



Sixth Edition

# Sociology Matters

Richard T. Schaefer

## APPLICATIONS OF SOCIOLOGY'S MAJOR THEORETICAL APPROACHES

*Sociology Matters* provides comprehensive coverage of the major sociological perspectives. The summary table below includes a sample of the topics in this text that have been explored using these approaches. The numbers in parentheses indicate the pertinent chapters.

### FUNCTIONALIST PERSPECTIVE

Defined and explained (1)  
Anomie theory of deviance (4)  
Authority and power (9)  
Bureaucracy (3)  
Davis and Moore's view of stratification (5)  
Dominant ideology (2)  
Durkheim's view of deviance (4)  
Dysfunctions of racism (6)  
Education (9)  
Equilibrium model of social change (11)  
Ethnocentrism (2)  
Family (8)  
Gans's functions of poverty (5)  
Gender inequality (7)  
Gulf Coast oil spill (1)  
Health and illness (10)  
Human ecology (10)  
Immigration (6)  
Integrative function of religion (8)  
Modernization theory (5)  
Multinational corporations (5)  
Norms and values (2)  
Prison gangs (1)  
Race and ethnicity (6)  
Religion (8)  
Religion and socialization (2)  
Schools and socialization (2)  
Sick role (10)  
Social change (11)  
Social control (4)  
Social institutions (8)  
Social movements (11)  
Social roles (3)  
Subcultures (2)  
Urban ecology (10)

### CONFLICT PERSPECTIVE

Cultural variation (2)  
Defined and explained (1)  
Deindustrialization (9)  
Deviance (4)  
Dominant ideology (2, 5)  
Education (9)  
Elite model of U.S. power structure (9)  
Environmental issues (10)  
Exploitation theory (6)  
Family (8)  
Gender inequality (7)  
Gulf Coast oil spill (1)  
Immigration (6)  
Inequality and technology (11)  
Inequities in health care (10)

Marx's view of social stratification (5)  
Medicalization of society (10)  
Monopolies (9)  
Multinational corporations (5)  
New urban sociology (10)  
Racism and health (10)  
Religion and social control (8)  
Schools and socialization (2)  
Social change (11)  
Social control (4)  
Social institutions (8)  
Victimless crimes (4)  
White-collar crime (4)  
Women and poverty (5)  
World systems analysis (5)

### INTERACTIONIST PERSPECTIVE

Defined and explained (1)  
Charismatic authority (9)  
Commuter behavior (1)  
Contact hypothesis (6)  
Deviance (4)  
Dramaturgical approach (2)  
Education (9)  
Family and socialization (2, 8)  
Gender inequality (7)  
Gulf Coast oil spill (1)  
Health and illness (10)  
Human relations approach (3)  
Religious behavior (8)  
Self (2)  
Social control (4)  
Social institutions (8)  
Social stigma (4)  
Stratification (5)

### FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

Defined and explained (1)  
Culture (2)  
Deviance (4)  
Education (9)  
Family (8)  
Gender inequality (7)  
Ida Wells-Barnett (1)  
Religion (8)  
Sports (1)  
Victimless crimes (4)

### LABELING THEORY

Health and illness (10)  
Human sexuality (8)  
Racial profiling (6)  
White-collar crime (4)

## COVERAGE OF RACE AND ETHNICITY, GENDER, AND SOCIAL CLASS

*Sociology Matters* provides comprehensive coverage of race and ethnicity, gender, and social class and the intersection of those variables. The summary table below includes a sample of related topics; the numbers in parentheses indicate the pertinent chapters.

### RACE AND ETHNICITY

Affirmative action (6)  
*Brown v. Board of Education* legacy (9)  
Capitalism in China (9)  
Caste systems in the United States and South Africa (5)  
Color-blind racism (6)  
Cross-cultural differences in social interaction and social reality (3)  
Cross-cultural perspective on gender (7)  
Cultural attitudes toward children marrying adults (2)  
Differential justice (4)  
Education in China (9)  
Environmental justice (10)  
Ethnic differences in family life (8)  
Ethnic inequality (6)  
Ethnicity and nonverbal communication (1)  
Ethnicity and poverty (5)  
Ethnicity and rites of passage (2)  
Ethnicity and role strain (3)  
Ethnocentrism (2, 6)  
Globalization of Western culture (2)  
Ida Wells-Barnett (1)  
Immigration of new ethnic groups (6)  
Income inequality by race and ethnicity (6)  
Inequities in health care (10)  
Institutional discrimination (6)  
Japanese norms regarding eating on the street (1)  
Japanese schools as agents of socialization (2)  
Jim Crow (6)  
Local development of menus at McDonald's restaurants overseas (2)  
"Majority minority" (6)  
Milgram's obedience experiment (4)  
Muslim hajj (8)  
Muslim headscarf as symbol (2)  
Navajo language and attitudes toward cancer (2)  
Race and social mobility (5)  
Race as a master status (3)  
Racial discrimination in employment (6)  
Racial formation (6)  
Racial isolation in U.S. public schools (9)  
Racial profiling (6)  
Racial/ethnic access to technology (11)  
Racial/ethnic composition of the labor force (9)  
Racial/ethnic groups and health (10)  
Racism (6)  
Social construction of race and ethnicity (6)  
W. E. B. DuBois (1)  
White privilege (6)

### GENDER

Beauty myth (4)  
Changing gender roles in Afghanistan (7)  
Cross-cultural perspective on gender (7)  
Female-headed households (8)  
Feminization of poverty (5)  
Gender norm transgressions (7)

