

SECOND EDITION


JAMES M. HENSLIN

ESSENTIALS OF SOCIOLOGY

A DOWN-TO-EARTH APPROACH



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Essentials of Sociology

A Down-to-Earth Approach



Second Edition

James M. Henslin

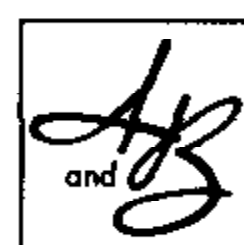
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TO THE STUDENT FROM THE AUTHOR

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 all of us are profoundly influenced by the society in which we live and the specific experiences we have. Social class, for example, sets us on different paths in life. For some, these paths lead to better health, more education, and higher income, whereas for others they result in poverty, dropping out of school, and even a higher risk of illness and disease. These paths are so significant that they even 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 marriages 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 women are treated as second-class citizens to why people commit suicide—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, 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. We don’t come into this world with preconceived notions of what life should be like. At birth, we have no ideas of race, gender, age, or social class. We have no idea, for example, of how people “ought” to act because they are male or female. Yet we all learn such things as part of growing 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 (if there still are far-off places) 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 ourselves 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.

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P.S. If you want to comment on your experiences with this text, don’t hesitate to write me. I enjoy

communicating with students. I can also be reached at henslin@aol.com by email.

Also, three other items that might interest you:

1. You may want to look at the website at <http://www.abacon.com/henslin/> for this text.
2. At the end of each chapter is a section on how to use the Internet to learn more about the chapter's topics. *Before* you begin a project, be

sure to read through the entire assignment to see what you are expected to produce, such as what kind of report you should write.

3. If you like using a study guide, check out the *Study Guide Plus*, prepared by Profesor Gwendolyn E. Nyden. It will help you review the chapters, and even provides self-tests so you can see how you are doing.

P R E F A C E

As instructors of sociology, we have set formidable tasks for ourselves—to teach both social structure and social interaction, to introduce students to the main sociological literature, to both the classic theorists and contemporary research—and to do so in ways that enliven the classroom, encourage critical thinking, and stimulate the sociological imagination. Although formidable, these goals are attainable. This book, based on many years of classroom experience, is designed to help you reach these goals.

The subtitle of this text, *A Down-to-Earth Approach*, is not proposed lightly. The goal is to share the fascination of sociology with students. Remember when you first got “hooked” on sociology, how the windows of perception opened and you began to see life-in-society through the sociological lens? For most of us, that 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 can at least 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.

Over the years, I have found the introductory course especially enjoyable. It is especially satisfying to see students’ faces light up as they begin to see

how separate pieces of their world fit together, as they gain insight into how their social experiences have given shape to even their innermost desires. This is precisely what this text is designed to do—to stimulate the sociological imagination so students can better perceive how the “pieces” of society fit together, and what that 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 dividing 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 role in it.

In short, this text is designed to make your teaching easier. There simply is no justifiable reason 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. After introducing the sociological perspective in the first chapter, in Chapter 2 we then look at how culture influences us, 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, we examine the different types of groups in society, looking also at the fascinating area of group dynam-

ics. 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 us. 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 in 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 the overarching social institutions in contemporary society. In Chapter 12, we turn our focus on the family, and in Chapter 13 we examine education and religion. Throughout, we look at how these social institutions are changing, and how these changes, in turn, influence our orientations and decisions.

With its focus on broad social change, Part V provides an appropriate ending 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. Chapter 14 opens this concluding part with an analysis of population and urbanization. Then, in Chapter 15 our focus on technology, social movements, and the environment takes us to the “cutting edge” of the changes that engulf us all.

Themes and Features

Four central themes run throughout the text. Three of these themes—cultural diversity, down-to-earth sociology, and critical thinking—were in the first edition. New to this edition is the timely—and fascinating—theme of technology and society.

