

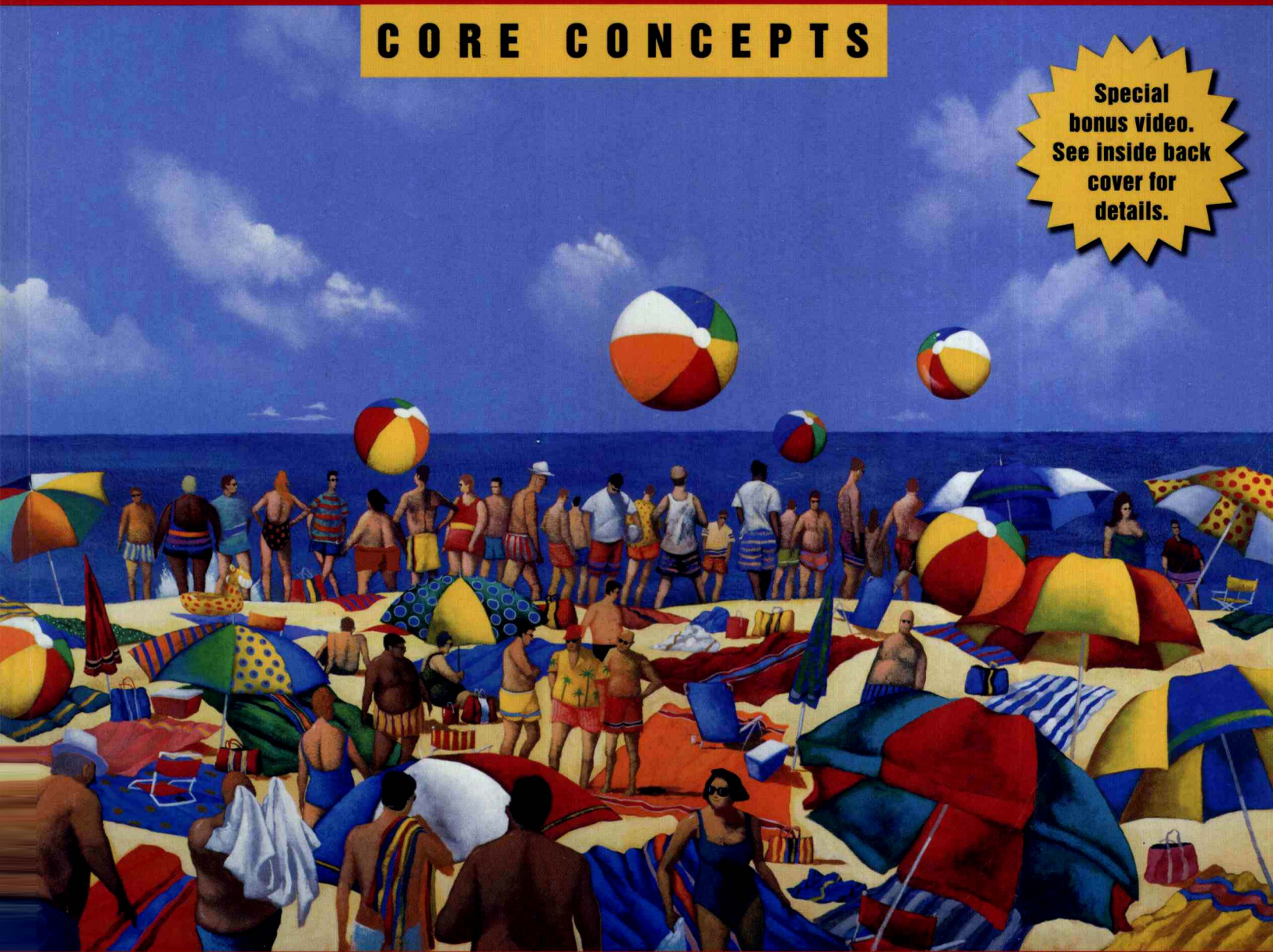
SECOND  
EDITION

# SOCIOLOGY

A DOWN~TO~EARTH APPROACH

CORE CONCEPTS

Special  
bonus video.  
See inside back  
cover for  
details.



