

The Century Social Science Series

EDUCATIONAL SOCIOLOGY

BY
DAVID SNEDDEN



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To
ANNA O'KEEFE SNEDDEN
PIONEER, MOTHER, THINKER

TO THE READER

The Red Indian, as our frontiersman forefathers found him, knew much about weather, woods, prairies, and wild animals. Hunters and trappers of European extraction, living in and on the wilderness, also came in time to know much of its secrets. Man cannot live day by day in any kind of an environment without acquiring a large store of the wisdom of experience. Much more will this be so if he have to live *actively, competitively, adaptively*, in that environment.

Every reader of this book already knows at least as much about societies as Indian and immigrant hunter knew about forests and wild animals. You have lived since birth in social groups; and you have lived often and much in vital relations of coöperation and of striving within them. Whether you are conscious of it or not, you already possess much social wisdom. Technically, you are not a sociologist any more than the Indian, rich in experience and nature lore, was a botanist or ornithologist. But you are rich in the raw materials out of which sociology is made. If you have some of the qualities of the student, some powers of reflection, analysis and synthesis, and some standards of evaluation—if you have these a word, a question, a formula, or a simple principle stated will often be sufficient to cause large areas of your experience to fall into order, and to interpret itself as scientific data, leading easily, perhaps, to comprehensions of generalization and law.

The least experienced reader of this book also knows much about education. All your life you have been under educational agencies and influences—in your home, in the neighborhood, at school, in church, and while at work. Here, too, you are the possessor of a wealth of data—bits of experience, prejudices, beliefs, generalizations. Much of this may be unassimilated. Much of it may be held like seeds in storage so dry and cold that no germination is possible. But it is, nevertheless, all very valuable material for thinker and student to use—and every teacher, actual or potential, is such a thinker and student perforce.

This book has been planned, therefore, for readers known to be already unwittingly rich in certain kinds of sociological and educational experience. They are already members of many social groups; they have

shared in uncounted social processes both as controlled and as controllers—as subject and as agent; they have always lived in a very net-work of social relationships, including the educational, which are capable of being disentangled and ordered, very much as we can imagine early botanists ordering and interpreting the countless data of the flora all about them.

At the beginning of each chapter is a series of questions, sometimes amplified into “problems.” No reader can answer all of these, but every reader can give provisional answers to many. Some are still unanswerable in any strictly scientific sense by the sociologist, but every day men somewhere have to guess at answers in order to proceed with living and with work.

This is in fact chiefly a book of problems. Designed primarily for teachers or for persons in the later stages of preparation for teaching, it includes discussions of the many problems of educational values and objectives with which makers of text-books, courses, and curricula are now concerned.

Many of the problems here discussed are, obviously, of a nature that will require the time and efforts of specialists for their final solution. The rank and file of teachers cannot be expected to do the experimental work, nor to effect the administrative readjustments that are required, either to solve the problems indicated, or to carry into practice the solutions tentatively reached. Why then should a book of this character be prepared for, and recommended to, teachers? The reasons are to be found chiefly in the present stage of evolution of education. It is not practicable yet to get on in education in the same way that we get on in medicine, engineering, agriculture, navigation, or even in the conduct of war. In these fields special agencies of investigation, experimentation, and publicity have been developed and speedy application of their findings can readily be made.

Notwithstanding that the amount of money spent upon the public schools of the United States now approximates one thousand million dollars annually, education is necessarily far behind those other fields of organized human effort as respects facilities for research and means and disposition for the application of the results of research. As yet, we possess very few genuine experimental schools and, with rare exceptions, these are not well organized and sustained. Systematic study of educational problems must still be undertaken largely by private and, often, individual effort. Even the very norms and methods of that systematic research are as yet largely lacking.

How then does progress come in education? It comes by much the same methods that in former decades or centuries prevailed in the other

fields of human activity named above. As formerly in those fields so now in education we find ourselves in the presence of a great body of customs and traditions, some probably valid, many probably invalid.

From time to time there springs up in some quarter a conviction that changes are necessary. Certain persons begin to agitate for these changes. If their enthusiasm is great, their endurance strong, and they are able to give convincing reasons for the faith that is in them, they quickly win supporters, and presently a well defined social movement is visible. This encourages experiments, many of them at first crude and poorly planned. Presently these begin to reveal whether or not the new idea or movement has sound foundations. Social imitation takes place, progressive individuals in backward communities constitute themselves propagandists, and gradually progress results. The history of the evolution of education to date is filled with examples of these processes—as is also the story of progress in the earlier stages of medicine, agriculture, government, and transportation.

