



The Way We Live:

COURSE OUTLINE

Lesson 1 - CONNECTIONS

What is Sociology? In this introductory lesson various perspectives are offered by leading sociologists for understanding the complex interplay of individuals, groups and relationships in society, and how they provide a context for living and a roadmap for understanding life's limitations ... and possibilities. Students Rising Above, a program that helps disadvantaged youth succeed in school, is featured in this episode.

Learning Outcomes:

- The sociological perspective: seeing the general in the particular, the power of society to shape our thoughts, feelings, and actions; transforming personal problems into public issues
- The global perspective: how where we live shapes our lives; increasing connections between societies throughout the world
- The origins of sociology: the growth of cities; the new, industrial economy; political change
- Sociological theory: the structural-functional paradigm, the social-conflict paradigm, and the symbolic-interaction paradigm
- Applied sociology

Lesson 2 - TRUTH BE TOLD

Sociological research and methodology is often the subject of debate among sociologists. The pursuit of objectivity in sociological research, Critical Sociology, and the idea of Sociology as a science...each has transformed the way sociologists approach sociological research. This lesson also includes discussion of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, and features a *Slice of Life* segment on sociologist Mitchell Duneier and his research on New York homeless populations.

Learning Outcomes:

- Scientific sociology: the study of society based on systematic observation of social behavior
- Interpretive sociology: the study of society that focuses on the meanings people attach to their social world
- Critical sociology: the study of society that focuses on the need for social change
- Methods of sociological research: experiments, surveys, participant observation, secondary analysis
- Giving facts meaning by building theory (using inductive and deductive logical thought)

Lesson 3 – COMMON GROUND

Values, beliefs, traditions, language, and material goods form the subject of this lesson about the components of culture. The video lesson begins with a *Slice of Life* look at the Amish - a group whose members in Southeastern Pennsylvania maintain language and other cultural traditions unique to early Germanic settlers to the region. The American values of individual rights and consumerism are also discussed.

Learning Outcomes:

- What is culture? (non-material vs. material; as distinguished from “nation” and “society;” means of passing on lessons learned/survival strategies)
- The components of culture: symbols, language, values and beliefs, norms, and material culture (including technology)
- Cultural diversity: many ways of life in one world (subculture, counterculture, multiculturalism, cultural change, ethnocentrism and cultural relativism)
- Theoretical analysis of culture: structural-functional analysis; social-conflict analysis; sociobiology

Lesson 4 – FITTING IN

Humans are born without any culture. For virtually anyone, the process of socialization begins with the family and continues through other social agents such as school, peer groups and mass media. The popularity of reality television shows that offer “extreme makeovers” is highlighted in this lesson as an example of the desire to fit in.

Learning Outcomes:

- Social experience and human development: nature, nurture and social isolation
- Understanding socialization: personality, cognitive development, moral development, gender, the social self, eight stages of development
- Agents of socialization: family, school, peer groups, mass media
- Socialization and the life course: childhood, adolescence, adulthood, old age, dying

Lesson 5 – FACE TO FACE

This lesson looks at how such aspects of social interaction as language, humor and emotion can shape and change the way we view the world around us. Nowhere is this interaction more visible than in the fusion of language and emotion which characterize

the world of politics. But social interaction in the more mundane world of everyday life can be just as significant. The video lesson begins with a stand-up comedy show that helps us further understand the significance of humor, as both a form of self-expression and as a culturally-specific method of social interaction.

Learning Outcomes:

- Status: status set; ascribed and achieved status; master status
- Role: role set; role conflict and strain; role exit
- The social construction of reality: “street smarts;” the Thomas Theorem; ethnomethodology; reality building (class and culture)
- Dramaturgical analysis: the presentation of self (performances; non-verbal communication; gender and personal performances; idealization; embarrassment and tact)
- Interaction in everyday life: language and humor

Lesson 6 – ALL TOGETHER

Whether a small group or a multinational corporation, every organization has its own culture. This lesson looks at organizational behavior and includes discussion around the ideas of Frederick Taylor and “scientific management,” corporate culture and the pitfalls of bureaucracy. As we see in the Outward Bound program, every organization has its own unique culture that is likened to the values and norms of the wider society .

Learning Outcomes:

- Social groups (primary and secondary; leadership; reference groups; size; diversity, i.e. race/class/gender; networks)
- Formal organizations: types; bureaucracies (origins; characteristics; informal aspects; problems); organizational environment; oligarchy
- The evolution of formal organizations: scientific management; challenges (race and gender; the Japanese organization; the changing nature of work); the “McDonaldization” of society (emphasis on efficiency, calculability, uniformity/predictability, and control through automation)
- The future of organizations: opposing trends (high-paying, “creative” jobs vs. routine jobs) in the post-industrial economy
- Computer technology, large organizations and the assault on privacy

Lesson 7 – AGAINST THE GRAIN

Conventional wisdom suggests that behavior “outside the norm” can be considered deviant. But can we really define deviant behavior? Programs like Delancey Street Foundation operate “outside the norm” by assisting convicted criminals to become productive members of mainstream society. Differing views on sexuality and violent crime are explored in the lesson, as are some of the moral, religious and psychological factors that play a role in understanding deviant behavior.

