

The Wadsworth Sociology Reader Series

SOCIOLOGICAL
ODYSSEY

CONTEMPORARY

Readings in Sociology

PATRICIA A. ADLER | PETER ADLER



Sociological Odyssey

Contemporary Readings in Sociology

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To Our Proteges

Kathy, Angela, Laurie, Dana, Joanna, Jen, Katy, Adina, and Kevin

May all teachers be blessed with students such as these



Preface

. . . what a long strange trip it's been . . .

So sang the Grateful Dead in the 1970s, when, in retrospect, their careers were only in an intermediate stage. The same refrain can be sung for sociology. This discipline, barely a century old (sociology is a relatively young science—only about 100 years old in Europe and slightly younger than that in America, a mere adolescent by intellectual standards), has witnessed the enormous social changes of the twentieth century. These changes include unsurpassed prosperity, a Depression that wreaked havoc with people's lives, several wars of varying lengths and questionable motivations, numerous natural disasters, an explosion in the production of knowledge, the rise of new media forms such as television, a grassroots student revolution that virtually altered the social patterns of society, so-called mind expanding drugs such as LSD, communication upheavals caused by innovations such as the Internet and cell phones, and myriad other inventions, events, and ideas that have shaped the world in which we now live. And sociology, the science of society, has been there to witness the impact of these profound transformations. Arguably, no other academic discipline is better suited to assess, analyze, evaluate, and predict what these changes have wrought.

You are about to begin an odyssey, a journey into a new realm of thinking that, if taken seriously, can change the way you view the world. The “sociological imagination,” as the mid-century sociologist C. Wright Mills referred to it, can transform one's perspective on reality so that even the most mundane, seemingly trivial aspects of everyday life take on added significance. Further, the big issues that face us, such as social inequality, political corruption, crime, and environmental decay, can also be looked at with fresh eyes to lend increasing clarity to

why these exist and how we can improve conditions. Like the visionary filmmaker Stanley Kubrick predicted decades ago, the early twenty-first century will be a space odyssey into domains we could not even have dreamed about a scant decade ago.

We are pleased to be your guides in these travels. Over the course of the next several months, with the assistance of your professor, we will explore parts of society that may either be very familiar to you or seem very far away. In either case, we hope to enlighten you about the social world that surrounds you. For the most part, the selections we have chosen are “experience-near” for you, such as on the change of identity you experienced from high school to college, the popularity of children in cliques, student participation in classrooms, public bathroom behavior, high school reunions, intermarriage, the Internet, and the behavior of some fraternity members. Other topics may not be as integral to your everyday lives, but relevant nevertheless. These include people on welfare, women with sexually transmitted diseases, skinheads, upper-level drug dealers and smugglers, illicit drug use by pharmacists, gang behavior, and the work of impoverished new immigrants. We hope that at the end of this journey you will have a better understanding of the social dynamics of society and the complexities that make up your world.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book came to full fruition during the hectic months of the Fall, 1999 semester. For years we had toyed with the idea of creating an exciting, new introductory reader for students to enjoy, but it wasn't until Eve Howard, stalwart acquisitions editor for Wadsworth, flew to Boulder to twist our arms that we finally agreed that the time was ripe. Throughout this process, Eve has been a strong supporter, listening to our worries, fielding our concerns, and doing more than we thought humanly possible to push the project through in record time. To her, we give our sincerest and heartfelt thanks.

We have also had the support of two departments at the University of Colorado and University of Denver, respectively, that have given us the foundation to pursue a project such as this. Our colleagues have been most open to hearing about our various selections, suggesting possible readings, and understanding the value of creating such a text. Most particularly, Paul Colomy (University of Denver), provided critical feedback at a time when we were unsure of the precise direction we wanted to take. His intellectual guidance will forever be appreciated. Our Chairs, Dennis Mileti and Nancy Reichman, gave us the intellectual and emotional support to pursue this endeavor. Other friends and colleagues, such as Dean Birkenkamp, Dan Cress, Gary Alan Fine, Chuck Gallmeier, Bob Granfield, Rik Scarce, and D. Angus Vail, gave us some ideas that were used in making our choices. Our children, Jori (now a superb sociologist in her own right) and Brye, offer us a perspective to evaluate what a college student wants to hear, as well as a model for what parents want to see in their progeny. No thank-you would be

