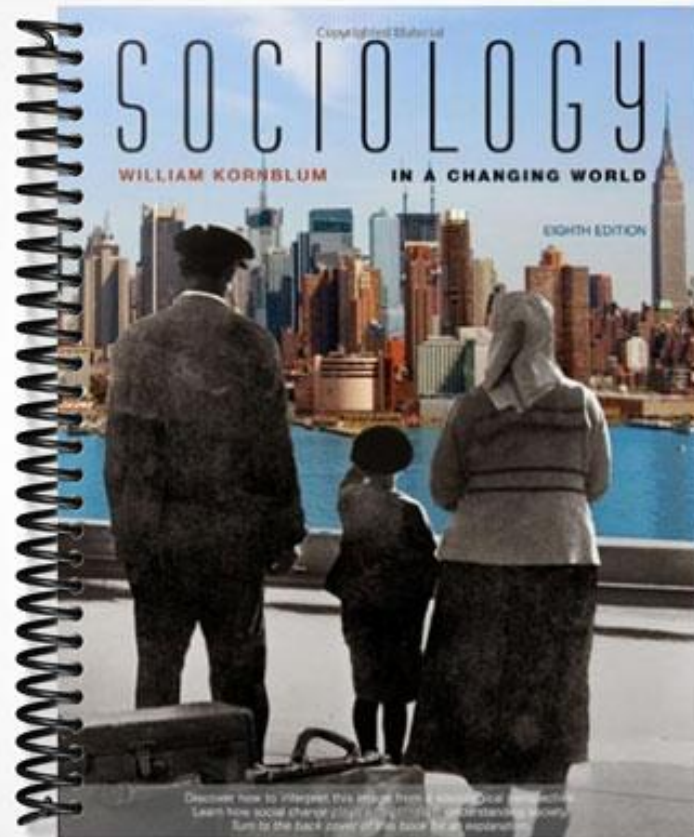


SOLUTIONS MANUAL



CHAPTER 1

SOCIOLOGY: AN INTRODUCTION

LECTURE OUTLINE

I. The Sociological Imagination

- A. The *sociological imagination* helps one see the relationships between social conditions and one's own situation in life.
- B. Sociologists are concerned with how *social conditions* influence our lives as individuals.

II. Sociology and Social Change

- A. *Sociology* is the scientific study of human societies and human behavior in the many groups that make up a society.
- B. A core idea of sociology is that individual choice is always determined to some extent by a person's environment.
- C. The terms *micro*, *macro*, and *middle* refer to different levels of complexity in the subjects of social research.
 - 1. The micro level of observation studies the implications of individual behaviors.
 - 2. The macro level is concerned with whole societies and the ways in which they are changing.
 - 3. The middle level studies the effects of communities and organizations on individual lives or behaviors.

III. From Social Thought to Social Science

- A. Like all the sciences, sociology developed out of the human desire to understand and predict.
- B. Eighteenth-century philosophers emphasized the idea of progress guided by human reason, rather than viewing the human condition as preordained and unchangeable.
- C. The American, French, and English revolutions were social movements fueled by the concepts of egalitarianism, democracy, and self-government.
- D. The science of sociology emerged from the social ferment of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.
- E. The early sociologists tended to think in macrosociological terms; their writing dealt with whole societies.
 - 1. Karl Marx believed that conflicts between workers and owners of capital would cause major upheavals.
 - 2. Émile Durkheim sought to explain social change as resulting from population growth and changes in the organization of work and community life.
 - 3. Max Weber was the first to understand the importance of bureaucratic forms of social organization.

- F. The Rise of Modern Sociology
 - 1. North American sociology emphasizes empirical investigation of social issues. Empirical information permits sociologists to form conclusions backed up by systematic, measurable evidence.
 - 2. In the early years of the twentieth century social surveys were undertaken to gain empirical data about social conditions.
 - 3. The “Chicago school” of sociology focused on the relationship between the individual and society. The term *human ecology* describes the relationships among social order, social disorganization, and population distribution.

