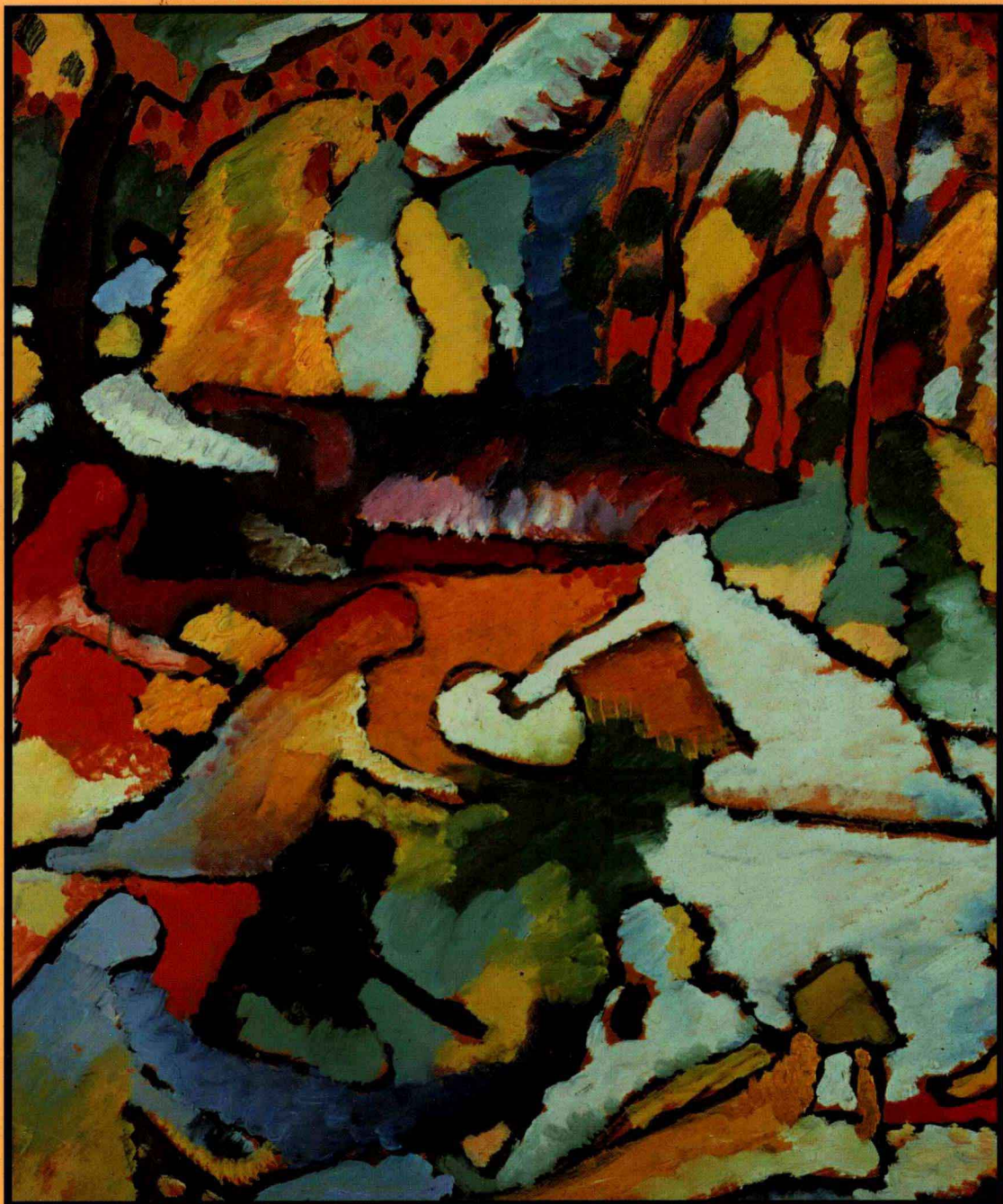


THIRD EDITION

Sociology

A DOWN-TO-EARTH APPROACH



JAMES M. HENSLIN



SOCIOLOGY:

A Down-to-Earth Approach

Third Edition



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*To my fellow sociologists, who do such creative research on social life
and who communicate the sociological imagination to generations
of students.*

With my sincere admiration and appreciation

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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.

In this book, you will especially see how social class sets us on different paths in life, how in one direction they lead to better health, more education, higher income, even better marriages—and in the other to more illness and disease, dropping out of school, low income, and higher chances of having your marriage fail. Those paths even affect your chances of making it to your first birthday, as well as of getting in trouble with the police—and of reading 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 group 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 around the world 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, social class, of how people “ought” to be. 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.

You can look forward to reading this book, then, for it can lead you to a new way of looking at the social world—and in the process, help you to better understand both society and yourself.

