

# SOCIOLOGY

*in Modules*

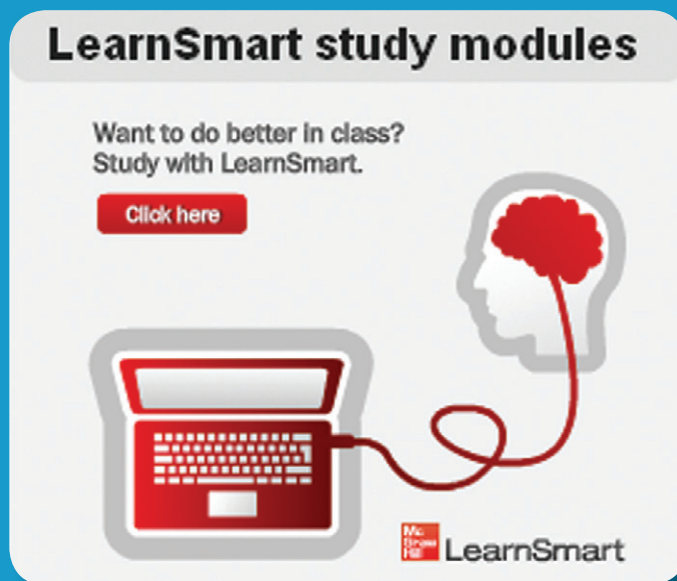
SECOND  
EDITION

RICHARD T. SCHAEFER



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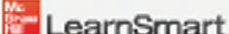


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# Coverage of Race and Ethnicity, Gender, and Social Class

**Sociology in Modules** provides comprehensive coverage of race and ethnicity, gender, and social class and of the intersection of those variables. This summary table includes a sample of the related topics in the text. The dots that precede the entries indicate the type of coverage:

- RACE AND ETHNICITY
- GENDER
- SOCIAL CLASS

## CHAPTER 1 Understanding Sociology

- M2 Class conflict
- M4 Community health care
- M3 Elijah Anderson
- M1 Gender and talkativeness
- M1 M4 Gender and the 2004 tsunami
- M1 Hurricane Katrina
- M3 Ida Wells-Barnett
- M2 W. E. B. DuBois

## CHAPTER 2 Sociological Research

- M6 Gender and scouting
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- M6 Gender stereotyping in children's coloring books
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## CHAPTER 3 Culture

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- M9 M10 M11 M12 Culture and values
- M9 M10 M11 M12 Ethnicity and language
- M10 Ethnicity and nonverbal communication
- M9 M10 Ethnocentrism in education
- M10 M12 Gender and language
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- M11 Walmart in Germany

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- M13 Black middle class
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- M15 Race and socialization
- M14 M15 Rites of passage
- M15 Socialization of Amish children

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- M16 M17 Cultural differences in social interaction
- M16 Ethnicity and role strain
- M16 M19 Gender and formal organizations
- M16 Gender and social institutions
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- M16 Race and social institutions

- M16 Race as a master status
- M17 Social class and social institutions

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- M24 M25 White-collar crime

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- M26 M27 Ethnicity and wealth
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- M30 Stratification in Mexico

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- M43 College enrollment among racial minorities and women
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- M56 Gender and social movements
- M57 Marx and social change
- M56 Relative deprivation
- M58 Transnationals
- M57 United States: A changing nation
- M57 Vested interests
- M56 Women and new social movements in South Korea and India

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950. Shane K	-749
951. (Anonymous)	-769

Chapter 18. Social Change in the Global Community

Which of the following statements describes the relationship between new social movements and the government?

- The movements do not accept established authority.
- The movements seek to overthrow the government.
- The government is viewed as an ally.
- The movements ignore the government.

Click one of the buttons below.

Do you know the answer? (Be honest.)

Yes | Probably | Maybe | No—just guessing

30 items left in the assignment

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# sociology

in modules





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in modules

*second edition*

Richard T. Schaefer

DEPAUL UNIVERSITY







SOCIOLOGY IN MODULES, SECOND EDITION

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dedication

To my granddaughter,  
Matilda Violet.  
May she enjoy  
exploring life's  
possibilities.

# about the author



**Richard T. Schaefer:** Professor, DePaul University  
B.A. Northwestern University M.A., Ph.D. University of Chicago



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

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

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

Dr. Schaefer is the author of the thirteenth edition of *Sociology* (McGraw-Hill, 2012), the tenth edition of *Sociology: A Brief Introduction* (McGraw-Hill, 2013), and the sixth edition of *Sociology Matters* (McGraw-Hill, 2013). He is also the author of *Racial and Ethnic Groups*, now in its thirteenth edition (2012), and *Race and Ethnicity in the United States*, seventh edition (2013), both published by Pearson. Together with William Zellner, he coauthored the ninth edition of *Extraordinary Groups*, published by Worth in 2011. Dr. Schaefer served as the general editor of the three-volume *Encyclopedia of Race, Ethnicity, and Society*, published by Sage in 2008. His articles and book reviews have appeared in many journals, including *American Journal of Sociology*; *Phylon: A Review of Race and Culture*; *Contemporary Sociology*; *Sociology and Social Research*; *Sociological Quarterly*; and *Teaching Sociology*. He served as president of the Midwest Sociological Society in 1994–1995.

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



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# chapter opening excerpts

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# Modules Work for Instructors & Students

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

Modules Work for **you**

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The image also features a photograph of a Buddhist monk in an orange robe standing at an ATM machine in a public building.



