

SIXTH EDITION

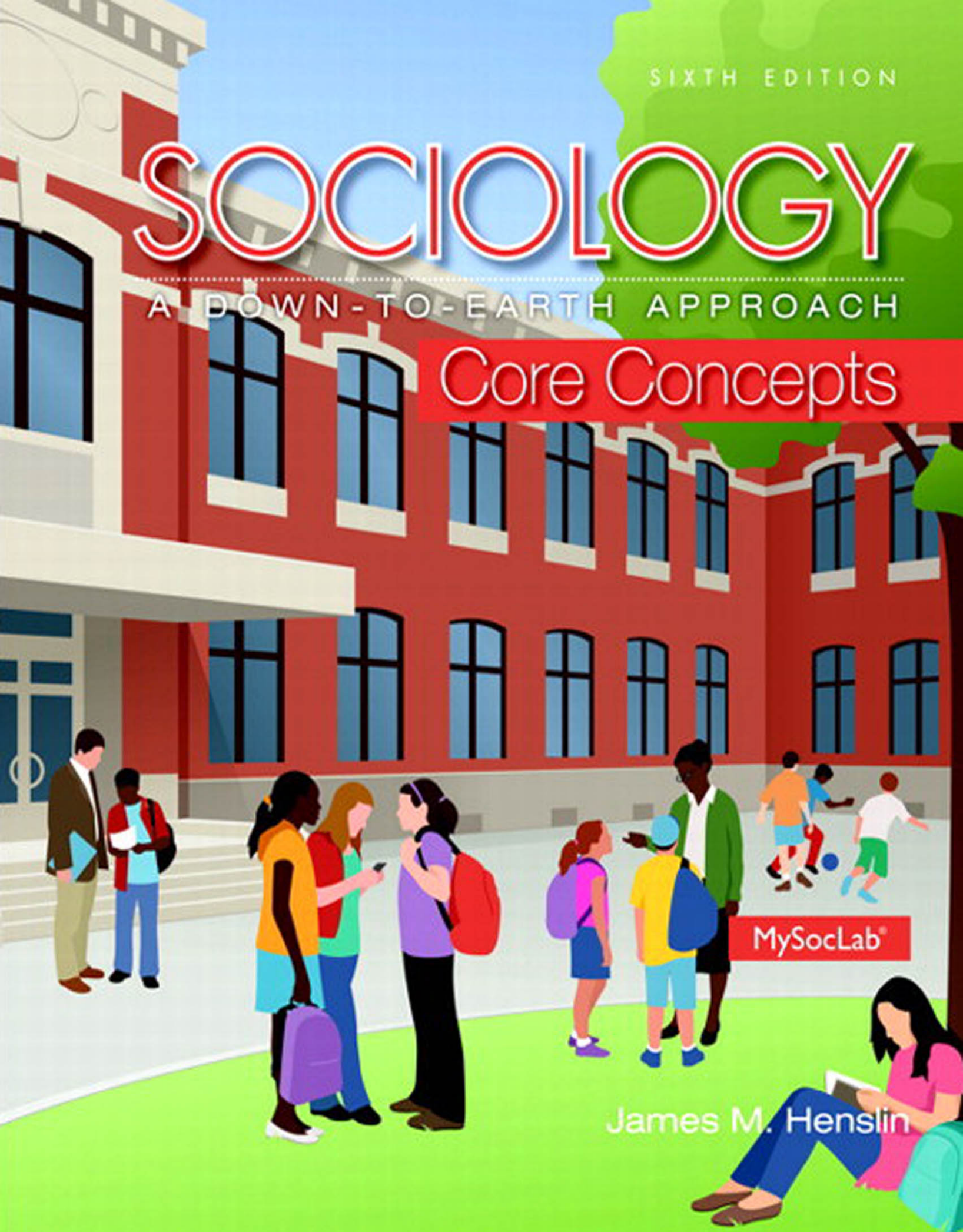
SOCIOLOGY

A DOWN-TO-EARTH APPROACH

Core Concepts

MySocLab®

James M. Henslin



Sociology

A Down-to-Earth Approach

Core Concepts

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Sociology

**A Down-to-Earth Approach
Core Concepts**

James M. Henslin

Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville

PEARSON

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To my fellow sociologists,
who do such creative research on social life and who
communicate the sociological imagination to generations
of students. With my sincere admiration and appreciation,

Jim Henslin

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THROUGH THE AUTHOR'S LENS

Vienna: Social Structure and Social Interaction

We live our lives within social structure. Just as a road is to a car, providing limits to where it can go, so social structure limits our behavior. Social structure—our culture, social class, statuses, roles, group memberships, and social institutions—points us in particular directions in life. Most of this direction-giving is beyond our awareness. But it is highly effective, giving shape to our social interactions, as well as to what we expect from life.

These photos that I took in Vienna, Austria, make visible some of social structure's limiting, shaping, and direction-giving. Most of the social structure that affects our lives is not physical, as with streets and buildings, but social, as with norms, belief systems, obligations, and the goals held out for us because of our ascribed statuses. In these photos, you should be able to see how social interaction takes form within social structure. (pages 110–111)



THROUGH THE AUTHOR'S LENS

When a Tornado Strikes: Social Organization Following a Natural Disaster

As I was watching television, I heard a report that a tornado had hit Camilla, Georgia. "Like a big lawn mower," the report said, it had cut a path of destruction through this little town. In its fury, the tornado had left behind six dead and about 200 injured. (pages 123–124)



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THROUGH THE AUTHOR'S LENS

Helping a Stranger

Serendipity sometimes accompanies sociologists as they do their work, which was certainly the case here. The entire episode took no more than three minutes, and I was fortunate to

capture it with my camera. Real life sometimes differs sharply from that portrayed in research laboratories. (page 146)



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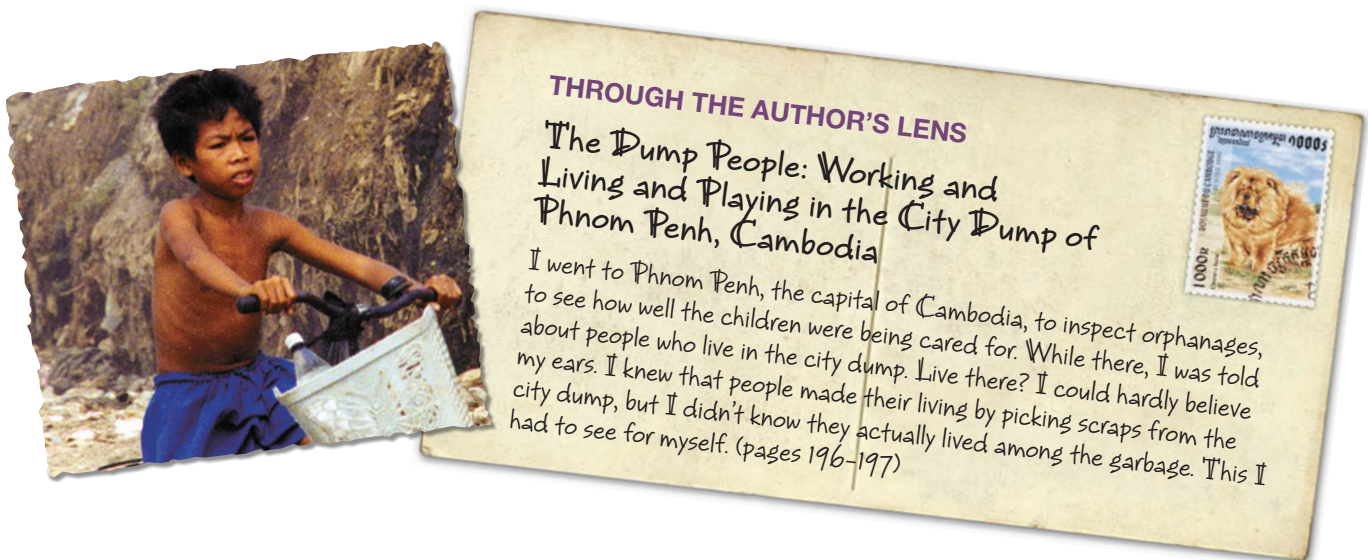
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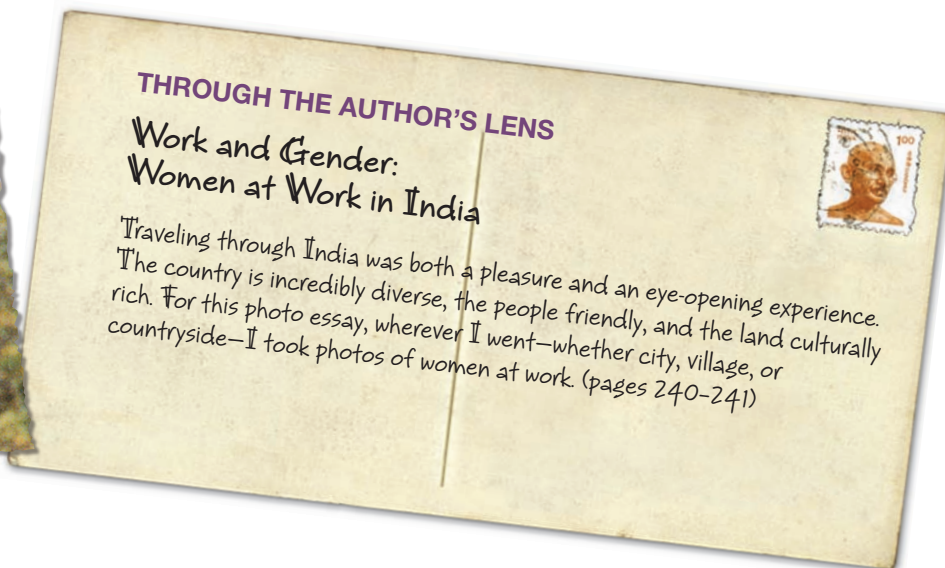


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To the Student ... from the Author

WELCOME TO SOCIOLOGY! I've loved sociology since I was in my teens, and I hope you enjoy it, too. Sociology is fascinating because it is about human behavior, and many of us find that it holds the key to understanding social life.

