



The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology ONLINE

Newsletter - Third and Fourth Updates

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Welcome to the Newsletter for the Third and Fourth Updates of the **Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology Online**. Within this newsletter you will find a brief summary of over 35 new entries, as well as a sneak preview of future entries.

Have an idea for a new entry? Suggest a new entry for the Online Encyclopedia and if your suggestion is chosen you could win an Amazon gift certificate! (See details below)

Finally, be sure to check out the [reviews](#) of the **Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology**, and pass this newsletter on to your librarian.

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About the Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology

The **Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology Online** provides a living, breathing resource for the academic community in sociology, including faculty, students, and researchers. The print version, published in 2007, contains nearly 1,800 entries and over 3.5 million words, arranged in a-z format over 11 volumes, making it the most comprehensive reference work ever published in sociology. Using the material from this unrivalled reference as a starting point, and under the continuing editorship of George Ritzer, the Online Encyclopedia is being updated three times a year. The **Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology Online** includes new entries and updates to existing entries. Suggestions for new topics to be covered are welcome, and for those who did not contribute to the print version, there may be an opportunity to contribute to the Online Encyclopedia.

To learn more about the **Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology**, visit www.sociologyencyclopedia.com.

Third Update - New Entries to the Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology ONLINE

Americanization (William Marling) - Americanization is a term whose definition is ever-changing and not often agreed upon. During the earliest days of the US, it meant an internally coherent ideological dynamic to most US citizens, and the type of culture associated with the young US to those outside the country. Since that time the definition of the term has changed many times, including a recent conception by the author of this entry as 'a rhetorical strategy for discussing change while distancing oneself from responsibility for it'.

Culture Turn (Steven Best) - The 'culture turn' is a dynamic process that has affected the worlds of theory, art, and politics. Although it has played out quite differently across different disciplines, nations, and traditions, it generally refers to an increasing emphasis on the importance of art and culture for education, moral growth, and social criticism and change.

Figurational Sociology (Katie Liston and Stephen Mennell) - Figurational sociology refers to the research tradition stemming from the work of Norbert Elias. Sometimes also called 'process sociology', it rejects traditional notions of agency-structure, or 'individual' and 'society', instead focusing on the complex webs of interdependent relationships between people, on the more intertwined, 'open' nature of people.

Gouldner, Alvin (Nazneen Kane) - Perhaps Gouldner's most influential work in sociology is his widely read *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology* (1970). In this work, he attacked the sociology of the day, most notably structural functionalism, and called for a more critical, reflexive sociology. Aside from this work, Gouldner made many other important contributions to sociology including founding three journals – most notably *Theory and Society*.

Gun Control (Matt Qvortrup) - Gun control is a hot topic both in sociology as well as the larger social and political world. Whether more guns deters crime or increases the likelihood of being a victim of a firearm offense is a debate that rages both in and out of the academy. This entry not only provides some theoretical background to the issue, but also provides empirical evidence of the effects of gun control and gun crime.

Housework (Andrew Hunt) - With the coming of industrialization, 'housework' came to be seen as separate from 'work'. It is a topic most often framed in the discussion of the household division of labor, the well-being of families, the construction of gender, and the reproduction of society.

Individualization (Beck) (Craig Lair) - The German sociologist Ulrich Beck has raised issues central to the founders of sociology with his individualization thesis. Beck argues that as we have moved from a first to a second modernity, individual behavior has become less bounded by traditional norms, values, and

sources of collective identity. Further, this process of individualization has been opened up to others who were previously excluded from this process.

Jihad (Muhammad Najib Azca) - The word 'Jihad' has become a near buzzword in recent years. The author of this entry gives an account of the history of the term as well its uses in modern day parlance, both between Muslim society as a social entity and also between Muslim and non-Muslim societies.

Kuhn, Manford (Reef Youngreen) - Kuhn, a student of George Herbert Mead, is the founder of a branch of sociological social psychology referred to as the 'Iowa School'. Among Kuhn's many contributions to social psychology are the concept of a core self, an emphasis on empirical techniques to investigate human interaction and cognition, and a strong sense of a structural approach toward social psychology.

Metrosexual (Michael Yaksich) - The term 'metrosexual' is another that has become a near buzzword in recent years. The term generally refers to a heterosexual male whose lifestyle, spending habits and concerns for personal appearance are likened to stereotypes associated with homosexual men.

Multiphrenia (Kenneth Gergen) - Multiphrenia is a concept originating in the work of the author of this entry, Kenneth Gergen. Gergen argues that the traditional ideal of a single coherent self is being gradually replaced by a sense of self as fragmented and de-centered. Multiphrenia refers to this condition and, in particular, to refer to the individual's subsequent experience of conflict in values, ideals, opinions, and motives.

