



## Seinology: The Sociology of Seinfeld

By Tim Delaney

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### Seinology: The Sociology of Seinfeld By Tim Delaney

Sociologist and avid *Seinfeld* fan, Tim Delaney explores what sociologists and all interested readers can learn about themselves and their society from this tremendously popular sitcom. His work represents a fascinating blend of popular and contemporary culture with the keen observations of a scholar trained to assess social behavior. Delaney uses excerpts from many of the now-classic episodes to illustrate key facets of social interaction. In fifteen chapters, amusingly titled after some of the show's famous incidents, he reviews what its characters teach us about ourselves and the complex society in which we live.

Fans of *Seinfeld* will enjoy reliving their fondest memories associated with each episode. Students and laypersons alike will learn basic sociological concepts and theories in this jargonfree work. *Seinology* provides *Seinfeld* fans an opportunity to view this brilliant television show through the sociologist's well-trained eye.

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

In the 1990s, the immensely successful sitcom *Seinfeld* brilliantly used humor to reveal America's obsession with moral behavior. Delaney, who teaches sociology at the State University of New York, Oswego, claims the show examines the same issues as sociology: race, ethnicity, deviance, crime, and personal relationships. True, *Seinfeld* offered layered and sophisticated observations about social interactions. But Delaney's analysis is superficial. Obvious statements like "The police have a tough job" and "Social interaction plays an important role in an individual's life" are followed by plot summaries from various episodes. While Delaney aims for a chatty style, his personal comments are sophomoric: "There are a number of behaviors that are not criminal but perhaps should be. For example, 'picking your nose' in public, I believe, should be illegal." His tedious writing is rife with repetition. *Seinfeld* is an ideal forum to illuminate social norms and anxieties, and worthy of serious academic critique; alas, this shallow offering isn't it. (Mar.)

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### Review

"Delaney offers a unique and entertaining look at many sociologically relevant social topics covered in the popular *Seinfeld* television sitcom....the book has a number of strengths....[he] does such an excellent job describing each segment, including giving the necessary background information, that even students who are unfamiliar with the show could easily follow along....the book is written in a very clear, understandable, and down-to-earth style that would most likely be a welcome relief for most students from the standard textbook format....finally, the book and its many *Seinfeld* examples are entertaining. At various points while reading I found myself laughing out loud....it would probably be extremely useful for popular culture, media and society, and similar courses."

Teaching Sociology

Journal of the American Sociological Association

"This book is an engaging and entertaining way to learn basic sociological concepts and perspectives. Tim knows his sociology and knows his *Seinfeld*. He writes in a jargon-free, reader-friendly style, whether the reader is a student in an introductory sociology course, an advanced sociology student, or just a fan of *Seinfeld*. Tim is truly master of his domain. No yadda-yadda here. You'll be amazed at what *Seinfeld* and Delaney can teach you about work, gender, sex, crime, family, religion, sports, aging, and death. I recommend this book to everyone interested in painlessly learning more about the sociologist's take on life."

Norm Weiner

Distinguished Service Professor of Sociology

State University of New York at Oswego

"Delaney takes a brilliant approach to understanding sociology, one that students will both enjoy and understand. Through episodes of *Seinfeld*, Delaney illustrates sociology to the reader that any audience can identify with. Pairing sociological concepts with *Seinfeld*'s humor he creates Seinology. In doing this Tim Delaney takes us through the major fields in the discipline providing real examples of how sociology can be seen in daily activities. This book would make an excellent reader for any introduction to sociology or media class."

Cherylynn Bassani, Ph.D.

Researcher and Instructor

University of British Columbia

## About the Author

Tim Delaney is assistant professor of sociology at the State University of New York at Oswego.

## Users Review

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#### **Joshua Arwood:**

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