

*Diana Kendall*

# SOCIOLOGY IN OUR TIMES

Save  
Our  
Planet

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.....	5,207.1	556.6
.....	5,480.4	617.7
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.....	5,664.2	654.7
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.....	-4.5	+12.5
.....	+9.0	+38.4





*Diana Kendall*

Austin Community College

# SOCIOLOGY IN OUR TIMES



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## Preface

# FOR INSTRUCTORS

As sociology professors, we have a unique passion for passing on the sociological perspective to our students. We are excited when we see students make connections between personal troubles and public issues. We delight in telling students about the first sociology course we took and how we became interested in becoming sociologists. When we watch television, go to movies, or surf the internet, we look for relevant ideas and examples we can use in class. We spend hours examining textbooks, looking for the right book for our students. And, for many of us, therein lies the problem! The texts we review seem virtually interchangeable. We cannot find a book that captures students' imaginations, enhances our course, and speaks in an authentic way to the diversity of students in our class.

Why is finding such a book so difficult? In a recent review in *Contemporary Sociology*, Jodi O'Brien (1995:307) provides this answer: Many sociology textbooks have become so obscure and irrelevant that they are now the subject of jokes about meaningless education. This observation, confirmed by other instructors, explains why I spent three years writing *Sociology in Our Times*: I do not want students to see sociology as irrelevant or boring when the sociological perspective has so much to contribute to a better understanding of the complex world in which we live. As a

student in one of my classes stated, sociology "opened up new compartments in my mind."

*Sociology in Our Times* is designed to be a cutting-edge book that highlights the relevance of sociology for students. It does this in at least two ways by including a diversity of theory, research, and lived experiences that accurately mirror the diversity in society itself, and by showing students that sociology involves important questions and issues that they confront both personally and vicariously (for example, through the media). This text speaks to a wide variety of students and captures their interest by taking into account the concerns and perspectives of its intended audience.

*Sociology in Our Times* is unique in its relevance and its use and application of diversity. Throughout the book, I systematically incorporate timely everyday examples and illustrations that reflect the tremendous range of diverse experiences that constitute life in the United States. The research used in this text includes the best work of classical and established contemporary sociologists, but it also introduces students to newer perspectives that bring us into areas unexamined in other texts. *Sociology in Our Times* includes perspectives and research from new scholars, especially white women and all people of color. It weaves an inclusive treatment of *all* people into the examination

- *Sociology in Global Perspective.* In our interconnected world, the sociological imagination must extend beyond national borders. The global implications of each chapter's topics are explored in these boxes. Topics include rape in wartime, contemporary slavery in Brazil, the international problems of pollution, the AIDS epidemic in Africa, homelessness in Japan and France, and the politics of disability in China.

## SOCIOLOGY IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

In addition to highlighting the contemporary relevance of sociology, I have tried to extend the sociological perspective into the future. The concluding section of Chapters 3–17 looks ahead to the next century and suggests how our social lives may look in the years to come. Environmental issues, homelessness, technology, population, deviance and crime, and the economy and work are among the topics discussed.

## LEARNING AIDS

Several features are included in this book to promote students' mastery of sociological concepts and terminology.

- *Chapter Outlines.* A concise outline at the beginning of each chapter gives students an overview of major topics and a convenient aid for review.
- *Questions and Issues.* After the opening lived experience in each chapter, a series of introductory questions invites students to think about the major topics discussed in the chapter.
- *Integrated Running Glossary.* Major concepts and key terms are concisely defined and highlighted in bold print within the text flow to avoid disrupting students' reading.

These concepts and terms are also listed at the end of the chapters and in the glossary at the back of the book.

- *End-of-Chapter Study Aids.* The *Chapter Review* provides a concise summary of key points and theoretical perspectives, along with a list of *Key Terms*. *Questions for Analysis and Understanding* and *Questions for Critical Thinking* encourage students to assess their knowledge of the chapter and apply insights they have gained to other issues. The *Suggested Readings* list describes recent publications related to the chapter. This list also is a good source for book review suggestions.

