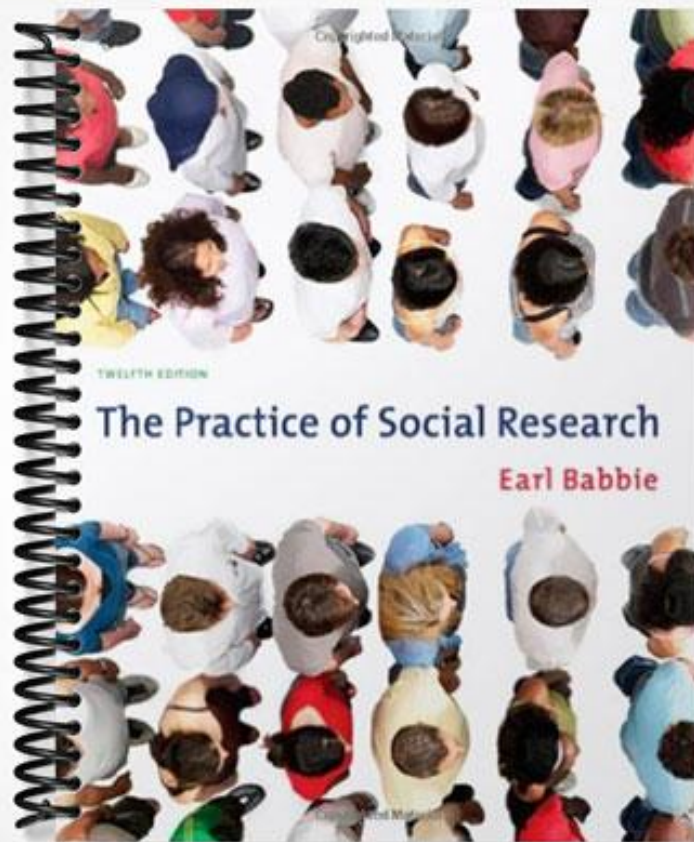


SOLUTIONS MANUAL



CHAPTER 2

PARADIGMS, THEORY, AND SOCIAL RESEARCH

BRIEF CHAPTER OUTLINE

- I. Introduction

- II. Some Social Science Paradigms
 - A. Macrotheory and microtheory
 - B. Early positivism
 - C. Social Darwinism
 - D. Conflict paradigm
 - E. Symbolic interactionism
 - F. Ethnomethodology
 - G. Structural functionalism
 - H. Feminist paradigms
 - I. Critical Race Theory
 - J. Rational objectivity reconsidered

- III. Elements of Social Theory

- IV. Two Logical Systems
 - A. The traditional model of science
 - 1. Theory
 - 2. Operationalization
 - 3. Observation
 - B. Deductive and inductive reasoning: A case illustration
 - C. A graphic contrast

- V. Deductive Theory Construction
 - A. Getting started
 - B. Constructing your theory
 - C. An example of deductive theory: distributive justice

- VI. Inductive Theory Construction

- VII. The Links Between Theory and Research

- VIII. Research Ethics and Theory

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this chapter, the student should be able to:

1. List the three functions of theory for research.
2. Define paradigm.
3. Differentiate macrotheory from microtheory.
4. Provide synopses for each of the following paradigms: early positivism, social Darwinism, conflict, symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology, structural-functionalism, feminist, and critical race theory.
5. Differentiate theory from paradigm.
6. Define and show how each of the following terms is used in theory construction: observation, fact, law, theory, concepts, variables, axioms (or postulates), propositions, and hypotheses.
7. Show the role of theory, operationalization, and observation in the traditional model of science.
8. Define hypothesis testing.
9. Differentiate inductive logic from deductive reasoning by definition and example.
10. Outline the steps in deductive theory construction.
11. Summarize the links between theory and research.
12. Describe how the theoretical perspective chosen impacts the ethics of research.

ASA RECOMMENDATIONS

3. Departments should **require introductory sociology** and a capstone course in sociology as well as coursework in sociological theory, research methods, and statistics for the sociology major.
4. Departments should **infuse the empirical base of sociology** throughout the curriculum, giving students exposure to research opportunities across several methodological traditions, providing repeated experiences in posing sociological questions, developing theoretical explanations, and bringing data to bear on them.
6. Within this four-level model, departments should also structure the curriculum to include one (or more) content area of substantive sequences which cut across two or more levels of the curriculum. Departments should design sequences to **develop students' skills in empirical and theoretical analysis** along with their knowledge about one or more specialty areas within sociology.