**create**

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**Finally** you have the ability to customize your introductory Sociology course materials to align with your course goals.

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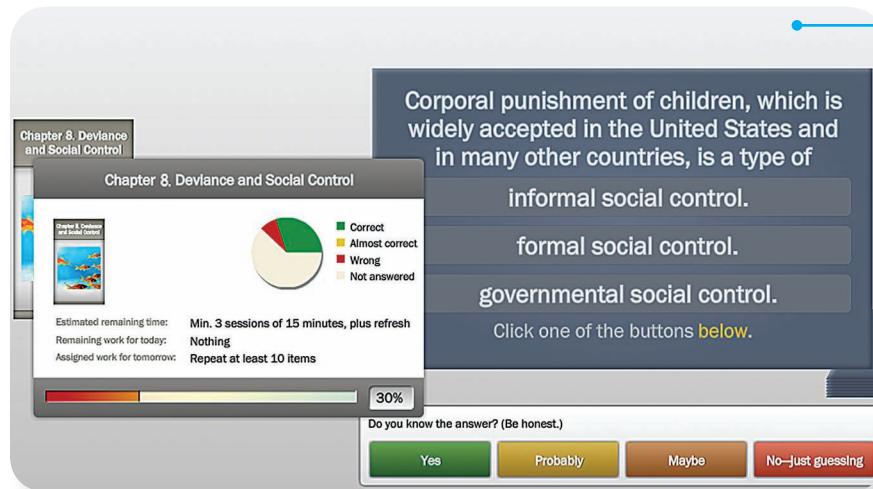
*Sociology in Modules* is available to instructors and students in traditional print format as well as online within McGraw-Hill’s Connect Sociology, an integrated assignment and assessment platform. Connect Sociology’s online tools make managing assignments easier for instructors—and make learning and studying more motivating and efficient for students.

- **LearnSmart** This powerful learning system helps students assess their knowledge of course content through a series of adaptive questions, intelligently pinpointing concepts the student does not understand and mapping out a personalized study plan for success.
- **Investigate Sociology** These engaging, interactive, story-based online activities challenge students to delve deeply into issues of race, class, gender, and culture, giving them the experience of *doing* sociology.
- **Integrated eBook** A fully loaded eBook allows students to review *Sociology in Modules* anytime and anywhere. They can highlight, take notes, and quickly search for key terms and phrases.
- **Real-time Reports** These printable, exportable reports show how well each student (or section) is performing on each course segment. Instructors can use this feature to spot problem areas before they crop up on an exam.
- **Assignable and Assessable Activities** Instructors can easily deliver assignments and tests online, and students can practice skills that fulfill learning objectives at their own pace and on their own schedule.





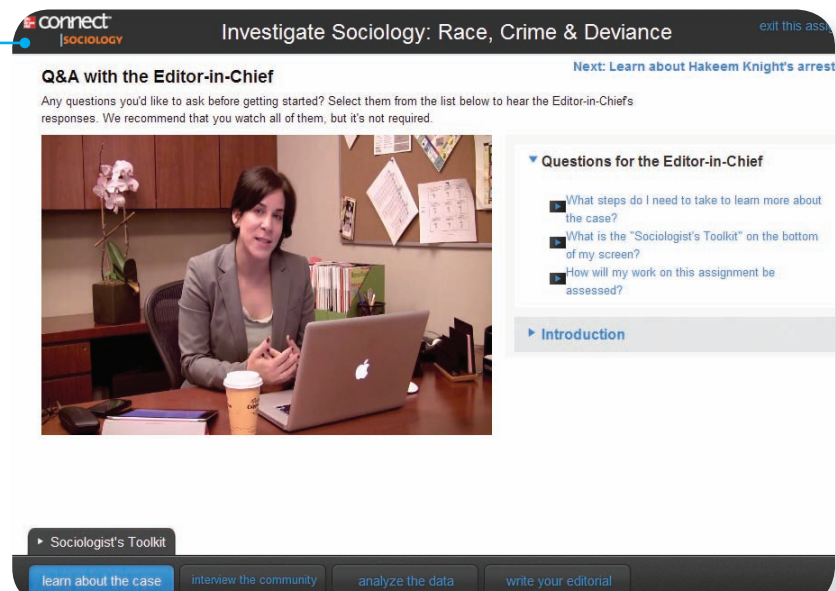
# Experience a new classroom dynamic with *LearnSmart*.



*LearnSmart* is an adaptive learning system that helps students study efficiently and effectively for greater success. *LearnSmart* intelligently pinpoints concepts students do not understand and maps out personalized study plans that ground students in the fundamentals of sociology, allowing instructors to focus valuable class time on higher-level concepts.

# Give students the experience of doing sociology with *Investigate Sociology*.

The engaging, interactive, story-based scenarios in *Investigate Sociology* help students develop their sociological imagination, challenging them to use the lenses of culture, race, class, and gender to delve deeply into significant and timely issues. To complete these scenarios, students study background information, analyze data, conduct interviews, and write up and support their conclusions.



# Taking Sociology with You



*Sociology in Modules* highlights the distinctive way in which sociologists examine human social behavior and how their research findings can be used to understand the broader principles that guide our lives. In doing so, it helps students to begin to think like sociologists and to become capable of using sociological theories and concepts to evaluate human interactions and institutions. In other words, *Sociology in Modules* gives students the tools they need to take sociology with them when they graduate from college, pursue careers, and get involved in their communities and the world at large.