Gender and health (10)  
Gender and social mobility (5)  
Gender and social movements (11)  
Gender differences in networking (3)  
Gender discrimination in education (9)  
"Gender gap" in academic achievement (9)  
Gender inequality (7)  
Gender roles (2, 3, 7)  
Gender stereotypes (7)  
Glass ceiling (7)  
Homophobia (7)  
Income inequality by gender (5)  
Lesbian and gay couples (8)  
Male dominance of the family (8)  
Matrix of domination (7)  
Men who pursue nontraditional occupations (7)  
Multiple masculinities (7)  
Second shift (7)  
Sexism (7)  
Social construction of gender (7)  
Women on corporate boards of directors (7)  
Women in selected occupations (7)  
Women in the labor force (7, 9)  
Women who earn more than their husbands (8)  
Worldwide status of women (7)

### SOCIAL CLASS

Class conflict (1)  
Class consciousness (5)  
Downsizing (9)  
Educational programs for the disadvantaged (9)  
Education and social change (9)  
Education and social class inequality (9)  
Environmental justice (10)  
Environmental refugees (10)  
Global inequality (5)  
Global power elite (9)  
Health and economic mobility (10)  
Income inequality (5)  
Inequities in health care (10)  
Infant mortality rates in selected countries (10)  
Occupy Wall Street (11)  
Offshoring of service and professional jobs (11)  
Power elite (9)  
Relative deprivation (11)  
Relative deprivation among militant extremists (11)  
Rossides's five-class model (5)  
Social class and access to technology (11)  
Social class and deviant identity (4)  
Social class and health (10)  
Social class in industrial cities (10)  
Social class in preindustrial cities (10)  
Socioeconomic status (SES) (5)  
Theories of social change (11)  
Tracking of low-income students (9)  
Vested interests (11)  
Vulnerability to disasters (5)  
White-collar crime (4)

# *Sociology Matters*

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**Also available from McGraw-Hill**

**by Richard T. Schaefer**

*Sociology: A Brief Introduction*, 10th edition (2013)

*Sociology in Modules*, 2nd edition (2013)

*Sociology*, 13th edition (2012)

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*Sixth Edition*

*Richard T. Schaefer*

*DePaul University*





SOCIOLOGY MATTERS, SIXTH EDITION

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This book is printed on acid-free paper.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 DOC/DOC 1 0 9 8 7 6 5 4 3

ISBN 978-0-07-802695-9

MHID 0-07-802695-4

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Cover Designer: *Studio Montage, St. Louis, MO*

Cover Image: © *Tom Mareschal/Alamy/RF*

Typeface: *10/12, Times Roman*

Compositor: *Laserwords Private Limited*

Printer: *R. R. Donnelly*

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**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Schaefer, Richard T.

Sociology matters / Richard T. Schaefer.—6th ed.

p. cm.

ISBN 978-0-07-802695-9 (alk. paper)

ISBN 0-07-802695-4 (alk. paper)

1. Sociology. 2. Cultural relations. 3. Social stratification. I. Title.

HM447.S33 2014

301—dc23

2012038398

The Internet addresses listed in the text were accurate at the time of publication. The inclusion of a website does not indicate an endorsement by the authors or McGraw-Hill, and McGraw-Hill does not guarantee the accuracy of the information presented at these sites.

## *Dedication*

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*To my students, for their contributions every term*



# About the Author

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## Richard T. Schaefer

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Growing up in Chicago at a time when neighborhoods were going through transitions in ethnic and racial composition, Richard T. Schaefer found himself increasingly intrigued by what was happening, how people were reacting, and how these changes were affecting neighborhoods and people's jobs. His interest in social issues caused him to gravitate to sociology courses at Northwestern University, where he eventually received a BA in sociology.

"Originally as an undergraduate I thought I would go on to law school and become a lawyer. But after taking a few sociology courses, I found myself wanting to learn more about what sociologists studied, and fascinated by the kinds of questions they raised." This fascination led him to obtain his MA and PhD in sociology from the University of Chicago. Dr. Schaefer's continuing interest in race relations led him to write his master's thesis on the membership of the Ku Klux Klan and his doctoral thesis on racial prejudice and race relations in Great Britain.

Dr. Schaefer went on to become a professor of sociology, and now teaches at DePaul University in Chicago. In 2004 he was named to the Vincent DePaul professorship in recognition of his undergraduate teaching and scholarship. He has taught introductory sociology for over 35 years to students in colleges, adult education programs, nursing programs, and even a maximum-security prison. Dr. Schaefer's love of teaching is apparent in his interaction with his students. "I find myself constantly learning from the students who are in my classes and from reading what they write. Their insights into the material we read or current events that we discuss often become part of future course material and sometimes even find their way into my writing."

Dr. Schaefer is the author of the tenth edition of *Sociology: A Brief Introduction* (McGraw-Hill, 2013), the second edition of *Sociology in Modules*, second edition (McGraw-Hill, 2013), and the thirteenth edition of *Sociology* (McGraw-Hill, 2012). He is also the author of *Racial and Ethnic Groups*, now in its thirteenth edition (2012), and *Race and Ethnicity in the United States*, seventh edition (2013), both published by

Pearson. Together with William Zellner, he coauthored the ninth edition of *Extraordinary Groups*, published by Worth in 2011. Dr. Schaefer served as the general editor of the three-volume *Encyclopedia of Race, Ethnicity, and Society*, published by Sage in 2008. His articles and book reviews have appeared in many journals, including *American Journal of Sociology*; *Phylon: A Review of Race and Culture*; *Contemporary Sociology*; *Sociology and Social Research*; *Sociological Quarterly*; and *Teaching Sociology*. He served as president of the Midwest Sociological Society in 1994–1995.

Dr. Schaefer's advice to students is to "look at the material and make connections to your own life and experiences. Sociology will make you a more attentive observer of how people in groups interact and function. It will also make you more aware of people's different needs and interests—and perhaps more ready to work for the common good, while still recognizing the individuality of each person."