## ORGANIZATION AND CONTENT

*Sociology in Our Times* is divided into five parts. Part I, "Studying Society," focuses on the sociological perspective and sociological research methods. After introducing students to the sociological imagination in Chapter 1, I trace the development of sociological thinking and set forth the major perspectives used by sociologists in analyzing compelling social issues. Chapter 2, on sociological research, provides a thorough description of both quantitative and qualitative methods. Beginning with Emile Durkheim's study, research on suicide is used to show students how sociologists do research. Experiments, surveys, secondary analysis of data, and field research—including observation, case studies, ethnography, and unstructured interviews—are described to give students a balanced perspective on the diversity of methods used by contemporary scholars.

Part II focuses on "The Nature of Social Life." In Chapter 3, culture is spotlighted as either a stabilizing force or a force that can generate discord, conflict, and even violence in societies. Cultural diversity and hate crimes are

## **ANCILLARIES FOR *SOCIOLOGY IN OUR TIMES***

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Ancillary materials that enhance teaching and learning are an important feature of a textbook. I chose to create most of the supplements offered with *Sociology in Our Times* to ensure their consistency with the themes of diversity, inclusiveness, and contemporary issues in my book. These pieces work together to form an effective and integrated teaching package.

### **ANNOTATED INSTRUCTOR'S EDITION**

The Annotated Instructor's Edition is designed to help you bring new perspectives to the introductory course. I've included many ideas that have been successful in my own courses, including teaching tips, ideas for class debate and point-counterpoint discussions, references to the videos described in the Instructor's Resource Manual, learning objectives, discussion questions, diversity issue discussion questions, suggestions for class activities and projects, ideas for book reviews and presentations, and an icon indicating the art available in the transparency packet.

### **INSTRUCTOR'S RESOURCE MANUAL**

The Instructor's Resource Manual expands on the annotations and provides further resources. Sections include video suggestions, guest speaker suggestions, chapter outlines, chapter summaries, learning objectives, student projects, discussion questions, and essay questions. You may request chapter outlines from Wadsworth in ASCII format in order to insert your own examples and references.

### **TEST BANK**

Kenrick Thompson, Northern Michigan University, has created an outstanding Test Bank of over 2,000 multiple-choice and true-false items. Each question is categorized as testing conceptual understanding, concept application, or factual knowledge, and a page reference is provided for each answer. I have carefully supervised the creation of the Test Bank, often the most used ancillary, to ensure its coordination with the text's learning objectives. It is also available in DOS, Windows, and Macintosh versions to facilitate the creation of your own tests.

### **STUDY GUIDE**

I created the Study Guide to give students further opportunities to think sociologically. It includes a chapter summary, learning objectives, a chapter outline, key terms, key people, and self-tests with true-false, multiple-choice, and fill-in questions. Parts of each test were written by Dr. Thompson to ensure coordination with the Test Bank; they do not duplicate the contents of the Test Bank.

### **TRANSPARENCY MASTERS**

Full-color transparency acetates for your use consist of selected art from the text and selected art from related Wadsworth publications.

### **VIDEO**

Wadsworth also offers selected videotapes coordinated to each chapter of the book. The segments were chosen to amplify the concepts of each chapter and provide further examples of the sociology of everyday life. They focus on the issues discussed in this book and the questions of race, class, and gender that are of special interest to students. An Instructor's Manual to accompany

her role as sociology editor, Serina Beauparlant convinced me to write this text and shared my vision that a more inclusive framework—based on race, class, gender, age, sexual orientation, and disability—was needed for introductory sociology texts. After Serina left the Wadsworth team, Eve Howard moved into the action as sociology editor, advocate, and coordinator of the “big picture.” John Bergez, managing development editor, has been a guiding light and mainstay for me on team Wadsworth. I appreciate his creativity, his sense of humor, and his writing and editing skills (especially his ability to “tweak” a sentence to enhance its meaning and clarity). Judith McKibben also contributed her expertise as a developmental editor in earlier stages of the project.