If you like to watch people and try to figure out why they do what they do, you will like sociology. Sociology pries open the doors of society so you can see what goes on behind them. *Sociology: A Down-to-Earth Approach, Core Concepts*, stresses how profoundly our society and the groups to which we belong influence us. Social class, for example, sets us on a particular path in life. For some, the path leads to more education, more interesting jobs, higher income, and better health, but for others it leads to dropping out of school, dead-end jobs, poverty, and even a higher risk of illness and disease. These paths are so significant that they affect our chances of making it to our first birthday, as well as of getting in trouble with the police. They even influence our satisfaction in marriage, the number of children we will have—and whether or not we will read this book in the first place.

When I took my first course in sociology, I was “hooked.” Seeing how marvelously my life had been affected by these larger social influences opened my eyes to a new world, one that has been fascinating to explore. I hope that you will have this experience, too.

From how people become homeless to how they become presidents, from why people commit suicide to why women are discriminated against in every society around the world—all are part of sociology. This breadth, in fact, is what makes sociology so intriguing. We can place the sociological lens on broad features of society, such as social class, gender, and race–ethnicity, and then immediately turn our focus on the smaller, more intimate level. If we look at two people interacting—whether quarreling or

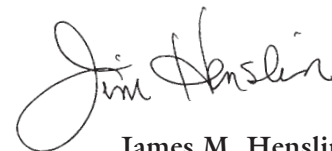
kissing—we see how these broad features of society are being played out in their lives.

We aren't born with instincts. Nor do we come into this world with preconceived notions of what life should be like. At birth, we have no concepts of race–ethnicity, gender, age, or social class. We have no idea, for example, that people “ought” to act in certain ways because they are male or female. Yet we all learn such things as we grow up in our society. Uncovering the “hows” and the “whys” of this process is also part of what makes sociology so fascinating.

One of sociology's many pleasures is that as we study life in groups (which can be taken as a definition of sociology), whether those groups are in some far-off part of the world or in some nearby corner of our own society, we gain new insights into who we are and how we got that way. As we see how *their* customs affect *them*, the effects of our own society on us become more visible.

This book, then, can be part of an intellectual adventure, for it can lead you to a new way of looking at your social world—and in the process, help you to better understand both society and yourself.

I wish you the very best in college—and in your career afterward. It is my sincere desire that *Sociology: A Down-to-Earth Approach, Core Concepts*, will contribute to that success.



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P.S. I enjoy communicating with students, so feel free to comment on your experiences with this text. You can reach me at henslin@aol.com

To the Instructor ... from the Author

Remember When You First Got “HOOKED” on sociology, how the windows of perception opened as you began to see life-in-society through the sociological perspective? For most of us, this was an eye-opening experience. This text is designed to open those windows onto social life, so students can see clearly the vital effects of group membership on their lives. Although few students will get into what Peter Berger calls “the passion of sociology,” we at least can provide them the opportunity.

To study sociology is to embark on a fascinating process of discovery. We can compare sociology to a huge jigsaw puzzle. Only gradually do we see how the intricate pieces fit together. As we begin to see these interconnections, our perspective changes as we shift our eyes from the many small, disjointed pieces to the whole that is being formed. Of all the endeavors we could have entered, we chose sociology because of the ways in which it joins the “pieces” of society together and the challenges it poses to “ordinary” thinking. To share with students this process of awareness and discovery called the sociological perspective is our privilege.

As instructors of sociology, we have set ambitious goals for ourselves: to teach both social structure and social interaction and to introduce students to the sociological literature—both the classic theorists and contemporary research. As we accomplish this, we would also like to enliven the classroom, encourage critical thinking, and stimulate our students’ sociological imagination. Although formidable, these goals are

attainable, and this book is designed to help you reach them. Based on many years of frontline (classroom) experience, its subtitle, *A Down-to-Earth Approach*, was not proposed lightly. My goal is to share the fascination of sociology with students and in doing so to make your teaching more rewarding.

Over the years, I have found the introductory course especially enjoyable. It is singularly satisfying to see students’ faces light up as they begin to see how separate pieces of their world fit together. It is a pleasure to watch them gain insight into how their social experiences give shape to even their innermost desires. This is precisely what this text is designed to do—to stimulate your students’ sociological imagination so they can better perceive how the “pieces” of society fit together—and what this means for their own lives.

Filled with examples from around the world as well as from our own society, this text helps to make today’s multicultural, global society come alive for students. From learning how the international elite carve up global markets to studying the intimacy of friendship and marriage, students can see how sociology is the key to explaining contemporary life—and their own place in it.

In short, this text is designed to make your teaching easier. There simply is no justification for students to have to wade through cumbersome approaches to sociology. I am firmly convinced that the introduction to sociology should be enjoyable and that the introductory textbook can be an essential tool in sharing the discovery of sociology with students.

approaches to studying social life in Chapter 4. In Chapter 5, we first analyze how broad historical changes in the structure of society affect our orientations to life and then examine the influence of groups on how we feel, think, and act. In Chapter 6, we focus on how groups “keep us in line” and sanction those who violate their norms. In Chapter 7, we turn our focus on how social inequality



The Organization of This Text

The opening chapter introduces students to the sociological perspective and how sociologists do research. We then look at how culture influences us in Chapter 2, examine the deep impact of socialization in Chapter 3, and compare the macrosociological and microsociological

pervades society and how those inequalities have an impact on our own lives. In this chapter, we begin with a global focus on stratification and move from there to an analysis of social class in the United States. After establishing this broader context of social stratification, in Chapter 8 we examine gender, the most global of the inequalities. Then in Chapter 9, we focus on the pervasive inequalities of race-ethnicity, from theoretical views of prejudice and discrimination to the historical and current situation in the United States. In the final chapter, we examine the influences of the family on our lives, looking at how this social institution is changing and how its changes, in turn, influence our orientations and decisions.

Throughout this text runs a focus on social inequalities of social class, gender, and race-ethnicity—and their implications for our own lives. As we analyze the topics of this text, we look at the cutting edge of the vital changes that are engulfing us all. This is certainly an exciting time to be experiencing social life—and sociology is a fascinating way of perceiving our experiences.

Themes and Features

In addition to social change and the social inequalities of social class, gender, and race-ethnicity, six themes run throughout this text: down-to-earth sociology, globalization, cultural diversity, critical thinking, the new technology, and the mass media in social life. Let's look at these six themes.

Down-to-Earth Sociology

As many years of teaching have shown me, all too often textbooks are written to appeal to the adopters of texts rather than to the students who must learn from them. A central goal in writing this book has been to present sociology in ways that not only facilitate the understanding of social life but also share the excitement of sociological discovery. During the course of writing other texts, I often have been told that my explanations and writing style are “down-to-earth,” or accessible and inviting to students—so much so that I chose this phrase as the book's subtitle. The term is also featured in my introductory reader, *Down-to-Earth Sociology: Introductory Readings*, now in its 15th edition (New York: The Free Press, 2014).

This first theme is highlighted by a series of boxed features that explore sociological processes that underlie everyday life. The topics that we review in these *Down-to-Earth Sociology* boxes are highly diverse. Here are some of them.

- the experiences of W. E. B. Du Bois in studying U.S. race relations (Chapter 1)
- improper and fraudulent social research (Chapter 1)
- how a sociologist became a gang leader for a day (Chapter 1)
- the relationship between heredity and environment (Chapter 3)
- how adolescents use gossip and ridicule to enforce their norms (Chapter 3)
- how football can help us understand social structure (Chapter 4)
- beauty and success (Chapter 4)
- discrimination on the basis of looks (Chapter 5)
- how shaming is making a comeback (Chapter 6)
- serial killers in our midst (Chapter 6)
- “the naked pumpkin runners and the naked bike riders” (Chapter 6)
- how hitting it big in the lottery can ruin your life (Chapter 7)
- the lifestyles of the super-rich (Chapter 7)
- how the incomes of today's adults compared with that of their parents (Chapter 7)
- cold-hearted surgeons and their women victims (Chapter 8)
- how to apply sociology to get a higher salary (Chapter 8)
- living in the dorm: contact theory (Chapter 9)
- how a plane ride can change someone's race (Chapter 9)
- the health benefits of marriage (Chapter 10)
- single moms and married moms (Chapter 10)
- why abused women don't pack up and leave (Chapter 10)

This first theme is actually a hallmark of the text, as my goal is to make sociology “down to earth.” To help students grasp the fascination of sociology, I continuously stress sociology's relevance to their lives. To reinforce this theme, I avoid unnecessary jargon and use concise explanations and clear and simple (but not reductive) language. I also use student-relevant examples to illustrate key concepts, and I base several of the chapters' opening vignettes on my own experiences in exploring social life. That this goal of sharing sociology's fascination is being reached is evident from the many comments I receive from instructors and students alike that the text helps make sociology “come alive.”