# Preface

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Sociology has been my life's work for several decades. In the classroom and in the pages of my textbooks, I have tried to spark students' interest in the discipline by showing them its real-life implications. My aim has been to convince students that sociology is more than just another academic pursuit, an exercise in scholarship for the sake of scholarship. Sociology illuminates the world around us—our families, schools, neighborhoods, and other familiar institutions we have lived with all our lives. It puts into larger perspective our culture and our socialization—the way we come to be the way we are. Sociology makes us think deeply about the divide between ourselves and those of different races, classes, and ethnicities. It forces us to recognize the effects of power, technological advances, electronic media, and the increasingly rapid process of social change on our own lives. Sociology matters—to you, me, and everyone with a stake in the society we live in.

This concise volume stresses the same theme, in fewer pages and with fewer illustrations and study aids. *Sociology Matters* is intended for instructors who desire an especially short, relatively inexpensive introductory text. This text covers the essential content in *Sociology: A Brief Introduction*, tenth edition, in much the same depth. Its 11 chapters can be covered easily in a quarter- or semester-long course, together with other materials instructors might wish to add.

## Major Emphases

Like the brief tenth edition of *Sociology*, this volume includes comprehensive, balanced coverage of the major theoretical perspectives. Chapter 1 introduces, defines, and contrasts the functionalist, conflict, and interactionist perspectives, as well as the increasingly important feminist perspective. Later chapters use these distinctive viewpoints to explore topics such as deviance (Chapter 4); social stratification (Chapter 5); race and ethnicity (Chapter 6); gender (Chapter 7); social institutions (Chapters 8 and 9); population, community, health, and the environment (Chapter 10); and social movements, social change, and technology (Chapter 11).

This volume also includes strong coverage of gender, race, ethnicity, and social class. Three entire chapters are devoted to these topics: Chapter 5, on stratification in the United States and global inequality; Chapter 6, on race and ethnicity; and Chapter 7, on gender. Related discussions appear throughout the book. For instance, Chapter 3 examines

race and gender as ascribed statuses; Chapter 4, racial profiling and the perceived seriousness of white-collar crime; Chapter 10, the connection between health and a person's social class, race, ethnicity, and gender; and Chapter 11, the role of gender in social movements.

Finally, this volume includes considerable cross-cultural coverage. Chapter 2 covers the development of culture around the world. Chapter 4 covers international crime rates. Chapter 5 treats social stratification from a global perspective, including coverage of world systems analysis, dependency theory, modernization theory, the development of multinational corporations, and the global economy. Chapter 7 covers cross-cultural differences in gender roles. Chapter 8 takes a global view of the family. Chapter 10, which opens with a vignette on the Gulf Coast oil spill, treats global environmental issues. And Chapter 11 covers global social change.

## Special Features

This volume offers a variety of learning aids designed to help students understand and review basic concepts, including:

- Chapter outline
- Chapter-opening vignette with chapter overview
- Use Your Sociological Imagination exercises, which prompt students to apply their knowledge of sociology to the world around them
- Tables and figures, some with sticker-style captions and Think About It questions
- Two series of tables, Tracking Sociological Perspectives and Summing Up, which aid students in their review of chapter content
- Photographs and cartoons
- Online Learning Center icons, which alert students to relevant material on the book's companion website
- Boldfaced key terms
- *Sociology Matters* sections at the end of each chapter, which point out the relevance of a chapter's content to students' lives
- Numbered 10-point chapter summary
- End-of-chapter key terms list with page references
- End-of-book Appendix, "Careers in Sociology"
- End-of-book glossary with page references

## What's New in the Sixth Edition?

The most important changes in this edition include the following (refer as well to the chapter-by-chapter list of changes on pages xii–xvii).

## CONTENT

- Six new key terms have been added, along with related coverage: Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of *cultural capital* and *social capital* (Chapter 1); *differential justice* and *index crimes* (Chapter 4); *Jim Crow* (Chapter 6); and *ecological modernization* (Chapter 10).
- A new section on human sexuality, including subsections on labeling and human sexuality and on lesbian and gay relationships, has been added to Chapter 8.
- Coverage of numerous other topics has been added or augmented, including ethnography as a major research design, and observation as one component of ethnography (Chapter 1); sociobiologists' emphasis on human nature in general, rather than on individuals or racial/ethnic groups (Chapter 2); how ascribed statuses such as gender, race, and ethnicity can influence the way people see themselves within formal organizations (Chapter 3); the Second Life virtual world (Chapter 3); the tendency for white-collar crime to be prosecuted less vigorously than other types of crime (Chapter 4); hate crime (Chapter 4); crime statistics, including subsections on index crimes and victimization surveys and on crime trends (Chapter 4); modern-day slavery and human trafficking (Chapter 5); historical caste systems in the United States and South Africa (Chapter 5); the current trend toward a bipolar income distribution in the United States, and the tendency of federal and state tax policies to accentuate it (Chapter 5); the reduction in intergenerational mobility among American men since 1960 (Chapter 5); functions of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (Chapter 5); social and environmental problems associated with globalization (Chapter 5); the demographic trend toward a "majority minority," and the resulting shift in the color line (Chapter 6); recent census findings on the growth of the Mexican American population in the last decade (Chapter 6); new state laws requiring voters to show a photo ID as an example of institutional discrimination (Chapter 6); disadvantages of the traditional gender role for boys, in academic settings and in the job market (Chapter 7); comparison of gender inequality among the rich and the poor (Chapter 7); the effect of unemployment on gender inequality (Chapter 7); concentrations of power brought about by globalization (Chapter 9); the global power elite (Chapter 9); the federal government's movement away from *laissez-faire* economics and toward support for distressed financial institutions and automakers following the recent economic downturn (Chapter 9); the move toward capitalism in communist and formerly communist countries (Chapter 9); competition between Chinese capitalists and multinational

corporations (Chapter 9); the cumulative effect of social class differences on health (Chapter 10); pollution of surface and groundwater by industry and agriculture, and the resulting health problems (Chapter 10); globalization of the environmental justice movement (Chapter 10); global social movements (Chapter 11); emergence of a worldwide antiglobalization movement (Chapter 11); global offshoring, including discussion of Apple’s use of outsourced labor in China (Chapter 11); and biotechnology, including discussion of electronically controlled artificial limbs and the use of cell phones instead of genetic engineering to improve agriculture in developing countries (Chapter 11).

