

Essentials of Sociology

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Essentials of Sociology

A Down-to-Earth Approach

Twelfth Edition

James M. Henslin

Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville

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

Jim Hansen

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To the Student ... from the Author

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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To the Instructor ... from the Author

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

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

As instructors of sociology, we have set ambitious goals for ourselves: to teach both social structure and social interaction and to introduce students to the sociological literature—both the classic theorists and contemporary research. As we accomplish this, we would also like to enliven the classroom, encourage critical thinking, and stimulate our students’ sociological imagination. Although formidable, these goals *are* attainable. This book is designed to help you reach them. Based on many years of frontline (classroom) experience, its subtitle, *A Down-to-Earth Approach*, was not proposed lightly. My goal is to share the fascination of sociology with students and in doing so to make your teaching more rewarding.

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

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

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

The Organization of This Text

The text is laid out in five parts. Part I focuses on the sociological perspective, which is introduced in the first chapter. We then look at how culture influences us (Chapter 2), examine socialization (Chapter 3), and compare macrosociology and microsociology (Chapter 4).

Part II, which focuses on groups and social control, adds to the students’ understanding of how far-reaching society’s influence is—how group membership penetrates even our thinking, attitudes, and orientations to life. We first examine the different types of groups that have such profound influences on us and then look at the fascinating area of group dynamics (Chapter 5). After this, we focus on how groups “keep us in line” and sanction those who violate their norms (Chapter 6).

In Part III, we turn our focus on social inequality, examining how it pervades society and how it has an impact on our own lives. Because social stratification is so significant, I have written two chapters on this topic. The first (Chapter 7), with its global focus, presents an overview of the principles of stratification. The second (Chapter 8), with its emphasis on social class, focuses on stratification in the United States. After establishing this broader context of social stratification, we examine inequalities of race–ethnicity (Chapter 9) and then those of gender and age (Chapter 10).

Part IV helps students to become more aware of how social institutions encompass their lives. We first look at politics and the economy, our overarching social institutions (Chapter 11). After examining the family (Chapter 12), we then turn our focus on education and religion (Chapter 13). One of the emphases in this part of the book is how our social institutions are changing and how their changes, in turn, influence our orientations and decisions.

With its focus on broad social change, Part V provides an appropriate conclusion for the book. Here we examine why our world is changing so rapidly, as well as catch a glimpse of what is yet to come. We first analyze trends in population

and urbanization, those sweeping forces that affect our lives so significantly but that ordinarily remain below our level of awareness (Chapter 14). We conclude the book with an analysis of technology, social movements, and the environment (Chapter 15), which takes us to the cutting edge of the vital changes that engulf us all.

Themes and Features

Six central themes run throughout this text: down-to-earth sociology, globalization, cultural diversity, critical thinking, the new technology, and the influence of the mass media on our lives. For each of these themes, except globalization, which is incorporated throughout the text, I have written a series of boxes. These boxed features are one of my favorite components of the book. They are especially useful for introducing the controversial topics that make sociology such a lively activity.

Let's look at these six themes.

Down-to-Earth Sociology

As many years of teaching have shown me, all too often textbooks are written to appeal to the adopters of texts rather than to the students who will learn from them. In writing this book, my central concern has been to present sociology in a way that not only facilitates understanding but also shares its excitement. During the course of writing other texts, I often have been told that my explanations and writing style are "down-to-earth," or accessible and inviting to students—so much so that I chose this phrase as the book's subtitle. The term is also featured in my introductory reader, *Down-to-Earth Sociology: Introductory Readings*, to appear in its 15th edition (New York: The Free Press, 2017).

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

- How a sociologist became a gang leader—for a day (Chapter 1)
- The experiences of W. E. B. Du Bois, an early sociologist, in studying U.S. race relations (Chapter 1)
- How gossip and ridicule enforce adolescent norms (Chapter 3)
- Boot camp as a total institution (Chapter 3)
- How football can help us understand social structure (Chapter 4)
- Beauty and success (Chapter 4)
- The McDonaldization of society (Chapter 5)
- Serial killers (Chapter 6)
- Urban gangs (Chapter 6)
- What life is like after hitting it big in the lottery (Chapter 8)
- How the super-rich live (Chapter 8)
- National research on the American Dream: Actual social mobility (Chapter 8)
- Stealth racism in the rental market (Chapter 9)
- How a man became a live exhibit in a New York zoo (Chapter 9)
- Greedy surgeons and their women victims (Chapter 10)
- Do we need affirmative action for men? (Chapter 10)
- Testing stereotypes by looking at the background of suicide terrorists (Chapter 12)
- Our chances of getting divorced (Chapter 12)
- How tsunamis can help us to understand world population growth (Chapter 14)
- The possible dangers of bio foods (Chapter 14)
- Deception and persuasion in propaganda (Chapter 15)

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

Globalization

In the second theme, *globalization*, we explore the impact of global issues on our lives and on the lives of people around the world. All of us are feeling the effects of an increasingly powerful and encompassing global economy, one that intertwines the fates of nations. The globalization of capitalism influences the kinds of skills and knowledge we need, the types of work available to us—and whether work is available at all. Globalization also underlies the costs of the goods and services we consume and whether our country is at war or peace—or in some uncharted middle ground between the two. In addition to the strong emphasis on global issues that runs throughout this text, I have written a separate chapter on global stratification (Chapter 7). I also feature global issues in the chapters on social institutions and the final chapters on social change: population, urbanization, social movements, and the environment.

