

## Henslin textbook – Guiding Questions

### Chapter 1: The Sociological Perspective

(Note: This is a big chapter covering sociology as a discipline, sociological theory, and doing sociology. Chapter 4 also has some useful reading regarding sociological theory.)

- What is sociology? How does the discipline fit into academia? How does it differ from other disciplines?
- What is the sociological perspective?
- What is social location?
- Is sociology a science?
- When did sociology first emerge as a separate discipline?
- Who is August Comte? What did Comte contribute to sociology?
- What is positivism?
- Who is Karl Marx? What did Marx contribute to sociology?
- Who is Emile Durkheim? What did Durkheim contribute to sociology?
- What did Emile Durkheim find in his study of suicide? How was this study unique?
- Who is Max Weber? What did Weber contribute to sociology?
- What is the Protestant ethic? What is unique about this idea?
- Who is W.E.B. DuBois? What was DuBois contribution to sociology?
- Who is Harriet Martineau? What Martineau contribute to sociology?
- Who is Jane Addams? What did Addams contribute to sociology?
- Who does Henslin call the “Forgotten Sociologists?” How do they differ from those who were not forgotten?
- What are the “three stages of sociology” that Henslin lays out?
- What is applied/public sociology? Why do some sociologists support applied/public sociology? Why do some sociologists oppose applied/public sociology?
- What is theory? Why does sociology use theories?
- What is functionalism?
- What is conflict theory?
- What is symbolic interactionism?
- What theoretical approach does dramaturgy belong to? What is impression management? Front and back stages? Role performance?
- What levels of analysis do sociologists use? Define each.
- What does it mean to say society is “socially constructed?” Share an example of social construction and explain it.
- What is the “Thomas theorem”?
- What types of research methods do sociologists use?
- What is sampling?
- Why do researchers sample?
- What is the most objective method for sampling and how does it work?
- What is correlation?
- What is causation?
- What is a variable?
- What is an independent variable? A dependent variable?

- What is a hypothesis?
- What is validity?
- What is reliability?
- What ethical considerations must be considered when doing sociological research?
- What was Maria Brajuha's research that was highlighted in the book?
- What does Brajuha's research have to do with research ethics?
- What was Laud Humphrey's research highlighted in the book?
- What does Humphrey's research have to do with research ethics?

## **Chapter 2: Culture**

- What is culture?
- To what extent does culture effect our experiences? How does it affect our ways of thinking and patterns of behavior?
- What is material culture?
- What is non-material culture?
- What is ideal culture? Real culture?
- What is ethnocentrism? What is cultural relativism? How can understanding these concepts impact our understanding of social phenomena?
- What is the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis? What implications does it have?
- What are norms?
- What role do sanctions play in enforcing norms?
- How are different norms enforced differently (i.e. folkways vs. mores)?
- What are the dominant values in U.S. society?
- How does the U.S. value/ideology of individualism distort U.S.-Americans' perceptions of social life?
- How has globalization impacted cultural diffusion and cultural leveling?
- What is cultural imperialism?\*
- How has cultural imperialism been enacted?\*

### **\*Supplemental reading**

Excerpt from: Tobin, Theresa. 2007. "Cultural Imperialism," in Encyclopedia of Business Ethics and Society. Ed Robert W. Kolb. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2007: 536-541.

## **Chapter 3: Socialization**

- What is socialization?
- What are agents of socialization?
- What is a hidden curriculum?
- What is resocialization?
- Who are the sworn virgins?
- What is a total institution?
- What does it mean to say "society makes us human"?
- What have studies of isolated children contributed to our understanding?
- What was the Skeels/Dye Experiment? What can we learn from it?
- What have studies of deprived animals contributed to our understanding?
- How does our thinking of how other people perceive us influence us?

- How does our thinking of how other people perceive us change during the development process (in particular according to George Herbert Mead)?
- What is the “generalized other?” What implications do concepts like the “generalized other,” “superego,” “social mirror,” etc. have for our behavior?
- How does socialization impact how we act, think, and feel?
- In general, does socialization constrain or liberate our actions?