- Seven new chapter-opening passages have been added on topics including how sociologists would study student-led campus tours (Chapter 1); the cultural meanings attached to the hooded sweatshirt (Chapter 2); the contrast between poverty in Niger and the great wealth of the world’s multi-billionaires (Chapter 5); the demographic trend toward a “majority minority” (Chapter 6); the economic and political significance of the attack on the World Trade Center on 9/11 (Chapter 9); the Gulf Coast oil spill (Chapter 10); and the Occupy Wall Street movement (Chapter 11).

## PEDAGOGY

- Fourteen new Use Your Sociological Imagination exercises challenge students to apply what they have learned to their own life experiences.
- Seven new chapter-opening passages spark student interest.
- Five new cartoons highlight sociological issues.
- Two new figures illustrate important sociological trends and developments.
- A new series of tables, Tracking Sociological Perspectives, highlights coverage of the major sociological perspectives.

## Teaching and Learning with Sociology Matters

A wealth of complimentary teaching and learning resources is available to students and instructors who use *Sociology Matters*. Students will benefit from the free study aids accessible to them at McGraw-Hill’s website, [www.mhhe.com/schaeferm6e](http://www.mhhe.com/schaeferm6e), including an online glossary and self-quizzes containing multiple-choice and true-false questions.

Instructors also have an Online Learning Center devoted to their needs. They may choose from the following resources:

- Instructor's Manual
- Test Bank
- Chapter PowerPoint slides

Instructors may also take advantage of two new offerings, McGraw-Hill's Create™, a custom publishing system, and CourseSmart, an adaptive learning system available through McGraw-Hill Connect.



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## What's New in Each Chapter?

### CHAPTER 1 THE SOCIOLOGICAL VIEW

- Chapter-opening discussion of how sociologists would study student-led campus tours
- Discussion of how different social scientists might study the impact of the global recession that began in 2008
- Discussion of the common misconception that the area bordering Mexico in the southwestern United States is a high-crime area

- Discussion of the high suicide rate in Las Vegas as an illustration of Durkheim's emphasis on the relationship between suicide and social isolation
- Expanded coverage of Pierre Bourdieu's contribution to sociology, including key term coverage of cultural capital and social capital
- Discussion of the feminist perspective on sports
- Discussion of the interactionist perspective on a new form of commuter behavior called *slugging*
- Discussion of the relationship between people's relative knowledge and their choice of news media as an example of correlation
- Coverage of ethnography as a major research design, and observation as one component of ethnography
- Discussion of content analyses of (a) gender stereotyping in children's coloring books and (b) televised sports coverage of female and male athletes
- Discussion of the Northeast Florida Center for Community Initiatives (CCI), based at the University of North Florida, and its Magnolia Project as examples of applied sociology

## CHAPTER 2 CULTURE AND SOCIALIZATION

- Chapter opening on the cultural meanings attached to the hooded sweatshirt and their consequences for Mark Zuckerberg and Trayvon Martin
- Discussion of the contempt for Americans prevalent in the subculture of Indian call-center workers
- Discussion of ultraconservative countercultural militia groups in the United States
- Discussion of 2010 census findings on the use of languages other than English as a primary language, with figure
- Discussion of the way parents teach small children the norms of heterosexuality
- Discussion of sociobiologists' emphasis on human nature in general rather than on individuals or racial/ethnic groups
- Discussion of the negative influences that Black families must deal with in raising their children
- Social media cartoon
- Discussion of high school students' research on prospective colleges as an illustration of anticipatory socialization
- Two Use Your Sociological Imagination exercises



### CHAPTER 3 SOCIAL INTERACTION, GROUPS, AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

- Extensively revised and updated coverage of the Second Life virtual world, with Use Your Sociological Imagination exercise
- Discussion of how ascribed statuses such as gender, race, and ethnicity can influence the way people see themselves within formal organizations
- Use Your Sociological Imagination exercise

### CHAPTER 4 DEVIANCE AND SOCIAL CONTROL

- Discussion of differential justice, with key term treatment
- Discussion of ethnic succession in organized crime
- Discussion of the tendency for white-collar crime to be prosecuted less vigorously than other types of crime
- Subsection on hate crime, with figure “Categorization of Reported Hate Crimes”
- Extensively revised and updated section on crime statistics, with subsections on (a) index crimes and victimization surveys and (b) crime trends
- Discussion of the rapid escalation of homicide rates in developing countries that supply illegal drugs to industrialized countries

### CHAPTER 5 STRATIFICATION IN THE UNITED STATES AND GLOBAL INEQUALITY

- Chapter opening contrasting poverty in Niger with great wealth among the world’s multibillionaires
- Discussion of modern-day slavery and human trafficking
- Discussion of historical caste systems in the United States and South Africa
- Discussion of the current trend toward a bipolar income distribution in the United States
- Discussion of methods of measuring social class in dual-income families
- Discussion of the tendency of federal and state tax policies to accentuate the trend toward income inequality in the United States
- Discussion of the sinking of the *Titanic* as an example of the connection between social class and life chances
- Discussion of the reduction in intergenerational mobility among American men since 1960

- Discussion of the functions of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund
- Discussion of the social and environmental problems associated with globalization
- Three Use Your Sociological Imagination exercises

## CHAPTER 6 INEQUALITY BY RACE AND ETHNICITY

- Chapter-opening discussion of the demographic trend toward a “majority minority” and a resulting shift in the color line
- Discussion of recent census findings that from 2000 to 2010, Mexican Americans accounted for 42 percent of the nation’s population growth, and that those who were born in the United States far outnumbered those who immigrated
- Key term coverage of Jim Crow laws as a historical example of discriminatory behavior
- Discussion of new state laws requiring voters to show a photo ID as an example of institutional discrimination, with cartoon

