Integrating Sustainability Issues Into the Introduction to Sociology Course

David O. Friedrichs
Dept. of Sociology/Criminal Justice

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY (Soc 110)

As one aspect of my existing Introduction to Sociology course teams of 3-4 students are formed to engage in discussion of key questions relating to the text, readings, and class lectures; one member of each team makes a record of the discussion and then reports to the class what came out of the team discussion (this assignment rotates). I have now introduced the following questions specifically pertaining to sustainability into the listing of team discussion questions:

1. How would each of the major three sociological theories discussed in the text and in class lectures address the sustainability issue?
2. Compare a scientific and a humanistic approach to studying sustainability.
3. Outline a sociological research project on sustainability.
4. Which specific American cultural values have to be addressed to promote sustainability?
5. How does the pattern of socialization within American society have to be transformed to promote sustainability?
6. Which means of social control are most effective, and which are least effective, in addressing sustainability?
7. How do the concepts of “crime” and “deviance” intersect with the sustainability issue?
8. How can sustainability issues be characterized in terms of social class and socioeconomic inequality?
9. Which dimensions of traditional, modern, and emerging postmodern societies promote or work against sustainability?
10. Identify practices that the family as a social institution can adopt to promote sustainability; which specific practices of your own family promote or work against sustainability?
11. What is the role of collective behavior and social movements in addressing sustainability?
12. Which specific forces of social change are most likely to shape the societal response to the sustainability challenge?

I have been searching for a soft cover book as a possible required book in this course, in addition to the required textbook and reader, that would illustrate a specifically sociological understanding of sustainability issues, in a provocative and informative way. It is my intention to replace the existing third text – an application of sociological principles to college life – with such a book, but I have not yet succeeded in identifying the most appropriate book for this purpose.

In addition, I expect to continue to address sustainability issues in my White Collar Crime course in the context of a focus on environmental crimes (especially of corporations), and would like to reintroduce attention to environmental issues into my Social Problems course.
INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY (Soc 110): Course Calendar

Fall, 2005

Tu/Th 10073  10:00-11:15 p.m.  Hyland 306
      10070  1:00-2:15 p.m.      Hyland 306

[Note: The schedule below is provisional. It may be adjusted or revised, as circumstances dictate. However, it should provide you with a guide for organizing your reading schedule and preparing for exams. It is very important to have the reading completed by the date listed below for the particular reading assignment. You should be able to respond to questions in class about the reading. * = Scheduled class group discussions.]

Texts:

Office Hours:  Tu/Th. 3:00 - 5 p.m.
            Wed.  10:00-12 Noon
            Or: By Appointment.

August

Tu  30  Introduction to the Course; Sociology and Related Disciplines
      Discussion: How does Sociology differ from Philosophy, History, Political Science, Economics, Psychology and Anthropology?

September

Th  1  Origins of Sociology; Seminal Theorists
      Reading: Macionis, Ch. 1, Sociology: Perspective, Theory, and Method
      Discussion: Which Social Forces Gave Rise to Sociology? What Did Marx Mean by Alienated Labor? What Did Durkheim Mean by Anomie? What Did Weber Mean by Rationalization?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Sustainability Issue</th>
<th>Film</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tu</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Seminal Theorists Continued: From Marx to Weber</td>
<td>Reading: Henslin: Berger, Invitation to Sociology, 3-7; Mills, The Promise, 20-27.</td>
<td>Derber: Preface, xiii-sv.</td>
<td><strong>Discussion:</strong> What are the Principal Themes of Functionalism, the Conflict Perspective, and Interactionism? <strong>Sustainability Issue:</strong> How do the three theories just identified address the sustainability issue?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>American Sociology and the Science Question</td>
<td>Reading: Henslin: Henslin, What is Sociology: Comparing Sociology and the Social Sciences, 8-19.</td>
<td>* <strong>Discussion:</strong> Is Sociology a Science, or a Humanistic Discipline? <strong>Sustainability Issue:</strong> Compare a scientific and a humanistic approach to the sustainability issue.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tu</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Humanistic Perspectives; Doing Sociological Research</td>
<td>Reading: Henslin: Scully &amp; Marolla, Riding the Bull..., 48-64; Jacobs, Dealing Crack: Doing Research with Streetcorner Dealers, 65-73.</td>
<td><strong>Discussion:</strong> What are the Principal Steps in Sociological Research?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Sociological Research Methods</td>
<td>Reading: Henslin: Henslin, How Sociologists Do Research, 35-47.</td>
<td>Derber: Ch. 1, “The Good Man Fills His Own Stomach: All American Crimes and Misdemeanors”</td>
<td><strong>Discussion:</strong> What are the Advantages and Disadvantages of Each of the Major Research Methods? <strong>Sustainability Issue:</strong> Outline a research project specifically addressing the sustainability issue.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tu 20 Culture and Society
Reading: Macionis, Ch. 2, Culture
Henslin:
    Harris, India’s Sacred Cows, 425-433.
Discussion: How did Culture Originate Among Humans?
Film: Amish Riddles

LECTURE: Dr. Mark Israel, Flinders University, Adelaide,
Australia, “International Trends in Social Science Ethics”
Brennan 228  5:30-7:00 p.m.