Learning Outcomes:

- What is deviance? (social control; the biological context; personality factors; social foundations)
- Functions of deviance: structural-functional analysis (Emile Durkheim on functions; Merton's Strain Theory; deviant subcultures)
- Labeling deviance: symbolic-interaction analysis (labeling theory; medicalization of deviance; Sutherland's Differential Association theory; Hirschi's Control Theory)
- Deviance and inequality: social-conflict analysis (deviance and power; deviance and capitalism; white collar crime; corporate crime; organized crime)
- Deviance and social diversity (hate crimes; deviance and gender)
- Crime and the criminal justice system (types and statistics; street criminals; global perspective; police; courts; punishment)

Lesson 8 – MATTERS OF THE FLESH

Conflicting views about sexuality permeate American culture. These conflicts play out in a variety of ways, from how we perceive sexually explicit materials to how we legislate on the issue of abortion. This lesson looks at the concept of sexuality and explores different attitudes towards sexuality education, abortion and sexual orientation. We meet Renee Walker, a concerned mother who objected to the sexuality education program at her son's school because she believed the program was biased.

Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding sexuality: biological issues; cultural issues; incest
- Sexual attitudes in the United States: the sexual revolution and counter-revolution; premarital sex; sex between adults; extramarital sex
- Sexual orientation: origins; alternative sexuality
- Sexual controversies: teen pregnancy; pornography; prostitution; sexual violence and abuse
- Theoretical analyses of sexuality: structural-functional; symbolic-interaction; social-conflict

Lesson 9 – UPS AND DOWNS

Since the 1950s when opportunity reached its peak, the gap between the "haves and have nots" has grown. This lesson looks at social stratification and the dimensions of social inequality that exist in the United States, as seen in the story of an immigrant from Eastern Europe who, along with her family, comes to the U.S. with virtually nothing, and eventually manages to open and operate a successful child care business.

Learning Outcomes:

- Dimensions of social inequality: income, wealth, power, occupational prestige, schooling
- Social stratification and birth: ancestry, gender, race and ethnicity, religion
- Social classes in the U.S.: upper, middle, working, working poor/lower
- Impacts of class: health, values, politics, family and gender

- Social mobility: myth vs. reality; mobility (race, ethnicity and gender; mobility by income level); the American dream (still a reality?); the global economy and U.S. class structure
- Poverty in the U.S.: explanations and extent; link with unemployment; the welfare dilemma; who are the poor; impact on children; homelessness
- Stratification and conflict (Karl Marx and class conflict; Max Weber on class, status and power)

Lesson 10 – WORLDS APART

Why can one continent be relatively affluent and another mired in poverty? This lesson looks at stratification on a global scale, and introduces the ideas of globalization and neo-liberalism. The lesson features Doctors Without Borders – an organization whose stated aim is to serve populations in need anywhere in the world irrespective of religious, political or social barriers that may exist.

Learning Outcomes:

- Caste and class systems
- Overview of global stratification: terminology; high-income countries; middle-income countries; low-income countries
- Global wealth and poverty: severity and extent; poverty and women; poverty and children; slavery; correlates of global poverty (technology; population growth; cultural patterns; social stratification; gender inequality; global power relationships)
- Global stratification: theoretical analysis (modernization theory; dependency theory)
- Global stratification: economic polarization; world hunger

Lesson 11 – VENUS AND MARS

Are men and women really *that* different? Society tends to emphasize differences more than similarities. This often leads to competition and, in some cases, inequality. Gender issues and stratification, the gender divide in the workplace, the impact of Title Seven, and the women's movement are explored in this lesson. As illustrated in the example of a female football team, it can take a lot of determination to defy the agents of socialization and overcome gender bias.

Learning Outcomes:

- Gender and inequality: male-female differences; gender in global perspective; patriarchy and sexism
- Gender and socialization: family, peer group, schooling, and the mass media
- Gender and social stratification: working men and women; housework; gender and education, politics, the military; minority women; violence against women
- Theoretical analysis of gender: structural-functional analysis; social-conflict analysis
- Feminism: basic ideas; types; opposition

Lesson 12 – COLORS

For racial and ethnic minorities, the struggle for recognition and equality is nothing new. Perhaps nowhere is this more visible than in the United States. The polarizing effects of stereotyping, racial prejudice and discrimination, and its impact on generations of Black Americans are discussed. Learners will also meet the Bazy family – an Arab-American family in Michigan who must cope with local misconceptions and generalizations about Arab culture in the wake of 9/11.