- IV. **Major Sociological Perspectives**
 - A. *Interactionism* is a sociological perspective that views social order and social change as resulting from repeated interactions among individuals and groups.
 - 1. *Rational-choice* or exchange models of behavior study what people seem to be getting out of their interactions and what they contribute in return.
 - 2. *Symbolic interactionism* is the study of how social life is “constructed” through acts of social communication.
 - B. The *functionalist* perspective is based on the idea that various social structures exist to fulfill vital functions for society.
 - C. *The conflict perspective* explores the role of conflict and power in social change.
 - D. The ecological, interactionist, functionalist, and conflict perspectives can be used in combination to provide a multidimensional view of society and the world.

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. Introduce the concept of the sociological imagination and discuss the difference between personal troubles and social conditions.
2. Demonstrate how the sociological imagination is applied at different levels of behavioral and social complexity—micro, macro, and middle—and show that these are conceptual rather than fixed distinctions.
3. Describe how sociology developed, arising during the scientific and industrial revolutions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and taking on the characteristics of a science during the twentieth century.
4. Introduce functionalism as a perspective that appears in many areas of social thought and is especially relevant to the study of social structures involving large numbers of people.

5. Indicate that interactionism has both economic (rational-choice) and cultural (symbolic) dimensions.
6. Introduce the conflict perspective as a set of theories about the way conflict among individuals and groups accounts for much social change.
7. Give students examples of modern sociological research that combines the basic perspectives in order to create more powerful explanations of social conditions and social change.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

My own preference is to spend only a short time on the first chapter, using it to move quickly into the subject matter of sociology. You will have plenty of time to refer to the history of sociology later in the course. You could devote the first class to introducing the subject and yourself, and in a second class you could help students see why sociologists often organize their research around issues of structure, interaction, and conflict. Also show that looking at the way significant features of human experience are distributed can be viewed as an ecological dimension of social thought.

Many instructors feel that conveying the excitement and insights of the sociological imagination should be the main theme of any introductory class. I agree, but there is only so much that you can convey about this concept by presenting it all at once. I prefer to keep coming back to the sociological imagination throughout the text rather than simply using the concept as an introduction. I also like to introduce students to a few theoretical controversies, both to help them better understand the major perspectives and to show them that sociology, like other sciences, has competing theories.

Distinctive Features

The opening vignette asks students to go beyond their usual perceptions of what a parade is and to apply sociological concepts to understanding what parades reveal about the society that presents them. At one level the parade is a representation of a particular society's social structure. Most students have seen many parades but will never have stopped to think about their broader meaning and what they might reveal to a more critical and perceptive observer. You can help them develop their skills in applying the sociological perspectives and using their eyes to study social interaction. Throughout the text I depict real people and situations in the opening vignettes. These introductions are meant to be more than "ticklers"; they are short case studies that are referred to from time to time in the chapter and in the Visual Sociology sections.

Key Concepts

Sociology itself is the main concept that we wish to get across in this unit. After that, the dominant concepts are the theoretical perspectives: interactionism, functionalism, and the conflict perspective.

It is relatively easy for students to think psychologically, or at least to think in terms of individual actions and individual goal attainment. Many of our intuitive explanations of why social problems exist, or why wars and other sorts of conflict occur, are largely psychological. We say that these things happen because human nature is what it is. But the sociological view is quite different. It looks at how organizations work, at how people behave in groups as opposed to how they think they behave as individuals. It deals with how they try to write constitutions for their societies and then run their politics accordingly, how their markets work or why they do not work according to classical economic principles, why some people are rich and many more are poor, why some are powerful and may even abuse their power while many others, especially those who are stigmatized as racially different or as deviant for other reasons, lack the power to advance their interests in society.

