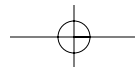
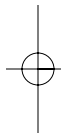
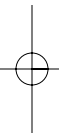
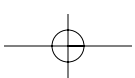
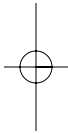
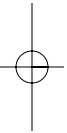
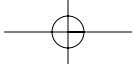


Sociology Now The Essentials





Sociology Now The Essentials



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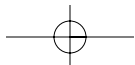
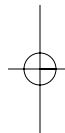
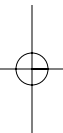
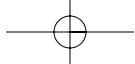
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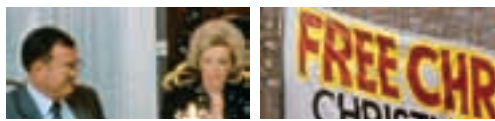


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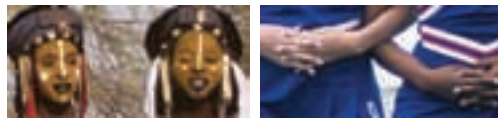


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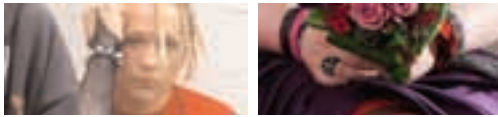
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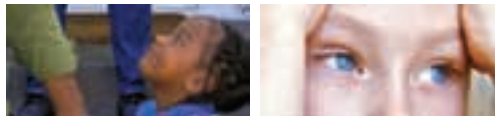
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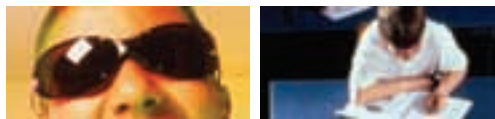
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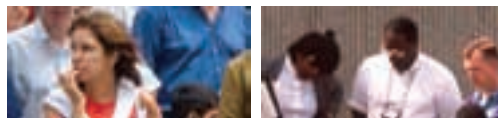
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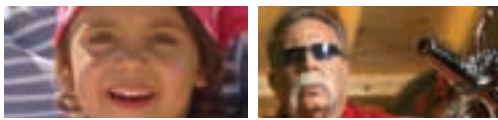
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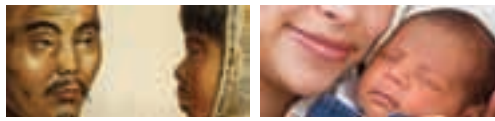


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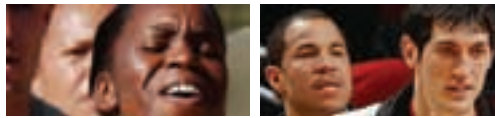
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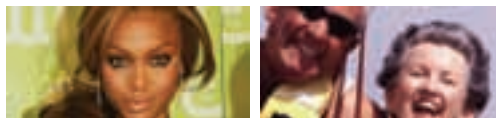
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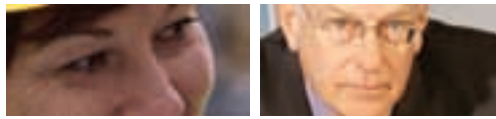
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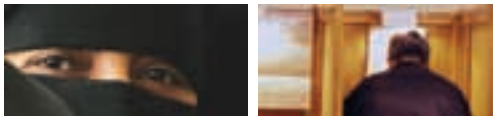
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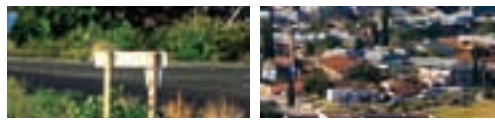


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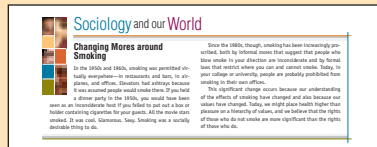
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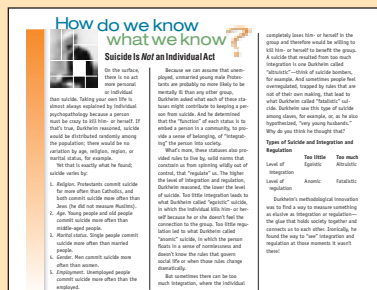
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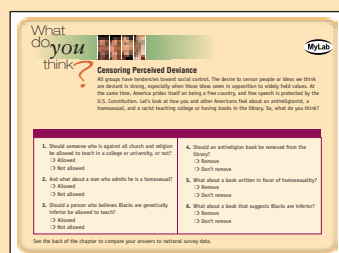
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Preface

I am a sociologist—both by profession and by temperament. It’s what I do for a living and how I see the world. I consider myself enormously lucky to have the kind of job I have, teaching and writing about the world in which we live.

I love sociology. I love that it gives us a way to see the world that is different from any other way of seeing the world. It’s a lens, and when I hold that lens up to the world, I see shapes and patterns that help me understand it, colors and movement that enable me to perceive depth and shading. I love sociology because when I see those shapes, those patterns, and those shades of gray, I feel hopeful that we can, as citizens and sociologists, contribute to making that world a better place for all of us.

Teachers in general are a pretty optimistic bunch. By working with you to develop your own critical engagement with the world—developing ideas, using evidence to back up assertions, deepening and broadening your command of information—we believe that your life will be better for it. You will get a better job, be a more engaged and active citizen, maybe even be a better parent, friend, or partner than you might otherwise have been. We believe that education is a way to improve your life on so many different levels. Pretty optimistic, no?

