Sociology Now

Sociology Now

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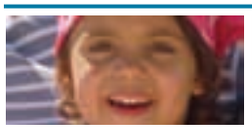


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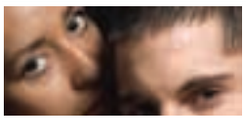


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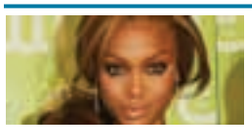


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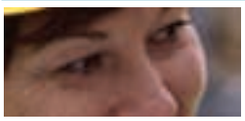


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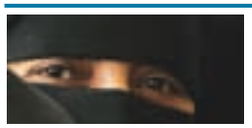


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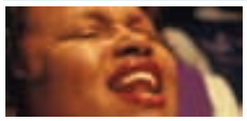


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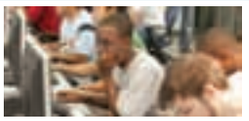

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Sociology and our World

Milestones of Adulthood

When students are asked to name some of the milestones between childhood and adulthood, they usually mention the ability to drive a car, vote, buy alcohol, and marry. But the legal age for these activities varies from state to state and from country to country, so you could get on an airplane as a legal "child" and get off as a legal "adult." Here are some of the more variable milestones:

- *Graduate from high school.* In Belgium, Germany, and the Netherlands, compulsory education ends at age 18. In the United States, it's 17. In most countries, it's 15 or 16. But you can leave school at age 12 in Afghanistan, Burundi, and Nicaragua, at 11 in Chad and Jamaica, at 10 in Iran, and at 9 in Angola and Myanmar (OECD, 2004).
- *Get a job.* The United States is one of 120 countries that have adopted the guidelines set by the International Labour Organization (ILO): Fifteen is the minimum age for most jobs and 18 for jobs likely to jeopardize "health, safety, or morals." But Sri Lanka and Turkey have set the minimum age for full-time work at 14, Paraguay at 12, and Peru and Zaire at 12. Many countries allow "light work" much earlier; in Thailand, at age 10 (International Labour Organization, 2006).
- *Lose your virginity.* The age of consent for sexual activity varies in the United States depending on whether you are a boy or a girl and on whether your partner is a boy or a girl. In New Hampshire, it's 16 for heterosexual and 18 for same-sex partners, regardless of their gender. In Montana, it's 14 for girls and 17 for boys in heterosexual relationships and illegal for same-sex partners at any age. Globally, the laws are even more varied. It's 14 (for everybody) in Iceland, 15 in France, and 16 in Venezuela. In Malta, it's 12 for girls and 18 for boys (gay or straight). In Burkina Faso, it's 13 for heterosexual partners and 21 for same-sex partners (male or female). (Avert, 2007). http://www.avert.org/aofconsent.htm.
- *Get married.* In the United States, the minimum age for marrying in most states is 16 with parental consent and 18 without parental consent. It's higher in only one state, Nebraska (19). In most states, 16- or 17-year-olds can marry with the permission of a parent or guardian and a judge. Only five states—Mississippi, Alabama, Oregon, Rhode Island, and South Carolina—and the District of Columbia expressly forbid young teens (under 14, 15, 16, or 17, depending on gender and locale) to marry (Dirlraf and Dirlraf, 2002).
- *Drink alcohol.* The minimum age for purchasing or drinking alcoholic beverages in the United States used to vary from state to state, but now it's 21 everywhere. Most other countries set the minimum age at 16 to 18. Denmark has no minimum age for drinking, but you have to be 16 to buy alcohol in stores and 18 to buy it in pubs and restaurants. The United Kingdom allows children aged 5 and older to drink alcohol at home, but you must be 16 to order a beer at the pub. And a few countries, including China, Jamaica, and Spain, have no age restrictions at all: Drink all you want. (See Alcohol Problems and Solutions, 2007).
- *Join the army.* The minimum age for compulsory or volunteer service is 15 in Tanzania, 16 in Canada, 18 in the United States, 19 in Brazil, and 20 in Chad. In Norway, it's 18 in peacetime, 16 in wartime, 17 for male volunteers, 18 for female volunteers. In Bolivia, it's 14 for compulsory, 18 for volunteers. In Uganda "no one under the apparent age of 13 may be conscripted," but journalists have documented cases of 9- and 10-year-olds being taken from their homes and forced to bear arms (CIA, *World Factbook*, 2006).

