

**Crawford, Lizabeth and Katherine Novak. 2014. *Individual and Society. Sociological Social Psychology*. London, New York: Routledge. 547 pp. Pb.: \$89.95. ISBN: 9780415889872.**

The textbook deals with the “sociological kind” of social psychology. ‘What makes this book unique’ is explicitly defined in the introductory chapter: ‘Most social psychology textbooks are psychological in orientation ... Of those social psychology textbooks that are sociological in orientation, most focus solely on symbolic interactionism ... and the qualitative research’ (p. xxiii). According to the authors, the key innovation of the textbook is the equal treatment of all three traditions in sociological social psychology: symbolic interactionism, social structure and personality, and group processes and structures (p. xxiv). The organisation of the textbook follows the authors’ primary strategy, so the differences among three traditions are discussed throughout the book.

Both the form and the content of the textbook contribute to the primary goal of educating undergraduate students about sociological social psychology. The book is well-written and excellently designed. It consists of 13 chapters divided into two parts. Part I presents theoretical perspectives and research methods in sociological social psychology, including all three major positions: symbolic interactionism, social structure and personality, and group processes and structures. Part II deals with the specific topics in sociological/psychological social psychology: socialisation throughout the life course, self and identity, emotions and social life, deviance and social control, mental health and illness, personal relationships, prejudice and discrimination, social influence, social constraint, and collective behavior. Methodology is discussed thoroughly in comparative perspective, and the advantages and criticism of each methodological solution are presented in each chapter of the textbook.

Many appropriate educational tools are used to enhance student’s better understanding of the presented content. Diagrams, tables and glossary at the end of the book are used for that purpose. Furthermore, every chapter contains the *Chapter Summary*, with key facts presented in a table, narrative summary (*Key points to know*), *Terms and Concepts for Review*, and finally, *Questions for Review and Reflection*. In order to help students become familiarised with a specific theoretical approach, each chapter contains boxes with well-chosen examples of relevant research studies and original questionnaires so that students can understand the methodological dimension of the presented approach. For example, the *Twenty Statements Test* introduced by Kuhn and McPartland can be found on p. 82. *What do you think?* boxes conveniently provide insight into multiple layers of the acquired knowledge by referring to everyday life and personal experience.

The authors had another important educational goal: to emphasise and clarify differences between psychological and sociological social psychologies. Their intention is in line with a long tradition of the divided science of social psychology. However, the question is whether the differences between sociological and psychological approaches to the studied subject matter are adequately addressed. The intention to keep psychological and sociological domains separate has proved to be somewhat artificial: psychologi-

cal side of the concept of self-esteem is not discussed, only the *Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale* is presented, and another accepted scale created by a psychologist (the Coopersmith Scale) is not mentioned (p. 214). Sometimes, drawing the lines of separation just contribute to students' confusion. For example, disciplinary differences in the study of stress are explained as micro(psychology) vs. macro(sociology) perspective (p. 312). The micro-macro dualism is used as the key marker of psychology-sociology difference, which is often misleading, especially within the presented sociological framework of micro orientations in sociology (symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology). In contrast, the contributions of each of the three schools are emphasised in every domain, even though some adjustment could be done based on the actual contribution of each approach.

Finally, it seems that sociological social psychology is not a consistent discipline, but more a combination of separate paradigms, which are very different and do not even share the same research interest (e.g. qualitative orientation of Symbolic Interactionism vs. quantitative orientation of Social Structure and Personality paradigm). The authors are attempting to set a common umbrella for three approaches within sociological social psychology, instead of acknowledging and clarifying some more natural relations with psychology (in the case of socialisation) and identifying the subtle differences between almost indistinguishable sociological orientation of Group Process and Structures and studies in psychological social psychology (experiments, group tasks). In addition to that, the psychological concepts used are not always properly explained, even though an average student of sociology is not very likely to be familiar with them (*cognitive schema* is defined only in the Glossary, and there is no definition of *cognitive bias*, (p. 216, 219, G-520)). Another question can be raised regarding the presented topics of emotions, mental illness, and social deviation. These topics rather belong to the specific subdisciplines of the sociology of emotions, or the sociology of (mental) health. It is not clear why should these fields be incorporated in social psychology.

The textbook provides solid basics of social psychology for undergraduates in sociology, but it can also be recommended to the students in other fields: psychology and anthropology. In general, the textbook follows the historical parallelism of sociological and psychological social psychology at the expense of better identification of the cross-sectional dimension. The authors should have paid more attention to the implied interdisciplinary perspective of social psychology. It seems that the old tensions between sociology and psychology persist (e.g. the Durkheim-Tarde debate in 19<sup>th</sup> century). Perhaps the complementary nature of sociology-psychology relation should be better addressed in a curriculum for the future sociologists.

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