Th 22 Aspects of Culture
Reading: Henslin:
    Miner, Body Ritual Among the Nacirema, 79-83;
    Hall & Hall: The Sounds of Silence, 100-108.
Discussion: What is the Difference Between
    Ethnocentrism and Cultural Diversity?

Tu 27 Ethnocentrism and Cultural Relativity
Reading: Two of the following: Henslin:
    Chagnon, Doing Fieldwork Among the Yanomamo, 84-99;
    Martin & Hummer, “Fraternities and Rape…, 321-330;
    Katz, The Importance of Being Beautiful, 313-330;
Also read:
    Derber: Ch. 2, “The Ultimate Wilders: Prisoners of the
    American Dream”.
* Discussion: What are the Principal American Cultural Values and What
    are the Attributes of American Cultural Heroes?
Sustainability Issue: Which specific American cultural values would have
to
    be transformed to be compatible with long-term sustainability?

Th 29 Patterns of American Culture
Reading: Henslin:
    Davis, Extreme Isolation, 133-142; ; Gracey, Kindergarten as
    Academic Boot Camp,390-404 ; Kilbourne, Beauty and the
    Beast of Advertising, 421-424.
Two of the following: Thorne & Luria, Sexuality..., 162-174; Henslin, On Becoming Male..., 143-154; Eder, On Becoming Female ..., 155-161; Tannen, But What Do You Mean? Women and Men in Conversation, 175-181.

Discussion: What is the Significance of Stages of Socialization according to Piaget, Kohlberg, and Mead?

Sustainability Issue: How does the socialization process have to be transformed to be compatible with long-term sustainability?

Film: Still Killing Us Softly

October

Tu  4  EXAM #1

Th  6  Return & Review of Exam; Socialization

Reading: Macionis, Ch. 3: Socialization

Derber: Ch. 3, “Cheaters, Cynics, Dot-Commers, and Survivors: Wilding Culture in the Media and Everyday Life”

Discussion: What is the Difference Between Role Conflict and Role Strain, and How Do These Concepts Relate to Our Daily Lives?

Tu 11  Socialization

Reading: Macionis, Ch. 4, Social Interaction in Everyday Life

Henslin:
Goffman, The Presentation of Self..., 118-128;
Meyer, If Hitler ..., 253-260.

Discussion: How is the Nature of Our Primary and Secondary Relationships Different Today from Such Relationships in the Past?

Th 13  Social Organization and Social Groups

Reading: Macionis, Ch. 5, Groups …, pp. 106-115.

Two of the following:
Henslin: Henslin & Biggs, … Vaginal Examination, 202-214; Coleman, … Homeless Man, 215-228; Lawson, Women Selling Cars, 187-201; Thompson, Handling the Stigma of Handling the Dead, 229-243; Dyer, Anybody’s Son Will Do [Military], 458-469.

* Discussion: What are the Principal Mechanisms of Social Control over the Behavior of Humans?

Sustainability Issue: Which mechanisms of social control are most effective,
and least effective, in addressing sustainability?

Tu  18   FALL BREAK

Th  20   Social Control and Social Deviance
Reading: Macionis, Ch. 7, Deviance
         Henslin:
             Chambliss, The Saints ..., 2271-286; Rosenhan, On Being Sane,...,
             294-
             306.
         Also read:
             Derber, Ch. 8, “War and Wilding: Iraq and the War against
             Terrorism”
         Discussion: What is the Difference Between an
             Absolutist, Positivist Notion of Deviance and
             a Relativist, Interpretivist Notion?