What occurs in Russia, Germany, and China, as well as in much smaller nations, such as Syria and Iraq, has far-reaching consequences on our own lives. Consequently, in addition to the global focus that runs throughout the text, the next theme, cultural diversity, also has a strong global emphasis.

Cultural Diversity around the World and in the United States

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

To highlight this first subtheme, I have written a series of boxes called **Cultural Diversity around the World**. Among the topics with this subtheme are

- food customs that shock people from different cultures (Chapter 2)
- why the dead need money (Chapter 2)
- where virgins become men (Chapter 3)
- human sexuality in Mexico and Kenya (Chapter 6)
- how blaming the rape victim protects India’s caste system (Chapter 6)
- female circumcision (Chapter 10)
- the life of child workers (Chapter 11)
- China’s new capitalism (Chapter 11)
- love and arranged marriage in India (Chapter 12)
- female infanticide in China and India (Chapter 14)
- urbanization in the Least Industrialized Nations (Chapter 14)
- the destruction of the rain forests and indigenous peoples of Brazil (Chapter 15)

In the second subtheme, **Cultural Diversity in the United States**, we examine groups that make up the fascinating array of people who form the U.S. population. The boxes I have written with this subtheme review such topics as

- how studying job discrimination turned into public sociology (Chapter 1)
- the language of race (Chapter 2)
- the controversy over the use of Spanish or English (Chapter 2)
- how education can cause conflict for immigrants (Chapter 3)
- how the Amish resist social change (Chapter 4)
- how our social networks produce social inequality (Chapter 5)
- how Tiger Woods represents a changing racial–ethnic identity (Chapter 9)
- the author’s travels with a Mexican who transports undocumented workers to the U.S. border (Chapter 9)

- human heads, animal sacrifices, and religious freedom (Chapter 13)

Seeing that there are so many ways of “doing” social life can remove some of our cultural smugness, making us more aware of how arbitrary our own customs are—and how our taken-for-granted ways of thinking are rooted in culture. The stimulating contexts of these contrasts can help students develop their sociological imagination. They encourage students to see connections among key sociological concepts, such as culture, socialization, norms, race–ethnicity, gender, and social class. As your students’ sociological imagination grows, they can attain a new perspective on their experiences in their own corners of life—and a better understanding of the social structure of U.S. society.

Critical Thinking

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

- are we prisoners of our genes? (Chapter 2)
- managing diversity in the workplace (Chapter 5)
- our tendency to conform to evil authority (the Milgram experiments) (Chapter 5)
- labeling in everyday life illustrated by the Saints and the Roughnecks: (Chapter 6)
- bounties paid to kill homeless children in Brazil (Chapter 7)
- *maquiladoras* on the Mexican–U.S. border (Chapter 7)
- the deserving and the undeserving poor (Chapter 8)
- emerging masculinities and femininities (Chapter 10)
- targeted killings (Chapter 11)
- the coming disappearance of some island nations (Chapter 15)
- cyber war and cyber defense (Chapter 15)
- ecosabotage (Chapter 15)

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

Sociology and the New Technology

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

This theme is introduced in Chapter 2, where technology is defined and presented as a major aspect of culture. The impact of technology is then discussed throughout the text. Examples include how technology is related to cultural change (Chapter 2), fantasy life (Chapter 4), the control of workers (Chapter 5), and the maintenance of global stratification (Chapter 7). We also examine how technology led to social inequality in early human history and how it now may lead to world peace—and to Big Brother’s net thrown over us all (Chapter 11). The final chapter (Chapter 15), “Social Change and the Environment,” concludes the book with a focus on the effects of technology.

To highlight this theme, I have written a series of boxes called **Sociology and the New Technology**. In these boxes, we explore how technology affects our lives as it changes society. We examine how technology

- is making our clothing smart (Chapter 2)
- blurs the distinction between reality and fantasy (Chapter 4)
- is changing the way people find mates (Chapter 12)
- is changing the way families handle disagreements (Chapter 12)
- by allowing “designer babies,” might change society (Chapter 12)
- is likely to lead to real “star wars” (Chapter 15)

The Mass Media and Social Life

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

To make this theme more prominent for students, I have written a series of boxed features called **Mass Media in Social Life**. Among these are

- the presentation of gender in computer games (Chapter 3)
- the worship of thinness—and how this affects our body images (Chapter 4)
- the reemergence of slavery in today’s world (Chapter 7)
- the slowly changing status of women in Iran (Chapter 10)
- how the mass media shape our perceptions of the elderly (Chapter 10)
- the myth of increasing school shootings (Chapter 13)
- God on the Net (Chapter 13)

What’s New in This Edition?

