ASA TRAILS Resources

*Our Social World 6e*

# Chapter 1: Sociology: A Unique Way to View the World

1. [Objects From Everyday Life: A Can of Coca-Cola](http://trails.asanet.org/Pages/Resource.aspx?ResourceID=12936)

“Objects From Everyday Life: A Can of Coca-Cola” is a detailed adaptation of an activity adapted by Peter Kaufman (1997) and published in Teaching Sociology. This exercise is designed to help students develop their sociological imagination.

**Resource Type(s):** Class Activity

**Authors(s):** Peter Kaufman (1997) updated by Stephanie Medley-Rath

**Date Published:** 9/2/2015

**Subject Area:** Introduction to Sociology/Social Problems

**Class Level:** Any

**Class Size:** Any

**Language:** English

2. [What is the difference between a Private Trouble and a Public Issue? Exploring the Sociological Imagination](http://trails.asanet.org/Pages/Resource.aspx?ResourceID=12870)

By adapting the in-class exercise described by Adams (2010), the following activity helps students explore C. Wright Mills’ sociological imagination by generating examples of private troubles and public issues. By the conclusion of the activity, students should be able to explain the difference between troubles and issues, provide their own examples of each, and brainstorm their own public solutions to contemporary social problems.

**Resource Type(s):** Class Activity

**Authors(s):** David S. Adams (2010) updated by Jessica A. Cohen

**Date Published:** 1/12/2015

**Subject Area:** Introduction to Sociology/Social Problems

**Class Level:** College 100

**Class Size:** Small

**Language:** English

3. [Learning to Interpret Cultural Meaning through an Etic Description of Familiar Culture](http://trails.asanet.org/Pages/Resource.aspx?ResourceID=13218)

Undergraduate students often have trouble interpreting cultures other than that with which they are familiar in a way that takes into account the symbols and meanings that explain behaviors, objects, and ideologies. Instead, many fall into the trap of making ethnocentric assumptions and coming to conclusions that are informed by their own cultural perspectives. This in-class active learning exercise makes the familiar strange, using Horace Miner’s well-known 1956 essay “Body Ritual Among the Nacirema” to introduce students to an etic, cultural outsider-like description of American culture. This activity demonstrates that when students overlook or misunderstand cultural meaning, they can come to myriad inaccurate depictions and conclusions about social life and behavior. It therefore reinforces the importance of developing an emic understanding of cultures rather than accepting social phenomena at face value.

**Resource Type(s):** Class Activity

**Authors(s):** Elizabeth Miller

**Date Published:** 6/24/2016

**Subject Area:** Introduction to Sociology/Social Problems

**Class Level:** Any

**Class Size:** Any

**Language:** English