James M. Henslin



Essentials Coctology

A Down-to-Earth Approach



A DOWN-TO-EARTH APPROACH

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James M. Henslin

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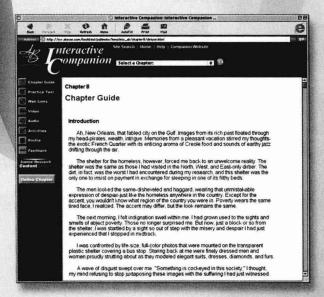
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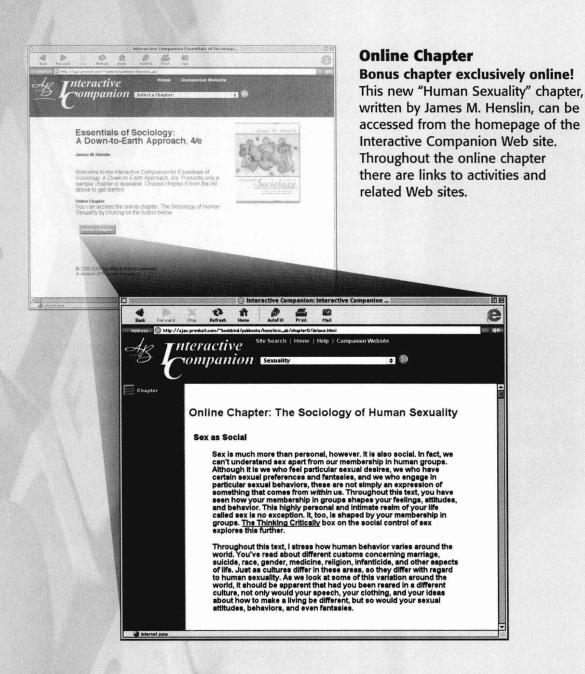
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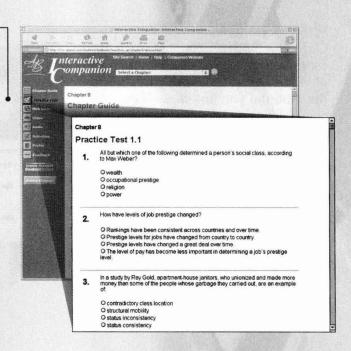
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These Web links help me find quality internet resources for the types of assignments required for class.

Debra, age 22

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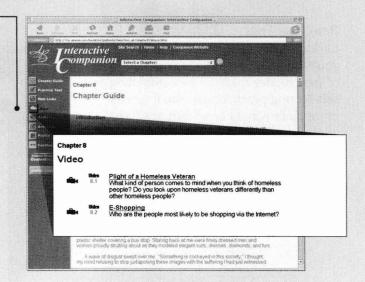
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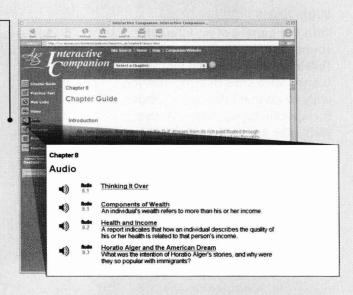
Janel, age 40



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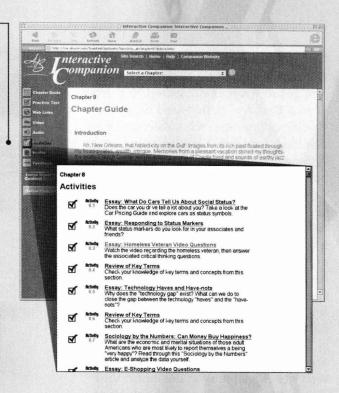
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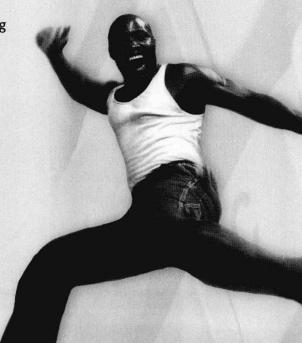


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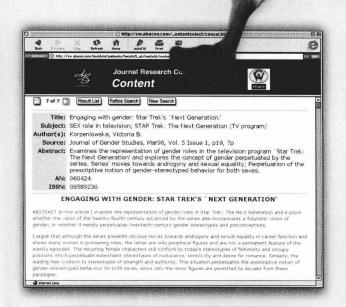
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To my son, Paul, who is inheriting a world not of his making. May his contributions to it be of value to those who follow.