In getting students to think sociologically, I have found the micro, middle, and macro levels of analysis to be helpful. The micro level usually starts from the dyad and continues up to the small group or the small organization of groups. The middle level usually involves entire organizations or communities. It is influenced by the micro level of interaction among individuals and small groups, as well as by forces established at the macro level of society through government or market forces or events taking place in other societies and nations. But we could also speak of the micro, middle, and macro levels of analysis within a social system such as a large corporation, in which the micro level consists of interpersonal relations at work, which differ in different departments—the middle level—and are shaped partially by macro forces such as the firm's leadership, market forces, and other factors such as the race or ethnicity of the workers. The point here is that these levels of analysis are relative; they do not actually exist and cannot be applied rigidly.

The basic sociological perspectives are difficult for textbook authors to deal with. I have spoken to many instructors who deride their use, and to many others who insist that at least one or two of them must be used in organizing a text. The author needs to integrate these views into the text in a manner that is pedagogically sound. In my view it is worthwhile to help students think about social structures and their function in social life (the functionalist view), recognize the importance of norms and values and how these arise and are confirmed and changed through interaction (the interactionist view), and become aware that the exercise of power in various contexts is essential in explaining how social structures, and whole societies, change (conflict theory). It would be a major achievement if students left your course with the ability to apply these perspectives with some subtlety as well as to merge them into an overall sociological perspective on life.

Additional Concepts

Throughout the book I call attention to the ecological perspective in sociology. This is not a highly theoretical perspective; in fact, when it has been the subject of theory building it has often been a version of functionalist thinking. The power of the ecological view comes from the fact that it looks at the quantitative distribution of social phenomena over space and time. These distributions form the demographic spine around which sociological explanations are often built.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Ask your students to name some of the most ignorant ideas human beings have had about themselves and their societies. You may find that they have trouble coming up with answers at first. Prompt them. Ask them if they know about leaches or cupping, or about foot binding or forced collectivization or mercantilism. Some of them may offer ideas that you or other students do not think of as stupid, and this could be pointed out quite profitably. Also ask your students to think about what medicine was like in its early stages, before the discovery of microorganisms, when bloodletting was considered scientific. Or ask them to imagine what it would have been like to live as a slave in a system in which those in power were sure that you were an inferior being simply because of some outward and irrelevant features of your anatomy. How do we know that we are not fostering such ideas now? This is where the concept of social science comes in: We subject our ideas about values to the test of scientific evidence.

Another wonderful stimulant for class discussion is Clarence Darrow's speech to the prisoners at Cook County Jail (1902), which is available in his collected speeches and elsewhere. This is an impassioned argument that jails are the problem rather than the solution. Students who have not confronted Darrow, no matter what their own political leanings are, have missed a vital chapter in American history and sociology.

Sociologists are frequently accused of using too much jargon: "Sociologists, the people who gave us such memorable locutions as 'charisma' and 'lifestyle,' 'the power elite' and 'the lonely crowd,' are now speaking a language so dense that other sociologists can hardly understand them" (Richard Bernstein, in *The New York Times*, August 17, 1988, p. 7). But writing in sociology is always somewhat difficult for laypeople to understand. We must try to use common terms such as *society* and *culture* in more precise ways. We do need to develop a specialized vocabulary, just as other disciplines do. But we also need to communicate clearly. I agree with sociologist Todd Gitlin that, sadly, many sociologists "cannot be bothered to clarify matters for the reader who is not among the adept" (quoted in *The New York Times*, August 27, 1988, p. 7).

DISCUSSION QUESTION

Identify a social fact that pertains to your society (e.g., “The majority of Americans finish high school”). Why is this fact not explained by “human nature”? Is it likely to change in the near future? Has it changed in the past?

