

An aerial photograph of a large crowd of people, likely at a sporting event, viewed from above. The crowd is dense and fills the entire frame. The colors are muted, with a lot of blues, greys, and browns. The perspective is looking down, creating a sense of scale and density.

SOCIOLOGY

WINDOWS ON
SOCIETY

Fifth Edition

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Sociology

Windows on Society

Fifth Edition

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Introduction

Any anthology for introductory sociology has two somewhat contradictory obligations: 1) to be interesting, current, and accessible to its readers; and 2) to fairly represent what the discipline is all about. We say that these are contradictory requirements because introductory students are not necessarily interested in, or able to fully understand, the many sociological studies that are published. Moreover, sociologists are not always concerned with examining issues that are timely or topical nor do they write for student readers. In an attempt to strike a balance between these contradictory ideals, we have tried to emphasize sociological substance without sacrificing interest and readability.

The Readings

In order to encourage student debate about sociological issues facing society today, this anthology provides a wide variety of articles from both contemporary sources as well as the classical literature of sociology. Classic selections include readings from the works of Marx, Weber, and Durkheim—all of which are both central to the classic tradition and highly readable.

Contemporary selections in the Fifth Edition have been updated to include topics of current interest and concern such as: critical thinking about sources of information; social influences on I.Q.; feminist ideology and child rearing; adolescent drinking; homeless women and children; exploitation and control of workers; severe inequalities in educational opportunities; the media's influence on public understanding and beliefs; and the mutual influence between technology and other social factors.

Gender is a major focus of this anthology because it is of central concern to people everywhere and is fundamental to many social and political issues in the United States. Moreover, gender has been at the

heart of some of the most exciting sociological research of recent years. In addition, we emphasize the issues of race/ethnicity and inequality because of their significance in both recent American history and sociological research.

The selections in this anthology also challenge preconceived notions and conventional wisdom by showing students the distinctive power of a sociological viewpoint (for example, Storfer's analysis of the way that parent-child interaction affects I.Q.). As the title suggests, the selections in this anthology can be viewed as "windows" on society. They permit the student to see everyday activities in a new light—from the familiar (Caplow's article on the striking regularities of Christmas gift giving patterns) to the more exotic (Harris' study on India's worship of the sacred cow).

A few of the articles in *Windows on Society* may prove difficult reading. Nevertheless, we have decided to include these selections for two reasons. First, they are important in accurately presenting what the discipline of sociology is all about. Second, they challenge students with the opportunity to master difficult material—an opportunity which increases their knowledge, hones their academic skills, and benefits their self-esteem.

Organization

Windows is divided into five units. Unit One introduces the enterprise of sociology. Unit Two features topics relating to the intersection of culture, social organization, and the individual. Unit Three considers various forms of social inequality based on class, race/ethnicity, gender, and age while Unit Four focuses primarily on social institutions. Finally, Unit Five addresses aspects of society in flux.

Windows can stand alone or be used as a supplement to a standard introductory

text. The chart on page xi cross-references topic areas that commonly appear in introductory sociology texts to related selections in this anthology. Both the primary and secondary emphases of each chapter are listed. This will facilitate use of *Windows* as a supplement to any major text.

To facilitate student understanding, we have added discussions of the major concepts in the introductions to the units and the selections. Review questions and suggested applications follow each selection. The applications can serve as class or small group projects; they offer students an opportunity to experience how the process of sociological research is conducted.

The updated *Instructor's Manual/Testing Program* summarizes the conclusions of each article, lists key points, and provides both essay questions and multiple-choice questions. Hopefully, these materials will assist instructors in opening the *Windows* on the sociological enterprise to their students.

In Appreciation

The editors and publisher would like to express appreciation to the following individuals whose feedback and revision suggestions helped us prepare the Fifth Edition: Scott Sernau (Indiana University), Deborah Abowitz (Philadelphia College of Textiles), Nancy Terjesen (Kent State University), James Glynn (Bakersfield College), Harriet Hartman (Rowan University), Thomas Shannon (Redford University), Mary Kirby Diaz (SUNY Famingdale), and Barbara A. Arrighi (Northern Kentucky University).

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We wish to dedicate this book to our students and children. As we have taught them, they have taught us much in return. ♦

Use of Selections

Sociology: Windows on Society, Fifth Edition will comfortably stand alone as a single assigned text. However, most instructors use this anthology to supplement another text. They may find the following chart, which groups the selections, helpful. Primary and secondary emphases are listed separately.

