



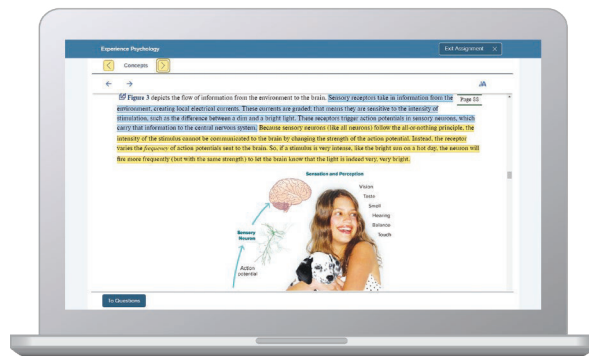


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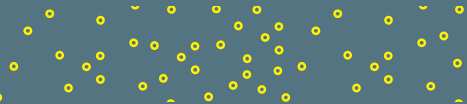
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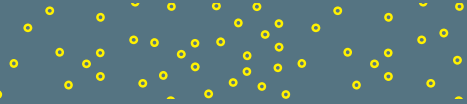


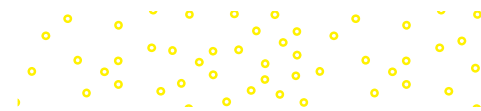


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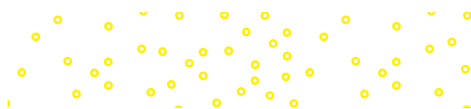


sociology in modules

sixth edition

Richard T. Schaefer
Professor Emeritus

DEPAUL UNIVERSITY





SOCIOLOGY IN MODULES, SIXTH EDITION

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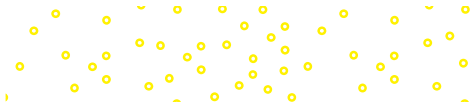
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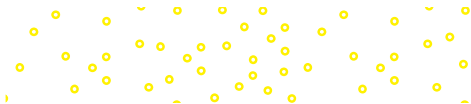
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dedication

To my grandchildren, Matilda and Reuben. May they enjoy exploring life’s possibilities.



about the author

Richard T. Schaefer Professor Emeritus, DePaul University
BA Northwestern University; MA, PhD University of Chicago



Courtesy of Richard T. Schaefer

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 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. He holds the Emeritus Professor title from both Western Illinois University and DePaul University. 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 fourteenth edition of *Sociology: A Brief Introduction* (McGraw Hill, 2022), the seventh edition of *Sociology Matters* (McGraw Hill, 2018), and, with Robert Feldman, *Sociology and Your Life with P.O.W.E.R. Learning* (McGraw Hill, 2016). He is also the author of *Racial and Ethnic Groups*, now in its fifteenth edition (2021), *Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the USA* (first edition, 2014), and *Race and Ethnicity in the United States*, eighth edition (2018), all published by Pearson. Together with William Zellner he coauthored the ninth edition of *Extraordinary Groups* (Waveland Press, 2015). Dr. Schaefer served as the general editor of the three-volume *Encyclopedia of Race, Ethnicity, and Society*, published by Sage in 2008. These books have been translated into Chinese (both short- and long-form), Indonesian, Japanese, Sinhalese, Portuguese, Spanish, and Turkish, as well as adapted for use in Canadian colleges.

Dr. Schaefer's 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."

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chapter opening excerpts

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“Forging Selfhood: Categorisation and Identity in Arizona’s Prison Wildfire Programme” by Lindsey Raisa Feldman 79

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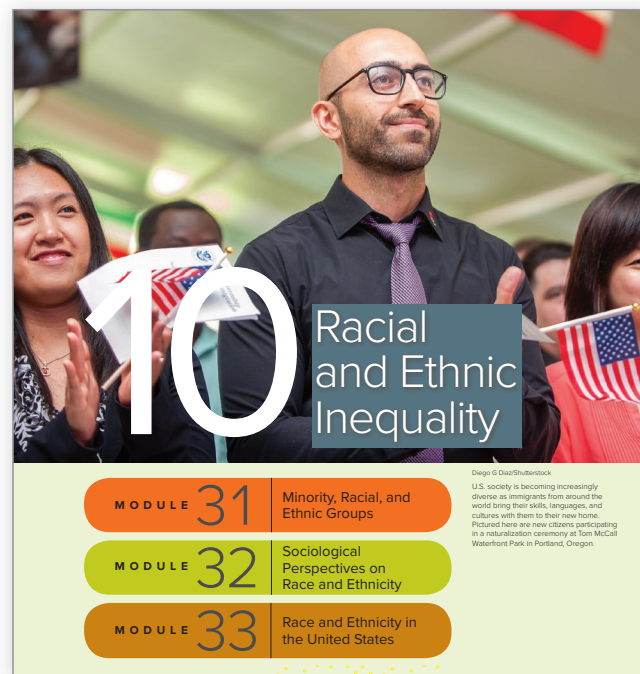
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Modules Work for Instructors and Students

Sociology in Modules allows you to assign the content you want in the order you prefer, and the format promotes student learning and success by presenting content in small, manageable chunks.



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McGraw Hill's Content Collections Powered by Create® is a self-service website that enables instructors to create custom course materials—print and eBooks—by drawing upon McGraw Hill's comprehensive, cross-disciplinary content. Choose what you want from our high-quality textbooks, articles, and cases. Combine it with your own content quickly and easily, and tap into other rights-secured, third-party content such as readings, cases, and articles. Content can be arranged in a way that makes the most sense for your course and you can include the course name and information as well. Choose the best format for your course: color print, black-and-white print, or eBook. The eBook can be included in your Connect course and is available on the free ReadAnywhere app for smartphone or tablet access as well. When you are finished customizing, you will receive a free digital copy to review in just minutes! Visit McGraw Hill Create®—www.mcgrawhillcreate.com — today and begin building!

Why Does Sociology Matter?

Whether you're a first-time student, someone who is returning to the classroom, or even an instructor leading a discussion, you've probably thought about that question. Sociologists examine society, from small-scale interactions to the broadest social changes, which can be daunting for any student to take in. *Sociology in Modules*, Sixth Edition, bridges the essential sociological theories, research, and concepts and the everyday realities we all experience. The program highlights the distinctive ways in which sociologists explore human social behavior—and how their research findings can be used to help students think critically about the broader principles that guide their lives. In doing so, it helps students begin to think sociologically, using what they have learned to evaluate human interactions and institutions independently.

What do a police officer, a nurse, and a local business owner need to know about the community that they serve? It turns out quite a lot. And *Sociology in Modules* is poised to give students the tools they need to take sociology with them as they pursue their studies and their careers, and as they get involved in their communities and the world at large. Its emphasis on real-world applications enables students to see the relevance of sociological concepts to contemporary issues and events as well as students' everyday lives. In addition, the digital tools in Connect foster student preparedness for a more productive and engaging experience in class and better grades on exams.

Help Your Students Succeed with Connect



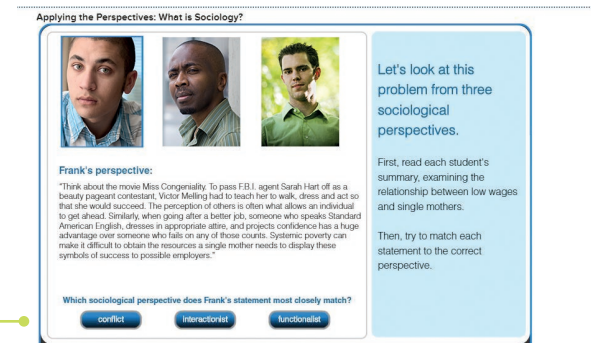
McGraw Hill Connect is an integrated educational platform that includes assignable and assessable quizzes, exercises, and interactive activities, all associated with learning objectives for *Sociology in Modules*, Sixth Edition. Videos, interactive assessments, links to news articles about current issues with accompanying questions ("NewsFlash"), and scenario-based activities engage students and add real-world perspective to the introductory sociology course. In addition, printable, exportable reports show how well each student or section is performing on each course segment. Here are some of the media-rich activities that will help your students succeed in the introductory sociology course:

Application-Based Activities. At the higher level of Bloom's, McGraw Hill's Application-Based Activities are highly interactive, automatically graded, online learn-by-doing exercises that provide students a safe space to apply their knowledge and problem-solving skills to real-world scenarios. Each scenario addresses key concepts and skills that students must use to work through and solve course-specific problems, resulting in improved critical thinking and development of relevant workplace skills. Topics for Sociology include "Deviance and Social Control," "Racial and Ethnic Inequality," and "Socialization and the Life Course," where students explore and navigate life choices and challenges.

Applying the Perspectives. In Applying the Perspectives, students examine a problem—global inequality, gender stratification, or family and intimate relationships—from three sociological perspectives and apply their critical thinking skills to align theories with the appropriate perspective.



icons from left to right: Shutterstock/Tati Nova photo Mexico; Ingram Publishing/SuperStock; Glow Images; Hero/Corbis/Glow Images; Marc Romanelli/Blend Images LLC; large photo (Maria): Shutterstock/Tati Nova photo Mexico



(Left): bolland/Getty Images; (Middle): azndc/Getty Images; (Right): TriggerPhoto/Getty Images

Concept Clips. Concept Clips are animations designed to engage students and walk them through some of the more complex concepts in the course and conclude with assessment questions to demonstrate their understanding. Topics include research variables, functions of religion, and power and authority.

Connect Interactive Activities. Activities such as *Visual Data Analysis*, *Real Life Scenarios*, and *Taking Sociology with You* are designed to engage students at a higher level than standard multiple-choice assessment questions and offer instructors a wide variety of rich content options to choose from.

Mobile Interface. Put students first with Connect's intuitive mobile interface, which gives students and instructors flexible, convenient, anytime-anywhere access to all components of the Connect platform. It provides seamless integration of learning tools and places the most important priorities up front in a new "to-do" list with a calendar view across all Connect courses. Enjoy on-the-go access with the new mobile interface designed for optimal use of tablet functionality.

ReadAnywhere. Read or study when it's convenient for you with McGraw Hill's free ReadAnywhere app. Available for iOS or Android smartphones or tablets, ReadAnywhere gives users access to McGraw Hill tools including the eBook and SmartBook 2.0 or Adaptive Learning Assignments in Connect. Take notes, highlight, and complete assignments offline—all of your work will sync when you open the app with WiFi access. Log in with your McGraw Hill Connect username and password to start learning—anytime, anywhere!

Concept Clip: Sociology as a Science

Watch the Concept Clip and then respond to the following questions.



Writing Assignment

McGraw Hill's new Writing Assignment Plus tool delivers a learning experience that improves students' written communication skills and conceptual understanding with every assignment. Assign, monitor, and provide feedback on writing more efficiently and grade assignments within McGraw Hill Connect®. Writing Assignment Plus gives you time-saving tools with a just-in-time basic writing and originality checker.