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



**Sociology in the Global Community** These segments provide a global perspective on topics such as inequality, marriage, technology use, and the women's movement.



**Sociology on Campus** These sections apply a sociological perspective to issues of immediate interest to students, such as impression management on campus, social class, and financial aid.

trend|spotting

**Trendspotting** These boxes alert students to trends on their campuses and in their communities, viewed through a sociological lens.

**Thinking about Movies** Two films that underscore chapter themes are featured at the end of each chapter, along with a set of questions that encourage students to use their sociological imagination when viewing movies.



**Taking Sociology to Work** These segments underscore the value of an undergraduate degree in sociology by profiling individuals who majored in sociology and now use its principles in their work.



**Research Today** These sections present new sociological findings on topics such as online socializing, reality television, and Islam in the United States.



## Social Policy Sections

The Social Policy sections play a critical role in helping students to think like sociologists. These sections apply sociological principles and theories to important social and political issues currently being debated by policymakers and the general public. “Take the Issue with You” questions prompt students to consider their own experiences and thoughts regarding the issue.

Take *Sociology in Modules* with you . . . wherever you go



# Teaching and Learning with *Sociology in Modules*

## Teaching Resources

- **Instructor's Manual** written by Susan Cody-Rydzewski, *Georgia Perimeter College*.  
The Instructor's Manual incorporates tips for both new and experienced instructors.
- **PowerPoint Slides** written by Gerry William.  
The selections can be used as is or modified to meet the needs of individual instructors.
- **Test Bank** written by Jonathan M. Bullinger.  
This resource offers multiple-choice, true or false, and essay questions for each chapter. McGraw-Hill's computerized EZ Test allows the instructor to create customized exams using the publisher's supplied test items or the instructor's own questions. A version of the test bank is also provided in Microsoft Word files for instructors who prefer that format. Additional questions are available for use with in-class clicker systems through the Classroom Performance System (CPS), a wireless polling system that provides immediate feedback from every student in the class. A CPS tutorial is available at [www.einstruction.com](http://www.einstruction.com).

## tegrity campus

Tegrity Campus is a service that makes class time available all the time by automatically capturing every lecture in a searchable format for students to review when they study and complete assignments.

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## What's New

### Module 1: What is Sociology

- Discussion of how different social scientists would study the impact of the global recession that began in 2008
- Discussion of the common misconception that the area bordering Mexico in the southwestern United States is a high-crime area

### Module 3: Major Theoretical Perspectives

- Trendspotting box, “The Changing Third Place”
- Research Today box, “Looking at the Gulf Coast Oil Spill from Four Sociological Perspectives”

### Module 4: Taking Sociology with You

- Emphasis on the theme “Taking Sociology with You” in the last two sections, Applied and Clinical Sociology and Developing a Sociological Imagination
- Discussion of the Northeast Florida Center for Community Initiatives (CCI), based at the University of North Florida, and its Magnolia Project as examples of applied sociology

### Module 5: What Is the Scientific Method?

- Chapter-opening excerpt from *The Tender Cut: Inside the Hidden World of Self-Injury* by Patricia A. Adler and Peter Adler
- Discussion of nonrespondents to the Current Population Survey

### Module 6: Major Research Designs

- Discussion of the need to adjust survey questions in response to changes in society
- Coverage of ethnography as a major research design, and observation as one component of ethnography, with cartoon
- Research Today box, “Gender Messages in Scouting”
- Coverage of content analysis of gender stereotyping in children’s coloring books, and of television coverage of men’s versus women’s sports

### Module 8: Developments of Methodology

- Discussion of feminist research on self-injury
- Discussion of epidemiologists’ use of Google topic searches in tracking the spread of the H1N1 virus
- Discussion of the vastly increased amount of data now available to sociologists and its ethical implications

### Module 10: Role of Language

- Sociology in the Global Community box, “Symbolizing 9/11,” with photo
- Discussion of value differences in different cultures’ views of cram schools
- Figure, “Valuing Ethnicity by Country”

### Module 11: Development of Culture around the World

- Use of official responses to the invention of electronic cigarettes as an illustration of culture lag

### Module 12: Cultural Variation

- Coverage of countercultural patriot militia groups

### Module 13: The Role of Socialization

- Trendspotting on multiple births updated with latest data

### Module 15: Agents of Socialization

- New cartoon on social networking

### Module 16: Social Interaction and Social Structure

- Taking Sociology to Work box, “Danielle Taylor, Account Manager, Cash Cycle Solutions”
- Research Today box, “Social Networks and Obesity,” with figure
- Trendspotting box, “The Growth of Online Societies”
- Case study, “Second Life Virtual World,” with Use Your Sociological Imagination exercise

### Module 19: Understanding Organizations

- Social Policy section, “Media Concentration”

### Module 20: Sociological Perspectives on the Media

- Chapter-opening excerpt from *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other*, by Sherry Turkle
- Taking Sociology to Work box, “Lindsey Wallen, Social Media Coordinator, Northwestern University”
- Research Today box, “Inside the Bubble: Internet Search Filters”
- Discussion of the use of the Internet and social media to fuel anti-government protests during the 2011 upheavals in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Bahrain, and Syria, with cartoon
- Discussion of the differential impact of online gaming on male and female adolescents