Globalization

In the second theme, *globalization*, we explore the impact of global issues on our lives and on the lives of people around the world. All of us are feeling the effects of an increasingly powerful and encompassing global economy, one that intertwines the fates of nations. The globalization of capitalism influences the kinds of skills and knowledge we need, the costs of the goods and services we consume, the types of work available to us—and whether work is available at all—and even whether our country is at war or peace, or in some uncharted middle ground between the two. In addition to this strong emphasis on global issues that runs throughout this text, Chapter 7 features systems of global stratification. What occurs in China, India, and Russia, as well as in much smaller nations such

as Afghanistan and Iraq, has far-reaching consequences on our own lives. Consequently, in addition to the global focus that runs throughout the text, we continue this emphasis in the next theme, cultural diversity.

Cultural Diversity Around the World and in the United States

The third theme, *cultural diversity*, has two primary emphases. The first is cultural diversity around the world. Gaining an understanding of how social life is “done” in other parts of the world often challenges our taken-for-granted assumptions about social life. At times, when we learn about other cultures, we gain an appreciation for the life of other peoples; at other times, we may be shocked or even disgusted at some aspect of another group’s way of life (such as female circumcision) and come away with a renewed appreciation of our own customs.

To highlight this theme, I have written a series of boxes called **Cultural Diversity around the World**. These boxes, as well as the others scattered throughout the text are one of my favorite features of the book. They are especially valuable for introducing the provocative and controversial materials that make sociology such a fascinating activity. Among the boxed features that stress cultural diversity around the world are

- food customs that test the limits of our cultural relativity (Chapter 2)
- dancing with the dead (Chapter 2)
- where virgins become men (Chapter 3)
- human sexuality in Mexico and Kenya (Chapter 6)
- “dogging” in England (Chapter 8)
- female circumcision (Chapter 8)
- love and arranged marriage in India (Chapter 10)

In the second aspect of this theme, **Cultural Diversity in the United States**, we turn our focus on the fascinating array of people who form the U.S. population. The boxes I have written with this subtheme review such topics as

- the controversy over the use of Spanish or English (Chapter 2)
- the terms that people choose to refer to their own race-ethnicity (Chapter 2)
- how the Amish resist social change (Chapter 4)
- do your social networks produce social inequality? (Chapter 5)
- affirmative action for men (Chapter 8)
- the author’s travels with a Mexican who transports undocumented workers to the U.S. border (Chapter 9)
- our shifting racial-ethnic mix (Chapter 9)

Seeing that there are so many ways of “doing” social life can remove some of our cultural smugness, making us more aware of how arbitrary our own customs are—and how our

taken-for-granted ways of thinking are rooted in culture. The stimulating contexts of these contrasts can help students develop their sociological imagination. They encourage students to see connections among key sociological concepts such as culture, socialization, norms, race-ethnicity, gender, and social class. As your students’ sociological imagination grows, they can attain a new perspective on their experiences in their own corners of life—and a better understanding of the social structure of U.S. society.

Critical Thinking

In our fourth theme, critical thinking, we focus on controversial social issues, inviting students to examine various sides of those issues. In these sections, titled **Thinking Critically**, I present objective, fair portrayals of positions and do not take a side—although occasionally I do play the “devil’s advocate” in the questions that close each of the topics. Like the boxed features, these sections can enliven your classroom with a vibrant exchange of ideas. Among the issues addressed are

- our tendency to conform to evil authority, as uncovered by the Milgram experiments (Chapter 5)
- the three-strikes-and-you’re-out laws (Chapter 6)
- labeling in everyday life (Chapter 6)
- how vigilantes arise when the state breaks down (Chapter 6)
- bounties paid to kill homeless children in Brazil (Chapter 7)
- the welfare debate (Chapter 7)
- *maquiladoras* on the U.S.-Mexican border (Chapter 7)
- emerging masculinities and femininities (Chapter 8)

These *Thinking Critically* sections are based on controversial social issues that either affect the student’s own life or focus on topics that have intrinsic interest for students. Because of their controversial nature, these sections stimulate both critical thinking and lively class discussions. These sections also provide provocative topics for in-class debates and small discussion groups, effective ways to enliven a class and present sociological ideas. In the Instructor’s Manual, I describe the nuts and bolts of using small groups in the classroom.

Sociology and the New Technology

The fifth theme, sociology and the new technology, explores an aspect of social life that has come to be central in our lives. We welcome these new technological tools, for they help us to be more efficient at performing our daily tasks, from making a living to communicating with others—whether those people are nearby or on the other side of the globe. The significance of our new technology, however, extends far beyond the tools and the ease and efficiency they bring to our lives. The new technology is better envisioned as a social revolution that will leave few aspects of our lives untouched. Its effects are so profound that it even changes the ways we view life.

This theme is introduced in Chapter 2, where technology is defined and presented as a major aspect of culture and we discuss how technology is related to social change. To highlight this theme, I have written a series of boxes called **Sociology and the New Technology**. The focus of this boxed feature is how technology is changing society and affecting our lives. We examine how technology

- through avatars is blurring the distinction between reality and fantasy (Chapter 5)
- is changing how families handle their disagreements (Chapter 10)
- is changing the way people find mates (Chapter 10)
- is leading to designer babies (Chapter 10)

The Mass Media and Social Life

In the sixth theme, we stress how the mass media affect our behavior and permeate our thinking. We consider how the media penetrate our consciousness to such a degree that they even influence how we perceive our own bodies. As your students consider this theme, they may begin to grasp how the mass media shape their attitudes. If so, they will come to view the mass media in a different light, which should further stimulate their sociological imagination.

Although this theme is highlighted at appropriate points throughout the text, to make it more prominent for students, I have written a series of boxed features called **Mass Media in Social Life**. In these boxes, we explore

- images of gender in computer games (Chapter 3)
- the worship of thinness—and how this affects our body images (Chapter 4)
- the reemergence of slavery in today's world (Chapter 7)
- the slowly changing status of women in Iran (Chapter 8)

New Boxed Features

I prepared eight new boxes for this edition. As you can see, their coverage is broad and their interest for students high. They hold strong potential for enriching your class discussions.

Chapter 2

Cultural Diversity around the World box: Dancing with the Dead

Chapter 3

Down-to-Earth Sociology box: Gossip and Ridicule to Enforce Adolescent Norms

Chapter 7

Cultural Diversity around the World Box: Rape: Blaming the Victim and Protecting the Caste System
Down-to-Earth Sociology box: The American Dream: Research on Social Mobility

Chapter 6

Down-to-Earth Sociology box: Applying Sociology: How to Get a Higher Salary

Chapter 10

Down-to-Earth Sociology box: Health Benefits of Marriage: Living Longer

Down-to-Earth Sociology box: Family Structure: Single Moms and Married Moms

Sociology and the New Technology box: “How Should We Handle Family Disagreements?” Use Your App

New Topics

Because sociology is about social life and we live in a rapidly changing global society, the topics of an introductory text must reflect the national and global changes that engulf us, as well as new sociological research. For a quick overview of the new topics in this edition, see *What's New* on page xxi.

Visual Presentations of Sociology

Some of the most interesting—and even fascinating—topics in sociology are effectively presented in visual form. Here is a brief overview of some of the visual presentations in this text.

Showing Changes Over Time In presenting social data, many of the figures and tables show how data change over time. This feature allows students to see trends in social life and to make predictions on how these trends might continue—and even affect their own lives. Examples include Figure 1.5, *U.S. Marriage, U.S. Divorce* (page 14); Figure 3.2, *Transitional Adulthood: A New Stage in Life* (page 92); Figure 6.2, *How Much Is Enough? The Explosion in the Number of Prisoners* (page 175); Figure 7.6, *The More Things Change, the More They Stay the Same: Dividing the Nation's Income* (page 209); Figure 10.2, *In Two-Paycheck Marriages, How Do Husbands and Wives Divide Their Responsibilities* (page 307); Figure 10.5, *The Number of Children Americans Think Are Ideal* (page 312), and Figure 10.13, *Cohabitation in the United States* (page 323).

Through the Author's Lens I have prepared a series of photo essays called *Through the Author's Lens*. Using this format, students are able to look over my shoulder as I experience other cultures or explore aspects of this one. Doing the research presented in this feature expanded my own sociological imagination, and I hope that these reports do the same for your students. These five photo essays should open your students' minds to other ways of doing social life, as well as stimulate insightful class discussion.

WHAT'S NEW?

Because sociology is about social life and we live in a rapidly changing global society, an introductory sociology text must reflect the national and global changes that engulf us, as well as new sociological research. Here are some of the new topics, figures, and boxed features.