In this book, we have tried to communicate that way of seeing and that optimism about how you can use a sociological lens.

Why Study Sociology? A Message to Students

So, what did people say when you told them you were taking sociology?

They probably looked at you blankly, “Like, what is sociology?” They might say, “And what can you do with it?” Sociology is often misunderstood. Some think it’s nothing more than what my roommate told me when I said I was going to go to graduate school in sociology. (He was pre-med.) “Sociology makes a science out of common sense,” he said dismissively.

It turns out he was wrong: What we think of as common sense turns out to be wrong a lot of the time. The good news is that sociologists are often the ones who point out that what “everybody knows” isn’t necessarily true. In a culture saturated by self-help books, pop psychology, and TV talk shows promising instant and complete physical makeovers and utter psychological transformation, sociology says “wait a minute, not so fast.”

Our culture tells us that all social problems are really individual problems. Poor people are poor because they don’t work hard enough, and racial discrimination is simply the result of prejudiced individuals.

And the “solutions” offered by TV talk shows and self-help books also center around individual changes. If you work hard, you can make it. If you want to change, you can change. Social problems, they counsel, are really a set of individual problems all added together. Racism, sexism, or homophobia is really the result of unenlightened people holding bad attitudes. If they changed their attitudes, those enormous problems would dissolve like sugar in your coffee.

Sociology has a different take. Sociologists see society as a dynamic interaction between individuals and institutions, like education, economy, and government. Changing yourself might be necessary for you to live a happier life, but it has little impact on the effects of those institutions. And changing attitudes would make social life far more pleasant, but problems like racial or gender inequality are embedded in the ways those institutions are organized. It will take more than attitudinal shifts to fix that.

One of sociology's greatest strengths is also what makes it so elusive or discomfiting. We often are in a position in which we contrast American mythologies with sociological realities.

I remember a song as I was growing up called "Only in America" by Jay and the Americans, which held that only in this country could "a guy from anywhere," "without a cent" maybe grow up to be a millionaire or president. Pretty optimistic, right? And it takes a sociologist, often, to burst that bubble, to explain that it's really not true—that the likelihood of a poor boy or girl making it in the United States is minuscule and that virtually everyone ends up in the same class position as his or her parents. It sounds almost unpatriotic to say that the best predictors of *your* eventual position in society are the education and occupation of your parents.

Sociology offers some answers to questions that may therefore be unpopular—because they emphasize the social and the structural over the individual and psychological, because they reveal the relationship between individual experience and social reality, and because structural barriers impede our ability to realize our dreams.

This often leads introductory students to feel initially depressed. Because these problems are so deeply embedded in our society, and because all the educational enlightenment in the world might not budge these powerful institutional forces—well, what's the use? Might as well just try and get yours, and the heck with everyone else.

But then, as we understand the real mission of sociology, students often feel invigorated, inspired. Sociology's posture is exactly the opposite—and that's what makes it so compelling. Understanding those larger forces means, as the Who put it, "we won't get fooled again!"

What also makes sociology compelling is that it connects those two dimensions. It is *because* we believe that all social problems are really the result of individual weaknesses and laziness that those social problems remain in place. It is *because* we believe that poverty can be eliminated by hard work that poverty doesn't get eliminated. If social problems are social, then reducing poverty, or eliminating racial or gender discrimination, will require more than individual enlightenment; it will require large-scale political mobilization to change social institutions. And the good news is that sociologists have also documented the ways that those institutions themselves are always changing, always being changed.

Why Study Sociology Right Now? A Message to Students and Instructors

Understanding our society has never been more important. Sociology offers perhaps the best perspective on what are arguably the two dominant trends of our time, globalization and multiculturalism.

Globalization refers to the increasingly interlocked processes and institutions that span the entire world rather than in one country. Goods and services are produced

and distributed globally. Information moves instantly. You want to know how much things have changed? More than 2,000 soldiers in both the Union and Confederate armies were killed in the summer of 1865—that is, *after* the Civil War had ended. Why? Because no one had told them the war was over.

Globalization makes the world feel smaller, leaves us all far more intimately connected. And since people all over the world are wearing the same sneakers, eating the same fast food, and connecting by the Internet and texting each other, we are becoming more and more similar.

On the other hand, multiculturalism makes us keenly aware of how we are different. Globalization may make the world smaller, but we remain divided by religious-inspired wars, racial and ethnic identities, blood feuds, tribal rivalries, and what is generally called “sectarian violence.”

Multiculturalism describes the ways in which we create identities that at once make us “global citizens” and also, at the same time, local and familial, based on our membership in racial, ethnic, or gender categories. Here in the United States, we have not become one big happy family, as some predicted a century ago. Instead of the “melting pot” in which each group would become part of the same “stew,” we are, at our best, a “beautiful mosaic” of small groups that, when seen from afar, creates a beautiful pattern while each tile retains its distinct shape and beauty.

Globalization and multiculturalism make the world feel closer and also more divided; and they make the distances between us as people seem both tiny and unbridgeably large.

Globalization and multiculturalism are not only about the world—they are about us, individually. We draw our sense of who we are, our **identities**, from our membership in those diverse groups into which we are born or that we choose. Our identities—who we think we are—come from our gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, age, religion, region, nation, and tribe. From these diverse locations, we piece together an identity, a sense of self. Sometimes one or another feels more important than others, but at other times other elements emerge as equally important.

And these elements of our identities also turn out to be the bases on which social hierarchies are built. Social inequality is organized from the same elements as identity—resources and opportunities are distributed in our society on the basis of race, class, ethnicity, age, sexuality, gender, and so forth.