## CHAPTER 7 INEQUALITY BY GENDER

- Discussion of stay-at-home fathers
- Discussion of the disadvantages of the traditional gender role for boys, in academic settings and in the job market
- Discussion of the United Nations’ effort to improve the rights of Afghani women as an example of the social construction of gender roles
- Comparison of gender inequality among the rich and the poor, and discussion of the effect of unemployment on gender inequality
- Use Your Sociological Imagination exercise

## CHAPTER 8 SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS: FAMILY AND RELIGION

- Section, “Human Sexuality,” with subsections on (a) labeling and human sexuality and (b) lesbian and gay relationships
- Discussion of religious organizations’ use of Twitter and Facebook to provide social support
- Two Use Your Sociological Imagination exercises

## CHAPTER 9 SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS: EDUCATION, GOVERNMENT, AND THE ECONOMY

- Chapter-opening passage on the global economic and political significance of the attack on the World Trade Center on 9/11

- Discussion of the global concentrations of power brought about by globalization
- Discussion of research on the global power elite
- Discussion of the federal government's continued movement away from the laissez-faire economic model and toward support for distressed financial institutions and automakers during the economic downturn that began in 2008
- Discussion of the recent adoption of capitalism in communist and formerly communist countries
- Figure, "World's Largest Economies"
- Discussion of competition between Chinese capitalists and multinational corporations
- Discussion of criticism of microfinancing, especially in India
- Two Use Your Sociological Imagination exercises

## **CHAPTER 10 POPULATION, COMMUNITY, HEALTH, AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

- Chapter-opening passage on the Gulf Coast oil spill
- Discussion of the cumulative effect of social class differences on health
- Discussion of the pollution of surface water and groundwater by industry and agriculture, and resulting health problems
- Section on ecological modernization, with key term treatment
- Discussion of the globalization of the environmental justice movement

## **CHAPTER 11 SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, SOCIAL CHANGE, AND TECHNOLOGY**

- Chapter-opening passage on the Occupy Wall Street movement
- Discussion of global social movements
- Discussion of the mobilization of social movements by institutional insiders
- Discussion of the emergence of a worldwide antiglobalization movement
- Extensively revised and updated subsection on global offshoring, including discussion of Apple's use of outsourced labor in China
- Extensively revised and updated subsection on biotechnology, including discussion of (a) electronically controlled artificial limbs and (b) use of cell phones to improve agriculture in

developing countries, as an alternative to genetically modified crops

- Two Use Your Sociological Imagination exercises

## Acknowledgments

Elizabeth Morgan, who collaborated with me on the first edition, as well as on several editions of my longer introductory textbooks for undergraduates, brought her experience and knowledge to the sixth edition of *Sociology Matters*.

I deeply appreciate the contributions my editors made to this book. Art Pomponio and Erin Melloy helped to shape this fresh approach to sociology for undergraduates. This edition also benefits from the continuing contributions made by Gina Boedeker, Managing Director, Products and Markets for Sociology, and Rhona Robbin, Director of Development for Sociology, who have lent their expertise and experience to this book for several editions.

As is evident from these acknowledgments, the preparation of a textbook is truly a team effort. The most valuable member of this effort continues to be my wife, Sandy, who provides the support so necessary to my creative and scholarly activities.

I have had the good fortune to be able to introduce students to sociology for many years. Those students have been enormously helpful in spurring my own sociological imagination. In ways I can fully appreciate but cannot fully acknowledge, their questions in class and queries in the hallway have found their way into this textbook.

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## Academic Reviewers

Many sociologists reviewed this book and offered constructive and thorough evaluations of its content. I would like to thank the following

reviewers for their thoughtful comments on the sixth edition manuscript and its features:

Gayle Gordon Bouzard <i>Texas State University–San Marcos</i>	Clayton Peoples <i>University of Nevada–Reno</i>
Jared D. Cootz <i>Lone Star College–Montgomery</i>	John Phelan <i>Western Oklahoma State College</i>
Kathleen Grant <i>Macon State College</i>	Leonard A. Steverson <i>South Georgia College</i>

I would also like to thank the reviewers of the fifth edition for their contributions:

Todd E. Bernhardt <i>Broward Community College</i>	Barbara Feldman <i>Seton Hall University</i>
Rosemarie Best <i>Warren County Community College</i>	Cynthia Ganote <i>Vanderbilt University</i>
Henry Borne <i>Holy Cross College</i>	William Gronfein <i>Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis</i>
Gayle Gordon Bouzard <i>Texas State University–San Marcos</i>	Bram Hamovitch <i>Lakeland Community College</i>
Junell Chapman <i>Ohio Northern University</i>	Kristen Hefley <i>University of Oklahoma, Norman</i>
Cynthia Crisel <i>Arkansas State University–Mountain Home</i>	Michelle Jacob <i>MiraCosta College</i>
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# *The Sociological View*

**What Is Sociology?**

**What Is Sociological Theory?**

**The Development of Sociology**

**Major Theoretical Perspectives**

**What Is the Scientific Method?**

**Major Research Designs**

**Ethics of Research**

**Applied and Clinical Sociology**



It is a scene repeated many times a week on college campuses across the nation. An undergraduate leads a group of prospective students on a tour of what could eventually become their new home. The group visits the library, the student center, and the school's recreational facilities. While following a well-rehearsed script meant to highlight the college's strengths, the tour leader fields questions about student dormitories and laundry facilities.

How would sociologists view this everyday event? First, they might consider who is not present: the many young people who will not complete high school, or who do not plan to attend college even part-time. Second, they might note how preoccupied some students and parents are with questions about financial assistance. A fortunate few seem unconcerned about the cost of tuition, and ask instead about academic enrichment programs, such as field trips and study abroad.

Sociologists might also ask about the demographic composition of this group of prospective students. Do the women outnumber the men, as they do on most college campuses? How diverse is this group



in terms of age, race, and ethnicity? Are some of these young people concerned about the college's ability to accommodate learning or physical disabilities?