Features include:

- Grammar/writing checking with McGraw Hill learning resources
- Originality checker with McGraw Hill learning resources
- Writing stats
- Rubric building and scoring
- Ability to assign draft and final deadline milestones
- Tablet ready and tools for all learners

Provide a Smarter Text and Better Value with SMARTBOOK®

Available within Connect, **SmartBook®** makes study time as productive and efficient as possible by identifying and closing knowledge gaps. SmartBook identifies what an individual student knows and doesn't know based on the student's confidence level, responses to questions, and other factors.

SmartBook builds an optimal, personalized learning path for each student, so students spend less time on concepts they already understand and more time on those they don't. As a student engages with SmartBook, the reading experience continuously adapts by highlighting the most impactful content a student needs to learn at that moment in time. This ensures that every minute spent with SmartBook is returned to the student as the most value-added minute possible. The result? More confidence, better grades, and greater success.

SmartBook is optimized for phones and tablets and accessible for students with disabilities using interactive features. Just like our eBook and ReadAnywhere app, SmartBook is also available both online and offline.

Prepare Students for Higher-Level Thinking

Aimed at the higher levels of Bloom's taxonomy, **Power of Process for Sociology** helps students improve critical thinking skills and allows instructors to assess these skills efficiently and effectively in an online environment. Power of Process is available through Connect and includes a set of preloaded classic Sociology readings for instructors to use in creating assignments. Using a scaffolded framework such as understanding, synthesizing, and analyzing, Power of Process moves students toward higher-level thinking and analysis

Teaching Resources

Instructor's Manual. The Instructor's Manual includes detailed chapter outlines and chapter summaries, learning objectives, a chapter-by-chapter bulleted list of new content, key terms, essay questions, and critical thinking questions.

PowerPoint Slides. Now accessibility compliant, PowerPoint Slides include bulleted lecture points, figures, and maps. They can be used as is or modified to meet the instructor's individual needs.

Test Bank. The Test Bank includes multiple-choice, true-false, and essay questions for every chapter. The Test Builder tool allows the instructor to create customized exams using either publisher-supplied test items or the instructor's own questions.

Test Builder. Available within Connect, Test Builder is a cloud-based tool that enables instructors to format tests that can be printed and administered within a Learning Management System. Test Builder offers a modern, streamlined interface for easy content configuration that matches course needs, without requiring a download.

Test Builder enables instructors to:

- Access all test bank content from a particular title
- Easily pinpoint the most relevant content through robust filtering options
- Manipulate the order of questions or scramble questions and/or answers
- Pin questions to a specific location within a test

Power of Process for Sociology



- Determine your preferred treatment of algorithmic questions
- Choose the layout and spacing
- Add instructions and configure default settings

Remote Proctoring. New remote proctoring and browser-locking capabilities are seamlessly integrated within Connect to offer more control over the integrity of online assessments. Instructors can enable security options that restrict browser activity, monitor student behavior, and verify the identity of each student. Instant and detailed reporting gives instructors an at-a-glance view of potential concerns, thereby avoiding personal bias and supporting evidence-based claims.

Chapter Changes

Changes to the sixth edition reflect new research findings, updated statistics, and hot topics and issues. In addition, a new feature added to every chapter is the "Writing Sociology" question included in the Mastering This Chapter summary-and-review section.

Chapter 1: Understanding Sociology

- Chapter-opening photo illustrating environmental cleanup
- Chapter-opening vignette about low-wage workers in the affluent Silicon Valley
- Extensive discussion of how different social sciences would address the issue of climate change
- Cartoon illustrating why different people have different attitudes to climate change

- “Thinking Critically” question about Marx’s influence on current thinking
- Photo illustrating an interactionist study of new patterns of facial coverings and social distancing during the coronavirus pandemic
- Research Today box, “The Third Place,” including impact of coronavirus on behavior in public places
- Example highlighting male vs. female acceptable behavior on the tennis court
- Example and photo highlighting how conflict theory focuses on issues of long-term social and racial inequality
- Sociology in the Global Community box, “Influencers Worldwide”

Chapter 2: Sociological Research

- Chapter-opening photo illustrating research among the homeless population of New York City
- Chapter-opening vignette drawn from a sociological study of why teenagers use vaping products
- Photo and text example to illustrate how sociologists control for various biases in study subjects
- Figure 5-2, “Educational Level and Household Income in the United States,” extensively updated
- “Thinking Critically” question about the relationship between dependent and independent variables
- Explanation of new census relationship questions and how they relate to sociological research
- Coverage of research on parental involvement in children’s education during the coronavirus pandemic
- Extensive example of how content analysis reveals how men are portrayed in country music
- Example of use of photographic evidence in applied sociological research
- Discussion of how the study of effects of education on income can be broadened to include race and gender factors
- Discussion and photo illustrating the use of content analysis to demonstrate lack of racial diversity in media
- Discussion of how being gay influences racial attitudes

Chapter 3: Culture

- Chapter-opening photo emphasizing cultural diversity
- Discussion of the #MeToo movement in the context of changing norms
- Enhanced and updated discussion of the culture of cheating in college admissions
- Sociology on Campus box, “A Culture of Cheating?” updated to reflect the move to online instructions resulting from Covid-19
- Figure 10-2, “Values: Acceptance of Government Efforts to Reduce Income Inequality”

- Photo of neo-Nazi group to illustrate culture shock
- Discussion of use of sanctions for failure to comply with orders to social distance and wear face coverings during the coronavirus pandemic
- Sociology in the Global Community box, “Culture Encapsulated on an Island”
- Discussion of the culture of vaping as an emerging subculture
- Figure 12-1, “Most Commonly Spoken Language, Other than English or Spanish, by State”
- Update of Figure 12-2, “Percentage of People Who Speak a Language other than English at Home, by State”
- Coverage of the impact of Covid-19 on globalization
- Discussion of the need for bilingual health care workers during the coronavirus pandemic

Chapter 4: Socialization and the Life Course

- Chapter-opening photo illustrating the role of family in socialization
- Chapter-opening vignette focusing on how people navigate between different cultures
- Updated discussion of the importance and findings of twin studies, with photo
- Photo illustrating role taking in childhood
- Enhanced discussion of face-work, with example drawn from *American Idol*
- Photo of *quinceañera* celebration to illustrate role transitions
- Discussion of ZOOM and impression management
- Extended discussion of young children and media use
- Wired World box, “Teens Controlling Access to Their Social Media,” including figure
- Coverage of childcare during the coronavirus pandemic
- “Thinking Critically” question about changes in the socialization of children resulting from the coronavirus pandemic

Chapter 5: Social Interaction, Groups, and Social Structure

- Chapter-opening photo featuring female athletes
- Updated discussion of the Zimbardo Prison Experiment featuring recent criticisms
- Enhanced discussion of ascribed and achieved statuses focusing on the elderly in China
- Research Today box, “Decision Making in the Jury Room”
- Enhanced discussion of disability as a master status
- Discussion of the impact on social reality caused by the wearing of face coverings, with focus on Black men
- Coverage of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on union organizing
- Likening of *Gemeinschaft* to contemporary sharing economy

- Discussion of privacy concerns during the pandemic
- Updated and expanded Our Wired World box, “Twitter Networks: From Wildfires to Hurricanes,” with new figure

Chapter 6: Mass Media and Social Media

- Chapter-opening photo highlighting the increased use of streaming services
- Updated chapter-opening excerpt from new edition of *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other*
- Updated discussion of the increasing influence of social media in politics
- Discussion of sociological study of media usage by young Muslims in Australia
- Photo of a Donald Trump tweet, with discussion of his use of Twitter for presidential communications
- Discussion of dissemination of false reports by political parties and governments
- Coverage of the use of telecom data and apps to trace the spread of the coronavirus pandemic
- Enhanced discussion of online stereotyping
- Discussion of facial recognition software and its interactionist implications
- Major revisions to Figure 20-2, “Who Uses Social Media?”
- Section on the queer perspective on media
- Expanded discussion of audience targeting in election campaigns
- Enhanced discussion of influencers, with Key Term treatment
- Revision of Social Policy feature, “Censorship,” to focus on misinformation in social media

Chapter 7: Deviance, Crime, and Social Control

- Chapter-opening image: movie poster for the 1939 film *Reefer Madness*
- Chapter-opening excerpt about police reform
- Discussion of attitudes toward policing and race
- Subsection, “Obedience and Virtual Reality,” updating coverage of Milgram’s classic experiment, with photo
- Discussion of current attitudes toward and use of solitary confinement
- Image of crowded beaches during the Covid-19 pandemic as an example of deviance
- Enhanced and updated coverage of the effects of child abuse
- Research Today box, “Gun Control”
- Updated discussion of the bail system in the Research Today box, “Debtors’ Jails in the Twenty-First Century”
- “Thinking Critically” question about the relevance of various sociological perspectives in analyzing different types of crime

- Image of Banksy’s “The Flower Thrower in Jerusalem” to illustrate labeling theory
- Enhanced discussion of the feminist perspective to include coverage of domestic violence during the coronavirus pandemic
- Updated discussion of disadvantages experienced by Blacks in the justice system
- Figure 25-2, “State Hate-Crime Laws,” with expanded discussion of hate crime
- Key Term treatment for “racial profiling”
- Social Policy section, “The Death Penalty in the United States and Worldwide”

Chapter 8: Stratification and Social Mobility in the United States

- Chapter-opening image showing a celebrity serving in a soup kitchen
- Chapter-opening vignette based on a speech about inequality by Jerome Powell, chair of the Federal Reserve board of governors
- Revised material on the shrinking middle class, with Research Today box, “Precarious Work”
- Cartoon illustrating the growing concentration of wealth in the United States
- Complete revision of section on class warfare, focusing on recent tax changes that benefit the rich
- Coverage of the differential impact of the coronavirus pandemic on different classes and on racial and ethnic minorities
- Enhanced coverage on women’s unpaid labor and efforts to measure its economic value
- Updated coverage of differences in wealth between racial and ethnic groups
- Expanded treatment of intergenerational mobility, focusing on the Millennials
- Discussion of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on unemployment rates
- Enhanced discussion of poverty, including new focus on geographic distribution of both poverty and affluence
- Discussion of aspects of Covid-19 related to stratification and mobility: impact on life chances, on occupational prestige, CEO salaries, and student debt
- Key Term treatment for “precarious work,” with discussion of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic

Chapter 9: Global Inequality

- Chapter-opening photo showing a squatter settlement in the developing world
- Discussion of the coronavirus pandemic’s likely effects on recent progress in reducing poverty
- Chapter-opening vignette excerpted from the updated United Nations Millennium Development Goals

- Sociology on Campus box, “International Students,” with figure showing countries of origin for international students in the United States
- “Thinking Critically” question about the effects of globalization on rich and poor countries
- Sociology in the Global Community box, “Social Stratification in Japan,” with photo
- Major revisions to Social Policy section, “Rethinking Welfare in Europe and North American,” focusing on current research into effectiveness of various programs and the impact of the pandemic
- Taking Sociology with You question on the impact of the pandemic