#### **Chapter 4: Social Structure & Social Interaction**

- Which levels of analysis correspond to the theories of structural functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism?
- What is social structure? Why is it important?
- What is status? What is an ascribed status? Achieved status? Master status?
- What is a role? What is role conflict? What is role strain?
- Explain division of labor.
- What was Emile Durkheim’s main functional interest for society? How do traditional and modern societies meet this need differently? Why do they do so? Define the terms mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity.
- What theoretical approach does dramaturgy belong to? What is impression management? Front and back stages? Role performance?
- How does ethnomethodology demonstrate the constraint of patterned/structured behavior/structure?
- What does it mean to say society is “socially constructed?” Share an example of social construction and explain it.
- What is the “Thomas theorem”?

#### **Chapter 5: Social Groups & Formal Organizations**

- What is Robert Michel’s Iron Law of Oligarchy?
- What are in-groups and out-groups?
- What is bureaucracy? What are its characteristics? What are examples of bureaucracy in contemporary society?
- What was John Darley and Bibb Latané’s experiment? What did it reveal about the relationship between group size and “diffusion of responsibility?”
- What was Solomon Asch’s experiment? What did it reveal about group conformity?
- What was Stanley Milgram’s experiment? What did it reveal about obedience to authority?
- What is groupthink (the term coined by Irving Janis)? How does it occur?
- What is the McDonaldization of society?

#### **Chapter 6: Deviance and Social Control**

- What is deviance? What determines whether something is deviant? Is deviance fixed (across time, cultures, etc.)?
- What is social order and why is it important?
- How do positive and negative sanctions enforce social control?
- What is Edwin Sutherland's differential association theory?
- What is Walter Reckless's control theory?

- What is labeling theory? What is stigma?
- What techniques of neutralization (Gresham Sykes and David Matza) are used to deflect social norms?
- What did Emile Durkheim argue about the function of deviance?
- What is Robert Merton's strain theory? In what ways do people adapt to strain?
- How would conflict theorists interpret our criminal justice system? Be able to give an example relating to the death penalty.
- What is medicalization?

### **Chapter 7: Global Stratification**

- What is social stratification?
- How is life different for those who live in industrialized nations/first-world and the least industrialized nations/third-world? (Chapter 7)
- What is colonialism and what is its legacy? (Chapter 7)

### **Chapter 8: Social Class in the United States**

- What is social class? (Chapters 7 & 8) What are its dimensions? (Chapter 8)
- What is social mobility? (Chapters 7 & 8)
- What is meritocracy? What would it mean to say that in the U.S. meritocracy is an ideology? (Chapter 7) What is the Horatio Alger myth? (Chapter 8)
- What is the ruling elite / “power elite” (C. Wright Mills) and what are its implications?
- What is anomie? (Chapter 8)
- What are the mechanisms through which social class impacts mental health? (Chapter 8)
- How have sociologists critiqued the idea of a “culture of poverty?” (Chapter 8)

### **Chapter 9: Race & Ethnicity**

- In what ways is race arbitrary? In what ways is race fluid? How does the Thomas Theorem apply to race?
- What is the difference between race and ethnicity? What is the current racial/ethnic make-up of the United States?
- What is contact theory?
- What is internalization of dominant norms?
- What is pluralism/multiculturalism?
- What is institutional racism? What is white privilege? Share an example of each.

### **Chapter 10: Gender & Age**

- What is the difference between sex and gender?
- What is “doing gender”?
- What is feminism?
- What are the three waves of feminism?
- What is patriarchy?
- What is the glass ceiling?
- What does the gender pay gap look like? What are explanations for why it still exists?