JAMES M. HENSLIN

# **Sociology** A DOWN-TO-EARTH APPROACH

second edition



## CORE CONCEPTS

**James M. Henslin**

*Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville*



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# **Sociology**

A DOWN-TO-EARTH APPROACH



CORE CONCEPTS



# “Dear Professor Henslin . . .”

The following are excerpts from letters and e-mails to Jim Henslin from students who have used various versions and editions of *Sociology: A Down-to-Earth Approach*.

Hi Mr. Henslin,

I am a student at Greenville Technical College in Greenville, South Carolina. I am currently taking Introduction to Sociology here at Tech and I must tell you, your book rocks!!!! It is the most fun I have ever had reading any textbook in my life!

Sincerely,  
Kim B

Dear Professor Henslin,

I am a student at Stony Brook University in New York and I'm working toward a major in Sociology. I just completed an introductory summer course in Sociology that was taught with your textbook. I found your book to be incredibly interesting—so much that I am now reading the chapters we skipped over in class.

Thanks again,  
Anna Maria Huertas Kormoski

Mr. Henslin,

I am a student at Texas Pan American University in Edinburg, Texas. I just want to take the time to write and say how much I have enjoyed your book. Not only is it very simple to understand, it is also very interesting. I was reluctant to take the class but through the text, I enjoy the class so much more.

Sincerely,  
Julissa Rodriguez

Dear Mr. Henslin,

I'm a student at Midlands Technical College in Columbia, South Carolina. I'm studying for a test that I have tomorrow in Sociology and I just thought you might like to know that I find your book very interesting. Thanks to your book, I'm considering continuing my study of Sociology.

Thanks again  
Sydney Conley

Hello Professor Henslin,

My name is Marta Holliday and I am a student at Marymount College in Tarrytown, NY. I am taking Introduction to Sociology at Nassau Community College to earn extra credits and your text was required reading for our class. I just wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed your book. I found the chapters fun and interesting—especially how you opened each with a sketch or a personal vignette.

It was a pleasure to read your work. I felt as though I became acquainted with you through your words.

Sincerely,  
Marta A. Holliday

I am currently a freshman at Dordt College, a liberal arts college in Sioux City, Iowa. I really enjoy your book so far. It is very easy to read and understand. I especially appreciate the "down-to-earthiness" of this book. I have found that I can apply the things I have learned [from your text] to my Psychology 201 class also. Thanks for your dedication to making the field of sociology more exciting to learn about.

Joya Gerritsma

My name is April and I live in West Virginia. I am currently reading the book that you wrote. I took Sociology classes in high school and none have made as much sense as this text. I just thought that I would write and let you know.

Sincerely,  
April

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

With my sincere admiration and appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jim Haskin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "J" and a small "H".

# To the Student from the Author

WELCOME TO SOCIOLOGY! I've loved sociology since I was in my teens, and I hope you enjoy it, too. Sociology is fascinating because it holds the key to so much understanding of social life.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



James M. Henslin  
Department of Sociology  
Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville

P.S. I enjoy communicating with students, so feel free to comment on your experiences with this text. Because I travel a lot, it is best to reach me by e-mail: [henslin@aol.com](mailto:henslin@aol.com)

Also, you may want to look at the Web site for this text: [www.ablongman.com/henslin](http://www.ablongman.com/henslin)



# To the Instructor from the Author

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

Sociology is like a huge jigsaw puzzle. Only gradually do the intricate pieces start to fit together. As they do so, our perspective changes as we shift our eyes from the many small, disjointed pieces onto the whole that is being formed. Although this analogy is imperfect, it indicates a fascinating process of sociological discovery. Of all the endeavors we could have entered, we chose sociology because of the ways in which it joins together the “pieces” of society and the challenges it poses to “ordinary” thinking. To share the sociological perspective with students is our privilege.