Finally, sociologists might wish to study the college's organization. What is the relationship between faculty and administration? Are "town-gown" relations cordial or strained? Is the college surrounded by run-down student apartments and pizza parlors, or by residential neighborhoods where students cannot afford to live—or both?

Whatever the subject, sociologists study social patterns that are shared by many people. This focus on the group rather than on the individual is a distinguishing feature of sociology. As the sociologist C. Wright Mills wrote more than half a century ago, if one person is unemployed, his difficulty is a personal problem, but if thousands of people are unemployed, their difficulty is a social problem. Sociologists look for the root causes of such social patterns in the way society is organized and governed (Mills [1959] 2000a).

As a field of study, sociology is extremely broad in scope. You'll see throughout this book the tremendous range of topics sociologists investigate—from tattooing to tweeting, from neighborhood groups to global economic patterns, from peer pressure to class consciousness. Sociologists look at how other people influence your behavior; how the government, religion, and the economy affect you; and how you yourself affect others. These aren't just academic questions. Sociology matters because it illuminates your life and your world, whether you are going to school, working for pay, or raising a family.

This first chapter introduces sociology as a social science, one that is characterized by a special skill called the *sociological imagination*. We'll meet four pioneering thinkers—Émile Durkheim, Max Weber, Karl Marx, and W.E.B. DuBois—and discuss the concepts and theoretical perspectives that grew out of their work. We'll see how sociologists use the scientific method to investigate the many questions they pose. Sociologists use surveys, ethnographic studies, experiments, and existing sources in their research; they often wrestle with ethical issues that arise during their studies. We'll examine some practical uses for their research at the end of the chapter.

## What Is Sociology?

**Sociology** is the scientific study of social behavior and human groups. It focuses primarily on the influence of social relationships on people's attitudes and behavior and on how societies are established and change. This textbook deals with such varied topics as families, the workplace, street gangs, business firms, political parties, genetic engineering, schools, religions, and labor unions. It is concerned with love, poverty, conformity, discrimination, illness, technology, and community.

## THE SOCIOLOGICAL IMAGINATION

In attempting to understand social behavior, sociologists rely on a unique type of creative thinking. C. Wright Mills described such thinking as the *sociological imagination*—an awareness of the relationship between an individual and the wider society, both today and in the past. This awareness allows all of us (not just sociologists) to comprehend the links between our immediate, personal social settings and the remote, impersonal social world that surrounds us and helps to shape us (Mills [1959] 2000a).

A key element in the sociological imagination is the ability to view one's own society as an outsider would, rather than only from the perspective of personal experiences and cultural biases. Consider something as simple as the practice of eating while walking. In the United States people think nothing of consuming coffee or chocolate as they walk along the street. Sociologists would see this as a pattern of acceptable behavior because others regard it as acceptable. Yet sociologists need to go beyond one culture to place the practice in perspective. This "normal" behavior is quite unacceptable in some other parts of the world. For example, in Japan people do not eat while walking. Streetside sellers and vending machines dispense food everywhere, but the Japanese will stop to eat or drink whatever they buy before they continue on their way. In their eyes, to engage in another activity while eating shows disrespect for the food preparers, even if the food comes out of a vending machine.

The sociological imagination allows us to go beyond personal experiences and observations to understand broader public issues. Divorce, for example, is unquestionably a personal hardship for a husband and wife who split apart. However, C. Wright Mills advocated using the sociological imagination to view divorce not simply as the personal problem of a particular man or woman but rather as a societal concern. From this perspective, an increase in the divorce rate serves to redefine a major social institution, the family. Today, households frequently include stepparents and half-sisters or -brothers whose parents have divorced and remarried. Through the complexities of the blended family, this private concern becomes a public issue that affects schools, government agencies, businesses, and religious institutions.

The sociological imagination is an empowering tool. It allows us to look beyond a limited understanding of things to see the world and its people in a new way and through a broader lens than we might otherwise use. It may be as simple as understanding why a roommate prefers country music to hip-hop, or it may open up a whole different way of understanding whole populations. For example, in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, many citizens wanted to understand how Muslims throughout the world perceived their country, and why. From time to time this textbook will offer you the chance to exercise your own sociological imagination in a variety of situations. We'll begin with one that may be close to home for you.



You are walking down the street in your city or hometown. Looking around, you can't help noticing that half or more of the people you see are overweight. How do you explain your observation? If you were C. Wright Mills, how do you think you would explain it?

## SOCIOLOGY AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

Is sociology a science? The term *science* refers to the body of knowledge obtained by methods based on systematic observation. Like researchers in other scientific disciplines, sociologists engage in organized, systematic study of phenomena (in this case, human behavior) in order to enhance understanding. All scientists, whether studying mushrooms or murderers, attempt to collect precise information through methods of study that are as objective as possible. They rely on careful recording of observations and accumulation of data.

Of course, there is a great difference between sociology and physics, between psychology and astronomy. For this reason, the sciences are commonly divided into natural and social sciences. *Natural science* is the study of the physical features of nature and the ways in which they interact and change. Astronomy, biology, chemistry, geology, and physics are all natural sciences. *Social science* is the study of various aspects of human society. The social sciences include sociology, anthropology, economics, history, psychology, and political science.

These social science disciplines have a common focus on the social behavior of people, yet each has a particular orientation. Anthropologists usually study past cultures and preindustrial societies that continue today, as well as the origins of men and women. Economists explore the ways in which people produce and exchange goods and services, along with money and other resources. Historians are concerned with the peoples and events of the past and their significance for us today. Political scientists study international relations, the workings of government, and the exercise of power and authority. Psychologists investigate personality and individual behavior. So what does *sociology* focus on? It emphasizes the influence that society has on people's attitudes and behavior and the ways in which people shape society. Humans are social animals; therefore, sociologists examine our social relationships scientifically.