DETAILED CHAPTER OUTLINE

I. Introduction

ASA Recommendation 3

II. Some Social Science Paradigms

ASA Recommendations 3, 4 and 6

- A. Macrotheory and microtheory**—macrotheory examines large aggregates of individuals, groups, organizations or entire societies as a whole, while microtheory is primarily concerned with individual (person)-level interactions.
- B. Early positivism**—this theoretical perspective claimed that it was possible to use scientific methods to study society, and that this knowledge could eventually improve society.
- C. Social Darwinism**—building on the Darwinian concept of “survival of the fittest,” Social Darwinism, which was popular during the Industrial Revolution, claimed that the most advanced groups and societies were able to and should dictate the social order.
- D. Conflict paradigm**—unlike Social Darwinists, conflict theorists argued that different social groups fought over scarce resources and that those with power were likely to exploit the have nots.
- E. Symbolic interactionism**—unlike macrotheories of sociology like the conflict paradigm, symbolic interactionism is primarily concerned with the ways in which individuals behave in personal interactions with one another.
- F. Ethnomethodology**—another microtheory of sociology, ethnomethodology claimed that social order and social structure is constantly being reproduced and modified on the basis of individuals interactions with others.
- G. Structural functionalism**—the basic claim of this macrotheoretical paradigm is that societies function much like an organism, with each aspect of society serving the greater good. Unlike conflict theory, structural functionalists emphasized harmony.
- J. Feminist paradigms**—feminist scholars argue that societies tend to reflect masculine interests at the expense of women and that traditional theories were based on understanding societies from a man’s perspective. Women, they claim, experience social life much differently than men.
- K. Critical Race Theory**—similar to feminist theory, critical race theory postulates that social theory is constructed from the dominant white perspective, ignoring the unique experiences of minority racial groups.
- J. Rational objectivity reconsidered**—many sociological theories assume that individuals behave in a largely rational way, concerned with their own well-being. However, there is evidence that this is not always the case. Moreover, we assume that our observations of the social world are objective, i.e. real, rather than subjective, but this cannot be proven.

III. Elements of Social Theory

ASA Recommendations 3 and 6

IV. Two Logical Systems

ASA Recommendation 3

- A. The traditional model of science**—this is what we think of as the “standard” way of doing science: beginning with a theory and then testing it with empirical evidence.
 - 1. Theory**—theories are testable statements about how the world works.
 - 2. Operationalization**—this refers to the process of defining precisely what we mean by a particular variable; it is part of the measurement process.
 - 3. Observation**—regardless of the data collection strategy sociologists employ, they are observing the social world.
- B. Deductive and inductive reasoning: A case illustration**—what is the relationship between theory and research as it is actually practiced in the real world? As this illustration of religious participation shows, sociologists typically are performing both inductive and deductive research
- C. A graphic contrast**—illustrates the relationship between hours spent study and grades on an exam.

V. Deductive Theory Construction*ASA Recommendations 4 and 6*

- A. Getting started**—all deductive research begins with a specific topic or question that interests the sociologists.
- B. Constructing your theory**—once the topic is selected, the sociologists must select the appropriate theoretical perspective as well as the way variables of interest will be measured.
- C. An example of deductive theory: distributive justice**—discusses deductive theory construction through an example of peoples’ perception of how fairly they are treated.

VI. Inductive Theory Construction*ASA Recommendations 4 and 6***VII. The Links Between Theory and Research***ASA Recommendation 4***VIII. Research Ethics and Theory***ASA Recommendation 4***TEACHING SUGGESTIONS AND RESOURCES**

1. A method for demonstrating the steps in the traditional model of science comes from the ASA’s “Eighty-one Techniques For Teaching Sociological Concepts.” The technique was written by Reed Geertsen. See the preface for ASA Teaching Resources address.

The demonstration requires two clear glasses. Fill one glass with water and the other with rubbing alcohol. You will also need several ice cubes. The students should be unaware as to what the materials are.