To the Student from the Author

elcome to sociology! I've loved sociology since I was in my teens, and I hope you enjoy it, too. Sociology is fascinating because it holds the key to so much understanding of social life.

If you like to watch people and try to figure out why they do what they do, you will like sociology. Sociology pries open the doors of society so you can see what goes on behind them. Essentials of Sociology: A Down-to-Earth Approach stresses how profoundly our society and the groups to which we belong influence us. Social class, for example, sets us on a path in life. For some, the path leads to better health, more education, and higher income, but for others it leads to poverty, dropping out of school, and even a higher risk of illness and disease. These paths are so significant that they affect our chances of making it to our first birthday, as well as of getting in trouble with the police. They even influence how our marriage will work out, the number of children we will have—and whether or not we will read this book in the first place.

When I took my first course in sociology, I was "hooked." Seeing how marvelously my life had been affected by these larger social influences opened my eyes to a new world, one that has been fascinating to explore. I hope that this will be your experience also.

From how people become homeless to how they become presidents, from why people commit suicide to why women are discriminated against in every society around the world—all are part of sociology. This breadth, in fact, is what makes sociology so intriguing. We can place the sociological lens on broad features of society, such as social class, gender, and race-ethnicity, and then immediately turn our focus on the small-scale level. If we look at two people interacting—whether quarreling or kissing—we see how these broad features of society are being played out in their lives.

We aren't born with instincts. Nor do we come into this world with preconceived notions of what life should be like. At birth, we have no ideas of race-

ethnicity, gender, age, or social class. We have no idea, for example, that people "ought" to act in certain ways because they are male or female. Yet we all learn such things as we grow up in our society. Uncovering the "hows" and the "whys" of this process is also part of sociology's fascination.

One of sociology's many pleasures is that as we study life in groups (which can be taken as a definition of sociology), whether those groups be in some far-off part of the world or in some nearby corner of our own society, we constantly gain insights into our own selves. As we see how *their* customs affect *them*, effects of our own society on us become more visible.

This book, then, can be part of an intellectual adventure, for it can lead you to a new way of looking at your social world—and in the process, help you to better understand both society and yourself.

I wish you the very best in college—and in your career afterward. It is my sincere hope that Essentials of Sociology: A Down-to-Earth Approach will contribute to that success.

James M. Henslin, Professor Emeritus Department of Sociology Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville

P.S. I enjoy communicating with students, so feel free to comment on your experiences with this text. Because I travel a lot, it is best to reach me by e-mail: henslin@aol.com

Also, you may want to look at the Website for this text: www.ablongman.com/henslin

To the Instructor from the Author

emember when you first got "hooked" on sociology, how the windows of perception opened as you began to see life-in-society through the sociological perspective? For most of us, this was an eye-opening experience. This text is designed to open those windows onto social life, so students can see clearly the vital effects of group membership on their lives. Although few students will get into what Peter Berger calls "the passion of sociology," we at least can provide them the opportunity.

Sociology is like a huge jigsaw puzzle. Only very gradually do the intricate pieces start to fit together. As they do so, our perspective changes as we shift our eyes from the many small, disjointed pieces onto the whole that is being formed. Although this analogy is imperfect, it indicates a fascinating process of sociological discovery. Of all the endeavors we could have entered, we chose sociology because of the ways in which it joins together the "pieces" of society and the challenges it poses to "ordinary" thinking. To share the sociological perspective with students is our privilege.

As instructors of sociology, we have set formidable tasks for ourselves—to teach both social structure and social interaction, and to introduce students to the main sociological literature, to both the classic theorists and contemporary research. And we would like to accomplish this in ways that enliven the classroom, encourage critical thinking, and stimulate our students' sociological imagination. Although formidable, these goals are attainable. This book, based on many years of frontline (classroom) experience, is designed to help you reach these goals. Its subtitle, *A Down-to-Earth Approach*, is not proposed lightly. My goal is to share the fascination of sociology with students, and thereby make your teaching more rewarding.