Obesity (Matt Qvortrup) - The socially constructed, rather than purely individual, aspects of obesity have been gaining attention in recent years. This entry discusses the social, historical, and cultural aspects of what has been labeled by many as one of the leading problems in contemporary Western society.

Popular Culture Forms: Punk Music (Karen Halnon) - The punk music scene first emerged in New York City in the mid 1970's as a sub cultural style that privileged anger, alienation, violence, and anarchy. Moreover, punk also rejected the hippie subculture and the dominance of profit-driven corporate rock.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques (Andrew Wernick) - Two of Rousseau's most famous works, *The Social Contract* and *Émile*, have become classics in social and political thought. Rousseau's controversial distinctions between natural and social inequality, legal and political inequalities, and inequalities of wealth and property, along with his theorem about the primacy of economic inequality have influenced generations of thinkers, including Hegel, Marx, and many of the Jacobins during the French Revolution.

Significant Symbol (Mamadi Corra) - A 'significant symbol' is anything with a shared meaning to a group of people or collectivity. What makes a significant symbol unique, therefore, is that it arouses the same reaction in one member of a group as it does in most other members. This makes them arguably the foundation of social interaction and the basic mechanism for intra-group interaction.

Starbucks (Bryant Simon) - Starbucks has nearly 14,000 locations worldwide, opens a new outlet every five hours, and serves more than 44 million customers each week. This entry, written by one of the leading experts on the subject, gives a history of this fast-growing company, the implications of its success, and outlines some of the criticisms.

Tattoos (Karen Halnon) - In 2007, 40% of Gen Xers (age 26-40) reported having at least one tattoo. This entry analyzes the multiplicity of meanings associated with tattooing both historically and cross-culturally.

Tarde, Gabriel (Christian Borch) - Gabriel Tarde developed a general theory of society based on the notion of imitation. He argued that social life is characterized by repetition through imitation. Although marginalized for a while by the dominant, and incompatible, viewpoint of Durkheim, Tarde's vision of sociology has begun to re-emerge, in part through the work of Bruno Latour and the rise of actor-network theory.

Violentization (Lonnie Athens) - Violentization, made popular largely by the author of this entry, is a comprehensive theory of violent crime that describes how violent criminals develop, how violent communities originate and change, and how violent criminal acts are committed. It does so in processual terms thereby providing an opportunity for stopping their completion and retarding the problem of violent crime.

Fourth Update - New Entries to the Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology ONLINE

Bureaucracy (Lawrence A. Scaff) – The concept of bureaucracy, whether conceived of as an organization or a form of social action, typically refers to a particular way of organizing the administration of human affairs and conduct. This entry traces the significance of the concept from ancient civilizations through to its most popular use in sociology in Weber and others.

Concessions (Tiffani Everett) - Concessions are an account-making strategy used by actors following a socially unexpected behaviour. They are used by actors to mitigate social harm following an event and according to research tend to generate a more positive impression of the actor.

Critical Race Theory (Anthony Ryan Hatch) - Critical Race Theory refers to a historical and contemporary body of scholarship that aims to interrogate the discourses, ideologies, and social structures that produce and maintain conditions of racial injustice. This entry highlights several core themes that tie together this eclectic body of explicitly political theorizing.

Cultural Colonialism (Sarah Amsler) - The term cultural colonialism refers to two related practices – the extension of colonial power through cultural activities and institutions or the asymmetrical influence of one culture over another. Although it is less popular in academic circles now than in the 1970s and 1980s, the discourse of cultural colonialism appears increasingly in public debate, especially with the rise of interest in globalization.

Cyber-Delinquency (Mike Molesworth and Janice Denegri-Knott) - Cyber-delinquency is a composite that captures the recognition of new deviances, or crimes related to the online behavior of young people. These activities may include, among others, the sharing of copyrighted software or music, vandalizing sites with inappropriate comments, plagiarizing essays taken from the internet, or making false claims to age or identity.

Economics (Michael Reay) - Economics as a modern discipline focuses primarily on systems of money-coordinated exchange and wage-based production. It is perhaps the most influential of the social sciences and is very closely connected to both national and international policy, especially during the era of neoliberalism and globalization. This entry explores not only the discipline of economics, but also its role in social policy and its relationship to sociology.

Excuses (Tiffani Everett) - Excuses are a strategy used to remedy interaction that fails to meet social standards. They are techniques used by actors to admit to a behavior but to reject responsibility of the behavior and its consequences.

Ford, Henry (Martha Crowley) - Henry Ford left an indelible imprint on production, the nature of work, and industrial relations by revolutionizing automobile production with improvements in efficiency, stimulating consumption with price reductions, and suppressing worker resistance through high wages and later with anti-union tactics.