I would count it a privilege if you would share with me your experiences with the book. If there are sections of this text that you especially enjoy, or that you wish to comment on for whatever reason, don’t hesitate to write me. I enjoy communicating with students.

I wish you the very best in college—and in your career afterwards. It is my sincere hope that *Sociology: A Down-to-Earth Approach* contributes to that success.

James M. Henslin
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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, we then contrast macrosociology and microsociology, present an overview of culture, examine socialization, and then look at how sociologists do research.

Part II, which focuses on groups and social control, provides an understanding of how significantly social groups influence our lives. It first provides an overview of groups—from society, which encompasses us, to the smaller networks in which we are immersed. After examining bureaucracy and formal organizations, we turn to the issue of how groups exert social control on those who violate their norms.

In Part III, we examine how social inequality pervades society and how those inequalities affect our own lives. Because social stratification is so significant, I have written two chapters on this topic. The first, with a global focus, presents an overview of the principles of stratification. The second, with an emphasis on variations in social class, focuses on stratification in U.S. society. After establishing this broader context, we then examine gender, the most global of the social inequalities, and conclude with analyses of race, ethnicity, and age.

Part IV begins by examining the economy and politics, which have become such overarching social institutions in contemporary society. Then follow separate chapters on the family, education, religion, and medicine.

Part V, which concludes the book, focuses on social change. Here you will gain insight into why your world is changing so rapidly, as well as catch a glimpse of what is yet to come. This concluding part opens by examining effects of population and urbanization, then collective behavior and social movements. The book closes with a chapter on technology, the environment, and social change, an exploration into the “cutting edge” of the changes that engulf us all.

THEMES AND FEATURES

Three central themes run through this text. Two of these themes, down-to-earth sociology and diversity, have been in the text since the first edition. New to this edition is the timely—and fascinating—theme of technology and society. The first theme, down-to-earth sociology, examines sociological processes that underlie the taken-for-granted assumptions of everyday life. The second theme, cultural diversity and globalization, explores cultures of peoples around the world, the many subgroups that make up the United States, and the local, national, and international effects of globalization. The third theme, technology and society, investigates how technology both shapes society and is shaped by it. Let’s look at these themes in more detail.

Down-to-Earth Sociology

Seeing the connection between the individual and society—to understand how social forces shape individual and group behavior—is perhaps the single greatest goal of the introductory sociology course. *Sociology: A Down-to-Earth Approach* offers a rich journey into the sociological implications of everyday life. Beginning with highly relevant and exciting-to-read opening vignettes (many of which are based on my own sociological investigations), each chapter seeks to stimulate the sociological imagination by using timely and relevant examples. Threaded through these examples are the central insights provided by the major perspectives—including the symbolic interactionist stress on the significance of symbols in creating social life, the functionalist insight that people’s actions have both manifest and latent consequences, and the conflict emphasis that groups compete for scarce resources. Separate “Down-to-Earth Sociology” boxes appear throughout the text, focused on such topics as Du Bois and race relations (Chapter 1); how college football can be used to explain social structure (Chapter 4); how women survive in the male-dominated business world, a real-life example written by one of my students (Chapter 7); how society is being “McDonaldized” (Chapter 7); how welfare ravages the self-concept, also written by one of my students (Chapter 10); how the racist mind works (Chapter 12); and urban fear and gated fortresses (Chapter 20, new to this edition). (See page xvi for a complete listing of these Down-to-Earth boxes.)

A “Down-to-Earth” Writing Style. The down-to-earth theme is reinforced throughout the text by a friendly, accessible writing style. As long 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—and revising—*Sociology: A Down-to-Earth Approach* 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. (This term is also highlighted in my introductory reader *Down to Earth Sociology*, 9th edition, Free Press, 1997.)

This down-to-earth quality also shows itself in concise explanations, the absence of unnecessary jargon, the use of clear and simple (but not reductive) language, and by the many student-relevant examples that illustrate key concepts. In addition, “In Sum” sections appear at several points throughout the chapters, which should help you review important points before proceeding to new materials. At the end of each chapter is a “user-friendly” summary, which presents the major chapter topics in a question-and-answer format designed to enhance your learning.

Cultural Diversity and Globalization

Any attempt to explain U.S. society must pay keen attention to its diverse populations, for ours is truly a multicultural society. It also must explore the many implications of the globalization of the world's societies. Consequently, this feature is again stressed in this edition. Throughout the text runs an emphasis on cultural diversity and globalization. In addition, special "Perspectives" boxes highlight key issues of diversity in the United States ("Cultural Diversity in U.S. Society") and introduce you to cultures around the world ("Society in Cross-Cultural Perspective").