Sociology and Our World


How do we know what we know?

Measuring Attitudes with a Likert Scale

The Likert scale is the most widely used scale in survey research. Developed by Rensis Likert (1932), it is a technique that presents a set of statements on a questionnaire, then asks respondents to express levels of agreement or disagreement with these statements. Their responses are given numerical value, usually along a five-point or a seven-point scale. By tallying these numeric values, sociologists can gauge people's attitudes.

Likert scales can be used to gauge many types of attitudes, from agreement or disagreement to relative importance, likelihood, quality, or frequency. Some Likert scales provide a middle value that is neutral or undecided; others use a "forced-choice" scale, with no neutral value, that requires respondents to decide whether they lean more toward agreement or disagreement.

For example, let's say you are doing a survey examining employee self-esteem. You want to gauge levels of self-satisfaction in the workplace. You might present people with a series of statements such as, "I feel good about my work in school on the job," and "I can tell my co-workers respect me," among others. Then you would ask respondents to record the extent of their agreement or disagreement with these statements along a Likert scale. The scale could look something like this:

Or, they could record their answers on a "forced-choice" scale that looks more like this:

You would take the different scaling structure into account when analyzing and reporting your results. But in either case, the Likert scale would help you to see the extent or intensity of attitudes—more or less, stronger or weaker, bigger or smaller—registered by your survey subjects.

How Do We Know What We Know?


Try It Investigating Interviews and Surveys

Adapted from submission by Meredith Greif, *Cleveland State University*

OBJECTIVE: Investigate how to develop interview questions and explore how research connects to sociological context.

STEP 1: Plan

Develop a research question that would require you to interview college students. There are numerous topics that would work for this project, but when in doubt be sure to check with your instructor about your research question. After you have identified your topic of interest, take a moment to identify your dependent variable. After you have identified your dependent variable, think about how you might measure it and develop six questions that you would ask in an interview to address your research question. Your instructor may have an example to help you with this process. Write out your research question, dependent variable, and interview questions.

STEP 2: Collect Data

The next step is to find a student in your sociology class to interview. It is best to partner with another student and to share interviews. As you are interviewing your partner student, not only pay attention to the responses but also think about how well your interview questions allowed you to really explore your research question. Make notes about what questions were not understood by your interviewee or what questions did not really result in the information you were hoping to gain from the student. After completing the interview, review your questions and revise them. As you are revising them, explain briefly why you revised each question.

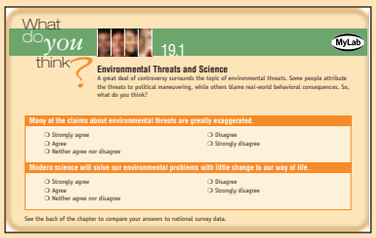
STEP 3: Write

After completing this activity, you may be asked to submit a short reflection paper including the following items. First, explain the research questions you chose for the project and discuss the dependent variable you were hoping to measure. Second, include your original list of interview questions and briefly explain what information you were hoping to learn in your interview. Third, discuss what happened in your interview and what you learned from the experience. Finally, include a list of your revised questions and provide a detailed explanation of why you revised your questions. Your instructor will give you further details on the length of this paper and may include other topics in this paper.

STEP 4: Discuss

At some point, your instructor may lead the class in a discussion of survey research, and you could be asked to share your experiences with this project. Please note that there are numerous variations of this activity, and your instructor may have further directions.

Try It



What Do You Think?

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 discomforting. 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 their parents. It sounds almost unpatriotic to say that the single best predictors of *your* eventual position in society is 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. Since these problems are so deeply embedded in our society, and since 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 which, 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 micro-level 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, poststructrialism, 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

We've added two chapters to the standard sociology textbook configuration, and we've revamped four others fundamentally. While some other books have one or two of these, none has them all.

- **Chapter 10, Sexuality.** We have included this chapter not because it's trendy, but because it's sociologically accurate. Over the past several decades, sexuality has emerged as one of the primary foundations of identity, while inequalities based on sexuality have emerged as among the nation's (and the world's) most charged arenas of inequality. And sociologists were at the forefront of the effort to identify sexuality as a primary foundation of identity.

  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.