The publishing team also played significant roles in bringing this book to fruition. I am extremely grateful to Jeanne Bosschart, permissions editor; Tom Briggs, copy editor; Emily Douglas and Nancy Spellman, art editors; Jerilyn Emori, senior production editor; Karen Hunt, senior print buyer; Julie McDonald, editorial assistant; Andrew Ogus, senior designer; Chris Pullo, photo researcher; Jill Reinemann, marketing manager; and Susan Shook, assistant editor.

My most profound thanks go to the members of my family who assisted with this book. Gordon Kendall, my son, handled the permissions and ably assisted with library research. Terrence Kendall, my husband, is an excellent cook and a practicing attorney who made significant contributions to *Sociology in Our Times*, especially in the Sociology and Law boxes in each chapter. He also keeps me aware of the power of words to convey (or confuse) ideas and issues.

*Sociology in Our Times* is dedicated to the many sociology students I have taught at Austin Community College, the University of Texas at Austin, and other colleges and universities, and to all current and future sociology students reading this text! I invite instructors to send their comments to me in care of:

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I also welcome e-mail messages to the following internet address: [dkendall@austin.cc.tx.us.edu](mailto:dkendall@austin.cc.tx.us.edu)

ing to the chapter. If you have book review or project assignments, you may wish to consult some of the books on the Suggested Readings list for ideas.

*Sociology in Our Times* is divided into five parts. Part I, “Studying Society,” focuses on the sociological perspective and sociological research methods. Part II looks at “The Nature of Social Life.” We will explore culture, socialization, social structure, and social interaction as dynamic aspects of our lives. Next, we will look at groups and organizations, including innovative forms of social organization and the ways in which organizational structures may impact people differently. Then, we will investigate deviance, crime, and the criminal justice system. In Part III, we examine social differences and social inequality, looking at issues of class, race/ethnicity, gender, age, and disability. Part IV puts the spotlight on social institutions in our society, including economy and work; politics, government, and the military; fam-

ilies and intimate relationships; and education and religion. Part V shifts to social dynamics and social change. We will examine population and urbanization in global context, and then we will look at the importance of collective behavior and social movements in bringing about social change. We will conclude with a look at the environment, population, technology, and social institutions in the twenty-first century.

Although we will part company at the end of this book, I hope you will choose to pursue additional studies in sociology by taking other courses. If you wish to comment on different sections of *Sociology in Our Times*, I welcome (and will respond to) your messages.

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of sociology in *all* chapters, instead of simply giving the *appearance* of inclusion. At the same time, I have worked to make the writing style both accessible and engaging for students. Not only are concepts and theories presented in a straightforward and understandable way, but the wealth of concrete examples and lived experiences makes the relevance of sociological theory and research abundantly clear.

## DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

The following special features are specifically designed to reflect the themes of relevance and diversity in *Sociology in Our Times*, as well as to support students' learning.

### LIVED EXPERIENCES

Authentic first-person accounts are used as opening vignettes and throughout each chapter to create interest and give concrete meaning to the topics being discussed. Lived experiences—ranging from the American Dream, body image, and environmental activism to sexual harassment, disability, and rape—provide opportunities for students to examine social life beyond their own experiences and to examine class, race and ethnicity, gender, and age from diverse perspectives. An unusually wide range of diverse experiences—both positive and negative—is systematically incorporated to expose students to a multiplicity of viewpoints. These lived experiences were selected for their ability to speak to students, to assist them in learning concepts and theories, and to determine how they can be applied to other situations.

### DISTINCTIVE BOXES

Each chapter contains four boxes: Sociology and Everyday Life, Sociology and Law, Sociology and Media, and Sociology in Global Per-

spective. The themes and content of these boxes were selected to expand students' depth of knowledge and to give them the opportunity to apply their sociological imagination in new contexts.