Let's consider how different social scientists would study the impact of the global recession that began in 2008. Historians would stress the pattern of long-term fluctuations in world markets. Economists would discuss the roles played by government, the private sector, and the world monetary system. Psychologists would study individual cases of emotional stress among workers, investors, and business owners. And political scientists would study the degree of cooperation among nations—or lack of it—in seeking economic solutions.

What approach would sociologists take? They might note a change in marital patterns in the United States. Since the recession began, the median age of first marriage has risen to 28.7 years for men and 26.7 years for women. Sociologists might also observe that today, fewer people are making that trip to the altar than in the past. If the U.S. marriage rate had remained the same as it was in 2006, about 4 million more Americans would have married by 2010.

Similarly, sociologists might evaluate the recession's impact on education. In the United States, private school enrollment from elementary through high school declined from 13.6 percent in 2006 to 12.8 percent in 2010 as families cut back on nonessential expenditures. Sociologists might even consider the recession's effect on environmental actions, such as carpooling. In all but one of the 50 largest metropolitan areas in the United States (New Orleans), the percentage of working people aged 16 to 64 dropped significantly during the recession. When friends and co-workers are laid off, carpools shrink and more people end up driving to work alone (El Nasser and Overberg 2011).

Sociologists put their sociological imaginations to work on a variety of subjects—including gender, the family, human ecology, and religion. Throughout this textbook, you will see how sociologists develop theories and conduct research to study and better understand societies. And you will be encouraged to use your own sociological imagination to examine the United States (and other societies) from the viewpoint of a respectful but questioning outsider.

## **SOCIOLOGY AND COMMON SENSE**

Sociology focuses on the study of human behavior. Yet we all have experience with human behavior and at least some knowledge of it. All of us might well have theories about why people buy lottery tickets, for example, or why people become homeless. Our theories and opinions typically come from “common sense”—that is, from our experiences and conversations, from what we read, from what we see on television, and so forth.

In our daily lives, we rely on common sense to get us through many unfamiliar situations. However, this commonsense knowledge, while sometimes accurate, is not always reliable, because it rests on commonly held beliefs rather than on systematic analysis of facts. It was once considered “common sense” to accept the idea that the earth was flat—a view rightly questioned by Pythagoras and Aristotle. Incorrect commonsense notions are not just a part of the distant past; they remain with us today.

Contrary to the saying “The love of money is the root of all evil,” for example, sociologists have found that in reality, affluence brings not only nicer cars and longer vacations but also better health and a significantly reduced exposure to pollution of all types. Another commonsense belief, “Love knows no reason,” does not stand up to sociological research on courtship and marriage. The choice of a lifetime partner is generally limited by societal expectations and confined within boundaries defined by age, money, education, ethnicity, religion, and even height. Cupid's arrow flies only in certain directions (Ruane and Cerulo 2004).

Contrary to the common notion that women tend to be chatty compared to men, furthermore, researchers have found little difference between the sexes in terms of their talkativeness. Over a five-year period

they placed unobtrusive microphones on 396 college students in various fields, at campuses in Mexico as well as the United States. They found that both men and women spoke about 16,000 words per day (Mehl et al. 2007).

Similarly, common sense tells us that today, violent crime holds communities on the border between the United States and Mexico in a kind of death grip, creating an atmosphere of lawlessness reminiscent of the old Wild West. Based on televised news stories and on concerns expressed by elected officials throughout the southwestern United States, this assertion may sound reasonable; however, it is not true. Although some communities in Mexico have fallen under the control of drug cartels, the story is different on the U.S. side of the border. All available crime data—including murder, extortion, robbery, and kidnapping rates, whether reported or documented in victim surveys—show that in the hundred-mile-deep border area stretching from San Diego to Brownsville, Texas, crime rates are significantly lower than in similar U.S. cities outside the area. Furthermore, the crime rate has been dropping faster near the border than in other similar-size U.S. communities for at least the last 15 years (Gillum 2011; Gomez et al. 2011).

Like other social scientists, sociologists do not accept something as a fact because “everyone knows it.” Instead, each piece of information must be tested and recorded, then analyzed in relation to other data. Sociologists rely on scientific studies in order to describe and understand a social environment. At times, the findings of sociologists may seem like common sense, because they deal with familiar facets of everyday life. The difference is that such findings have been *tested* by researchers. Common sense now tells us that the earth is round. However, that particular commonsense notion is based on centuries of scientific work that began with the breakthroughs made by Pythagoras and Aristotle.

## What Is Sociological Theory?

Why do people commit suicide? One traditional commonsense answer is that people inherit the desire to kill themselves. Another view is that sunspots drive people to take their own lives. These explanations may not seem especially convincing to contemporary researchers, but they represent beliefs widely held as recently as 1900.

Sociologists are not particularly interested in why any one individual commits suicide; they are more concerned with identifying the social forces that systematically cause some people to take their own lives. In order to undertake this research, sociologists develop a theory that offers a general explanation of suicidal behavior.

We can think of theories as attempts to explain events, forces, materials, ideas, or behavior in a comprehensive manner. Within sociology, a *theory* is a set of statements that seeks to explain problems, actions, or

behavior. An effective theory may have both explanatory and predictive power. That is, it can help us to see the relationships among seemingly isolated phenomena, as well as to understand how one type of change in an environment leads to other changes.

The World Health Organization (2010) estimates that nearly 1 million people commit suicide each year. More than a hundred years ago, a sociologist tried to look at suicide data scientifically. Émile Durkheim ([1897] 1951) developed a highly original theory about the relationship between suicide and social factors. He was primarily concerned not with the personalities of individual suicide victims but rather with suicide *rates* and how they varied from country to country. As a result, when he looked at the number of reported suicides in France, England, and Denmark in 1869, he noted the total population of each country so that he could determine the rate of suicide in each. He found that whereas England had only 67 reported suicides per million inhabitants, France had 135 per million and Denmark had 277 per million. The question then became: “Why did Denmark have a comparatively high rate of reported suicides?”

