

RODNEY STARK

Sociology

SIXTH EDITION



Sociology

SIXTH EDITION

Rodney Stark

University of Washington



Wadsworth Publishing Company

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Cover Image: *Hammerstein's Roof Garden* (ca. 1901), by William J. Glackens (1870–1938). Oil on canvas. 30 × 25 in. (76.2 × 63.5 cm.) Frame: 36¼ × 31⅝ × 2⅝ in. (92.1 × 79.7 × 6 cm.) Purchase. Collection of Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Photo by Geoffrey Clements.
Compositor: GTS Graphics, Los Angeles
Cover Printer: Phoenix Color Corp.
Printer: Quebecor Printing Book Group/Hawkins

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Printed in the United States of America
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10—02 01 00 99 98 97 96

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Stark, Rodney.
Sociology / Rodney Stark.—6th ed.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and indexes.
ISBN 0-534-25710-0 (hard cover: acid-free paper)
1. Sociology. I. Title.
HM51.S89625 1995
301—dc20

95-19157

Sociology

About the Cover

Good covers are hard to find. Faced with the need to hunt up another cover, I decided this time to look for an appropriate piece of fine art. After a lot of looking, I chose *Hammerstein's Roof Garden*, painted in about 1901 by William J. Glackens. What does a painting of people in a New York night spot watching a woman walk a tightwire have to do with sociology? Well, it shows people interacting, which is the central topic of sociology. In addition, authors who write introductions to fields marked by many heated disagreements tend to identify with wire walkers. But mostly I selected this painting because I would like to have it on my wall.

Rodney Stark

About the Author

Rodney Stark grew up in Jamestown, North Dakota, and received his Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley, where he held appointments as a research sociologist at the Survey Research Center and the Center for the Study of Law and Society. He left Berkeley to become Professor of Sociology and of Comparative Religion at the University of Washington. He has published sixteen books and more than a hundred scholarly articles on subjects as diverse as prejudice, crime, suicide, and city life in ancient Rome. However, the greater part of his work has been on religion. He is past president of the Association for the Sociology of Religion and has twice won the Distinguished Book Award conferred by the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion. He has two new books scheduled to appear in 1996: *Reconstructing the Rise of Christianity: Explorations in Historical Sociology and Contemporary Social Research Methods* (with Lynne Roberts). In 1993 he received the Award for Distinguished Scholarship from the Pacific Sociological Association.

Preface

The roles of scholar and textbook author are quite different. The scholar prizes originality, but the textbook author must resist it, opting instead to report the current state of each substantive area. When nothing really significant has happened in an area since the prior edition, textbook authors must settle for updating the research. This is important, but not terribly exciting. What makes the text-writing exercise fun is when new ideas or new data require substantial changes in particular chapters. Fortunately, many such changes were required in this Sixth Edition of the book, and I had a lot of fun making them.

Perhaps the most extensive changes are in Chapter 7, "Crime and Deviance." For generations social scientists who focus on crime have struggled with the problem that the definition of their primary concept—crime—lay beyond their control. That is, it was accepted that crime is what governments say is against the law. Everyone knew this was an unfortunate state of affairs which forced social scientists to accept that protesting against the government is a crime in some societies and thus a phenomenon to be explained alongside homicide, rape, and robbery. In similar fashion, it forced us to somehow agree that wife beating is not a crime if we are using data from certain countries. In other words, we attempted to explain why people broke the law, trying to ignore the content of the laws. Would sociologists be content to let governments define social class, religion, prejudice, socialization, or urbanization? Certainly not. But there seemed no other way to deal with the problem of defining crime.

Then in 1990 Michael R. Gottfredson and Travis Hirschi broke with this tradition. According to them, crime consists of "acts of force or fraud undertaken in pursuit of self-interest." This single sentence returned antigovernment protests to political sociologists, while defining actions such as wife beating as crimes regardless of local law. I was tempted to make major use of this breakthrough in the Fifth Edition.

But textbook writers are best advised to see how a field reacts, for it is this rather than the writers' personal responses that determines what should be in their books. Now, having waited until my criminologist friends expressed considerable approval of this new approach, I have changed the textbook accordingly. Indeed, Gottfredson and Hirschi inspired me to include a lengthy descriptive section on ordinary crimes and criminals to let students see for themselves what it is that we are trying to explain with our theories of crime and deviance.