A sociological perspective has never been more important to enabling us to understand these problems, because sociology has become the field that has most fully embraced globalization and multiculturalism as the central analytic lenses through which we view social life.

Why Use Sociology Now? A Message to Instructors

The field of sociology has changed enormously since I first went to graduate school in the mid-1970s. At the time, two paradigms, functionalism and conflict theory, battled for dominance in the field, each one claiming to explain social processes better than the other. At the time, symbolic interactionism seemed a reasonable way to understand microlevel processes.

That was an era of great conflict in our society: the civil rights, women’s, and gay and lesbian movements; protests against the Vietnam war; hippies. On campuses these groups vied with far more traditional, conservative, and career-oriented

students whose collegiate identity came more from the orderly 1950s than the tumultuous 1960s.

Just as the world has changed since then, so, too, has sociology—both substantively and demographically. New perspectives have emerged from older models, and terms like *rational choice*, *poststructuralism*, *collective mobilization*, *cultural tool kit*—not to mention *multiculturalism* and *globalization*—have become part of our daily lexicon.

Demographically, sociology is the field that has been most transformed by the social movements of the last decades of the twentieth century. Because sociology interrogates the connections between identities and inequalities, it has become a home to those groups who were historically marginalized in American society: women, people of color, gays and lesbians. The newest sections in the American Sociological Association are those on the Body, Sexualities, and Race, Class, and Gender; the largest sections are no longer Medical Sociology and Organizational Sociology, but now Sex and Gender, Culture, and Race.

It turned out that symbolic interactionism was resilient enough to remain a theoretical lens through which social interaction and processes can still be understood. That's largely because the old textbook model of "three paradigms" placed the three in a somewhat stilted competition: conflict and functionalism were the macro theories; interactionism stood alone as a micro theory.

Themes: Exploring the Questions of Today

One of the biggest differences you'll see immediately in *Sociology Now* is that we have built on older functionalism–conflict theory–interactionism models with a contemporary approach. We no longer believe these paradigms are battling for dominance; students needn't choose between competing models. Sociology is a synthetic discipline—*for us the question is almost never "either/or," and thus the answer is almost always "both/and."*

Sociology is also, often, a debunking discipline, rendering old truisms into complex, contextualized processes and interactions. What "everybody knows" to be true often turns out not to be. We didn't learn everything we needed to know in kindergarten. It's more complicated than that!

And using globalization and multiculturalism as the organizing themes of the book helps to illustrate exactly how "both/and" actually works. The world isn't smaller or bigger—it's both. We're not more united or more diverse—we're both. We're not more orderly or more in conflict—we're both. And sociology is the field that explains the way that "both" sides exist in a dynamic tension with each other. What's more, sociology explains why, and how, and in what ways they exist in that tension.

This way of expressing where sociology is now turned out to be quite amenable to the traditional architecture of a sociology textbook. The general sections of the book, and the individual chapter topics, are not especially different from the chapter organization of other textbooks.

There are, however, some important differences.

First, **globalization** is not the same as cross-national comparisons. Globalization is often imagined as being about "them"—other cultures and other societies. And while examples drawn from other cultures are often extremely valuable to a sociologist, especially in challenging ethnocentrism, globalization is about processes that link "us" and "them." Thus, many of our examples, especially our cultural references, are about the United States—in relation to the rest of the world. This enables students

both to relate to the topic and also to see how it connects with the larger global forces at work.

Globalization is woven into every chapter—and, perhaps more important, every American example is connected to a global process or issue.

Second, **multiculturalism** is not the same as social stratification. Every sociology textbook has separate chapters on class, race, age, and gender. (We have added a few, which I will discuss below.) But in some books, that’s about as far as it goes—chapters on “other topics” do not give adequate sociological treatment to the ways in which our different positions affect our experience of other sociological institutions and processes.

Multiculturalism is used as a framing device in every chapter. Every chapter describes the different ways in which race, class, age, ethnicity, sexuality, and gender organize people’s experiences within institutions.

Within Part Two, on “Identities and Inequalities,” we deal with each of these facets of identity—age, class, race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality—separately, of course. But we are vitally concerned, also, with the ways in which they intersect with each other. When, after all, do you start being middle class and stop being Black? Contemporary sociological inquiry requires that we examine the *intersections* among these various elements of identity and inequality, understanding how they interact, amplify, and contradict each other.

These aspects of identity both unite us (as elements of identity) and divide us—into groups that compete for scarce resources. These are the dimensions of social life that organize inequality. Thus we explore both—identity and inequality.

Multiculturalism requires not just that we “add women (or any other group) and stir”—the ways that some courses and textbooks tried to revamp themselves in the last few decades of the twentieth century to embrace diversity. Multiculturalism requires that we begin from questions of diversity and identity, not end there. This book attempts to do that.

Organization

In the *Essentials* edition, we’ve reorganized several chapters and departed somewhat from standard introductory textbook formats (as well as from the complete edition of this text).

- **Chapter 10, Age and Sexuality.** We’ve included a chapter on both age and sexuality, not because it’s trendy, but because it’s sociologically accurate. While most other textbooks have a chapter on age, they are often really relabeled gerontology chapters and deal exclusively with aging—that is, with old people. We’ve added new material on youth. Half the chapter focuses on youth as an identity and as a source of inequality. After all, when we discuss age stratification, it is *both* old and young who experience discrimination. Our students know this; we should acknowledge it in our textbooks. And, again, it has been sociologists who have been at the forefront of exploring and understanding youth—as identity and as a basis for inequality.