The purpose, therefore, of inviting teachers to consider a number of the problems that probably will require close examination and solution during the next generation, is chiefly to create among them, particularly the more progressive, a body of professional public opinion, both as to the character of these problems and as to urgency of their early consideration. These teachers can in turn create public opinion among those laymen with whom they associate, and especially among parents and others having keen interest in the advancement of education. Probably one of the most important results to be achieved at the present time is a clear and definite formulation of these problems. So far as practicable educational forecasts ought always to distinguish between the conditions and practices which we expect to continue in their present form, and those other conditions and practices which we expect to see either profoundly modified or else supplanted by new conditions and practices.

SUGGESTIONS TO STUDENTS AND INSTRUCTORS USING THIS BOOK

This book has been prepared primarily for persons who are now teachers or who expect soon to become teachers. But it is important that the book be properly used by instructors if it is to fulfil its purpose.

That purpose is primarily to extend the educator's professional vision and to multiply and deepen his professional appreciations. This is not a guide-book to management or methods of teaching. It is not a book to be studied rigorously and with a view to passing formal examinations. It is

expected to enhance professional culture and ideals; and to that end it should be read and discussed willingly, appreciatively, and interestedly, or else not at all.

In the early pages of each chapter will be found many "leading" questions. Only a very exceptional student can or should "take" all of these for reflection and report. Better that each student select or be assigned a few, and then, later, in conference let the findings be "pooled" in discussion.

The text itself, apart from the questions, is designed mainly to be suggestive rather than logically complete. Educational Sociology, though in a sense a very juvenile science, is already too comprehensive to admit of successful compression into a single text-book, at least if any of its flavoring juices are to be preserved.

Advanced students, and experienced teachers preparing for administrative work, who use this book for more rigorous professional purposes—namely for guidance in curriculum planning and the critical comparative evaluation of subjects of study and courses—are expected to find large numbers of initial problems of educational objectives suggested here. Theirs will then be the responsibility of prosecuting analysis and constructive thinking farther than the circumstances attending the preparation of this book now warrant.

Appended to each chapter are some references, selected largely because of a certain availability and timeliness, which may well be taken up, sometimes for supplemental reading, and occasionally as a basis for monthly or even term reports.

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PART I
SOCIETIES AND SOCIAL GROUPS

EDUCATIONAL SOCIOLOGY

CHAPTER I

THE MAKING OF A PEOPLE

INTERPRETATIONS OF EXPERIENCE

THE reader of this book already knows much about America and the making of that people which we call "Americans." He knows that hardly more than three hundred years ago the only Americans were the Indians, whom the invaders found it necessary to displace or absorb in order to build up their civilization. He knows that all our beginnings were forced to be in most ways simple, crude, and even extemporized, because of the necessities of pioneering. But he also knows that the early settlers brought with them some of the best tools, much of the best knowledge, and nearly all the serviceable arts of Europe. The newcomers were old, or rather advanced, in culture, whereas, the Indians were young or retarded. No wonder the latter were forced into a retreat that continued almost to the end of the nineteenth century!

The reader also knows much about how "we, the people of the United States," made and spread our first settlements; battled for security and independence; built roads, cleared forests, and settled to the westward; invented machinery; grew wealthy; and finally came to have a voice in world affairs. The greatness and wonder of this drama reveals itself to most of us only in fragments. If one has read much he recalls how a Berkeley, a Cooper, a Parkman, a Whitman, a Turner, a Winston Churchill, a Vachel Lindsay, a Meredith Nicholson, or some other interpreter has opened to him a vista, seen as through a window, of the great unfolding procession by which we have come to be what we are.¹

The informed reader is abundantly prepared to think of America, first in cross-section; and then, if curiosity is aroused over some social phenomenon, to inquire into its genesis, its evolutionary history. Questions like the following, which can readily be multiplied, should open the way toward sociological interpretations of "The Making of a People."

1. As compared with other "large nations," is America relatively homogeneous as respects: speech, religion, manners, political beliefs, ambitions, culture?

¹The interested reader will find in the fifty pocket-size volumes of the "Yale Chronicles Series" accurate, vivid, and very readable accounts of many of the stages and personalities in the evolution of America.

Why? What are noteworthy exceptions, and how are these to be explained historically? What does, or what ought, the word "Americanization" mean? What sociological reasons prompted Congress recently to impose a variety of restrictions on immigration? What would be your reasons for favoring (or opposing) such action?

2. How does America compare with other strong nations as respects: wealth; facilities for internal transportation—railroads, highways, automobiles; newspaper readers; literacy; children between twelve and eighteen years of age in school; general healthfulness; general culture; criminality?