  When I was a sociology student in the 1970s, we were asking very different questions in my coeduational dorm: Could we use the same bathrooms? What impact does feminism have on women's sexuality? Are gay people "normal"? Students today are more likely to be debating transgenderism and what bathrooms are appropriate for the intersexed, hooking up, and the effectiveness of abstinence pledges. Sexuality deserves its own chapter.

- **Chapter 18, Mass Media.** Again, we have included this chapter not to be trendy, but 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.

We have also reconceptualized the standard way of organizing four other chapters. We feel that these changes will more accurately reflect where sociology is *now* and the interests of our students, and thus more adequately prepare students to engage with sociological ideas.

- **Chapter 11, Age: From Young to Old.** Most other textbooks have a chapter on age. They deal exclusively with aging—that is, with old people. Now, I have nothing against old people—I am, or will soon be, one myself! But students often feel the age chapter is not about them, but about their parents or grandparents, about "other people."

  Of course this chapter retains the sociological treatment of aging, but we've also 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.

- **Chapter 15, Religion and Science.** We often think of religion and science as competitors, even as enemies. After all, both seek answers to life's big questions, but they use very different methods and come up with different answers. Sociologically, they exhibit many formal similarities—hierarchies of positions, organizational networks, hierarchies of knowledge. Both guide social action, offering normative claims derived from their respective "truths."

  More than that, students often feel that they must choose between the two. But religious belief and scientific knowledge co-exist. In fact, the United States is simultaneously one of the most scientifically advanced and one of the most deeply religious countries in the world. The same person may be both religious and scientific in different situations. Most clergy in the U.S. keep up with advances in medicine and law in order to minister to their congregations effectively, and many, if not most, scientists attend church or temple. Students are eager to talk about religion, although some may feel initially uncomfortable discussing it sociologically. Placing the discussion alongside an equally sociological discussion of science will facilitate the sociological conversation about both subjects.

- **Chapter 16, The Body and Society: Health and Illness.** Virtually every textbook has a chapter on health and medicine, which discuss both our experience of health and illness and the social institutions that engage with us in those experiences. We've organized this chapter to include far more about the body—that is, the "social body," the ways in which our experiences of our bodies are socially constructed.

  Students are eager to discuss the other sociological aspects of the body besides, for example, the sick role. Body modification (tattoos, piercing, cosmetic surgery) lends itself to marvelous class discussions about the construction of identity through the body, and the ways we assert both individuality and conformity. This discussion connects well with traditional discussions of health and illness. And, once again, sociologists have been among the more visible researchers in this new and growing field of interest, as the newest section of the ASA on the Sociology of the Body attests.

- **Chapter 19, Sociology of Environments: The Natural, Physical, and Human Worlds.** Few issues are more pressing to the current generation of college students than the

environment. 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.

By reconceptualizing the chapter on the environment, we 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.

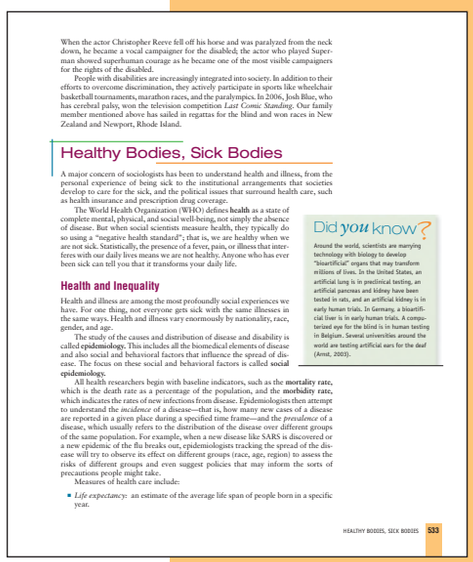
Finally, the chapter on methods has been moved from its more common place as Chapter 2 to Chapter 4. That is not because we have somehow "demoted" methods to a less-important place in the sociology curriculum. In fact, it's because we see it as that much more important.

- **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 only come 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* 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.



When the actor Christopher Reeve fell off his horse and was paralyzed from the neck down, he became a vocal campaigner for the disabled; the actor who played Superman showed superhuman courage as he became one of the most visible campaigners for the rights of the disabled.

People with disabilities are increasingly integrated into society. In addition to their efforts to overcome discrimination, they actively participate in sports like wheelchair basketball tournaments, marathon races, and the paralympics. In 2006, Josh Blue, who has cerebral palsy, won the television competition *Last Comic Standing*. Our family member mentioned above has sailed in regattas for the blind and won races in New Zealand and Newport, Rhode Island.