Tu  25   Social Deviance; Human Sexuality
Reading: Henslin:
             Henslin, The Survivors ..., 261-270; Ruane & Cerulo, Is
             Honesty Really Our Policy, 249-252
             One of the following:
             Zimbardo, The Pathology of Imprisonment, 287-293;
             Hunt, Police Accounts ..., 447-457.
         Recommended: Macionis, Ch. 6, Sexuality and Society
         Discussion: Is Crime always Deviance, and Deviance always Crime?
         Sustainability issue: How do the concepts of crime and deviance intersect
             with
             emerging concerns about sustainability?
         Film: Calling the Shots

Th  27   EXAM #2

November
Tu  1   Return & Review Exam; Social Stratification
Reading: Macionis, Ch. 12, Economic Systems, 314-317;
         Ch. 8, Social Stratification
         Henslin:
             Gans, The Uses of Poverty, 347-359;
Discussion: What Explains the Origins of Human Inequalities

Tu 3 

Theories of Social Inequality

Reading:
Henslin:
   Ehrenreich, Nickel and Dimed, 365-378.

Recommended: Macionis, Ch. 9, Global Stratification, 224-238.

* Discussion: In What Sense is America a Class Society and in What Sense is it Classless?

Tu 8 

Social Class and Social Mobility in America;
Social Inequality in America

Reading: Henslin:
   Eitzen, Upward Mobility through Sport, 405-410;

Derber: Ch. 4, U.S. Business vs. Us: Global Capitalism and Corporate Wilding
   Ch. 5, Enron: Systemic Wilding in the Corridors of Power

Discussion: Which forms of inequality are most likely to persist in American society, in the future? Which policies should be adopted to minimize unfair disadvantages in our society?
Sustainability issue: How does sustainability intersect with, and correlate with, issues of social class?

Th 10 

The Great Transformation

Reading: Macionis, Ch. 16, Modernity, 455-459;
Henslin:
   Leidner, Over the Counter at McDonald’s, 475-485.

* Discussion: In What Essential Ways Does Modern Society Differ from Traditional Society, and What are the Emerging Elements of a Postmodern Society?
Sustainability issue: What are the specific dimensions of traditional, modern and postmodern societies that either promote or work against sustainability?

Tu 15 

Note: Instructor expects to be participating in a professional conference;
film to be shown.
Social Inequality, Poverty, and Gender
Reading [Recommended]: Macionis, Ch. 10; Review earlier reading.
Film: Down and Out in America [60 min.]

Note: Instructor expects to be participating in a professional conference;

film to be shown.

Social Inequality, Race, and Ethnicity
Reading [Recommended]: Macionis, Ch. 11; Review earlier reading.
Henslin:
Kozol, Savage Inequalities, 329-337;
Film: Our Families, Our Future [58 min.]

Dimensions of Modern Society
Reading: Macionis, Ch. 15, Urbanization, 425-434;
Ch.5, Formal Organizations, 118-130;
Henslin:
Chambliss, The World of the Hospital, 434-446.
Derber, Ch. 7, Killing Society: The Ungluing of America
Discussion: Has Alienation or Liberation been the Dominant Characteristic of Contemporary Society?

Social Institutions: The Family
Reading: Macionis, Ch. 13, The Family, 344-362;
Henslin:
Discussion: What are the Principal Ways in which Contemporary Families Differ from those of the Past?
Sustainability issue: What practices do individual families have to adopt to promote sustainability, and what are the practices of your own family in this regard?

December
Th 1  Social Institutions: Politics ...
   Religion, Education, and Medicine
Reading [Recommended]:  Macionis, Ch. 12, [Economics and Politics:
   317-340; Ch. 13, … Religion, 363-376.
   Ch. 14, Education and Medicine
Discussion:  Do We Really Live in a Democratic Society?
   Does a "Power Elite" Really Govern Our Country?

Tu 6  The Future of Society:  Demographic and Ecological
   Dimensions; Collective Behavior and Mass Movements
Reading: Macionis, Ch. 15, 405-413; 421-433;
   Ch. 16, Social Change …448-461
Henslin:
   Smith and Belgrave, After Hurricane Andrew,
   513-523;
   Miller, Women in the Military, 496-512;
* Derber:  Ch. 9, Beyond Wilding:  Resurrecting Civil Society
Discussion:  What are the Principal Forces Which
   Produce Social Change?
Sustainability issue:  What is the role of social movements in the
   promotion of sustainability, and what specific social forces will
   promote or work against sustainability in the future?
Film:  Future Shock

Th 8  Social Change and The Future of Society
Reading: Macionis, Ch. 16, Social Change, 461-471;
   Ch. 9, Global Stratification, 238-247.
Henslin:
   Savells, Social Change Among the Amish....,
   486-495.
Discussion:  What will the Nature of 21st Century
   Society Be?
Week of December 13-17

EXAM #3 FINAL [Date to be announced]