A second cause for substantial revision is the recent spate of amazing findings about the link between testosterone and a variety of aggressive and antisocial behaviors. Scientists had suspected these things for some time and had been assembling supportive evidence from very small sets of cases. A huge, nationwide study of the health of Vietnam veterans unexpectedly provided an immense database which social scientists have been mining very successfully. These results strengthen Chapter 5, "Biology, Culture, and Society," and make a nice contribution to the sociological understanding of gender effects on crime in Chapter 7.

The collapse of totalitarian regimes in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union has presented sociologists of religion with an exceptionally stringent test of the secularization thesis. After decades of religious repression and of vigorous educational efforts to instill "scientific atheism," what is the state of religiousness in these societies now that we are able to examine them close up and to obtain honest answers to survey interviews? A new section of Chapter 14 examines data on the vigorous revival taking place in this region.

While the popular press still is fixated on the "population bomb," demographers have moved on to new issues. One involves "depopulation," as many nations now have fertility rates far below replacement level. A second involves gender bias in fertility, as it has become increasingly common in some na-

tions to abort female fetuses. New sections were added to Chapter 18 to deal with these matters in some detail.

An important development having implications for many chapters was the early release of the 1990–1992 World Values Surveys. When the World Values Surveys conducted in 1981–1983 were released in 1991, I thought them so valuable that I made very extensive use of them throughout the Fifth Edition. Thus, early in the first chapter I let students compare attitudes toward abortion in 22 nations. Other extremely pertinent comparisons across these nations appeared in most of the other chapters. Along with my substantial use of the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample (186 premodern societies), the World Values Survey allowed me to move even closer to my aim to produce an introduction to sociology that is truly comparative.

I was utterly amazed when the World Values Surveys conducted in 1990–1992 were released in late 1994. Many new, very important questions had been added, and data were available for an incredible 42 nations. Moreover, the inclusion of Nigeria, Turkey, India, China, and South Korea (Japan had already joined the study in the 1980s), as well as the addition of many nations from eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, greatly increased the range of cultural variation. Among the very important new questions were some measuring prejudice against Jews, Muslims, and “members of another race.” I think it will be extremely valuable for students to grasp the international nature of prejudice and racism. Other items contribute greatly to seeing sex roles, family life, political participation, and religious commitment in a more fully comparative way.

My concern to make this textbook as comparative as possible is based on my experience that when textbooks rely mainly on data for one society, students have difficulty telling social science from journalism. That is, they often confuse explanation with description. Use of studies and data from many societies allows us to display sociology as science, for then we can show that when some particular set of factors exists in any society, the results are the same. Hence, through all previous editions I have compared ethnic conflict and prejudice in Canada and the United States to help students see that the same fundamental dynamics occur on both sides of the border. Indeed, I have made much use of Canadian studies be-

cause comparisons with the United States often are very revealing, and students in both nations find them easy to understand.

In previous editions use of data from the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample permitted me to let students discover such revealing facts as that wife beating is regarded as acceptable in 80 percent of these premodern societies, and that in more than half of them men do no domestic chores whatsoever. In this edition I have been able to pursue similar questions based on comparative data from *modern* nations. Thus, students will discover that the 42 modern nations included in the World Values Survey differ greatly in the proportions who believe that “sharing household chores is very important for a successful marriage” and that, perhaps surprisingly, within each nation men and women are in close agreement on this matter (see Chapter 13, “The Family”).

As noted in previous editions, I am overwhelmed by the generosity of my colleagues across North America, who have volunteered so many useful suggestions. I thank each of you for taking the time to write.

However, if I was surprised by the supportive and valuable mail I received from sociologists, I remain absolutely astonished at the number of students who write to me. It seems clear from their comments that the reason hundreds of them have written is because the “over-the-shoulder” style lets students recognize that sociology is a *human activity* and that by writing to me they can participate. Not only have I greatly enjoyed these letters but several brought new material to my attention—one letter even caused me to write an entirely new chapter on gender for the Third Edition.