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

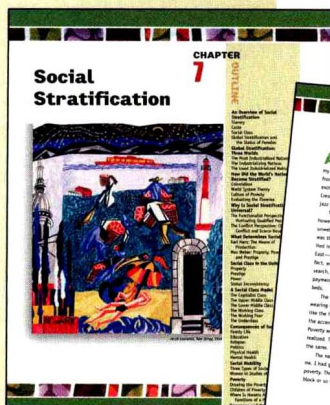
Over the years, I have found the introductory course especially enjoyable. It is singularly satisfying to see students’ faces light up as they begin to see how separate pieces of their world fit together. It is a pleasure to watch them gain insight into how their social experiences give shape to even their innermost desires. This is precisely what this text is designed to do—to stimulate your students’ sociological imagination so that they can better perceive how the “pieces” of society fit together—and what this means for their own lives.

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

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

## The Organization of this Text

The opening chapter introduces students to the sociological perspective and how sociologists do research. We then look at how culture influences us in Chapter 2, examine the deep impact of socialization in Chapter 3, and compare the macrosociological and microsociological approaches to studying social life in Chapter 4. In Chapter 5, we first analyze how broad historical changes in the structure of society affect our orientations to life






and then examine the far-reaching influence of groups on how we feel, think, and act. In Chapter 6, we focus on how groups “keep us in line” and sanction those who violate their norms. In Chapter 7, we turn our focus on how social inequality pervades society and how those inequalities have an impact on our own lives. In this chapter, we begin with a global focus on social stratification and move to an analysis of social class in the United States. After establishing this broader context of social inequality, in Chapter 8 we examine gender, the most global of the inequalities. Then in Chapter 9, we focus on the pervasive inequalities of race-ethnicity. In the final chapter, as we examine the influences of the family on our lives, we look at how this social institution is changing and how its changes, in turn, influence our orientations and decisions.

Throughout this text runs a focus on social change—and its implications for our own lives. As we analyze the topics of this text, we look at the cutting edge of the vital changes that are engulfing us all. This is an exciting time to be experiencing social life—and sociology is a fascinating way of perceiving our experiences.

## Themes and Features

 In addition to social change, six themes run throughout this text: down-to-earth sociology, globalization, cultural diversity, critical thinking, sociology and the new technology, and the mass media in social life. Let's look at these themes.

### Down-to-Earth Sociology

As many years of teaching have shown me, all too often textbooks are written to appeal to the adopters of texts rather than to the students who must learn from them. To me, this is backwards. Therefore, a central concern in writing this book has been to present sociology in a way that not only facilitates understanding but also shares its excitement. During the course of writing other texts, I often have been told that my explanations and writing style are “down-to-earth,” or accessible and inviting to students—so much so that I chose this phrase as the book's subtitle. The term is also featured in my introductory reader, *Down to Earth Sociology*, 13th edition (New York: Free Press, 2005).

This first theme is highlighted by a series of boxed features that explore sociological processes that underlie everyday life. In these **Down-to-Earth Sociology** boxes, we consider such topics as feminism in the 1800s, racism during the same period, and improper and fraudulent social research (Chapter 1); written gestures (Chapter 2); emotional numbness among the Ik and the relationship between heredity and environment (Chapter 3); beauty and success and how football explains social structure (Chapter 4); making friends by facebooking (Chapter 5); serial killers in our midst and urban residents' ambivalence about gangs (Chapter 6); how hitting it big in the lottery changes people's lives and the lifestyles of the super-rich (Chapter 7); the gender gap in math and science and how sexism actually kills women (Chapter 8); voice and racial discrimination in the rental market, the mind of the Neo-Nazis, the “invisible knapsack” that whites carry, and even how a plane ride can change someone's race (Chapter 9); cohabitation, figuring your chances for divorce, when work becomes more comfortable than home, and why abused women don't pack up and leave (Chapter 10).