Cultural Diversity in U.S. Society. Each year about one million people from around the world legally move to the United States, and the number of illegal entrants is at least as large. Currently, about one American in four defines himself 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. In contrast, non-Hispanic whites are expected to increase by a mere 2 percent. In some places the future has already arrived. In New York, 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 the implications of this century's second great demographic shift (the first took place in the early 1900s), simply cannot serve as an adequate introduction to the realities of life in a multicultural society. Thus, in each chapter Perspectives boxes headed "Cultural Diversity in U.S. Society" explore issues such as conflict over the use of English language versus Spanish (Chapter 2); why Native Americans like Western movies (Chapter 2); a Latino's reaction to his (Anglo) school socialization (Chapter 3); how the Amish resist social change (Chapter 4); problems in defining deviance among newly arrived immigrants from vastly dissimilar cultures (Chapter 8); the immigrant's path to political participation (Chapter 15); the new neighbor, Islam in the U.S. (Chapter 18); and the Million-Man March (Chapter 21). (See page xvii for a complete listing of the Perspectives boxes.)

The "Cultural Diversity in the United States" boxes, as well as the many discussions of diversity throughout the text, help you apply the sociological imagination to fundamental changes occurring in U.S. society. They also help you see connections among key sociological concepts such as culture, socialization, norms, race, gender, and social class. As your sociological imagination grows, you will be able to apply these ideas to your own experiences—which will further increase your understanding of the social structure of U.S. society.

Cultural Diversity Around the World. In the new global economy, the interdependent fate of nations affects your life in many crucial areas—from influencing the kinds of

skills and knowledge you need, types of work available to you, and costs of the goods and services you consume, to whether your country is at war or peace. To increase your awareness of these global interconnections that affect your life so profoundly became a primary goal as I wrote and revised this text. I have included a separate chapter on global stratification, extensive coverage in the chapters on social institutions, and a global focus in the final chapter on technology, social change, and the environment.

In addition, Perspectives boxes headed "Cultural Diversity Around the World" build on this emphasis by addressing such issues as female circumcision (Chapter 11), ethnic conflict among nations and states (Chapter 15), health care in other countries (Chapter 19), urbanization in the least industrialized nations (Chapter 20), and threats posed to the world's remaining preliterate groups—as well as consequences for the world that the loss of their knowledge will bring (Chapter 22). (See page xvii for a complete listing of this feature.)

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 you face is the accelerated rate of technological change. In just a single generation, computers have become integrated in our daily lives; alternative, or niched, media outlets have proliferated, including online services and the Internet; "sci-fi"-like technologies are being used to aid reproduction; distance learning is becoming common. Each of these topics is the subject of a new boxed feature headed "Sociology and the New Technology." Other topics, selected both for their relevance and timeliness, include cybercommunications and the creation of electronic communities (Chapter 6), how pornography has gone high tech (Chapter 8), the adverse impact of technology on African Americans (Chapter 12), how technology affects democracy (Chapter 15), the dilemma of medical rationing (Chapter 19), and opposition to technology (Chapter 22).

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"; it concludes by introducing the emerging sociological theory of technology called the "social construction of technology." Rather than regarding technology as an out-of-control force that drives culture and on which all social change depends, social construction of technology theorists emphasize the role that individuals and groups—with all their values and special interests—play in shaping technology. (For a complete listing of the technology boxes, see page xvi.)

Technology is also discussed throughout the text. Examples include how technology is used to control workers

in order to produce the “maximum security” workplace (Chapter 7), the implications of technology for maintaining global stratification (Chapter 9), how the consequences of technology differ by social class (Chapter 10), how technology often outpaces norms (Chapter 13), and new technologies, downsizing, and the restructuring of work (Chapter 14). The final chapter, “Technology, Social Change, and the Environment,” concludes the book with an emphasis on this new theme.

Thinking Critically About Social Controversy. Another important feature is the section headed “Thinking Critically About Social Controversy.” Addressing pressing and often controversial social issues, these sections include the Milgram experiment and conformity to evil authority (Chapter 6), bounties paid to kill homeless children in Brazil (Chapter 9), the welfare debate (Chapter 10), racial and ethnic self-segregation on campus (Chapter 12), the restructuring of work (Chapter 14), marital tensions caused by “the second shift” (Chapter 16), how to get single teen mothers back in school (Chapter 17), a conflict interpretation of the destruction of the Branch Davidians (Chapter 18), and abortion as a social movement (Chapter 21). (For a full listing of these sections, see page xvii)

These Thinking Critically sections make excellent points of departure for class discussions, for they contrast several points of view or theoretical interpretations about an area of social controversy. After presenting these multiple perspectives, you are asked to evaluate the issue. In “Self-Segregation on Campus” (Chapter 12), for instance, the controversy over students living in segregated housing is presented, along with the many unresolved questions it has brought.