Write on the blackboard, PROBLEM or TOPIC OF INTEREST. Tell the students you want to know what will happen when the CUBES are placed in the LIQUID. Ask them for their suggestions and write these on the board. When the students are done, label these HYPOTHESES. Explain to them that their suggestions are hypotheses. Ask the students how to TEST these hypotheses. As you go through the list you will find the issue of MEASUREMENT coming up. For example, a typical hypothesis is that the temperature of the liquids will change. Ask them how they will test that. This will lead into a discussion of a before and after thermometer measurement of temperature. After going through the hypotheses list with the issues of testing and measurement in mind, select one to test. An easy one to test in class is the hypothesis that the cubes will float. Define *float* and *sink*. Place the cubes in the liquids. Ask what happened and write FINDINGS on the board. Ask what CONCLUSIONS they draw from these findings. Typically, they will respond that the liquids are different or that the cubes are different. Write ADDITIONAL RESEARCH on the board and ask them what they would call their suggestions—HYPOTHESES. Point out that they are back into the research process. You might switch the cubes and go through the process again.

After going through the stages with this demonstration, go through them with a sociological example.

2. A wonderful demonstration for teaching students about the blind spots of our perceptions/paradigms is developed by Reed Geertsen 1993. "Simulating the Blind Spot of Everyday Experience." *Teaching Sociology* 21:392-396. All you need is chalk and a board. The demonstration is done in several rounds during which you tell the students which word is part of the pattern and which word is not. You ask students to guess the pattern. So, the first round might include a pattern of words that begin with a vowel (e.g., around, extra, interesting, Ann, but not guess, child, or Tom). The second round might have a pattern of words that include double letters (e.g., teen, letters, Sally, but not Fred, tired, or theory). The third round might include a pattern of 3 letter words (e.g., Tom, try, or cry, but not Sally, theory, or Marx). You can develop any patterns in this part as long as the focus is on the word (though you do not tell the students to focus on the word). Finally, start writing words on the board in the last round and again tell the students which words are in the pattern and which are not. However, this time the pattern is determined by where you stand when you write the word. If you're on the left of the word, for example, it's in the pattern and if you stand to the right of the word it's not. Students will have a tough time switching from focusing on the words to focusing on your position. Gradually exaggerate your stance. The demonstration clearly illustrates that once our attention is focused, we have difficulty seeing other patterns.
3. Have the students break up into eight groups. Then, select a particular social institution (the criminal justice system would be particularly appropriate). Assign each group one of the paradigms discussed in the book, and have them explain the functioning of the institution using that particular paradigm. Are there overlaps? Are some theories better equipped to examine the institution?

4. Global warming is becoming an increasingly important issue, especially in the scientific community. Split the students into two groups and have one group check out the websites of environmental groups concerned with global warming, and the other with groups arguing that global warming is not real or threatening. What types of evidence are the two groups using? How do they talk about the issues? Is there an “objective” way to study this issue?
5. Ask the students come up with a sociological topic of interest to them (dating patterns of college students, for example). Have the class split into two groups; have one group advocate for doing deductive research to study this topic, the other inductive research. What is their consensus regarding the “better” approach?

VIDEO SUGGESTIONS

Application of the Scientific Method

27 min. B/W. 1966. Univ. of Utah.

Applies the scientific method to four different experiments: (1) Bernard’s discovery of the cause of diabetes, (2) Priestley’s discovery of the need for oxygen in healthy air, (3) Leverrier’s discovery of the planet Neptune, and (4) Freud’s theory of the cause of dreams.

Methodology: The Psychologist and the Experiment

30 min. Color. 1975. Indiana Univ.

The scientific method is demonstrated in two different experiments. Steps illustrated are (1) generation of hypotheses; (2) manipulation of relevant environmental conditions; (3) random assignment of subjects; (4) experimental control; (5) observation of the effects of manipulation on the behavior under study; (6) interpretation of the findings; (7) replicability and generalizations.

Research Methods for the Social Sciences

33 min. 1995. Insight Media

An introduction to research methods for the social sciences. The video details 7 steps of the scientific method and explains how to gather and interpret data.

Sociological Thinking and Research

30 min. 1991. Insight Media Phone: (212)721-6316

This program describes how to structure a research study by defining the problem to be studied, reviewing the relevant literature, formulating a hypothesis, and selecting a research design. William Kornblum explains his methods for studying the effects of planned renewal on the Times Square neighborhood.

INFOTRAC EXERCISES

1. Feminist theory and sociology: underutilized contributions for mainstream theory. Janet Saltzman Chafetz. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 1997 v23 p. 97(24). What four criteria did the author use to select theories for this analysis?