Learning Outcomes:

- Social meaning of race, ethnicity and minority
- Prejudice: stereotypes, racism, theories of prejudice
- Discrimination: institutional prejudice and discrimination; the cycle of prejudice and discrimination
- Majority and minority: patterns of interaction (pluralism, assimilation, segregation, genocide)
- Race and ethnicity in the U.S.: Native Americans, White Anglo-Saxon Protestants, African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, White Ethnic Americans

Lesson 13 – GOLDEN YEARS

The Longevity Revolution, cross-cultural differences, stereotypes – all present challenges to meeting the needs of America’s growing population of elderly adults. This lesson explores issues surrounding aging, death and dying, and features The Jewish Home for the Aged – a nursing home that provides a rich array of programs for its residents.

Learning Outcomes:

- The graying of the United States: birth rate and life expectancy; cultural change; “young old” and “old old”
- Growing old: biology and culture (biological changes; psychological changes; aging and culture; age stratification: a global assessment)
- Growing old: transitions and challenges (finding meaning; social isolation; retirement; aging and poverty; caregiving; ageism)
- Theoretical analysis of aging: structural-functional analysis (aging and disengagement); symbolic-interaction analysis (aging and activity); social-conflict analysis (aging and inequality)
- Death and dying: historical patterns of death; modern separation of life and death; ethical issues; bereavement

Lesson 14 – WORKING WORLD

Today, we live in a rapidly changing economic and social climate that emphasizes the bottom line. What is the impact on society? What role does globalization play? The situation faced by striking grocery workers illustrates some of the frustrations experienced by employees in today’s changing global economy. This lesson also includes a discussion around the impact one retail giant in particular is having on workers, the economy, and the world - Walmart.

Learning Outcomes:

- Historical overview of the economy: agricultural, industrial and information revolutions; sectors of the economy; the global economy
- Economic systems: capitalism; socialism; welfare capitalism and state capitalism; changes in socialist countries
- Work in the post-industrial economy
- Corporations: economic concentration; conglomerates; competition; corporations and globalization

Lesson 15 – BALANCE OF POWER

Too often government only hears from insiders with access to money and education, which is why grass roots movements in the form of local and statewide initiatives often represent the best way for the average person to make his or her voice heard. This episode looks at the sociology of politics as illustrated in the California ballot initiatives Proposition 68, to expand legalized gambling, and Proposition 71, for the support of stem cell research.

Learning Outcomes:

- Politics and government: traditional authority; rational-legal authority; charismatic authority
- Politics in global perspective: monarchy; democracy; authoritarianism; totalitarianism
- Politics in the U.S.: the political spectrum; special interest groups; voter apathy; the growth of government
- Theoretical analysis of power in society: the pluralist model; the power-elite model; the Marxist model
- Power beyond the rules: revolution; terrorism
- War and peace: the causes of war; costs and causes of militarism; nuclear weapons; pursuing peace

Lesson 16 – FAMILY MATTERS

The traditional or nuclear family of the 1950s and 1960s is what most of us think of when asked to define ‘family’. But the idea that there is a typical family is perhaps little more than a myth. This lesson considers the diversity of family forms that exist today and cultural shifts that are changing the way we look at families. You will meet the Scott-Chung family – a lesbian couple who discuss their decision to start a family.

Learning Outcomes:

- The family: basic concepts (global variations; marriage patterns; residential patterns; patterns of descent; patterns of authority)
- Theoretical analysis of the family: functions of the family (structural-functional analysis); inequality and the family (social-conflict analysis); constructing family life (micro-level analysis)
- Stages of family life: courtship; ideal and real marriage; child rearing; the family in later life
- U.S. families: class, race and gender

- Transitions and problems in family life: divorce; remarriage; family violence
- Alternative family units: single-parent families; cohabitation; gay and lesbian couples; singlehood
- New reproductive technology and the family

Lesson 17 – IN GOD WE TRUST

Most religions define themselves by their respective rituals and traditions. What is remarkably consistent, however, is the role that virtually all religions play in the lives of their followers. Religion in the United States, its effect on the tapestry of American society, and its delicate relationship with politics are the focus of this lesson – which also features a *Slice of Life* look at Catholicism and Voodoo in New Orleans.

