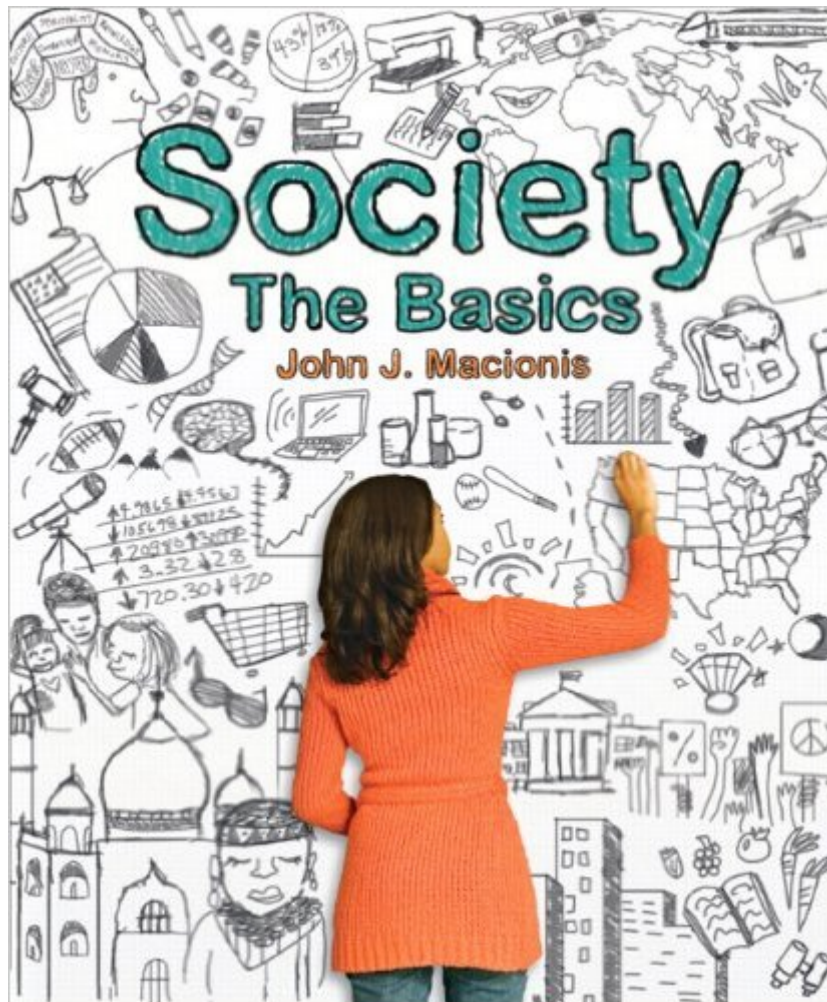


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Society: The Basics (12th Edition)



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Series: Society the basics (Book 12)

Paperback: 552 pages

Publisher: Pearson; 12 edition (June 8, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0205898912

ISBN-13: 978-0205898916

Product Dimensions: 8.9 x 0.9 x 10.7 inches

Shipping Weight: 2 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (404 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #17,142 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #36 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Anthropology > General](#) #80 in [Books > Textbooks > Social Sciences > Sociology](#) #230 in [Books > Science & Math > Behavioral Sciences](#)