Durkheim went much deeper into his investigation of suicide rates; the result was his landmark work *Suicide*, published in 1897. He refused to automatically accept unproven explanations regarding suicide, including the beliefs that cosmic forces or inherited tendencies caused such deaths. Instead, he focused on such problems as the cohesiveness or lack of cohesiveness of religious, social, and occupational groups.

Durkheim’s research suggested that suicide, while a solitary act, is related to group life. Protestants had much higher suicide rates than Catholics; the unmarried had much higher rates than married people; soldiers were more likely to take their lives than civilians. In addition, there seemed to be higher rates of suicide in times of peace than in times of war and revolution, and in times of economic instability and recession rather than in times of prosperity. Durkheim concluded that the suicide rate of a society reflected the extent to which people were or were not integrated into the group life of the society.

Émile Durkheim, like many other social scientists, developed a theory to explain how individual behavior can be understood within a social context. He pointed out the influence of groups and societal forces on what had always been viewed as a highly personal act. Clearly, Durkheim offered a more *scientific* explanation for the causes of suicide than that of sunspots or inherited tendencies. His theory has predictive power, since it suggests that suicide rates will rise or fall in conjunction with certain social and economic changes.

Of course, a theory—even the best of theories—is not a final statement about human behavior. Durkheim’s theory of suicide is no exception. Sociologists continue to examine factors that contribute to differences in suicide rates around the world and to a particular society’s rate of suicide. In Las Vegas, for example, sociologists have observed

that the chances of dying by suicide are strikingly high—twice as high as in the United States as a whole. Noting Durkheim’s emphasis on the relationship between suicide and social isolation, researchers have suggested that Las Vegas’s rapid growth and constant influx of tourists have undermined the community’s sense of permanence, even among long-time residents. Although gambling—or more accurately, losing while gambling—may seem a likely precipitating factor in suicides there, careful study of the data has allowed researchers to dismiss that explanation. What happens in Vegas may stay in Vegas, but the sense of community cohesiveness that the rest of the country enjoys may be lacking (Wray et al. 2008, 2011).



**If you were Durkheim’s successor in his research on suicide, how would you investigate the factors that may explain the increase in suicide rates among young people in the United States today?**

## The Development of Sociology

People have always been curious about sociological matters—such as how we get along with others, what we do for a living, and whom we select as our leaders. Philosophers and religious authorities of ancient and medieval societies made countless observations about human behavior. They did not test or verify their observations scientifically; nevertheless, those observations often became the foundation for moral codes. Several of the early social philosophers predicted that a systematic study of human behavior would one day emerge. Beginning in the 19th century, European theorists made pioneering contributions to the development of a science of human behavior.

### EARLY THINKERS: COMTE, MARTINEAU, AND SPENCER

The 19th century was an unsettled time in France. The French monarchy had been deposed in the revolution of 1789, and Napoleon had subsequently suffered defeat in his effort to conquer Europe. Amid this chaos, philosophers considered how society might be improved. Auguste Comte (1798–1857), credited with being the most influential of the philosophers of the early 1800s, believed that a theoretical science of society and a systematic investigation of behavior were needed to improve French society. He coined the term *sociology* to apply to the science of human behavior.

Writing in the 1800s, Comte feared that the excesses of the French Revolution had permanently impaired France’s stability. Yet he hoped that the systematic study of social behavior would eventually lead to more rational human interactions. In Comte’s hierarchy of sciences, sociology was at the top. He called it the “queen,” and its practitioners “scientist-priests.” This French theorist did not simply give sociology its name; he also presented a rather ambitious challenge to the fledgling discipline.



Scholars learned of Comte's works largely through translations by the English sociologist Harriet Martineau (1802–1876). As a sociologist, Martineau was a pathbreaker in her own right. She offered insightful observations of the customs and social practices of both her native Britain and the United States. Martineau's book *Society in America* ([1837] 1962) examines religion, politics, child rearing, and immigration in the young nation. This groundbreaking book gives special attention to social class distinctions and to such factors as gender and race. Martineau ([1838] 1989) also wrote the first book on sociological methods.

Martineau's writings emphasized the impact that the economy, law, trade, health, and population could have on social problems. She spoke out in favor of the rights of women, the emancipation of slaves, and religious tolerance. Later in life, deafness did not keep her from being an activist. In Martineau's ([1837] 1962) view, intellectuals and scholars should not simply offer observations of social conditions; they should *act* on their convictions in a manner that will benefit society. That is why Martineau conducted research on the nature of female employment and pointed to the need for further investigation of the issue (Deegan 2003; Hill and Hoecker-Drysdale 2001).

Another important contributor to the discipline of sociology is Herbert Spencer (1820–1903). A relatively prosperous Victorian Englishman, Spencer (unlike Martineau) did not feel compelled to correct or improve society; instead, he merely hoped to understand it better. Drawing on Charles Darwin's study *On the Origin of Species*, Spencer applied the concept of evolution of the species to societies in order to explain how they change, or evolve, over time. Similarly, he adapted Darwin's evolutionary view of the "survival of the fittest" by arguing that it is "natural" that some people are rich while others are poor.

Spencer's approach to societal change was extremely popular in his own lifetime. Unlike Comte, Spencer suggested that since societies are bound to change eventually, one need not be highly critical of present social arrangements or work actively for social change. This viewpoint appealed to many influential people in England and the United States who had a vested interest in the status quo and were suspicious of social thinkers who endorsed change.

## ÉMILE DURKHEIM

As discussed earlier, Émile Durkheim made many pioneering contributions to sociology, including his important theoretical work on suicide. The son of a rabbi, Durkheim (1858–1917) was educated in both France and Germany. He established an impressive academic reputation and was appointed one of the first professors of sociology in France. Above all, Durkheim will be remembered for his insistence that behavior must be understood within a larger social context, not just in individualistic terms.