Over the past several decades, sexuality has emerged as one of the primary foundations of identity, while, at the same time, inequalities based on sexuality have emerged as among the nation’s (and the world’s) most charged arenas of inequality. And sociologists were in the forefront of the effort to identify sexuality as a primary foundation of identity. Chapter 10 acknowledges that.

Students today are eager to discuss these issues. Textbooks developed in the late twentieth century have not fully taken account of the massive changes that our

current interest in sexuality has wrought—changes augured by movements both to liberalize and to restrict sexual expression and to multiply the variations of sexual identities, the importance of HIV in reconstituting sexual behaviors, and current campus sexual behaviors.

- **Chapter 13, Politics and Media.** Paired with the discussion of politics, we have included a detailed treatment of media because the world has changed so enormously in the past few decades, and the media have been among the most important causes, and consequences, of those changes. Few institutions are more centrally involved in both globalization and multiculturalism. And, again, it has been sociologists who have come to see the increased centrality of the media in both the creation of identity and the global distribution of information. Sociologists have insisted that media (and peer groups) must take their place as equally important agents of childhood socialization as the former “big three”—family, religion, and education. And while some of us are zooming down the information superhighway; others are stuck on barely passable dirt tracks.
- **Chapter 15, Sociology of Environments: The Natural, Physical, and Human Worlds.** Students are eager to discuss the environment. Few issues are more pressing to the current generation of college students than the environment. Indeed, few issues seem to be more pressing to our society as a whole. Yet while many textbooks discuss aspects of the environment, they typically focus on the “human” environment (chapters on demography and population) or the “built” environment (a chapter on urbanization). While fundamental and necessary, these books often leave out the third element of the environmental equation: the natural environment.

We have reconceptualized the chapter on the environment to focus on all three elements: human, built, and natural. It is, after all, the interaction among these three elements that structures the sorts of issues we face and constructs and constrains the sorts of policy options available to meet environmental needs. We believe that this framing will better equip a new generation of sociology students to understand and engage with the vital environmental issues of our time.

Finally, the chapter on methods has been moved from its more common place as Chapter 2 to Chapter 4. That is not because we have somehow “demoted” methods to a less-important place in the sociology curriculum. In fact, it’s because we see it as that much more important.

- **Chapter 4, How Do We Know What We Know? The Methods of the Sociologist.** We believe that methods don’t exist in a conceptual vacuum. Strategies of researching sociological problems come only after one has a problem to investigate. We have placed the discussion of classical and contemporary theory (Chapter 1) and of the conceptual foundations of sociology—culture, society, organization, interaction—before the discussion of methods because, we believe, it’s more sociological to do so. When sociologists do research, they don’t begin with a method and then go looking for a problem. They begin with a problem, drawn from the conceptual foundations of the field, and then determine the sorts of methodological strategies that they might use to comprehend it.

What’s more, we believe that sociological methods are so important that we should not end our discussion of methodology with the individual methods chapter. One of the distinctive elements of *Sociology Now: The Essentials* is the “How Do We Know What We Know?” feature box. In each substantive chapter, we stop and ask exactly *how* sociologists have come to know what we know about a certain topic. That is, we discuss different methods used in sociological research. Thus the discussion of methods is woven into each chapter, and it is woven in *in context* with substantive sociological questions.

Distinctive Features

The “How Do We Know What We Know?” box is only one of several features of *Sociology Now* that are fresh and exciting for students, enhancing their enjoyment of the text without sacrificing any of the substance.

► **Did You Know?** Each chapter is punctuated by several “Did You Know?” boxes. These are generally short sociological factoids, tidbits of information that are funny, strange, a little offbeat, but illustrate the sociological ideas being discussed.

For example, did you know that the notion that the Eskimos have 24 different words for snow is a myth? Did you know that at the turn of the last century, baby boys were supposed to be dressed in red and pink and little girls in blue?

You won’t draw their attention to all of these factoids, but the students are going to enjoy reading them. And we guarantee that there are at least a few that you didn’t know!

► **Sociology and Our World.** Among the most exciting and rewarding parts of teaching introductory sociology is revealing to students how what we study is so immediately applicable to the world in which we all live. Thus, each chapter has at least two boxes that make this connection explicit. They’re there to help the student see the connections between their lives, which they usually think are pretty interesting, and sociology, which they might, at first, fear as dry and irrelevant. And these boxes also are there to facilitate classroom discussions, providing only a couple of examples of what could be numerous possibilities to apply sociology to contemporary social questions.

► **What Do You Think? and What Does America Think?** Part of an introductory course requires students to marshal evidence to engage with and often reevaluate their opinions. Often our job is to unsettle their fallback position of “this is just my own personal opinion”—which floats, unhinged from any social contexts. We ask that they contextualize, that they refer to how they formed their opinions and to what sorts of evidence they might use to demonstrate the empirical veracity of their position. How they came to think what they think is often as important as what they think.

But students often benefit enormously from knowing what *other people* think as well. What percentage of Americans agree with you? Throughout each chapter, we’ve included a boxed feature that asks students questions taken directly from the General Social Survey. At the end of the chapter, we provide the information about what a representative sample of Americans about the same topic, to give a student a sense of where his or her opinion fits with the rest of the country. Critical-thinking questions based on the data encourage students to think about how factors like race, gender, and class influence our perceptions and attitudes.

Americans’ freedoms, but many Americans see that as a small price to pay for security from terrorist attack.

11. **Inequality.** Americans also believe that unequal incomes and experiences are the result of individual effort, and so they are pacified. We tolerate inequality by seeing it as a by-product of unequal individual efforts.