### Module 21: The Audience

- Sociology in the Global Community box, “Charity Begins at Home Online”
- Trendspotting box, “Who’s on the Internet?”
- Discussion of audience segmentation in the two major political parties’ placement of television advertisements during the 2010 midterm elections

### Module 22: The Media’s Global Reach

- Discussion of how the arrival of television in Brazil’s Amazon region created a new social norm, with photo
- Social Policy section on the right to privacy, including discussions of online tracking, the compilation and sale of personal profiles, and the use of such information to deny insurance or employment (called *Weblining*)

### Module 25: Crime

- Subsection on hate crime, with figure, “Categorization of Reported Hate Crimes”
- Reorganized section on crime statistics, with subsections on (a) index crimes and victimization surveys, (b) crime trends, and (c) international crime rates.
- Social Policy section on the death penalty, with Mapping Life Worldwide map, “Death Penalty Status by Country”

### Module 26: Systems of Stratification

- Chapter-opening excerpt from *What Is Occupy? Inside the Global Movement*, by Rana Foroohar

- Discussion of the crime of trafficking in humans in the subsection on slavery, with table, “Human Trafficking Report”
- Subsection on the supposed existence of class warfare in the United States
- Key term treatment of “conspicuous consumption”

### Module 28: Poverty and Social Mobility

- Discussion of the possibility that the recent economic recession may swell the underclass
- Social Policy section, “Executive Compensation,” with cartoon

### Module 29: Stratification in the World System

- Chapter-opening excerpt from *Portfolios of the Poor: How the World's Poor Live on \$2 a Day*, by Daryl Collins
- Trendspotting box, “Feeding the World”
- Revised definition of the key term *world systems analysis*
- Sociology in the Global Community box, “Income Inequality: A Global Perspective”

### Module 30: Stratification with Nations: A Comparative Perspective

- In the Social Policy section, discussion of (a) the personal toll of the Greek economic collapse and financial bailout and (b) Europe’s shrinking social safety net

### Module 31: Minority, Racial, and Ethnic Groups

- Opening excerpt from *A Country for All: An Immigrant Manifesto* by Jorge Ramos
- Taking Sociology to Work box, “Prudence Hannis, Associate Director, First Nations Post-Secondary Institution, Odanak, Québec”
- Discussion of new state laws requiring voters to show a photo ID as an example of institutional discrimination, with Mapping Life Nationwide map, “Voter ID Requirements”
- Discussion of the 2010 census finding that the majority of all children ages three and under are now either Hispanic or non-White
- Discussion of the finding that in 2009, Asian American men earned slightly more income than White men

### Module 32: Sociological Perspectives on Race and Ethnicity

- Discussion of France’s expulsion of the ethnic Roma (Gypsies) beginning in 2009
- Coverage of secession as a pattern of intergroup relations
- Figure, “Spectrum of Intergroup Relations”
- Discussion of recent census data on the segregation of U.S. cities, and its implications for Black and Latino households
- Discussion of a study comparing the assimilation of immigrant groups in the United States, Canada, and Europe

### Module 33: Race and Ethnicity in the United States

- Research Today box, “Asian Americans: A Model Minority?”
- Subsection on Filipino Americans
- Discussion of recent census findings that from 2000 to 2010, Mexican Americans accounted for 42 percent of the nation’s

population growth, and that those who were born in the United States far outnumbered those who immigrated

### Module 34: Social Construction of Gender

- Opening excerpt from “Skating Femininity: Gender Maneuvering in Women’s Roller Derby,” by Nancy J. Finley
- Discussion of the social construction of gender roles and women’s rights in Afghanistan

### Module 35: Women: The Oppressed Majority

- Discussion of a new World Bank report on the status of the world’s women
- Discussion of gender inequality in housework among (a) the rich and the poor, with figure, “Gender Inequality in Housework” and (b) unemployed men and women
- Discussion of research showing small-investor bias against female members of corporate boards of directors
- In the Social Policy section, updated information on (a) U.S. public opinion on abortion, (b) new state restrictions on abortion, and (c) abortion laws in foreign countries

### Module 36: Aging and Society

- New opening excerpt from “Shock of Gray” by Ted Fishman

### Module 37: Aging Worldwide

- Figure 37-1, “World’s Oldest Countries,” updated
- New Figure 37-2, “Baby Boomers Eyeing Retirement”
- Up-to-date info on trends such as GLBT elders, working in retirement

### Module 38: Age Stratification in the United States

- New figure 38-1, “Percentage of U.S. Population in Selected Age Groups, 1970-2050”
- New movie listing

### Module 39: Global View of the Family

- Chapter-opening excerpt from *The Accordion Family: Boomerang Kids, Anxious Parents, and the Private Toll of Global Competition*, by Katherine S. Newman

### Module 40: Marriage and Family

- Statistics on interracial and interethnic marriages in the United States
- Discussion of the impact of new media technologies, including the Internet, on the practice of polygyny in Turkey and Morocco
- Discussion of how accordion families differ depending on their social class
- Research Today box, “Transracial Adoption: The Experience of Children from Korea”

### Module 42: Human Sexuality

- New module, “Human Sexuality,” with subsection, “Labeling and Human Sexuality”
- Research Today box, “Adolescent Sexual Networks,” with network diagram

- Mapping Life Nationwide map, “Same-Sex Couples per 1,000 Households”
- Two Use Your Sociological Imagination exercises

