THE SOCIAL WEB
An Introduction to Sociology

FIFTH EDITION

JOHN A. PERRY
CUYAHOGA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

ERNA K. PERRY

HARPER & ROW, PUBLISHERS, New York
Contents

Preface xvii

Perspectives and Concepts of Sociology

PART ONE

1

CHAPTER 1 | SOCIOLOGY: SCIENCE AND ART 3

Science: A New Tool of Inquiry 4
The Scientific Spirit 5 | The Scientific Method 5 | Steps of the Scientific Method 6

The Social Sciences and Sociology 8
Sociology 9

Sociological Perspectives 10
The Evolutionary Perspective 11 | The Functionalist Perspective 11 | The Conflict Perspective 13 | The Symbolic-Interactionist Perspective 14 | Other Perspectives 15

The Scientific Method in Sociology 15
Concepts 16 | Theories 16 | Research 16

Sociological Research Methods 17
What should the aims of sociology be? Should the discipline pursue a rigidly scientific course, or turn a sympathetic ear to human problems and suffering? The author argues for a balance between these two extremes.

CHAPTER 2 | SOCIETY: PEOPLE, THE SOCIAL ANIMALS

The Social System: Structure and Organization

Statues and Roles: Elements of Social Structure

Ascribed and Achieved Status 32 | The Multiplicity of Statuses and Roles 33

Social Groups

Sociological Definition of Group 37 | Classifying Groups 37

Society

Classification of Societies According to Subsistence Strategies 42
Classification of Societies According to Social Organization 43

Social Interaction and Social Processes

Social Processes: Cooperation, Competition, and Conflict 44

The Chapter in Brief 46

Terms to Remember 47

Suggestions for Further Reading 49

Reading: Helen Rogan, “Top Women Executives Find Path to Power Is Strewn with Hurdles,” the Wall Street Journal (October 25, 1984). 50

A report on a survey undertaken to discover how women are coping with the new statuses and roles they occupy as a result of the success of the feminist movement.
Culture

Definition of Culture 56 | Language: The Most Important Symbol 56 | Biological Predisposition to Culture 58

The Content of Culture

Material Culture 58 | Nonmaterial Culture 59 | Components of Nonmaterial Culture: Cognitive and Normative 59 | The Normative System 60 | The Basis of the Normative System: The Need for Social Control 63 | Traits, Complexes, and Institutions 64

Differences and Uniformities of Cultures

Cultural Differences and Universals 67

Subcultures and Countercultures

Subcultures 69 | Countercultures 69

The Chapter in Brief 70

Terms to Remember 71

Suggestions for Further Reading 72


Culture is a powerful molder of individual behavior. It can make any act seem "right," even one that is characterized as barbaric by other cultures.

CHAPTER 4 | BECOMING HUMAN: SOCIALIZATION

Personality

Personality: A Social Product on a Biological Basis 78 | Inheritance and Environment 80

Socialization: Becoming Human

Goals and Functions of Socialization 82

Theories of Socialization

Sociological Theories 83 | Freud and a Conflict Theory of Socialization 85 | Learning Theories 86

Agents of Socialization

The Family 89 | The School 89 | The Peer Group 91
The Mass Media 92 | Occupational Groups 93

Socialization as a Lifelong Process: Resocialization 93

Resocialization 94
The past is not necessarily a prelude to the future, nor is an individual's personality cast in stone.

Do criminals know that they are breaking the bond that makes society possible? Or are they victims of circumstances who cannot control their deviant actions?
We are born with unequal life chances, some destined to become life's anointed, others its hollow-eyed "Skunk Hollowers" of one type or another.
Majority and Minorities: Definition of Terms 165
Defining Minority Status 166
Ethnicity, Religion, Race 166
Differentiation According to Social Class 167
E Pluribus Unum: “Out of Many, One” 168
Anglo-Conformity 168 | The Melting Pot 168 | Cultural Pluralism 169

Majority and Minorities: Processes of Coexistence 170
In the Way: Obstacles to Full Integration 171
Racism 171 | Prejudice 172 | Discrimination 173
Prejudice and Discrimination: A Question of Economics 175

Racial Minorities 177
Native Americans 178 | Asian Americans 179 | Black Americans 180
Ethnic Minorities 183
Hispanic Americans 183
Religious Minorities 185
Catholics 185 | Jews 185

The Chapter in Brief 187
Terms to Remember 188

Suggestions for Further Reading 189


The new dilemma concerns the continued existence of an underclass seemingly impervious to upward mobility.

CHAPTER 8 | SOCIAL DIFFERENTIATION: SEX, AGE, AND HANDICAPS 195

The Making of Men and Women 196
Biological Differences: Nature 196 | Cultural Differences: Nurture 198 | Sex Roles: Whys and Wherefores 200 | Gender-Role Socialization 201 | Agents of Sex-Role Socialization 204

Inequality and the Ideology of Sexism 205
The Women’s Movement 210
The new American male is sometimes called upon to follow his wife when her job demands it . . . and lives to tell about it!
The colliding worlds of the past and the present are nowhere so shocking as when a preliterate hunting and gathering society comes in contact with the technology of an urban industrial one.

What makes an organized crowd, gathered for a pleasurable afternoon of spectator sport, become a mindless mob intent on maiming and killing?
CHAPTER 11 | THE FAMILY, RELIGION, AND EDUCATION  

The Basic Institution: The Family  
Family Forms 302 | Kinship Systems 304 | Marriage 304  
Family Functions 306 | Love and Marriage in America 307  
Changing Marital Patterns 308 | Alternatives to Traditional Marriage 310 | Forms of the New American Family 311  

Pivotal Institutions: Religion  
The Functions of Religion 315 | Religion in America 316  
The Sanctification of the American Way of Life 318 | Contemporary Trends 319  

Education  
Education in America 321 | The Functionalist View of Education 323 | The Conflict View of Education 325 | Education and Social Class 326  

The Chapter in Brief 329  
Terms to Remember 331  
Suggestions for Further Reading 332  


Of all the institutions to be in disarray during periods of rapid social change, the family has been the hardest hit; and the black family is a microcosm of the American family in general.

CHAPTER 12 | THE ECONOMY AND GOVERNMENT 339  

The Economy  
Economic Decision Making 341 | Basic Elements of the Economy 342 |  

Contemporary Economic Systems  
Capitalism 344 | Socialism 345 | Communism 346  
Theoretical Perspectives on Economic Development 348  

Western Economies in Historical Perspective  
The American Economy 350 | Work in the Industrial
The transition into a post-industrial era poses serious problems for industrial workers, but the young American worker of this generation seems ready to accept the challenge.