CHAPTER 1

Chapter opening vignette

Topic: Researchers used Facebook to identify the race-ethnicity of friendships of college students

Topic: Malls track patrons through their smartphones so stores can send them targeted ads

Topic: Face-recognition cameras at kiosks classify people by age and sex and post targeted ads

Topic: Bionic mannequins analyze customers' age, sex, and race-ethnicity

CHAPTER 2

Cultural Diversity around the World box: Dancing with the Dead

CHAPTER 3

Down-to-Earth Sociology box: Gossip and Ridicule to Enforce Adolescent Norms

Topic: Gender messages from homosexual parents

Topic: Babies might have an inborn sense of fairness, indicating that, like language, morality is a capacity hardwired in the brain

Topic: Sociologists are doing research on how the individual's sense of identity is related to morality, guilt, and shame

Topic: Average number of commercials Americans are exposed to has jumped to 200,000 a year

CHAPTER 4

Topic: The U.S. Army is trying to apply body language to alert soldiers to danger when interacting with civilians in a military zone

Topic: Students give higher ratings to better-looking teachers

Topic: To become slender, some women inject themselves daily with hCG, a hormone that comes from the urine of pregnant women

CHAPTER 5

Topic: Classic laboratory findings on group size and helping are compared with the real world

Topic: Research on millions confirms Milgram's 6 degrees of separation

Topic: Network analysis is being used to reduce gang violence

CHAPTER 6

Thinking Critically section: The Saints and the Roughnecks: Labeling in Everyday Life

Thinking Critically section: Vigilantes: When the State Breaks Down

Topic: The number of U.S. prisoners has begun to drop

Topic: Participant observation of youth gangs confirms research that ideas of masculinity encourage violence, including homicide

Topic: *Diversion* as a way to avoid labeling youthful offenders as delinquent

Topic: The *angry anarchist* added to Merton's typology of responses to goals and means

Topic: Citigroup fined over a *half billion dollars* for selling fraudulent subprime mortgages

Topic: California is releasing some prisoners whose third crime under the three-strikes law was not violent

Topic: The elimination of lead in gasoline could be the main cause for the drop in crime

Topic: To keep crime statistics low, the police don't record some crimes

CHAPTER 7

Down-to-Earth Sociology box: The American Dream: Research on Social Mobility

Figure 7.10 Adult Children's Income Compared with That of Their Parents

Topic: India's caste system is slowly being replaced by a social class system

Topic: Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen's 414-foot yacht has two helicopters, a swimming pool, and a submarine

Topic: The top fifth of the U.S. population receives 50.2% of the nation's income

Topic: Status inconsistent men are twice as likely to have heart attacks as status consistent men; status inconsistent women do not have more heart attacks

Topic: With poverty increasing, 21 million U.S. children are poor

CHAPTER 8

Down-to-Earth Sociology box: Applying Sociology: How to Get a Higher Salary

Topic: Women in jobs that give them authority and men in nurturing occupations reaffirm their gender at home

Topic: A "tough femininity" that incorporates masculine violence is emerging among female juvenile delinquents

Topic: Both males and females who are given a single dose of testosterone seek higher status and show less regard for the feelings of others

Topic: Dominance behavior, such as winning a game, produces higher levels of testosterone

Topic: Health workers have developed a strategy to get entire villages to renounce female circumcision

Topic: A movement to end male circumcision

Topic: With our economic crisis, children's poverty is higher now than it was in 1967—and in all the years in between

CHAPTER 9

Topic: Predatory lending increased monthly payments for home mortgages, causing many

African Americans to lose their homes when the economic crisis hit

Topic: Countrywide fined \$335 million for predatory lending

Topic: The United Auburn tribe's casino in California nets \$30,000 *a month* for each tribal member

Topic: In 2012, Mazie Hirono became the first Asian American woman to be elected to the U.S. Senate

Topic: U.S. Supreme Court upheld the states' right to check the immigration status of anyone they stop or arrest

Topic: President Obama signed an Executive Order allowing work permits to unauthorized immigrants who meet certain qualifications

CHAPTER 10

Figure 10.4 Marriage and Length of Life

Down-to-Earth Sociology box: Health Benefits of Marriage: Living Longer

Down-to-Earth Sociology box: Family Structure: Single Moms and Married Moms

Sociology and the New Technology box: "How Should We Handle Family Disagreements?" Use Your App

Topic: New Bianchi research on the gendered division of family labor

Topic: Single women who give birth are taking longer to get married

Topic: About one-fourth (23 percent) of U.S. children are born to cohabiting parents

Topic: On average, the children of cohabiting parents aren't as healthy as the children of married parents

Topic: Men who marry live longer than men who remain single or are divorced

Topic: Men who cohabit live longer than men who remain single or are divorced

Topic: Some "day care centers" are open round-the-clock

Topic: Of the recently married, the divorce rate of those who did and did not cohabit before marriage is about the same

Topic: Marriages between Asian Americans and whites and African American women and white men have lower divorce rates than the national average

Topic: Gender equality in the initiation of marital violence indicates the need to direct anti-violence socialization to both females and males

Topic: New research on 13,000 cases of sibling incest

Topic: Online dating sites are so specialized that one targets "green singles" and another targets women who like men with mustaches

Helping a Stranger is new to this edition. This sequence of four photos focuses on strangers in Vienna who are helping a man who has just fallen. This event casts doubt on the results of Darley and Latane’s laboratory experiments. One of my favorite photos is the last in the series, which portrays the cop coming toward me to question why I was taking photos of the accident. It fits the sequence perfectly (Chapter 5).

Vienna: Social Structure and Social Interaction in a Vibrant City The photos I took in this city illustrate how social structure surrounds us, setting the scene for our interactions, limiting and directing them (Chapter 4).

When a Tornado Strikes: Social Organization Following a Natural Disaster When a tornado hit a small town just hours from where I lived, I photographed the aftermath of the disaster. The police let me in to view the neighborhood where the tornado had struck, destroying homes and killing several people. I was impressed by how quickly people were putting their lives back together, the topic of this photo essay (Chapter 4).

The Dump People of Phnom Penh, Cambodia Among the culture shocks I experienced in Cambodia was not to discover that people scavenge at Phnom Penh’s huge city dump—this I knew about—but that they also live there. With the aid of an interpreter, I was able to interview these people, as well as photograph them as they went about their everyday lives. An entire community lives in the city dump, complete with restaurants amidst the smoke and piles of garbage. This photo essay reveals not just these people’s activities but also their social organization (Chapter 7).

Work and Gender: Women at Work in India As I traveled in India, I took photos of women at work in public places. The more I traveled in this country and the more photos I took, the more insight I gained into their gender relations. Despite the general dominance of men in India, women’s worlds are far from limited to family and home. Women are found at work throughout the society. What is even more remarkable is how vastly different “women’s work” is in India than it is in the United States. This, too, is an intellectually provocative photo essay (Chapter 8).

Other Photo Essays The photo essay in Chapter 2 is designed to help students better understand subcultures. The photo essay on ethnic work in Chapter 9 helps student see that ethnicity doesn’t “just happen.” Because these photo essays consist of photos taken by others, they are not a part of the series, *Through the Author’s Lens*. I think you will appreciate the understanding they can give your students.

Photo Collages Because sociology lends itself so well to photographic illustrations, this text also includes photo collages. I am very pleased with the one in Chapter 1 that features some of the many women who became sociologists in earlier generations, as these women have largely gone

unacknowledged as sociologists. In Chapter 2, students can catch a glimpse of the fascinating variety that goes into the cultural relativity of beauty. The collage in Chapter 5 illustrates categories, aggregates, and primary and secondary groups, concepts that students sometimes wrestle to distinguish. The photo collage in Chapter 8 lets students see how differently gender is portrayed in different cultures.

Other Photos by the Author Sprinkled throughout the text are photos that I took in Austria, Cambodia, India, Latvia, Spain, and the United States. These photos illustrate sociological principles and topics better than photos available from commercial sources. As an example, while in the United States, I received a report about a feral child who had been discovered living with monkeys and who had been taken to an orphanage in Cambodia. The possibility of photographing and interviewing that child was one of the reasons that I went to Cambodia. That particular photo is on page 68. Another of my favorites is on page 157.

Other Special Pedagogical Features

In addition to chapter summaries and reviews, key terms, and a comprehensive glossary, I have included several special features to aid students in learning sociology. **In Sum** sections help students review important points within the chapter before going on to new sections. I have also developed a series of **Social Maps**, which illustrate how social conditions vary by geography.

Chapter-Opening Vignettes These accounts feature down-to-earth illustrations of a major aspect of each chapter’s content. Several of these are based on my research with the homeless, the time I spent with them on the streets and slept in their shelters (Chapters 1 and 7). Others recount my experiences in Africa (Chapters 2 and 8) and Mexico (Chapter 10). I also share with students the time when I spent a night with street people at DuPont Circle in Washington, D.C. (Chapter 4). For other vignettes, I use an historical event (Chapter 9), classical studies in the social sciences (Chapters 3 and 6), and even a scene from an autobiography (Chapter 5). Many students have told their instructors that they find these vignettes compelling, that they stimulate interest in the chapter.

Thinking Critically About the Chapters I close each chapter with critical thinking questions. Each question focuses on a major feature of the chapter, asking students to reflect on and consider some issue. Many of the questions ask the students to apply sociological findings and principles to their own lives.

On Sources Sociological data are found in a wide variety of sources, and this text reflects that variety. Cited throughout this text are standard journals such as the *American Journal of Sociology*, *Social Problems*,

American Sociological Review, and *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, as well as more esoteric journals such as the *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, *Chronobiology International*, and *Western Journal of Black Studies*. I have also drawn heavily from standard news sources, especially the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*, as well as more unusual sources such as *El País*. In addition, I cite unpublished papers by sociologists.