12. **We’re all just people.** Americans don’t like to be seen as members of a group, although they like to see others that way.

Emerging Values. Values aren’t timeless; they all have histories. They change. As a result, there may be some values that are emerging now as new values. Some of these may become core values; others may be absorbed or discarded. Those recently observed by sociologists include physical fitness, environmentalism, and diversity/multiculturalism. And yet each of these emerging values may actually contradict others. We want to stay in shape but do not want to work hard at exercise or diets; we want to protect the environment but not at the expense of developing roads, housing, and extracting natural resources to driving the cars we want to drive; we believe in multiculturalism but oppose political efforts that would force different groups of people to go to school together or live closer to each other. Though we believe that every one is equal, we increasingly marry people with similar education levels and befriended people whose backgrounds are similar to our own (Brooks, 2004).

Changing and Contradictory Values. One good example of this difference is Americans’ attitudes about homosexuality. Most Americans agree with the statement that homosexuality is “wrong” and have felt that way for the past 40 years. In 1991, the General Social Survey (GSS), perhaps the most definitive ongoing study of Americans’ attitudes, found that 73 per-

Did you know?

Americans have long believed they share a set of common values with other democratic, industrialized countries, especially the United Kingdom, continental Europe, and Canada. Yet recent studies show that residents in these countries think that the spread of American ideas is a bad thing for the world. A Pew Research Center poll of 44 countries, the broadest single opinion poll ever taken, found half of all Britons, two-thirds of Germans, and 71 percent of French think the spread of American values is a bad thing.

—A Harris poll (2004) by Global—36 percent negative—to an value.

Sociology and our World

More Than Just Common Sense

Does sociology merely give a scientific face to what we already know? Actually, it turns out that many of the things we know by common sense are not true at all. It may be that sociology’s single most important contribution is to debunk (disprove) those common-sense ideas.

For example, a large majority of Americans believe the following statements to be true:

1. The United States is a meritocracy, in which any individual can rise to the top as long as he or she works hard enough.
2. The poor are poor because of individual factors, such as laziness, lack of effort, poor money management skills, or lack of effort or talent.
3. Men are from Mars and women are from Venus—that is, there are fundamental, unchanging, biologically based differences between women and men.
4. Most welfare recipients are minorities who live in large cities.
5. People who live together before they get married are less likely to get divorced because they have already had a “trial marriage.”
6. There is very little racial discrimination remaining in the United States, and the racism that remains is because of racist individuals who give everyone else a bad name.
7. Women and men are just about equal now, and so there is no need for feminists to complain all the time.
8. A woman who is battered or abused in her relationship has only herself to blame if she stays.
9. Only people who are unstable mentally commit suicide.
10. The person most likely to rape or sexually assault a woman is a stranger on a dark street.

It turns out that every one of these common-sense assumptions is empirically false. Each one of them is discussed in chapters of this book. As a result, why then the task of sociology is not only to understand why these “facts” are untrue, Sociologists also try to understand why we want so much to believe them anyway.

your own experience, your own participation in them. Sociologists understand that this history is not written beforehand; it is changeable, so that you can exert some influence on how it turns out.

That’s why Mill’s definition of the sociological imagination, the connection between biography and history, is as compelling as when it was written half a century ago. Sociology connects you, as an individual, to the larger processes of both stability and change that compose history.

Where Did Sociology Come From?

The questions that try, power—were it early nineteenth-century calamitous period ginnings of the book.

Before Social

Evens in the seven understand the text.

What do you think?

English as the Official Language

Although the majority of people living in the United States speak English, the question of whether or not to make it the official language is one that elicits strong emotions and arguments on both sides. Those who are against a single official language argue that the United States is a multicultural country that should have space for more than one language, that the rest of the world is multilingual, and that an official language is exclusionary. Those in favor of an official national language maintain that the policy does not mean an English-only nation; that it’s cost-effective, and that such a policy will unite Americans. So, what do you think?

Do you favor or oppose making English the official language of the United States?

Favor

Oppose

See the back of the chapter to compare your answers to national survey data.

Source: General Social Survey, 2004.

For example, the national anthem is sung at the beginning of most major professional events (although not at the beginning of NASCAR, tennis, or boxing matches) and major college athletic events. We’re celebrating the flag, the symbol of our country (“Be the republic for which it stands”). But this ritual is rarely, if ever, performed in other countries and would be unimaginable before a professional soccer match in Latin America or Europe.

Norms

Norms are the rules a culture develops that define how people should act and the consequences of failure to act in the specified ways. Cultural “norms” and cultural “values” are often discussed together; values are the ideas that justify those standards, or norms. Norms prescribe the behavior within the culture, and values explain to us what the culture has developed.

Did you know?

Citizens of many countries wave their flag, but only the United States has a Pledge of Allegiance. Why? Centuries in common opinion, it is not because we are especially patriotic. Rather, it’s because we are capitalists.

In 1892, the magazine *McClary’s* Commission was asking American flags to its readers and introduced the pledge being carried. The flag as a sales tool spawned reactions to think it by its promise recognition among investigators. So, it’s not really in the officially recognized as late to the United and the week “made of in 1954.

confusion or discomfort. Technological changes often spread quickly as what is called cultural diffusion. Cultures change in other ways as well, such as after a conquest or simply through the increased interaction of globalization. In addition, a global culture is developing where we share technology, fashion, and values.

