

Overheads

ASS Sociology – Lecture 5

Michaelmas 2001

Note that most of the figures are in a separate file - see the web-page.

Note that the ONS Social Trends document (also available on my web-page) has further useful tables.

When all allowance has been made for the very different assumptions about the household which then obtained . . . it remains the case that there slept together under each roof in 1600 only the nuclear family, with the addition of servants when necessary. Therefore in that vital respect our ancestors were not different from ourselves. They were the same.

Much so-called sociological history has been written, as if the contrary were true . . .

Our whole view of ourselves is altered if we cease to believe that we have lost some more humane, much more natural pattern of relationships than industrial society can offer. When we inquire, for example, what we are trying to do for the lonely old people who are becoming so lamentably common as the twentieth-century decades go by, we find ourselves assuming that they must be restored to the family, where they belong. Perhaps none of those who write so urgently about these problems have a very clear notion of the situation which they are trying to restore ... few of them can have realized how inappropriate it is to think of restoration at all, in the sense of returning to the historical past.

Suppose:

It takes me 1/2hr to mow my lawn.

*I am willing to pay my
neighbour's son £10 (but no
more) to mow my lawn.*

Suppose also:

*My neighbour offers me £20 to
mow his lawn (he's younger
and fitter - and richer - than
me)*

I refuse.

Suppose:

It takes me $\frac{1}{2}$ hr to mow my lawn.

*I am willing to pay my
neighbour's son £10 (but no
more) to mow my lawn.*

*I would rather spend $\frac{1}{2}$ hr of my
time than spend £11*

É

*I regard $\frac{1}{2}$ hr of my time as
worth less than £11*

Suppose also:

My neighbour offers ME £20 to mow his lawn (he's younger and fitter - and richer - than me)

I refuse.

I would rather keep ½hr of my time than receive £20

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I regard ½hr of my time as worth more than £20

“The chief thing which the common sense individual actually wants is not satisfaction for the wants he has, but more, and better wants ... Life is not fundamentally a striving for ends, for satisfaction, but rather for bases of further striving”

F H Knight The Ethics of Competition 1933

*An 'allocator' and a
'receiver'*

*The allocator is given £5
and asked to divide the
cash between herself and
the receiver.*

*The receiver can accept the
division*

*Or the receiver can refuse
(but then the deal is off, and
neither party gets anything)*

Until
very recently in
human history, most
children died.

Today
most children
live to grow up.

Assume

Instrumental

- *exogenous?*

- *endogenous?*

Puzzle for the instrumental model:

Why do people have children?

“The obvious answer is that they have children because the value to them of having children outweighs the value of the instrumental (time and money) resources that they give up in doing so.”

Assume

Immanent values

Problem of value specification

Impute

- *ask?*

- *use revealed preferences?*

Psychological Immanent values?

- *expansion of the self*
- *primary group ties and affiliation*
- *stimulation, novelty, fun*
- *creativity, accomplishment, competence*
- *power over others*
- *vicarious achievement possibilities*

Decision making under uncertainty is decision making without knowing the odds of the various alternatives in the set of choices

[Distinguish: decision making under risk, in which a decision maker can attach probabilities to alternative consequences.]

Uncertainty reduction
as a
universal immanent value
?

Consequent hypotheses?

The objective risk of divorce has a positive effect on the propensity to parenthood?

Duration of marriage has a negative effect on the propensity to parenthood?

The extent of marital support has a negative effect on the propensity to parenthood?

Social and geographic mobility has a negative effect on the propensity to parenthood?

(see other file on website for main figures)

Fertility rate (live births per 1,000 women in age group

	actual 1998	expected 1998 on uniform drop from 1961
Under 20	31	24
20-24	74	112
25-29	102	115
30-34	90	69
35-39	40	33
40+	8	10

Total rate in 1998

= 65% of 1961 rate