

An Anthology of Social Themes

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Table of Contents

An Anthology of Social Themes: An Introduction	i
<i>Gregory T. Papanikos</i>	
Section A. Society and Education	
1. Criminology and the Collective Consciousness of Society	3
<i>Kenneth Smith</i>	
2. Key Issues of Vocational Education for Disabled People in Russia	19
<i>Olga Borodkina</i>	
3. The Formation of Hybrid Identities in an Ethnically and Religiously Diverse Society	29
<i>Julija Stare</i>	
4. Articulation of Resistance Strategies and Processes of Consent among Private Sector Employees in Turkey	41
<i>Ayça Yılmaz Deniz</i>	
5. Science and Society in Biotech Enterprises: New Organisational Frameworks in an Academic Spin-off	55
<i>Sabrina Moretti & Francesco Sacchetti</i>	
6. A Moving Target: The Problem of Defining Teacher Quality	71
<i>Deborah Zuercher, Jon Yoshioka & Teresa Rishel</i>	
Section B. Behaviour and Attitude	
<i>Psychology of Emotions and Behaviour</i>	
7. Marginal and Unauthorized Grief, Denied and Omitted Rites	87
<i>Sonia Sirtoli Färber</i>	
8. Use of Inter-Observer Reliability Measures for Applied Behavior Analysis: Two Case Studies	99
<i>Ishhita Gupta, Shefali Thaman & S. P. K. Jena</i>	
9. The Role of Dispositional Aggressiveness and Organizational Injustice on Deviant Workplace Behavior	111
<i>Susan M. Stewart</i>	
10. A Re-reading of the Oedipus Complex in the Light of Ogden's Re-reading of Loewald's Reading: Oedipus Revisited	149
<i>Zelda G. Knight</i>	
11. Structure of the Death Obsession Scale among South African University Students	159
<i>Solomon Mashegoane & Simon Moripe</i>	
12. Development of Emotion Recognition Ability by Focused Observation	171
<i>Tomáš Sollár, Jana Turzáková, Martina Romanová & Andrea Solgajová</i>	

13. An International Lost Letter Study: Measuring Attitudes Toward Middle-Easterners	183
<i>William Phillips, Afshin Gharib and Matt Davis</i>	
<i>Personality, Identity & Social Norms</i>	
14. Measuring Ethnic Attitudes: Tolerance and Social Distance from Cross-cultural Perspective	193
<i>Nino Javakhishvili, Johann F. Schneider, Ana Makashvili and Natia Kochlashvili</i>	
15. Coping Strategies as a Measure of Personal Integration	205
<i>Eva Sollárová and Tomáš Sollár</i>	
16. Empathy's Importance in Social Work Practices	213
<i>Ergun Hasgul & Ayse Sezen Serpen</i>	
17. Self-Representation of Students with Intellectual Disabilities in Regular Schools	225
<i>Raclene Ataide de Faria</i>	

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An Anthology of Social Themes: An Introduction

Gregory T. Papanikos

This book contains peer reviewed papers presented at the various conferences organized by the Athens Institute for Education and Research (ATINER) and especially the Social Sciences Research Division. Social sciences is currently at a cross roads. The subjects covered are so diverse and the methodologies so different that it is very difficult to compare results in order to advance the knowledge about the society. If we add the diversion of societies then it makes the communication between social scientists a thorny issue. The same social issue or problem is viewed differently depending on the country of origin of the principal investigator. However, bringing these social scientists together makes the communication easier and one can only hope that this can be for the best of social science research, useful to all societies of the modern turbulent world that we live in.

This is exactly the mission of ATINER, i.e. to bring social scientists together in the historic city of Athens in order to discuss the current developments and the future prospects of social science research. This book includes 17 essays written by social scientists coming from 12 different countries and five continents (Russia, USA, Brazil, Turkey, India, Georgia, South Africa, Slovakia, Italy, Latvia, UK, and Germany). The same dispersion is noted in the topics covered. It is an anthology of essays determined only by the specific interests of the authors. The 16 papers are organized into two sections: the first on society which includes five papers and the second on behavior and attitude with eleven papers.

Chapter one can be considered an introductory chapter to issues concerning the society. **Kenneth Smith** examines the concept of collective consciousness of society based on Durkheimian sociology one of the three modern founders of the discipline of social sciences. The other two are Marx and Weber. The term “modern” is used to highlight that social sciences was a favoured subject of ancient Greek Philosophers especially Plato and Aristotle. The former can be considered as the father of social sciences. Many ideas developed in the following chapters of this book depend on the foundations of social analyses such as the one described in this chapter.