Customer Reviews

I have to use this book to teach Sociology 101, and it frustrates me to no end. The book is a failure in every aspect. Introductory textbooks have to simplify things, of course, but Macionis oversimplifies to the point where my students feel that their intelligence has been insulted, and worst of all, don't realize that the sociological concepts he's talking about are more than simple stereotypes and platitudes. He writes at one point, essentially, that "white people don't understand poverty", while every college freshmen knows that poor whites do exist, and that the author must be either a racist or an idiot for thinking otherwise. But what does the cultural construct of race have to do with social hierarchy and economics? Macionis doesn't start that conversation, you'll have to do it yourself. And that's the general flaw of the book, Macionis writes chapter after chapter of superficial lists of concepts, theorists, and vocabulary, but never does the real work of laying out key sociological theories in a simple and thorough way, which of course is exactly what a textbook is for. As a teacher, I'm then forced to spend class time laying out the basics that Macionis didn't cover, everything from culture to symbolic interactionism. He'll give a few paragraphs to Weber, Marx, or Freud, but doesn't actually explain them in any coherent way. Some things are completely absent. Macionis doesn't mention some key concepts, like social capital, and doesn't explain at all how sociologists use statistics. With glaring omissions like those, it's obvious that Macionis simply doesn't understand sociology. Finally, the book just isn't organized in any worthwhile way. Macionis puts the three big "approaches" (Structuralism, Conflict, Interaction) in the first chapter, before the students have been exposed to enough material to understand why they're useful or important. Then the rest of the book is a laundry list of concepts, clumped into chapters without any real theme. For example, chapter 4 is about social interaction, status, role, emotion, and humor, but gender, class, race, social groups, and social stratification are spread out in other chapters. Sure, the students learn their vocabulary, but it becomes very difficult to connect the different concepts to each other. Macionis offers snippets of narrative to help explain the concepts, but nothing big enough for actual analysis, so you'll have to do it instead. All in all, this book does nothing that it's supposed to do, and should not be bought by anyone.

advertises this as a "Kindle" edition yet it doesn't work on Kindles. It only works on Kindle Fires, PC Kindle application (not the Windows 8 app edition) and iPad (not even the iPhone Kindle app). How is this not supported on Windows 8 Kindle App???? All the new laptops/tablets for windows are out of luck. This should be disclaimed a VERY LIMITED e-editions only. Not happy.

The book is full of great information for someone studying sociology. However, my prof told me that new editions are pretty much the same as the last. Typically they just change the chapter order. If I had known this I would have saved myself about \$50 buying the older 10th edition and would have the same information. There aren't going to be any huge changes in society every 9 months- buy the previous edition!

I bought this book for a class that I pretty much just expected to get through. The teacher is alright, but the book is great. It doesn't talk down to you, but explains everything clearly and thoroughly. It interjects humor, speaks in plain English and answers questions you have been curious about. I am a psychology major, so I should say that the study of people has always interested me, so this book was already up my alley. While not exactly a "fun" read, I found this a fun read... for a textbook.

Pluses: This book is probably basic information that everyone should know. It's presented pretty clearly. There is even some criticism of sociologists in there - that they can be prone to groupthink. Negatives: What I find frustrating about this book, as opposed to the textbook for Psychology 101, Econ 101, and other social "science" intro courses - is that this one doesn't show enough about sociologists and what they are doing with their knowledge practically. I don't think that examples exist! Show me sociologists who are working on policy - education policy, affirmative action, drafting health inequality. What is the difference between a social worker and psychologist? Isn't that the kind of thing you should know when you take an introductory class in a field? I still cannot answer that question, except I would expect a social worker deals more with local, state, and perhaps federal bureaucracy. Where are the sociologists of this world, mainly? Do they all become social workers and professors? Where do their ideas and research come into play and make a difference in people's lives, besides categorizing and pointing out that this or that indifference or movement happened? This book perpetuates the idea of sociologists as gatherers of data, content to write books that other sociologists read, but not willing to wade into the waters of reality to test any hypotheses about how to reverse a situation. As opposed to psychologists and psychiatrists and economists who must test their ideas in the real world, and face the scorn and contempt of

society and try to solve the problems of their field, sociologists don't seem to propose any solutions! At least, not any addressed in this book... They are just commenters on what's happening in the world. like playing Monday night quarterback - nice work if you can get it. Because of that, I feel like you end up with a nice overview of the world - but don't get a sense of where sociologists fit into it, except in their ivory towers, reporting data, performing case studies and interviews, but never venturing out into where sociologists' ideas experience real criticism for the ideas' failures to do anything about the biases, injustices, and other ideas that sociologists so love to report on. I think this book (which is already updated) could use a section about what sociologists actually do in the real world (and I don't mean people with a BS who get a law degree or go to Teach For America or I-Banking)

This is a terrible book written by an extremely biased person who includes blatant lies as fact and ignores facts entirely in arguments. The author makes huge logical fallacies, and even switches what he considers to be truth from chapter to chapter in order to justify his random opinions. Obviously most people who get this will do so because it is a requirement for a class...if the class is not mandatory, pick another class because any teacher that would require this book should not be teaching.

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