Learning Outcomes:

- Theoretical analysis of religion: functions of religion (structural-functional analysis); constructing the sacred (symbolic-interaction analysis); inequality and religion (social-conflict analysis)
- Religion and social change: Protestantism and capitalism; liberation theology
- Types of religious organization: church; sect; cult
- Religion in history: religion in pre-industrial societies; religion in industrial societies
- World religions: Christianity; Islam; Judaism; Hinduism; Buddhism; Confucianism
- Religion in the United States: religious affiliation; religiosity; religion and social stratification
- Religion in a changing society: secularization; civil religion; a post-denominational society; religious revival

Lesson 18 – LEARNING CURVES

What kind of education a child can expect to receive may have less to do with the teacher and more to do socioeconomic status, race and culture. These and other factors make the question of how best to educate American children a complicated one. In this episode you will meet two families who have chosen different approaches to educating their children. The growth in home schooling as an alternative to conventional education is explored.

Learning Outcomes:

- A global survey: schooling in India, Japan, Great Britain and the United States
- Functions of schooling: socialization; cultural innovation; social integration; social placement; latent functions
- Schooling and social inequality: social control; standardized testing; school tracking; inequality between schools; access to higher education; credentialism; privilege and personal merit
- Problems in the schools: discipline and violence; student passivity; dropping out; academic standards
- Recent issues in education: school choice; schooling people with disabilities; adult education; the teacher shortage; bilingual education

Lesson 19 – TAKING THE PULSE

Health care in the United States has reached a crisis point, despite advances in medicine and technology. Yet this is not necessarily the case in other parts of the world. This lesson looks at health and society, and explores such issues as inequities in health care coverage, the economics of providing care, alternative medical treatments and ethical questions including right-to-die. Particular emphasis is placed on one of the most serious sexually transmitted diseases – HIV/AIDS.

Learning Outcomes:

- What is health: health and society
- Health: a global survey (health in history; health in low-income countries; health in high-income countries)
- Health in the United States: who is healthy (age, gender, class and race); cigarette smoking; eating disorders; sexually transmitted diseases; ethical issues surrounding death
- The medical establishment: the rise of scientific medicine; holistic medicine; paying for health (a global survey); medicine in the United States
- Theoretical analysis of health and medicine: structural-functional analysis; symbolic-interaction analysis; social-conflict analysis

Lesson 20 – RISE AND FALL

This lesson reviews population, urbanization and the environment from a sociological point of view. While each of these is often analyzed separately, it is the dynamic, constantly shifting interplay among all three that is perhaps most significant. Topics covered include fertility, mortality, migration, population growth, global climate change, and sustainability. As we see in the *Slice of Life* feature that focuses on one American city – there are positive and negative effects of the building boom.

Learning Outcomes:

- Demography: the study of population (fertility; mortality; migration; population growth; population composition)
- History and theory of population growth: Malthusian theory; demographic transition theory; global population today (a brief survey)
- Urbanization: the growth of cities (the evolution of cities; the growth of U.S. cities; suburbs and urban decline; postindustrial sunbelt cities; megalopolis: regional cities; edge cities; the rural rebound)
- Urbanism as a way of life (Ferdinand Tonnies: *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*; Emile Durkheim: mechanical and organic solidarity; George Simmel: the blasé urbanite; The Chicago School: Robert Park and Louis Wirth)
- Urbanization in poor societies
- Environment and society: the global dimension; technology and the environmental deficit; culture (growth and limits); solid waste (the disposable society); water and air; the rain forests; environmental racism
- Looking ahead: toward a sustainable world

Lesson 21 – MASS APPEAL

Social movements are not a new phenomenon. Fundamental to all social movements, past and present, is the idea of collective identity. But other factors are at play which often determine whether a social movement will be a success or a failure. An example of a social movement can be seen in the ANSWER Coalition.

Learning Outcomes:

- Studying collective behavior
- Localized collectivities: mobs and riots; crowds, mobs and social change; explaining crowd behavior
- Dispersed collectivities: mass behavior (rumor and gossip; public opinion and propaganda; panic and mass hysteria; fashions and fads)
- Social movements (types of social movements; explaining social movements; gender and social movements; stages in social movements; social movements and social change)

Lesson 22 – WAVES OF CHANGE

What is social change and what are its causes? This lesson provides a deeper understanding of both the concepts and the consequences at the heart of social change. The *Slice of Life* segment in this video lesson documents how the Winnemen Wintu – a Native American tribe who live in the Pacific Northwest – have been negatively impacted by U.S. Government water and land policies.

Learning Outcomes:

- What is social change?
- Causes of social change: culture and change; conflict and change; ideas and change; demographic change
- Modernity: four dimensions of modernization; the loss of community (Ferdinand Tonnies); the division of labor (Emile Durkheim); rationalization (Max Weber); capitalism (Karl Marx)
- Theoretical ideas of modernity: structural-functional theory (modernity as mass society); social-conflict theory (modernity as class society); modernity and the individual; modernity and progress; modernity: global variation
- Looking ahead: modernization and our global future