Healthy Bodies, Sick Bodies

A major concern of sociologists has been to understand health and illness, from the personal experience of being sick to the institutional arrangements that societies develop to care for the sick, and the political issues that surround health care, such as health insurance and prescription drug coverage.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines **health** as a state of complete mental, physical, and social well-being, not simply the absence of disease. But when social scientists measure health, they typically do so using a "negative health standard"; that is, we are healthy when we are not sick. Statistically, the presence of a fever, pain, or illness that interferes with our daily lives means we are not healthy. Anyone who has ever been sick can tell you that it transforms your daily life.

Did *you* know?

Around the world, scientists are marrying technology with biology to develop "bioartificial" organs that may transform millions of lives. In the United States, an artificial lung is in preclinical testing, an artificial pancreas and kidney have been tested in rats, and an artificial kidney is in early human trials. In Germany, a bioartificial liver is in early human trials. A computerized eye for the blind is in human testing in Belgium. Several universities around the world are testing artificial ears for the deaf (Arnst, 2003).

Health and Inequality

Health and illness are among the most profoundly social experiences we have. For one thing, not everyone gets sick with the same illnesses in the same ways. Health and illness vary enormously by nationality, race, gender, and age.

The study of the causes and distribution of disease and disability is called **epidemiology**. This includes all the biomedical elements of disease and also social and behavioral factors that influence the spread of disease. The focus on these social and behavioral factors is called **social epidemiology**.

All health researchers begin with baseline indicators, such as the **mortality rate**, which is the death rate as a percentage of the population, and the **morbidity rate**, which indicates the rates of new infections from disease. Epidemiologists then attempt to understand the *incidence* of a disease—that is, how many new cases of a disease are reported in a given place during a specified time frame—and the *prevalence* of a disease, which usually refers to the distribution of the disease over different groups of the same population. For example, when a new disease like SARS is discovered or a new epidemic of the flu breaks out, epidemiologists tracking the spread of the disease will try to observe its effect on different groups (race, age, region) to assess the risks of different groups and even suggest policies that may inform the sorts of precautions people might take.

Measures of health care include:

- *Life expectancy:* an estimate of the average life span of people born in a specific year.

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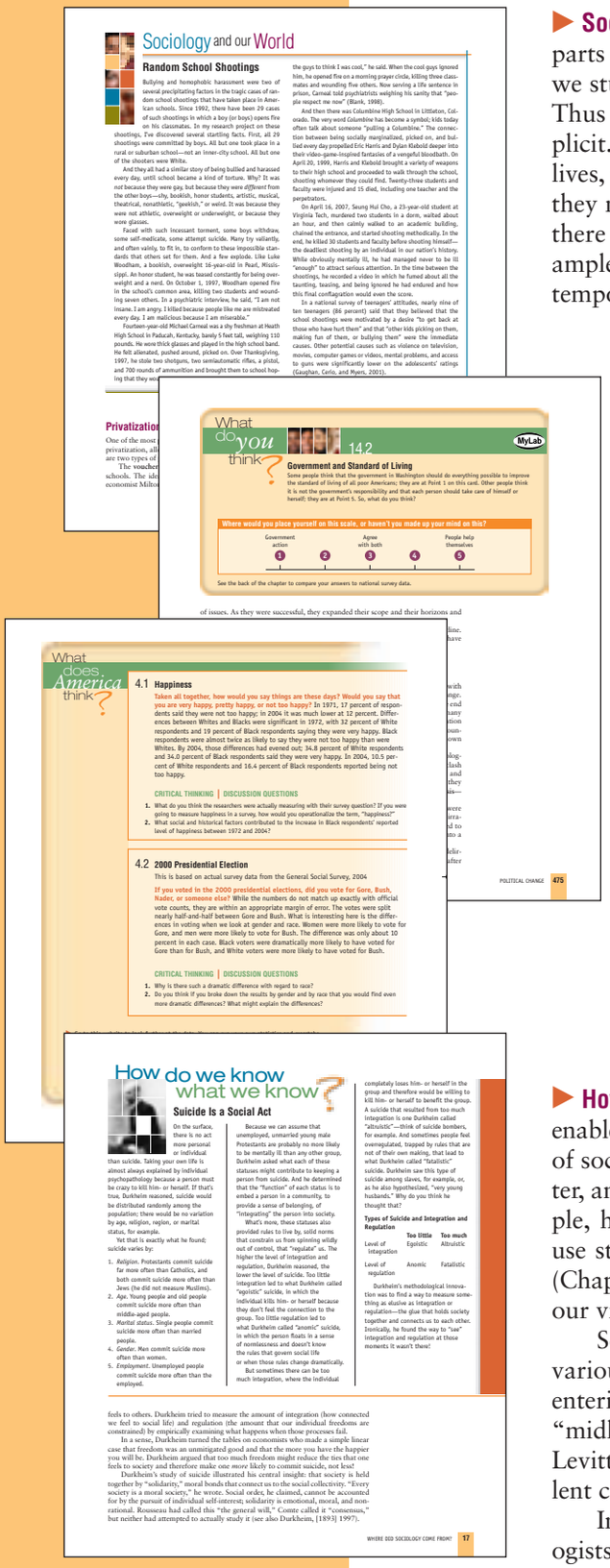
▶ Did You Know? Each chapter is punctuated by several "Did You Know?" boxes. These are generally short sociological factoids tidbits of information that are funny, strange, a little offbeat, but illustrate the sociological ideas being discussed.