The first theme, cultural diversity, explores the cultures of peoples worldwide, as well as subgroups that make up the United States. The second theme, down-to-earth sociology, examines sociological processes that underlie everyday life. The third theme, critical thinking, focuses on controversial social issues and engages students in examining the various sides of those issues. The fourth theme, sociology and the new technology, investigates how technol-

ogy both shapes society and is shaped by it. Let's look at these four themes in more detail.

Cultural Diversity and Globalization

In the new global economy, the interdependent fates of nations affect our lives in many crucial areas—from influencing the kinds of skills and knowledge we need, types of work available to us, and costs of the goods and services we consume, to whether our country is at war or peace. This text has a strong emphasis on global issues, such as a separate chapter on global stratification, extensive coverage in the chapters on social institutions, and a global focus in the final chapters on social change: technology, population, urbanization, social movements, and the environment.

Because we live in a global society, our sociological interpretations must take into account this broader perspective. What occurs in Russia and Japan, as well as in much smaller nations such as Chechen and Bosnia, has direct and far-reaching consequences on our own lives. Consequently, in addition to this global focus throughout the text, a series of boxes headed “A Global Glimpse” focuses on dimensions of social issues as they are played out in other societies. These include the relativity of deviance (Chapter 6), urbanization in the Least Industrialized Nations (Chapter 14), and the loss to humanity of the disappearing rain forests (Chapter 15). One of my favorites is in Chapter 9, which recounts an attempt to kill or maim an ethnic offender (with myself the victim!).

In addition, the text recurrently highlights key issues of multicultural diversity within U.S. society. A prime example is the boxes headed “The Immigrant Experience.” Each year over a million people from around the world legally immigrate to the United States, with the number of illegal entrants perhaps as large. Currently about one American in four defines him- or herself as Latino or nonwhite. In the next few years, the population of Asian Americans and Latinos is expected to increase by about 22 percent, that of African Americans by 12 percent, but whites by a mere 2 percent. In some places the future has already arrived. In New York City, for example, 40 percent of all primary and secondary students belong to an ethnic minority, while in California that figure stands at 51 percent.

A sociology textbook that does not explore this fundamental demographic shift cannot adequately

introduce the realities of life in a multicultural society. Thus “The Immigrant Experience” boxes introduce students to how immigrants’ fundamental orientations of the world are challenged and modified as they are immersed in their new culture. For example, we examine how education can force huge gaps between young immigrants and their families (Chapter 3), how the rules for life in the new society conflict so greatly with what immigrants had previously learned that they get in trouble with the law (Chapter 6), how they confront prejudice (Chapter 9), and how Latin American wives become much less submissive after they are introduced to North American culture (Chapter 10). See the inside front cover for a complete listing of this feature.

This focus on cultural diversity, as well as the many discussions of multiculturalism throughout the text, helps develop the student’s sociological imagination. By stimulating a broader perception of their society, it helps students see the connections between key sociological concepts such as culture, socialization, norms, race, gender, and social class. As your students’ sociological imagination grows, they will be able to apply these ideas to their own and others’ experiences—and to their understanding of the social structure of U.S. society.

Down-to-Earth Sociology

The second theme is highlighted by a series of “Down-to-Earth Sociology” boxes, in which we explore the sociological implications of everyday life and their application to social issues. Using this feature, we consider such issues as the relationship between heredity and environment (Chapter 3), the discrimination faced by heavy people (Chapter 4), how society is being “McDonaldized” (Chapter 5), how welfare ravages the self-concept (Chapter 8), the racist mind (Chapter 9), urban fears (Chapter 14), and the main types of propaganda designed to deceive us (Chapter 15).

I have reinforced the “down-to-earth” theme throughout the text by a friendly, accessible writing style. 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 manner 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 the phrase in the title of this text. The term is also highlighted in my introductory reader, *Down to Earth Sociology*, 9th edition (New York: Free Press, 1997).

This down-to-earth quality is also present in the chapters’ opening vignettes, which invite the student into each chapter. Several of these vignettes are based on my own sociological investigations. It also shows up in the absence of unnecessary jargon, concise explanations, the use of clear and simple (but not reductive) language, and by student-relevant examples that illustrate key concepts.