3. Out of your general knowledge, what seem to you to have been the effects of: New England's climate, soil, and access to the sea on the character, occupations, and culture of (a) her settlers up to 1815; (b) the subsequent Irish immigrants; and (c) the later immigrants from the Continent? How have the climate, soil, and other geographic conditions of the South Atlantic states affected the speech, manners, occupations, and religion of (a) the original whites and (b) the imported negroes?

What are some of the things that have been done to and by America because of: the Mississippi River; the fertile Mississippi Valley; the forests of Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, and Washington; the gold, silver, and copper mines of the western states; the deserts of the Southwest; the "frontier"; the great coal and oil deposits?

4. What proportion of our people are now urban residents? What seem to you the real advantages of urban life (convivial, vocational, healthful, cultural) to: a child of ten; an unmarried man of thirty of very superior mental ability; a married man of thirty of low-grade mental ability, good physical strength, and poor enterprise; a cultivated single woman with a substantial fixed income?

Can people with no capital and little special skill "find work" more readily in cities or in rural areas? How much faster would you estimate that food production increased than rural population during the last century, thanks to the use of farm machinery?

Are we to expect good or bad, or partly good and partly bad, consequences from the "urbanization of our people"? Give reasons.

5. What are some strongly established "American" standards or ideals as to: the monogamous family; freedom of divorce; care and education of children; wage-earning work of married women; freedom of women to vote, to work, and "to do other things just as men do"? What seem to you to be some bad and some good tendencies in American family life? What are some probable sociological causes of these?

6. What useful functions are served in America by such voluntary organizations as: political parties; women's clubs; Rotary and other men's clubs; secret societies and fraternities; labor unions; social "sets" or cliques; Granges and other farmers' associations; organizations of various classes of teachers,

doctors, business men, research specialists, writers, and hundreds of other classes?

If it seems that collective help must be provided for some afflicted class, a new line of thought promoted, or a new political object, how do we proceed? Are these methods indicative of too little, too much, or just enough "democracy"?

7. "Half the business of the United States is done by corporations." Do corporations seem to you to be on the whole "good" or "bad" for America? What kinds of harm do the worst of them do? What kinds of useful service do the best of them render?

Are we ahead of, or behind, the other advanced nations as respects: use of power-driven machinery; multiplication of useful inventions; use of "semi-skilled" labor?

8. Do modern farmers produce relatively less or more of what they consume than earlier farmers? Why does America specialize so greatly in farm production by localities? Where and what are the chief centers for production of raw cotton; copper; iron ore; smelted iron and steel; shoes; watches; oranges; apples; range cattle; firearms; automobiles?

9. Recall some of the noteworthy stages through which we have evolved our international relationships. What have been some consequences to us in the "making of a people" of: the British and colonial conquest of the French; our attainment of national independence; the development of Federal government; the reluctance of Anglo-Saxon stocks to intermarry with natives; our public land system; the Monroe Doctrine; the "westward" movement?

AMERICA AS A COMPLEX SOCIETY

Hundreds of thousands of social groups make up American society. There are more than 15,000,000 families. Religious denominations and sects run into scores. Every business corporation is a kind of society, as well as every factory, railroad system, ship, coal mine, and farm. Temporarily, at least, the pupils of every school room compose little societies, whilst those of the "institution"—the elementary or high school, liberal arts or professional college, trade or technical school—compose large and still more enduring "societies."

Throughout the land are numberless social groups in which membership is voluntary and which are usually formed by congenial spirits to promote fairly well defined objects. Political parties, social clubs, associations of scholars, "societies" to set machinery in motion for some philanthropic object—their name is legion. A democratic social order seems to be no less prolific of "societies" than of free discussion.²

² Consult Ross, *Principles of Sociology*, Part I, The Social Population.

The families of a rural neighborhood have at least "acquaintance" relationships with each other; and sometimes, especially in the older sections, they continue from the past or develop new organizations to meet needs for other "community" relationships. Every rural neighborhood is a kind of society, even when, as in many western states, its strictly local "community" interdependencies seem almost to have reached the vanishing point.

But small towns and cities are not only societies; they have so many local "common" functions, private and public, that they become real communities. The American state is a "community," too, since its citizens have common responsibilities for the enactment of legislation, the execution of governmental functions, and the collective discharge of the many other responsibilities that have long impelled men to call this kind of community a "commonwealth."

Embracing the states and colonial possessions is the Federal Union, the national government, with its constitutionally designated "community" governmental functions, as well as many others of a non-governmental character. Patriots cherish the "nation" because it is big enough and strong enough, not only to give us dignity and power in "the community of nations," but also to promote the more far-reaching forms of control, coöperation, and progressiveness among us all at home.

Most of the social groups just named are visible even to the less imaginative. They are compact, and have clear boundaries. Nearly always their members are keenly conscious of their membership, just as they well know the names, leaders, headquarters, symbols, and ideals of the respective groups to which they owe loyalty, service, and chastening criticism.