It is always a goal—as well as a pleasure and a challenge—to keep *Essentials of Sociology* current with cutting-edge sociological research and to incorporate into the analyses national and global changes that affect our lives. For an indication of the thoroughness of incorporating recent sociological research and current events, look at the chapter-by-chapter listing of this edition’s changes in “What’s New In The 12th Edition?” on page xxix.

As is discussed in the next section, some of the most interesting—and even fascinating—topics are presented in a visual form.

Visual Presentations of Sociology

SHOWING CHANGES OVER TIME A hallmark of this text is showing how social change affects your students’ lives. Many figures and tables show how social data have changed over time. This allows students to see trends in social life and to make predictions of how these trends, if they continue, might affect their own lives. Examples include Figure 1.5, *U.S. Marriage, U.S. Divorce* (Chapter 1) Figure 8.3, *The More Things Change, the More They Stay the Same: Dividing the Nation’s Income* (Chapter 8); Figure 10.2, *Changes in College Enrollment, by Sex* (Chapter 10); Figure 10.17, *Trends in Poverty* (Chapter 10); Figure 12.4, *The Number of Children Americans Think Are Ideal* (Chapter 12), and Figure 12.11, *Cohabitation in the United States* (Chapter 12).

THROUGH THE AUTHOR’S LENS Using this format, in which I share sociological research by means of photos I have taken, students are able to look over my shoulder as I experience other cultures or explore aspects of this one. These eight photo essays should expand your students’ sociological imagination and open their minds to other ways of doing social life, as well as stimulate thought-provoking class discussions.

VIENNA: SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND SOCIAL INTERACTION IN A VIBRANT CITY appears in Chapter 4. The photos I took in this city illustrate how social structure surrounds us, setting the scene for our interactions, limiting and directing them.

WHEN A TORNADO STRIKES: SOCIAL ORGANIZATION FOLLOWING A NATURAL DISASTER When a tornado hit a small town just hours from where I lived, I photographed the aftermath of the disaster. The police let me in to view the neighborhood where the tornado had struck, destroying homes and killing several people. I was impressed by how quickly people were putting their lives back together, the topic of this photo essay (Chapter 4).

COMMUNITY IN THE CITY, in Chapter 5, is also from Vienna. This sequence of four photos focuses on strangers who are helping a man who has just fallen. This event casts doubt on the results of Darley and Latane's laboratory experiments. This short sequence was serendipitous in my research. One of my favorite photos is the last in the series, which portrays the cop coming toward me to question why I was taking photos of the accident. It fits the sequence perfectly.

THE DUMP PEOPLE: WORKING AND LIVING AND PLAYING IN THE CITY DUMP OF PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA Among the culture shocks I experienced in Cambodia was not to discover that people scavenge at Phnom Penh's huge city dump—this I knew about—but that they also live there. With the aid of an interpreter, I was able to interview these people, as well as photograph them as they went about their everyday lives. An entire community lives in the city dump, complete with restaurants amid the smoke and piles of garbage. This photo essay reveals not just these people's activities but also their social organization (Chapter 7).

WORK AND GENDER: WOMEN AT WORK IN INDIA As I traveled in India, I took photos of women at work in public places. The more I traveled in this country and the more photos I took, the more insight I gained into gender relations. Despite the general dominance of men in India, women's worlds are far from limited to family and home. Women are found at work throughout the society. What is even more remarkable is how vastly different "women's work" is in India than it is in the United States. This, too, is an intellectually provocative photo essay (Chapter 10).

SMALL TOWN USA: STRUGGLING TO SURVIVE To take the photos for this essay, I went off the beaten path. On a road trip from California to Florida, instead of following the interstates, I followed those "little black lines" on the map. They took me to out-of-the-way places that the national transportation system has bypassed. Many of these little towns are putting on a valiant face as they struggle to survive, but, as the photos show, the struggle is apparent, and, in some cases, so are the scars (Chapter 11).

HOLY WEEK IN SPAIN I was fortunate to be able to photograph religious processions in two cities, Malaga, a provincial capital, and Almuñecar, a smaller city of Granada. Spain

has a Roman Catholic heritage so deep that some of its city streets are named Conception, Piety, Humility, Calvary, Crucifixion, The Blessed Virgin, etc. In large and small towns throughout Spain, elaborate processions during Holy Week feature *tronos* that depict the biblical account of Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection. As these photos make clear, these events have a decidedly Spanish flavor.