Chapter 10: Racial and Ethnic Inequality

- Chapter-opening excerpts about John Lewis’s 50-year struggle for civil rights
- Discussion of inclusion of triracial categories in recent census questions
- Research Today box on prejudice and discrimination, “Avoiding Interracial Relationships Online,” with photos
- Coverage of 2020 racial justice protests, white privilege, and the role of institutional discrimination
- Photo of 2017 “Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville, Virginia
- Discussion of voting requirements as an example of institutional discrimination
- Enhanced and expanded section on racial profiling, with photo
- Sociology in the Global Community box, “The Maori of New Zealand,” with photo
- Updated discussion of Asian Americans as a “model minority,” with Research Today box, “Is There a Model Minority?” including anti-Asian sentiment during the coronavirus pandemic
- Updated and enhanced discussion of Chinese Americans, Indian Americans, effects of Hurricane Maria and Covid-19 on Puerto Rican Americans, and recent antisemitic incidents
- Photo of Deb Haaland, Secretary of the Interior in the Biden administration, and Kim Ng, general manager of the Miami Marlins baseball team
- Updated and expanded discussion of recent attempts to limit immigration and their social effects, with cartoon

Chapter 11: Stratification by Gender and Sexuality

- Updated and expanded coverage of gender roles, with photo
- Revised and updated Sociology in the Global Community box, “No Gender, Please, It’s Preschool”
- Enhanced coverage of gender fluidity in text and in Research Today box, “Measuring Discrimination Based on Gender Identity”

- Coverage of the 2020 Supreme Court ruling that the Civil Rights Act protects gays and transgender people in the workplace
- Discussion of interactionist perspective on increased domestic violence during the coronavirus pandemic
- Table 36-1, “The Global Gender Gap”
- Sociology in the Global Community box, “The Gender Gap in Japan,” with photo
- Figure 36-1, “Weekly Median Earnings of Women vs. Men, by Age”
- Research Today box, “Who Does the Housework?” with figure
- Updated coverage of women’s activism, including recent efforts to revive the ERA
- Updated Social Policy section, “Workplace Sexual Harassment,” with cartoon

Chapter 12: Stratification by Age

- Updated chapter-opening vignette with new example of 91-year-old athlete
- Discussions of the effects of the coronavirus pandemic on the lives of elderly people
- “Thinking Critically” question about the effects of Covid-19 on the elderly
- Enhanced example illustrating how people view love and commitment differently at different life stages
- Figure 38-2, “Support for Increased Government Spending on Retirement”
- Photo illustrating the sandwich generation
- Research Today box, “The Wisdom-Keepers and the Pandemic”
- Update of Figure 39-4, “Labor Force by Age, 2006–2029”
- Discussion of discrimination against the elderly in advertising
- Enhanced discussion of employment by older workers
- Photo of actor and producer Viola Davis to illustrate the diversity of the elderly population

Chapter 13: The Family and Household Diversity

- Chapter-opening photo showing large family reunion
- Enhanced coverage of interactionist perspective on stepparenting and online dating, with updates to Our Wired World box, “Love Is in the Air and on the Web”
- Coverage of increased online messaging and dating during the coronavirus pandemic
- Expanded discussion of couples in which the female partner earns more than the male
- Discussion of tendency to marry later in life

xxx

- Sociology in the Global Community box, “Arranged and Hybrid Marriage,” with figure
- Figure 41-3, “Grandparents Who Support Grandchildren, 2018”
- Expanded discussion of married people living apart and dual-income couples
- Research Today box, “Challenges to LGBTQ Adoptions”
- Updated and expanded discussion of cohabitation
- Expanded discussion of remaining single and childlessness, including 2020 statistics showing all-time low marriage rate
- Updated and expanded discussion of family leave policies in the United States
- Key Term treatment of “arranged marriage” and “hybrid marriage”

Chapter 14: Education

- Chapter-opening photo showing prospective students and their parents on college tour
- Chapter-opening excerpt from *Inequality in the Promised Land: Race, Resources and Suburban Schooling*
- Figure 43-1, “Average Number of Years of Education, Selected Countries”
- Figure 43-2, “Annual Earnings by Degree Level, 2018”
- Updated discussion of racial isolation in public schools
- “Thinking Critically” questions about social factors that affect inequality in schooling and the effects of online instructions
- Discussion of the changes resulting from widespread online schooling
- Updated discussion of teaching as a choice of profession among college students
- Updated discussion of credentialism
- Updated Box 13-1, “The Debate over Title IX,” to include research on negative effects of sports and the #MeToo movement
- Updated discussion of the teaching profession
- Updated and expanded coverage of homeschooling

Chapter 15: Religion

- Research Today box, “The Growth of None of the Above”
- Discussion of religion and social support and religious ritual updated to include effects of coronavirus pandemic
- Figure 46-2, “Religion Is Very Important in My Life”
- Research Today box, “Wicca: Religion or Quasi-Religion?” with photo
- Cartoon to illustrate the debate between evolution and creationism

Chapter 16: Government and the Economy

- Chapter-opening photo focusing on coronavirus pandemic
- Chapter-opening excerpt from *Who Rules America? The Triumph of the Corporate Rich* updated drawing on the latest data

- Capitalism coverage updated to include government measures passed during the coronavirus pandemic
- Updated coverage of political participation rates by African Americans, Latino Americans, and young voters
- Updated and expanded discussion of political influence, with Key Term treatment of “influencers”
- Photos to illustrate Arab Americans in Congress and the influence of the power elite
- Updated and expanded coverage of the global power elite
- Research Today box, “Election Polling: Science or Guesswork?” with photo
- Our Wired World box, “Politicking Online,” updated to include recent developments in use of social media in elections
- Section on political polarization
- Discussion of online misinformation about Covid-19 during the pandemic
- “Thinking Critically” questions about ways to promote world peace and political polarization
- Discussion of recent classification of white supremacist groups as terrorists
- Social Policy section, “The Response to the Coronavirus Pandemic,” with photo and cartoon
- Key Term treatment for “influencer,” “obedience,” and “precarious work”

Chapter 17: Health, Population, and the Environment

- Chapter-opening photo showing the effects of the coronavirus lockdown on pollution
- Chapter-opening vignette featuring Greta Thunberg’s 2019 address to the United Nations
- Updated Figure 52-1, “Infant Mortality Rates in Selected Countries”; Figure 53-1, “AIDS by the Numbers Worldwide”; and Figure 53-3, “Total Health Care Expenditures in the United States, 1960–2028 (Projected)”
- Updated discussion of health insurance coverage, including impact of the pandemic
- Enhanced discussion of the medical profession as an agent of social control
- Revised and updated discussion of differences in mortality among racial and ethnic groups
- Discussion of life expectancy and the coronavirus pandemic
- Expanded discussion of *curanderismo*
- Research Today box, “The Color of Covid-19”
- Discussion of racial and ethnic differences in access to mental health care
- Photos illustrating reliance of people with mental health issues on telemedicine during the pandemic and environmental justice

- Box 55-1, “Population Policy in China,” updated in light of recent changes in official government policies
- Updated and revised sections, “Population Explosion Gives Way to Population Decline,” and “Declining Population Growth”
- “Thinking Critically” questions about mental health issues and Covid-19 and social factors resulting in negative population growth
- Expanded discussion of air pollution in the United States and worldwide; updated discussion of water pollution
- Cartoon highlighting insufficient efforts to curb carbon emissions
- “Taking Sociology to Work” box about Kasi Good, clinical social worker
- Social Policy section about homelessness as a public health issue
- Key Term treatment for “comorbidity” and “gentrification”
- Updated Figure 59-2, “Declining Drive-Ins, 1954–2019”; and Figure 59-3, “Walking to Work, 1980–2019”
- Discussion of implications of coronavirus pandemic, social change in Dubai, artificial intelligence
- Updated and expanded coverage of #BlackLivesMatter movement, with photo
- Coverage of pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong
- Enhanced discussion of fake news and #StopTheSteal in light of the 2016 and 2020 presidential elections
- Photo of recent teacher protest to illustrate section “Social Movements”
- Refocused discussion of feminist perspective on social movement
- Updated and expanded coverage of communication and social movements
- “Thinking Critically” questions about social change theory and the coronavirus pandemic and the possibility of anticipating the problems caused by social change

Chapter 18: Social Change in the Global Community

- Chapter-opening photo illustrating pro-democracy demonstrations in Hong Kong

Take Sociology with You

Sociology in Modules highlights the distinctive ways in which sociologists examine human social behavior, as well as the ways in which research findings contribute to our understanding of society. In doing so, it helps students to think like sociologists and to apply sociological theories and concepts to human interactions and institutions. In other words, *Sociology in Modules* gives students the tools they need to take sociology with them when they graduate from college, begin to pursue careers, and become involved in their communities and the world at large.



Thinking Critically: These questions, appearing at the end of each module, prompt students to review and reflect on the content.



Sociology on Campus: These boxes apply a sociological perspective to issues of immediate interest to students.



Use Your Sociological Imagination: These short, thought-provoking exercises encourage students to apply the sociological concepts they have learned to the world around them.



Taking Sociology with You: These critical thinking questions and reflection prompts at the end of each chapter encourage students to apply the material they have just read to their daily lives.



Taking Sociology to Work: These boxes underscore the value of an undergraduate or community college degree in sociology by profiling individuals who studied sociology and now use its principles in their work.



Research Today: These boxes present new sociological findings on topics such as sports, social networks, and transracial adoption.



Careers in Sociology: This appendix to Chapter 1 presents career options for students who have their undergraduate degree in sociology and explains how this degree can be an asset in a wide variety of occupations.



Our Wired World: These boxes describe the Internet's effect on social activities such as lying, love, and politicking.



Sociology in the Global Community: These boxes provide a global perspective on topics such as stratification, marriage, and the women's movement.



Social Policy Sections: These end-of-chapter sections apply sociological concepts and theories to important social issues currently being debated by policymakers and the general public.



Maps: Mapping Life Nationwide and Mapping Life Worldwide maps show social trends in the United States as well as in the global community.

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The Sixth Edition of *Sociology in Modules* reflects the input of many talented individuals.

Since 2010, Elaine Silverstein has played a most significant role in the development of my introductory sociology books. Fortunately for me, in this sixth edition, Elaine has once again been responsible for the smooth integration of all changes and updates.

As is evident from the number of professionals listed on the back of the title page, the preparation of a textbook is truly a team effort. The most valuable member of this effort continues to be my wife, Sandy. She provides the support so necessary in my creative and scholarly activities.

I have had the good fortune to introduce students to sociology for many years. These students have been enormously helpful in spurring on my 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 work.


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This project has benefited from constructive and thorough evaluations provided by sociologists from both two-year and four-year institutions.

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sociology



in modules



Understanding Sociology

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One of the things sociologists study is how people organize themselves into groups to perform tasks necessary to society. Volunteers pick up garbage in a local woodlands park for eventual recycling.

MODULE 1 What Is Sociology?

MODULE 2 The Development of Sociology

MODULE 3 Major Theoretical Perspectives

MODULE 4 Taking Sociology with You



kozmoat98/Getty Images

What is life like for low-wage workers in one of the most affluent areas of the United States?

Sociologists Vicki Smith and Brian Halpin interviewed these essential but overlooked workers to bring their lives into focus.

“Napa Valley, just north of San Francisco, is known for its wineries and gourmet foods. The region attracts affluent tourists from all over the world to enjoy hot-air balloon rides and luxury vineyard tours. But the view that most tourists and affluent residents see does not include the low-wage workers who make their comfortable lifestyle possible.