Over the years, I have found the introductory course especially enjoyable. It is singularly satisfying to see students' faces light up as they begin to see how separate pieces of their world fit together. It is a pleasure to watch them gain insight into how their social experiences give shape to even their innermost desires. This is precisely what this text is designed to do—to stimulate

your students' sociological imagination so they can better perceive how the "pieces" of society fit together—and what this means for their own lives.

Filled with examples from around the world as well as from our own society, this text helps make today's multicultural, global society come alive for the student. From the international elite carving up global markets to the intimacy of friendship and marriage, the student can see how sociology is the key to explaining contemporary life—and his or her own place in it.

In short, this text is designed to make your teaching easier. There simply is no justification for students to have to wade through cumbersome approaches to sociology. I am firmly convinced that the introduction to sociology should be enjoyable, and that the introductory textbook can be an essential tool in sharing the discovery of sociology with students.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THIS TEXT

The text is laid out in five parts. Part I focuses on the sociological perspective, which we introduce in the first chapter. We then look at how culture influences us in Chapter 2, examine socialization in Chapter 3, and compare macrosociology and microsociology in Chapter 4.

Part II, which focuses on groups and social control, adds to the students' understanding of how significantly social groups influence our lives. In Chapter 5, as we examine the different types of groups, we also look at the fascinating area of group dynamics. Then, in Chapter 6, we focus on how groups "keep us in line" and sanction those who violate their norms.

In Part III, we examine how social inequality pervades society and how those inequalities have an impact on our lives. Because social stratification is so significant, I have written two chapters on this topic. The first (Chapter 7), with its global focus, presents an overview of the principles of stratification. The second (Chapter 8), with its emphasis on variations in social class, focuses

on stratification in U.S. society. After establishing this broader context, in Chapter 9 we examine inequalities of race and ethnicity, and in Chapter 10 those of gender and age.

Part IV makes students more aware of how social institutions encompass their lives. In Chapter 11, we look at how the economy and politics are our overarching social institutions. In Chapter 12, we examine the family, and in Chapter 13 we turn our focus on education and religion. Throughout, we look at how these social institutions are changing, and how their changes, in turn, influence our orientations and decisions.

With its focus on broad social change, Part V provides an appropriate conclusion for the book. Here we examine why our world is changing so rapidly, as well as catch a glimpse of what is yet to come. In Chapter 14, we analyze trends in population and urbanization, sweeping forces in our lives that ordinarily remain below our level of awareness. Our focus on technology, social movements, and the environment in Chapter 15 then takes us to the "cutting edge" of vital changes that engulf us all.

THEMES AND FEATURES

Six central themes run throughout the text: globalization, cultural diversity, down-to-earth sociology, critical thinking, sociology and the new technology, and the theme new to this edition—the growing influence of the mass media on our lives. Let's look at these six themes

Globalization

The first theme, globalization, explores the impact of global issues. The new global economy, for example, which has intertwined the fates of nations, vitally affects our lives. The globalization of capitalism influences the kinds of skills and knowledge we need, types of work available to us, costs of the goods and services we consume, and even whether our country is at war or peace. In addition to the strong emphasis on global issues that runs throughout this text, I have written a separate chapter on global stratification. I have also featured global issues in the chapters on social institutions and the final chapters on social change: technology, population, urbanization, social movements, and the environment.

What occurs in Russia, Japan, and China, as well as in much smaller nations such as the various parts of the former Yugoslavia, has direct and far-reaching

consequences on our own lives. Consequently, in addition to this global focus that runs throughout the text, the second theme, Cultural Diversity, also has a strong global emphasis.

Cultural Diversity in the United States and Around the World

The second theme, cultural diversity, has two primary emphases. The first is cultural diversity around the world. Gaining an understanding of how social life is "done" in other parts of the world often challenges our taken-for-granted assumptions of social life. At times, learning about other cultures gives us an appreciation for the life of other peoples; at other times, we may be shocked at some aspect of another group's way of life (such as female circumcision) and come away with a renewed appreciation of our own customs.