I was allowed to photograph the preparations for one of the processions, so this essay also includes "behind-the-scenes" photos.

During the processions in Malaga, the participants walk slowly for one or two minutes; then because of the weight of the *tronos*, they rest for one or two minutes. Except for Saturdays, this process repeats for about six hours each day during Holy Week, with different *tronos* featured and different bands and organizations participating. As you will see, some of the most interesting activities occur during the rest periods (Chapter 13).

A WALK THROUGH EL TIRO IN MEDELLIN, COLOMBIA One of the most significant social changes in the world is taking place in the Least Industrialized Nations. There, in the search for a better life, people are abandoning rural areas. Fleeing poverty, they are flocking to the cities, only to find even more poverty. Some of these settlements of the new urban poor are dangerous. I was fortunate to be escorted by an insider through a section of Medellin, Colombia, that is controlled by gangs (Chapter 14).

OTHER PHOTOS BY THE AUTHOR Sprinkled throughout the text are photos that I took in Austria, Cambodia, India, Latvia, Spain, and the United States. These photos illustrate sociological principles and topics better than photos available from commercial sources. As an example, while in the United States, I received a report about a feral child who had been discovered living with monkeys and who had been taken to an orphanage in Cambodia. The possibility of photographing and interviewing that child was one of the reasons that I went to Cambodia. That particular photo is on page 69. Another of my favorites is on page 198.

PHOTO ESSAY ON SUBCULTURES To help students better understand subcultures, I have produced the photo essay on subcultures in Chapter 2. Because this photo essay consists of photos taken by others, it is not a part of the series, *Through the Author's Lens*. The variety of subcultures featured in this photo essay, however, should be instructive to your students.

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

Other Special Pedagogical Features

In addition to chapter summaries and reviews, key terms, and a comprehensive glossary, I have included several special features to help students learn sociology. **In Sum** sections help students review important points within the chapter before going on to new materials. I have also developed a series of **Social Maps** that illustrate how social conditions vary by geography. These social maps, personally prepared, are unique to my texts.

Learning Objectives To help students, *learning objectives* are woven into the text. This feature enhances your students' mastery of the materials. As students move to a new section, they can understand clearly what they are expected to learn in that section. The learning objectives are introduced at the beginning of each chapter, then repeated in the Summary and Review at the end of the chapter.

CHAPTER-OPENING VIGNETTES These accounts feature down-to-earth illustrations of a major aspect of each chapter's content. Some are based on my research with the homeless, the time I spent with them on the streets and slept in their shelters (Chapters 1 and 8). Others recount my travels in Africa (Chapters 2 and 10) and Mexico (Chapters 12 and 14). I also share my experiences when I spent a night with street people at Dupont Circle in Washington, D.C. (Chapter 4). For other vignettes, I

use current and historical events (Chapters 7, 9, 13, and 15), classic studies in the social sciences (Chapters 3 and 6), and even scenes from novels (Chapters 5 and 11). Students have often told me that they find the vignettes compelling, that they stimulate interest in the chapter.

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

ON SOURCES Sociological data are found in a wide variety of sources, and this text reflects that variety. Cited throughout this text are standard journals such as the *American Journal of Sociology*, *Social Problems*, *American Sociological Review*, and *Journal of Marriage and Family*, as well as more esoteric journals such as the *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, *Chronobiology International*, and *Western Journal of Black Studies*. I have also drawn heavily from standard news sources, especially the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*, as well as more unusual sources such as *El País*. In addition, I cite unpublished research and theoretical papers by sociologists.

Acknowledgments

The gratifying response to this text's earlier editions indicates that my efforts at making sociology down-to-earth have succeeded. The years that have gone into writing this text are a culmination of the many years that preceded its writing—from graduate school to that equally demanding endeavor known as classroom teaching. No text, of course, comes solely from its author. Although I am responsible for the final words on the printed page, I have received excellent feedback from instructors who have taught from the first eleven editions.

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I couldn't ask for a more outstanding team than the one that I have the pleasure to work with at Pearson. I want to thank Billy Grieco and Emily Tamburri, who joined the team for this 12th edition, for coordinating the many tasks that were necessary to produce this new edition; Diane Melliot, who provided excellent research, tracking down both standard and esoteric items that made an impact on the book; Jenn Auvil, for juggling so many tasks; Dusty Friedman, for working with me on yet another edition; and Kate Cebik, for her creativity in photo research and for her willingness to "keep on looking"; and for the many others, unnamed, who worked behind the scenes to help make this text accessible to students.

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

I would also like to thank those who prepared the supplements that go with *Essentials of Sociology*. Their efforts, so often unacknowledged, are important in our goal of

introducing students to sociology and awakening their sociological imagination. The Instructor's Manual/Test Bank for this edition of *Essentials of Sociology* was prepared by Jessica Herrmeyer.