### Module 43: Sociological Perspectives on Education

- Discussion of a new study showing that the number of years of formal schooling a person receives outweighs race, ethnicity, and gender as a determinant of lifetime earnings, with figure, “Lifetime Earnings by Race, Gender, and Degree Level”
- Trendspotting box, “Rising College Enrollment among Racial and Ethnic Minorities, Women”
- Discussion of the ways in which increased spending on college women’s sports since the passage of Title IX has benefited men

### Module 44: Schools as Formal Organizations

- Taking Sociology to Work box, “Diane Belcher, Assistant Director of Volunteer Services, New River Community College”
- Social Policy section on charter schools, with (a) Mapping Life Nationwide map, “Charter Schools,” and (b) discussion of the failure rate among charter schools

### Module 45: The Sociological Approach to Religion

- Discussion of how religious organizations use social media to provide social support to those who identify themselves as religious

### Module 46: World Religions

- Figure, “Test Your Religious Knowledge”
- Use Your Sociological Imagination exercise

### Module 47: Religious Organization

- Research Today box, “Wicca: Religion or Quasi-Religion?”

### Module 48: Government, Power, and Authority

- Chapter-opening excerpt from *The Fair Trade Revolution*, edited by John Bowes, with key term treatment of *fair trade*
- Sociology in the Global Community box, “Sovereignty in the Aloha State”
- Trendspotting box, “Democracy on the Rise?”
- Discussion of the nation-state perspective on the supposed socioeconomic benefits of war
- Taking Sociology to Work box, “Joseph W. Drummond, Management Analyst, U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command”
- Updated coverage of terrorism, including cyberattacks
- new key term, “sovereignty movement”

### Module 50: Economic Systems

- Discussion of the Cuban government’s decision to allow citizens to own small businesses

### Module 51: Changing Economies

- Discussion of Apple Computer’s use of outsourcing to build its products
- Table, “Occupations Most Vulnerable to Offshoring”
- Social Policy section, “Microfinancing”

### Module 53: Social Epidemiology and Health

- Trendspotting box, “Longer Life Spans, More Social Change”
- Mapping Life Nationwide map, “Percentage of Children without Health Insurance”

### Module 54: Health Care in the United States

- Research Today box, “Women as Physicians and Surgeons”

### Module 55: Sociological Perspectives on the Environment

- Subsection on ecological modernization, with key term treatment
- Expanded discussion of the health costs of unsafe water
- Key term treatment of “environmental refugee”
- Figure, “The Environment versus Energy Production”
- Updated discussion of the conflict perspective on environmentalism

### Module 56: Social Movements

- Chapter-opening excerpt from *I Live in the Future and Here’s How It Works: Why Your World, Work, and Brain Are Being Creatively Disrupted*, by Nick Bilton
- Discussion of the mobilization of social movements by institutional insiders
- Sociology in the Global Community box, “Women’s Social Movements in South Korea and India”
- Key term coverage of “computer-mediated communication”
- Research Today box, “Organizing for Controversy via Computer-Mediated Communication”

### Module 57: Social Change

- Trendspotting box, “Social Change and Travel to the United States after 9/11”

### Module 58: Global Social Change

- Discussion of the use of cell phones to improve agriculture in developing countries, as an alternative to biotechnology
- New Thinking Critically questions
- Discussion of the role of migrants in facilitating global trade and development in the Social Policy section on transnationals

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Richard T. Schaefer  
www.schaefersociology.net  
schaefertr@aol.com

## Academic Reviewers

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Jennifer Altman, *Middlesex County College*  
Michelle Bentz, *Central Community College, Columbus*  
Cathy Blair, *Minnesota West Community and Technical College*  
Marshall Botkin, *Frederick Community College*  
Richard Deutsch, *John A Logan College*  
Rose Hunte, *Metro Community College, Fort Omaha*  
Bethany Johnson, *Gordon College*  
Keith Kerr, *Quinnipiac University*  
Joan Luxenburg, *University of Central Oklahoma*  
Carla Newman, *El Paso Community College, Valle Verde*  
Douglas O'Neill, *South Dakota State University*  
Trish Ramirez, *El Paso Community College, Valle Verde*  
Lucia Rodriguez, *El Paso Community College, Valle Verde*  
David Schjott, *Northwest Florida State College*  
Denise Shuster, *Owens Community College*  
Monica Sosa, *Tarrant County College, Southeast*  
Frank Stanford, *Blinn College, Bryan*  
Glen Tolle, *Blinn College, Bryan*  
Jonathan Treas, *Wichita State University*  
Brent Ur, *Blinn College, Bryan*  
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Royal Loresco, *South Texas College*  
Michael Loukinen, *Northern Michigan University*  
Melinda Messineo, *Ball State University*  
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Russell Davis, *University of West Alabama*  
Shelly Dutchin, *Western Technical College*  
Lois Easterday, *Onondaga Community College*  
Samuel Echevarria-Cruz, *Austin Community College*  
Tammie Foltz, *Des Moines Area Community College*  
Kimberly K. Hennessee, *Ball State University*  
Thomas Kersen, *Jackson State University*  
Laura Johnson, *Southeast Missouri State University*  
David Locher, *Missouri Southern State University*  
Linda Lombard, *Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University*  
Kevin Parent, *Point Park University*  
Tommy Sadler, *Union University*  
Denise Shuster, *Owens Community College*  
Rachel Stehle, *Cuyahoga Community College*  
John C. Tenuto, *College of Lake County*  
Marie Wallace, *Pima Community College*  
Sally Vyain, *Ivy Tech Community College*