To highlight this sub-theme, I have written a series of boxes on worldwide diversity. The boxed features, here and throughout the text, are one of my favorite features of the book. They are especially valuable for introducing the provocative and controversial materials that make sociology such a lively activity. Among the boxed features that stress this sub-theme of cultural diversity around the world are an examination of human sexuality in Mexico and Kenya (Chapter 6), selling brides in China (Chapter 10), female circumcision in Africa (Chapter 10), love and arranged marriage in India (Chapter 12), infanticide in China (Chapter 14), and the destruction of the rain forests and indigenous people in Brazil (Chapter 15).

The second emphasis is cultural diversity in the United States. In this sub-theme, we examine groups that make up the fascinating array of people who compose the United States. Among the boxes I have written with this sub-theme are the significance of language—Spanish and English in Miami, and the terms people choose for their own racial-ethnic self-identification (both in Chapter 2), the resistance of social change by the Amish (Chapter 4), how Tiger Woods represents a significant change in racial-ethnic identification (Chapter 9), Islam as the new religious neighbor (Chapter 13), our shifting racial-ethnic mix (Chapter 14), and the Million Man March (Chapter 15).

Looking at cultural diversity—whether it be in the United States or in other regions of the world—often challenges our own orientations to life. To see that there are so many varieties of "doing" social life is to highlight the arbitrariness of our own customs—and our customary

ways of thinking. These contrasts help students develop their sociological imagination. They are better able to see connections among key sociological concepts such as culture, socialization, norms, race-ethnicity, gender, and social class. As your students' sociological imagination grows, they can attain a new perspective on their own experiences—and a better understanding of the social structure of U.S. society.

Down-to-Earth Sociology

As many years of teaching have shown me, all too often textbooks are written to appeal to the adopters of texts rather than to the students who must learn from them. Thus, a central concern in writing this book has been to present sociology in a way that not only facilitates understanding but also shares its excitement. During the course of writing other texts, I often have been told that my explanations and writing style are "down-to-earth," or accessible and inviting to students—so much so that I have used this phrase as the book's subtitle. The term is also featured in my introductory reader, *Down to Earth Sociology*, 11th edition (New York: Free Press, 2001).

This third theme is highlighted by a series of boxed features that explore sociological processes that underlie everyday life. In these Down-to-Earth sociology boxes, we consider such issues as improper and fraudulent social research (Chapter 1), "written gestures" ("emoticons") being used in e-mail (Chapter 2), the relationship between heredity and environment (Chapter 3), how sports shape male identity in such a way that it makes intimate relationships difficult for men (Chapter 3), how the United States is being "McDonaldized" (Chapter 5), lifestyles of the super-rich (Chapter 8), how voice is used to practice racial discrimination in the rental market (Chapter 9), Louisiana's controversial covenant marriage (Chapter 12), the gentrification of Harlem (Chapter 14), and corporate welfare (Chapter 15).

This third theme is actually a hallmark of the text, as my goal is to make sociology "down to earth." To help students grasp the fascination of sociology, I continuously stress sociology's relevance to their lives. To reinforce this theme, I avoid unnecessary jargon and use concise explanations and clear and simple (but not reductive) language. I often use student-relevant examples to illustrate key concepts, and I have based several of the chapters' opening vignettes on my own experiences in exploring social life. That this goal of sharing sociology's fascination is being reached is evident from the many

comments I receive from instructors and students alike that the text helps make sociology "come alive."

Critical Thinking

The fourth theme, critical thinking, focuses on controversial social issues and engages students in examining the various sides of those issues. These sections, titled "Thinking Critically," can enliven your classroom with a vibrant exchange of ideas. Among the issues addressed are our tendency to conform to evil authority, as uncovered by the Milgram experiments (Chapter 5); bounties paid to kill homeless children in Brazil (Chapter 7); social class inequality in the treatment of mental and physical illness (Chapter 8); racial segregation (by choice) on college campuses (Chapter 8); a consideration of quality of life and our potential to increase our life span (Chapter 10); and abortion as a social movement (Chapter 15).

Because these Thinking Critically sections are based on controversial social issues that either affect the student's own life or are something that he or she is vitally interested in, they stimulate critical thinking and lively class discussion. They also lend themselves especially well to debates and small-group discussion. For a full listing of this feature, see p. xv.

