SECOND EDITION

Essentials of HUMAN BEHAVIOR

INTEGRATING PERSON, ENVIRONMENT, AND THE LIFE COURSE

Elizabeth D. Hutchison

SECOND EDITION

Essentials of HUMAN BEHAVIOR

To Hutch, Brad, Jennie, Abby, Darin, Auggie, Ruby, and Juliet. Family inspires, supports, and sustains. I am so lucky to have you along on my life journey.

Note From the Author

In 2008, the Council on Social Work Education adopted a competency-based framework for the accreditation of social work educational programs. The Educational Policy (EP), adopted in 2015, continues this approach to social work education, laying out 9 core social work competencies that should guide curriculum design in social work education programs. Competencies are practice behaviors that integrate knowledge, values, and skills. We have included material in this book to assist the reader in developing all 9 core competencies.

We present material to assist the reader to engage in personal reflection related to personal biases and social work values. Critical thinking questions appear in each chapter to assist the reader in ongoing critical examination of personal biases, conceptual frameworks, and empirical research. The content on diversity, oppression, human rights, and social and economic justice includes attention to issues of global social, economic, and environmental justice. Chapter 6, Culture and the Physical Environment, draws special attention to issues of environmental justice. All chapters draw on multidisciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing about human behavior. A number of chapters include material on relevant social policies and historical, cultural, economic, and global influences on policy development. Theories of human behavior are a major focus of the book and are covered in every chapter. Each chapter includes practice principles for applying knowledge about human behavior for assessment and intervention. The multidisciplinary theoretical content includes theories of individual behavior, as well as theories of families, small groups, communities, formal organizations, social institutions, and social movements.

The 9 core competencies and the related practice behaviors are presented here, followed by a grid that indicates which of the core competencies are addressed in some fashion in each chapter. You might find it helpful to review these core competencies from time to time as you are learning more and more about what it means to be a social worker.

COMPETENCY 1: DEMONSTRATE ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

Social workers

- make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;
- use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
- demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

COMPETENCY 2: ENGAGE DIVERSITY AND DIFFERENCE IN PRACTICE

Social workers

- apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;
- present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and
- apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

COMPETENCY 3: ADVANCE HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Social workers

- apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels; and
- engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

COMPETENCY 4: ENGAGE IN PRACTICE-INFORMED RESEARCH AND RESEARCH-INFORMED PRACTICE

Social workers

- use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research;

- apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings; and
- use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

COMPETENCY 5: ENGAGE IN POLICY PRACTICE

Social workers

- identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services;
- assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services; and
- apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice.

COMPETENCY 6: ENGAGE WITH INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES

Social workers

- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies; and
- use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

COMPETENCY 7: ASSESS INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES

Social workers

- collect and organize data and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies;
- develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies; and
- select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies.

COMPETENCY 8: INTERVENE WITH INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES

Social workers

- critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies;
- use interprofessional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes;
- negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies; and
- facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

COMPETENCY 9: EVALUATE PRACTICE WITH INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES

Social workers

- select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes;
- apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes;
- critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes; and
- apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

Essentials of Human Behavior and Social Work Core Competencies

CHAPTER	ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR	ENGAGE DIVERSITY & DIFFERENCE	HUMAN RIGHTS & JUSTICE	RESEARCH AND PRACTICE	POLICY PRACTICE	SOCIAL WORK ENGAGEMENT	ASSESSMENT	INTERVENTION	EVALUATION
1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
2	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
3	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
4	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√
5	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√
6	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
7	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
8	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
9	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
10	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
11	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
12	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
13	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
14	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
15	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
16	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Total Chapters	16	16	16	16	14	16	16	16	16

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PART IV. The Changing Life Course

Detailed Contents

Case Studies

(Continued)

(Continued)

Preface

In the preface to the first edition of this book, I noted that I have always been intrigued with human behavior. I didn't know any social workers when I was growing up—or even that there was a social work profession—but I felt an immediate connection to social work and social workers during my junior year in college when I enrolled in an elective titled Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare. What attracted me most was the approach social workers take to understanding human behavior. I was a sociology major, minoring in psychology, and it seemed that each of these disciplines—as well as disciplines such as economics, political science, and ethics—added pieces to the puzzle of human behavior; that is, they each provided new ways to think about the complexities of human behavior. Unfortunately, it wasn't until several years later when I was a hospital social worker that I began to wish I had been a bit more attentive to my course work in biology, because that discipline increasingly holds other pieces of the puzzle of human behavior. But when I sat in that Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare course, it seemed that the pieces of the puzzle were coming together. I was inspired by the optimism about creating a more humane world, and I was impressed with an approach to human behavior that clearly cut across disciplinary lines.

Just out of college, amid the tumultuous societal changes of the late 1960s, I became an MSW student. I began to recognize the challenge of developing the holistic understanding of human behavior that has been the enduring signature of social work. I also was introduced to the tensions in social work education, contrasting breadth of knowledge versus depth of knowledge. I found that I was unprepared for the intensity of the struggle to apply what I was learning about general patterns of human behavior to the complex, unique situations that I encountered in the field. I was surprised to find that being a social worker meant learning to understand my own behavior, as well as the behavior of others.

Since completing my MSW, I have provided services in a variety of social work settings, including a hospital, nursing homes, state mental health and mental retardation institutions, a community mental health center, a school-based program, public child welfare, and a city jail. Sometimes the target of change was an individual, and other times the focus was on bringing about changes in dyadic or family relationships, communities, organizations, or social institutions. I have also performed a variety of social work roles, including case manager, therapist, teacher, advocate, group facilitator, consultant, collaborator, program planner, administrator, and researcher. I love the diversity of social work settings and the multiple roles of practice. My varied experiences strengthened my commitment to the pursuit of social justice, enhanced my fascination with human behavior, and reinforced my belief in the need to understand human behavior holistically.

For 30 years, I have taught courses on human behavior to undergraduate students, MSW students, and doctoral students. The students and I have struggled with the same challenges that I encountered as a social work student in the late 1960s: the daunting task of developing a holistic understanding of human behavior, the issue of breadth versus depth of knowledge, and discovering how to use general knowledge about human behavior in unique practice situations. And, increasingly, over time, my students and I recognized a need to learn more about human and social diversity and to build a knowledge base that provides tools for promoting social justice. My experiences as student, practitioner, and teacher of human behavior led me, with the help of a dedicated and thoughtful group of contributing authors, to spend several years in the 1990s writing the first edition of the two-volume *Dimensions of Human Behavior* books, which are now in their fifth edition.

I have appreciated hearing from faculty and students who use the *Dimensions of Human Behavior* books, and their feedback has been enormously helpful as the contributing authors and I revised and updated the books for subsequent editions. Over the years, I was approached by faculty who would like to see a briefer one-volume version of those books. Sometimes the requests came from faculty who are teaching in universities organized by quarters rather than semesters, and they wanted text material better suited for this shorter term. Other requests came from faculty who wanted a somewhat less comprehensive, but still multidimensional, textbook. The contributing authors and I wrote the first edition of this book to respond to these requests, out of respect for the great variety of social work educational programs and the diversity of ways of organizing curriculum. We are pleased that it has been so well received and have worked diligently to reorganize and update the material to present what we think is a much improved book.

This book retains the multidimensional, multitheoretical approach of the two-volume *Dimensions of Human Behavior* and retains much of the content, as well, but it is organized into fewer chapters and is presented in a

somewhat more simplified fashion. We have retained what we consider the essential themes of theory and research about human behavior.

MULTIDIMENSIONAL UNDERSTANDING OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR

Social work has historically used the idea of person-in-environment to develop a multidimensional understanding of human behavior. The idea that human behavior is multidimensional has become popular with most social and behavioral science disciplines. Recently, we have recognized the need to add the aspect of time to the person-environment construct, to capture the dynamic, changing nature of person-in-environment.

The purpose of this book is to help you to breathe life into the abstract idea of person-in-environment. As in the first edition of this book, I identify relevant dimensions of both person and environment, and my colleagues and I present up-to-date reports on theory and research about each of these dimensions in Parts II and III of the book. All the while, we encourage you to link the micro world of personal experience with the macro world of social trends—to recognize the unity of person and environment. We help you make this connection by showing how several of the same theories have been used to understand dimensions of both person and environment.

THE CHANGING LIFE COURSE

Part IV of the book builds on the multiple dimensions of person and environment analyzed in Chapters 3–9 and demonstrates how they work together with the dimension of time to produce patterns in unique life course journeys. The life course perspective puts equal value on individual agency and human connectedness; therefore, it serves as a good framework for social work's commitments to both the dignity and worth of the person as well as the importance of human relationships. The contributing authors and I draw on the best available evidence about the life course to assist the reader to develop and enhance expertise in serving people at all life stages.

BREADTH VERSUS DEPTH

The most difficult challenge I have faced as a student and teacher of human behavior is to develop a broad, multidimensional approach to human behavior without unacceptable sacrifice of depth. It is indeed a formidable task to build a knowledge base both wide and deep. After years of struggle, I have reluctantly concluded that although both breadth and depth are necessary, it is better for social work to err on the side of breadth. Let me tell you why.

Social workers are doers; we use what we know about human behavior to tell us what to do. If we have a narrow band of knowledge, no matter how impressive it is in its depth, we will "understand" the practice situations we encounter from this perspective. This will lead us to use the same solutions for all situations, rather than to tailor solutions to the unique situations we encounter. The emerging risk and resilience literature suggests that human behavior is influenced by the multiple risk factors and protective factors inherent in the multiple dimensions of contemporary social arrangements. What we need is a multidimensional knowledge base that allows us to scan widely for and think critically about risk factors and protective factors and to craft multipronged intervention programs to reduce risks and strengthen protective factors.

To reflect recent developments in the social and behavioral sciences, this book introduces dimensions of human behavior that are not covered in similar texts. Content on the biological and spiritual dimensions of person, the physical environment, social institutions, and social movements provides important insights into human behavior not usually covered in social work texts. In addition, we provide up-to-date information on the typically identified dimensions of human behavior.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE AND UNIQUE SITUATIONS

The purpose of the social and behavioral sciences is to help us understand *general patterns* in person-environment transactions. The purpose of social work assessment is to understand *unique configurations* of person and environment dimensions. Those who practice social work must weave what they know about unique situations with general knowledge. To assist you in this process, as we did in the *Dimensions of Human Behavior* books, we begin each chapter with one or more case studies, which we then weave with contemporary theory and research. Many of the stories are composite cases and do not correspond to actual people known to the authors. Throughout the book, we call attention to the successes and failures of theory and research to accommodate human diversity related to gender, class, age, race and ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, and disability. More important, we extend our attention to diversity, power, privilege, and oppression by being

very intentional in our effort to provide a global context for understanding person-environment transactions. This global perspective becomes increasingly necessary in our highly interconnected world. It also calls us to examine the impact of new technologies on all dimensions of the person and environment and across the life course.

FEATURES OF THE BOOK

The task of developing a solid knowledge base for doing social work can seem overwhelming. For me, it is an exciting journey because I am learning about my own behavior as well as the behavior of others. What I learn enriches my personal life as well as my professional life. My colleagues and I wanted to write a book that gives you a state-of-the-art knowledge base, but we also wanted you to find pleasure in your learning. We have tried to write as we teach, with enthusiasm for the content and a desire to connect with your process of learning. We use some special features that we hope will aid your learning process.

- *Detailed chapter outlines*, presented at the beginning of each chapter, prepare the reader to understand what content will be covered before beginning to read the chapter.
- *Learning objectives* help readers anticipate what knowledge, values, and skills they should be able to exhibit following the reading of each chapter.
- *Case studies* put human faces on theory and research.
- *Critical thinking questions* are presented throughout all chapters to encourage critical analysis of theory and research and assist the reader in recognizing and managing personal values and biases.
- *Exhibits* are used throughout the chapters to summarize information in graphical or tabular form to help the reader understand and retain ideas.
- *Key terms* are presented in bold type in the chapters and defined in the Glossary.
- *Photographs* provide visual interest and human faces for abstract content.
- *Active learning exercises*, presented at the end of each chapter, suggest classroom activities that can be used to engage students in critical analysis of text materials.
- *Implications for social work practice* are included throughout the chapters and summarized as a set of practice principles at the end of each chapter to guide the reader's use of general knowledge in social work assessment and intervention.
- *Web resources* appear at the end of each chapter to assist readers with further exploration of issues.