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John Batsie, *Parkland College*  
Janice Bending, *University of Cincinnati*  
Elaine Cannon, *El Camino College*  
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Margaret Choka, *Pellissippi State Tech College*  
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Charles Combs, *Sinclair Community College*  
Lisa Coole, *Bridgewater College*  
Carolyn Corrado, *University of Albany*  
Larry Curiel, *Cypress College*  
Scott Davis, *Treasure Valley Community College*  
Aimee Dickinson, *Lorain County Community College*  
Joe Donnermeyer, *Ohio State University*  
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Gianna Durso-Finley, *Mercer County Community College*  
Shelly Dutchin, *Western Technical College*  
Ike Eberstein, *Florida State University*  
Samuel Echevarria-Cruz, *Austin Community College*  
John Ehle, *Northern Virginia Community College*  
David Embrick, *Loyola University*  
Kathryn Feltey, *University of Akron*  
Tammie Foltz, *Des Moines Area Community College*  
Sergio Gomez, *Chaffey College*  
Kyra Greene, *San Diego State University*  
Mike Greenhouse, *Middlesex County College*  
Bram Hamovitch, *Lakeland Community College*  
Carl Hand, *Valdosta State University*  
Garrison Henderson, *Tarrant County College*  
Paul Ketchum, *University of Oklahoma*  
Steve Keto, *Kent State University*  
Brian Klocke, *State University of New York Plattsburgh*  
Laura Jamison, *Parkland College*  
Jodie Lawston, *DePaul University*  
Jason Leiker, *Utah State University*  
Joe Lengermann, *University of Maryland*



David Liu, *Harrisburg Area Community College*  
David Locher, *Missouri Southern State University*  
Micheael Loukine, *Northern Michigan University*  
Jean Lynch-Brandon, *Lansing Community College*  
Lori Maida, *Westchester Community College*  
Karen McCue, *Central New Mexico Community College*  
Messineo Melinda, *Ball State University*  
Michelle Stewart Thomas, *Mt. San Antonio College*  
Kelly Mosel-Talavera, *Texas State University–San Marcos*  
Frank Mossadeghi, *Palm Beach Community College*  
Jacob Oni, *Cape Cod Community College*  
Robert Orrange, *Eastern Michigan University*  
Diane Owsley, *Elizabeth Community College*  
Pat O’Brien, *Elgin Community College*  
Kevin Payne, *Park University*  
Lisa Pellerin, *Ball State University*  
Paul C. Price, *Pasadena City College*

Richard Rosell, *Westchester Community College*  
Alan Rudy, *Central Michigan University*  
Terri Schrantz, *Tarrant County Community College–Southeast*  
Barbara Seiter, *Raritan Valley Community College*  
Michelle Smith, *Lakeland Community College*  
Rachael Stehle, *Cuyahoga Community College*  
Lawrence Stern, *Collin College*  
Richard Sweeny, *Modesto Junior College*  
Margaret Taylor, *Greenville Technical College*  
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Ruth Thompson-Miller, *Texas A&M University*  
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sociology  
in modules

# 1

## Understanding Sociology

MODULE

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No matter where you're going—to work, to study abroad,  
or just on vacation—you can take sociology  
and its insights with you.





Today you may have thought about what to wear. But did you ask yourself where those garments came from, or who made them?

Journalist Kelsey Timmerman offers some answers to these questions. His book speaks to the way we see ourselves, not only in the mirror when we're getting dressed, but in the world at large.

“I was made in America. My *Jingle These* Christmas boxers were made in Bangladesh.

I had an all-American childhood in rural Ohio. My all-American blue jeans were made in Cambodia.

I wore flip-flops every day for a year when I worked as a SCUBA diving instructor in Key West. They were made in China.

One day while staring at a pile of clothes on the floor, I noticed the tag of my favorite T-shirt: “Made in Honduras.”

I read the tag. My mind wandered. A quest was born.

Where am I wearing? It seems like a simple question with a simple answer. It's not.

The question inspired the quest that took me around the globe. It cost me a lot of things, not the least of which was my consumer innocence. Before the quest, I could put on a piece of clothing without reading its tag and thinking about Arifa in Bangladesh or Dewan in China, about their children, their hopes and dreams, and the challenges they face.

Where am I wearing? This isn't so much a question related to geography and clothes, but about the people who make our clothes and the texture of their lives. This quest is about the way *we* live and the way *they* live; because when it comes to clothing, others make it, and we have it made. And there's a big, big difference. . . .

Workers flood the narrow alley beside the Delta Apparel Factory in San Pedro Sula, Honduras. They rush to catch one

of the many waiting buses at the highway. Merchants hoping to part them from a portion of their daily earnings—\$4 to \$5—fight for their attention. Vehicles push through the crowd. A minivan knocks over a girl in her midtwenties and then runs over her foot. She curses, is helped to her feet, and limps onto a waiting bus.

The buildings behind the fence are shaded in Bahamian pastels and very well kept. The shrubs have been recently shaped, and the grass trimmed. In the bright Honduran sun, they seem as pleasant as a factory can get.

The lady at Delta Apparel, based in Georgia, giggled at me on the phone when I told her my plans. She was happy to tell me that their Honduran factory was located in the city of Villanueva just south of San Pedro Sula. She even wished me good luck.

Now that I'm in Honduras, the company doesn't think it's very funny.