Since this text is based on the contributions of many, I would count it a privilege if you would share with me your teaching experiences with this book, including suggestions for improving the text. Both positive and negative comments are welcome. This is one way that I continue to learn.

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



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

What's New in the 12th Edition?

Chapter 2 Culture

Cultural Diversity around the World box: Why the Dead Need Money

Sociology and the New Technology box: How Smart Is Your Clothing?

Topic: The coming wearable computers will make Google Glass look like a museum piece

Chapter 3 Socialization

Topic: Transitional adulthood has become so extended that some companies have a "Bring Your Parents to Work Day"

Topic: Research on orphans in Romania, with experimental and control groups shows that personalized care improves not only social skills but also increases brain cells

Topic: A university is offering a varsity sports scholarship in videogames

Chapter 4 Social Structure and Social Interaction

Topic: To apply body language, Homeland Security spends \$200 million a year on training "Behavior Detection Officers"

Topic: Attractive people are treated more favorably by judges and juries

Topic: "Image consultants" teach women executives how to display power amidst "soft" femininity

Chapter 5 Social Groups and Formal Organizations

Sociology and the New Technology box: Welcome to the Memory Hole: Enjoy the Security State

Chapter 6 Deviance and Social Control

Down-to-Earth Sociology box: Sexting: Getting On the Phone Isn't What It Used to Be

Figure 6.3 How Fast They Return: Recidivism of U.S. Prisoners

Topic: Differential association in the cyber age

Topic: Mexico moves against the militias that citizens have formed to fight the drug cartels

Topic: GM executives did not take action on the ignition problem that accidentally turned off the engine and air bags, even though it caused many deaths.

Chapter 7 Global Stratification

Down-to-Earth Sociology box: Inequality? What Inequality?

Topic: The FBI is pressuring Google and Amazon to stop sales of encrypted mobile devices

Chapter 8 Social Class in the United States

Thinking Critically section: The Frightful Future: The Three-Tier Society

Figure 8.12 How Does Income Influence Births to Single Women?

Topic: The gender gap in social mobility: As adults, women are less likely than men to live in families with higher income than the one in which they grew up

Topic: Larry Ellison has a basketball court on his yacht and a basketball retriever who trails the yacht, scooping up errant balls

Topic: A \$39,000 backpack for the ultra-rich by Ashley and Mary-Kate Olsen.

Topic: The Waltons of Wal-Mart fame are worth more than the bottom 40 percent of all Americans

Topic: Callie Rogers, youngest lottery winner in Great Britain, added to the box on lottery winners

Chapter 9 Race and Ethnicity

Topic: Supreme Court upholds states' rights to ban affirmative action in college admissions

Topic: Associate's degree added to Table 9.3

Topic: North Koreans who defile the "sacred Korean race" are tortured, raped, and starved

Topic: Native American tribes clash over casino profits

Topic: Donald Sterling forced to forfeit the ownership of the Los Angeles Clippers, banned from professional basketball for life, and fined \$2.5 million

Topic: Social class as the answer to the affirmative action controversy in college admissions

Chapter 10 Gender and Age

Thinking Critically section: New Masculinities and Femininities Are on the Way

Topic: *Swara*, a practice in tribal areas of Pakistan: Unmarried girls, even children, are given as brides to compensate a family for a man's crime

Chapter 11 Politics and the Economy

Topic: New research by Gilens and Page on 1,800 policy decisions by the U.S. government supports the power elite perspective.

Chapter 12 Marriage and Family

Topic: The single father

Topic: Same-sex and heterosexual couples have about the same rate of divorce

Topic: Uber as a parent substitute

Chapter 13 Education and Religion

Down-to-Earth Sociology box: You Want to Get Through College? Let's Apply Sociology

Chapter 14 Population and Urbanization

Topic: To encourage childbirth, officials in Turkey pin a gold medal on women who have their first child

Topic: Since the 1990s, world hunger has dropped 40 percent

Topic: Update on the controversy over biofoods

Topic: Corporate funding and the threat to objective scientific research

Topic: There are 28 megacities; by 2030 there will be 41.

Topic: Edge cities are being changed to give them the look and feel of traditional cities

Topic: Forced urbanization: deciding that urbanization fuels economic growth, China's top leaders are forcing villagers to move to the city

Topic: Some aging suburbs are turning their malls into town centers

Topic: Megaregions have developed.

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A Note from the Publisher on the Supplements

Instructor Supplements

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

Instructor’s Manual and Test Bank

For each chapter in the text, the Instructor’s Manual provides a list of key changes to the new edition, chapter summaries and outlines, learning objectives, key terms and people, discussion topics, classroom activities, recommended films and Web sites, and additional references. The Instructor’s Manual also includes sample syllabi and a section by Jim Henslin on how to make your class more interactive and stimulating by using small, in-class discussion groups.