NEW IN THIS EDITION

The bulk of this second edition will be familiar to instructors who used the first edition of *Essentials of Human Behavior: Integrating Person, Environment, and the Life Course*. Many of the changes came at the suggestion of instructors who have been using the first edition. The overall outline of the book has been reorganized in a number of places. To respond to the rapidity of changes in complex societies, all chapters have been comprehensively updated. As the contributing authors and I worked to revise the book, we were surprised to learn how much the knowledge base had changed since we worked on the first edition. We came to agree with the futurists who say that we are at a point where the rate of cultural change and knowledge development will continue to accelerate rapidly. You will want to use the many wonders of the World Wide Web to update information you suspect is already outdated.

The more substantial revisions for this addition include the following:

- The book now includes four parts instead of the three used in the first edition, with Part II, The Multiple Dimensions of Person and Environment, now divided into Part II, The Multiple Dimensions of the Person, and Part III, The Multiple Dimensions of the Environment.
- The chapters in Part III, The Multiple Dimensions of the Environment, have been reordered to move more smoothly from smaller systems to larger systems. The discussion of environmental dimensions continues to begin with Culture and the Physical Environment (Chapter 6) because those dimensions of the environment permeate all other dimensions. The Culture and the Physical Environment chapter is now followed by Families (Chapter 7), the most long-term and intimate social grouping. In the first edition, the discussion of families and small groups was joined in one chapter. In this second edition, one chapter is devoted to a fuller discussion of families, recognizing their important role as a social institution and their important impact on individual behavior. Following the chapter on families is Chapter 8, Small Groups, Formal Organizations, and Communities. This new organization reflects the important role that small groups play in both formal organizations and communities. Part III concludes with Chapter 9, Social Structure, Social Institutions, and Social Movements: Global and National, a discussion of large-scale societies and the social movements that attempt to create more just societies.
- Some reorganization of content is also presented in Part IV, The Changing Life Course. In the first

edition, Chapter 10, the first chapter in Part IV, included an overview of the life course perspective along with a discussion of conception, pregnancy, and childbirth. In this second edition, Chapter 10, The Human Life Journey: A Life Course Perspective, now presents a fuller discussion of the life course perspective that is used throughout the final six chapters of the book. We think this provides a clearer framework for the reading of those chapters. The discussion of infancy is now married to the discussion of conception, pregnancy, and childbirth in Chapter 11, a marriage that reflects increasing understanding of the close association of these two periods of life. Chapter 12 now covers the periods of toddlerhood and early childhood. The other chapters in Part IV are organized as they were in the first edition.

- Genetics content is moved from the discussion of conception, pregnancy, and childbirth to Chapter 3, The Biological Person.
- Significantly more content is added on the impact of the new information, communication, and medical technologies on person and environment.
- New content on neuroscience is added.
- Coverage of the global context of human behavior is expanded.
- New content on environmental and ecological justice has been added to Chapter 6, Culture and the Physical Environment.
- New content on gender identity has been added to several chapters.
- Eight new case studies have been added to reflect contemporary issues.
- The number of critical thinking questions is increased in every chapter.
- Visual metaphors are used in Chapter 2 to represent the major theoretical perspective used in the book.
- Several exhibits are added and others are updated.

INTERACTIVE eBOOK

A free interactive eBook is available with the text to expand the learning experience. Users of the eBook will have access to 45 original SAGE-produced videos. These videos are linked to learning objectives and assessments and serve to deepen readers' understanding of basic concepts. Also available in the eBook is a series of professionally narrated "Chalk Talks"—whiteboard-style animations that provide a visual overview of each part of the text.

SAGE edge INSTRUCTOR AND STUDENT RESOURCES

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For Instructors: SAGE edge is a robust online environment featuring an impressive array of free tools and resources. Instructors using this book can access customizable Power Point slides, along with an extensive test bank built on Bloom's taxonomy that features multiple-choice, true/false, essay, and short answer questions for each chapter. The instructor's manual is mapped to learning objectives and features lecture notes, sample syllabi for semester and quarter courses, discussion questions, class assignments, links to SAGE journal articles, and video and web resources.

For Students: The student study site provides access to eFlashcards, web quizzes, links to full-text SAGE journal articles with accompanying review questions, video and web resources, downloadable versions of in-text assessments, and a link to the author's blog on multicultural education.

ONE LAST WORD

I imagine that you, like me, are intrigued with human behavior. That is probably a part of what attracted you to social work. I hope that reading this book reinforces your fascination with human behavior. I also hope that when you finish this book, and in the years to come, you will have new ideas about the possibilities for social work action.

Learning about human behavior is a lifelong process. You can help me in my learning process by letting me know what you liked or didn't like about the book.

—Elizabeth D. Hutchison
Reno, Nevada
ehutch@vcu.edu

Acknowledgments

A project like this book is never completed without the support and assistance of many people. This second edition stands on the back of the first edition, as well as on five editions of *Dimensions of Human Behavior: Person and Environment* and *Dimensions of Human Behavior: The Changing Life Course*. Since I started work on the first edition of the *Dimensions* books in the mid-1990s a large number of people have helped me keep this project going. I am grateful to all of them, some of them known to me and others working behind the scenes in a way not visible to me.

Steve Rutter, former publisher and president of Pine Forge Press, shepherded every step of the many years of work to produce the first edition of the *Dimensions* books. Along with Paul O'Connell, Becky Smith, and Maria Zuniga, he helped to refine the outline for the second edition of those books, and that outline continued to be used in the third, fourth, and fifth editions. I am especially grateful to Becky Smith, who worked with me as a developmental editor for the first two editions of the *Dimensions* books. She taught me so much about writing, and I often find myself thinking *How would Becky present this?*

The contributing authors and I are grateful for the assistance Dr. Maria E. Zuniga offered during the drafting of the second edition of the *Dimensions* books. She provided many valuable suggestions on how to improve the coverage of cultural diversity in each chapter. Her suggestions have stayed with us as lasting lessons about human behavior in a multicultural society.

I am grateful once again to work with a fine group of contributing authors. They care about your learning and are committed to providing a state-of-the-art knowledge base for understanding the multiple dimensions of human behavior. I am also grateful for colleagues who have provided rich case studies for Chapters 1, 9, 10, 11, 15, and 16.

We are lucky to be working again with the folks at SAGE. Kassie Graves provided disciplined and creative editorial assistance from 2006 to 2016. She encouraged (gently nudged is more like it) me to bring the first edition of this book to fruition for several years. Nathan Davidson came on board at SAGE in time to help me turn months of research and writing into what you see in this book. He is just the editor I need at this time. Carrie Montoya and Heidi Dreiling have assisted me with tasks both large and small. I am so lucky to be working with Mark Bast as copy editor again; they don't get any better than Mark. He works with an eagle eye and a marvelous sense of humor. Likewise, I am lucky to once again have the disciplined, organized, and creative efforts of Jane Haenel to turn words and ideas into a beautiful book. I love these folks!

I am grateful to my former faculty colleagues at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), who set a high standard for scientific inquiry and teaching excellence. They also provided love and encouragement through both good and hard times. My conversations about the human behavior curriculum with colleagues Rosemary Farmer, Stephen Gilson, Marcia Harrigan, Holly Matto, Mary Secret, and Joe Walsh over many years have stimulated much thinking and resulted in many ideas found in this book.

My students over 30 years also deserve a special note of gratitude. They teach me all the time, and many things that I have learned in interaction with them show up in the pages of this book. They have also provided a great deal of joy to my life journey. Those moments when I learn of former students doing informed, creative, and humane social work are special moments indeed. I have also enjoyed receiving e-mail messages from students from other universities who are using the books and have found their insights to be very helpful.

I would also like to thank Goutham Menon, director of social work at the University of Nevada Reno, for inviting me back into the classroom. He is a thoughtful and supportive administrator.

My deepest gratitude goes to my husband, Hutch. Since work began on the first edition of the *Dimensions* books, we have weathered several challenging years and experienced many celebratory moments. He is constantly patient and supportive and often technically useful. But, more important, he makes sure that I don't forget that life can be great fun. He has now accompanied me through many changes for over three fourths of my life journey.

Finally, I am enormously grateful to a host of reviewers who provided very helpful feedback for the revisions found in this second edition. Their ideas were very helpful in framing our work on this book, and their ideas about the organization of the book were especially helpful:

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—Elizabeth D. Hutchison

About the Author

Elizabeth D. Hutchison received her MSW from the George Warren Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis and her PhD from the University at Albany, State University of New York. She was on the faculty in the Social Work Department at Elms College from 1980 to 1987 and was chair of the department from 1982 to 1987. She was on the faculty in the School of Social Work at Virginia Commonwealth University from 1987 to 2009, where she taught courses in human behavior and the social environment, social work and social justice, and child and family policy; she also served as field practicum liaison. She has been a social worker in health, mental health, aging, and child and family welfare settings. She is committed to providing social workers with comprehensive, current, and useful frameworks for thinking about human behavior. Her other research interests focus on child and family welfare. She lives in Reno, Nevada, where she is a hands-on grandmother and teaches part-time in the School of Social Work at the University of Nevada, Reno.

PART I

A Multidimensional, Multitheoretical Approach for Multifaceted Social Work

- Caroline O'Malley is knocking at the door of a family reported to her agency for child abuse.
- Sylvia Gomez and other members of her team at the rehabilitation hospital are meeting with the family of an 18-year-old man who is recovering from head injuries sustained in a motorcycle accident.
- Mark Bernstein is on the way to the county jail to assess the suicide risk of an inmate.
- Helen Moore is preparing a report for a legislative committee.
- Juanita Alvarez is talking with a homeless man about taking his psychotropic medications.
- Stan Weslowski is meeting with a couple who would like to adopt a child.
- Andrea Thomas is analyzing the results of a needs assessment recently conducted at the service center for older adults where she works.
- Anthony Pacino is wrapping up a meeting of a cancer support group.
- Sam Belick is writing a social history for tomorrow's team meeting at the high school where he works.
- Sarah Sahair has just begun a meeting of a recreational group of 9- and 10-year-old girls.
- Jane Kerr is facilitating the monthly meeting of an interagency coalition of service providers for substance-abusing women and their children.
- Ann Noles is planning a fund-raising project for the local Boys Club and Girls Club.
- Meg Hart is wrapping up her fourth counseling session with a lesbian couple.
- Chien Liu is meeting with a community group concerned about youth gang behavior in their neighborhood.
- Mary Wells is talking with one of her clients at the rape crisis center.
- Nagwa Nadi is evaluating treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder at a Veterans Administration hospital.
- Devyani Hakakian is beginning her workday at an international advocacy organization devoted to women's rights.

What do these people have in common? You have probably guessed that they all are social workers. They work in a variety of settings, and they are involved in a variety of activities, but they all are doing social work. Social work is, indeed, a multifaceted profession. And because it is multifaceted, social workers need a multidimensional, multitheoretical understanding of human behavior. This book provides such an understanding. The purpose of the two chapters in Part I is to introduce you to a multidimensional way of thinking about human behavior and to set the stage for subsequent discussion. In Chapter 1, you will be introduced to the multiple dimensions of person, environment, and time that serve as the framework for the book, and you will learn about social work's emphasis on diversity, inequality, and social justice. You also will be given some tools to think critically about the multiple theories and varieties of research that make up our general knowledge about these dimensions of human behavior. In Chapter 2, you will encounter eight theoretical perspectives that contribute to multidimensional understanding. You will learn about their central ideas and their scientific merits. Most important, you will consider the usefulness of these eight theoretical perspectives for social work.

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1

Human Behavior

A Multidimensional Approach

Elizabeth D. Hutchison

Learning Objectives

LO 1.1 Recognize one's emotional and cognitive reactions to a case study.