- *Sociology and Everyday Life*. This box, located near the start of each chapter, is a brief quiz that relates the sociological perspective to the pressing social issues presented in the opening vignette. (Answers are given on a subsequent page.) Is rape a personal trouble or a social issue? Does the success of some subordinate group athletes indicate that race is no longer an issue in the United States? Are the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer? Topics such as these will pique your students' interest.
- *Sociology and Law*. Based on the latest legal research, this box encourages students to think critically about the many ties between sociology and law. Topics such as child maltreatment, assisted suicide, social welfare, and juvenile offenders and "equal justice under the law" encourage students to apply the sociological imagination to contemporary issues and provide a springboard for discussion.
- *Sociology and Media*. Like most people in our society, students get much of their information about the social world from the media. A significant benefit of a sociology course is encouragement to think critically about such information. Focusing on various types of media depictions—including television news, daytime talk shows, television commercials and magazine advertisements, cartoons, rap music, the electronic church, movies, and mainstream and alternative presses—Sociology and Media boxes provide an overview of sociological topics as seen through the "eye" of the media. Topics range from a discussion of *The Simpsons* as an "all-American" family and an analysis of cartoon depictions of labor unions to the marketing of African American athletes and news coverage of diverse topics such as homeless persons and AIDS.

discussed as a contemporary cultural issue. Unique coverage is given to popular culture and leisure and to divergent perspectives on popular culture. Chapter 4 looks at positive and negative aspects of socialization and presents an innovative analysis of gender and racial-ethnic socialization. Chapter 5 examines social structure and social interaction in detail, using homelessness as a sustained example of the dynamic interplay of structure and interaction in society. Unique to this chapter are discussions of the sociology of emotions and of personal space as viewed through the lenses of race, class, gender, and age. Chapter 6 analyzes groups and organizations, including innovative forms of social organization and ways in which organizational structures may differentially impact people based on race, class, gender, age, and disability. Chapter 7 examines diverse perspectives on deviance, crime, and the criminal justice system. Key issues are dramatized for students through an analysis of recent research on gangs and the lived experiences of gang members.

In Part III, we examine “Social Differences and Social Inequality,” looking at issues of class, race/ethnicity, gender, age, and disability. Chapter 8 addresses social stratification and class, including systems of stratification, major perspectives on the U.S. class system, and the causes and consequences of inequality and poverty. The ideology and accessibility of the American Dream is a recurring theme in the chapter. Chapter 9 extends the discussion to race and ethnicity, using as an illustration the historical relationship (or lack of it) between sports and upward mobility by persons from diverse racial-ethnic groups. A thorough analysis of prejudice, discrimination, theoretical perspectives, and the experiences of racial and ethnic groups is presented, along with global racial and ethnic issues in the twenty-first century. Chapter 10 examines sex and gender with special emphasis on gender stratification in historical perspective. Linkages between gender socialization and contemporary gender inequality are described and illustrated by lived experiences and

perspectives on body image. Chapter 11 provides a cutting-edge analysis of aging and disability, including theoretical perspectives and inequalities related to each. Lived experiences deal with the realities of these issues but also show how older persons and persons with a disability resist discrimination and seek to live with dignity and autonomy.

Part IV, “Social Institutions,” makes students more aware of the importance of social institutions and shows how problems in one have a significant impact on others. Chapter 12 delves into the economy and work, examining contemporary economic systems, the social organization of work, unemployment, and worker resistance and activism. Chapter 13 discusses the intertwining nature of politics, government, and the military. Political systems are examined in global perspective, and politics and government in the United States are analyzed with attention to governmental bureaucracy and the military-industrial complex. The issues of race, gender, class, sexual orientation, and the military are recurring themes in the chapter. Families and intimate relationships are explored in Chapter 14, and education and religion are presented in Chapter 15.

Part V shifts students’ focus to “Social Dynamics and Social Change.” Chapter 16 examines population and urbanization, looking at demography, population growth in global context, and the process and consequences of urbanization. Special attention is given to gender and city life and to race, class, and suburbs. Chapter 17 ends the textbook with a discussion of collective behavior and social change. Environmental activism is used as a sustained example to help students grasp the importance of collective behavior and social movements in producing social change. The concluding section on the twenty-first century takes a final look at the physical environment, population, technology, social institutions, and change.

videos offers a synopsis of each video, suggestions for introducing the videos and discussion questions, and test questions.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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I also deeply appreciate the energy, creativity, and dedication of the many people responsible for the development and production of *Sociology in Our Times*. During my first visit at Wadsworth, I was introduced to my publishing team. Although the roster of players has changed somewhat over time, the team concept has remained strong. In

## Preface

# FOR STUDENTS

Welcome to *Sociology in Our Times*! This book has been written with you—the student—in mind. I enjoy interacting with students in my introductory sociology classes, and I now look forward to your questions and comments about sociology and this text.