complete without the inclusion of Dorene Miller, Administrative Assistant at the University of Denver, who time and again has bailed us out. She unselfishly does the tough work and lends the type of support without which projects such as these could not flourish. Finally, we are fortunate to have a cadre of comrades, our proteges, who have also given us advice and encouragement along the way. Kathy Fox, Angela Yancik, Laurie Scarborough Voss, Dana Jones Hubbard, Joanna Gregson Higginson, Jennifer Lois, Katy Irwin, Adina Nack, and Kevin David Vryan are all now full-fledged collaborators with us in the joint sociological enterprise we share. We lovingly dedicate this book to them.

A team of sociological reviewers were also an important cog in assuring that the selections in this book had the most relevance to students' lives:

David Boden
Lake Forest College

John Bridges
Kutztown University

Kevin Early
Oakland University

Patti Guiffre
Southwest Texas State University

Jane Johnson
Southwest Texas State University

David Maines
Oakland University

Alvar Nieves
Wheaton College

We are grateful for the quick turnaround they gave in reviewing the book, as well as the thoughtful comments about the numerous ways that introductory sociology can be taught.

At Wadsworth Publishing Company, in addition to the steadfast work of Eve Howard, mentioned previously, there have been a number of individuals who have assisted us. Most especially, Dee Dee Zobian, assistant to Eve Howard, did more of the daily work than anyone else to assure the timeliness of the project. Dee Dee treated us as if we were her only project, when in reality she was simultaneously juggling a dozen or more ventures. Others, such as Jerilyn Emori, Bob Kauser, and Andrea Bednar made sure that the final product was produced with the professionalism that has become the hallmark of Wadsworth's operation. This list would not be complete without mentioning others in the publishing industry who either directly or indirectly helped us. Notably, Serina Beauparant, formerly of Wadsworth but now holding court at Mayfield, was literally the first person to try to cajole us into doing this book. No other person deserves more credit than Serina for giving birth to the embryo that has culminated in this final product. Dean Birkenkamp (Rowman and Littlefield), Mitch Allen (Alta Mira), and Martha Heller (formerly of Rutgers University Press) are all editors with whom we've worked who remind us of the scholarly and intellectual fortunes, rather than merely economic ones, that are borne out through our books. They represent the best that publishing has to offer.

To our students, past, present, and future, and to our readers, we thank you for your patience, diligence, and understanding. We hope that we have been able to convey the sociological perspective in such a way as to make you as excited about applying it to your lives as it is for us to teach it to you.



About the Editors



Patricia A. Adler (Ph.D., University of California, San Diego) is Professor of Sociology at the University of Colorado. In 1999, she was named as the Outstanding Teacher in the faculty of Arts and Sciences. She has written and taught in the areas of deviance, drugs in society, sociology of gender, and the sociology of children. A second edition of her book *Wheeling and Dealing* (Columbia University Press), a study of upper-level drug traffickers, was released in 1993.

Peter Adler (Ph.D., University of California, San Diego) is Professor of Sociology at the University of Denver, where he served as Chair from 1987 to 1993. In 1998, he was named the University Lecturer, an award that represents outstanding achievement in scholarship and research. His research interests include social psychology, qualitative methods, and the sociology of sport and leisure.

Together the Adlers edited the *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* and were the founding editors of *Sociological Studies of Child Development*. They are also editors of another Wadsworth book, *Constructions of Deviance*, a collection of readings on deviant behavior, now in its third edition. Among their other books are *Backboards and Blackboards*, a participant-observation study of college athletes that was published by Columbia University Press in 1991, and *Peer Power*, a study of the culture of elementary schoolchildren that was published by Rutgers University Press in 1998. Currently, they are studying the subculture of resort workers.