LO 1.2 Outline the elements of a multidimensional person-in-environment approach to human behavior.

LO 1.3 Advocate for an emphasis on diversity, inequality, social justice, and a global perspective in social work's approach to human behavior.

LO 1.4 Summarize four ingredients of knowing how to do social work.

LO 1.5 Analyze the roles of theory and research in guiding social work practice.

LO 1.6 Apply knowledge of the multidimensional person-in-environment framework, diversity, inequality, and the pursuit of social justice to recommend guidelines for social work assessment and intervention.

CASE STUDY

MANISHA AND HER CHANGING ENVIRONMENTS

Manisha is a 61-year-old Bhutanese woman who resettled in the United States in early 2009. She describes her childhood as wonderful. She was the youngest of seven children born to a farming family in a rural village of Bhutan. Although there was little support for education, especially for girls, Manisha's parents valued education, and she was one of five girls in her village school, where she was able to finish the second grade. As was tradition, she married young, at age 17, and became a homemaker for her husband, who was a contractor, and the four sons they later had. Manisha and her husband had a large plot of farmland, and Manisha enjoyed tending their large vegetable gardens. They were able to develop some wealth and were sending their children to school. They were managing well and living in peace.

In 1988, the political climate began to change and the good times ended. Manisha says she doesn't really understand how the problem started because in Bhutan, women were excluded from decision making and were given little information. As she talks, she begins to reflect that she has learned some things about what happened, but she still doesn't understand it. What she does recall is that the Bhutanese government began to discriminate against the Nepali ethnic group to which she belongs. News accounts indicate that the Druk Buddhist majority wanted to unite Bhutan under the Druk culture, religion, and language. The Nepalis had a separate culture and language and were mostly Hindu, whereas the Druks were Buddhist. Manisha says she does not know much about this, but she does recall that suddenly Nepalis were denied citizenship, were not allowed to speak their language, and could no longer get access to jobs.

Manisha recalls that the Nepali people began to raise their voices and question what was happening. When this occurred, the Bhutanese government sent soldiers to intimidate the villagers and undermine the Nepali resistance. Manisha tells about cases of rape of Nepali women at the hands of the Bhutanese soldiers and recalls that the soldiers expected Nepali girls and women to be made available to them for sexual activity. She reports that government forces targeted Nepali families who had property and wealth, arresting them in the middle of the night and torturing and killing some. Families were forcefully evicted from their property.

One day when Manisha was at the market, the soldiers arrested her husband and took him to jail; she didn't know where he was for 2 days. He was in jail for 18 months. She remembers that she and her sons would hide out, carefully watch for soldiers, and sneak back home to cook. She was afraid to be at home. Finally, one day she was forced to report to the government office and there was told to leave and go to Nepal. She told the government representative that she couldn't leave because her husband was in jail and she needed to care for her children. She tried to survive, living with other families, and she managed to live that way for a year.

Finally, Manisha heard that her husband would be released from jail on condition that he leave the country. By this time, neighbors had started to flee, and only four households were left in her village. She sent her youngest son with friends and neighbors who were fleeing. A few days later, her husband was released. He said he was too afraid to stay in their home, and they too had to flee. Manisha did not want to leave, and she still talks about the farm they had to leave behind. But the next morning, she and her husband and their other three sons fled the country. It was a 3-day walk to the Indian border, where Manisha and her family lived on the banks of a river with other Nepalis who had fled. Her sons ranged in age from 6 to 19 at this time. Manisha recalls that many people died by the river and that there was "fever all around."

After 3 months, Manisha and her family moved to a refugee camp in Nepal, the largest of seven Nepali refugee camps. They spent 17 years in this camp before coming to the United States. The 18 months of imprisonment affected her husband such that he was not able to tolerate the close quarters of refugee camp living; he lived and worked in the adjacent Nepali community and came to visit his family. The four boys were able to attend school in the camp.

The camp was managed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), whose representatives started to build a forum for women. Manisha says that many of the women were, like her, from rural areas where they had been self-reliant, eating what they grew and taking care of their families. Now they were dependent on other people. The facilities at the camps were closely built and crowded. There was always a need for cash; the refugees were given food, but money was needed for other things, like clothes and personal hygiene items. Oxfam, an international aid organization, started a knitting program, and the women were able to sell their knitted items, which provided much-needed cash. Manisha began to provide moral support to other women and to disabled children, and she worked as the camp's deputy secretary for 3 years.

Manisha's family wanted desperately to get back to Bhutan, but they began to realize that that would not happen. They

also learned that Nepal would not give citizenship to the refugees even though they had a shared culture. So, Manisha and her family decided to resettle in the United States, where they had been assured by UNHCR workers that they would have a better life. The family resettled in three stages. First, Manisha and her husband came to the United States along with their youngest son and his wife. The older sons and their families resettled in two different waves of migration. They all live in proximity to one another. All of Manisha's sons and daughters-in-law are working, but some have only been able to find part-time work. They work in retail; hotel, hospital, and school housekeeping; and school food services. Her youngest son works at Walmart as a customer service manager and takes online college courses. Her grandchildren are all thriving and doing well in school. Manisha is pleased that they learned English so quickly.

In the camp in Nepal, Manisha had been working and was on the go. In her first year in the United States, she felt lonely, describing her life as "living behind closed doors." She and her husband took English as a second language (ESL) classes, but she felt strongly that she needed to be out at work so that she would have a chance to practice English. Five years after arriving in the United States, Manisha says that everything was so strange at first, and she found it difficult to adjust. For the past 4 years, she has worked part-time in a public school cafeteria, and she has been taking a citizenship preparation class. Her husband is not working, and he dropped out of the citizenship preparation class after a few weeks. English is still very hard for her, but her friends at work help her with the language. She has both American and Nepalese friends, and her friends are an important part of her life. She and her husband continue to practice their Hindu faith at home, but they are not able to attend the nearest Hindu Center, which is about 20 miles from their apartment, as often as they would like. The social worker at the refugee resettlement program is pleased that Manisha has found dignity and purpose in resettlement, but he continues to be concerned about other refugee men and women who are isolated and unhappy.

—Beverly B. Koerin and Elizabeth D. Hutchison

HUMAN BEHAVIOR: INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE

As eventful as it has been, Manisha's story is still unfolding. As a social worker, you will become a part of many unfolding life stories, and you will want to have useful ways to think about those stories and effective ways to be helpful to people like Manisha and her community of Bhutanese refugees. The purpose of this book is to provide ways for you to think about the nature and complexities of human behavior—the people and situations at the center of social work practice. To begin to do that, we must first clarify the purpose of social work and the approach it takes to individual and collective human behavior. This is laid out in the 2015 *Educational Policy* of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE):

> The purpose of the social work profession is to promote human and community well-being. Guided by a person-in-environment framework, a global perspective, respect for human diversity, and knowledge based on scientific inquiry, the purpose of social work is actualized through its quest for social and economic justice, the prevention of conditions that limit human rights, the elimination of poverty, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all persons. (p. 1)

In discussion of social work competencies, the policy notes that "social workers apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies" (p. 6).

As you think about Manisha's story, you may be thinking, as I was, not only about Manisha but also about the different environments in which she has lived and the ways in which both Manisha and her environments have changed over time. The person-in-environment framework noted in the CSWE Educational Policy is an old approach in social work, but it still is a very useful way to think about human behavior—a way that can accommodate such contemporary themes in human life as the emotional life of the brain, human–robot relationships, social media, human rights, economic globalization, and environmental justice. Social workers are concerned about both individual and collective behavior and well-being. When I talk about human behavior, I am referring to both the individual and collective behavior of humans. Sometimes we focus on individual behavior, and other times we are more concerned about the social systems created by human interaction.

This chapter overviews the person-in-environment framework that has guided social work intervention since the earliest days of the profession. The element of time is added to the person-in-environment framework to call attention to the dynamic, ever-changing nature of both people and environments. The chapter also presents a discussion of

diversity, inequality, and the pursuit of social justice from a global perspective. After a brief description of the process by which professionals like social workers move from knowing to doing, the chapter ends with a discussion of how scientific knowledge from theory and research informs social work's multidimensional understanding of human behavior.

A MULTIDIMENSIONAL APPROACH

Social work's person-in-environment framework has historically recognized both person and environment as complex and **multidimensional**, that is, as having several identifiable dimensions. A **dimension** refers to a feature that can be focused on separately but that cannot be understood without also considering other features. This last piece is really important: Although we can focus on one dimension of a human story to help us think about it more clearly, no one dimension can be understood without considering other dimensions as well. With an explosion of research across a number of disciplines in the past few decades, the trend has been to expand the range of dimensions of both person and environment folded into the person-in-environment framework. Time too can be thought of as multidimensional. Let's look at some of the dimensions of person, environment, and time in Manisha's story.

If we focus on the *person* in Manisha's story, it appears that she was born with a healthy biological constitution, which allowed her to work in the family gardens and care for four sons. She describes no difficulty in managing the strenuous 3-day walk to the Indian border as she fled Bhutan. She survived while many people died by the river, and later, in the refugee camp, she survived and found new purpose when many others died of damaged bodies or broken spirits. Manisha appears to have emotional resilience, and she has maintained a belief in her ability to find dignity and purpose in life in the United States. She is able to learn a new language and culture and plan for the future. Her Hindu faith has been a source of comfort for her as she has adapted to different environments.

If we focus on the *environment*, we see many influences on Manisha's story. Consider first the physical environment. Manisha lived in relative comfort, first on her father's and then her husband's farm, for almost 40 years, where she was able to spend much of her day outside helping to turn gardens into food for her family. From there, she endured a long hike and a few months of survival in a poorly sheltered camp by the river. Her next stop was a crowded refugee camp. After 17 years, she and her family left the camp to establish a new life in the United States, where she lives with her husband in a small apartment that at first left her feeling isolated.

Culture is a dimension of environment that exerts a powerful influence in Manisha's story. Culture influenced the fact that she received limited, if any, education and that she be married at what may appear to us to be an early age. Her culture also held that women lack power and influence and are not involved in affairs outside the home, and yet Manisha assumed a powerful role in holding her family together after her husband was imprisoned. She also developed a very public role in the refugee camp and, on first coming to the United States, grieved the loss of that role. Although there were many challenges in the camp, she was living among people who shared her culture, language, and religion. She is adapting to a new, fast-moving culture where language is a constant barrier and her religious beliefs are in the minority. But culture is an important part of Manisha's story in another way. Culture clash and cultural imperialism led the Bhutanese government to discriminate against and then banish the Nepali ethnic group. Such cultural conflict is not new; historical analysis suggests that intercultural violence has actually declined in recent times (Pinker, 2011), but it continues to be a source of great international upheaval.

Another dimension of the environment, family, is paramount to Manisha. She is lucky to have her husband living with her again and all of her children nearby. None of her siblings was resettled in the same city, however, and they are spread across several countries at this time. She is not even sure what has happened to much of her large extended family. Manisha's children and grandchildren are central to her life, and they give her hope for the future. Manisha and her husband are devoted to each other but had to adjust to living together again after living in separate quarters for many years in Nepal. In some ways, Manisha led a much more independent life in the refugee camp than back in Bhutan, and she came to value that independence. She and her husband are still negotiating this change from traditional gender roles.

Small groups, organizations, and communities have been important forces in Manisha's life. In the refugee camp, she participated in some focus groups that the UNHCR conducted with the women in the camps. She is enjoying the relationships she is developing with her ESL class and her citizenship preparation class; she draws courage from the companionship and the collegial sense of "we are all in the same boat" that she gets from the weekly classes. She also has warm relationships with the other cafeteria workers at the school.

Several organizations have been helpful to Manisha and her family since they fled Bhutan. First, she is grateful for the UNHCR for all of the resources it put into running the Nepali refugee camps. Second, she has high praise for Oxfam International, which started the knitting program in the camps. In the United States, she is grateful for the assistance of the refugee resettlement program that sponsored her family and is especially appreciative of the ESL

program they run and the moral support provided by the social worker. She is learning to work within the context of the public school bureaucracy. She would like to have more contact with the Hindu Center, but the distance does not make that easy.