Acknowledgments

The gratifying response to earlier editions indicates that my efforts at making sociology down to earth have succeeded. The years that have gone into writing this text are a culmination of the many more years that preceded its writing—from graduate school to that equally demanding endeavor known as classroom teaching. No text, of course, comes solely from its author. Although I am responsible for the final words on the printed page, I have received outstanding feedback from instructors who have taught from the earlier versions of *Sociology: A Down-to-Earth Approach*, from which *Core Concepts* is adapted. I am especially grateful to the following reviewers.

Reviewers

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I am also indebted to the fine staff of Allyn and Bacon. I want to thank Charlyce Jones-Owen, who joined the team for this 6th edition, for coordinating the many tasks that were necessary to produce this new edition; Dusty Friedman, always a pleasure to work with, for attending to what seemed to be an infinite number of details—and for her constant

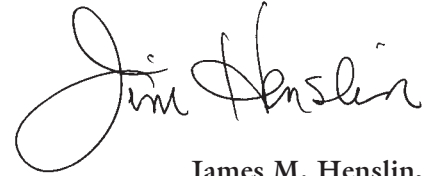
encouragement; Jenn Albanese, who once again provided excellent research, tracking down both standard and esoteric items that made an impact on the book; Diane Elliott, who thought along with me as she did the copy editing; Jennifer Auvil, who stepped in to help with this edition, and Kate Cebik, for her creativity in photo research—and for her willingness to “keep on looking.”

I do appreciate this team. It is difficult to heap too much praise on such fine, capable, and creative people. Often going “beyond the call of duty” as we faced nonstop deadlines, their untiring efforts coalesced with mine to produce this text. Students, whom we constantly kept in mind as we prepared this edition, are the beneficiaries of this intricate teamwork.

Since this text is based on the contributions of many, I would count it a privilege if you would share with me your teaching experiences with this book, including suggestions

for improving the text. Both positive and negative comments are welcome. It is in this way that I continue to learn.

I wish you the very best in your teaching. It is my sincere desire that *Sociology: A Down-to-Earth Approach, Core Concepts* contributes to your classroom success.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Henslin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "H".

**James M. Henslin,
Professor Emeritus
Department of Sociology
Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville**

I welcome your correspondence. You can reach me at henslin@aol.com

A Note from the Publisher on the Supplements

Instructor Supplements

Unless otherwise noted, instructor supplements are available at no charge to adopters—in electronic formats through the Instructor’s Resource Center (www.pearsonhighered.com/irc).

Instructor’s Manual

For each chapter in the text, the Instructor’s Manual provides a list of key changes to the new edition, chapter summaries and outlines, learning objectives, key terms and people, discussion topics, classroom activities, recommended films and Web sites, and additional references.

Test Bank

The Test Bank contains multiple-choice, true/false, short answer, essay, and matching formats. The questions are correlated to the in-text learning objectives for each chapter.

MyTest Computerized Test Bank

The printed Test Bank is also available online through Pearson’s computerized testing system, MyTest. The user-friendly interface allows you to view, edit, and add questions, transfer questions to tests, and print tests in a variety of fonts. Search and sort features allow you to locate questions quickly and to arrange them in whatever order you prefer. The Test Bank can be accessed anywhere with a free MyTest user account. There is no need to download a program or file to your computer.

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- Social Explorer—the premier interactive demographics Web site.
- MySocLibrary—with over 100 classic and contemporary primary source readings.
- The Core Concepts in Sociology videos—streaming videos presented in documentary style on core sociological concepts.
- The Social Lens—a sociology blog updated weekly with topics ranging from politics to pop culture.
- Chapter Audio—streaming audio of the entire text.

About the Author

JIM HENSLIN was born in Minnesota, graduated from high school and junior college in California and from college in Indiana. Awarded scholarships, he earned his master's and doctorate degrees in sociology at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. After this, he won a postdoctoral fellowship from the National Institute of Mental Health and spent a year studying how people adjust to the suicide of a family member. His primary interests in sociology are the sociology of everyday life, deviance, and international relations. Among his many books are *Down-to-Earth Sociology: Introductory Readings* (Free Press), now in its 15th edition, and *Social Problems* (Allyn and Bacon), now in its 11th edition. He has also published widely in sociology journals, including *Social Problems* and *American Journal of Sociology*.

While a graduate student, Jim taught at the University of Missouri at St. Louis. After completing his doctorate, he joined the faculty at Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville, where he is Professor Emeritus of Sociology. He says, "I've always found the introductory course enjoyable to teach. I love to see students' faces light up when they first glimpse the sociological perspective and begin to see how society has become an essential part of how they view the world."

Jim enjoys reading and fishing, and he also does a bit of kayaking and weight lifting. His two favorite activities are writing and traveling. He especially enjoys visiting and living in other cultures, for this brings him face to face with behaviors and ways of thinking that challenge his perspectives and "make sociological principles come alive." A special pleasure has been the preparation of the photo essays that appear in this text.

Jim moved to Latvia, an Eastern European country formerly dominated by the Soviet Union, where he had the experience of becoming an immigrant. There he observed firsthand how people struggle to adjust to capitalism. While there, he interviewed aged political prisoners who had survived the Soviet gulag. He then moved to Spain, where he was able to observe how people adjust to a declining economy and the immigration of people from contrasting cultures. (Of course, for this he didn't need to leave the United States.) To better round out his cultural experiences, Jim is making plans for travel to South Korea and again to India, and later to South America, where he expects to do more photo essays to reflect their fascinating cultures. He is grateful to be able to live in such exciting social, technological, and geopolitical times—and to have access to portable broadband Internet while he pursues his sociological imagination.

The author at work—getting a little too close to "the action." Taken during a Holy Week celebration in Malaga, Spain.



Anita Henslin

CHAPTER
1

The Sociological Perspective

 Listen to Chapter 1 on MySocLab



Learning Objectives

After you have read this chapter, you should be able to:

- 1.1** Explain why both history and biography are essential for the sociological perspective. (p. 2)
 - 1.2** Trace the origins of sociology, from tradition to Max Weber. (p. 4)
 - 1.3** Trace the development of sociology in North America and explain the tension between objective analysis and social reform. (p. 8)
 - 1.4** Explain the basic ideas of symbolic interactionism, functional analysis, and conflict theory. (p. 12)
 - 1.5** Explain why common sense can't replace sociological research. (p. 20)
 - 1.6** Know the 8 steps of the research model. (p. 20)
 - 1.7** Know the main elements of the 7 research methods: surveys, participant observation, case studies, secondary analysis, analysis of documents, experiments, and unobtrusive measures. (p. 22)
 - 1.8** Explain how gender is significant in sociological research. (p. 30)
 - 1.9** Explain why it is vital for sociologists to protect the people they study; discuss the two cases that are presented. (p. 32)
 - 1.10** Explain how research versus reform and globalization are likely to influence sociology. (p. 34)
-
- 1.1** Explain why both history and biography are essential for the sociological perspective.

The Sociological Perspective

I quickly scanned the room filled with 100 or so bunks. *I was relieved to see that an upper bunk was still open. I grabbed it, figuring that attacks are more difficult in an upper bunk. Even from the glow of the faded red-and-white exit sign, its faint light barely illuminating this bunk, I could see that the sheet was filthy. Resigned to another night of fitful sleep, I reluctantly crawled into bed.*

I kept my clothes on.

The next morning, I joined the long line of disheveled men leaning against the chain-link fence. Their faces were as downcast as their clothes were dirty. Not a glimmer of hope among them.

No one spoke as the line slowly inched forward.

When my turn came, I was handed a cup of coffee, a white plastic spoon, and a bowl of semiliquid that I couldn't identify. It didn't look like any food I had seen before. Nor did it taste like anything I had ever eaten.

My stomach fought the foul taste, every spoonful a battle. But I was determined. "I will experience what they experience," I kept telling myself. My stomach reluctantly gave in and accepted its morning nourishment.

The room was strangely silent. Hundreds of men were eating, each one immersed in his own private hell, his mind awash with disappointment, remorse, bitterness.

As I stared at the Styrofoam cup that held my coffee, grateful for at least this small pleasure, I noticed what looked like teeth marks. I shrugged off the thought, telling myself that my long weeks as a sociological observer of the homeless were finally getting to me. "It must be some sort of crease from handling," I concluded.

I joined the silent ranks of men turning in their bowls and cups. When I saw the man behind the counter swishing out Styrofoam cups in a washtub of murky water, I began to feel sick to my stomach. I knew then that the jagged marks on my cup really had come from another person's mouth.

How much longer did this research have to last? I felt a deep longing to return to my family—to a welcome world of clean sheets, healthy food, and "normal" conversations.

“The room was strangely silent. Hundreds of men were eating, each immersed in his own private hell, . . .”

The Sociological Perspective

Seeing the Broader Social Context

The **sociological perspective** stresses the social contexts in which people live. It examines how these contexts influence people's lives. At the center of the sociological perspective is the question of how groups influence people, especially how people are influenced by their **society**—a group of people who share a culture and a territory.