Key Terms

Communitarian (p. 41)	Culture shock (p. 39)	Nonmaterial culture (p. 39)
Cultural capital (p. 54)	Ethnocentrism (p. 39)	Norm (p. 43)
Cultural diffusion (p. 58)	Fad (p. 51)	Popular culture (p. 53)
Cultural diversity (p. 39)	Fashion (p. 51)	Ritual (p. 44)
Cultural imperialism (p. 57)	Folkway (p. 46)	Scape-Goat hypothesis (p. 43)
Cultural relativism (p. 40)	Language (p. 43)	Subculture (p. 40)
Cultural universals (p. 52)	Law (p. 47)	Symbol (p. 42)
Culture (p. 38)	Material culture (p. 38)	Value (p. 47)
Culture lag (p. 58)	Moré (p. 47)	

What does America think?

English as Our Official Language

This is actual survey data from the General Social Survey, 2004.

Do you favor or oppose making English the official language of the United States?

Overall, slightly more than three-quarters of the U.S. population favor English as the official language of the United States. There are significant class differences in this, with those who identify as lower class being less likely than other groups to be in favor.

English as Official Language, by Social Class, Percent					
	LOWER	WORKING	MIDDLE	UPPER	ROW TOTAL
Favor	70.2	75.8	79.8	78.4	77.5
Oppose	29.8	24.2	20.2	21.6	22.5

CRITICAL THINKING | DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How can we explain the social class differences in responses to this survey question?
2. How do you think the results might have differed had we looked at them by race or gender?

► Go to this website to look further at the data. This can run your own statistics and create a bar chart: <http://sda.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin/hsda?hsoda-gss04>

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those with a great deal of power to make policy decisions. Leaders and hardcore members spend an enormous amount of time and energy on the group; it forms an important part of their identity. As a consequence, they have a vested interest in promoting the norms and values of the group. They are most likely to punish deviance among group members and to think negatively about other groups. Ordinary members split their time and energies among several groups, so they are not as likely to be strongly emotionally invested. They are more likely to commit minor acts of deviance, sometimes because they confuse the norms of the various groups they belong to and sometimes because they are not invested enough to obey every rule.

Conformity. The groups we belong to hold a powerful influence over our norms, values, and expectations. Group members yield to others the right to make decisions about their behavior, their ideas, and their beliefs. When we belong to a group, we prize conformity over “rocking the boat,” even in minor decisions and even if the group is not very important to us.

Conformity may be required by the norms of the group. Some groups have formal requirements: For example, cadets at military schools often have their heads shaved on their enrollment, and members of some groups wear specific clothing or get identical tattoos. If you do not conform, you cannot be a member. Other times, however, we volunteer our conformity. We will often imitate the members of our reference group and use it as a “frame of reference” for self-evaluation and attitude formation (Deux and Wrightman, 1988; Merton, 1968), even if we don’t belong to it. For instance, you may have paid special attention to the popular clique in high school and modeled your dress, talk, and other behaviors on them. Other common reference groups are attractive people, movie stars, or sports heroes. Marketing makes use of this dynamic, aiming to get the “opinion leaders” in selected reference groups to use, wear, or tout a product, in the hopes that others will imitate them (Gladwell, 1997; PBS, 2001). The most familiar example of group conformity is peer pressure.

How do we know what we know?
Group Conformity

How can we observe these processes of conformity to what others do? In a classic experiment in social psychology (Asch, 1955), a group of strangers was gathered together under the pretense of testing their visual acuity. They were shown two cards, one with one line and one with three lines of different lengths. (In the group, however, only one person was really the subject of the experiment; all the rest were research assistants.) The group was then asked which of the lines on the second card matched the line on the first. When the subject was asked first, he or she answered correctly. (It didn’t matter what others said.) But when the first group members to respond were the research assistants, they gave wrong answers, picking an obviously incorrect line and insisting it was the match. Surprisingly, the test subjects would then most often give the wrong answers as well, preferring to follow the group norm rather than trust their own perceptions. When asked about it, some claimed that they felt uncomfortable but that they actually came to see the line they chose as the correct one. Psychologist Solomon Asch concluded that our desire to “fit in” is very powerful, even in a group that we don’t belong to.



GROUPS 79

► **How Do We Know What We Know?** As mentioned above, this feature enables us to show students how methods actually work in the exploration of sociological problems. Instead of confining methods to its own chapter and then ignoring it for the remainder of the book, we ask, for example, how sociologists measure social mobility (Chapter 7), or how we use statistics to examine the relationship between race and intelligence (Chapter 8), or how participant observation studies of gangs have changed our views of inner-city life (Chapter 6).

Sometimes, we show how *bad* methods have been used to support various arguments, such as nineteenth-century arguments against women entering higher education (Chapter 9), the notion that men experience a “midlife crisis” (Chapter 10), or even the recent claim by economist Steven Levitt that the legalization of abortion in 1973 led to the decline in violent crime two decades later (Chapter 6).

In this way, students can see method-in-action as a tool that sociologists use to discover the patterns of the social world.

► **An Engaging Writing Style.** All textbook writers strive for clarity; a few even reach for elegance. This book is no exception. We’ve tried to write the book in a way that conveys a lot of information, but also in a way that engages the students where *they* live. Not only are concepts always followed by examples, but we frequently use examples drawn from pop culture—from TV, movies, and music—and even from videos and video games.

This will not only make the students’ reading experience seem more immediate but should also enable the instructor to illustrate the relevance of sociological concepts to the students’ lives.

Acknowledgments

To say that every book is a conversation is true, but insufficient. Every book is many conversations at once. To be sure, it’s a conversation between authors and readers, and it’s designed to stimulate conversations among readers themselves. But writing a book is itself saturated with other conversations, and though I cannot possibly do justice to them all, it is important to acknowledge their presence in this process.