Hope (Sarah Amsler) - Hope most generally refers to a desire for positive futures that are considered possible, either theoretically or in practice, but are not guaranteed. This entry traces the role and debates surrounding the use of this concept in sociology.

Husserl, Edmund (Lenore Langsdorf) - The work of Edmund Husserl has influenced a range of scholars working in a number of fields including philosophy, psychology, and sociology. His work directly, and indirectly, influenced the rise of ethnomethodology, phenomenology, and a social constructionist approach in sociology.

Justifications (Tiffani Everett) - Justifications are verbal strategies used to minimize unpredictable behavior or consequences. When people make justifications for their behavior, they accept responsibility for their actions, but deny any negativity associated with the actions.

Knowledge Politics (Charalambos Tsekeris) - The concept of knowledge politics relates to the interconnected nature of facts and values and the inherent impurity of any epistemological project. It bears relevance to such contemporary debates as those around test-tube human conception, reproductive cloning, and genetically engineered foods.

Moral Careers (John Loy) - Moral careers, as distinguished from occupational or practical careers, relate to the acquisition or loss of honor, respect, and other forms of prestige. They are a useful way to grasp the relationship between history and society and Mills' distinction between personal troubles and public issues.

Phronesis and Phronetic Social Science (Martyn Hammersley) - Phronesis refers to the kind of tacit wisdom acquired from engaging in practical action. It is not seen as having a grasp on some theoretical body of knowledge or command over a set of skills but is rather closer to a virtue that is part of the character of the person. Phronetic social science takes the approach that social science should be directly engaged in seeking to bring about practical improvements in the quality of life for ordinary people by challenging powerful interests.

Psychology (Jeffrey Stepnisky) - Psychology understands itself as the scientific study of individual behavior and mental processes. It is one of the most renowned and influential of the social sciences. Broadly, psychologists divide their work into pure and applied fields, the former adopting the scientific methods of the natural sciences and the latter pursuing applications of the field in the 'real world'.

Social Dominance Theory (Markus Kemmelmeier) - Social dominance theory is a conflict-type theory developed by political psychologists in the early 1990s. The main focus of the theory is to explain the psycho-ideological underpinnings of intergroup conflict, social hierarchy and oppression.

Social Type (Simmel) (Dan Silver) - Although Simmel did not himself articulate a concept of social type, his descriptions of various social configurations like the stranger, the miser, and the spendthrift have stimulated sociologists who use the concept. Simmel's discussions of what may be called social types can be grouped into two general categories with respect to analysis of either the position occupied with relation to some interactional form (i.e. the stranger) or as a certain basic orientation to the world (i.e. the adventurer).

Technopolitics (Charalambos Tsekeris) - The concept of technopolitics lies at the intersection of politics and technology. It provides the possibility of challenging widely entrenched preconceptions about the nature and character of modern technology as well as of re-imagining the political world.

Walt Disney World (Laura L. Hansen) - Walt Disney World ranks as the most popular theme park destination in the world. It has been the focal point of analysis of leisure studies, consumption, and even capitalism writ large. It also serves a central component of the paradigm of Alan Bryman's theory of disneyization.

Future Updates

The fifth update (scheduled for September 2008) will feature new entries as well as updates to existing entries to keep the Online Encyclopedia at the cutting edge of sociology.

Some of the planned new entries include:

- **Elections** (Matt Qvortrup)
- **Fair Trade** (Vince Carducci)
- **Japan Sociological Society** (Shun Inoue)
- **Web 2.0** (Roger Burrows)
- **Hurricane Katrina** (Lori Peek and Kai Erikson)

Suggest a New Entry and Win an Amazon Gift Certificate

If you have suggestions for potential new entries, please send them to J. Michael Ryan, Senior Managing Editor of the **Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology Online**, at miker@socy.umd.edu. We are awarding a £100/\$150 Amazon gift certificate for the best suggestions featured in subsequent updates to the Encyclopedia online*.

* One prize will be given for each of the Publisher's major updates to the Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology Online. The judges' decision is final.

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Reviews

"The most up-to-date work on this topic ... Essential. Lower-level undergraduates through faculty/researchers."

Choice

"This work will be an important addition to large university libraries with sociological departments. It represents important scholarship in this field and will be a resource that will be well used and reliable."

American Reference Books Annual

"Ritzer has created the literal bible of sociology – a comprehensive and vital tome that houses an ever-evolving snapshot of the structure of our society ... Blackwell's Encyclopedia of Sociology deserves a place in all college-level libraries. Simply, we have seen no other sociological-based resource as comprehensive or as classy – this point of reference that outlines the academic mission in beautiful almost elegant terms, in turn recording our never-ending quest for knowledge and enlightenment."

The Electric Review

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John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. | The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK
Tel: +44 (0)1243 779777 | Fax: +44 (0)1243 775878 | Registered Number: 641132 England

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