To find out why people do what they do, sociologists look at **social location**, the corners in life that people occupy because of their place in a society. Sociologists look at how jobs, income, education, gender, race–ethnicity, and age affect people's ideas and behavior. Consider, for example, how being identified with a group called *females* or with a group called *males* when you were growing up has shaped *your* ideas of who you are. Growing up as a female or a male has influenced not only how you feel about yourself but also your ideas of what you should attain in life and how you relate to others. Even your gestures and the way you laugh come from your identifying with one of these groups.

Sociologist C. Wright Mills (1959) put it this way: “The sociological imagination [perspective] enables us to grasp the connection between history and biography.” By *history*, Mills meant that each society is located in a broad stream of events.

This gives each society specific characteristics—such as its ideas about what roles are proper for men and women. By *biography*, Mills referred to people’s experiences within a specific historical setting, which gives them their orientations to life. In short, you don’t do what you do because you inherited some internal mechanism, such as instincts. Rather, *external* influences—your experiences—become part of your thinking and motivation. Or we can put it this way: At the center of what you do and how you think is the society in which you grow up, and your particular location in that society.

Consider a newborn baby. As you know, if we were to take the baby away from its U.S. parents and place it with the Yanomamö Indians in the jungles of South America, his or her first words would not be in English. You also know that the child would not think like an American. The child would not grow up wanting credit cards, for example, or designer clothes, a car, a cell phone, an iPod, and video games. He or she would take his or her place in Yanomamö society—perhaps as a food gatherer, a hunter, or a warrior—and would not even know about the world left behind at birth. And, whether male or female, the child would grow up assuming that it is natural to want many children, not debating whether to have one, two, or three children.

If you have been thinking along with me—and I hope you have—you should be thinking about how *your* social groups have shaped *your* ideas and desires. Over and over in this text, you will see that the way you look at the world is the result of your exposure to specific human groups. I think you will enjoy the process of self-discovery that sociology offers.

The Global Context—and the Local


As is evident to all of us—from the labels on our clothing that say Hong Kong, Brunei, or Macau to the many other imported products that have become part of our daily lives—our world has become a global village. How life has changed! Our predecessors lived on isolated farms and in small towns. They grew their own food and made their own clothing, buying only sugar, coffee, and a few other items that they couldn’t produce. Beyond the borders of their communities lay a world they perceived only dimly.

And how slow communications used to be! In December 1814, the United States and Great Britain signed a peace treaty to end the War of 1812. Yet two weeks *later*, their armies fought a major battle at New Orleans. Neither the American nor the British forces there had heard that the war was over (Volpi 1995).

Now we can grab our cell phone or use the Internet to communicate instantly with people anywhere on the planet. News flashes from around the world are part of our everyday life. At the same time that we are engulfed in instantaneous global communications, we also continue to occupy our own little corners of life. Like those of our predecessors, our worlds, too, are marked by differences in family background, religion, job, gender, race–ethnicity, and social class. In these smaller corners of life, we continue to learn distinctive ways of viewing the world.

One of the beautiful—and fascinating—aspects of sociology is that it enables us to look at both parts of our current reality: being part of a global network *and* having unique experiences in our smaller corners of life. This text reflects both of these worlds, each so vital in understanding who we are.

 **Read on MySocLab**
Document: Invitation to Sociology

 **Watch on MySocLab**
Video: What is Sociology?
The Basics

 **Explore on MySocLab**
Activity: The Development of
American Society

sociological perspective understanding human behavior by placing it within its broader social context

society people who share a culture and a territory

social location the group memberships that people have because of their location in history and society

Just as we occupy a “small corner” in life, so does this homeless man in New York. Just as our “small corner” is affected by global events, so is his. Both his and our focus, though, is primarily on our little, personal worlds.



1.2 Trace the origins of sociology, from tradition to Max Weber.

 **Watch on MySocLab**
Video: Sociology: The Big Picture

sociology the scientific study of society and human behavior

Origins of Sociology

Tradition versus Science

So when did sociology begin? Even ancient peoples tried to figure out how social life works. They, too, asked questions about why war exists, why some people become more powerful than others, and why some are rich but others are poor. However, they often based their answers on superstition, myth, even the positions of the stars. They did not test their assumptions.

Science, in contrast, requires theories that can be tested by research. Measured by this standard, sociology emerged about the middle of the 1800s, when social observers began to use scientific methods to test their ideas.

Sociology was born in social upheaval. The Industrial Revolution had just begun, and masses of people were moving to cities in search of work. This broke their ties to the land—and to a culture that had provided ready answers to the difficult questions of life. The city's greeting was harsh: miserable pay, long hours, and dangerous work. Families lived on the edge of starvation, so children had to work alongside the adults. With their ties to the land broken and their world turned upside down, no longer could people count on tradition to provide the answers to the difficult questions of life.

Tradition suffered further blows. With the success of the American and French revolutions, new ideas swept out the old. As the idea that individuals possess inalienable rights caught fire, many traditional Western monarchies gave way to more democratic forms of government. This stimulated new perspectives.

About this time, the scientific method—using objective, systematic observations to test theories—was being tried out in chemistry and physics. This revealed many secrets that had been concealed in nature. With traditional answers failing, the next step was to apply the scientific method to questions about social life. The result was the birth of sociology.

Let's take a quick overview of some of the main figures in this development.

Auguste Comte and Positivism

Auguste Comte (1798–1857) suggested that we apply the scientific method to the social world, a process known as **positivism**. With the bloody upheavals of the French Revolution fresh in his mind—and he knew that the crowds had cheered at the public execution of the king and queen of France—Comte started to wonder what holds society together. Why do we have social order instead of anarchy or chaos? And when society becomes set on a particular course, what causes it to change?

These were pressing questions, and Comte decided that the scientific method held the key to answering them. Just as the scientific method had revealed the law of gravity, so, too, it would uncover the laws that underlie society.

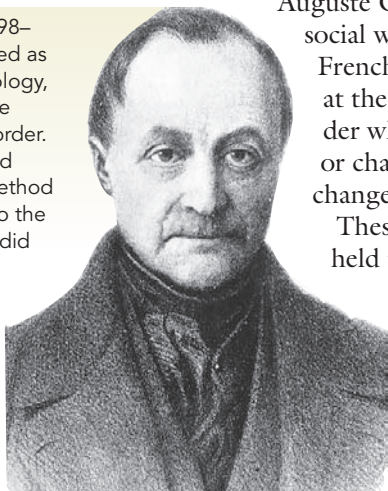
Comte called this new science **sociology**—“the study of society” (from the Greek *logos*, “study of,” and the Latin *socius*, “companion,” or “being with others”). The purpose of this new science, he said, would not only be to discover social principles but also to apply them to social reform. Comte developed a grandiose view: Sociologists would reform society, making it a better place to live.



Upsetting the entire social order, the French Revolution removed the past as a sure guide to the present. This stimulated Auguste Comte to analyze how societies change. Shown here is a battle at the Hotel de Ville in Paris in 1830.

positivism the application of the scientific approach to the social world

Auguste Comte (1798–1857), who is credited as the founder of sociology, began to analyze the bases of the social order. Although he stressed that the scientific method should be applied to the study of society, he did not apply it himself.



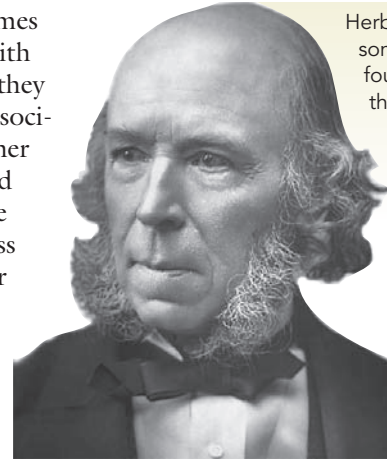
Applying the scientific method to social life meant something quite different to Comte than it does to sociologists today. To Comte, it meant a kind of “armchair philosophy”—drawing conclusions from informal observations of social life. Comte did not do what we today call research, and his conclusions have been abandoned. But because he proposed that we observe and classify human activities to uncover society’s fundamental laws and coined the term *sociology* to describe this process, Comte often is credited with being the founder of sociology.

Herbert Spencer and Social Darwinism

Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), who grew up in England, is sometimes called the second founder of sociology. Spencer disagreed sharply with Comte. He said that sociologists should *not* guide social reform. If they did, he said, it would interfere with a natural process that improves societies. Societies are evolving from a lower form (“barbarian”) to higher (“civilized”) forms. As generations pass, a society’s most capable and intelligent members (“the fittest”) survive, while the less capable die out. These fittest members produce a more advanced society—unless misguided do-gooders get in the way and help the less fit (the lower classes) survive.

Spencer called this principle *the survival of the fittest*. Although Spencer coined this phrase, it usually is credited to his contemporary, Charles Darwin. Where Spencer proposed that societies evolve over time as the fittest people adapt to their environment, Darwin applied this idea to organisms. Because Darwin is better known, Spencer’s idea is called *social Darwinism*. History is fickle, and if fame had gone the other way, we might be speaking of “biological Spencerism.”

Like Comte, Spencer did armchair philosophy instead of conducting scientific research.