USING THE TABLES AND CHARTS

The review and perspective charts in Chapter 1 summarize the levels of sociological analysis and the three basic sociological perspectives. In both cases you could call the students’ attention to what charts like these seek to accomplish. They summarize concepts and offer examples to facilitate learning. You need to help students understand the concepts presented in such charts while at the same time alerting them to the potential pitfalls. With reference to levels of analysis, for example, the text points out that these are artificial or heuristic distinctions. Thus, if the chart is used as a basis for discussion, you should emphasize that distinctions such as micro, macro, and middle are not rigid and easily drawn boundaries.

USING THE VISUAL FEATURES

The Visual Sociology box on parades invites you to return to the parade as a representation of society and its structure. This edition begins each chapter with a vignette that raises important concepts and returns to these issues at the end of the chapter in visual representations that invite students to apply their developing sociological imaginations to the phenomena in question (parades in this case). Note that in this Visual Sociology box we offer a comparative perspective on parades that enlarges the example of a Mardi Gras parade used in the opening vignette. The Rose Bowl parade, the military parade, and the ethnic parade offer contrasting views of social groups. You might want to spend some time discussing these contrasts as the students look at the photos and reflect on them.

The Then and Now box highlights the long-neglected contributions of female founders of sociology and brings them up to date by showing how important women are among contemporary sociologists. The point here is that pioneering sociologists like Harriet Martineau, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, and many others helped make sociology an independent discipline early in its history, and their work often emphasized gender inequality and its huge costs to society. Contemporary sociologists like Manjula Giri are carrying forward the difficult work of these early women sociologists.

SOCIOLOGY VERSUS IDEOLOGY

Dr. Paul Lazarsfeld, a highly influential sociologist who pioneered the application of scientific methods to social issues, liked to tell a parable about a sociologist who interviews a centipede (this requires a leap of imagination) in order to find out how the centipede manages to coordinate the movements of all those legs. In thinking about the question, the centipede becomes confused and loses track of how her legs actually work. She becomes all tangled up in her legs because for the first time someone asked her to think about something that she had always taken for granted. Sociology can disturb people in a similar manner by making them think about behavior and beliefs that they take for granted. Does that make it a subversive science?

Some people believe that any discipline that asks searching questions and does not simply accept answers like “Well, that is how we do things around here” is threatening. Others equate sociology with “social engineering”; that is, they fear that once a sociologist identifies a problem in social relations, the next move is to recommend some kind of intervention--a social program or other device for changing the way things are. As with all stereotypes, there is some truth in these fears. At times the simple asking of penetrating questions makes us uneasy, and we may begin to question behaviors or opinions that we hold dear. At other times the facts that sociologists reveal about injustices, or about social conditions like crime, lead us to want to make intentional changes.

Does that make sociologists social engineers? No more so than in many other professions. We live in a world where people of all descriptions seek to improve their societies, their businesses, their communities, their schools, and almost every other aspect of their social world. In this book you will find many examples of situations in which sociologists who have studied disturbing trends, such as divorce or family stress, have also suggested ways to ameliorate the conditions that cause suffering. But they have little capacity to put their ideas into practice. That requires political processes and a great deal of public debate.

***INFO*TRAC[®] EXERCISES**

Encourage students to use *InfoTrac[®] College Edition* by assigning *InfoTrac[®]* keyword searches, as suggested at the end of each chapter in the text. Here are some additional suggestions for how to integrate *InfoTrac[®]* research into class discussion and student assignments.

1. Ask students to do a subject search for the term **Sociology**. There are dozens of categories and more than 100 articles. Students should explore the discipline and bring back to class information of interest that was not presented in class nor in the assigned readings.

2. A search for articles using the keyword **Sociological Imagination** will lead students to current debates and perspectives on how sociological thinking operates. A search for **C. Wright Mills** will also indicate the lasting impact of this radical intellectual both within and outside the field of sociology.
3. The search for articles related to **Marx, Durkheim**, or other classic European or American sociologists could be used in various ways to advance students' learning and discussion. One approach would be to assign student groups particular theorists. Through in-class or online discussion, students could reach conclusions, based on their explorations, about the legacy or lasting significance of the theorists on contemporary social thought and research. Another interesting approach would be to focus on articles that feature personal portraits or depict the "social locations" of the theorists. What can we learn about sociological theory and research from the social locations of these classics?