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

### Globalization

The second theme, globalization, explores the impact of global issues. The new global economy, for example, which has intertwined the fates of nations, vitally affects our lives. The



**Down-to-Earth Sociology**

**Beauty May Be Only Skin Deep, But Its Effects Go On Forever: Stereotypes in Everyday Life**

What are stereotypes? They are generalizations about groups of people that we use to describe them. They are often based on physical characteristics, but they can also be based on social characteristics. Stereotypes can be helpful in some ways, but they can also be harmful. They can lead to discrimination and prejudice. They can also make it difficult for us to see the individual in front of us. In this box, we will explore the role of stereotypes in everyday life.

**How Self-Fulfilling Stereotypes Work**

1. A stereotype is a generalization about a group of people.
2. A stereotype can be based on physical characteristics or social characteristics.
3. A stereotype can be helpful or harmful.
4. A stereotype can lead to discrimination and prejudice.
5. A stereotype can make it difficult for us to see the individual in front of us.



globalization of capitalism influences the kinds of skills and knowledge we need, the types of work available to us, the costs of the goods and services we consume, and even whether our country is at war or in a time of peace. In addition to this strong emphasis on global issues that runs throughout this text, Chapter 7 features systems of global stratification. What occurs in Russia, Japan, and China, as well as in much smaller nations such as Afghanistan and Iraq, has direct and far-reaching effects on our own lives. Consequently, in addition to the global focus that appears throughout the text, we continue this emphasis in the next theme, cultural diversity.

## Cultural Diversity in the United States and Around the World

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

To highlight this subtheme, I have written a series of boxes called **Cultural Diversity Around the World**. These boxes, as well as the other types scattered throughout the text, are one of my favorite features of the book. They are especially valuable for introducing the provocative and controversial materials that make sociology such a lively activity. Among the boxed features that stress cultural diversity around the world are food customs that will likely test the limits of our cultural relativity (Chapter 2); how Easterners and Westerners don’t see the same thing even when they are looking at the same object (Chapter 3); human sexuality in Mexico and Kenya (Chapter 6); selling brides in China and circumcising girls in Africa (Chapter 8); family life in Sweden and love and arranged marriage in India (Chapter 10).

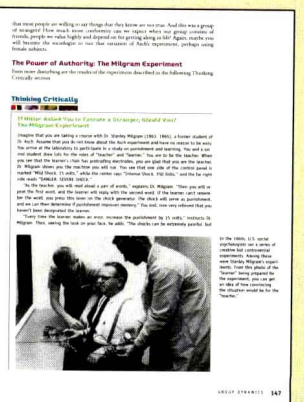
In the second subtheme, **Cultural Diversity in the United States**, we turn our focus on the fascinating array of people who compose U.S. society. Among the boxes that I have written with this subtheme are the significance of language: Spanish and English in Miami and the terms people choose for their own racial-ethnic self-identification (Chapter 2); the dilemma that Latinos face as they confront two cultures (Chapter 3); how the Amish resist social change (Chapter 4); how our own social networks perpetuate social inequality (Chapter 5); the upward social mobility of African Americans, how Tiger Woods represents a significant change in U.S. racial-ethnic identity, discrimination against immigrants, and our shifting racial-ethnic mix (Chapter 9).

Looking at cultural diversity—whether it be in the United States or in other regions of the world—often challenges our own orientations to life. Seeing that there are so many varieties of “doing” social life highlights the arbitrariness of our own customs—and our taken-for-granted ways of thinking. These contrasts help students to develop their sociological imagination. They are better able to see connections among key sociological concepts such as culture, socialization, norms, race-ethnicity, gender, and social class. As their sociological imagination grows, your students can attain a new perspective on their own experiences—and a better understanding of the social structure of U.S. society.

## Critical Thinking

The fourth theme, critical thinking, can enliven your classroom with a vibrant exchange of ideas. Titled **Thinking Critically**, these sections focus on controversial social issues. As with the controversial materials presented in the boxed features, in these sections I present objective, fair portrayals of positions and do not take a side. In the questions that close each of the topics, however, I occasionally play the “devil’s advocate.”