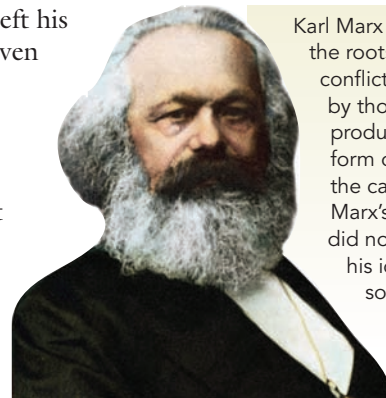
Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), sometimes called the second founder of sociology, coined the term “survival of the fittest.” Spencer thought that helping the poor was wrong, that this merely helped the “less fit” survive.

Karl Marx and Class Conflict

Karl Marx (1818–1883) not only influenced sociology but also left his mark on world history. Marx’s influence has been so great that even the *Wall Street Journal*, that staunch advocate of capitalism, has called him one of the three greatest modern thinkers (the other two being Sigmund Freud and Albert Einstein).

Like Comte, Marx thought that people should try to change society. His proposal for change was radical: revolution. This got him thrown out of Germany, and he settled in England. Marx believed that the engine of human history is **class conflict**. Society is made up of two social classes, he said, and they are natural enemies: the **bourgeoisie** (boo-shwa-ZEE) (the *capitalists*, those who own the means of production, the money, land, factories, and machines) and the **proletariat** (the exploited workers, who do not own the means of production). Eventually, the workers will unite and break their chains of bondage. The workers’ revolution will be bloody, but it will usher in a classless society, one free of exploitation. People will work according to their abilities and receive goods and services according to their needs (Marx and Engels 1848/1967).

Marxism is not the same as communism. Although Marx proposed revolution as the way for workers to gain control of society, he did not develop the political system called *communism*. This is a later application of his ideas. Marx himself felt disgusted when he heard debates about his insights into social life. After listening to some of the positions attributed to him, he shook his head and said, “I am not a Marxist” (Dobriner 1969:222; Gitlin 1997:89).



Karl Marx (1818–1883) believed that the roots of human misery lay in class conflict, the exploitation of workers by those who own the means of production. Social change, in the form of the workers overthrowing the capitalists was inevitable from Marx’s perspective. Although Marx did not consider himself a sociologist, his ideas have influenced many sociologists, particularly conflict theorists.

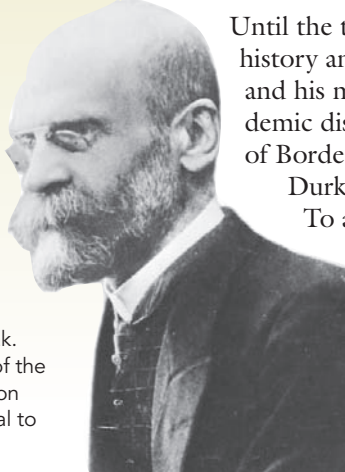
class conflict Marx’s term for the struggle between capitalists and workers

bourgeoisie Marx’s term for capitalists, those who own the means of production

proletariat Marx’s term for the exploited class, the mass of workers who do not own the means of production

 **Read on MySocLab**
Document: The Division of Labor

The French sociologist Emile Durkheim (1858–1917) contributed many important concepts to sociology. His comparison of the suicide rates of several countries revealed an underlying social factor: People are more likely to commit suicide if their ties to others in their communities are weak. Durkheim's identification of the key role of social integration in social life remains central to sociology today.



Durkheim believed that modern societies produce feelings of isolation, much of which comes from the division of labor. In contrast, members of traditional societies, who work alongside family and neighbors and participate in similar activities, experience a high degree of social integration. The photos below contrast a U.S. office with nomads in Mongolia who are shearing cashmere off their goats.



Unlike Comte and Spencer, Marx did not think of himself as a sociologist—and with his reputation for communism and revolution, many sociologists wish that no one else did either. Because of his insights into the relationship between the social classes, Marx is generally recognized as a significant early sociologist. He introduced *conflict theory*, one of today's major perspectives in sociology. Later, we will examine this perspective in detail.

Emile Durkheim and Social Integration

Until the time of Emile Durkheim (1858–1917), sociology was viewed as part of history and economics. Durkheim, who grew up in France, wanted to change this, and his major professional goal was to get sociology recognized as a separate academic discipline (Coser 1977). He achieved this goal in 1887 when the University of Bordeaux awarded him the world's first academic appointment in sociology.

Durkheim's second goal was to show how social forces affect people's behavior.

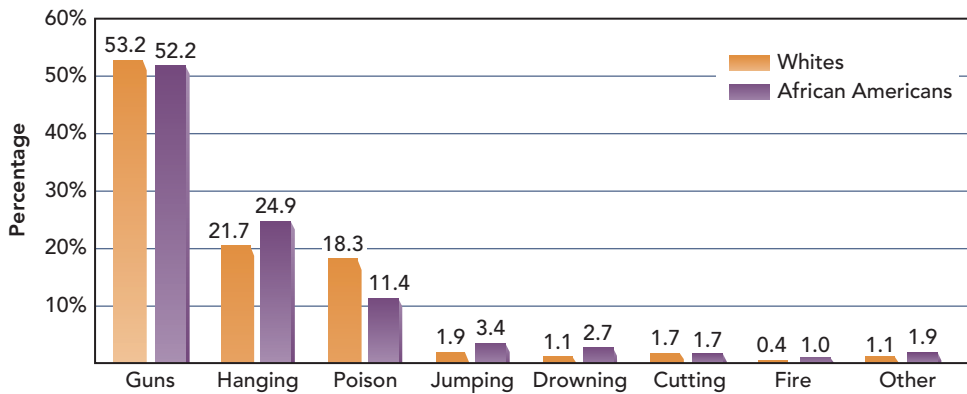
To accomplish this, he conducted rigorous research. Comparing the suicide rates of several European countries, Durkheim (1897/1966) found that each country has a different suicide rate—and that these rates remain about the same year after year. He also found that different groups within a country have different suicide rates and that these, too, remain stable from year to year. Males are more likely than females to kill themselves, Protestants more likely than Catholics or Jews, and the unmarried more likely than the married. From these observations, Durkheim concluded that suicide is not what it appears—simply a matter of individuals here and there deciding to take their lives for personal reasons.

Instead, *social factors underlie suicide*, which is why a group's rate remains fairly constant year after year.

In his search for the key social factors in suicide, Durkheim identified **social integration**, the degree to which people are tied to their social groups: He found that people who have weaker social ties are more likely to commit suicide. This, he said, explains why Protestants, males, and the unmarried have higher suicide rates. This is how it works: Protestantism encourages greater freedom of thought and action; males are more independent than females; and the unmarried lack the ties and responsibilities that come with marriage. In other words, members of these groups have fewer of the social bonds that keep people from committing suicide. In Durkheim's term, they have less social integration.

Despite the many years that have passed since Durkheim did his research, the principle he uncovered still applies: People who are less socially integrated have higher rates of suicide. Even today, more than a century later, those same groups that Durkheim identified—Protestants, males, and the unmarried—are more likely to kill themselves.

It is important for you to understand the principle that was central in Durkheim's research: *Human behavior cannot be understood only in terms of the individual; we must always examine the social forces that affect people's lives.* Suicide, for example, appears to be such an intensely individual act that psychologists should study it, not sociologists. As Durkheim stressed, however, if we look at human behavior only in reference to the individual, we miss its *social* basis.

FIGURE 1.1 How Americans Commit Suicide

Note: These totals are the mean of years 2001–2010. (“Mean” is explained in Table 1.3 on page 24.)

Source: By the author. Based on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2012 and earlier years.

Applying Durkheim. Did you know that 29,000 whites and 2,000 African Americans will commit suicide this year? Of course not. And you probably are wondering if anyone can know something like this before it happens. Sociologists can. How? Sociologists look at **patterns of behavior**, recurring characteristics or events.

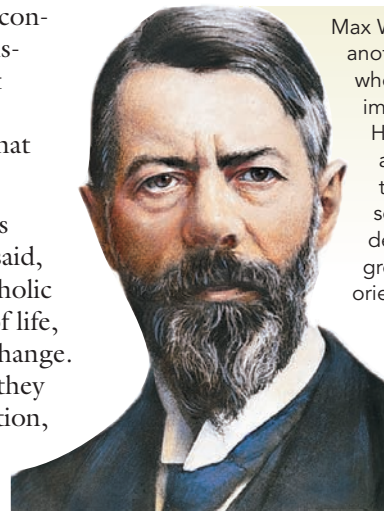
The patterns of suicide let us be even more specific. Look at Figure 1.1. There you can see the methods by which African Americans and whites commit suicide. These patterns are so consistent that we can predict with high certainty that of the 29,000 whites, about 15,500 will use guns to kill themselves, and that of the 2,000 African Americans, 60 to 70 will jump to their deaths.

These patterns—both the numbers and the way people take their lives—recur year after year. This indicates something far beyond the individuals who kill themselves. They reflect conditions in society, such as the popularity and accessibility of guns. They also reflect conditions that we don’t understand. I am hoping that one day, this textbook will pique a student’s interest enough to investigate these patterns.

Max Weber and the Protestant Ethic

Max Weber (Mahx VAY-ber) (1864–1920), a German sociologist and a contemporary of Durkheim, also held professorships in the new academic discipline of sociology. Like Durkheim and Marx, Weber is one of the most influential of all sociologists, and you will come across his writings and theories in later chapters. For now, let’s consider an issue Weber raised that remains controversial today.