Generic topics for an introductory sociology course	<i>Windows</i> selections in which the topic is a primary emphasis	<i>Windows</i> selections in which the topic is a secondary emphasis
Introduction	1, 2, 4	5, 6, 9
Research methods	3, 4	9, 10, 13, 18, 19, 40, 41
Culture	6, 9	19, 25, 30, 36, 41, 43, 44
Social organization	7, 8, 14	22, 29, 32, 33, 36, 42
Socialization	9, 10, 11	32, 34, 40
Class stratification	14, 15, 16, 17	22, 28, 32, 33, 36, 42
Ethnic groups	18, 19, 26, 37	36
Gender	11, 16, 20, 21	22, 23, 24, 28, 31, 34, 39, 44
Aging	22	35
Family	16, 23, 24, 25	7, 9, 12, 13, 21, 31, 41, 44
Political institutions	26, 33, 37	22, 28, 35, 41
Economy	27, 28, 29, 30	6, 14, 15, 17, 20, 33, 43
Religion	30, 31	3, 6
Education	32	2, 9, 10
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Deviance	13, 35, 36, 37	3, 7, 9, 21, 32, 38, 39
Collective behavior/ social movements	38, 39	31, 40
Demography/ urbanization	40, 41	16, 17, 18, 35, 36, 37, 38
Technology/ social change	42, 43, 44	6, 28, 30

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Note: Biographical information has been provided where available. Some authors do not appear in this list. ♦

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UNIT ONE

The Sociological Enterprise

What is the sociological enterprise? Sociologists study social groups, the interaction within and between groups, and how human behavior is affected. An empirical research study or a theory provides the sociologist with a window view of what is going on in a particular society. The more that sociologists perfect their research techniques and refine their theories, the better our window-like vantage point on the inner workings of that society.

To expand on the analogy of windows, under certain conditions of light and darkness every window becomes a mirror. We hope that the “windows” offered in this anthology will give students a sociological perspective not only on society but also on themselves.

This unit examines different aspects of the sociological enterprise. The first article discusses the “sociological imagination,” a distinctive vision of sociology as a discipline. The following two selections demonstrate the diversity of styles in sociological analysis. And the last selection is an example of critical thinking, which is an essential part of sociological analysis.

Every discipline uses a distinctive set of concepts to explain what it studies. The “mass” of physicists, the “behavior modification” of psychologists, the “supply and demand” of economists, the “acculturation” of anthropologists, and the “pluralist model of

power” of political scientists are among the concepts used by various scientists. Sociologists also employ carefully defined concepts in an effort to be more precise about explanations. In various unit and selection introductions, therefore, we will briefly explain the important concepts that the selection introduces. Some of these concepts are words that are commonly used, but they have particular (and sometimes different) meanings in sociology.

Among the concepts you will encounter in the readings in this unit are “sociology,” the “sociological imagination,” “social structure,” “social integration,” “social roles,” “groups,” “power,” and “institutions.” Because these concepts are closely related to one another and basic to the study of sociology, we will look at them here. **Sociology** is the scientific study of social life. The founders of sociology wanted to improve the quality of human life, and realized that they had to understand the workings of society in order to do so.

The **sociological imagination** is a term coined by C. Wright Mills, the author of the first selection. It refers to a way of thinking that enables people to understand the impact of culture, society, and group memberships on their behavior. In contrast to those who try to understand human behavior by internal processes within individuals, sociologists ex-

plain behavior by the social factors that circumscribe the lives of all individuals.

There are regularities and patterns to those social factors. We call the regularities and patterns in social interaction the **social structure**. Social structure occurs because all societies are composed of **groups** (two or more people who pursue a shared goal or interest) and **institutions** (collective solutions to problems of social life) such as government, the economy, the family, religion, and education. Note that sociologists define “institution” differently from its common usage. A psychiatric hospital is not an institution in sociological terms; it is an organization, which is one kind of group. The family, in the sense of all families rather than a particular family, is an institution.

The social structure is maintained—that is, the patterns and regularities of social life

tend to continue—for various reasons. For one thing, **power** (control over the behavior of others) is exercised by those in authority. For another, parents and schools train children to accept their various **social roles**. A role is the behavior expected of people who hold a particular position in society (e.g., parent, student, worker, citizen).

When people yield to the power of those in authority, accept their various roles, and support their institutions and groups, we have a state of **social integration**, the combining of the various parts of a society into a harmonious and coordinated whole. Social integration can occur for a whole society or for segments of a society, as Durkheim shows in selection 3. Durkheim also shows the adverse consequences that result from a lack of social integration. ◆