Manisha has adapted her behavior to live within four different types of communities. In her Bhutanese farming village, she was surrounded by open land, extended family, and long-term friends. In the poorly sheltered camp by the river, fear and confusion were the driving force of relationships, and loss of loved ones was a much too common occurrence. In the crowded refugee camp, disease and despair were common, but she also found her voice and played an important role in helping other women and their children. She enjoyed her leadership position as deputy secretary of the camp and liked the active life she created in this role. Now, she has moved to a suburb of a U.S. city where she lives in a small apartment in a neighborhood with many other Bhutanese refugees. Suburban life is a new experience for her, and she has had many new behaviors to learn, such as how to use unfamiliar appliances, how to cook with unfamiliar foods, and how to navigate public transportation.

Manisha's story has been powerfully influenced by the geopolitical unrest that began just as she was entering middle adulthood. Her relationships with social institutions have changed over time, and she has had to learn new rules based on her changing place in the social structure. Prior to 1988, she enjoyed high status in her village and the respect that comes with it. She lived in peace. She still does not understand why the Bhutanese government suddenly began to discriminate against her ethnic group, and she grieves the loss of property, status, and homeland that came out of this unrest. She is grateful to the United Nations for its support of the Bhutanese refugees and to the United States for welcoming some to resettle here.

Manisha is aware that some members of her Nepali ethnic group developed a resistance social movement when the Bhutanese government began to discriminate against them. She is also aware that some refugees in the Nepali refugee camps resisted the idea of resettlement in the United States and other countries because they thought resettlement would dilute the pressure on Bhutan to repatriate the Nepalis. As much as Manisha would love to be repatriated, she and her family decided that resettlement in the United States was their best chance for a good future.

Time is also an important part of Manisha's story. Her story, like all human stories, is influenced by the human capacity to live not only in the present time but also in past and future times. Discrimination, imprisonment, escape, crowded camps, and resettlement are past events in her family's life and can be vividly recalled. There have been times in Manisha's life when she needed to focus on future possibilities with questions such as "Should we leave Bhutan or stay?" and "Should we resettle in the United States or continue to try to return to Bhutan?" This future thinking has had an enormous impact on the current circumstances of the family's lives. Manisha's husband spends a lot of time thinking about his past life in Bhutan and all that has been lost, but she likes to think about the pleasant aspects of her past life. Manisha sees that her children and grandchildren are living largely in the present while also imagining possibilities for their future life in the United States, and she is trying to do that as well.

Manisha's story is also influenced by the historical times in which she has lived and is living. If she had been born 50 years earlier, it is possible that she could have lived out life peacefully in her farm village. On the other hand, the UNHCR, which was so instrumental to her family's survival, was not established until December 1950, 2 years before her birth, and she is lucky to have lived in an era of international support for refugees. The family's adjustment to life in the United States was hampered in the early days by the global economic recession of the time. Her youngest son benefits from living in an era when college credits can be earned by online study. The times in which we live shape our behaviors in many ways.

Another way to think about the role of time in human behavior is to consider the way in which age, or life stage, influences behavior. Manisha notes that learning English and adapting to their new life in the United States is so much easier for her children and grandchildren than it is for her and her husband. She is enjoying the grandparent role that is a large part of her focus in this life stage. She is happy to have a job rather than spending all day in the small apartment, but she hopes that she and her husband will stay well enough for her to continue to work for many more years.

As suggested, social work has historically recognized human behavior as an interaction of person with environment, although the relative emphasis on different dimensions of person and environment has changed over time (see Kondrat, 2008). Today, a vast multidisciplinary literature is available to help us in our social work efforts. The good news is that the multifaceted nature of this literature provides a broad knowledge base for the varied settings and roles involved in social work practice. The bad news is that this literature is highly fragmented, scattered across a large number of fields. What we need is a structure for organizing our thinking about this multifaceted, multidisciplinary, fragmented literature.

The multidimensional approach provided in this book should help. This approach is built on the person–environment–time model described earlier. Although in this book we focus on each of these elements separately, keep in mind that no single element can be entirely understood without attention to other elements. The dimensions

Social work has historically recognized human behavior as an interaction of person with environment.

of person and environment identified in this book were traditionally studied as detached or semidetached realities, with one dimension characterized as causing or leading to another. In recent years, however, behavioral science scholars have begun to collaborate across disciplines, leading to exciting new ways of thinking about human behavior, which the contributing authors and I share with you. I want to be clear that I do not see the dimensions analyzed in this book as detached realities, and I am not presenting a causal model. I want instead to show how these dimensions work together, how they are interwoven with each other, and how many possibilities are opened for social work practice when we think about human behavior in a multidimensional way. I am suggesting that humans engage in **multidetermined behavior**, that is, behavior that develops as a result of many causes. I do think, however, that focusing on specific dimensions one at a time can help to clarify general, abstract statements about person-in-environment—that is, it can put some flesh on the bones of this abstract framework. Exhibit 1.1 is a graphic overview of the dimensions of person, environment, and time discussed in this book. Exhibit 1.2 defines and gives examples for each dimension.

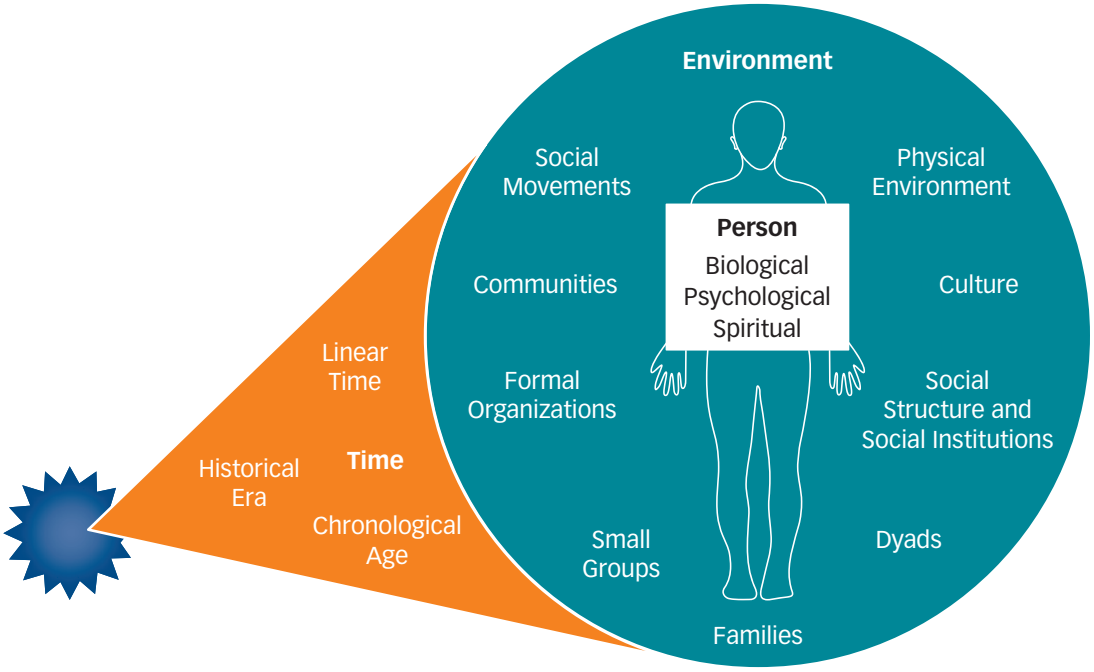
CRITICAL THINKING Questions 1.1

What courses have you taken in the past that added to your understanding of human behavior? How does content from any of these courses help you to understand Manisha's story and how a social worker might be helpful to Manisha and her family? Do you agree that the person-in-environment framework is still useful for social work? Explain your answer.

PERSONAL DIMENSIONS

Any story could be told from the perspective of any person in the story. The story at the beginning of this chapter is told from Manisha's perspective, but it could have been told from the perspectives of a variety of other persons such as the Bhutanese king, Manisha's husband, one of Manisha's children, one of Manisha's grandchildren, a UNHCR staff member, one of the women supported by Manisha in the camp, the social worker at the refugee

EXHIBIT 1.1 • Person, Environment, and Time Dimensions



resettlement agency, or one of her coworkers. You will want to recognize the multiple perspectives held by different persons involved in the stories of which you become a part in your social work activities.

You also will want tools for thinking about the various dimensions of the persons involved in these stories. In recent years, social workers, like contemporary scholars in other disciplines, have taken a *biopsychosocial approach* that recognizes human behavior as the result of interactions of integrated biological, psychological, and social systems (see Melchert, 2013). In this approach, psychology is seen as inseparable from biology; emotions and cognitions affect the health of the body and are affected by it (Smith, Fortin, Dwamena, & Frankel, 2013). Neurobiologists are identifying the brain circuitry involved in thoughts and emotions (Davidson & Begley, 2012; Kurzweil, 2012). They are finding evidence that the human brain is wired for social life (Lieberman, 2013). They are also finding that the social environment has an impact on brain structure and functions and that environments actually turn genes on and off. Environments influence biology, but the same environment acts on diverse genetic material (Hutchison, 2014).

In recent years, social work scholars and those in the social and behavioral sciences and medicine have argued for greater attention to the spiritual dimension of persons as well (see Crisp, 2010). Developments in neuroscience have generated new explorations of the unity of the biological, psychological, and spiritual dimensions of the person. For example, recent research has focused on the ways that emotions and thoughts, as well as spiritual states, influence the immune system and some aspects of mental health (Davidson & Begley, 2012). One national longitudinal study examined the role of spirituality in physical and mental health after the collective trauma of the 9/11 attacks and found that high levels of spirituality were associated with fewer infectious ailments, more positive emotions, and more immediate processing of the traumatic event in the 3 years following the attacks (McIntosh, Poulin, Silver, & Holman, 2011). In this book, we give substantial coverage to all three of these personal dimensions: biological, psychological, and spiritual; they are covered in some detail in Chapters 3–5.

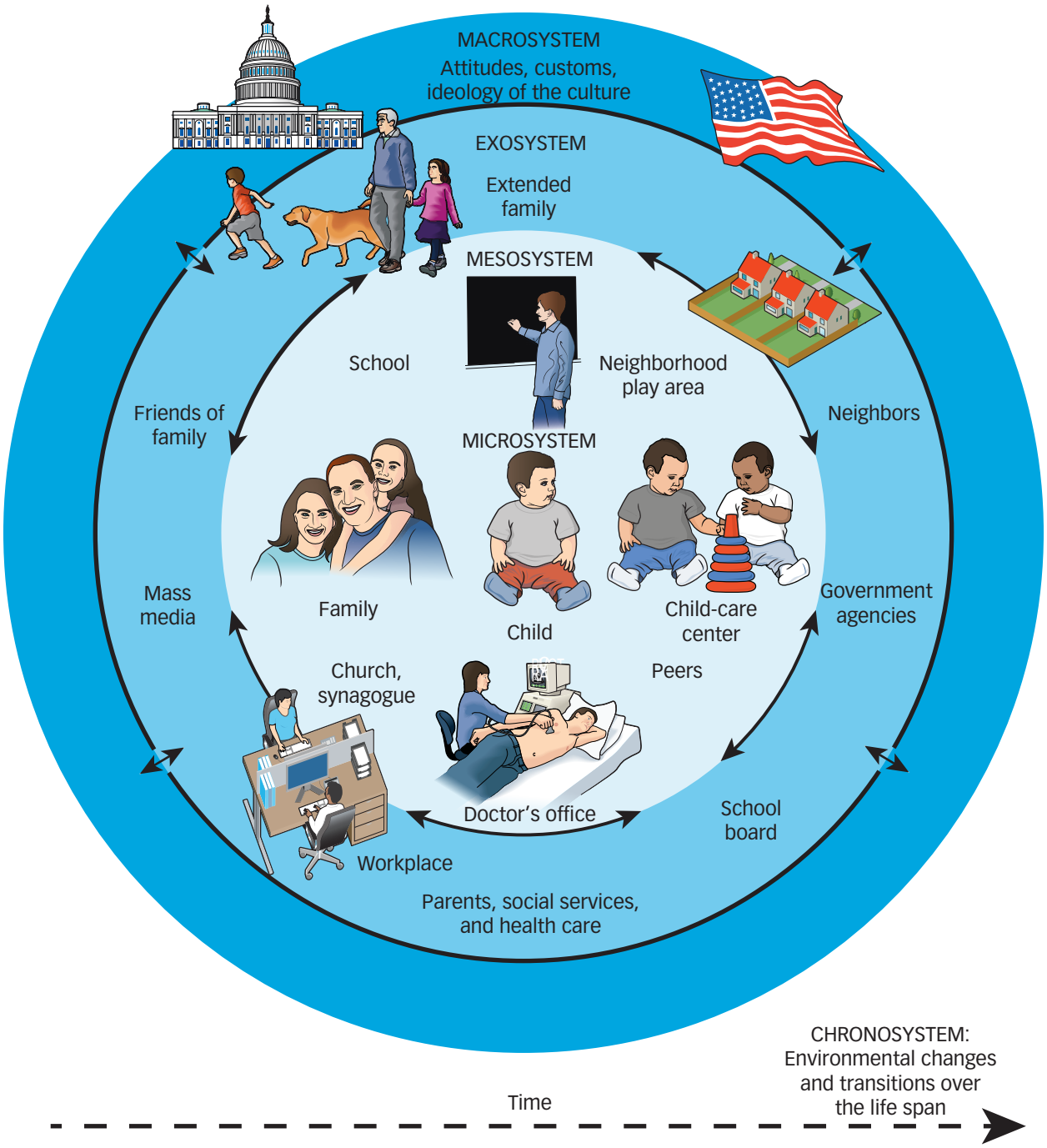
ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSIONS

Social workers have always thought about the environment as multidimensional. As early as 1901, Mary Richmond presented a model of social work case coordination that took into account not only personal dimensions but also family, neighborhood, civic organizations, private charitable organizations, and public relief organizations. Several models for classifying dimensions of the environment have been proposed since Mary Richmond's time. Social workers (see, e.g., Ashford, LeCroy, & Lortie, 2010) have also been influenced by Uri Bronfenbrenner's (2005) ecological perspective, which identifies the five interdependent, nested categories or levels of systems presented in Exhibit 1.3. You might notice some similarities between Bronfenbrenner's model and the one presented in Exhibit 1.1. By adding

EXHIBIT 1.2 • Definitions and Examples of Dimensions of Person, Environment, and Time

DIMENSION	DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
PERSON		
Biological	The body's biochemical, cell, organ, and physiological systems	Nervous system, endocrine system, immune system, cardiovascular system, musculoskeletal system, reproductive system
Psychological	The mind and the mental processes	Cognitions (conscious thinking processes), emotions (feelings), self (identity)
Spiritual	The aspect of the person that searches for meaning and purpose in life	Themes of morality; ethics; justice; interconnectedness; creativity; mystical states; prayer, meditation, and contemplation; relationships with a higher power
ENVIRONMENT		
Culture	A set of common understandings, evident in both behavior and material artifacts	Beliefs, customs, traditions, values
Physical	The natural and human-built material aspects of the environment	Water, sun, trees, buildings, landscapes
Dyads	Two persons bound together in some way	Parent and child, romantic couple, social worker and client
Families	A social group of two or more persons, characterized by ongoing interdependence with long-term commitments that stem from blood, law, or affection	Nuclear family, extended family, chosen family
Small groups	Two or more people who interact with each other because of shared interests, goals, experiences, and needs	Friendship group, self-help group, therapy group, committee, task group, interdisciplinary team
Formal organizations	Collectivities of people, with a high degree of formality of structure, working together to meet a goal or goals	Civic and social service organizations, business organizations, professional associations
Communities	People bound either by geography or by network links (webs of communication), sharing common ties, and interacting with one another	Territorial communities such as neighborhoods; relational communities such as the social work community, the disability community, a faith community, a soccer league
Social structure and social institutions	Social structure: a set of interrelated social institutions developed by humans to impose constraints on human interaction for the purpose of the survival and well-being of the collectivity Social institutions: patterned ways of organizing social relations in a particular sector of social life	Social structure: social class Social institutions: government, economy, education, health care, social welfare, religion, mass media, and family
Social movements	Large-scale collective actions to make change, or resist change, in specific social institutions	Civil rights movement, poor people's movements, disability movement, gay rights movement
TIME		
Linear time	Time in terms of a straight line	Past, present, future
Historical era	A discrete block of time in human history	Progressive Era, the Great Depression, 1960s
Chronological age	Age of a person measured in years, months, and days from the date the person was born; may also be described in terms of a stage of the human life course	Six months old (infancy), 15 years old (adolescence), 80 years old (late adulthood)

EXHIBIT 1.3 • Five Categories or Levels of Systems as Presented by Uri Bronfenbrenner



SOURCE: Adapted from Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006.

chronosystems in his later work, Bronfenbrenner was acknowledging the importance of time in person–environment transactions, but this book presents a more fluid, less hierarchical model of person-in-environment than presented by Bronfenbrenner. Some social work models have included the physical environment (natural and built environments) as a separate dimension (see Norton, 2009). There is growing evidence of the impact of the physical environment on human well-being and growing concern about environmental justice issues in the physical environment.

To have an up-to-date understanding of the multidimensional environment, I recommend that social workers have knowledge about the nine dimensions of environment described in Exhibit 1.2 and discussed in

Three elements of human behavior are captured in this photo—person, environment, and time.

Chapters 6–9 in this book: culture, physical environment, dyads, families, small groups, formal organizations, communities, social structure and social institutions, and social movements. Dyadic relationships—those between two people, the most basic social relationship—receive attention throughout the book and are emphasized in Chapter 4, in discussion of self in relationships. Simultaneous consideration of multiple environmental dimensions provides new possibilities for action, perhaps even new or revised approaches to social work practice.

These dimensions are neither mutually exclusive nor hierarchically ordered. For example, a family is sometimes referred to as a social institution, families can also be considered small groups or dyads, and family theorists write about family culture. Remember, dimensions are useful ways of thinking about person–environment configurations, but we should not think of them as detached realities.

The importance of time in human behavior is reflected in the finding that *time* is the most commonly used noun in print in the English language; *person* is the second most common (BBC News, 2006). There are many ways to think about time. Physics is generally seen as the lead discipline for studying time, and quantum physics has challenged much about the way we think about time. Various aspects of time are examined by other disciplines as well, and there are a number of different ways to think about time. In this book, we examine three dimensions of time that have been studied by behavioral scientists as important to the understanding of human behavior: linear time, historical era, and chronological age.

Linear time—time ordered like a straight line from the past through the present and into the future—is the most common way that humans think about time. Although it is known that people in some cultures and groups think of time as stationary rather than moving (Boroditsky, Fuhrman, & McCormick, 2011), contemporary behavioral science researchers are interested in what they call "mental time travel," the human ability to remember events from the past and to imagine and plan for the future (Eacott & Easton, 2012). The research on mental time travel has focused on the conscious processes of reminiscence and anticipation, but there is also considerable evidence that past events are stored as unconscious material in the brain and the body and show up in our thoughts and emotions (see Davidson & Begley, 2012; Kurzweil, 2012). Traces of past events also exist in the natural and built environments, for example, in centuries-old buildings or in piles of debris following a hurricane or tornado.

This approach to time has been called *clock time* (Zimbardo & Boyd, 2008). However, this approach to time is a relatively new invention, and many people in the contemporary world have a very different approach to time. In nonindustrialized countries, and in subcultures within industrialized countries, people operate on *event time*, allowing scheduling to be determined by events. For example, in agricultural societies, the most successful farmers are those who can be responsive to natural events—sunrise and sunset, rain, drought, temperature—rather than to scheduled events (Zimbardo & Boyd, 2008). Manisha's life was organized around cues from the natural world rather than the clock when she lived in Bhutan, just as my grandfather's was on his farm in rural Tennessee.

Clock time cultures often use the concept of **time orientation** to describe the extent to which individuals and collectivities are invested in the three temporal zones—past, present, and future. Research indicates that cultures differ in their time orientation. In most cultures, however, some situations call for us to be totally immersed in the present, others call for historical understanding of the past and its impact on the present, and still others call for attention to future consequences and possibilities. Psychologists Philip Zimbardo and John Boyd (2008) have been studying time orientation for more than 30 years and have identified the six most common time perspectives held in the Western world. They call these the *past-positive* (invested in the past, focused on its positive aspects), *past-negative* (invested in the past, focused on its negative aspects), *present-hedonistic* (invested in the present, focused on getting as much pleasure as possible from it), *present-fatalistic* (invested in the present, sees life as controlled by fate), *future* (invested in the future, organizes life around future goals), and *transcendental-future* (invested in the future, focuses on new time after death). Zimbardo and Boyd's research using the Zimbardo Time Perspective Inventory (ZTPI) in a number of Western societies indicates that human well-being is maximized when people in these societies live with a balance of past-positive, present-hedonistic, and future perspectives. People with biases toward past-negative and present-fatalistic perspectives are at greater risk of developing physical and mental health problems. Zimbardo and Boyd's (2008) book *The Time Paradox* suggests ways to become more past-positive, present, and future oriented to develop a more balanced time orientation. You might want to visit www.thetimeparadox.com and complete the ZTPI to investigate your own time orientation.

Zimbardo and Boyd have carried out their research in Western societies and acknowledge that the ZTPI may not accurately reflect time orientation in other societies. They make particular note that their description of present-hedonistic and present-fatalistic does not adequately capture the way Eastern religions think about the present. Recently, Western behavioral scientists have begun to incorporate Eastern mindfulness practices of being more fully present in the current moment (present orientation) to help people buffer the persistent stresses of clock time and goal monitoring (future orientation) (Davidson & Begley, 2012). Research also indicates age-related differences in time orientation, with older adults tending to be more past oriented than younger age groups (Yeung, Fung, & Kam, 2012). Women have been found to be more future oriented and men more present oriented (Zimbardo & Boyd, 2008). Researchers have found that trauma survivors who experienced the most severe loss are more likely than other trauma survivors to be highly oriented to the past (Martz, 2004). Zimbardo and Boyd (2008) suggest that trauma survivors may need assistance to think in different ways about past trauma and to enhance their capacity for present and future thinking. This is something to keep in mind when we interact with refugees, military men and women who have served in war zones, and other groups who have an increased likelihood of having a history of trauma. It is also important for social workers to be aware of the meaning of time for the individuals and communities they serve.

Two other dimensions of time have been identified as important to the understanding of human behavior. Both of these dimensions are aspects of linear time but have been separated out for special study by behavioral scientists. The first, *historical era*, refers to the specific block or period of time in which individual and collective lives are enacted. The historical era in which we live shapes our environments. The economies, physical environments, institutions, technologies, and geopolitical circumstances of a specific era provide both options for and constraints on human behavior. The second, *chronological age*, seems to be an important variable in every society. How people change at different ages and life stages as they pass from birth to death has been one of the most enduring ways of studying both individual and collective behavior. Historical era is examined throughout this book, and chronological age is the organizing framework for Part IV, "The Changing Life Course" (Chapters 10–16).

CRITICAL THINKING Questions 1.2

How would our understanding of Manisha's story change if we had no knowledge of her prior life experiences in Bhutan and the Nepali refugee camp—if we only assessed her situation based on her current functioning? What personal and environmental dimensions would we note in her current functioning?