I stand among the chaos overwhelmed. A thousand sets of eyes stare at me; perhaps they recognize my T-shirt. The irony that this is Tattoo's tropical paradise wore off long ago—somewhere between the confrontation with the big-bellied guards at the factory gate who had guns shoved down their pants like

little boys playing cowboy and the conversation with the tight-lipped company representative who failed to reveal much of anything about my T-shirt or the

people who assembled it. There was no way I was getting onto the factory floor. All I learned was that eight humans of indiscriminate age and sex stitched my shirt together in less than five minutes. ”

(Timmerman 2009:xiii–xiv, 14) Additional information about this excerpt can be found on the Online Learning Center at [www.mhhe.com/schaefermod2e](http://www.mhhe.com/schaefermod2e).

*Where am I wearing? This isn't so much a question related to geography and clothes, but about the people who make our clothes and the texture of their lives.*

In his book *Where Am I Wearing? A Global Tour to the Countries, Factories, and People that Make Our Clothes*, Timmerman recounts his travels to the countries where his jeans, T-shirts, and flip-flops—the uniform of today's young adult—were made. From Honduras to Bangladesh, from Cambodia to the United States, he tracked down the factories and befriended the seamstresses who labored there. Timmerman found that garment workers lived in what would be considered substandard conditions in the United States. He argues that global apparel companies should take responsibility for conditions at their suppliers' factories (Fairtrade Foundation 2010).

Timmerman's book focuses on an unequal global economy, which is a central topic in sociology. His investigative work is

informed by sociological research that documents the existence and extent of inequality around the world. Social inequality has a pervasive influence on human interactions and institutions.

Although it might be interesting to know how one individual, like Kelsey Timmerman or a foreign factory worker, is affected by social inequality, sociologists consider how entire groups of people and society itself are affected. Sociologists are concerned with what people do as members of a group or in interaction with one another, and what that means for individuals and for society as a whole. For example, sociologists have considered how college students have taken sociology with them, organizing to confront the sportswear companies that underpay the overseas workers who create

their team uniforms and T-shirts proclaiming their school pride (Esbenshade 2008; Silverstein 2010).

As a field of study, sociology is extremely broad. You will see throughout this book the range of topics sociologists investigate—from suicide to TV viewing habits, from Amish society to global economic patterns, from peer pressure to genetic engineering. Sociology looks at how others influence our behavior; how major social institutions like the government, religion, and the economy affect us; and how we ourselves affect other individuals, groups, and even organizations.

How did sociology develop? In what ways does it differ from other social sciences? This chapter will explore the nature of sociology as both a field of inquiry and an exercise of the “sociological imagination.” We’ll look at the discipline as a science and consider its relationship to other social sciences. We’ll meet four pioneering thinkers—and examine the theoretical perspectives that grew out of their work. We’ll note some of the practical applications for sociological theory and research. Finally, we’ll see how sociology helps us to develop a sociological imagination.

## MODULE

# 1

## What Is Sociology?

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

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

### ■ The Sociological Imagination

In attempting to understand social behavior, sociologists rely on a particular type of critical thinking. A leading sociologist, C. Wright Mills, described such thinking as the **sociological imagination**—an awareness of the relationship between an individual and the wider society, both today and in the past (Mills [1959] 2000a). This awareness allows all of us (not just sociologists) to comprehend the links between our immediate, personal social settings and the remote, impersonal social world that surrounds and helps to shape us. Kelsey Timmerman certainly used a sociological imagination when he studied foreign garment workers.

A key element in the sociological imagination is the ability to view one’s own society as an outsider would, rather than only from the perspective of personal experiences and cultural biases. Consider something as simple as sporting events. On college campuses in the United States, thousands of students cheer well-trained football players. In Bali, Indonesia, dozens of spectators gather around a ring to cheer on roosters trained in cockfighting. In both instances, the spectators debate the merits of their favorites and bet on the outcome of the events. Yet what is considered a normal sporting event in one part of the world is considered unusual in another part.

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

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



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



### use your **sociological imagination**

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

## Sociology and the Social Sciences

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

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

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

relationships they investigate is vast, as the current list of sections in the American Sociological Association suggests (Table 1-1).

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

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

Similarly, sociologists might evaluate the recession's impact on education. In the United States, private school enrollment from elementary through high school declined from 13.6 percent in 2006 to 12.8 percent in 2010 as families cut back on nonessential expenditures. Sociologists might even consider the recession's effect on environmental actions, such as carpooling. In all but 1 of the 50 largest metropolitan areas in the United States (New Orleans), the percentage of working people aged 16 to 64 dropped significantly during the recession. When friends and co-workers are laid off, carpools shrink and more people end up driving to work alone (El Nasser and Overberg 2011).

Sociologists would take a similar approach to studying episodes of extreme violence. In April 2007, just as college students were beginning to focus on the impending end of the semester,

Table 1-1 Sections of the American Sociological Association

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

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

Source: American Sociological Association 2012.

## Think about It

Which of these topics do you think would interest you the most? Why?

tragedy struck on the campus of Virginia Tech. In a two-hour shooting spree, a mentally disturbed senior armed with semi-automatic weapons killed a total of 32 students and faculty at Virginia's largest university. Observers struggled to describe the events and place them in some social context. For sociologists in particular, the event raised numerous issues and topics for study, including the media's role in describing the attacks, the presence of violence in our educational institutions, the gun control debate, the inadequacy of the nation's mental health care system, and the stereotyping and stigmatization of people who suffer from mental illness.