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 or 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.

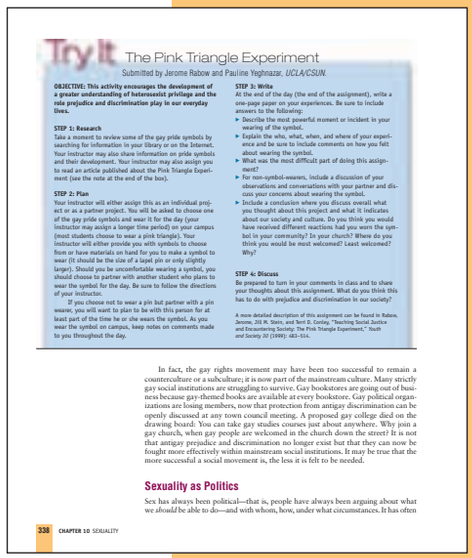
But students often benefit enormously from knowing what *other people* think as well. What percentage of Americans agree with you? Throughout each chapter, we've included a boxed feature that asks students questions taken directly from the General Social Survey. At the end of the chapter, we provide the information about what a representative sample of Americans think 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.

▶ 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 11) 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.

Try It These exercises, based on real classroom experience and contributed by sociology instructors across the country, provide opportunities for active learning. One "Try It" exercise per chapter directs students to perform an activity—individually or in a group, inside or outside of class—that illustrates a sociological concept. Activities include asking students to apply theories of deviance to what they see in the news (Chapter 6), to think sociologically about the lifespan (Chapter 11), and to consider and apply the concept of population pyramids (Chapter 19).


Try It The Pink Triangle Experiment

Submitted by Jerome Rabow and Pauline Yeghnazar, *UCLA/CSUN.*

OBJECTIVE: This activity encourages the development of a greater understanding of heterosexist privilege and the role prejudice and discrimination play in our everyday lives.

STEP 1: Research

Take a moment to review some of the gay pride symbols by searching for information in your library or on the Internet. Your instructor may also share information on pride symbols and their development. Your instructor may also assign you to read an article published about the Pink Triangle Experiment (see the note at the end of the box).

STEP 2: Plan

Your instructor will either assign this as an individual project or as a partner project. You will be asked to choose one of the gay pride symbols and wear it for the day (your instructor may assign a longer time period) on your campus (most students choose to wear a pink triangle). Your instructor will either provide you with symbols to choose from or have materials on hand for you to make a symbol to wear (it should be the size of a lapel pin or only slightly larger). Should you be uncomfortable wearing a symbol, you should choose to partner with another student who plans to wear the symbol for the day. Be sure to follow the directions of your instructor.

If you choose not to wear a pin but partner with a pin wearer, you will want to plan to be with this person for at least part of the time he or she wears the symbol. As you wear the symbol on campus, keep notes on comments made to you throughout the day.