Patti and Peter have been writing together for thirty years, ever since they were undergraduates at Washington University in St. Louis. They have two children: a son, Brye, who recently graduated from Boulder High School and attends Emory University, and a daughter, Jori, a sociology major who recently graduated from Emory University. Their dog, Lanai, accompanies them to their classes.

If you have any questions for them, they can be reached at adler@spot.colorado.edu



About the Contributors

Emily Stier Adler is Professor of Sociology at Rhode Island College with areas of specialization in the sociology of gender, the family, and research methods. She is the coauthor, with Roger Clark, of *How It's Done: An Invitation to Social Research* (Wadsworth, 1999). Her current research projects include a study of college faculty members' views of teaching and the classroom experience and on family interaction patterns after retirement.

Elijah Anderson is the Charles and William L. Day Professor of the Social Sciences, Professor of Sociology, and Director of the Philadelphia Ethnography Project at the University of Pennsylvania. An expert on the sociology of black America, he is the author of the highly regarded work, *A Place on the Corner*, numerous articles on the black experience, and the recently published *Code of the Streets*. For his ethnographic study, *Streetwise*, he was honored with the Robert E. Park Award by the American Sociological Association.

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Alan Bryman is Professor of Social Research in the Department of Social Sciences, Loughborough University, England. His main research interests lie in research methodology, leadership studies, organizational analysis, and theme parks. He is author or coauthor of several books, including *Quantity and Quality in Social Research* (Routledge, 1988), *Charisma and Leadership in Organizations* (Sage, 1992), *Disney and His Worlds* (Routledge, 1995), and *Social Scientists* (Routledge, 1999). He is currently writing a book on social research methods (Oxford University Press, forthcoming) and *The Disneyization of Society* (Sage, forthcoming).

Spencer E. Cahill is Associate Director of Interdisciplinary Studies and Sociology at the University of South Florida. He has published articles on a range of topics including gender identity acquisition, public life, childhood, disability, and professional socialization. His current research examines adolescent culture and relations through notes and other personal documents that adolescents wrote and exchanged among themselves.

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Joel Charon earned his Ph.D. in Sociology at the University of Minnesota. He has worked in the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice at Moorhead State University, which he has chaired since 1993. He has written *Symbolic Interactionism* (seventh edition, Prentice Hall), *The Meaning of Sociology* (sixth edition, Prentice Hall), and *Ten Questions* (fourth edition, Wadsworth). He loves teaching, but has decided to devote the rest of his professional life to research and writing, beginning in 2001.

Randall Collins is Professor of Sociology at the University of Pennsylvania. His books include *Conflict Sociology* (1975), *The Credential Society* (1979), *Weberian Sociological Theory* (1986), *The Sociology of Philosophies* (1998), and *Macro-History: Essays in Sociology of the Long Run* (1999).

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G. William Domhoff is a Research Professor at the University of California, Santa Cruz, where he teaches a course on social psychology and power. He is most recently author of *State Autonomy or Class Dominance* (Aldine de Gruyter, 1996) and coauthor with Richard L. Zweigenhaft of *Diversity in the Power Elite: Have Women and Minorities Reached the Top?* (Yale University Press, 1998). Four of his earlier books, including the one from which the selection in this anthology is taken, appeared on the recent list of top 50 best sellers in sociology since 1945. He is currently studying the likelihood that a new liberal-environment-labor coalition can transform the Democratic Party due to the fact that the Voting Rights Act of 1964 made it possible for African American voters in the South to force conservative Southern whites into the Republican Party.

Paula Foster is the Clinical Director of Children's Services, a program of May Behavioral Health, Inc. In addition, she has a private practice specializing in trauma resolution, sexual offending, and family systems.

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Lynda Lytle Holmstrom is Professor of Sociology at Boston College and former chairperson of the department. Her books include: *The Two-Career Family* (Schenkman, 1972); *The Victims of Rape: Institutional Reactions*, with Ann Wolbert Burgess (Wiley, 1978; Transaction, 1983); and *Mixed Blessings: Intensive Care for Newborns*, with Jeanne Harley Guillemin (Oxford University Press, 1986). Her present research, with David A. Karp and Paul S. Gray, is on family dynamics and the college application process.