First, there is my conversation, as an author, with my chosen field, my profession. How have I understood what others have written, their research, their way of seeing the world? How can I best communicate that to a new generation of students encountering sociology for the very first time?

I’ve had conversations with dozens of other sociologists who have read these chapters and provided enormously helpful feedback. Their candor has helped us revise, rethink, and reimagine entire sections of the book, and we are enormously grateful.

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Each chapter includes a box called “What Do You Think?” and an end-of-chapter exercise called “What Does America Think?”—all of which were contributed by Kathleen Dolan of North Georgia College and State University. These help the students gauge their own opinions next to the results of GSS and other surveys of Americans’ opinions. Such a gauge is pedagogically vital. Often my students begin a response to a question with a minimizing feint: “This is just my own personal opinion” What a relief and revelation to see their opinions as socially shared (or not) with others. I’m grateful to Kathleen for her efforts to contextualize those “personal opinions.”

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I have spent my entire career teaching in large public universities—UC Berkeley, UC Santa Cruz, Rutgers, and now Stony Brook—teaching undergraduate students who are, overwhelmingly, first-generation college students, and most often immigrants and members of minority groups. They represent the next generation of Americans, born not to privilege but to hope and ambition. More than any other single group, they have changed how I see the world.

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A textbook of this size and scale is also the result of a conversation between author and publisher—and there we have been enormously lucky to work with such a talented and dedicated team as we have at Allyn and Bacon. As the editor, Jeff Lasser does more than acquire a book, he inhabits it—or, more accurately, it inhabits him. He thinks about it constantly and engages with the authors with just the right balance of criticism and support. He knows when to push—and when not to.

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At the beginning of this preface, I said I was really lucky because my job is so amazingly rewarding, and because I get to do something that is in harmony with my values, with how I see the world.

But I’m also really lucky because I get to do virtually everything—including the writing of this book—with my wife, Amy Aronson. Amy is a professor of Journalism and Media Studies at Fordham University; she comes to her sociological imagination through her background in the humanities and her experiences as a magazine editor (*Working Woman*). In the writing of this book, we have been completely equal partners—this is the only part I have written myself. (Don’t worry: She edited it!)

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Michael Kimmel

To learn more about this text and the authors, watch video of Michael Kimmel and Amy Aronson discussing *Sociology Now* at www.ablongman.com/kimmelpreview.

About the Authors



Michael Kimmel, Professor of Sociology at Stony Brook University, is one of the pioneers in the sociology of gender and one of the world's leading experts on men and masculinities. He was the first man to deliver the International Women's Day lecture at the European Parliament; was the first man to be named the annual lecturer by the Sociologists for Women in Society; and has been called as an expert witness in several high-profile gender discrimination cases. Among his many books are *Men's Lives*, *The Gendered Society*, *Manhood in America*, and *Revolution: A Sociological Perspective*. He is also known for his ability to explain sociological ideas to a general audience. His articles have appeared in dozens of magazines and newspapers, including the *New York Times*, *The Nation*, the *Village Voice*, the *Washington Post*, and *Psychology Today*.



Amy Aronson is Assistant Professor of Journalism and Media Studies at Fordham University. She is the author of *Taking Liberties: Early American Women's Magazines and Their Readers* and an editor of the international quarterly, *Media History*. She has coedited several books, including a centennial edition of Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *Women and Economics* and the two-volume *Encyclopedia of Men and Masculinities*, which was honored by the New York Public Library with a Best of Reference Award in 2004. A former editor at *Working Woman* and *Ms.*, she has also written for publications including *Business Week*, *Global Journalist*, and the Sunday supplement of *The Boston Globe*.

A Note from the Publisher about Supplements

Instructor Supplements

Unless otherwise noted, instructor's supplements are available at no charge to adopters and available in printed or duplicated formats, as well as electronically through the Pearson Higher Education Instructor Resource Center (www.pearsonhighered.com/irc).

Instructor's Manual (*Jennifer E. Lerner, Northern Virginia Community College, Loudoun*) For each chapter in the text, the Instructor's Manual provides chapter summaries and outlines, learning objectives, key terms and people, teaching suggestions (which include film suggestions, in-class activities, and projects and homework exercises), and references for further research and reading. The Instructor's Manual also includes "Try It" activities, along with notes for the instructor.

Test Bank (*Elizabeth Pare, Wayne State University*) The Test Bank contains approximately 90 questions per chapter in multiple-choice, true-false, short answer, fill-in-the-blank, essay, and open-book formats. The open-book questions challenge students to look beyond words and answer questions based on the text's figures, tables, and maps. All questions are labeled and scaled according to Bloom's Taxonomy.

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PowerPoint™ Presentation (*Kell Stone, El Camino College*) These PowerPoint slides on a CD, created especially for *Sociology Now*, feature lecture outlines for every chapter and many of the tables, charts, and maps from the text. PowerPoint software is not required, as a PowerPoint viewer is included.

Clicker PowerPoint™ Slides (*Kell Stone, El Camino College*) Clicker-ready PowerPoint® slides can be used in the classroom with the Personal Response System. Each Checkpoint problem from the text is included on an individual slide, followed by a slide with its guided solution. Instructors can assign these as in-class assignments or review quizzes. The Clicker PowerPoint slides for *Sociology Now: The Essentials*, also incorporate opinion questions based on the "What Do You Think?" feature to stimulate class discussion.