STEP 3: Write

At the end of the day (the end of the assignment), write a one-page paper on your experiences. Be sure to include answers to the following:

- Describe the most powerful moment or incident in your wearing of the symbol.
- Explain the who, what, when, and where of your experience and be sure to include comments on how you felt about wearing the symbol.
- What was the most difficult part of doing this assignment?
- For non-symbol-wearers, include a discussion of your observations and conversations with your partner and discuss your concerns about wearing the symbol.
- Include a conclusion where you discuss overall what you thought about this project and what it indicates about our society and culture. Do you think you would have received different reactions had you worn the symbol in your community? In your church? Where do you think you would be most welcomed? Least welcomed? Why?

STEP 4: Discuss

Be prepared to turn in your comments in class and to share your thoughts about this assignment. What do you think this has to do with prejudice and discrimination in our society?

A more detailed description of this assignment can be found in Rabow, Jerome, Jill M. Stein, and Terri D. Conley, "Teaching Social Justice and Encountering Society: The Pink Triangle Experiment," *Youth and Society* 30 (1999): 483–514.

In fact, the gay rights movement may have been too successful to remain a counterculture or a subculture; it is now part of the mainstream culture. Many strictly gay social institutions are struggling to survive. Gay bookstores are going out of business because gay-themed books are available at every bookstore. Gay political organizations are losing members, now that protection from antigay discrimination can be openly discussed at any town council meeting. A proposed gay college died on the drawing board: You can take gay studies courses just about anywhere. Why join a gay church, when gay people are welcomed in the church down the street? It is not that antigay prejudice and discrimination no longer exist but that they can now be fought more effectively within mainstream social institutions. It may be true that the more successful a social movement is, the less it is felt to be needed.

Sexuality as Politics

Sex has always been political—that is, people have always been arguing about what we *should* be able to do—and with whom, how, under what circumstances. It has often

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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 re-imagine entire sections of the book, and we are enormously grateful.

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A number of instructors were kind enough to share some of their favorite class-tested learning activities for the feature in this book called "Try It": these make more concrete and experiential some of the themes we discuss in the chapters, enabling the students to gain some hands-on sociological experience. Thanks to Katherine Rowell of Sinclair Community College for her valuable work in assembling, editing, and contributing many of these; other contributors include:

Amy Agigian, Suffolk University
Sharon Barnartt, Gallaudet University
Michelle Bemiller, Kansas State University
Casey J. Cornelius, Delta College
Jeff Dixon, Indiana University
Meredith Greif, Cleveland State University
Amy Guptill, SUNY–Brockport
Jonathan Marx, Winthrop University
Jerome Rabow and Pauline Yeghnazar, University of California, Los Angeles

In addition, each chapter includes two boxes called "What Do You Think?" and two end-of-chapter exercises 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."

I've also carried on a conversation with my colleagues at SUNY, Stony Brook, where I have been so fortunate to work for two decades in a department that strongly values high quality teaching. In particular, I'm grateful to my chair, Diane Barthel-Bouchier, for managing such a diverse and collegial department where I have felt so comfortable. Every single one of my colleagues—both past and present—has assisted me in some way in the work on this book, guiding my encounter with areas of their expertise, providing an example they have used in class, or commenting on specific text. I am grateful to them all.

There has also been an ongoing conversation with my students, both graduate and undergraduate, throughout my career. They've kept me attentive to the shifts in the field and committed to working constantly on my own pedagogical strategies to communicate them. My teaching assistants over the years have been especially perceptive—and unafraid to communicate their thoughts and opinions!

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.

Many other sociologists have influenced my thinking over the years. I suspect I may be a rather impressionable guy, because were I to list them all, I think the list would go on for pages! So I will only thank some recent friends and colleagues who have contributed their advice, comments, or criticisms on specific items in this book, and those old friends who have shared their passion for sociology with me for decades: Elizabeth Armstrong, Troy Duster, Paula England, Cynthia and Howard Epstein, Abby Ferber, John Gagnon, Josh Gamson, Barry Glassner, Erich Goode, Cathy Greenblat, Michael Kaufman, Mike Messner, Rebecca Plante, Lillian Rubin, Don Sabo, Wendy Simonds, Arlene and Jerry Skolnick, Jean-Anne Sutherland, and Suzanna Walters.

For the rest of my far-flung friends and colleagues, I hope that you will find the fruits of those conversations somewhere in these pages.