David Karp is Professor of Sociology at Boston College. His earlier books on cities, everyday life, aging, and depression commonly reflect an enduring interest in how people invest their daily worlds with meaning. His book entitled *Speaking of Sadness: Depression, Disconnection, and the Meaning of Illness* was the 1996 recipient of the Charles Horton Cooley Award. A new book, *Committed to Care: Mental Illness, Family Ties, and Moral Responsibility*, will be published by Oxford University Press in 2001.

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Adina Nack is a Ph.D. candidate in sociology at the University of Colorado. Her teaching and research interests include medical sociology, feminist theory, ethnographic methods, and social psychology. She is currently studying

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Irene Padavic is Associate Professor of Sociology at Florida State University. With Karin Brewster she has examined changes in ideology about gender (*Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 2000), and together they are currently working on a project about changes in child care arrangements over the last 20 years. With Mindy Stompler (*Social Problems*, 1997) and with Alexandra Berkowitz (*Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 1999) she has explored differences between African American and white women's groups on college campuses. Most of her research, however, has centered on gender and work, including several articles about segregation written independently or in collaboration with Barbara Reskin, and articles about sexual harassment and women veterans' earnings.

Joel Perlmann is Senior Scholar, Jerome Levy Economics Institute of Bard College and Levy Institute Research Professor at the College. He received his Ph.D. in history and sociology at Harvard University. Among his publications are *Ethnic Differences* (Cambridge University Press), *Women's Work? American Schoolteachers 1650-1920* (with Robert Margo, forthcoming, University of Chicago Press), and (with Roger Waldinger), "Immigrants Past and Present: A Reconsideration," in *The Handbook of International Migration*. He is at work on the history of American ethnic intermarriage; a comparison of contemporary second-generation economic prospects with those of second generations from the last great wave of American immigration; and a demographic history of the Russian Jews on the eve of their emigrations to the West.

Robert Putnam is the Peter and Isabel Malkin Professor of Public Policy at Harvard University. He is the author of many books, including *Bowling Alone* (1999), *Making Democracy Work* (1993), *Double-Edged Diplomacy* (1993), *Hanging Together* (1984), *Bureaucrats and Politicians in Western Democracies* (1981), *Comparative Study of Political Elites* (1976), and *Beliefs in Politicians* (1973). A recipient of numerous scholarly honors and a consultant to various government and international organizations, he is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Mark R. Rank received his Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Wisconsin. He is currently Associate Professor in the George Warren Brown School of So-

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Barbara Reskin is Professor of Sociology at Harvard University. Her research focuses on sex, race, and ethnic inequality in jobs. Her most recent books are *The Realities of Affirmative Action in Employment* (1998), *Women and Men at Work* (with Irene Padavic, 1994), *Job Queues, Gender Queues: Explaining Women's Inroads into Male Occupations* (with Patricia Roos, 1990). She is currently studying the impact of employers' personnel practices and government actions on levels of employment discrimination by sex and race.

Barbara J. Risman is Professor of Sociology at North Carolina State University, where she also directs the graduate program for the Women and Gender Studies Program. She is currently coeditor of *Contemporary Sociology*. Currently, her research is on women's activism in post-Soviet Russia.

George Ritzer is best known for *The McDonaldization of Society*, but he has authored other works like it, including *Enchanting a Disenchanted World*. He is co-founding editor of *The Journal of Consumer Culture*. The vast majority of his work is in the area of social theory and metatheory. Sage (England) will soon publish two volumes of his collected works, one volume focusing on theory and the other on consumption. He has been Professor of Sociology at the University of Maryland since 1974.

Andrew Shapiro is a writer and legal scholar with a particular interest in the Internet. He is the author of *The Control Revolution: How the Internet is Putting Individuals in Charge and Changing the World We Know*. He is also cofounder of Kind.com and a senior advisor to the Markle Foundation.

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