DIVERSITY, INEQUALITY, AND THE PURSUIT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE: A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

The Council on Social Work Education (2015) proposes that social work practice is guided by a global perspective. What exactly does that mean, and why is it valued by social workers? We are increasingly aware that we are part of an interconnected world, and Manisha's story is one reminder of this. A global perspective involves much more than geography, however. Here are some aspects of what it means to take a global perspective:

- To be aware that my view of the world is not universally shared, and others may have a view of the world that is profoundly different from mine
- To have a growing awareness of the diversity of ideas and cultural practices found in human societies around the world
- To be curious about conditions in other parts of the world and how they relate to conditions in our own society
- To understand where I fit in the global social structure and social institutions
- To have a growing awareness of how people in other societies view my society
- To have a growing understanding of how the world works, with special attention to systems and mechanisms of inequality and oppression around the world

We have always been connected to other peoples of the world, but those connections are being intensified by **globalization**, a process by which the world's people are becoming more interconnected economically, politically, environmentally, and culturally. It is a process of increased connectedness and interdependence that began at least 5 centuries ago but has intensified in recent times and is affecting people around the world (C. Mann, 2011). This increasing connectedness is, of course, aided by rapid advancements in communication technology. There is much debate about whether globalization is a good thing or a bad thing, a conversation that is picked up in Chapter 9 as we consider the globalization of social institutions. What is important to note here is that globalization is increasing our experiences with social diversity and raising new questions about inequality, human rights, and social justice.

DIVERSITY

Diversity has always been a part of the social reality in the United States. Even before the Europeans came, the Indigenous people were divided into about 200 distinct societies with about 200 different languages (Parrillo, 2009). Since the inception of the United States of America, we have been a nation of immigrants. We value our nation's immigrant heritage and take pride in the ideals of equality of opportunity for all who come. However, there have always been tensions about how we as a nation handle diversity. Are we a *melting pot* where all are melted into one indistinguishable model of citizenship, or are we a *pluralist society* in which groups have separate identities, cultures, and ways of organizing but work together in mutual respect? Pioneer social worker Jane Addams (1910) was a prominent voice for pluralism during the early 20th century, and that stance is consistent with social work's concern for human rights.

Even though diversity has always been present in the United States, it is accurate to say that some of the diversity in our national social life is new. Clearly, there is increasing racial, ethnic, and religious diversity in the United States, and the mix in the population stream has become much more complex in recent years (Parrillo, 2009). The United States was 87% White in 1925, 80% White in 1950, and 72% White in 2000; by 2050, it is

FGP/Archive Photos/Getty Images

Diversity has always been a part of the social reality in the United States.

projected that we will be about 47% White (Taylor & Cohn, 2012). Why is this happening at this time? A major driving force is the demographic reality that native-born people are no longer reproducing at replacement level in the wealthy postindustrial nations, which, if it continues, ultimately will lead to a declining population skewed toward advanced age. One solution used by some countries, including the United States, is to change immigration policy to allow new streams of immigration. The current rate of foreign-born persons in the United States is lower than it has been throughout most of the past 150 years, but foreign-born persons are less likely to be White than when immigration policy, prior to 1965, strictly limited entry for persons of color. With the recent influx of immigrants from around the globe, the United States has become one of many ethnically and racially diverse nations in the world today. In many wealthy postindustrial countries, including the United States, there is much anti-immigrant sentiment, even though the economies of these countries are dependent on such migration. Waves of immigration have historically been accompanied by anti-immigrant sentiment. There appear to be many reasons for anti-immigrant sentiment, including fear that new immigrants will dilute the "purity" of the native culture, racial and religious bias, and fear of economic competition. Like other diverse societies, we must find ways to embrace the diversity and seize the opportunity to demonstrate the human capacity for intergroup harmony.

On the other hand, some of the diversity in our social life is not new but simply newly recognized. In the contemporary era, we have been developing a heightened consciousness of human differences—gender and gender identity differences, racial and ethnic differences, cultural differences, religious differences, differences in sexual orientation, differences in abilities and disabilities, differences in family forms, and so on. This book intends to capture the diversity of human experience in a manner that is respectful of all groups, conveys the positive value of human diversity, and recognizes differences *within* groups as well as *among* groups.

As we seek to honor differences, we make a distinction between heterogeneity and diversity. We use **heterogeneity** to refer to individual-level variations—differences among individuals. For example, as the social worker whom Manisha consults, you will want to recognize the ways in which she is different from you and from other clients you serve, including other clients of Bhutanese heritage. An understanding of heterogeneity allows us to recognize the uniqueness of each person and situation. **Diversity**, on the other hand, is used to refer to patterns of group differences. Diversity recognizes social groups, groups of people who share a range of physical, cultural, or social characteristics within a category of social identity. Knowledge of diversity helps us to provide culturally sensitive services.

I want to interject a word here about terminology and human diversity. As the contributing authors and I attempted to uncover what is known about human diversity, we struggled with terminology to define identity groups. We searched for consistent language to describe different groups, and we were dedicated to using language that identity groups would use to describe themselves. However, we ran into challenges endemic to our time related to the language of diversity. It is not the case, as you have probably observed, that all members of a given identity group at any given time embrace the same terminology for their group. As we reviewed literature from different historical moments, we recognized the shifting nature of terminology. In addition, even within a given historical era, we found that different researchers used different terms and had different decision rules about who composes the membership of identity groups. Add to this the changing way that the U.S. Census Bureau establishes official categories of people, and in the end, we did not settle on fixed terminology to consistently describe identity groups. Rather, we use the language of individual researchers when reporting their work, because we want to avoid distorting their work. We hope you will not find this too distracting. We also hope that you will recognize that the ever-changing language of diversity has both constructive potential to find creative ways to affirm diversity and destructive potential to dichotomize diversity into *the norm* and *the other*.

INEQUALITY

Attending to diversity involves recognition of the power relations and the patterns of opportunities and constraints for social groups. When we attend to diversity, we note not only the differences between groups but also how socially constructed hierarchies of power are superimposed on these differences.

Recent U.S. scholarship in the social sciences has emphasized the ways in which three types of categorizations—gender, race, and class—are used to develop hierarchical social structures that influence social identities and life chances (Rothenberg, 2010; Sernau, 2014). This literature suggests that these social categorizations create **privilege**, or unearned advantage, for some groups and disadvantage for other groups. In a much-cited article, Peggy McIntosh (2007, first printed in 1988) has pointed out the mundane, daily advantages of White privilege that are not available to members of groups of color, such as assurances "that my children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race," and "Whether I use checks, credit cards, or cash, I can count on my skin color not to work against the appearance of financial reliability." We could also generate lists of advantages of male privilege, adult privilege, upper-middle-class privilege, heterosexual privilege, ability privilege, Christian privilege, and so on. McIntosh argues that

members of privileged groups benefit from their privilege but have not been taught to think of themselves as privileged. They take for granted that their advantages are normal and universal. For survival, members of nonprivileged groups must learn a lot about the lives of groups with privilege, but groups with privileged status are not similarly compelled to learn about the lives of members of nonprivileged groups.

Michael Schwalbe (2006) argues that those of us who live in the United States also carry "American privilege," which comes from our dominant position in the world. (I would prefer to call this U.S. privilege because people living in Canada, Ecuador, and Brazil also live in America.) According to Schwalbe, among other things, American privilege means that we don't have to bother to learn about other countries or about the impact of our foreign policy on people living in those countries. American privilege also means that we have access to cheap goods that are produced by poorly paid workers in impoverished countries. As Chapter 9 shows, the income and wealth gap between nations is mind-boggling. Sernau (2014) reports that the combined income of the 25 richest people in the United States is almost as great as the combined income of 2 billion of the world's poorest people. In 2011, the average per capita income in Bhutan was $2,346 in U.S. dollars, compared with $48,112 in the United States (World Bank, 2013a). It is becoming increasingly difficult to deny the costs of exercising American privilege by remaining ignorant about the rest of the world and the impact our actions have on other nations.

As the contributing authors and I strive to provide a global context, we encounter current controversies about appropriate language to describe different sectors of the world. Following World War II, a distinction was made between First World, Second World, and Third World nations, with *First World* referring to the Western capitalist nations, *Second World* referring to the countries belonging to the socialist bloc led by the Soviet Union, and *Third World* referring to a set of countries that were primarily former colonies of the First World. More recently, many scholars have used this same language to define global sectors in a slightly different way. *First World* has been used to describe the nations that were the first to industrialize, urbanize, and modernize. *Second World* has been used to describe nations that have industrialized but have not yet become central to the world economy. *Third World* has been used to refer to nonindustrialized nations that have few resources and are considered expendable in the global economy. However, this approach has begun to lose favor in the past few years (Leeder, 2004). Immanuel Wallerstein (1974, 1979) uses different language but makes a similar distinction; he refers to wealthy *core* countries, newly industrialized *semiperiphery* countries, and the poorest *periphery* countries. Other writers divide the world into *developed* and *developing* countries, referring to the level of industrialization, urbanization, and modernization. Still others divide the world into the *Global North* and the *Global South*, calling attention to a history in which the Global North colonized and exploited the resources of the Global South. Finally, some writers talk about the *West* versus the *East*, where the distinctions are largely cultural. We recognize that such categories carry great symbolic meaning and can mask systems of power and exploitation. As with diversity, we attempted to find a respectful language that could be used consistently throughout the book. Again, we found that different researchers have used different language and different characteristics to describe categories of nations, and when reporting on their findings, we have used their own language to avoid misrepresenting their findings.

It is important to note that privilege and disadvantage are multidimensional, not one-dimensional. One can be privileged in one dimension and disadvantaged in another; for example, I have White privilege but not gender privilege. As social workers, we need to be attuned to our own *social locations*—where we fit in a system of social identities, such as race, ethnicity, gender, social class, sexual orientation, religion, ability/disability, and age. We must recognize how our own particular social locations shape how we see the world, what we notice, and how we interpret what we "see."

It is important for social workers to acknowledge social inequalities because our interactions are constantly affected by inequalities of various types. In addition, there is clear evidence that social inequalities are on the rise in the United States. Although income inequality has been growing in all of the wealthy nations of the world over the past 2 decades, the United States gained the distinction as the most unequal wealthy nation in this period, and the gap has continued to widen since the deep economic crisis that began in 2008 (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2011).

THE PURSUIT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

There is another important reason why social workers must acknowledge social inequalities. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics identifies social justice as one of six core values of social work and mandates that "Social Workers challenge social injustice" (NASW, 2008). To challenge injustice, we must first recognize it and understand the ways it is embedded in a number of societal institutions. That is a major subject of Chapter 9 in this book.

The Council on Social Work Education (2015) notes that "social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power" (p. 4). Suzanne Pharr (1988) has provided

some useful conceptual tools that can help us with this. She identifies a set of mechanisms of oppression, whereby the everyday arrangements of social life systematically block opportunities for some groups and inhibit their power to exercise self-determination. Exhibit 1.4 provides an overview of these mechanisms of oppression. As you review the list, you may recognize some that are familiar to you, such as stereotyping and perhaps blaming the victim. There may be others that you have not previously given much thought to. You may also recognize, as I do each time I look at the list, that whereas some of these mechanisms of oppression are sometimes used quite intentionally, others are not so intentional but occur as we do business as usual. For example, when you walk into your classroom (or some place of business), do you give much thought to the person who cleans that room, what wage this person is paid, whether this is the only job this person holds, and what opportunities and barriers this person has experienced in life? Most likely, the classroom is cleaned in the evening after it has been vacated by teachers and students, and the person who cleans it, like many people who provide services that make our lives more pleasant, is invisible to you. Giving serious thought to common mechanisms of oppression can help us to recognize social injustice and think about ways to challenge it.