Critical Thinking

The third feature, “Thinking Critically about Social Controversy,” can help enliven your classroom with a vibrant exchange of ideas. These sections address pressing and often controversial social issues, such as the “Mommy Track” (Chapter 5); our tendency to conform to evil authority, as uncovered by the Milgram experiments (Chapter 5); bounties paid to kill homeless children (Chapter 7); the “deserving” versus the “undeserving” in our hotly contested welfare debate (Chapter 8); racial segregation (by choice) on college campuses (Chapter 9); and abortion as a social movement (Chapter 15).

These sections, based on controversy that either affects the student’s own life or is something he or she is vitally interested in, stimulate critical thinking and lively class discussions. For a full listing of this feature, see the inside front cover.

A New Theme: Sociology and the New Technology

New to this edition is a focus on technology and society. One of the most profound social forces that we face is an accelerated rate of technological change. Today “sci fi”-like technologies are being used to aid reproduction. In just a single generation, computers have become integrated in our daily lives, online services have become common, and millions now feel an urgent need to be connected to the Internet. Such topics are explored in a new boxed feature entitled “Sociology and the New Technology.” Other topics, selected both for their relevance and timeliness, include cybercommunications and the creation of electronic communities (Chapter 5), how

pornography has gone high tech (Chapter 6), the dilemma of medical rationing (Chapter 10), how technology affects democracy (Chapter 11), and opposition to technology (Chapter 15).

This theme is introduced in Chapter 2, where technology is defined and presented as a major aspect of culture. The box in this chapter, "Technology and Culture—Is Technology the Cart or the Horse?" harkens back to the French sociologist Jacques Ellul's fear that technology was destroying civilization and to Marshall McLuhan's celebration of "the global village." For a complete listing of the technology boxes, see the inside front cover.

Technology is also 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 often outpaces norms (Chapter 10); and new technologies, world peace, and Big Brother (Chapter 14). The final chapter, "Technology, Social Change, and the Environment," concludes the book with an emphasis on this new theme.

On Sources and Terms

Sociological data are found in an amazingly wide diversity 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 such as the *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal*, as well as more unusual sources such as *El País*. In addition, I have cited numerous unpublished papers by sociologists.

The boxes are one of my favorite features. They are especially valuable for introducing the provocative and controversial materials that make sociology such a lively activity.

Finally, a note on terms. The terms First World, Second World, and Third World, although still used, are severely problematic. Even though it is unintentional, to use the term First World inevitably connotes superiority of some sort—a sort of coming in first place, with other nations in lesser, inferior positions. To substitute the terms Most Developed Countries, Less Developed Countries, and Least Developed Countries, as some do, 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 introduce 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.

Intext Learning Aids

Essentials of Sociology: A Down-to-Earth Approach includes other pedagogical aids that are especially helpful in the teaching/learning process.

Summary and Review. Each chapter closes with a question-and-answer format that highlights and reinforces the most important concepts and issues discussed in the chapter. The question-and-answer format is pedagogically superior to the traditional summary as it more effectively engages students in a thinking process.

Internet Projects. New to this edition is an in-text learning aid that reinforces the text's new technology theme, and the role the Internet is playing in social change. Two Internet projects for each chapter, titled Sociology and the Internet, written by Robert Thompson of Minot State University, guide the students into the Internet so they can learn more about major topics introduced in the chapter. You, too, might enjoy these fascinating projects.

Suggested Readings. A list of suggested readings is included for each chapter. These readings are useful for wider background reading on the chapter's topics, as well as a guide for students as they write papers. Sociological journals are also listed.

Comprehensive Glossary. A comprehensive glossary at the end of the book gathers into a single, accessible format the key terms and concepts introduced throughout the text.