Sociology Active Learning Library (*General Editor Kathy Rowell, Sinclair Community College*) The "Try It!" exercises in this text are taken from Allyn & Bacon's *Sociology Active Learning Library* (SALLY), a website where we are collecting class-tested, hands-on learning activities from instructors across the country. Adopters of *Sociology Now: The Essentials* can request access to all of the activities archived in SALLY.

Learning activities have been evaluated and developed to make sure they pedagogically complete and ready to use in the classroom (www.activelearninglibrary.com).

ABC News Sociology Videotapes and DVDs Pearson Arts and Sciences has licensed a number of news reports and documentary-style programs from *Nightline*, *World News Tonight*, and *20/20* that illustrate sociological themes. Choose from a collection that covers general sociology topics, or others that examine specific topics such as race, class, gender, deviance, aging, or social institutions. Contact your Pearson Arts and Sciences representative for details.

Sociology Video Library Third-party videos are available on every major topic in sociology. Some of the videos are from Films for the Humanities and Sciences and Annenberg/CPB. Some restrictions apply. Contact your Pearson Arts and Sciences representative for details.

The Video Professor: Applying Lessons in Sociology to Classic and Modern Films (*Anthony W. Zumpetta, West Chester University*) This manual describes hundreds of commercially available videos that represent 19 of the most important topics in introductory sociology textbooks. Each topic lists a number of movies, along with specific assignments and suggestions for class use. It is available in print and electronically through the Pearson Higher Education Instructor Resource Center.

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Study Guide (*Shelly McGrath, Southern Illinois University*) The Study Guide is designed to help students prepare for quizzes and exams. For every chapter in the text, it contains a chapter summary, lists of key terms and people, a practice test with 25 multiple-choice questions and an answer key, and a set of PowerPoint lecture outlines. We have also included a list of videos, simulations, and other activities students can find in MySocLab for further exploration of topics in each chapter. It can be packaged on request with the text at no additional cost.

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MySocLab MySocLab is a state-of-the-art interactive and instructive solution for introductory sociology, delivered within CourseCompass or Pegasus, Pearson's course management systems hosted nationally on our server. MySocLab is built around a complete e-book version of the text and is designed to be used as a supplement to a traditional lecture course or to completely administer an online course. Users can watch interviews with the authors of this text and other prominent social scientists, listen to stories from the National Public Radio archives, read current newspaper articles, and take self-scoring practice tests to prepare for quizzes and exams. Some features in the print text are identified by a MyLab icon, and can be carried out online in MySoclab:

- All of the "What Do You Think?" survey questions.
- Selected "Try It!" learning activities.
- Selected maps and figures, where the data can be explored using the virtual globe program, *Google Earth*.

When you see the icon, go to www.mysoclab.com to access miscellaneous additional features. MySocLab also includes a tutorial on "Writing about Sociology." Customize your course or use the materials as presented. This material is free to students when the text is packaged with a *MySocLab Student Access Code Card* for either the Pegasus or Course Compass platforms (www.mysoclab.com).

MySocLab, Website Version The website version provides virtually the same online content and interactivity as MySocLab, without any of the course management features or requirements. Students not using the Pegasus or Course Compass versions of MySocLab will automatically receive an *Access Code Card* for the website version.

WebCT and Blackboard Test Banks For colleges and universities with WebCT™ and Blackboard™ licenses, we have converted the complete Test Bank into these popular course management platforms. Adopters can request a copy on CD or download the electronic file by logging in to our Instructor Resource Center.

Additional Supplements

The Allyn and Bacon Social Atlas of the United States (William H. Frey, University of Michigan, with Amy Beth Anspach and John Paul DeWitt) This brief and accessible atlas uses colorful maps, graphs, and some of the best social science data available to survey the leading social, economic, and political indicators of American society. It is available for purchase separately or packaged with this text at a significant discount.

Careers in Sociology, Third Edition (W. Richard Stephens, Eastern Nazarene College) This supplement explains how sociology can help students prepare for careers in such fields as law, gerontology, social work, business, and computers. It also examines how sociologists entered the field. The supplement is packaged on request with this text at no additional charge.

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 Elizabeth Tracy, Rhodes State College

Robert Transon, Milwaukee Area
Technical College
Anne Tsul, City College of San Francisco
David L. Tutor, Oakland Community
College
Alalazu Ugoji, Bishop State Community
College
Jodie Vangrov, Chattahoochee Technical
College
Connie Veldink, Everett Community
College
Dennis Veleber, Michigan State University,
Great Falls College of Technology
Daniel Vieira, Moorpark College
Joel Villademoros, El Paso Community
College, Valle Verde
Andrea Wagganer, University of South
Florida
Dean Wagstaffe, Indian River Community
College
Thomas Waller, Tallahassee Community
College
Sheryl Walz, Citrus College
Kat Warner, Green River Community
College
Margaret Weinberger, Bowling Green State
University

George Weiner, Cleveland State University
Donald Wells, Henderson State University
Stephen Wieting, University of Iowa
Matthew Williams, Boston College
Pamela Williams-Paez, College of the
Canyons
Debra Williamson, Lansing Community
College
George Wilson, University of Miami
Loren Wingblade, Jackson Community
College
Helen Wise, Louisiana State University,
Shreveport
Sandra Woodside, Modesto Junior College
S. Rowan Wolf, Portland Community
College
LaQueta Wright, Richland College
Lenard Wynn, Moraine Valley Community
College
Lissa Yogan, Valparaiso University
Brenda Zicha, Charles S. Mott Community
College
Herbert Ziegler, Chesapeake College
John Zipp, University of Akron