2. Positivism in sociological practice: 1967-1990. C. David Gartrell, John W. Gartrell. *The Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, May 1996 v33 n2 p 143(16). What are the criteria by which the authors define positivism?
3. Symbolic interaction theories. (Theories of ethnicity.) Barbara Ballis Lal. *American Behavioral Scientist*, Jan 1995 v38 n3 P421(21). Who are some of the key founders of symbolic interactionism?
4. Paradigm shifts in family sociology? Evidence from three decades of family textbooks. Susan A. Mann; Michael D. Grimes; Alice Abel Kemp; Pamela J. Jenkins. *Journal of Family Issues*, May 1997 v18 n3 p315(35). What perspective do the authors claim drives most of the discourse on family and why?
5. Taking sides and constructing identities: reflections on conflict theory. Guenther Schlee. *British Journal of Political Science*, Oct 2003 v33 i4 p607(14). According to the author how and why do people draw a distinction between friend and foe?
6. Using the key word option, ask students to select the theoretical perspective that comes closest to their world view and to read a social science article that uses that perspective. Ask students to critique the article and its use of the perspective. Ask them how someone using one of the other paradigms would apply that paradigm to the topic under inquiry.
7. Ask students to select a theoretical perspective that DOES NOT resonate with their world view and to find an article that uses that perspective. Ask students to critique the article and whether the author(s) correctly applied the perspective to the topic of inquiry. Would another perspective be useful in studying the topic? If so, which paradigm and why? If no, why not?
8. Have the students search for articles on issues related to poverty and inequality, one with a functionalist perspective and one with a conflict orientation. Does the theoretical framework used by the author affect how they approach the issue of poverty (neutral versus negative)?

INTERNET EXERCISES

1. Ask students to use the SOSIG: Social Science Information Gateway site at: <http://sosig.esrc.bris.ac.uk/>
Then tell them to click on Sociology and then “Schools and Theories.” Ask students to select a link and summarize the information that they found. Alternatively, you could narrow their selections by telling them, for example, to select one of the editor’s choice items or a journal article.

2. Ask students to visit the Marx/Engels Internet Archive site at:
<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/>
Once accessed, ask students to select the subject index and select a topic that interests them. After clicking on that topic ask students to summarize what they found and to select one article to read and review for the class.

3. Ask students to go to the following site for a discussion of the scientific method at:
<http://www.scientificmethod.com>
Tell students to read the following three sections: 1) scientific methods vs scientific method, 2) the 11 stages and 3 supporting ingredients of the SM-14 formula, and 3) practical help with everyday problems and decisions. After reviewing these three sections ask students:
 - 1) What are the stages in the scientific method?
 - 2) Why is the scientific method used?
 - 3) What does the scientific method enable researchers to conclude?

4. Ask the students to visit the website for *Theory and Society* at:
<http://www.springerlink.com/content/0304-2421>
Tell them to select the most recent volume, and ask them to read the abstract for each article. What theoretical paradigm discussed in the reading best captures the perspective of the article? Is there a certain theoretical paradigm that dominates?

5. Ask the students to visit Frank Elwin's website on Max Weber, particularly Weber's discussion of objectivity, at:
<http://www.criticism.com/md/weber1.html>
Have the students write a short reaction discussing why they agree or disagree with Weber's view regarding objectivity and the social sciences.

APPLYING SOCIAL RESEARCH TO EVERYDAY LIFE

1. Have the students interview at least two family members about their work and career. Have their questions focus on job satisfaction and relationships with supervisors/subordinates. Do these experiences seem to fit a conflict approach to society, or a more cooperative one as advanced by structural functionalists?

2. Ask the students to monitor the front page of the *New York Times* for one week, keeping track of the issues that are discussed on the front page. Which of the theoretical paradigms discussed in the readings best captures current affairs?

QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES TO GUIDE A RESEARCH PROJECT

ACTIVITIES:

1. Have the student select two different theoretical perspectives and ask them to discuss how each paradigm would guide the students' thinking on his or her research paper. Once this is complete, have the student evaluate each perspective based on current research on the topic; which approach seems to be more in step with current scholarship.
2. Have the student discuss how they would study their topic of interest from an inductive approach, and then from a deductive approach using existing theory. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each strategy?

QUESTIONS:

1. Sociological theories are often seen as "competing" with one another. Ask the student if more than one theory from the readings be used to study the student's topic of interest in a synergist way.
2. Do your own personal feelings about the topic you are interested in study impact in any way the particular theory you select?
3. How are you able to account for the subjective nature of our perceptions of reality when doing research on your topic of interest?