In recent years, social workers have expanded the conversation about social justice to include *global* social justice. As they have done so, they have more and more drawn on the concept of *human rights* to organize thinking about social justice (see Mapp, 2008; Reichert, 2006; Wronka, 2008). In the aftermath of World War II, the newly formed United Nations (1948) created a Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which spelled out the rights to which all humans were entitled, regardless of

EXHIBIT 1.4 • Common Mechanisms of Oppression

MECHANISM	DEFINITION
Economic power and control	Limiting of resources, mobility, education, and employment options to all but a few
Myth of scarcity	Myth used to pit people against one another, suggests that resources are limited and blames people (e.g., poor people, immigrants) for using too many of them
Defined norm	A standard of what is good and right, against which all are judged
The other	Those who fall outside "the norm" but are defined in relation to it, seen as abnormal, inferior, marginalized
Invisibility	Keeping "the other's" existence, everyday life, and achievements unknown
Distortion	Selective presentation or rewriting of history so that only negative aspects of "the other" are included
Stereotyping	Generalizing the actions of a few to an entire group, denying individual characteristics and behaviors
Violence and the threat of violence	Laying claim to resources, then using might to ensure superior position
Lack of prior claim	Excluding anyone who was not originally included and labeling as disruptive those who fight for inclusion
Blaming the victim	Condemning "the others" for their situation, diverting attention from the roles that dominants play in the situation
Internalized oppression	Internalizing negative judgments of being "the other," leading to self-hatred, depression, despair, and self-abuse
Horizontal hostility	Extending internalized oppression to one's entire group as well as to other subordinate groups, expressing hostility to other oppressed persons and groups rather than to members of dominant groups
Isolation	Physically isolating people as individuals or as a "minority" group
Assimilation	Pressuring members of "minority" groups to drop their culture and differences and become a mirror of the dominant culture
Tokenism	Rewarding some of the most assimilated "others" with position and resources
Emphasis on individual solutions	Emphasizing individual responsibility for problems and individual solutions rather than collective responsibility and collective solutions

SOURCE: Adapted from Pharr, 1988.

their place in the world, and this document has become a point of reference for subsequent definitions of human rights. Cox and Pawar (2013) identify eight philosophical values suggested by the UDHR: life (human and nonhuman); freedom and liberty; equality and nondiscrimination; justice; solidarity; social responsibility; evolution, peace, and nonviolence; and relationships between humankind and nature.

A number of theories of social justice have been proposed. Probably the most frequently cited theory of social justice in the social work literature is John Rawls's (1971, 2001) theory of justice as fairness. In the past decade or so, some social work scholars (Banerjee & Canda, 2012; P. Morris, 2002) have recommended the capabilities approach to social justice, originally proposed by Amartya Sen (1992, 2009) and revised by Martha Nussbaum (2011). The capabilities approach draws on both Western and non-Western thinking. In this approach, capabilities are, in simplest terms, opportunities and freedoms to be or do what we view as worthwhile; justice is served when people have such opportunities and freedoms. Nussbaum carries the capabilities approach a step further and identifies 10 core capabilities that all people in all societies must have to lead a dignified life. She asserts that promotion of social justice involves supporting the capabilities of people who are denied opportunities and freedoms related to any of the core capabilities. See Exhibit 1.5 for an overview of the core capabilities identified by Nussbaum.

CRITICAL THINKING Questions 1.3

What impact is globalization having on your own life? Do you see it as having a positive or negative impact on your life? What about for Manisha? Do you think globalization is having a positive or negative impact on her life? Do you agree with Martha Nussbaum that it is important for all people to have opportunities and freedoms in relation to the 10 core capabilities she identifies? How do you see Manisha in relation to these core capabilities?

KNOWING AND DOING

Social workers, like other professional practitioners, must find a way to move from knowing to doing, from "knowing about" and "knowing that" into "knowing how to" (for fuller discussion of this issue, see Hutchison, Charlesworth, Matto, Harrigan, & Viggiani, 2007). We *know* for the purpose of *doing*. Like architects, engineers, physicians, and teachers, social workers are faced with complex problems and case situations that are unique and uncertain. You no doubt will find that social work education, social work practice, and even this book will stretch your capacity to tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty. That is important because, as Carol Meyer (1993) has suggested,

EXHIBIT 1.5 • Nussbaum's 10 Core Capabilities

CAPABILITY	DEFINITION
Life	To live to the end of a normal life course
Bodily health	To have good physical health and adequate nourishment and shelter
Bodily integrity	To exercise freedom of movement, freedom from assault, and reproductive choice
Senses, imagination, and thought	To have pleasant sensory experiences, pain avoidance, adequate education, imagination, free self-expression, and religious freedom
Emotion	To experience a full range of emotion and to love and be loved
Practical reason	To think critically and make wise decisions
Affiliation	To live with others with empathy and compassion, without discrimination
Concern for other species	To show concern for animals, plants, and other aspects of nature
Play	To laugh and play and enjoy recreational activities
Control over one's political and material environment	To participate freely in the political process and have equal access to employment and property

SOURCE: Adapted from Nussbaum, 2011.

"There are no easy or simple [social work] cases, only simplistic perceptions" (p. 63). There are four important ingredients of "knowing how" to do social work: knowledge about the case, knowledge about the self, values and ethics, and scientific knowledge. These four ingredients are intertwined in the process of doing social work. The focus of this book is on scientific knowledge, but all four ingredients are essential in social work practice. Before moving to a discussion of scientific knowledge, I want to say a word about the other three ingredients.

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE CASE

I am using *case* to mean the situation at hand, a situation that has become problematic for some person or collectivity, resulting in a social work intervention. Our first task as social workers is to develop as good an understanding of the situation as possible: Who is involved in the situation, and how are they involved? What is the nature of the relationships of the people involved? What are the physical, societal, cultural, and community contexts of the situation? What are the contextual constraints as well as the contextual resources for bringing change to the situation? What elements of the case are maintaining the problematic situation? How have people tried to cope with the situation? What preferences do the involved people have about the types of intervention to use? What is the culture, and what are the social resources of the social agency to whose attention the situation is brought? You might begin to think about how you would answer some of these questions in relation to Manisha's situation.

It is important to note that knowledge about the case is influenced by the quality of the relationship between the social worker and client(s). There is good evidence that people are likely to reveal more aspects of their situation if they are approached with commitment, an open mind, warmth, empathic attunement, authentic responsiveness, and mutuality (Hepworth, Rooney, Rooney, & Strom-Gottfried, 2013). For example, as Manisha became comfortable in the interview, feeling validated by both the interviewer and the interpreter, she began to engage in deeper reflection about what happened in Bhutan. At the end of the interview, she expressed much gratitude for the opportunity to tell her story, noting that it was the first chance she had to put the story together and that telling the story had led her to think about some events in new ways. This can be an important part of her grieving and adjustment process. The integrity of knowledge about the case is related to the quality of the relationship, and the capacity for relationship is related to knowledge about the self.

But knowledge about the case requires more than simply gathering information. We must select and order the information at hand and decide if further information is needed. This involves making a series of decisions about what is relevant and what is not. It also involves searching for recurring themes as well as contradictions in the information. For example, it was important for the refugee resettlement social worker to note Manisha's lingering confusion about why her peaceful world in Bhutan got turned upside down. This suggests that Manisha and other Bhutanese refugees might benefit from narrative exercises that help them to make sense of these experiences.

To assist you in moving between knowledge about the case and scientific knowledge, each chapter in this book begins, as this one does, with one or more case studies. Each of these unique stories suggests what scientific knowledge is needed. For example, to work effectively with Manisha, you will want to understand some things about Bhutan, the Nepali ethnic group, Hinduism, grief reactions, the acculturation process, challenges facing immigrant families, and cross-cultural communication. Throughout the chapters, the stories are woven together with relevant scientific knowledge. Keep in mind that scientific knowledge is necessary, but you will not be an effective practitioner unless you take the time to learn about the unique situation of each person or collectivity you serve. It is the unique situation that guides what scientific knowledge is needed.

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE SELF

In his book *The Spiritual Life of Children*, Robert Coles (1990) wrote about the struggles of a 10-year-old Hopi girl to have her Anglo teacher understand Hopi spirituality. Coles suggested to the girl that perhaps she could try to explain her tribal nation's spiritual beliefs to the teacher. The girl answered, "But they don't listen to hear *us*; they listen to hear themselves" (p. 25, emphasis in the original). This young girl has captured, in a profound way, a major challenge to our everyday personal and professional communications: the tendency to approach the world with preconceived notions that we seek to validate by attending to some information while ignoring other information (Kahneman, 2011). The capacity to understand oneself is needed in order to tame this very human tendency.

Three types of self-knowledge are essential for social workers: understanding of one's own thinking processes, understanding of one's own emotions, and understanding of one's own social locations. We must be able to think about our thinking, a process called *metacognition*. We all have biases that lead to thinking errors, and it is very difficult to get control of our biases. As Daniel Kahneman (2011) suggests in his book *Thinking Fast and Slow*, constant questioning of our own thinking can become tedious and immobilize us. The best we can do, therefore, is to understand the types of situations in which we are likely to make mistakes and slow down and use multiple sources of information to help correct for our biases. We also must be able to recognize what emotions get aroused in us

when we hear stories like Manisha's and when we contemplate the challenges of the situation, and we must find a way to use those emotions in ways that are helpful and avoid using them in ways that are harmful. Although writing about physicians, Gunnar Biorck (1977) said it well when he commented that practitioners make "a tremendous number of judgments each day, based on inadequate, often ambiguous data, and under pressure of time, and carrying out this task with the outward appearance of calmness, dedication and interpersonal warmth" (p. 146).

In terms of social locations, as suggested earlier, social workers must identify and reflect on where they fit in a system of social identities, such as race, ethnicity, gender, social class, sexual orientation, religion, ability/disability, and age. The literature on culturally sensitive social work practice proposes that a strong personal identity in relation to important societal categories, and an understanding of the impact of those identities on other people, is essential for successful social work intervention across cultural lines (see Lum, 2011). This type of self-knowledge requires reflecting on where one fits in systems of privilege.

VALUES AND ETHICS

The process of developing knowledge about the case is a dialogue between the social worker and client system, and social workers have a well-defined value base to guide the dialogue. Six core values of the profession have been set out in a preamble to the Code of Ethics established by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) in 1996 and revised in 2008. These values are service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. The value of social justice was discussed earlier in the chapter. As demonstrated in Exhibit 1.6, the Code of Ethics articulates an ethical principle for each of the core values. Value 6, competence, requires that we recognize the science available to inform our work. It requires understanding the limitations of the available science for considering the situation at hand but also that we use the strongest available evidence to make practice decisions. This is where scientific knowledge comes into the picture.

CRITICAL THINKING Questions 1.4

If you were the social worker at Manisha's refugee resettlement program when she first arrived in the United States, what knowledge about the case would you like to have? What information would you find most important? What emotional reactions did you have to reading Manisha's story? What did you find yourself thinking about her story? Where do you see Manisha fitting in systems of privilege? Where do you see yourself fitting? How might any of this impact your ability to be helpful to Manisha?

SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE: THEORY AND RESEARCH

The Council on Social Work Education (2015) proposes that social work practice is guided by knowledge based on scientific inquiry. Ethical social workers are always searching for or recalling what is known about the situations they encounter, turning to the social and behavioral sciences for this information. Scientific knowledge serves as a screen against which the knowledge about the case is considered. It suggests **hypotheses**, or tentative statements,

EXHIBIT 1.6 • Core Values and Ethical Principles in the NASW Code of Ethics

VALUE	ETHICAL PRINCIPLE
1. Service	Social workers' primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems.
2. Social justice	Social workers challenge social injustice.
3. Dignity and worth of the person	Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person.
4. Importance of human relationships	Social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships.
5. Integrity	Social workers behave in a trustworthy manner.
6. Competence	Social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise.

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to be explored and tested, not facts to be applied, in transactions with a person or group. Because of the breadth and complexity of social work practice, usable knowledge must be culled from diverse sources and a number of scientific disciplines. **Science**, also known as scientific inquiry, is a set of logical, systematic, documented methods for answering questions about the world. Scientific knowledge is the knowledge produced by scientific inquiry. Two interrelated approaches to knowledge building, theory and empirical research, fit the scientific criteria of being logical, systematic, and documented for the public. Together, they create the base of knowledge that social workers need to understand commonalities among their clients and practice situations. In your coursework on social work research, you will be learning much more about these concepts, so I only provide a brief description here to help you understand how this book draws on theory and research.