One person stands out as deserving of special thanks. Jeffery Dennis began his career as my graduate student—an enormously gifted one at that. We engaged Jeff as a colleague to work with us to develop this book—to help us develop chapters, explore arguments, clarify examples, track down obscure factoids, organize thematic presentations—and with everything we asked of him, he delivered far more than we hoped. He's been a most valued contributor to this project, and a major participant in its conversations.

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.

Jessica Carlisle has been simply the ideal development editor. Her instincts were almost always flawless—she held aloft a concern for both the form and the content of this book in equal measure, helping us revise, trim, cut, and add in a way that made the book better, stronger and tighter.

The rest of the production team, including Donna Simons and Susan McNally, were as professional and dedicated to the project as we were.

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!)

Amy thanks her colleagues at Fordham University, Lincoln Center, for their support and various helpful comments. She's grateful always to Robert Ferguson for his unwavering encouragement over the years.

And we both thank our respective families—Winnie Aronson, Nancy Aronson, Barbara and Herb Diamond, Sandi Kimmel and Patrick Murphy, Ed Kimmel, Bill Diamond, Jeff Diamond, Leslie and Bruce Hodes, and Lauren Kaplan—for believing in us and cheering us on.

And we thank Zachary, our son. At age 8, he's been a lively critic of some of our ideas, a curious listener, and a patient family member. (He helped pick some of the pictures!) Every single day, when he recounts the day's events at school, or is at soccer or ice hockey practice, or observes something in the neighborhood, or asks a question about the news—he reminds us of the importance of a sociological perspective in making sense of the world.

And finally I thank Amy. As partners in our lives, as parents to our son, and in our collaboration on this and other books, we work toward a marriage of equals, in which the idea of gender equality is a lived reality, not some utopian dream.

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 co-edited 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.*, her work has also appeared in 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 the "Try It" activities from the text, 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.

Computerized Test Bank The printed Test Bank is also available through Pearson's computerized testing system, TestGen EQ. This fully networkable test-generating software is available for Windows and Macintosh. The user-friendly interface allows you to view, edit, and add questions, transfer questions to tests, and print tests in a variety of fonts. Search and sort features allow you to locate questions quickly and to arrange them in whatever order you prefer.

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.

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* can request access to all of the activies 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 nineteen 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. Available in print and electronically through the Pearson Higher Education Instructor Resource Center.

InterWrite PRS (Personal Response System) Assess your students' progress with the Personal Response System—an easy-to-use wireless polling system that enables you to pose questions, record results, and display those results instantly in your classroom.

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- Results can be recorded for grading, attendance, or simply used as a discussion point.

Our partnership with PRS allows us to offer student rebate cards bundled with any Allyn and Bacon / Longman text. The rebate card has a direct value of $20.00 and can be redeemed with the purchase of a new PRS student transmitter. In addition, institutions that order 40 or more new textbook + rebate-card bundles will receive the classroom receiver (a $250 value), software, and support at no additional cost. We also offer sets of questions for introductory sociology designed to be used with Personal Response Systems. Contact your Pearson Arts and Sciences representative or for more information. (www.ablongman.com/prs)

Student Supplements

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. Packaged at no additional cost on request with the text.

Research Navigator™ Students receive a free six-month subscription to this valuable research database when the text is packaged with the *ResearchNavigator Guide for Sociology*. Research Navigator's powerful search engines provide access to thousands of full-text articles from scholarly social science journals and popular magazines and newspapers, including a one-year archive of the complete *New York Times*. (www.researchnavigator.com)

Study Card for Introduction to Sociology Compact, efficient, and laminated for durability, the Allyn and Bacon Study Card for Introductory Sociology condenses course information down to the basics, helping students quickly master fundamental facts and concepts or prepare for an exam. Packaged on request with this text at no additional charge.

Online Course Management

MySocLab MySocLab is a state-of-the-art interactive and instructive solution for introductory sociology, delivered within CourseCompass, Pearson's course management system (powered by Blackboard and 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 access to ResearchNavigator and a tutorial on "Writing about Sociology." Customize your course or use the materials as presented. Free to students when the text is packaged with a *MySocLab Student Access Code Card*. (www.mysoclab.com)

MySocLab, Website Version Provides virtually the same online content and interactivity as MySocLab, without any of the course management features or requirements. Free to students when the text is packaged with a *MySocLab Student Access Code Card*.

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. 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. Packaged on request with this text at no additional charge.

Additional Acknowledgments

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