To bring the lives of these invisible laborers into focus, sociologists Vicki Smith and Brian Halpin conducted in-depth interviews with low-wage workers about their current job situations and their plans for the future.

Their current occupations included food service, landscaping, cleaning homes and offices, and construction, with some respondents holding jobs in more than one sector. They typically patched together full- and part-time work, devoting themselves to searching for better jobs, learning new skills, taking classes, and obtaining credentials that would result in more satisfying lives. Many interviewees told Smith and Halpin about ways they tried to improve their situations: they were always trying to

Many interviewees told Smith and Halpin about ways they tried to improve their situations: they were always trying to “learn new skills in their current occupational niche.”

“learn new skills in their current occupational niche, such as a housecleaner learning how to clean offices, or a worker who sets up tables and chairs at events for a catering company learning how to make special desserts.”

Because of the temporary, part-time, and seasonal nature of their jobs, the Napa Valley workers are always looking ahead. One restaurant worker, William, described how he created his repertoire of kitchen-based, transferable skills:

[I]f you go to a restaurant, most of the time you can learn pretty fast. And you can learn stuff here and take it to another restaurant; it’s easy to do. You just need to pay attention. You have to want to learn to ask questions. You can’t just stand there; you have to work, to show them something.

According to Smith and Halpin, “Low-wage workers can be a productive, high-quality workforce despite lacking the human capital of more highly educated, professional workers. Research repeatedly finds that these workers hold strong work ethics, desire stable employment and are willing to learn.” Nevertheless, they find it hard to escape into middle-class jobs.

Low-wage workers live difficult lives throughout the United States. In the affluent Napa Valley, their situation is made even more complicated by the wildfires that frequent the region each summer and the 2020 coronavirus pandemic. Nevertheless, these workers, like people everywhere, are continually looking for ways to improve their social and economic situations.”

Sources: Halpin and Smith 2017:336; Smith and Halpin 2014.

By interviewing low-wage workers whose labor is often hidden from public view, sociologists Vicki Smith and Brian Halpin were able to go beyond publicly reported employment data or corporate annual reports. Their research let them reveal the efforts that low-paid workers make to stay afloat and perhaps get ahead in the Napa Valley.

The fruit of these workers’ labor is enjoyed by the people who live in and visit the Napa Valley as well by those who consume the wine and other luxury goods shipped worldwide. Yet few consumers ever interact directly with these laborers. The work of scholars like Smith and Halpin lets us learn more about those who are just making it, even in the best economic times, throughout the nation and around the globe.

As a field of study, sociology is extremely broad in scope. You will see throughout this book the range of topics sociologists investigate—from immigration to suicide, from Amish society to

global economic patterns, from peer pressure to genetic engineering. Sociology looks at how others influence our behavior; how major social institutions like the government, religion, and the economy affect us; and how we ourselves affect other individuals, groups, and even organizations.

How did sociology develop? In what ways does it differ from other social sciences? These modules will explore the nature of sociology as both a field of inquiry and an exercise of the “sociological imagination.” We’ll look at the discipline as a science and consider its relationship to other social sciences. We’ll meet four pioneering thinkers—Émile Durkheim, Max Weber, Karl Marx, and W. E. B. DuBois—and examine the theoretical perspectives that grew out of their work. We’ll note some of the practical applications for sociological theory and research. Finally, we’ll see how sociology helps us to develop a sociological imagination. For those students interested in exploring career opportunities in sociology, the chapter closes with a special appendix.

MODULE 1 | What Is Sociology?

“What has sociology got to do with me or with my life?” As a student, you might well have asked this question when you signed up for your introductory sociology course. To answer it, consider these points: Are you influenced by what you see on television? Do you use the Internet? Did you vote in the last election? Are you familiar with binge drinking on campus? Do you use alternative medicine? These are just a few of the everyday life situations described in this book that sociology can shed light on. But as the opening excerpt indicates, sociology also looks at large social issues. We use sociology to investigate the contrast between poverty and affluence, why thousands of jobs have moved from the United States to developing nations, what social forces promote prejudice, what leads someone to join a social movement and work for social change, how access to computer technology can reduce social inequality, and why relationships between men and women in Seattle differ from those in Singapore.

Sociology is, simply, the scientific study of social behavior and human groups. It focuses on social relationships; how those relationships influence people’s behavior; and how societies, the sum total of those relationships, develop and change.

The Sociological Imagination

In attempting to understand social behavior, sociologists rely on a particular type of critical thinking. A leading sociologist, 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 (Mills [1959] 2000a). 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 and helps to shape us.

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 sporting events. On college campuses in the United States, thousands of students cheer well-trained football players. In parts of South America and the Caribbean, spectators gather around two cages, each holding a finch. The covers are lifted, and the owner of the first bird to sing 50 songs wins a trophy, a cash prize, and great prestige. In speed singing as in football, eager spectators debate the merits of their favorites and bet on the outcome of the events. Yet what is considered a normal sporting event in one part of the world is considered unusual in another part (Rueb 2015).

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 as simply an individual’s personal problem but rather as a societal concern. Using this perspective, we can see that an increase in the

divorce rate actually redefines a major social institution—the family. Today’s households frequently include stepparents and half-siblings 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 human behavior 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 other populations in the world. 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 sociological imagination in a variety of situations.



use your sociological imagination

You are walking down the street in your city or hometown. In looking around you, 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. Just like other scientific disciplines, sociology involves the 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 the social features of humans and the ways in which they interact and change. 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 humans. 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



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Sociology is the scientific study of social behavior and human groups.

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 do *sociologists* focus on? They study the influence that society has on people's attitudes and behavior and the ways in which people interact and shape society. Because humans are social animals, sociologists examine our social relationships scientifically. The range of the relationships they investigate is vast, as the current list of sections in the American Sociological Association suggests (Table 1-1).

Let's consider how different social scientists might study the issue of climate change. Psychologists would look at the impact on the well-being of individuals who live and work in the areas most vulnerable to the impact of climate change, such as flood-prone areas along the coasts. Political scientists would consider the differences between countries, states, and cities that take steps to combat climate change. They would also consider how increasingly politicians are unable to avoid being questioned about their own position on climate change at election time. And economists would consider how, through climate change, the unintended effects of human activity affect long-term economic growth and well-being.

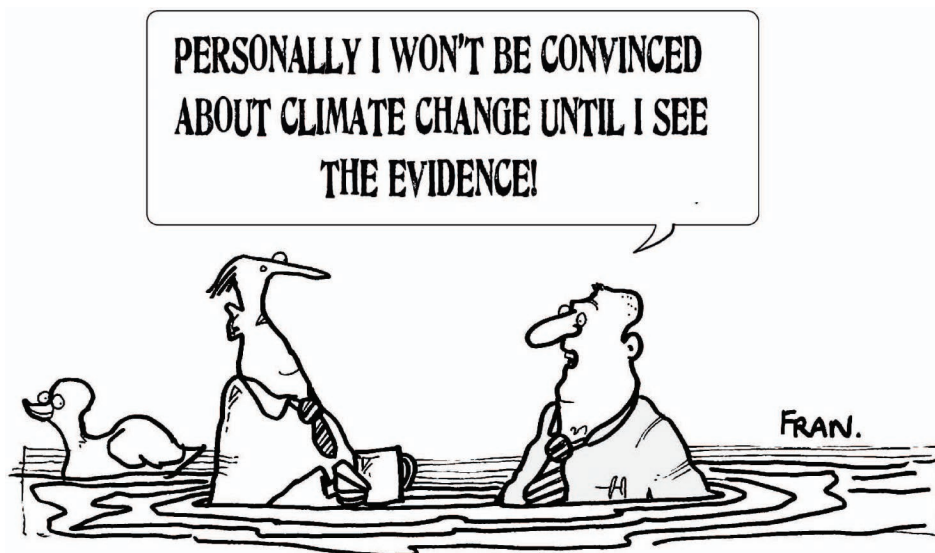
What approach would sociologists take? They would be interested in why a relatively large number of Americans deny that climate change is occurring or feel human activities are not responsible. In 2019, nearly

20 percent of the U.S. public held those views, compared to less than 5 percent in Germany, Great Britain, or China. Sociology moves us past viewing individuals as the primary agents producing carbon emissions and instead sees that individual actions are embedded in the workings of society as a whole. How individuals confront climate change is constrained by social, economic, and political dynamics.

Similarly, sociology considers how the impact of climate change is not evenly felt and demonstrates that the poor are among the most vulnerable, both in the United States and around the world. Poor people often live in low-lying areas most vulnerable to floods and storms, and poor nations lack the means to build protective infrastructure.

Social protests and movements to try to mobilize people to confront the human contribution to climate change would also be a prime focus of sociological analysis (Dunlap and Brulle 2019; Milman and Harvey 2019).

Sociologists would take a similar approach to studying episodes of extreme violence and hatred. In 2017, the nation was shocked by the open display of pro-Nazi and pro-Ku Klux Klan sympathy and unprovoked, open attacks on government buildings. Observers struggled to explain these individual and collective events by placing them in a larger social context. For sociologists in particular, these events raised numerous issues and topics for study, including the role of social media as a platform for



Fran/Cartoon Stock

As the world considers issues related to climate change, sociologists use a variety of insights, including why people differ in their willingness to accept that human activity affects the global environment.

TABLE 1-1 SECTIONS OF THE AMERICAN SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Aging and the Life Course	History of Sociology	Social Psychology
Altruism, Morality, and Social Solidarity	Indigenous Peoples and Native Nations	Sociological Practice and Public Sociology
Animals and Society	Inequality, Poverty, and Mobility	Sociology of Body and Embodiment
Asia and Asian America	International Migration	Sociology of Consumers and Consumption
Children and Youth	Labor and Labor Movements	Sociology of Culture
Collective Behavior and Social Movements	Latina/o Sociology	Sociology of Development
Communication, Information Technologies, and Media	Marxist Sociology	Sociology of Education
Community and Urban Sociology	Mathematical Sociology	Sociology of Emotions
Comparative-Historical Sociology	Medical Sociology	Sociology of Human Rights
Crime, Law, and Deviance	Methodology	Sociology of Law
Disability in Society	Organizations, Occupations, and Work	Sociology of Mental Health
Drugs and Society	Peace, War, and Social Conflict	Sociology of Population
Economic Sociology	Political Economy of the World-System	Sociology of Religion
Environmental Sociology	Political Sociology	Sociology of Sex and Gender
Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis	Race, Gender, and Class	Sociology of Sexualities
Evolution, Biology, and Society	Racial and Ethnic Minorities	Teaching and Learning
Family	Rationality and Society	Theory
Global and Transnational Sociology	Science, Knowledge, and Technology	

Source: American Sociological Association 2021a.

The range of sociological issues is very broad. For example, sociologists who belong to the Animals and Society section of the ASA may study the animal rights movement; those who belong to the Sociology of Sexualities section may study global sex workers or the gay, bisexual, and transgender movements. Economic sociologists may investigate globalization or consumerism, among many other topics.

extremist thought, growing anger against government and people in authority, the gun control debate, and the inadequacy of the nation’s mental health system.