Religion and the Origin of Capitalism. Weber disagreed with Marx’s claim that economics is the central force in social change. That role, he said, belongs to religion. Weber (1904/1958) theorized that the Roman Catholic belief system encouraged followers to hold on to their traditional ways of life, while the Protestant belief system encouraged its members to embrace change. Roman Catholics were taught that because they were Church members they were on the road to heaven, but Protestants, those of the Calvinist tradition, were told that they wouldn’t know if they were saved until Judgment Day. Uncomfortable with this, the Calvinists began to look for a “sign” that they were in God’s will. They found this “sign” in financial success, which they took as a blessing that indicated that God was on their side. To bring about this “sign” and receive spiritual comfort, they began to live frugal lives, saving their money and investing it in order to make even more. This, said Weber, brought about the birth of capitalism.



Max Weber (1864–1920) was another early sociologist who left a profound impression on sociology. He used cross-cultural and historical materials to trace the causes of social change and to determine how social groups affect people’s orientations to life.

patterns of behavior recurring behaviors or events

**Read on MySocLab****Document:** Max Weber, *Asceticism and the Spirit of Capitalism*

1.3 Trace the development of sociology in North America and explain the tension between objective analysis and social reform.

Weber called this self-denying approach to life the *Protestant ethic*. He termed the desire to invest capital in order to make more money the *spirit of capitalism*. To test his theory, Weber compared the extent of capitalism in Roman Catholic and Protestant countries. In line with his theory, he found that capitalism was more likely to flourish in Protestant countries. Weber's conclusion that religion was the key factor in the rise of capitalism was controversial when he made it, and it continues to be debated today (Kalberg 2011).

Sociology in North America

Now let's turn to the development of sociology on this side of the Atlantic Ocean.

Sexism at the Time: Women in Early Sociology

As you may have noticed, all the sociologists we have discussed are men. In the 1800s, sex roles were rigid, with women assigned the roles of wife and mother. In the classic German phrase, women were expected to devote themselves to the four K's: *Kirche, Küche, Kinder, und Kleider* (the four C's in English: church, cooking, children, and clothes). Trying to break out of this mold meant risking severe disapproval.

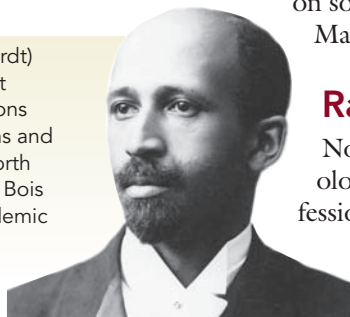
Few people, male or female, attained any education beyond basic reading and writing and a little math. Higher education, for the rare few who received it, was reserved primarily for men. Of the handful of women who did pursue higher education, some became prominent in early sociology. Marion Talbot, for example, was an associate editor of the *American Journal of Sociology* for thirty years, from its founding in 1895 to 1925. The influence of some early female sociologists went far beyond sociology. Grace Abbott became chief of the U.S. government's Children's Bureau, and Frances Perkins was the first woman to hold a cabinet position, serving twelve years as Secretary of Labor under President Franklin Roosevelt. The photo wheel on the next page portrays some of these early sociologists.

Most early female sociologists viewed sociology as a path to social reform. They focused on ways to improve society, such as how to stop lynching, integrate immigrants into society, and improve the conditions of workers. As sociology developed in North America, a debate arose about the proper purpose of sociology. Should it be to reform society or to do objective research on society? Those who held the university positions won the debate. They feared that advocating for social causes would jeopardize the reputation of sociology—and their own university positions. It was these men who wrote the history of sociology. Distancing themselves from the social reformers, they ignored the early female sociologists (Lengermann and Niebrugge 2007). Now that women have regained their voice in sociology—and have begun to rewrite its history—early female sociologists are again, as here, being acknowledged.

Harriet Martineau (1802–1876) provides an excellent example of how the contributions of early female sociologists were ignored. Although Martineau was from England, she is included here because she did extensive analyses of U.S. social customs. Sexism was so pervasive that when Martineau first began to analyze social life, she would hide her writing beneath her sewing when visitors arrived: Writing was “masculine” and sewing “feminine” (Gilman 1911/1971:88). Despite her extensive and acclaimed research on social life in both Great Britain and the United States, until recently Martineau was known primarily for translating Comte's ideas into English.

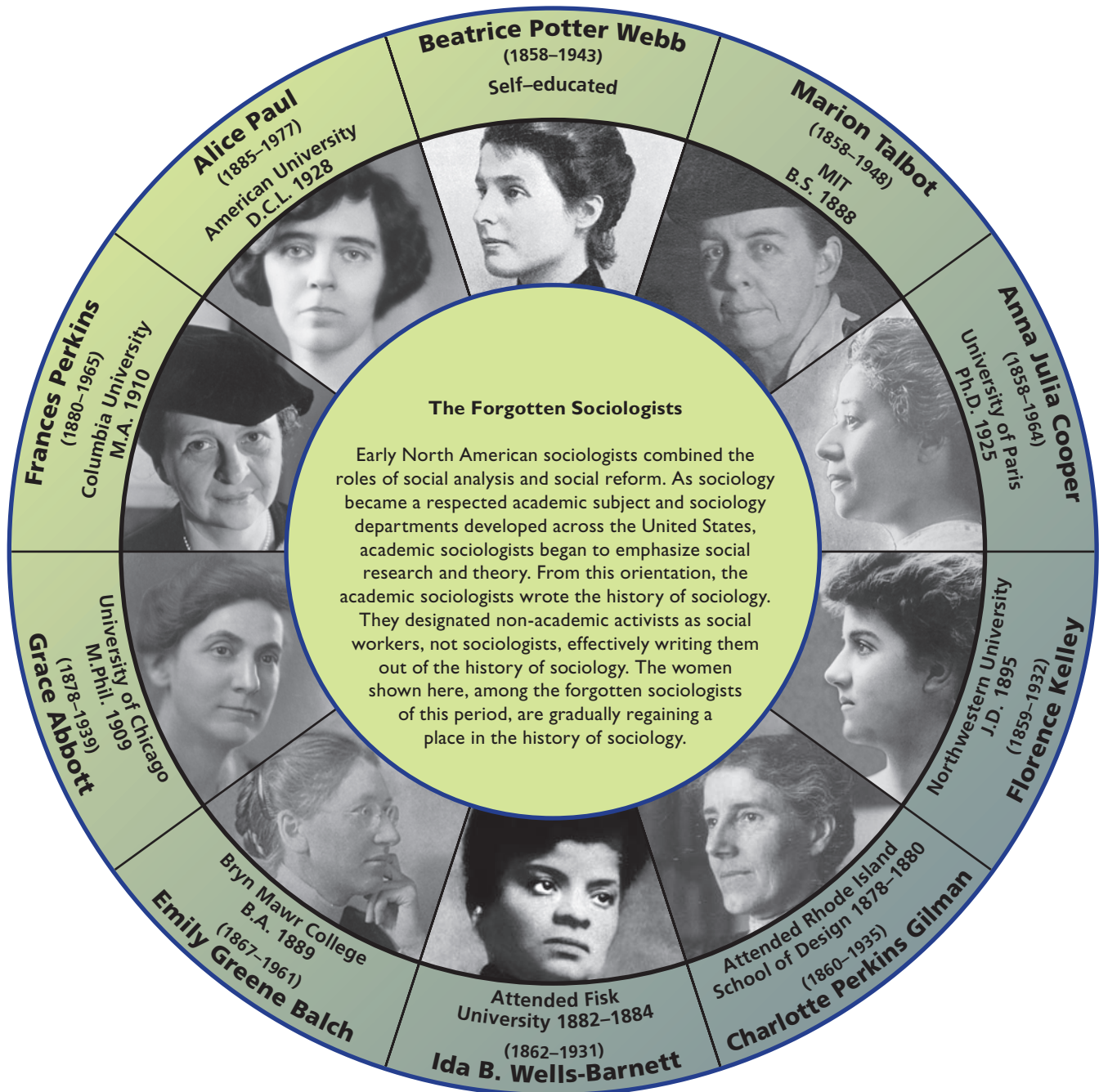
**Read on MySocLab****Document:** Harriet Martineau, *Society in America*

William E(dward) B(urghardt) Du Bois (1868–1963) spent his lifetime studying relations between African Americans and whites. Like many early North American sociologists, Du Bois combined the role of academic sociologist with that of social reformer.



Racism at the Time: W. E. B. Du Bois

Not only was sexism assumed to be normal during this early period of sociology but so was racism. This made life difficult for African American professionals such as W. E. B. Du Bois (1868–1963). After earning a bachelor's degree from Fisk University, Du Bois became the first African American to earn a doctorate at Harvard. He then studied at the University of Berlin, where he attended lectures by Max Weber. After teaching

FIGURE 1.2 The Forgotten Sociologists

Source: Photo wheel copyright 2014 © James M. Henslin.

Greek and Latin at Wilberforce University, Du Bois moved to Atlanta University in 1897 to teach sociology and do research. He remained there for most of his career (Du Bois 1935/1992).

The Down-to-Earth Sociology box on the next page features Du Bois' description of race relations when he was in college.

It is difficult to grasp how racist society was at this time. As Du Bois passed a butcher shop in Georgia one day, he saw the fingers of a lynching victim displayed in the window (Aptheker 1990). When Du Bois went to national meetings of the American