I think this level of student response justifies my initial decision to break some norms of college textbook writing. Most textbooks take pains to sound as if they had no authors but were composed during endless committee meetings. Moreover, human beings are equally indistinct within most texts; the books present a field as consisting mainly of printed matter—of papers and books, of principles and findings. This misleads students about the real nature of scholarly disciplines, which consist not of paper but of people. Moreover, a Nobel laureate once told me that if, after the first ten minutes of the first day of introductory physics, his students didn’t know that people go into science primarily because it’s fun, he would consider himself a failure as a teacher.

So this is a book with a voice, in which a sociologist addresses students directly and describes the activities of a bunch of living, breathing human beings who are busy being sociologists for the fun of it. Moreover, it attempts to show students that the single most important scientific act is not to propose answers but to ask questions—to *wonder*. As I let students look over the shoulders of sociologists, be they Emile Durkheim or Kingsley Davis, I want students to first see them wondering—asking *why* something is as it is. Then I want students to see how they searched for and formulated an answer. For, as an advertising copywriter might put it, I want students to realize that *sociology* can be a verb as well as a noun.

Point of View and Approach

Sociologists considering a textbook often ask what “kind” or “brand” of sociology it reflects. What are the author’s theoretical and methodological commitments? I find some difficulty framing a satisfactory answer to such questions, because I don’t think I have a brand. First of all, my fundamental commitment is to sociology as a social science. Hence, I want to know how societies work and why, not to document a perspective. Moreover, in constructing sociological theories I am a dedicated, even reckless, eclectic. Competing theoretical sociologies persist, in part, not only because they tend to talk past one another but also because each can explain some aspect of social life better than the others can. Therefore, in my own theoretical writing I tend to take anything that seems to work from whatever school can provide it. The textbook does much the same, but with care to point out which elements are being drawn from which theoretical tradition.

I also have not written a book that favors either *micro* or *macro* sociology. Both levels of analysis are essential to any adequate sociology. Where appropriate, the chapters are structured to work from the micro to the macro level of analysis. And the book itself works from the most micro topics to the most macro.

Methodologically the text is equally eclectic. In my own research I have pursued virtually every known technique—participant observation, survey research, historical and comparative analysis, demography, human ecology, even experiments. My belief, made clear in the book, is that theories and

hypotheses determine what methods are appropriate (within practical and moral limits). That is why there is not one chapter devoted to methods and one devoted to theory. Instead, Chapter 3 first introduces basic elements of micro theories and then demonstrates how such theories are tested through experiments and participant observation. Chapter 4 introduces social structure within the context of survey research methods. The chapter then assesses basic elements of major macro schools of sociological theory and concludes with an extended example of testing macro theories through comparative research using societies as units of analysis. Throughout the book, the interplay of theory and research is not asserted but *demonstrated*. No sooner do readers meet a theory than they see it being tested.

Countless publishers have stressed to me that introductory sociology textbooks, unlike texts in other fields, must *not* have an integrated structure. Because sociologists, I am told, have idiosyncratic, fixed notions about the order of chapters, books must easily permit students to read them in any order. That would be a poor way to use this book. The fact is that later chapters build on earlier ones. To do otherwise would have forced me to eliminate some of sociology’s major achievements or else to write a redundant book that repeats itself each time basic material is elaborated or built upon. Clearly, some jumping around is possible—the institutions chapters work well enough in any order (and could even be omitted without harming subsequent chapters)—but the basic ordering of the major parts of the book is organic. Thus, for example, the chapter on socialization expands upon material already presented in the biology chapter. And the discussion of theories of intergroup relations included in Chapter 11 is basic to the examination of models of urban segregation taken up in Chapter 19. In my judgment textbooks can be highly flexible only at the risk of being superficial (imagine a chemistry book with chapters that could be read in any order).

Study Aids

To assist readers, each chapter ends with a complete review glossary that includes concepts and principles. For example, the glossary for the population chapter includes not only concepts such as “birth co-

hort” and “crude birth rate” but also a succinct restatement of “Malthusian theory” and of “demographic transition theory.” The glossary is ordered in the same way as the chapters, so it serves to summarize and review the chapter.

Boxed inserts of side material have become a standard feature of leading sociology texts. I decided against them. First of all, if the material is worth including, it belongs in the body of the chapter. Placed in a box, the material breaks the narrative flow of the chapter and often gets skipped.

In six instances, however, I have included brief essays—minichapters identified as Special Topics. I did this because I wanted to amplify and apply material from several chapters to give them extra emphasis.