Besides doing research, sociologists have a long history of advising government agencies on how to respond to disasters. Certainly the poverty of the Gulf Coast region complicated the challenge of evacuating New Orleans in 2005. With Hurricane Katrina bearing down on the Gulf Coast, thousands of poor inner-city residents had no automobiles or other means of escaping the storm. Added to that difficulty was the high incidence of disability in the area. New Orleans ranked second among the nation’s 70 largest cities in the proportion of people over age 65 who were disabled—56 percent. Moving wheelchair-bound residents to safety requires specially equipped vehicles, to say nothing of handicap-accessible accommodations in public shelters. Clearly, officials must consider these factors in developing evacuation plans (Bureau of the Census 2005b).

Sociological analysis of the disaster did not end when the floodwaters receded. Indeed, several steps were taken that improved the response to hurricanes Harvey and Irma, which hit Texas and Florida in 2017. These included:

- Requiring communities to develop workable disaster response plans in advance.
- Delivering emergency supplies to secure holding areas before the storms struck.
- Permitting prior approval for taking action rather than requiring plan submission after the disaster.

- Identifying emergency shelters that take pets to avoid people remaining at home to safeguard their pets.
- Ending federal prohibition against accepting volunteer responders, especially when the scope of the disaster increases.

Tragically, many Katrina victims had relocated to Houston, where they then had to be sheltered again after Harvey struck in 2017, but they often expressed the realization that disaster response had improved. However, just a month later the slow response in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria on Puerto Rico, with most of the island left without clean water, power, or cell phone service for weeks, left many scholars looking for still further ways to improve both disaster preparedness and response (Carey 2017b; Philips 2017).

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 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 become homeless, for example. 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 that the earth was flat—a view rightly questioned by Pythagoras and Aristotle. But incorrect commonsense notions are not just a part of the distant past; they remain with us today.

Contrary to the common notion that women tend to be chatty compared to men, for instance, 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, 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—documented by the FBI—show that all the counties along the U.S.–Mexico border have crime rates at least 2 percent lower than that in the rest of the United States. 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 (Nowrasteh 2019).

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 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, but this 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 die by suicide? One traditional commonsense answer is that people inherit the desire to kill themselves. Another view is that sunspots drive people to take their 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 dies by suicide; they are more concerned with identifying the social forces that systematically cause some people to take their own lives. 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. In 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 (2019b) estimates that 800,000 people die from suicide every 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. Durkheim 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 also noted the total population of each country in order to determine the rate of suicide in each nation. 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 suicide?”

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

Durkheim’s research suggested that suicide, although it is a solitary act, is related to group life. He found that people without religious affiliations had a higher suicide rate than those who were affiliated; the unmarried had much higher rates than married people; and soldiers had a higher rate 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 rates of a society reflected the extent to which people were or were not integrated into the group life of the society.



use your **sociological imagination**

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 people age 55 and older in the United States today?

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 inherited tendencies or

sunspots. 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, and Nevada as a whole, for example, sociologists have observed that the chances of dying by suicide are strikingly high—about 45 percent higher than those



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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 longtime 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 (Bekker 2019).

MODULE 1

Recap and Review

Summary

Sociology is the scientific study of social behavior and human groups. In this module, we examine the nature of sociological theory and the work of some of the founders of the discipline.

1. The **sociological imagination** is an awareness of the relationship between an individual and the wider society. It is based on the ability to view our own society as an outsider might, rather than from the perspective of our limited experiences and cultural biases.
2. In contrast to other **social sciences**, sociology emphasizes the influence that groups can have on people’s behavior and attitudes and the ways in which people shape society.
3. Knowledge that relies on common sense is not always reliable. Sociologists must test and analyze each piece of information they use.
4. Sociologists employ **theories** to examine relationships between observations or data that may seem completely unrelated.

Thinking Critically

1. How might sociology approach an issue such as gun control differently from the way economics or political science would study the same issue?
2. What aspects of the social and work environment in a fast-food restaurant would be of particular interest to a sociologist? How would the sociological imagination help in analyzing the topic?
3. Think about the sociologists profiled in this module, Mills and Durkheim. Whose work seems most relevant to today’s social problems? Why did you choose that thinker, and which social problems were you thinking of?

Key Terms

Natural science	Sociological imagination
Science	Sociology
Social science	Theory

MODULE 2

The Development of Sociology

People have always been curious about sociological matters—how we get along with others, what we do for a living, 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 those observations scientifically; nevertheless, their observations often became the foundation for moral codes. Several of these early social philosophers correctly

predicted that a systematic study of human behavior would emerge one day. Beginning in the 19th century, European theorists made pioneering contributions to the development of a science of human behavior.

Early Thinkers

Auguste Comte

The 19th century was an unsettling time in France. The French monarchy had been deposed in the revolution of 1789, and



Napoleon had 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 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 the 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 presented a rather ambitious challenge to the fledgling discipline.

Harriet Martineau

Scholars learned of Comte's works largely through translations by the English sociologist Harriet Martineau (1802–1876). But 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*



Alonzo Chappel/Georgios Kollidas/Alamy Stock Photo

Harriet Martineau, a pioneer of sociology who studied social behavior both in her native England and in the United States. Martineau proposed some of the methods still used by sociologists, including systematic observation.

([1837] 1962) examined religion, politics, child rearing, and immigration in the young nation. It gave 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).

Herbert Spencer

Another important early contributor to the discipline of sociology was 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 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

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.

To give one example of this emphasis, Durkheim ([1912] 2001) developed a fundamental thesis to help explain all forms of society. Through intensive study of the Arunta, an Australian tribe, he focused on the functions that religion performed and underscored the role of group life in defining what we consider to be religion. Durkheim concluded that like other forms of group behavior, religion reinforces a group's solidarity.

Another of Durkheim's main interests was the consequences of work in modern societies. In his view, the growing division of labor in industrial societies, as workers' tasks became more and more specialized, led to what he called "anomie." **Anomie** refers to

the loss of direction felt in a society when social control of individual behavior has become ineffective. Often, the state of anomie occurs during a time of profound social change, when people have lost their sense of purpose or direction. In a period of anomie, people are so confused and unable to cope with the new social environment that they may resort to death by suicide.

Durkheim was concerned about the dangers that alienation, loneliness, and isolation might pose for modern industrial societies. He shared Comte's belief that sociology should provide direction for social change. As a result, he advocated the creation of new social groups—mediators between the individual's family and the state—that would provide a sense of belonging for members of huge, impersonal societies. Unions would be an example of such groups.

Like many other sociologists, Durkheim did not limit his interests to one aspect of social behavior. Later in this book we will consider his thinking on crime and punishment, religion, and the workplace. Few sociologists have had such a dramatic impact on so many different areas within the discipline.

■ Max Weber

Another important early theorist was Max Weber (pronounced vay-ber). Born in Germany, Weber (1864–1920) studied legal and economic history, but gradually developed an interest in sociology. Eventually, he became a professor at various German universities. Weber taught his students that they should employ *verstehen* (pronounced fair-shtay-en), the German word for “understanding” or “insight,” in their intellectual work. He pointed out that we cannot analyze our social behavior by the same type of objective criteria we use to measure weight or temperature. To fully comprehend behavior, we must learn the subjective meanings people attach to their actions—how they themselves view and explain their behavior.

For example, suppose that a sociologist was studying the social ranking of individuals in a fraternity. Weber would expect the researcher to employ *verstehen* to determine the significance of the fraternity's social hierarchy for its members. The researcher might examine the effects of athleticism or grades or social skills or seniority on standing within the fraternity. He or she would seek to learn how the fraternity members relate to other members of higher or lower status. While investigating these questions, the researcher would take into account people's emotions, thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes (Coser 1977).



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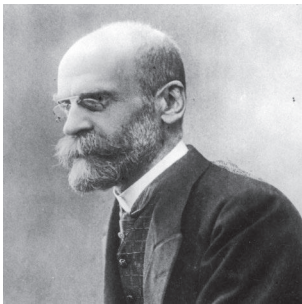
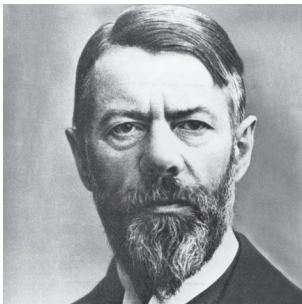
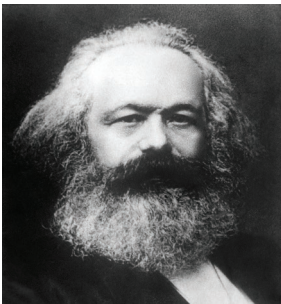
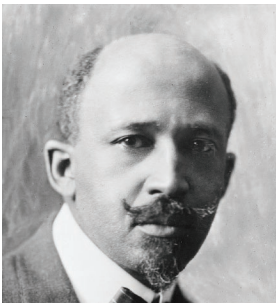
We also owe credit to Weber for a key conceptual tool: the ideal type. An **ideal type** is a construct or model for evaluating specific cases. In his works, Weber identified various characteristics of bureaucracy as an ideal type (discussed in detail in Module 19). In presenting this model of bureaucracy, Weber was not describing any particular organization, nor was he using the term *ideal* in a way that suggested a positive evaluation. Instead, his purpose was to provide a useful standard for measuring how bureaucratic an actual organization is (Gerth and Mills 1958). Later in this book, we will use the concept of *ideal type* to study the family, religion, authority, and economic systems, as well as to analyze bureaucracy.

Although their professional careers coincided, Émile Durkheim and Max Weber never met and probably were unaware of each other's ideas. Such was not true of the work of Karl Marx. Durkheim's thinking about the impact of the division of labor in industrial societies was related to Marx's writings, while Weber's concern for a value-free, objective sociology was a direct response to Marx's deeply held convictions. Thus, it is not surprising that Karl Marx is viewed as a major figure in the development of sociology, as well as several other social sciences (Figure 2-1).

■ Karl Marx

Karl Marx (1818–1883) shared with Durkheim and Weber a dual interest in abstract philosophical issues and the concrete reality of everyday life. Unlike them, however, Marx was so critical of existing institutions that a conventional academic career was impossible. He spent most of his life in exile from his native Germany.

FIGURE 2-1 Contributors to Sociology

				
	The Art Gallery Collection/Alamy Stock Photo	Keystone Pictures USA/Alamy Stock Photo	Everett Historical/Shutterstock	Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division [LC-DIG-ppmsca-38818]
	Émile Durkheim 1858–1917	Max Weber 1864–1920	Karl Marx 1818–1883	W. E. B. DuBois 1868–1963
Academic training	Philosophy	Law, economics, history, philosophy	Philosophy, law	Sociology
Key works	1893— <i>The Division of Labor in Society</i> 1897— <i>Suicide: A Study in Sociology</i> 1912— <i>Elementary Forms of Religious Life</i>	1904–1905— <i>The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism</i> 1921— <i>Economy and Society</i>	1848— <i>The Communist Manifesto</i> 1867— <i>Das Kapital</i>	1899— <i>The Philadelphia Negro</i> 1903— <i>The Negro Church</i> 1903— <i>Souls of Black Folk</i>

Marx’s personal life was a difficult struggle. When a paper he had written was suppressed, he fled to France. In Paris, he met Friedrich Engels (1820–1895), with whom he formed a lifelong friendship. The two lived at a time when European and North American economic life was increasingly dominated by the factory rather than the farm.