Test Bank

The Test Bank contains approximately 125 questions for each chapter in multiple-choice, true/false, short answer, essay, and matching formats. There is also a set of questions based on the text’s figures, tables, and maps. The questions are correlated to each chapter’s in-text learning objectives.

MyTest Computerized Test Bank

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

PowerPoint Presentation Slides

Lecture PowerPoint Presentations are available for this edition. The lecture slides outline each chapter of the text, while the line art slides provide the charts, graphs, and maps found in the text. PowerPoint software is not required as PowerPoint viewer is included.

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About the Author

Jim Henslin was born in Minnesota, graduated from high school and junior college in California and from college in Indiana. Awarded scholarships, he earned his master's and doctorate degrees in sociology at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. After this, he won a postdoctoral fellowship from the National Institute of Mental Health and spent a year studying how people adjust to the suicide of a family member. His primary interests in sociology are the sociology of everyday life, deviance, and international relations. Among his many books are *Down-to-Earth Sociology: Introductory Readings* (Free Press), soon in its 15th edition, and *Social Problems* (Allyn and Bacon), soon to be in its 12th edition. He has also published widely in sociology journals, including *Social Problems* and *American Journal of Sociology*.

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

Jim enjoys reading and fishing, and he also does a bit of kayaking and weight lifting. His two favorite activities

are writing and traveling. He especially enjoys visiting and living in other cultures, for this brings him face to face with behaviors and ways of thinking that challenge his perspectives and "make sociological principles come alive." A special pleasure has been the preparation of *Through the Author's Lens*, the series of photo essays that appear in this text.

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



Chapter 1

The Sociological Perspective



Learning Objectives

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

- 1.1** Explain why both history and biography are essential for the sociological perspective. (p. 3)
- 1.2** Trace the origins of society, from tradition to Max Weber. (p. 4)
- 1.3** Trace the development of sociology in North America and explain the tension between objective analysis and social reform. (p. 8)
- 1.4** Explain the basic ideas of symbolic interactionism, functional analysis, and conflict theory. (p. 13)
- 1.5** Explain why common sense can't replace sociological research. (p. 20)
- 1.6** Know the eight steps of the research model. (p. 21)
- 1.7** Know the main elements of the seven research methods: surveys, participant observation, case studies, secondary analysis, analysis of documents, experiments, and unobtrusive measures. (p. 23)
- 1.8** Explain how gender is significant in sociological research. (p. 32)
- 1.9** Explain why it's vital for sociologists to protect the people they study; discuss the two cases that are presented. (p. 33)
- 1.10** Explain how research versus reform and globalization are likely to influence sociology. (p. 35)

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

I kept my clothes on.

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

No one spoke as the line slowly inched forward.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Sociological Perspective

1.1 Explain why both history and biography are essential for the sociological perspective.

Seeing the Broader Social Context

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

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

Sociologist C. Wright Mills (1959) put it this way: “The sociological imagination [perspective] enables us to grasp the connection between history and biography.” By *history*, Mills meant that each society is located in a broad stream of events. This gives each society specific characteristics—such as its ideas about what roles are proper for men and women. By *biography*, Mills referred to people’s experiences within a specific historical setting, which gives them their orientations to life. In short, you don’t do what you do because you inherited some internal mechanism, such as instincts. Rather, *external* influences—your experiences—become part of your thinking and motivation. Or we can put it this way: At the center of what you do and how you think is the society in which you grow up and your particular location in that society.

Consider a newborn baby. As you know, if we were to take the baby away from its U.S. parents and place it with the Yanomamö Indians in the jungles of South America, his or her first words would not be in English. You also know that the child would not think like an American. The child would

sociological perspective

understanding human behavior by placing it within its broader social context

society

people who share a culture and a territory

social location

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

Perhaps from this photo taken in Athens, Greece, you can see why silence is common in homeless shelters. An optimistic view of life and exciting things to talk about are not part of the homeless.





We all learn our basic views of the world from the group in which we grow up. Just as this principle applies to this woman in the Bayaka tribe of the Central African Republic, so it applies to you.

not grow up wanting credit cards, for example, or designer clothes, a car, a smart phone, an iPod, and video games. He or she would take his or her place in Yanomamö society—perhaps as a food gatherer, a hunter, or a warrior—and would not even know about the world left behind at birth. And, whether male or female, the child would grow up assuming that it is natural to want many children, not debating whether to have one, two, or three children.

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

The Global Context—and the Local

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

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

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

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

Origins of Sociology

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

Tradition versus Science

So when did sociology begin? Even ancient peoples tried to figure out how social life works. They, too, asked questions about why war exists, why some people become more powerful than others, and why some are rich but others are poor. However, they often

based their answers on superstition, myth, even the positions of the stars. They did not test their assumptions.