I hope you will find sociology as fascinating as I did when I took my first course in sociology. After majoring in another field, I enrolled in introduction to sociology because it met the social science requirement for my degree. Once in sociology, I began to explore all aspects of social life. I saw that sociology helps all of us gain a better understanding of ourselves and others. I became aware that our behavior is largely shaped by the groups to which we belong and the society in which we live. Sociology helped me to look beyond my personal experiences and gain insights into the larger world order. Little did I know that taking introductory sociology would change my career plans! I eventually pursued my master's and Ph.D. in sociology and have taught numerous sociology courses at various colleges and universities.

*Sociology in Our Times* has a number of distinctive features that I hope will make sociology interesting to you. I have listed a few of these below:

- *Lived Experiences.* Authentic first-person accounts are used as opening vignettes and throughout each chapter to give you an opportunity to examine social life from a variety of perspectives.
- *Chapter Outlines.* A concise outline at the beginning of each chapter gives you an overview of major topics without having to flip through the chapter.
- *Questions and Issues.* After the opening lived experience in each chapter, a series of introductory questions will help you focus on the major topics discussed in the chapter.
- *Integrated Running Glossary.* The major concepts or key terms are concisely defined and highlighted in bold print followed by italicized definitions to make your studying easier. (A complete glossary also is provided at the end of the text.)
- *End-of-Chapter Study Aids.* The Chapter Review found at the end of each chapter is a concise summary of key points and theoretical perspectives. The list of Key Terms will help you pinpoint the location of important concepts in the chapter. Questions for Analysis and Understanding and Questions for Critical Thinking will help you assess your knowledge of the chapter and apply insights you have gained. The Suggested Readings list includes recent books pertinent-