While in London in 1847, Marx and Engels attended secret meetings of an illegal coalition of labor unions known as the Communist League. The following year they prepared a platform called *The Communist Manifesto*, in which they argued that the masses of people with no resources other than their labor (whom they referred to as the *proletariat*) should unite to fight for the overthrow of capitalist societies. In the words of Marx and Engels:

The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. . . .
The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.
WORKING MEN OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE! (Tucker 1978:473, 500)

After completing *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx returned to Germany, only to be expelled. He then moved to England, where he continued to write books and essays. Marx lived there in extreme poverty; he pawned most of his possessions, and several of his children died of malnutrition and disease. Marx clearly was an outsider in British society, a fact that may well have influenced his view of Western cultures.

In Marx’s analysis, society was fundamentally divided between two classes that clashed in pursuit of their own interests. When he examined the industrial societies of his time, such as Germany, England, and the United States, he saw the factory as the center of conflict between the exploiters (the owners of the means of production) and the exploited (the workers). Marx viewed these relationships in systematic terms; that is, he believed

that a system of economic, social, and political relationships maintained the power and dominance of the owners over the workers. Consequently, Marx and Engels argued that the working class should overthrow the existing class system. Marx’s writings inspired those who would later lead communist revolutions in Russia, China, Cuba, Vietnam, and elsewhere.

Even apart from the political revolutions that his work fostered, Marx’s significance is profound. Marx emphasized the *group* identifications and associations that influence an *individual’s* place in society. This area of study is the major focus of contemporary sociology. Throughout this textbook, we will consider how membership in a particular gender classification, age group, racial group, or economic class affects a person’s attitudes and behavior. In an important sense, we can trace this way of understanding society back to the pioneering work of Karl Marx.

■ W. E. B. DuBois

Marx’s work encouraged sociologists to view society through the eyes of those segments of the population that rarely influence decision making. In the United States, some early Black sociologists, including W. E. B. DuBois (1868–1963), conducted research that they hoped would assist in the struggle for a racially egalitarian society. DuBois (pronounced doo-boyss) believed that knowledge was essential to combat prejudice and achieve tolerance and justice. Sociologists, he contended, needed to draw on scientific principles to study social problems such as those experienced by Black Americans. To separate opinion from fact, he advocated research on the lives of Black people. Through his in-depth studies of urban life, both white and Black, in cities such as Philadelphia and Atlanta, DuBois ([1899] 1995) made a major contribution to sociology.

Like Durkheim and Weber, DuBois saw the importance of religion to society. However, he tended to focus on religion at the community level and on the role of the church in the lives of its members (DuBois [1903] 2003). DuBois had little patience with theorists such as Herbert Spencer, who seemed content with the status quo. He believed that the granting of full political rights to Blacks was essential to their social and economic progress.

Through what became known as the Atlanta Sociological Laboratory, DuBois also promoted groundbreaking research by other scholars. While investigating religion, crime, and race relations, these colleagues trained their students in sociological research. The extensive interviews conducted by students in Atlanta still enrich our understanding of human behavior (Earl Wright II 2012).

Because many of his ideas challenged the status quo, DuBois did not always find a receptive audience within either the government or the academic world. As a result, he became increasingly involved with organizations whose members questioned the established social order. In 1909 he helped to found the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, known today as the NAACP (Morris 2015, Wortham 2008).

DuBois's insights have been lasting. In 1897 he coined the term **double consciousness** to refer to the division of an individual's identity into two or more social realities. He used the term to describe the experience of being Black in white America. African Americans have held the highest offices in the land, including President of the United States. Yet for millions of African Americans, the reality of being Black in the United States typically is not one of power (DuBois [1903] 1961).

■ Twentieth-Century Developments

Sociology today builds on the firm foundation developed by Émile Durkheim, Max Weber, Karl Marx, and W. E. B. DuBois. However, the field certainly has not remained stagnant over the past hundred years. While Europeans have continued to make contributions to the discipline, sociologists from throughout the world and especially the United States have advanced sociological theory and research. Their new insights have helped us to better understand the workings of society.

Charles Horton Cooley

Charles Horton Cooley (1864–1929) was typical of the sociologists who came to prominence in the early 1900s. Born in Ann Arbor, Michigan, Cooley received his graduate training in economics but later became a sociology professor at the University of Michigan. Like other early sociologists, he had become interested in this new discipline while pursuing a related area of study.

Cooley shared the desire of Durkheim, Weber, and Marx to learn more about society. But to do so effectively, he preferred to use the sociological perspective to look first at smaller

units—intimate, face-to-face groups such as families, gangs, and friendship networks. He saw these groups as the seedbeds of society, in the sense that they shape people's ideals, beliefs, values, and social nature. Cooley's work increased our understanding of groups of relatively small size.

Jane Addams

In the early 1900s, many leading sociologists in the United States saw themselves as social reformers dedicated to systematically studying and then improving a corrupt society. They were genuinely concerned about the lives of immigrants in the nation's growing cities, whether those immigrants came from Europe or from the rural American South. Early female sociologists, in particular, often took active roles in poor urban areas as leaders of community centers known as *settlement houses*. For example, Jane Addams (1860–1935), a member of the American Sociological Society, cofounded the famous Chicago settlement house called Hull House.

Addams and other pioneering female sociologists commonly combined intellectual inquiry, social service work, and political activism—all with the goal of assisting the underprivileged and



Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division [LC-H25- 71336-BF]

Jane Addams was a pioneer both in sociology and in the settlement house movement. She was also an activist for many causes, including the worldwide campaign for peace.

creating a more egalitarian society. For example, working with Black journalist and educator Ida Wells-Barnett, Addams successfully prevented racial segregation in the Chicago public schools. Addams's efforts to establish a juvenile court system and a women's trade union reveal the practical focus of her work (Addams 1910, 1930; Deegan 1991; Lengermann and Niebrugge-Brantley 1998).

By the middle of the 20th century, however, the focus of the discipline had shifted. Sociologists for the most part restricted themselves to theorizing and gathering information; the aim of transforming society was left to social workers and activists. This shift away from social reform was accompanied by a growing commitment to scientific methods of research and to value-free interpretation of data. Not all sociologists were happy with this emphasis. A new organization, the Society for the Study of Social Problems, was created in 1950 to deal more directly with social inequality and other social problems.

Robert Merton

Sociologist Robert Merton (1910–2003) made an important contribution to the discipline by successfully combining theory and research. Born to Slavic immigrant parents in Philadelphia, Merton won a scholarship to Temple University. He continued his studies at Harvard, where he acquired his lifelong interest in sociology. Merton's teaching career was based at Columbia University.

Merton (1968) produced a theory that is one of the most frequently cited explanations of deviant behavior. He noted different ways in which people attempt to achieve success in life. In his view, some may deviate from the socially approved goal of accumulating material goods or the socially accepted means of achieving that goal. For example, in Merton's classification scheme, *innovators* are people who accept the goal of pursuing material wealth but use illegal means to do so, including robbery, burglary, and extortion. Although Merton based his explanation of crime on individual behavior that has been influenced by society's approved goals and means, it has wider applications. His theory helps to account for the high crime rates among the nation's poor, who may see no hope of advancing themselves through traditional roads to success. Chapter 7 discusses Merton's theory in greater detail.

Merton also emphasized that sociology should strive to bring together the *macro-level* and *micro-level* approaches to the study of society. **Macrosociology** concentrates on large-scale phenomena or entire civilizations. Harriet Martineau's study of religion and politics in the United States is an example of macro-level research. More recently, macrosociologists have examined international crime rates (see Chapter 7) and the stereotype of Asian Americans as a "model minority" (see Chapter 10). In contrast, **microsociology** stresses the study of small groups, often through experimental means. Sociological research on the micro level has included studies of how divorced men and women disengage from significant social roles (see Chapter 5) and of how a teacher's expectations can affect a student's academic performance (see Chapter 13).

While Merton intended to be inclusive of all research, over the past 50 years sociologists have identified two additional levels of research: *mesosociology* and *global sociology*. **Mesosociology** is an intermediate level of analysis embracing study of formal organizations and social movements. Max Weber's analysis of bureaucracies (see Module 19) illustrates mesosociology. **Global sociology** makes comparisons among nations, typically using entire societies as the units of analysis. Émile Durkheim's cross-cultural study of suicide is an example of global sociology, as is the study of international crime rates (Smelser 1997).

Pierre Bourdieu

Increasingly, scholars in the United States have been drawing on the insights of sociologists in other countries. The ideas of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002) have found a broad following in North America and elsewhere. As a young man, Bourdieu did fieldwork in Algeria during its struggle for independence from France. Today, scholars study Bourdieu's research techniques as well as his conclusions.

Bourdieu wrote about how capital in its many forms sustains individuals and families from one generation to the next. To Bourdieu, *capital* included not just material goods, but cultural and social assets. **Cultural capital** refers to noneconomic goods, such as family background and education, which are reflected in a knowledge of language and the arts. Not necessarily book knowledge, cultural capital refers to the kind of education that is valued by the socially elite. Though a knowledge of Chinese cuisine is culture, for example, it is not the prestigious kind of culture that is valued by the elite. In the United States, immigrants—especially those who arrived in large numbers and settled in ethnic enclaves—have generally taken two or three generations to develop the same level of cultural capital enjoyed by more established groups.

In comparison, **social capital** refers to the collective benefit of social networks, which are built on reciprocal trust. Much has been written about the importance of family and friendship networks in providing people with an opportunity to advance. Social bonds and capital have great value in health, happiness, educational achievement, and economic success. In his emphasis on cultural and social capital, Bourdieu's work extends the insights of early social thinkers such as Marx and Weber (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990; Poder 2011; Putnam 2015:207).

Today sociology reflects the diverse contributions of earlier theorists. As sociologists approach such topics as divorce, drug addiction, and religious cults, they can draw on the theoretical insights of the discipline's pioneers. A careful reader can hear Comte, Durkheim, Weber, Marx, DuBois, Cooley, Addams, and many others speaking through the pages of current research. Sociology has also broadened beyond the intellectual confines of North America and Europe. Contributions to the discipline now come from sociologists studying and researching human behavior in other parts of the world. In describing the work of these sociologists, it is helpful to examine a number of influential *theoretical perspectives*, also known as *approaches* or *views*.

MODULE 2 | Recap and Review

Summary

The thinkers who founded the discipline of sociology and developed it in the 19th and 20th centuries were reacting to the social world in which they lived.

1. Nineteenth-century thinkers who contributed sociological insights included Auguste Comte, a French philosopher; Harriet Martineau, an English sociologist; and Herbert Spencer, an English scholar.
2. Other important figures in the development of sociology were Émile Durkheim, who pioneered work on suicide; Max Weber, who taught the need for insight in intellectual work; Karl Marx, who emphasized the importance of the economy and social conflict; and W. E. B. DuBois, who advocated for the usefulness of basic research in combating prejudice and fostering racial tolerance and justice.
3. In the 20th century, the discipline of sociology was indebted to the U.S. sociologists Charles Horton Cooley and Robert Merton, as well as to the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu.
4. **Macrosociology** concentrates on large-scale phenomena or entire civilizations; **microsociology** stresses the study of small groups. **Mesosociology** is an intermediate level of analysis that focuses on formal organizations and social movements. **Global sociology** compares nations or entire societies.