Anyone who reads all of the books and articles recommended for further reading at the end of each chapter will know a lot of sociology. To choose them I asked myself what I had read that was of broad interest and had helped me to write the chapter. Obviously I did not think anyone would rush out and read them all. But students attracted by a particular topic may find useful follow-up reading provided in these suggestions. I also have found these works useful in composing lectures.

ShowCase® Presentational Software and ShowCase Resource Book

Demonstrating Sociology, the instructor’s resource book distributed with the First Edition, was a major departure from the materials offered with other sociology textbooks. It was a first attempt to provide sociologists with a set of classroom demonstrations of the sort that accompany textbooks in the natural sciences. Any chemist, for example, even one teaching in a run-down high school, can go to the front of the classroom and *do* chemistry. I want to make it possible for any sociologist to go to the front of the classroom and *do* sociology.

To facilitate these goals I have prepared dozens of demonstrations based on analyses of real data, all ready for you to use in class. Now in the ShowCase Resource Book, each expands upon a particular chapter.

To do these demonstrations live in class, you will need a computer (an IBM or compatible), a large monitor or a projection system, and ShowCase Pre-

sentational Software—a copy of which is available free to instructors who adopt the textbook. This software was created especially for live presentations based on the analysis of quantitative data—whether ecological or large survey studies—and uses attractive, informative graphics to present the results. The program is so fast that you can analyze huge data sets and get results in a second or two. The demonstrations are based on a variety of data sets, most of them on the data sets that are provided free to adopters. But some are from data sets available (inexpensively) from the MicroCase Corporation, creators of ShowCase Presentational Software and the well-known statistical analysis and data management system MicroCase.

In addition, I have prepared a brand new set of student laboratory assignments: *Doing Sociology: An Introduction Through MicroCase*, published by Wadsworth. Each book comes with a student version of MicroCase and four substantial data sets. Now students can go to the computer lab on their own, without coaching, and do real analysis, pursuing real questions, and get real results. They will come back with a lot to discuss in class. And a by-product of their efforts is that they become extremely well prepared for subsequent methods and statistical courses.

Instructor’s Manual with Test Items

Lawrence Mencotti of Edinboro University and Peter Lehman of the University of Southern Maine have created an Instructor’s Manual with Test Items that is available separately to all instructors. In addition to summaries of the pedagogical goals of each chapter, the Instructor’s Manual with Test Items contains topics for class discussion and suggests materials that could be turned into lectures—a rich assortment of “good stuff.”

Testing is a neglected subject in graduate education that receives precious little space even in *Teaching Sociology*. Yet it is one of the most important things we do. For this reason I am grateful that so talented a teacher as Peter Lehman, who developed an entirely new Test Bank for the Fourth Edition, updated the Test Bank for the Fifth and Sixth Editions. In addition to questions based on the textbook, he has included some based on ShowCase demonstrations (as requested by many users).

Other Supplements

As she did for the previous editions, Carol Mosher of Jefferson County Community College in Louisville, Kentucky, has prepared a Study Guide for students. It begins with practical suggestions on studying a text, effective test taking, and essay tests. Each chapter of the Study Guide begins with an overview of the text chapter and a narrative summary of major topics, followed by lists of key concepts (with accompanying text page numbers), key research studies discussed, and key theories. These sections help students identify and focus on what they need to study and remember. They can then follow up their review with multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and sample essay questions that dovetail with but do not duplicate the test items included in the Test Bank.

Acknowledgments

I do not create this book by myself. For one thing, I usually have a cat dozing on my monitor, inspiring me by example to always take a relaxed approach. In addition, I am helped in a more direct way by some extraordinary people. My debt to Lynne Roberts, president of MicroCase Corporation, and to her staff can only be expressed, not repaid. Veronica Oliva is a wonderful copy editor who fixed everything that needed fixing and otherwise left my prose alone. Zeus Gleason and Capt. R. K. Clancy were my faithful and creative graphics advisors. Julie Aguilar did a terrific job of obtaining the real research studies behind the many sketchy media reports I turned over to her. Nick Smith spent many hours in the library photocopying articles I needed to read. Andrew Ogus gave the book a new look, and Sandra Craig made everything happen on time, for the umpteenth time. I am grateful to them all.

I am especially indebted to all of my colleagues who devoted time and effort to assessing portions of the manuscript.

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