In our democratic society there exist countless other "groups," largely invisible and not easily to be bounded—for it must be remembered that where men mutually affect each other, or become even in obscure ways "interdependent," there we have the social relationships that create actual, though unseen, perhaps unfelt, social groups. The buyer and the seller in any commercial transactions are, for that purpose even if for no other, socially related. Between "original producer" and "ultimate consumer" in most modern commercial transactions—involving the transfer of coal or coffee or watches, or sermons or newspapers, or transportation, or learning—there are often many intermediaries to transport, refine, inspect, wholesale, and retail the commodity or service. As respects this service, producers, middle-men, and consumers are all interlinked. They con-

stitute a kind of social group stretching imaginary hands and eyes and voices over the wide gulfs of space or time that separate them.

Thus we have thousands of producers of cotton cloth in Massachusetts and Rhode Island who are "socially" dependent on, and therefore related to, the producers of raw cotton in the South, hides in the West, and wheat in the Northwest, all of which are essential to the prosperity, and even the existence, of the workers of New England.

There are probably millions of wage-earning operatives on railroads and in mines in America who have never seen their real employers—namely, the stockholders of the corporation. But the economic relationships thus created are none the less real and involve none the less of mutual responsibility, even though they are made obscure and difficult of adjustment by their impersonality.

A highly complex society, or rather society of societies, has evolved in the United States. It is now probably the most complex society in the world. Aside from our insular possessions, there were in 1920 more than 105,000,000 individuals of us. We are still rapidly increasing, though immigration has been restricted, the birth rate is falling, and the frontier with its free land has passed. We are the wealthiest and the most united of the large nations. We have no apprehensions of foreign invasion, whilst our social machinery for the protection of life, property, and reputation works fairly well, in spite of some manifest imperfections.

A cross-section of the American people would show the same bewildering intricacies that are found in the heavens on a clear night. Any adult among us can readily trace scores, if not hundreds, of social bonds, groupings, and processes in which he is a part. Each of us can disentangle many sociological situations by answering these questions: What are your recognized family affiliations? Your relationship to town, city, state, nation? Your membership in church, political, fraternal, recreational, and cultural organizations? Your dependencies upon employers, co-workers, and society at large for economic opportunities?³

The adult individual in any American village is visibly the beneficiary of numberless institutions and other human mechanisms, a large proportion of which, springing from seeds planted long ago, have become actively functional on this continent only within the last three centuries. Our villager, under all ordinary circumstances, now concerns himself but little with thoughts of how he can be protected against Indian raid, civil warfare, or foreign invasion. The agencies now giving that security are

³ Compare Kropotkin, P. A., *Fields, Factories, and Workshops*.

products of collective action complex, far-reaching, and to many citizens uncomprehended. Within thirty years almost all our colleges, and some of our high schools, have invited their students to study the social sciences—those bodies of knowledge dealing with the principles and methods of social organization. A generation has witnessed decided progress in diffusing some knowledge of social groups, social functions, and social improvement.

The social environment is composed of men, women, and children, nearly all of whom are found living in groups. These groups are formed for various purposes—defense, coöperative work, sociability, joint worship, and the like. They vary in size from a partnership of two, or a family of four, to cities, nations, and alliances. Some are ephemeral, some last for many centuries. Some, like long established churches, political parties, or states, rest upon elaborate foundations of custom, codified statutes, and traditions of service; others, like boys' gangs, dancing parties, and pleasure societies, have almost no tangible machinery.⁴

The normal adult is a member of many social groups. Into some of these—the family, the state, the race—he was born and nurtured. With others he allies himself in more or less voluntary ways—churches, political parties, cultural and social groupings. Into still others he is admitted on approval and after specific preparation—marriage, higher schools, secret societies, exclusive cultural and social sets, labor unions, and corporations.

At first the members of these social groups usually follow rather than lead. Sometimes under direct coercion, more often in response to suggestion, they proceed to adapt themselves to the standards and ways of the groups, to court the approval of the older or stronger members, and to partake of the advantages that such membership makes possible. These processes of socialization can be traced in any family, village, school, fraternal society, church, political party, manual workers' union, or nation.

On the other hand, sooner or later every individual reaches the point in any one of his group relationships where imposed restrictions irk him. The growing child rebels at too much parental control; the citizen resents having to pay taxes, perform jury duty, or even obey certain unwelcome laws; the church member questions some doctrines or resists discipline; the unionist dislikes to obey orders of officials; the member of the political party rejects the "platform" or "bolts" nominations of the leaders.

⁴ See Ch. 10 (The Causes of Race Superiority) in E. A. Ross, *The Foundations of Sociology*.