Besides doing research, sociologists have a long history of advising government agencies on how to respond to disasters. Certainly the poverty of the Gulf Coast region complicated the huge challenge of evacuation in 2005. With

Katrina bearing down on the Gulf Coast, thousands of poor inner-city residents had no automobiles or other available means of escaping the storm. Added to that difficulty was the high incidence of disability in the area. New Orleans ranked second among the nation's 70 largest cities in the proportion of people



As the nation struggled to recover from a deep and lengthy recession, recently laid-off workers jostled the long-term unemployed at a crowded job fair in San Francisco. Sociologists use a variety of approaches to assess the full impact of economic change on society.



over age 65 who are disabled—56 percent. Moving wheelchair-bound residents to safety requires specially equipped vehicles, to say nothing of handicap-accessible accommodations in public shelters. Clearly, officials must consider these factors in developing evacuation plans (Bureau of the Census 2005b).

Sociological analysis of the disaster did not end when the floodwaters receded. Long before residents of New Orleans staged a massive anticrime rally at City Hall in 2007, researchers were analyzing resettlement patterns in the city. They noted that returning residents often faced bleak job prospects. Yet families who had stayed away for that reason often had trouble enrolling their children in schools unprepared for an influx of evacuees. Faced with a choice between the need to work and the need to return their children to school, some displaced families risked sending their older children home alone. Meanwhile, opportunists had arrived to victimize unsuspecting homeowners. And the city's overtaxed judicial and criminal justice systems, which had been understaffed before Katrina struck, had been only partially restored. All these social factors led sociologists and others to anticipate the unparalleled rise in reported crime the city experienced in 2006 and 2007 (Jervis 2008; Sarah Kaufman 2006).

Throughout this textbook, you will see how sociologists develop theories and conduct research to study and better understand societies. And you will be encouraged to use your sociological imagination to examine the United States (and other societies) from the viewpoint of a respectful but questioning outsider.

## Sociology and Common Sense

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

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

Contrary to the common notion that women tend to be chatty compared to men, for instance, researchers have found little difference between the sexes in terms of their talkativeness. Over a five-year period they placed unobtrusive microphones on 396 college students in various fields, at campuses in Mexico as well as the United States. They found that both men and women spoke about 16,000 words per day (Mehl et al. 2007).

Similarly, common sense tells us that today, violent crime holds communities on the border between the United States and Mexico in a kind of death grip, creating an atmosphere of lawlessness reminiscent of the old Wild West. Based on televised news stories and on concerns expressed by elected officials throughout the southwestern United States, this assertion may sound reasonable;

however, it is not true. Although some communities in Mexico have fallen under the control of drug cartels, the story is different on the U.S. side of the border. All available crime data—including murder, extortion, robbery, and kidnapping rates, whether reported or documented in victim surveys—show that in the hundred-mile-deep border area stretching from San Diego to Brownsville, Texas, crime rates are significantly lower than in similar U.S. cities outside the area. Furthermore, the crime rate has been dropping faster near the border than in other similar-size U.S. communities for at least the last 15 years (Gillon 2011; Gomez et al. 2011).

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

## What Is Sociological Theory?

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

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

We can think of theories as attempts to explain events, forces, materials, ideas, or behavior in a comprehensive manner. In sociology, a **theory** is a set of statements that seeks to explain problems, actions, or behavior. An effective theory may have both explanatory and predictive power. That is, it can help us to see the relationships among seemingly isolated phenomena, as well as to understand how one type of change in an environment leads to other changes.

The World Health Organization (2010) estimates that almost a million people die from suicide every year. More than a hundred years ago, a sociologist tried to look at suicide data scientifically. Émile Durkheim ([1897] 1951) developed a highly original theory about the relationship between suicide and social factors. Durkheim was primarily concerned not with the personalities of individual suicide victims, but rather with suicide rates and how they varied from country to country. As a result, when he looked at the number of reported suicides in France, England, and Denmark in 1869, he also noted the total population of each country in order to determine the rate of suicide in each nation. He found that whereas England had only

67 reported suicides per million inhabitants, France had 135 per million and Denmark had 277 per million. The question then became “Why did Denmark have a comparatively high rate of reported suicide?”

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

Durkheim’s research suggested that suicide, although it is a solitary act, is related to group life. He found that people without religious affiliations had a higher suicide rate than those who were affiliated; the unmarried had much higher rates than married people; and soldiers had a higher rate than civilians. In addition, there seemed to be higher rates of suicide in times of peace than in times of war and revolution, and in times of economic instability and recession rather than in times of prosperity. Durkheim concluded that the suicide rates of a society reflected the extent to which people were or were not integrated into the group life of the society.

Émile Durkheim, like many other social scientists, developed a theory to explain how individual behavior can be understood



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

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

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

## MODULE 1

## Recap and Review

### Summary

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

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

### Thinking Critically

1. What aspects of the social and work environment in a fast-food restaurant would be of particular interest to a sociologist? How would the sociological imagination help in analyzing the topic?
2. Can you think of any explanation, other than lack of community, for the high suicide rate in Las Vegas? Does that explanation agree with Durkheim’s theory?
3. Think about the sociologists profiled in this module, Mills and Durkheim. Whose work seems most relevant to today’s social problems? Why did you choose that thinker, and which social problems were you thinking of?

### Key Terms

**Natural science 6**  
**Science 6**  
**Social science 6**  
**Sociological imagination 5**  
**Sociology 5**  
**Theory 5**