- How have life expectancies changed over the past century and a half? How has this differed in the most and least industrialized nations? What are the future policy implications of these trends?
- How did Social Security and Medicare come to exist? What impact have they had on elderly poverty?
- How is the way societies treat the elderly socially constructed?
- What is an “age cohort”?
- Is sexual orientation a social construction?\*
- To what extent does the history of sexuality labeling challenge or bolster the current dominant narrative (in the U.S.) that sexuality is something people are born with rather than a choice?\*

**\*Supplemental reading:**

Rogers, Thomas. 2012. “The invention of the heterosexual.” Salon. Available at: [http://www.salon.com/2012/01/22/the\\_invention\\_of\\_the\\_heterosexual/](http://www.salon.com/2012/01/22/the_invention_of_the_heterosexual/)

**Chapter 11: Politics and the Economy**

- How do voting rates differ within demographic categories like age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, employment status, and income?
- How do party preferences differ within demographic categories like gender and race-ethnicity?
- How do functionalists (the pluralist perspective) and conflict theorists (the power elite perspective) make sense of power in the U.S.? What is the pluralist perspective of power?
- What is conspicuous consumption?
- What is capitalism? What are its features?
- What are the impacts of the globalization of capitalism?

**Chapter 12: Marriage and Family**

- What is the gendered division of labor? Is it shifting, and if so, how?
- How do Indian and American marriages differ? How are they similar? Why might this be the case?
- What is the impact of raising children on mental health and (for married couples) marital happiness?
- How is marriage different in traditional societies vs. industrial and post-industrial societies?
- What is transitional adulthood?
- How does social class impact family structure?
- What are U.S. trends relating to having children? What are U.S. trends relating to age of getting married? Relating to cohabitation?

**Chapter 13: Education and Religion**

- What is gatekeeping?
- What is tracking? What are its impacts? How does labeling and the idea of a self-fulfilling prophecy relate to it?
- What is the hidden curriculum?

- What is cultural capital? What role does it play within schools in reproducing social inequality?
- What did Durkheim argue are the essential elements of religion?
- What is civil religion?\*
- What did Marx mean when he described religion as “the opium of the people?”
- What is the Protestant ethic? What does it have to do with capitalism?
- What is the religious make-up of the United States?
- What can sociology tell us about religion? What can it not tell us?
- What is the “summer slide” and “faucet theory”?\*

**\*Supplemental readings:**

- Executive Summary from: Miller, Beth M. 2007. “The Learning Season: The Untapped Power of Summer to Advance Student Achievement.” Nellie Mae Education Foundation. Available at:  
[https://ccsnh.blackboard.com/bbcswebdav/pid-4625896-dt-content-rid-7544226\\_1/courses/GBCC\\_SOC\\_110\\_HYAH\\_20479\\_201520/SummerSlide.ReportExcerpt.pdf](https://ccsnh.blackboard.com/bbcswebdav/pid-4625896-dt-content-rid-7544226_1/courses/GBCC_SOC_110_HYAH_20479_201520/SummerSlide.ReportExcerpt.pdf)
- Sternheimer, Karen. 2012. “Civil Religion.” Everyday Sociology. Available at:  
<http://www.everydaysociologyblog.com/2012/06/civil-religion.html>
- Graph of religious make-up of the world:  
[http://www.pewforum.org/files/2012/12/01\\_groups.png](http://www.pewforum.org/files/2012/12/01_groups.png)

**Chapter 14: Population & Urbanization**

- What is demography?
- What are the New Malthusians worried about? Why?
- What is the “demographic transition?”
- Understand how to interpret population pyramids and what the general shape of a population pyramid would look like in a “most industrialized” and a “least industrialized” country.
- What are the three demographic variables that go into changes in population?
- What is female infanticide? Where does it mainly occur and why?
- What is urbanization? To what extent has urbanization occurred in the world? In the U.S. specifically?
- What is gentrification?
- What is redlining?
- Does a higher or lower percentage of Americans live in suburbs today compared to 1920? How has suburbanization impacted cities?

**Chapter 15: Social Change & The Environment**

- What is modernization? What differentiates modern societies from traditional societies?
- What does Henslin suggest stimulated the fourth (current) social revolution?
- How do environmental challenges relate to social stratification?
- What is environmental justice?