THEORY

The Council on Social Work Education (2015) notes that "social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge" (p. 6). Social workers use theory to help organize and make sense of the situations they encounter. A **theory** is an interrelated set of concepts and propositions, organized into a deductive system that explains relationships among aspects of our world. As Elaine Leeder (2004) so aptly put it, "To have a theory is to have a way of explaining the world—an understanding that the world is not just a random series of events and experiences" (p. 9). Thus, theory gives us a framework for interpreting person and environment and for planning interventions. It seems to be human nature to develop theories to make sense of the world. As social workers we put our personal theories of the world to the test by studying theories proposed by serious scholars of human behavior. I want to emphasize that theories allow us to organize our thinking, but theories are not "fact" or "truth."

Other terms that you will often encounter in discussions of theories are *model*, *paradigm*, and *perspective*. *Model* usually is used to refer to a visual representation of the relationships between concepts, *paradigm* most often means a way of seeing the world, and *perspective* is an emphasis or a view. Paradigms and perspectives are broader and more general than theory. In this book, we will be focusing on theories and perspectives that attempt to explain human behavior, known as human behavior theories. You will also be studying another type of theory, known as practice theory, which provides guidelines for social work intervention. Many practice theories are drawn from human behavior theory; for example, psychoanalytic practice theory is derived from psychodynamic human behavior theory.

If you are to make good use of theory, you should know something about how it is constructed. **Concepts** are the building blocks of theory. They are symbols, or mental images, that summarize observations, feelings, or ideas. Concepts allow us to communicate about the phenomena of interest. Some relevant concepts in Manisha's story are culture, Hinduism, Buddhism, cultural conflict, refugee, resettlement, acculturation, loss, and grief.

Theoretical concepts are put together to form **propositions**, or assertions. For example, loss and grief theory proposes that the loss of a person, object, or ideal leads to a grief reaction. This proposition, which asserts a particular relationship between the concepts of loss and grief, may help the refugee resettlement social worker understand some of the sadness, and sometimes despair, that she sees in her work with Bhutanese refugee families. They have lived with an accumulation of losses—loss of land, loss of livelihood, loss of roles, loss of status, loss of extended family members, loss of familiar language and rituals, and many more.

Theories are a form of **deductive reasoning**, meaning they lay out general, abstract propositions that we can use to generate specific hypotheses to test in unique situations. In this example, loss and grief theory can lead us to hypothesize that Bhutanese refugees are grieving the many losses they have suffered, but we should understand that this may not be the case with all Bhutanese refugees. Theory is about likelihood, not certainty.

Social and behavioral science theories are based on **assumptions**, or beliefs held to be true without testing or proof, about the nature of human social life. These theoretical assumptions have raised a number of controversies, three of which are worth introducing at this point.

1. Do the dimensions of human behavior have an **objective reality** that exists outside a person's consciousness, or is all reality based on personal perception (**subjective reality**)?
2. Is human behavior determined by forces beyond the control of the person (**determinism**), or are people free and proactive agents in the creation of their behavior (**voluntarism**)?
3. Are the patterned interactions among people characterized by harmony, unity, and social cohesion or by conflict, domination, coercion, and exploitation?

The nature of these controversies will become more apparent to you in Chapter 2. The contributing authors and I take a middle ground on all of them: We assume that reality has both objective and subjective aspects, that human behavior is partially constrained and partially free, and that social life is marked by both cohesion and conflict.

A research assistant records observations of children at a skate park.

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Traditionally, science is equated with empirical research, which is widely held as the most rigorous and systematic way to understand human behavior. Research is typically viewed, in simple terms, as a problem-solving process, or a method of seeking answers to questions. If something is empirical, we experience it through our senses, as opposed to something we experience purely in our minds. The process of **empirical research** includes a careful, purposeful, and systematic observation of events with the intent to note and record them in terms of their attributes, to look for patterns in those events, and to make our methods and observations public. Each empirical research project is likely to raise new questions, often producing more questions than answers. The new questions become grist for future research. Like theory, empirical research is a key tool for social workers. It is important to understand, however, that empirical research informs us about probabilities, not certainties (Firestein, 2012). For example, research can tell us what percentage of parents who were abused as children will become abusive toward their own children, but it cannot tell us whether a specific parent who was abused as a child will become abusive toward his or her children. Social workers, of course, must make decisions about specific parents, recognizing the probabilities found in research as well as considering the knowledge about the case.

Just as there are controversies about theoretical assumptions, there are also controversies about what constitutes appropriate research methods for understanding human behavior. Modern science is based on several assumptions, which are generally recognized as a **positivist perspective**: The world has an order that can be discovered, findings of one study should be applicable to other groups, complex phenomena can be studied by reducing them to some component part, findings are tentative and subject to question, and scientific methods are value-free. **Quantitative methods of research** are preferred from the positivist perspective. These methods use quantifiable measures of concepts, standardize the collection of data, attend only to preselected variables, and use statistical measures to look for patterns and associations (Engel & Schutt, 2013).

Over the years, the positivist perspective and its claim that positivism = science have been challenged. Critics argue that quantitative methods cannot possibly capture the subjective experience of individuals or the complex nature of social life. Although most of these critics do not reject positivism as *a way* of doing science, they recommend other ways of understanding the world and suggest that these alternative methods should also be considered part of science. Various names have been given to these

alternative methods. I refer to them as the **interpretist perspective**, because they share the assumption that reality is based on people's definitions of it and research should focus on learning the meanings that people give to their situations. This is also referred to as a *constructivist perspective*.

Interpretists see a need to replace quantitative methods with **qualitative methods of research**, which are more flexible and experiential and are designed to capture how participants view social life rather than to ask participants to respond to categories preset by the researcher (Engel & Schutt, 2013). Participant observation, intensive interviewing, and focus groups are examples of qualitative methods of research. Interpretists assume that people's behavior cannot be observed objectively, that reality is created as the researcher and research participants interact. Researchers using qualitative methods are more likely to present their findings in words than in numbers and to attempt to capture the settings of behavior. They are likely to report the transactions of the researcher and participant as well as the values of the researcher, because they assume that value-free research is impossible.

In this controversy, it is our position that no single research method can adequately capture the whole, the complexity, of human behavior. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods have a place in a multidimensional approach, and used together they may help us to see more dimensions of situations. This position is consistent with the Council on Social Work Education (2015) Educational Policy that states that "social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice" (p. 5). Social workers must also understand the limitations of available science. Neuroscientist Stuart Firestein (2012) reminds us that we must learn to live with "unknowable unknowns" (p. 30) and become capable of working with uncertainties. Nevertheless, science remains the most rigorous and systematic way to understand human behavior.

CRITICAL USE OF THEORY AND RESEARCH

You may already know that social and behavioral science theory and research have been growing at a fast pace in modern times, and you will often feel, as McAvoy (1999) aptly put it, that you are "drowning in a swamp of information" (p. 19), both case information and scientific information. Ironically, as you are drowning in a swamp of information, you will also be discovering that the available scientific information is incomplete. You will also encounter contradictory theoretical propositions and research results that must be held simultaneously and, where possible, coordinated to develop an integrated picture of the situation at hand. That is, as you might guess, not a simple project. It involves weighing available evidence and analyzing its relevance to the situation at hand. That requires critical thinking. **Critical thinking** is a thoughtful and reflective judgment about alternative views and contradictory information. It involves thinking about your own thinking and the influences on that thinking, as well as a willingness to change your mind. It also involves careful analysis of assumptions and evidence. Critical thinkers also ask, "What is left out of this conceptualization or research?" "What new questions are raised by this research finding?" Throughout the book, we call out critical thinking questions to support your efforts to think critically.

As you read this book and other sources of scientific knowledge, begin to think critically about the theory and research they present. Give careful thought to the credibility of the claims made. Let's look first at theory. It is important to remember that although theorists may try to put checks on their biases, they write from their own cultural frame of reference, from particular locations in the social structure of their society, and from life experiences. So, when taking a critical look at a theory, it is important to remember that theories are generally created by people of privileged backgrounds who operate in seats of power. The bulk of theories still used today were authored by White, middle- to upper-class Western European men and men in the United States with academic appointments. Therefore, as we work in a highly diversified world, we need to be attentive to the possibilities of biases related to race, gender, culture, religion, sexual orientation, abilities/disabilities, and social class—as well as professional or occupational orientation. One particular concern is that such biases can lead us to think of disadvantaged members of society or of members of minority groups as pathological or deficient.

Social and behavioral science scholars disagree about the criteria for evaluating theory and research. However, I recommend the criteria presented in Exhibit 1.7 because they are consistent with the multidimensional approach of this book and with the value base of the social work profession. (The five criteria for evaluating theory presented in Exhibit 1.7 are also used in Chapter 2 to evaluate eight theoretical perspectives relevant to social work.) There is agreement in the social and behavioral sciences that theory should be evaluated for coherence and conceptual clarity as well as for testability and evidence of empirical support. The criterion of comprehensiveness is specifically related to the multidimensional approach of this book. We do not expect all theories to be multidimensional, but critical analysis of a theory should help us identify deterministic and unidimensional thinking where they exist. The criterion of consistency with emphasis on diversity and power arrangements examines the utility of the theory for a profession that places high value on social justice, and the criterion of usefulness for practice is essential for a profession.

EXHIBIT 1.7 • Criteria for Evaluating Theory and Research

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING THEORY
Coherence and conceptual clarity. Are the concepts clearly defined and consistently used? Is the theory free of logical inconsistencies? Is it stated in the simplest possible way, without oversimplifying?
Testability and evidence of empirical support. Can the concepts and propositions be expressed in language that makes them observable and accessible to corroboration or refutation by persons other than the theoretician? Is there evidence of empirical support for the theory?
Comprehensiveness. Does the theory include multiple dimensions of persons, environments, and time? What is included and what is excluded? What dimension(s) is (are) emphasized? Does the theory account for things that other theories have overlooked or been unable to account for?
Consistency with social work's emphasis on diversity and power arrangements. Can the theory help us understand diversity? How inclusive is it? Does it avoid pathologizing members of minority groups? Does it assist in understanding power arrangements and systems of oppression?
Usefulness for social work practice. Does the theory assist in the understanding of person–environment transactions over time? Can principles of action be derived from the theory? At what levels of practice can the theory be used? Can the theory be used in practice in a way that is consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics?
CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING RESEARCH
Corroboration. Are the research findings corroborated by other researchers? Are a variety of research methods used in corroborating research? Do the findings fit logically with accepted theory and other research findings?
Multidimensionality. Does the research include multiple dimensions of persons, environments, and time? If not, do the researchers acknowledge the omissions, connect the research to larger programs of research that include omitted dimensions, or recommend further research to include omitted dimensions?
Definition of terms. Are major variables defined and measured in such a way as to avoid bias against members of minority groups?
Limitation of sample. Does the researcher make sufficient effort to include diversity in the sample? Are minority groups represented in sufficient numbers to show the variability within them? When demographic groups are compared, are they equivalent on important variables? Does the researcher specify the limitations of the sample for generalizing to specific groups?
Influence of setting. Does the researcher specify attributes of the setting of the research, acknowledge the possible contribution of the setting to research outcomes, and present the findings of similar research across a range of settings?
Influence of the researcher. Does the researcher specify his or her attributes and role in the observed situations? Does the researcher specify his or her possible contributions to research outcomes?
Social distance. Does the researcher attempt to minimize errors that could occur because of literacy, language, and cultural differences between the researcher and respondents?
Specification of inferences. Does the researcher specify how inferences are made, based on the data? What biases, if any, do you identify in the inferences?
Suitability of measures. Does the researcher use measures that seem suited to, and sensitive to, the situation being researched?

Just as theory may be biased toward the experiences of members of dominant groups, so too may research be biased. The results may be misleading, and the interpretation of results may lead to false conclusions about members of minority groups. Bias can occur at all stages of the research process.

- Funding sources and other vested interests have a strong influence on which problems are selected for research attention. In recent times, there has been controversy about how gun violence research was frozen in the United States in 1996 when Congress, under pressure from the National Rifle Association, passed legislation that banned funding by the Centers for Disease Control for research that could be used to advocate or promote gun control (American Psychological Association, 2013).

- Bias can occur in the definition of variables for study. For example, using "offenses cleared by arrests" as the definition of crime, rather than using a definition such as "self-reported crime involvement," may lead to an overestimation of crime among minority groups of color,