# DETAILED CONTENTS

## *Part One*

### STUDYING SOCIETY 1

#### *Chapter 1*

#### **The Sociological Perspective 2**

#### **Putting Social Life into Perspective 5**

*Why Study Sociology? 6*

*The Sociological Imagination 9*

#### **The Development of Sociological Thinking 14**

*Early Thinkers: A Concern  
with Social Order and Stability 15*

*Differing Views on the Status Quo:  
Stability Versus Change 18*

*The Development of Sociology  
in the United States 21*

#### **Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives 23**

*Functionalist Perspectives 24*

*Conflict Perspectives 26*

*Interactionist Perspectives 29*

#### **Chapter Review 32**

*Part Two*

**THE NATURE  
OF SOCIAL LIFE 79**

*Chapter 3*

---

**Culture 80**

**Culture and Society 82**

*The Importance of Culture 82*

*Material and Nonmaterial Culture 85*

*Cultural Universals 87*

**Components of Culture 88**

*Symbols 88*

*Language 90*

*Values 96*

*Norms 98*

**Popular Culture 99**

*Popular Versus High Culture 99*

*Popular Culture and Leisure 101*

*Divergent Perspectives*

*on Popular Culture 102*

**Cultural Change and Diversity 105**

*Cultural Change 105*

*Cultural Diversity 106*

*Culture Shock 111*

*Ethnocentrism 112*

*Cultural Relativism 113*

**Sociological Analysis of Culture 113**

*Functionalist Perspective 113*

*Conflict Perspective 114*

*Interactionist Perspective 114*

**Cultural Patterns**

**for the Twenty-First Century 116**

*Culture and Technology 116*

*A Global Culture? 117*

**Chapter Review 119**

*Chapter 4*

---

**Socialization 122**

**Why Is Socialization Important? 124**

*Human Development: Biology and Society 127*

*Social Isolation 128*

*Child Maltreatment 130*

**Changing Social Structure and Interaction  
in the Twenty-First Century 186**

**Chapter Review 189**

*Chapter 6*

---

**Groups and Organizations 192**

**Social Groups 195**

*Groups, Aggregates, and Categories 195*

*Types of Groups 196*

**Group Characteristics and Dynamics 198**

*Group Size 199*

*Group Leadership 200*

*Group Conformity 201*

**Formal Organizations 209**

*Types of Formal Organizations 209*

*Bureaucracies 211*

*Shortcomings of Bureaucracies 216*

*Bureaucracy and Oligarchy 220*

*An Alternative Form of Organization 222*

**New Organizations  
for the Twenty-First Century 224**

**Chapter Review 226**

*Chapter 7*

---

**Deviance and Crime 230**

**What Is Deviance? 232**

**Functionalist Perspectives on Deviance 235**

*How Is Deviance Functional for Society? 235*

*Strain Theory: Goals  
and Means to Achieve Them 236*

*Opportunity Theory: Access to Illegitimate  
Opportunities 238*

*Control Theory: Social Bonding 239*

**Interactionist Perspectives on Deviance 240**

*Differential Association Theory 240*

*Labeling Theory 241*

**Conflict Perspectives on Deviance 243**

*The Critical Approach 243*

*Feminist Approaches 244*

**Conflict Perspectives on  
the U.S. Class Structure 287**

*Conflict Approach to Measuring Class 287*

*Conflict Model of the Class Structure 288*

*Conflict Explanation of Social Inequality 291*

**Inequality in the United States 293**

*Unequal Distribution of Income and  
Wealth 293*

*Consequences of Inequality 295*

**Poverty 298**

*Who Are the Poor? 298*

*Economic and Structural Sources of Poverty 301*

*Solving the Poverty Problem 301*

**Social Stratification  
in the Twenty-First Century 304**

**Chapter Review 305**

*Chapter 9*

---

**Race and Ethnicity 308**

**Race and Ethnicity 310**

*Social Significance of Race and Ethnicity 311*

*Racial Classifications  
and the Meaning of Race 313*

*Majority and Minority Groups 315*

**Prejudice 315**

*Theories of Prejudice 317*

*Measuring Prejudice 318*

**Discrimination 318**

**Sociological Perspectives  
on Race and Ethnic Relations 320**

*Interactionist Perspectives 320*

*Functionalist Perspectives 321*

*Conflict Perspectives 323*



---

<b>Contemporary Gender Inequality</b>	<b>370</b>
<i>Gendered Division of Paid Work</i>	370
<i>Pay Equity, or Comparable Worth</i>	372
<i>Paid Work and Family Work</i>	374
<b>Perspectives on Gender Stratification</b>	<b>376</b>
<i>Functionalist and Neoclassical Economic Perspectives</i>	376
<i>Conflict Perspectives</i>	377
<i>Feminist Perspectives</i>	378
<b>Gender Issues in the Twenty-First Century</b>	<b>381</b>
<b>Chapter Review</b>	<b>382</b>

---

## *Chapter 11*

<b>Aging and Disability</b>	<b>386</b>
<b>An Overview of Aging and Disability</b>	<b>388</b>
<b>The Social Significance of Age</b>	<b>389</b>
<i>Trends in Aging</i>	391
<i>Age in Historical Perspective</i>	393
<i>Age in Contemporary Society</i>	393
<b>Inequalities Related to Aging</b>	<b>396</b>
<i>Ageism</i>	396
<i>Wealth, Poverty, and Aging</i>	398
<i>Elder Abuse</i>	400
<b>Sociological Perspectives on Aging</b>	<b>401</b>
<i>Functionalist Perspectives on Aging</i>	401
<i>Interactionist Perspectives on Aging</i>	401
<i>Conflict Perspectives on Aging</i>	403
<b>The Social Significance of Disability</b>	<b>404</b>
<i>Disability in Historical Perspective</i>	404
<i>Disability in Contemporary Society</i>	405