Sociology and the New Technology

The fifth theme, sociology and the new technology, investigates an aspect of social life that has come to be central to our existence. We welcome these new tools, for they help us to be more efficient at doing our tasks, from making a living to communicating with people on the other side of the globe. The significance of the new technology goes far beyond the tools and the ease and efficiency they bring to our tasks, however. The new technology also penetrates our being—it shapes our thinking, leading to changed ways of viewing life. We are in the midst of a social revolution that will leave few aspects of our lives untouched.

This theme is introduced in Chapter 2, where technology is defined and presented as a major aspect of culture. It is then discussed throughout the text. Examples include the implications of technology for maintaining global stratification (Chapter 7); how the consequences of technology differ by social class (Chapter 8); how technology outpaces norms (Chapter 10); how technology led to social inequality in early human history and how it now may lead to world peace—and to Big Brother

(Chapter 11). The final chapter (15), "Technology, Social Change, and the Environment," concludes the book with a focus on this theme.

To highlight this theme, I have written a series of boxes on how technology is changing society and affecting our lives. Among these are the potential of computers to replace the human species (Chapter 2), how for some people virtual friendship is replacing their flesh-and-blood friends (Chapter 4), the appearance of a new group, electronic communities (Chapter 5), cyberslacking and cybersleuthing (Chapter 5), the digital divide (Chapter 8), how technology is restructuring work (Chapter 11), and unusual reproduction (Chapter 12).

The Mass Media and Social Life

New to this edition is a sixth theme, how the mass media influence social life. In this theme, we stress how the media affect our behavior and permeate our thinking. We consider how they even penetrate our consciousness to such a degree that they have an impact on how we perceive our own bodies. As your students consider this theme, they should begin to see the mass media in a different light, which should further stimulate their sociological imagination.

In addition to this theme running through the text, I have also written a series of boxed features to make it more prominent for students. Among these are an analysis of why Native Americans like Western novels and movies even though Indians are usually portrayed as victims (Chapter 2), the influence of computer games on images of gender (Chapter 3), the worship of thinness—and how this affects our own body images (Chapter 4), the issue of censoring high-tech pornography (Chapter 6), slavery in today's world (Chapter 7), preaching hatred and online censorship (Chapter 9), finding pleasure in the pain of others (Chapter 10), stimulating greed to stimulate the economy (Chapter 11), and God on the Net (Chapter 13).

On Sources and Terms

Sociological data are found in an amazingly wide variety of sources, and this text reflects that variety. Cited throughout this text are standard journals such as the American Journal of Sociology, Social Problems, and Journal of Marriage and the Family, as well as more esoteric journals such as the Bulletin of the History of Medicine, Chronobiology International, and Western Journal of Black Studies. I also have drawn heavily from standard news

sources, especially the *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal*, as well as more unusual sources such as *El País*. In addition, I cite unpublished papers by sociologists.

Finally, a note on terms. Although still in use, the terms First World, Second World, and Third World are severely problematic. Even though unintentional, to say First World inevitably connotes superiority of some sort—a sort of coming in first place, with other nations following in lesser, inferior positions. To substitute the terms Most Developed Countries, Less Developed Countries, and Least Developed Countries carries the same ethnocentric burden. These terms indicate that our economic state is superior: We are "developed," but they are not. To overcome this problem, I use neutrally descriptive terms: the Most Industrialized Nations, the Industrializing Nations, and the Least Industrialized Nations. These terms do not carry an ethnocentric value burden, for they indicate only that a nation's amount of industrialization is measurable and relative, without a connotation that industrialization is desirable.

Supplements for the Instructor

Instructor's Manual. For each chapter in the text, the Instructor's Manual provides: a "chapter-at-a-glance" grid that coordinates use of other supplements; a chapter summary; learning objectives; a lecture outline; a list of what's new in the Fourth Edition; key terms with page references; classroom discussion topics and activities; and suggestions for guest lecturers.

Test Banks. The test banks contain several thousand questions in multiple choice, true-false, short answer, and essay formats. Many of the multiple choice questions test the students' ability to apply what they've learned to new situations.

Computerized Testing. Allyn and Bacon Test Manager is an integrated suite of testing and assessment tools for Windows and Macintosh. You can use Test Manager to create professional-looking exams in just minutes by selecting questions from the database, editing questions, or by writing your own questions. Course management features include a class roster, gradebook, and item analysis. Test Manager also has everything you need to create and administer online tests.

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