IN-TEXT LEARNING AIDS

Sociology: A Down-to-Earth Approach includes a number of other pedagogical aids to help your learning. These include:

Compelling Chapter Opening Vignettes. Opening vignettes alert you to key topics to be covered in the chapter. Six new vignettes have been written for this edition, including a portrait of three average families from the most industrialized, industrializing, and least industrialized nations of the world (in Chapter 9); the exploitation of women in prostitution in Tunisia (Chapter 11); the horrors of genocide in Rwanda (Chapter 12); a mind-boggling description of how the frail elderly are treated by the Tiwi (Chapter 13); the strains of the two-paycheck family (Chapter 16), and high-tech medical interventions (Chapter 19).

Key Terms. Key terms are highlighted as they are introduced and defined again in the margins of the text. These terms provide a working definition of the most important sociological concepts as they are introduced and applied.

Chapter Summaries. Each chapter is summarized and reviewed within a question-and-answer format. Organized by major chapter headings, this interactive method of presentation is an ideal way to review, highlight, and reinforce the most important concepts and issues discussed in each chapter.

Suggested Readings. Each chapter also includes a list of recommended readings, including relevant sociological journals, that you should find useful for writing papers and further investigating topics. These are indicated at the end of each chapter summary and may be found in the section called “Suggested Readings” on p. 657.

Using the Internet. Each chapter includes an exciting set of projects and exercises using the Internet. These are noted in the summaries and may be found in the section called “Using the Internet” on p. 636. See the Allyn and Bacon web site at <http://www.abacon.com> and <http://www.abacon.com/henslin>.

Comprehensive Glossary. A comprehensive glossary at the end of the book brings together the important concepts and terms introduced throughout the text, organizing them into a single, accessible format.

SUPPLEMENTS

Study Guide Plus. Prepared by Professor Gwendolyn E. Nyden, Oakton Community College, this guide provides learning objectives, key terms, self-tests, and glossaries. Students who need special language assistance will find a glossary for potentially confusing idioms and colloquialisms. New to this edition is a *How to Study* section.

Multimedia Study Guide. This exciting, interactive multimedia CD-ROM contains text, graphics, videos, interactive testing, and links to the Internet.

SoundGuide. Now students can study while driving, exercising, or walking to class with this practical SoundGuide. Each section begins with a vignette from the text, followed by an overview of chapter material and interactive testing.

Ourselves and Others: The Washington Post Sociology Companion, Second Edition. The second edition of this popular reader contains sixty-six all-new articles. Riveting, timely, and sociologically fascinating, the articles cover pressing issues in the United States and worldwide—from “College Dorms Reflect Trend of Self-Segregation” to “Years of Greed Make Zaire a Chaotic State.” Introductions help students recall core concepts and provide a brief overview and context for the articles that follow. New to this second edition of the reader are accompanying questions for discussion, providing a lively spur for critical thinking and class discussion.

Careers in Sociology. Written by Professor W. Richard Stephens, Jr., of Greenville College, this supplement goes

beyond the academic career path of the sociologist and explores careers in applied sociology, how people working as sociologists entered the field, and how a degree in sociology can be a preparation for careers in areas such as law, gerontology, social work, and public administration.

Breaking the Ice: A Guide to Understanding People from Other Cultures, Second Edition. This guide can help you better understand and interact with people from other cultures. Drawing on her own personal experience as a Ugandan-born woman living in the United States, Professor Daisy Kabagarama of Wichita State University offers examples to illustrate behavior in different cultures. Numerous exercises are included to help the reader discover and deal with their own biases.

America Online. Allyn and Bacon continues its exciting partnership with AOL. Check keyword College Online for ongoing projects.

Allyn and Bacon's Web Page. Both professors and students can now enjoy access to the Allyn and Bacon Web page at <http://www.abacom.com>. There are a variety of resources here, ranging from the author's home page to a massive collection of links to sociology resources for all major subfields of sociology, created by Professor Cecil Greek of the University of South Florida. Stay tuned for further developments, as this site changes daily!

Allyn and Bacon Guide to the Internet for Sociologists. Written by Professor Joseph Rivard of Central Michigan University, this handy reference acquaints users with the basics of the internet and the World Wide Web, and provides a multitude of sociology-specific references.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The gratifying response to the first two editions indicates that my efforts at making sociology down to earth have succeeded. The years that have gone into writing 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. But no text 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 two editions. I especially want to thank

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A B O U T T H E A U T H O R

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While a graduate student, James Henslin taught at the University of Missouri at St. Louis. After completing

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Henslin enjoys spending time with his family, reading, and fishing. His two favorite activities are writing and traveling. He especially enjoys living in other cultures, for this brings him face to face with behaviors that he cannot take for granted, experiences that "make sociological principles come alive."

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