Among the issues addressed in the Thinking Critically sections are the extent to which genes control human behavior (Chapter 2); our tendency to conform to evil authority, as uncovered by the Milgram experiments (Chapter 5); a culture clash on rape and marriage, three-strikes laws, and hate crimes (Chapter 6); bounties paid to kill homeless children in Brazil, *maquiladoras* on the U.S.–Mexico border, and the welfare debate (Chapter 7); biology or culture as a cause of human behavior (Chapter 8); self-segregation on college campuses and





reparations for slavery (Chapter 9); and marital tensions that arise from the inequitable sharing of housework (Chapter 10). Because these *Thinking Critically* sections are based on controversial social issues that either affect the student's own life or are something that he or she is vitally interested in, they stimulate critical thinking and lively class discussion. They also lend themselves especially well to debates and small-group discussions.

## Sociology and the New Technology

The fifth theme, sociology and the new technology, explores an aspect of social life that has come to be central to our existence. We welcome these new tools, for they help us to be more efficient at making a living, doing our everyday tasks, and even communicating with people on the other side of the globe. The significance of the new technology, however, goes far beyond the tools and the ease and efficiency that they bring to our lives. The new technology also reshapes social organizations, which has profound effects on how we relate to one another. This technology also penetrates our "inner" life: It shapes our thinking and perception, leading to changed ways of viewing life and even the self. We are in the midst of a social revolution that will leave few aspects of our lives untouched.

This theme is introduced in Chapter 2, where technology is defined and presented as a major aspect of culture. To highlight this theme, I have written a series of boxes called **Sociology and the New Technology**. The focus of this boxed feature is on how technology is changing society and affecting our lives. In these boxes, we discuss how cloning will lead to strange relationships (Chapter 5) and how high-tech reproduction is stretching and outpacing common sense (Chapter 10).

## The Mass Media and Social Life

In the sixth theme, we examine how the mass media influence our behavior and permeate our thinking. We consider how the media penetrate our consciousness to such a degree that they even influence how we perceive our own bodies. As your students are introduced to this theme, they should begin to see the mass media in a different light, which, in turn, should further stimulate their sociological imagination.

Although this theme is highlighted at appropriate points throughout the text, I have also written a series of boxed features called **Mass Media in Social Life** to make it more prominent for students. In these boxes, we explore why Native Americans like Western novels and movies even though Indians are usually portrayed as victims (Chapter 2); the influence of computer games on images of gender (Chapter 3); the worship of thinness—and how this affects our own body images (Chapter 4); the issue of censoring high-tech pornography (Chapter 6); and slavery in today's world (Chapter 7).

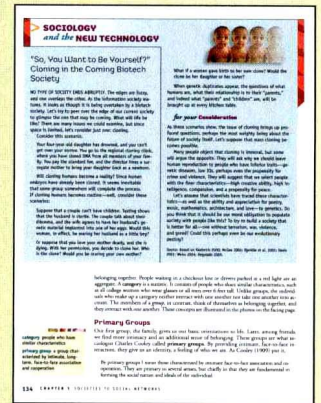
## New Topics

Among the many new topics in this edition are public sociology (Chapter 1); an experiment on monkeys' masculine or feminine toy preferences, transitional adulthood, and the portrayal of women on televised sports (Chapter 3); facebooking (Chapter 5); serial killers (Chapter 6); tracking income inequality by quintiles back to 1935 (Chapter 7); how surgeons exploit women, the gender-height gap in pay, the gender gap in math and science, and a study that challenges the assumption that men dominate conversations (Chapter 8); how people learn prejudice, the Minuteman Project, and the upward social mobility of African Americans (Chapter 9); how to calculate your chances of getting divorced, the first sociological study of the effects of divorce on grandchildren, and the real-life experience of a sociologist who was a battered wife (Chapter 10).

## Visual Presentations of Sociology

Some of the most interesting—and even fascinating—topics in sociology are effectively presented in visual form. Here is a brief overview of some of the visual presentations in this text.

**Through the Author's Lens** I have prepared a series of photo essays called *Through the Author's Lens*. Using this format, students are able to look over my shoulder as I experience other cultures or explore aspects of this one. Doing the research presented in this feature





expanded my own sociological imagination, and I hope that these reports do the same for your students. The four photo essays in this series should open your students' minds to other ways of social life, as well as stimulate insightful class discussion.