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

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

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

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

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

Auguste Comte and Positivism

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

These were pressing questions, and Comte decided that the scientific method held the key to answering them. Just as the scientific method had revealed the law of gravity, so, too, it would uncover the laws that underlie society. Comte called this new science **sociology**—“the study of society” (from the Greek *logos*, “study of,” and the Latin *socius*, “companion,” or “being with others”). The purpose of this new science, he said, would not only be to discover social principles but also to apply them to social reform. Comte developed a grandiose view: Sociologists would reform society, making it a better place to live.

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

Herbert Spencer and Social Darwinism

Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), who grew up in England, is sometimes called the second founder of sociology. Spencer disagreed sharply with Comte. He said that sociologists



Upsetting the entire social order, the French Revolution removed the past as a sure guide to the present. This stimulated Auguste Comte to analyze how societies change. Shown here is the king of France, Louis XVI, as he is about to be executed by guillotine in 1793.



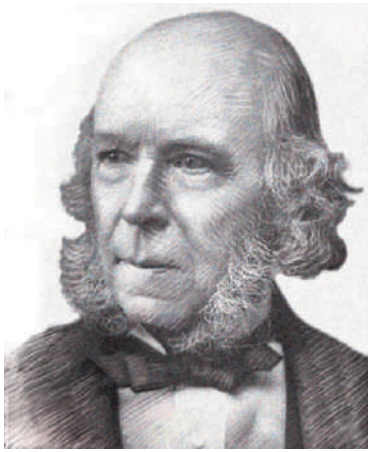
Auguste Comte (1798–1857), who is credited as the founder of sociology, began to analyze the bases of the social order. Although he stressed that the scientific method should be applied to the study of society, he did not apply it himself.

positivism

the application of the scientific approach to the social world

sociology

the scientific study of society and human behavior



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



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

class conflict

Marx’s term for the struggle between capitalists and workers

bourgeoisie

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

proletariat

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

should *not* guide social reform. If they did, he said, it would interfere with a natural process that improves societies. Societies are evolving from a lower form (“barbarian”) to higher (“civilized”) forms. As generations pass, a society’s most capable and intelligent members (“the fittest”) survive, while the less capable die out. These fittest members produce a more advanced society—unless misguided do-gooders get in the way and help the less fit (the lower classes) survive.

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

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

Karl Marx and Class Conflict

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

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

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

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

Emile Durkheim and Social Integration

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

Durkheim’s second goal was to show how social forces affect people’s behavior. To accomplish this, he conducted rigorous research. Comparing the suicide rates of several European countries, Durkheim (1897/1966) found that each country has a different

suicide rate—and that these rates remain about the same year after year. He also found that different groups within a country have different suicide rates and that these, too, remain stable from year to year. Males are more likely than females to kill themselves, Protestants more likely than Catholics or Jews, and the unmarried more likely than the married. From these observations, Durkheim concluded that suicide is not what it appears—simply a matter of individuals here and there deciding to take their lives for personal reasons. Instead, *social factors underlie suicide*, which is why a group's rate remains fairly constant year after year.

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

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

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

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

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

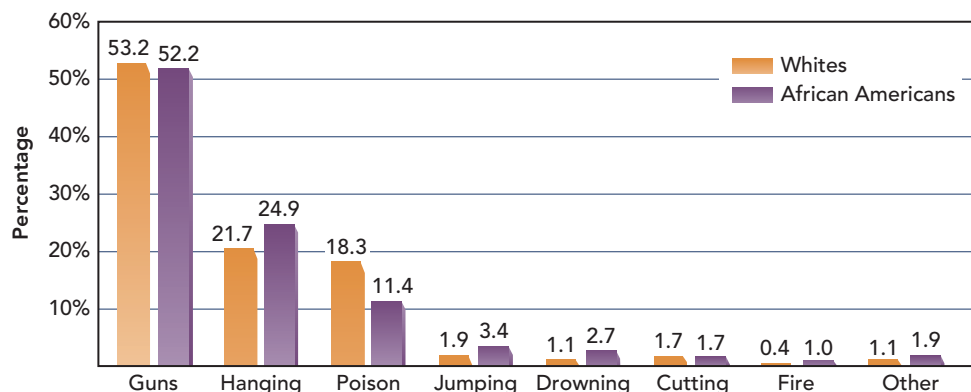


The French sociologist Emile Durkheim (1858–1917) contributed many important concepts to sociology. His comparison of the suicide rates of several countries revealed an underlying social factor: People are more likely to commit suicide if their ties to others in their communities are weak. Durkheim's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

patterns of behavior

recurring behaviors or events

Figure 1.1 How Americans Commit Suicide



NOTE: These totals are the mean of years 2001–2011. (“Mean” is explained in Table 1.3 on page 25.)

SOURCE: By the author. Based on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2012 and earlier years; Center for Injury Prevention and Control 2013.

