

**Zeitschrift:** Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Soziologie = Revue suisse de sociologie  
= Swiss journal of sociology

**Herausgeber:** Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Soziologie

**Band:** 8 (1982)

**Heft:** 3

  

**Rubrik:** Summaries in English

### **Nutzungsbedingungen**

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

### **Conditions d'utilisation**

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

### **Terms of use**

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

**Download PDF:** 17.03.2026

**ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>**

## SUMMARIES IN ENGLISH

---

### **The Pre-Industrial Large Family — an Ahistorical Concept**

*K. Lenz*

The thesis that the large family was the dominant type of family in the pre-industrial society goes back to the initial stages of the sociology of the family and has been maintained up to present times — though no longer undisputed — as a major theoretical element. This thesis only survived for so long because the sociology of the family has been lacking a historical-empirical basis. Historical family research — a new field of history — has permitted to create these bases. Recent historical family studies dealing with family forms of the 17th and 18th Centuries in a local or regional setting allow for checking the pre-industrial large family thesis. The inventory resulting therefrom will show that, in the cities as well as in the country, two-generation or three-generation parent-children groups very rarely cohabitated. If such constellations existed, then only for a very short phase of the family cycle. (*page 423*)

### **New Developments in the Relationship between Family and Politics**

*R. Geissler*

Empirical data and some theoretical considerations are used to "relativise" the image according to which the sociology of the family generally represents the privacy of the family. It is shown that, during the last twenty years, a development has taken place which might be called "the political opening-up of the family". Four symptoms confirm this trend: the penetration of political mass media into the privacy sphere of the family, the political colouring of family discussions, the parents remembering that they have a duty of political education, and an enrichment of family activities in general with rational elements. Differences specific to levels are not eliminated. Higher-level families are continuously more politicised than lower level families. The reasons of this development are the general politisation of political culture, and an increasing independence of the family from requirements of economy, time, and standardisation. (*page 451*)

## **Indicators, an Instrument for Assessing Social Reality**

*P.-U. Merz*

This paper deals with the assessment of social reality by means of indicators. On the basis of three typical possibilities of differentiating between objective and subjective indicators, their performance with respect to a pre-defined task are discussed. Reference is made to the opposed views of A. Schütz and T. Parsons on subjective and objective perspective in social science – said views being of great importance for the founding of social science. The last part of the paper contains the discussion of the question of social science research possibilities integrating both perspectives: an in-depth discussion of the possibilities of differentiation, and of a first approach towards a fresh assessment of the relationship between objective and subjective indicators. *(page 469)*

## **Proposals for a Cognition Theory in Urban Research**

*D. Urban*

In social science, any type of urban research is concerned with the space aspect of social action. However, some helplessness is observed when space-action systems have to be determined. Traditional sociological urban research considers this as a question of principle of the theory of cognition. To reply to this question, the most important draft theories are analysed here. For this, a scale ranging from environmental determinism to environmental conventionalism is used. The most progressive and most promising direction of research is the attempt to combine results in perception psychology and in development psychology into an interactive comprehension of space and action. Taking into account this direction of research and the theoretical discussion held here, five basic conditions for an action environment model are formulated. These define a level below which social-science urban research should not drop. *(page 495)*

## **Segmentation of Companies and Personal Income Distribution**

*V. Bornschieer*

This paper analyses how the segmentation of companies – i. e. their dual structure – influences personal income distribution in advanced industrial societies. After a short description of the main characteristics of the dual structure of the economy the problem is analysed from two levels: that of individual status attribution (also explaining the differences in individual incomes), and that of the

overall income distribution of society as a whole. In the first case, it is shown that the consideration of a dual economic structure can explain income differences in addition to individual characteristics, and probably allows for an empirical assessment of differentiated status attribution processes in the central and peripheral segments of the economy. In the second case, the representation of economic segmentation leads to new hypotheses as regards the development of overall inequality in function of dual structure characteristics and of employees' distribution over the segments. Such hypotheses lay down that overall inequality seems to have increased at an earlier stage, but diminished in a recent past. Some consideration is given to the part played by the favourable location of the rich countries in the worldwide division of labour. (*page 519*)

### **Income Distribution and Criminality in the Swiss Cantons in 1960 and 1970**

*H. Zwicky*

The relationship between various indicators of income distribution on the one hand, of the volume of criminality on the other hand is examined by an inter-cantonal comparison (1960 and 1970). The results confirm earlier research made in the United States, i. e. violent criminality is more frequent in an unequal income distribution context. Contrarily, offences against property in these inequality areas are below average. The higher violent criminality level in above-average inequality areas is attributed to the fact that the less-privileged react in an irrational manner against structural tensions. This type of reaction is to the advantage of the interests of the privileged in maintaining the existing distribution structure, since it is a lesser threat to societal stability than e. g. offences against property or political disputes about unequal distribution. (*page 541*)

### **Group Interviews**

*F. Streiffeler*

During individual interviews in African villages, the experience has been made that other people join the interviewee without being asked for, and participate in the interview by discussing the replies among themselves. By means of a critical analysis of the individual interview and of the existing literature on group interviews, an attempt is made to develop a methodology of group interviews in order to provide them with a scientific basis. The paper deals with the presentation, the planning and the execution of the group interview and contains some recommen-

dations as to how to exploit the results. Consideration is also given to the application of this technique to Western societies, and to the relationship between group interview and active research. (*page 567*)

**New Techniques in Psychology and Division of Labour  
in Psychiatry**  
*L. Verhaegen*

A study in the day-to-day practice in various units of one psychiatry department shows that the new psychological techniques partially transform inter-professional relationship under certain conditions, but do not constitute a determining variable *per se*. More likely, it is the ideological cohesion probably to be found within a same unit which is the carrier of structural changes affecting the division of labour in psychiatry. If consensus is high, new technologies may implement values common to the nursing staff, thus creating sufficient strength of daily arguments in favour of a greater autonomy with respect to the medical staff. If consensus is low, these technologies will split the nursing staff who tend towards individualistic promotion strategies, but will also favour claims for better status. (*page 591*)