INTERNET ACTIVITIES

1. To get a better grasp of what sociology is all about, go to the American Sociological Association's website. Explore the three major sections of the main page: (1) sociologists, (2) students, and (3) public. Bring to class a piece of information that you discovered from exploring the site.
www.asanet.org
2. To familiarize yourself with the broad field of sociology, explore the SOCIOSITE. From this page you can access dozens of subject areas within the discipline. The website has hundreds of resources organized within these subject areas.
www.pscw.uva.nl/sociosite/topics/index.html

WHERE TO FIND IT

Books

The Future of Life [electronic resource] (Edward O. Wilson; Vintage, 2003). A succinct statement of how social institutions need to develop to address the crisis of global climate change and loss of species.

Critical Social Theories (Ben Agger; Westview, 1998). A useful review of critical sociological theories, with up-to-date examples of critical sociology in the contemporary world.

Modern Sociological Theory: Key Debates and New Directions (Derek Layder; UCL Press, 1997). A valuable introduction to the basic questions and debates in sociology.

Great Jobs for Sociology Majors: A Career Guide (Stephen E. Lambert; VGM Career Publications, 1997). A good survey of the kinds of work sociologists do and the kinds of jobs people with various levels of sociological training can aspire to.

Harriet Martineau: First Woman Sociologist (Susan Hoecker-Drysdale; Berg Publishers, 1992). A thorough review of the work, life, and sociological contributions of one of the most influential sociological minds of the nineteenth century.

The Sociological Imagination (C. Wright Mills; Oxford University Press, 1959). Still the best and most passionate statement of what the sociological imagination is, by the person who coined the phrase.

Invitation to Sociology: A Humanist Perspective (Peter Berger; Doubleday Anchor, 1963). A lively look at the science and craft of sociology by an author with a predominantly interactionist perspective.

Sociology for Pleasure (Marcello Truzzi; Prentice Hall, 1974). A collection of studies of offbeat social groups and situations—gypsies, cults, nudist-camp visitors, and many others—that reminds the reader that sociology can illuminate little-known social worlds.

Masters of Sociological Thought (Lewis Coser; Harcourt Brace, 1977). An indispensable source for anyone interested in in-depth treatments of the contributions made by the founders of sociology.

The Women Founders (Patricia Madoo Lengermann and Jill Niebrugge-Brantley; McGraw-Hill, 1998). A text and reader about the pioneering contributions of female sociologists from 1830 to 1930; sets the record straight and brings a vital feminist viewpoint to the history of sociology.

Journals

Contemporary Sociology. The official journal of book reviews in sociology.

American Sociological Review. The journal of the American Sociological Association. Articles in this journal are often quite technical and may be somewhat advanced for the beginning student, but they offer a good perspective on current research.

American Journal of Sociology. The oldest journal in sociology; a treasure trove of articles going back to the early decades of the twentieth century. Consult the index for earlier papers and recent issues for excellent new research.

Additional Resources

Encyclopedia of Sociology (Edgar F. Borgatta, ed.; Macmillan, 1992). A comprehensive collection of essays that define and discuss the concepts and methods of sociology and social science.

Sociological Abstracts. A set of reviews of existing literature on a variety of social-scientific subjects. The abstracts are organized by topic and offer brief overviews of original research papers and other articles.

EXTENSION: WADSWORTH'S SOCIOLOGY READINGS COLLECTION SUMMARY

William Domhoff, *Power and Class in the United States*. In this classic example of the conflict perspective in sociology, Domhoff compares the networks of power found among corporate, banking, real estate, and other elites with those found in labor organizations and their allies, and examines why there is an imbalance of power in favor of wealth and ownership. But at the same time he warns against viewing the situation as a conspiracy; the networks he describes do not exert their power through secret deals.