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



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

Max Weber and the Protestant Ethic

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

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

Weber called this self-denying approach to life the *Protestant ethic*. He termed the desire to invest capital in order to make more money the *spirit of capitalism*. To test his theory, Weber compared the extent of capitalism in Roman Catholic and Protestant countries. In line with his theory, he found that capitalism was more likely to flourish in Protestant countries. Weber's conclusion that religion was the key factor in the rise of capitalism was controversial when he made it, and it continues to be debated today (Kotz 2015).

Sociology in North America

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

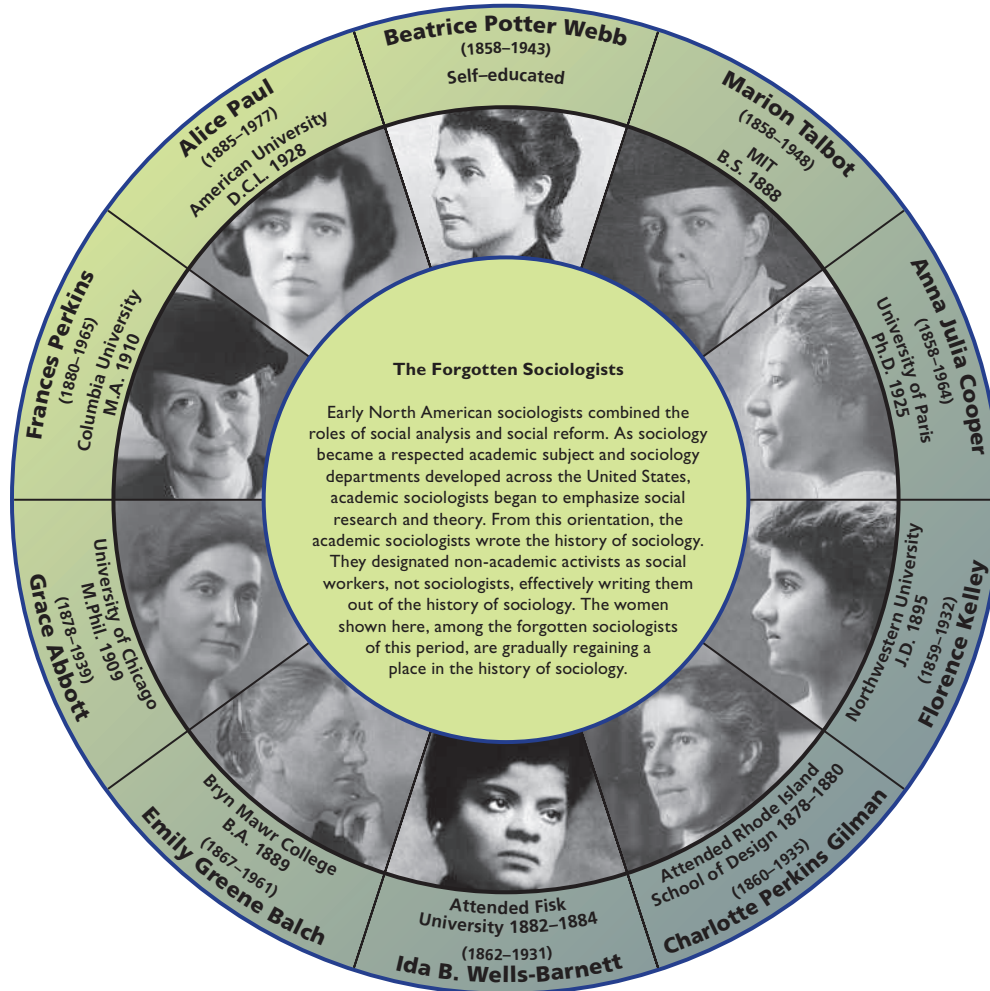
Now let's turn to the development of sociology on this side of the Atlantic Ocean.

Sexism at the Time: Women in Early Sociology

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

At this time, few people, male or female, attained any education beyond basic reading and writing and a little math. Higher education, for the rare few who received it, was reserved primarily for men. Of the handful of women who did pursue higher education, some became prominent in early sociology. Marion Talbot, for example, was an associate editor of the *American Journal of Sociology* for thirty years, from its founding in 1895 to 1925. The influence of some early female sociologists went far beyond sociology.

Figure 1.2 The Forgotten Sociologists



SOURCE: Photo wheel copyright 2017 © James M. Henslin.

Grace Abbott became chief of the U.S. government's Children's Bureau, and Frances Perkins was the first woman to hold a cabinet position, serving twelve years as Secretary of Labor under President Franklin Roosevelt. The photo wheel above portrays some of these early sociologists.

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

Harriet Martineau (1802–1876) provides an excellent example of how the contributions of early female sociologists were ignored. Although Martineau was from England, she is included here because she did extensive analyses of U.S. social customs. Sexism was so pervasive that when Martineau first began to analyze social life, she would hide her writing beneath her sewing when visitors arrived: Writing was “masculine” and