Thinking Critically

1. Consider the work of early sociologists such as Comte and Martineau. What social problems were they reacting to? To what extent have those problems been rectified today?
2. What influence do Marx's ideas have on current social and political issues?
3. What are some examples of social and cultural capital that you possess?

Key Terms

Anomie

Cultural capital

Double consciousness

Global sociology

Ideal type

Macrosociology

Mesosociology

Microsociology

Social capital

Verstehen

MODULE 3 | Major Theoretical Perspectives

Sociologists view society in different ways. Some see the world basically as a stable and ongoing entity. They are impressed with the endurance of the family, organized religion, and other social institutions. Other sociologists see society as composed of many groups in conflict, competing for scarce resources. To still other sociologists, the most fascinating aspects of the social world are the everyday, routine interactions among individuals that we sometimes take for granted. These three views, the ones most widely used by sociologists, are the functionalist, conflict, and interactionist perspectives. Together, these approaches will provide an introductory look at the discipline.

Functionalist Perspective

Think of society as a living organism in which each part of the organism contributes to its survival. This view is the **functionalist perspective**, which emphasizes the way in which the parts of a

society are structured to maintain its stability. In examining any aspect of society, then, functionalists emphasize the contribution that it makes to overall social stability.

Talcott Parsons (1902–1979), a Harvard University sociologist, was a key figure in the development of functionalist theory. Parsons was greatly influenced by the work of Émile Durkheim, Max Weber, and other European sociologists. For more than four decades, he dominated sociology in the United States with his advocacy of functionalism. Parsons saw any society as a vast network of connected parts, each of which helps to maintain the system as a whole. His approach, carried forward by German sociologist Niklas Luhmann (1927–1998), holds that if an aspect of social life does not contribute to a society's stability or survival—if it does not serve some identifiably useful function or promote value consensus among members of society—it will not be passed on from one generation to the next (Joas and Knöbl 2009; Knudsen 2010).

Let's examine an example of the functionalist perspective. Many Americans have difficulty understanding the Hindu prohibition against slaughtering cows (specifically, zebu). Cattle browse unhindered through Indian street markets, helping



John M Lund Photography Inc/Getty Images

Functionalists would see the family, as shown here in Panama City, Panama, as important to contributing to the stability of the society.

themselves to oranges and mangoes while people bargain for the little food they can afford. What explains this devotion to the cow in the face of human deprivation—a devotion that appears to be dysfunctional?

The simple explanation is that cow worship is highly functional in Indian society, according to economists, agronomists, and social scientists who have studied the matter. Cows perform two essential tasks: plowing the fields and producing milk. If eating beef were permitted, hungry families might be tempted to slaughter their cows for immediate consumption, leaving themselves without a means of cultivation. Cows also produce dung, which doubles as a fertilizer and a fuel for cooking. Finally, cow meat sustains the neediest group in society, the *Dalit*, or untouchables, who sometimes resort to eating beef in secrecy. If eating beef were socially acceptable, higher-status Indians would no doubt bid up its price, placing it beyond the reach of the hungriest.

Manifest and Latent Functions

A college catalog typically states various functions of the institution. It may inform you, for example, that the university intends to “offer each student a broad education in classical and contemporary thought, in the humanities, in the sciences, and in the arts.” However, it would be quite a surprise to find a catalog that declared, “This

university was founded in 1895 to assist people in finding a marriage partner.” No college catalog will declare this as the purpose of the university. Yet societal institutions serve many functions, some of them quite subtle. The university, in fact, *does* facilitate mate selection.

Robert Merton (1968) made an important distinction between manifest and latent functions. **Manifest functions** of institutions are open, stated, and conscious functions. They involve the intended, recognized consequences of an aspect of society, such as the university’s role in certifying academic competence and excellence. In contrast, **latent functions** are unconscious or unintended functions that may reflect hidden purposes of an institution. One latent function of universities is to hold down unemployment. Another is to serve as a meeting ground for people seeking marital partners.

Dysfunctions

Functionalists acknowledge that not all parts of a society contribute to its stability all the time. A **dysfunction** refers to an element or process of a society that may actually disrupt the social system or reduce its stability.

We view many dysfunctional behavior patterns, such as homicide, as undesirable. Yet we should not automatically interpret them in this way. The evaluation of a dysfunction depends on one’s own values, or as the saying goes, on “where you sit.” For example, the official view in prisons in the United States is that inmate gangs should be eradicated because they are dysfunctional to smooth operations. Yet some guards have come to view prison gangs as a functional part of their jobs. The danger posed by gangs creates a “threat to security,” requiring increased surveillance and more overtime work for guards, as well as requests for special staffing to address gang problems (G. Scott 2001).



MikeDotta/Shutterstock

Interactionists studied the new patterns of everyday behavior during the coronavirus pandemic as people wore gloves and facial coverings and maintained distances between themselves and others.

Conflict Perspective

Where functionalists see stability and consensus, conflict sociologists see a social world in continual struggle. The **conflict perspective** assumes that social behavior is best understood in terms of tension between groups over power or the allocation of resources, including housing, money, access to services, and political representation. The tension between competing groups need not be violent; it can take the form of labor negotiations, party politics, competition between religious groups for new members, or disputes over the federal budget.

Throughout most of the 1900s, the functionalist perspective had the upper hand in sociology in the United States. However, the conflict approach has become increasingly persuasive since the late 1960s. The widespread social unrest resulting from battles over civil rights, bitter divisions over the war in Vietnam, the rise of the feminist and LGBTQ movements, the Watergate political scandal, urban riots, confrontations at abortion clinics, and shrinking economic prospects for the middle class have offered support for the conflict approach—the view that our social world is characterized by continual struggle between competing groups. Currently, the discipline of sociology accepts conflict theory as one valid way to gain insight into a society.

The Marxist View

As we saw earlier, Karl Marx viewed struggle between social classes as inevitable, given the exploitation of workers that he perceived under capitalism. Expanding on Marx's work, sociologists and other social scientists have come to see conflict not merely as a class phenomenon but as a part of everyday life in all societies. In studying any culture, organization, or social group, sociologists want to know who benefits, who suffers, and who dominates at the expense of others. They are concerned with the conflicts between women and men, parents and children, cities and suburbs, whites and Blacks, to name only a few. Conflict theorists are interested in how society's institutions—including the family, government, religion, education, and the media—may help to maintain the privileges of some groups and keep others in a subservient position. Their

emphasis on social change and the redistribution of resources makes conflict theorists more radical and activist than functionalists (Dahrendorf 1959).

Building upon the work of the conflict perspective, sociologists today have drawn greater attention to social inequality as it dramatically impacts people of color. Eduardo Bonilla-Silva grew up in Puerto Rico, where his mother was a sociologist who authored a book focusing on domestic abuse. Proud of his family and ethnic background, Bonilla-Silva's scholarship asks us to rethink racism as it occurs subtly by outwardly



Duke University

Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, president of the American Sociological Association in 2018, has drawn upon conflict theory to focus on issues of long-term social and racial inequality.

tolerant people as well as violently in everyday life. Significant change is required to overcome this centuries old, long-standing pattern of inequality (Bonilla-Silva 2019; Silva-Bonilla 1985).

The Feminist Perspective

Sociologists began embracing the feminist perspective only in the 1970s, although it has a long tradition in many other disciplines. The **feminist perspective** sees inequity in gender as central to all behavior and organization. Because it focuses clearly on one aspect of inequality, it is often allied with the conflict perspective. Proponents of the feminist view tend to focus on the macro level, just as conflict theorists do. Drawing on the work of Marx and Engels, contemporary feminist theorists often view women's subordination as inherent in capitalist societies. Some radical feminist theorists, however, view the oppression of women as inevitable in *all* male-dominated societies, whether capitalist, socialist, or communist (Ferguson 2017).

An early example of this perspective (long before the label came into use by sociologists) can be seen in the life and writings of Ida Wells-Barnett (1862–1931). Following her groundbreaking publications in the 1890s on the practice of lynching Black Americans, she became an advocate in the women's rights campaign, especially the struggle to win the vote for women. Like feminist theorists who succeeded her, Wells-Barnett used her analysis of society as a means of resisting oppression. In her case, she researched what it meant to be Black, a woman in the United States, and a Black woman in the United States (Giddings 2008; Wells-Barnett 1970).

A more recent contribution that continues to spark discussion is the notion of the *intersectionalities*, or the interlocking matrix of domination. In all societies, privilege or lack of privilege is determined by multiple social factors, such as gender, age, race, sexual orientation, and religion. Patricia Hill Collins (2000), among other feminist theorists, drew attention to these interlocking factors, demonstrating that it is not just wealth that influences how we navigate our daily lives in any society.

Queer Theory

Traditionally, sociologists and other researchers have assumed that men and women are heterosexual. They either ignored other sexual identifications or treated them as abnormal. Yet as French social theorist Michel Foucault (1978) has pointed out, what is regarded as normal or even acceptable human sexuality varies dramatically from one culture to another, as well as from one time period to another. Today, in *queer theory*, sociologists have moved beyond narrow assumptions to study sexuality in all its forms.



Smithsonian Libraries/Science Source

Ida Wells-Barnett explored what it meant to be female and Black in the United States. Her work established her as one of the earliest feminist theorists.

Historically, the word *queer* was used in a derogatory manner, to stigmatize a person or behavior. Beginning in the early 1970s, however, gay and lesbian activists began to use the word as a term of empowerment. They dismissed the notion of heterosexuality as the only normal form of sexuality, along with the belief that people must be either heterosexual or homosexual. Instead, they recognized multiple sexual identities, including bisexuality. **Queer theory** is the study of society from the perspective of a broad spectrum of sexual identities, including heterosexuality, homosexuality, and bisexuality.

Queer theorist Eve Sedgwick (1990) argues that any analysis of society is incomplete if it does not include the spectrum of sexual identities that people embrace. Consider, for example, the reelection of President Obama in 2012. Political scientists have often noted the overwhelming support the president received from Black Americans, Latinos, and women voters. Yet most have ignored the huge support—76 percent—that the president enjoyed among gay, lesbian, and bisexual voters. In comparison, heterosexual voters split evenly (49 percent to 49 percent nationwide) between Obama and his opponent, Mitt Romney. In the three battleground states of Florida, Ohio, and Virginia, support from gay, lesbian, and bisexual voters alone was enough to put Obama over the top. If Romney had carried just 51 percent of the gay, lesbian, and bisexual vote nationwide, he would have become the next president of the United States (Gates 2012).



use your **sociological imagination**

You are a sociologist who takes the conflict perspective. How would you interpret the practice of prostitution? How would your view of prostitution differ if you took the functionalist perspective? The feminist perspective? The perspective of queer theory?

