earned her M.A. at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and is an associate of the Masters-Johnson Institute (Biological Research Institute) in St. Louis, Missouri.

Theodore Caplow (article 8) earned his Ph. D. in Sociology at the University of Minnesota and is Professor of Sociology at the University of Virginia. His books include *Two Against One: Coalitions in Triads, Middletown Families* (with others), and *American Social Trends*.

Caplow says, "I was lured out of history into sociology when a friend took me to hear a summer lecture by Robert Lynd. I have been following in Lynd's footsteps ever since."

Napoleon A. Chagnon (article 6) 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 *Studying the Yqnomamö, Yqnomamö Warfare, Social Organization and Marriage Alliances*, and the book from which his selection in this book is taken, *Yqnomamö: The Fierce People*.

William J. Chambliss (article 23) 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).

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."

Candace Clark (article 17) received her Ph.D. in Sociomedical Sciences at Columbia University. She is Associate Professor of Sociology at Montclair State College and has published *Social Interaction: Readings in Sociology* (with Howard Robboy).

Clark says, "In my first course in sociology, I saw that sociologists understand many non-obvious processes that go on behind the facades and pretenses of everyday life. I was fascinated by their ability to move between concrete data (people's actions in families, schools, bureaucracies, etc.) and abstract concepts (such as social cohesion, self, and social structure). Their *data* were the everyday beliefs and behavior that everyone else took for

granted. They understood how the way society is organized has profound effects on people, shaping even their self concepts. They understood how something like the age structure of a society can affect how much crime there is, how many people will get married, and just about everything. This was eye-opening stuff. It explained what was going on around me. I was hooked."

John R. Coleman (article 21) 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.

Kingsley Davis (article 10) 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 36) 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 graduate school, 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 27) 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 *Who Rules America Now?*, *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.

Joe Feagin (article 29) received his Ph.D. in Sociology from Harvard University and is Graduate Research Professor of Sociology at the University of Florida. His many books include *Free Enterprise City*, *Racial and Ethnic Relations*, and *The Elusive Dream: Racism and the Black Middle Class*.

Feagin says, "I became interested in sociology because of an interest in racial and ethnic relations and the sociology of religion. I was inspired by great teachers at Harvard University, particularly Thomas Pettigrew, Gordon Allport, and Charles Tilly."

Karen E. Fields (article 30) earned her Ph.D. in Sociology at Brandeis University. She is Director of the Frederick Douglass Institute for African and African-American Studies at the University of Rochester. She is the co-author of *Lemon Swamp and Other Places*, the book from which her article is taken.

Mamie Garvin Fields (article 30), the grandmother of Karen E. Fields, died in 1987, just short of her ninety-ninth birthday. She is the co-author of *Lemon Swamp and Other Places*, the book from which her article is taken.

Herbert J. Gans (article 28) 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*, *The Levittowners*, and *Middle American Individualism: The Future of Liberal Democracy*.

Gans, a former President of the American Sociological Association who "finds sociology more interesting than hobbies," 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 that "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."

Erving Goffman (article 9) 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 33) 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 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."

Jack Haas (article 38) received his Ph.D. in Sociology from Syracuse University and is Professor of Sociology at McMaster University. With William Shaffir, he is the author of *Decency and Deviance, Shaping Identity in Canadian Society*, and *Becoming Doctors: The Adoption of a Cloak of Competence*.

Haas says, "I became a sociologist in order to get paid for watching and talking to people and to avoid bosses and repetitive work."

Mykol Hamilton (article 13) 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 13) 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. I stumbled into psychology in part by accident and in part because of the intellectual fascination of research on human behavior. 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, 11, 16, 18, and 22) 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 *Social Problems: Coping with the Challenges of a Changing Society*.

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 upward 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."

Lawrence K. Hong (article 36) 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."

Everett C. Hughes (article 32) received his Ph.D. in Sociology at the University of Chicago. At the time of his death in 1983, he was Professor Emeritus of Sociology at Boston College. He wrote such books as *French Canada in Transition*, *Collective Behavior*, and *The Sociological Eye*.

Jennifer Hunt (article 39) received her Ph.D. in Sociology from the City University of New York and is Associate Professor of Sociology at Montclair State College. She is also a research candidate in the clinical training program at the Psychoanalytic Institute at the New York University Medical Center.

Hunt publishes articles on the police, psychoanalysis, and feminism. She likes sociology because "it provides an unusual opportunity to explore other cultural worlds by doing in-depth field work."

Elliot Liebow (article 31) earned his Ph.D. in Sociology at the Catholic University of America. Until his retirement in 1985, he was a social anthropologist with the National Institute of Mental Health. He is the author of *Tally's Corner*, the book from which his selection is taken.

Zella Luria (article 12) received her Ph. D. in Psychology at Indiana University and is Professor of Psychology at Tufts University. She is the author