Supplements to Help Your Teaching

Instructor's Manual and Test Bank. This manual, thoroughly revised for the second edition by

Gary Scott Smith, contains chapter summaries, outlines, key terms with definitions, author suggestions for interactive teaching, class discussion questions, essay questions, projects, guest speaker suggestions, and suggestions for using videos and transparencies. The Test Bank portion of the manual contains over 2,000 questions in multiple-choice, true/false, fill-in, and essay formats.

Computerized Instructor's Manual. The complete Instructor's Manual is also available on disk for Macintosh and IBM.

Test Bank. The Test Bank is available in a computerized format (Macintosh, and IBM-DOS, Windows) utilizing Allyn and Bacon Custom Test, from ESA-TEST, the best-selling, state of the art test generation software program.

Call-in Testing. Allyn and Bacon can run your tests for you and have a finished, ready-to-duplicate test on its way to you by mail or fax within 48 hours.

Transparencies. This package includes 100 color acetates featuring illustrations from both the text and from other sources. The majority of these transparencies are also found on the new *Allyn and Bacon Digital Archive for Sociology* (CD-ROM).

PowerPoint. A complete PowerPoint presentation for introductory sociology is available to adopters. Consisting of approximately 300 colorful graphic and text images, this supplement is ideal for the instructor interested in incorporating multimedia technology into his or her lectures. It is available on disk (IBM and Macintosh) and comes packaged with an informative user's guide offering details on how to use PowerPoint, including how to customize the images.

Website. Both professors and students can now enjoy access to the Allyn and Bacon web page at <http://www.abacon.com> and the specific site to accompany this book at <http://www.abacon.com/henslin/>. There is a variety of resources here, including SocLinks, a massive collection of links to sociological resources for all major subfields of sociology.

Allyn and Bacon Quick Guide to the Internet for Sociologists, 1998 edition. This handy reference acquaints users with the Internet and the World Wide Web, and provides a multitude of sociology-specific

resources. Each guide comes packaged with a Sprint Internet Passport (CD-ROM), which allows one month of Internet access.

Video. Specifically designed for use with this text, this video brings current sociological issues to the classroom by focusing on issues and events directly related to text content. An accompanying Video Guide provides detailed descriptions of the video, specific tie-ins to the text, and suggested discussion questions and projects.

A&B Video Library. The Allyn and Bacon Video Library offers qualified adopters an impressive selection of videos from such sources as Films for the Humanities, and Annenberg/CPB.

CD-ROM Library. New to this edition are several fascinating CD-ROM's available to qualified adopters of this text—*Material World: A Global Family Portrait*, *Our Times: Multimedia Encyclopedia of the 20th Century*, *Faces of Conflict*, and the *Allyn and Bacon Digital Archive for Sociology*. A User's Guide provides links to the text.

Just-in-Time Publishing. Allyn and Bacon uses the newest printing and computer technology to offer you this program, whereby you have the opportunity to build your own textbook or supplements to fit your own course, choosing materials from our database, and adding your own materials.

Sociology Digital Image Archive. This exciting new CD-ROM contains hundreds of images to incorporate in multimedia presentations. It includes original images, as well as selected art from Henslin's texts and many other Allyn & Bacon sociology texts, providing a broad selection of graphs, charts, and tables to use to illustrate key sociological concepts.

College Newslink. As a subscriber to College Newslink, you receive daily e-mail delivery of customized information and unlimited access to articles that interest you.

Acknowledgments

The gratifying response to the first edition indicates that my efforts at making sociology down to earth have succeeded. The years that have gone into writ-

ing this text are a culmination of the many more years that preceded its writing—from graduate school to that equally demanding endeavor known as classroom teaching. No text, of course, comes solely from its author. Although I am responsible for the final words on the printed page, I have depended heavily on feedback from instructors who used the first edition and to earlier feedback from many sociologists. I am especially grateful to

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Since this text, then, is based on the contributions of many, I would count it a privilege if you also would share with me your teaching experiences with this book, including any suggestions for improving the text.

I wish you the very best in your teaching. It is my sincere desire that *Essentials of Sociology: A Down-to-Earth Approach* contributes to that success.

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