Interactionist Perspective

Workers interacting on the job, encounters in public places like bus stops and parks, behavior in small groups—all these aspects of microsociology catch the attention of interactionists. Whereas functionalist and conflict theorists both analyze large-scale, society-wide patterns of behavior, theorists who take the **interactionist perspective** generalize about everyday forms of social interaction in order to explain society as a whole.

Today, given concern over traffic congestion and commuting costs, interactionists have begun to study a form of commuter behavior called “slugging.” To avoid driving to work, commuters gather at certain preappointed places to seek rides from complete strangers. When a driver pulls into the parking area or vacant lot and announces his destination, the first slug in line who is headed for that destination jumps in. Rules of etiquette have emerged to smooth the social interaction between driver and passenger: neither the driver nor the passenger may eat or smoke; the slug may not adjust the windows or radio or talk on a cell phone. The presence of the slugs, who get a free ride, may allow the driver to use special lanes reserved for high-occupancy vehicles (Slug-Lines.com 2020).

Interactionism (also referred to as *symbolic interactionism*) is a sociological framework in which human beings are viewed as living

in a world of meaningful objects. Those “objects” may include material things, actions, other people, relationships, and even symbols. Interactionists see symbols as an especially important part of human communication (thus the term *symbolic interactionism*). Symbols have a shared social meaning that is understood by all members of a society. In the United States, for example, a salute symbolizes respect, while a clenched fist signifies defiance. Another culture might use different gestures to convey a feeling of respect or defiance. These types of symbolic interaction are classified as forms of **nonverbal communication**, which can include many other gestures, facial expressions, and postures (Hall et al. 2019).

Manipulation of symbols can be seen in dress codes. Schools frown on students who wear clothes displaying messages that appear to endorse violence or drug and alcohol consumption. Businesses stipulate the attire employees are allowed to wear on the job in order to impress their customers or clients. In 2018, U.S. Tennis Open officials gave a violation to a tennis player who briefly removed her shirt and revealed her sports bra on the court, after realizing the shirt was on backwards. Yet male tennis players frequently change shirts without incident. After an outcry about the differential treatment, professional tennis organizations revised their policies to be more equitable.

While the functionalist and conflict approaches were initiated in Europe, interactionism developed first in the United States. George Herbert Mead (1863–1931) is widely regarded as the founder of the interactionist perspective. Mead taught at the University of Chicago from 1893 until his death. As his teachings have become better known, sociologists have expressed greater interest in the interactionist perspective. Many have moved away from what may have been an excessive preoccupation with the macro (large-scale) level of social behavior and have redirected their attention toward behavior that occurs on the micro (small-scale) level.

Erving Goffman (1922–1982) popularized a particular type of interactionist method known as the **dramaturgical approach**, in which people are seen as theatrical performers. The dramaturgist compares everyday life to the setting of the theater and stage. Just as actors project certain images, all of us seek to present particular features of our personalities while we hide other features. Thus, in a class, we may feel the need to project a serious image; at a party, we may want to look relaxed and friendly.

Interactionists give special intention to everyday behavior that occurs in what has come to be called “the third place,” as described in Box 3-1.

The Sociological Approach

Which perspective should a sociologist use in studying human behavior? Functionalist? Conflict? Interactionist? Feminist? Queer theorist? We simply cannot squeeze all sociological thinking into 4 or 5 theoretical categories—or even 10, if we include several other productive approaches. However, by studying the three major frameworks, we can better grasp how sociologists seek to explore social behavior. Table 3-1 summarizes these three broad approaches to sociological study.

Although no one approach is correct by itself, and sociologists draw on all of them for various purposes, many sociologists tend to favor one particular perspective over others. A

The Third Place

For a generation, sociologists have spoken of the **“third place,”** a social setting in addition to the “first place” of home and the “second place” of work. People gather routinely in the third place, typically a restaurant, recreation center, or health club, to see familiar faces or make new friends. The coronavirus, with its accompanying lockdowns, sharply curtailed third-place activity.

Sociologists and others observed how these third places were so desperately missed by their patrons. What factors have sociologists identified that both encourage and, aside from the pandemic, discourage gathering in the third place?

Free Wi-Fi encourages people to seek out such establishments, but do laptops truly enhance social interactions? And though talking among friends may be easy in the living-room settings that coffeehouses provide, proprietors don’t always welcome these social gatherings. Some enforce anti-littering regulations or require patrons to make purchases at regular time intervals.

Still, as the second place (the workplace) becomes less relevant to growing numbers of telecommuters, the third place appears to

have been growing in social significance. Yet the coronavirus pandemic may cause some people to think twice about socializing in crowded indoor places.

In 2018, the third place dramatically came to the forefront of discussions of racism as

As the second place (the workplace) becomes less relevant to growing numbers of telecommuters, the third place appears to have been growing in social significance.

the behavior of people who gathered there was called into question. At Yale University, a white graduate student called campus police when she found a Black female graduate student napping in her dormitory’s common room. In Philadelphia, two Black men were arrested at a Starbucks when they asked to

use the bathroom while waiting for a third person to arrive for a meeting. Observers of these instances question whether police would have been summoned if the napping student or waiting men had been white. This differential behavior seemed to hearken back 70 years to a time when overt discrimination in public spaces was the norm. Because of these and other instances, organizations have sought to teach students and employees how to navigate the third place without engaging in discriminatory behavior.

LET’S DISCUSS

1. Think about acceptable third-place behavior. In what types of situations do people tend to separate by race, class, or gender in third places?
2. What third places do you visit regularly? Are some more public places than really third places?

Sources: Butler and Diaz 2016; Finlay 2020; Oldenburg 2001; Pomrenze and Simon 2018; Putnam 1995.

TABLE 3-1 MAJOR SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

Tracking Sociological Perspectives

	Functionalist	Conflict	Interactionist
View of Society	Stable, well integrated	Characterized by tension and struggle between groups	Active in influencing and affecting everyday social interaction
Level of Analysis Emphasized	Macro Meso Global	Macro Meso Global	Micro, as a way of understanding the larger social phenomena
Key Concepts	Manifest functions Latent functions Dysfunctions	Inequality Capitalism Stratification	Symbols Nonverbal communication Face-to-face interaction
View of the Individual	People are socialized to perform societal functions	People are shaped by power, coercion, and authority	People manipulate symbols and create their social worlds through interaction
View of the Social Order	Maintained through cooperation and consensus	Maintained through force and coercion	Maintained by shared understanding of everyday behavior
View of Social Change	Predictable, reinforcing	Change takes place all the time and may have positive consequences	Reflected in people’s social positions and their communications with others
Example	Public punishments reinforce the social order	Laws reinforce the positions of those in power	People respect laws or disobey them based on their own past experience
Proponents	Émile Durkheim Talcott Parsons Robert Merton	Karl Marx W. E. B. DuBois Ida Wells-Barnett	George Herbert Mead Charles Horton Cooley Erving Goffman

sociologist's theoretical orientation influences his or her approach to a research problem in important ways—including the choice of what to study, how to study it, and what questions to pose (or not to pose). Box 3-2 shows how researchers would study sports from different sociological perspectives.

Whatever the purpose of sociologists' work, their research will always be guided by their theoretical viewpoints. For example, sociologist Elijah Anderson (1990) embraces both the interactionist perspective and the groundbreaking work of W. E. B. DuBois. For

14 years Anderson conducted fieldwork in Philadelphia, where he studied the interactions of Black and white residents who lived in adjoining neighborhoods. In particular, he was interested in their public behavior, including their eye contact—or lack of it—as they passed one another on the street. Anderson's research tells us much about the everyday social interactions of Black and white people in the United States, but it does not explain the larger issues behind those interactions. Like theories, research results illuminate one part of the stage, leaving other parts in relative darkness.

Research Today

BOX 3-2

Looking at Sports from Five Sociological Perspectives

We watch sports. Talk sports. Spend money on sports. Some of us live and breathe sports. Because sports occupy much of our time and directly or indirectly consume and generate a great deal of money, it should not be surprising that sports have sociological components that can be analyzed from various theoretical perspectives. In this section we will look at sports from five major sociological perspectives.

Functionalist View

In examining any aspect of society, functionalists emphasize the contribution it makes to overall social stability. Functionalists regard sports as an almost religious institution that uses ritual and ceremony to reinforce the common values of a society. For example:

- Sports socialize young people into such values as competition and patriotism.
- Sports help to maintain people's physical well-being.
- Sports serve as a safety valve for both participants and spectators, who are allowed to shed tension and aggressive energy in a socially acceptable way.
- Sports bring together members of a community (who support local athletes and teams) or even a nation (during World Cup matches and the Olympics) and promote an overall feeling of unity and social solidarity.

Conflict View

Conflict theorists argue that the social order is based on coercion and exploitation. They emphasize that sports reflect and even exacerbate many of the divisions of society:

- Sports are a form of big business in which profits are more important than the health and safety of the workers (athletes).
- Sports perpetuate the false idea that success can be achieved simply through hard work, while failure should be blamed on the individual alone (rather than on injustices in the larger social system).

- Professional athletes' behavior can promote violence and the use of performance-enhancing drugs.
- Communities divert scarce resources to subsidize the construction of professional sports facilities.
- Sports maintain the subordinate role of Blacks and Latinos, who toil as athletes but are less visible in supervisory positions as coaches, managers, and owners.
- Team logos and mascots (like the Washington Redskins) disparage American Indians.

Despite their differences, functionalists, conflict theorists, feminists, queer theorists, and interactionists would all agree that there is much more to sports than exercise or recreation.

Feminist View

Feminist theorists consider how watching or participating in sports reinforces the roles that men and women play in the larger society:

- Although sports generally promote fitness and health, they may also have an adverse effect on participants' health. Men are more likely to resort to illegal steroid use (among bodybuilders and baseball players, for example); women, to excessive dieting (among gymnasts and figure skaters, for example).
- Gender expectations encourage female athletes to be passive and gentle, qualities that do not support the emphasis on competitiveness in sports. As a result, women find it difficult to enter sports traditionally dominated by men, such as Indy or NASCAR.

- Although professional women athletes' earnings are increasing, they typically trail those of male athletes.

Queer Theory

Proponents of queer theory emphasize the ways in which sports promote heterosexuality as the only acceptable sexual identity for athletes:

- Coaches and players routinely use slurs based on negative stereotypes of homosexuals to stigmatize athletes whose performance is inadequate.
- As a group, professional athletes are highly reluctant to display any sexual identity other than heterosexuality in public, for fear of damaging their careers and losing their fans and commercial sponsors.
- Parents who are not heterosexual encounter hostility when they try to register their children for sports or scouting programs, and are often rejected from coaching and other support roles.

Interactionist View

In studying the social order, interactionists are especially interested in shared understandings of everyday behavior. Interactionists examine sports on the micro level by focusing on how day-to-day social behavior is shaped by the distinctive norms, values, and demands of the world of sports:

- Sports often heighten parent-child involvement; they may lead to parental expectations for participation, and sometimes unrealistically, for success.
- Participation in sports builds the friendship networks that permeate everyday life.
- Despite class, racial, and religious differences, teammates may work together harmoniously and may even abandon common stereotypes and prejudices.
- Relationships in the sports world are defined by people's social positions as players, coaches, and referees—as well