Chapter two deals with Russia’s disabled people. The emphasis is on vocational training. **Olga Borodkina**, based on empirical research, argues that inclusive education is lacking behind in Russia. Most Russian Universities cannot facilitate disabled people. The author concludes that there are improvements but further changes are needed which require the collaboration of the state, educational institutions, society and people with special needs.

Chapter three examines the Latvian society from the prism of its ethnic and religious diversity. **Julija Stare** states that Latvia is one of the most diverse countries in the Baltics and Europe. The concepts of ethnicity and religion are examined by the author in terms of their interaction to produce a hybrid identity. The conclusion is that cultural diversity contributes to the creations of new, hybrid and different forms of identities.

Chapter four investigates the Turkish society. **Ayça Yılmaz Deniz** looks at Turkey's working conditions. The author uses qualitative research based on interviews of 44 workers. The conclusions show that although employees do not take part collective resistance, they develop individual resistance strategies which she analyse by referring Bhabha's conception of mimicry.

Chapter five looks at an important issue which relates to the spin off between research at a university level and the business sector. **Sabrina Moretti & Francesco Sacchetti** investigate the Italian case using the method of interviews of academics and examining how these researchers have reconciled the market demand for research and the academic objective of producing new knowledge.

Chapter six **Deborah Zuercher, Jon Yoshioka & Teresa Rishel** deals with teacher quality using an experiment from two islands: Guam and American Samoa. Content Area Specialized Teacher (CAST) facilitators are used to promote professional development. They authors discuss the results fo their study and provide recommendations.

Chapter seven is the first of the second part of the book which deals with behavior and attitudes. **Sonia Sirtoli Färber** looks at thanatology and mourning which includes different types of losses.

Chapter eight is an application of applied behavior analysis. **Ishhita Gupta, Shefali Thaman & S. P. K. Jena** used two case studies to evaluate the intervention of differential reinforcement of other behavior. A number of important conclusions are drawn and suggestions are made for future research

Chapter nine examines the aggressiveness behavior of 262 hopsital employees. **Susan M. Stewart** finds that dispositional aggressiveness was related to all forms of organizational injustice and workplace deviance.

Chapter ten looks at the behaviour of Oidipus the lenses of Loewald's 'Waning of the Oedipus complex'. The author, **Zelda G. Knight**, claims that going back to the original interpretation different psychoanalytic perspectives regarding the process of 'growing up, growing old, and in between the two'.

Chapter eleven investigates the psychometric properties of the Death Obsession Scale (DOS) using a sample of South African university students. **Solomon Mashegoane & Simon Moripe** concludes that further studies are needed to test the basic hypotheses and the scale of measurement.

Chapter twelve examines emotions in human relations **Tomáš Sollár, Jana Turzáková, Martina Romanová & Andrea Solgajová** look at the relevant literature of reading emotions through facial expressions. A sample of psychology student and nursing students in Slovakia and the results were analyzed according to standardized manifestations of basic emotions and

neutral expressions. Various implications for education and training are discussed.

Chapter thirteen measures passive discrimination using a lost-letter technique. This technique assesses community's attitudes towards groups and institutions. **William Phillips, Afshin Gharib and Matt Davis** sampled people from the USA, Poland, Italy and Germany. The basic hypothesis is that people are more likely to mail a letter addressed to an individual or organization that they feel neutral or positive about, than to mail a letter addressed to an organization or person they feel negatively about. They showed that there was no difference between the two names.

Chapter fourteen uses a scale to incorporate three components of an attitude: cognitive, affective and behavioral. **Nino Javakhishvili, Johann F. Schneider, Ana Makashvili and Natia Kochlashvili** discuss this scale in terms of empirical evidence and conclude that "social distance and tolerance scales are good measures of ethnic attitudes and values".

Chapter fifteen studies integrated personality in a nontherapeutic background. Using a sample of public employees, **Eva Sollárová and Tomáš Sollár** show that more integrated persons choose proactively oriented strategies and high-integrated individuals are more likely to act proactively and make life opportunities.

Chapter sixteen examines social workers. **Ergun Hasgul and Ayse Sezen Serpen** examines empathy among social workers using a sample of Turkish social workers. They found that female social workers possess more emphatic skills than their male counterparts.

Chapter seventeen uses evidence from Brazil to examine the rights of persons with disabilities. **Raclene Ataide de Faria** found that the group of people with intellectual disabilities is heterogeneous and their self-representation makes a positive self-image of themselves as students in regular schools.