

Review of Sociological Snapshots: Seeing Social Structure and Change in Everyday Life

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- This is an interesting book that includes a variety of sociological accounts that address a number of diverse topics that have a contemporary sociological resonance. The book, claims the author, is underpinned by a concern with contributing to the development of pedagogy for introductory sociology. This concern stems, the preface argues, from the observation that whilst sociology is 'a vitally exciting field... The trick is getting our students to realise it' (p.IX). The opening premise here is perhaps one that many teachers working within the field of sociology in an increasingly mass higher education system will recognise and identify with. Furthermore the authors, correctly in my view, note that an increasing number of students who are not primarily sociologists (and are following different degree schemes) are taking courses or modules in sociology.

During the introductory chapter, Levin advances a specific rationale for the organisation, character and content of the book that relates to this initial concern. The central concept here is described as the 'sociological eye'. This notion is seen to be analogous with the practice and theory of photography. In particular, the documentary power of the 'snapshot' in photography in identifying particular everyday practices and relating them to forms of behaviour and issues is viewed as a suitable conceptual apparatus for a book introducing students to sociology. Sociological snapshots, in the form of a collection of topical (sociologically informed) essays are advanced as mechanisms for achieving a similar aim within the realm of the sociological imagination.

Levin notes that whilst sociology should aim to be value free much sociological work is informed through subjective criteria. We are then warned that whilst the various essays may be written in an informal tone and do not present direct evidence in the form of research data they are all based on 'sociological thinking, sociological data, or both' (p.4). This, it seems, is an article of faith presented at the outset of the book. One may therefore speculate that the logic behind this book assumes that the presentation of data and overt sociological thinking lend themselves to modes of discourse that do not fit into the pedagogical framework favoured for teaching introductory sociology and the concern for generating enthusiasm amongst students taking sociological courses. This is certainly a debatable, if speculative, point.

The main content of the book is broken down into seven units within which a number of sociological snapshots that are thematically related are located. The thematic units include 'culture', 'socialisation', 'the group experience', 'institutions', 'deviance', 'social inequality' and 'social change'. Each snapshot within each of the different units includes a general commentary that provides a contemporary angle on each theme utilising examples from everyday life. This is followed by a 'focus section' within which further reading is identified and summarised and a 'developing ideas section' within which questions, activities and tasks associated with the reading are presented. In many of the examples these sections include relevant reading, accessible summaries and interesting and considered questions and activities for students.

The essays within each section cover a broad range of issues from the powerful effects of social role to the unintended effects of certain forms of planning and policy implementation. One of the more interesting sections discusses the racial divide in the United States (*Another Crisis in Black and White? The Coming Race War in America p.161*) which provides a number of interesting references, if rather foreboding and pessimistic assessments, of the current state of race relations in that particular country. Indeed, one of the shortcomings of this book is that it is directed mainly at a North American audience. Consequently, much of the examples and anecdotes used are North American as is the origin of the recommended reading. This is not a bad thing in itself but it does detract from more global sociological issues and processes.

[6.] In many respects the organisation of the book provides a coherent and structured resource for teachers and students following an introductory course in sociology. In my view this makes the book particularly useful for seminar work. With more changes looming on the horizon in the Higher Education sector (e.g. the possible introduction of two year associate degrees, the take up of sociological options by students following different major schemes of study and the emergence of a mass education system) this book makes interesting reading. It can be understood as a response to the various challenges that parts of the Higher Education system in the U.S.A. has experienced in recent years. Whilst contemporary developments in Britain may not be exactly the same there are some increasingly clear similarities. Having said that, whilst *Sociological Snapshots* does provide interesting teaching material and commentary through the use of everyday examples it represents only one response to changes in teaching and learning within sociology. In some cases there is doubt about the level and pitch of the material and it sometimes reads in a very simplistic manner that does not always do justice to the intellectual curiosity of students. On the other hand, it is clearly a considered response to the changing profile of sociology students and the changing character of teaching and learning in Higher Education.

Social Interaction in Everyday Life. Sociology points to the many rules that guide behaviour in everyday situations. The more we learn about the rules of social interaction, the better we can play the game. CHAPTER. 6. CHAPTER OVERVIEW.Â But Matt and Dianne are lost in more ways than one, failing to see why they are growing more and more angry with their situation and with each other. Consider the predicament from the manâ€™s point of view. Matt cannot tolerate getting lostâ€™the longer he drives around, the more incompetent he feels.Â Members of every society rely on social structure to make sense of everyday situations and frame their lives. The world can be confusingâ€™even frighteningâ€™when societyâ€™s rules are unclear. See what's new with book lending at the Internet Archive.

Sociological snapshots : seeing social structure and change in everyday life. Item Preview. remove-circle.Â Sociological snapshots : seeing social structure and change in everyday life. by. Levin, Jack, 1941 Sociological Snapshots 5: Seeing Social Structure and Change in Everyday Life. Author: Jack Levin.Â The Fifth Edition of the best-selling Sociological Snapshots continues to provide a solid foundation for students as it introduces them to the world of sociological analysis. Combining abstract sociological concepts with interesting and grounded essays (â€™snapshotsâ€™) on issues of contemporary interest, this book helps students discover relevant connections and encourages them to develop a sociological eye. By linking everyday life experiences to foundational concepts and concerns, it serves as an effective springboard from the student's familiar and concrete world to the more abstract real Sociological perspectives on social change fall into the functionalist and conflict approaches. As usual, both views together offer a more complete understanding of social change than either view by itself (Vago, 2004).Vago, S. (2004). Social change (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. Table 14.1 "Theory Snapshot" summarizes their major assumptions. Table 14.1 Theory Snapshot.Â Early sociologists likened change in society to change in biological organisms. Taking a cue from the work of Charles Darwin, they said that societies evolved just as organisms do, from tiny, simple forms to much larger and more complex structures. When societies are small and simple, there are few roles to perform, and just about everyone can perform all of these roles.