

R E A D I N G S

SOCIOLOGY

EXPLORING THE
ARCHITECTURE
OF EVERYDAY LIFE



DAVID M. NEWMAN

Sociology

*Exploring the Architecture
of Everyday Life*

READINGS

David M. Newman

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READINGS

A companion text entitled
SOCIOLOGY: EXPLORING THE ARCHITECTURE OF EVERYDAY LIFE
accompanies this anthology and is available from
your instructor and college bookstore.

About the Author

David Newman (Ph.D., University of Washington) is an Associate Professor of Sociology at DePauw University. In addition to the introductory course, he teaches courses in research methods, family, social psychology, and deviance. He has won teaching awards at both the University of Washington and DePauw University.

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P R E F A C E

One of the greatest challenges I face as a teacher of sociology is trying to get my students to see the relevance of the course material and to appreciate fully the connection between the individual and society. I teach my students to see that sociology is all around us. It's in our careers, our media, our families, our goals, our interests, our desires, even our minds. Sociology can be found at the neighborhood pub or in the maintenance bay at the local gas station. Sociology can answer questions of global as well as private significance, from why poverty, discrimination, and homelessness exist to why we are attracted to some people and not to others; from why people become criminals to why we enjoy scrambled eggs for breakfast rather than rice.

It was with these ideas in mind that I set out to compile this collection of short articles, chapters, and excerpts designed to help introduce you to sociology. The task wasn't easy. For every sociological issue, concept, or area of research, there are thousands of potential readings. So I spent a great deal of time combing through scores of articles and books before I chose these readings.

As with the accompanying textbook, *Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life*, I didn't want this reader to be a massive smorgasbord of information that gives you a little taste of every conceivable sociological topic but not enough of any one of them to satisfy your hunger. The readings don't provide a lot of dry factual information, concept definitions, or reviews of past research. Instead, they are vivid, provocative, and eye-opening examples of the practice of sociology. In addition to accurately representing the sociological perspective and providing rigorous coverage of the discipline, they are all enjoyable to read. I hope that each selection will stimulate thoughtful reflection as you go about examining what society is, how it works, and, most important, your place in it.

The readings represent a variety of styles. Some use common everyday experiences (e.g., tee shirts, elementary school playgrounds, college life, marriage, childbirth) to illustrate the relationship between the individual and society. Others focus on important social issues (e.g., homelessness, multiculturalism, educational inequalities, technology and sex segregation in the workplace, binge eating) or make use of distinct historical events (e.g., massacres during

war time, crime waves, racist social experiments, labor strikes). Furthermore, the authors represent a variety of professions. I don't think one has to be a trained sociologist to see the world sociologically. So you will read articles written by psychologists, psychiatrists, anthropologists, social commentators, historians, and novelists as well as by sociologists.

To assist you in getting the most out of these selections, I have written short chapter introductions that provide the sociological context for the readings. For those who are using the accompanying textbook, these introductions will furnish a quick intellectual link between the reader and the accompanying text. After each selection, you will find one or more questions to ponder. These items are not straight, examlike information questions designed to see if you absorbed all the details in a given reading. Instead I thought it would be more useful to include questions that make you think about the meaning and relevance of each reading. I frequently ask you to apply the conclusions of the specific author to some ongoing issue in society. It is my hope that these questions help you to see the sociological merit of the readings.

Books like these tend to be enormous projects. I would like to thank Steve Rutter, Rebecca Holland, Sherith Pankratz, and Mary Sutton at Pine Forge Press, as well as Michele Pinkow, for their useful advice and assistance in putting this reader together.

Good luck,



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