The first photo essay is new to this edition:

**Small Town USA: Struggling to Survive** To take the photos for this essay, I wandered off the beaten path. On a road trip from California to Florida, instead of traveling the interstates, I followed those "little black lines" on the map. They took me to out-of-the-way places that our national transportation system has bypassed. Many of these little towns are putting on a valiant face as they struggle to survive, but, as the photos show, the struggle is apparent, and, in some cases, so are the scars (Chapter 5).

The last edition presented three photo essays in the *Through the Author's Lens* series. I have retained them in this edition.

**When a Tornado Strikes: Social Organization Following a Natural Disaster** When a tornado hit a small town just hours from where I live, I drove there to see the aftermath of the disaster. The police let me in to view the neighborhood where the tornado had struck, destroying homes and killing several people. I was impressed by how quickly people were putting their lives back together, the topic of this photo essay (Chapter 4).

**The Dump People of Phnom Penh, Cambodia** Among the culture shocks I experienced in Cambodia was not to discover that people scavenge at Phnom Penh's huge city dump—this I knew about—but that they also live there. With the aid of an interpreter, I was able to interview these people, as well as photograph them as they went about their everyday lives. An entire community lives in the city dump, complete with restaurants amidst the huge piles of garbage. This photo essay reveals not just these people's activities but also their social organization (Chapter 7).

**Work and Gender: Women at Work in India** As I traveled in India, I took photos of women at work in public places. The more I traveled in this country and the more photos I took, the more insight I gained into gender relations. Despite the general submissiveness of women to men in India, women's worlds are far from limited to family and home. Women are found at work throughout the society. What is even more remarkable is how vastly different "women's work" in India is compared to that in the United States. This, too, is an intellectually provocative photo essay (Chapter 8).

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

**Photo Collages** Because sociology lends itself so well to photographic illustration, this text also includes photo collages. In Chapter 2 (page 40), students can catch a glimpse of the fascinating variety that goes into the cultural relativity of beauty. The collage in Chapter 5 (page 135) illustrates categories, aggregates, and secondary groups, concepts that students sometimes wrestle to distinguish. In Chapter 8 (page 227), students can see how differently gender is portrayed in different cultures.

**Fold-Out Sections** Two special features, new to this edition, examine important changes in American society over time. The first, in the chapter on Sex and Gender, looks at the roles and states of women in different historical periods as reflected by the clothing they wore. The second, in the chapter on Race and Ethnicity, uses U.S. Census forms, from the first Census to the most recent, to illustrate that racial classifications are arbitrary and fluid.

**Other Photos by the Author** Sprinkled throughout this edition are photos that I took during travels to India and Cambodia. These photos illustrate sociological principles and topics better than photos available from commercial sources. As an example, the possibility of photographing and interviewing a feral child was one of the reasons that I went to Cambodia. While in the United States, I was told about a feral child who had been discovered living with monkeys and who had been taken to an orphanage in Cambodia. That particular photo is on page 65. Another of my favorites is on page 154.



## Other Special Pedagogical Features

In addition to chapter summaries and reviews, key terms, and a comprehensive glossary, I have included several special features to aid students in learning sociology. **In Sum** sections help students review important points within the chapter before going on to new sections. I have also developed a series of **Social Maps**, which illustrate how social conditions vary by geography. At the end of each chapter is **ContentSelect™**, a listing of search terms that facilitate chapter-related online research. ContentSelect™ gives students access to a huge online collection of professional journals.

**Chapter-opening vignettes** feature down-to-earth illustrations of a major aspect of each chapter's content. Some of these are based on my own experiences. A couple of them come from my research with the homeless, from the time I spent with them on the streets and slept in their shelters (Chapters 1 and 7). Others recount the culture shock that I experienced in Africa (Chapters 2 and 8). I also share my experiences when I spent a night with street people at Dupont Circle in Washington, D.C. (Chapter 4). One vignette is based on an historical event (Chapter 9), and two summarize classic studies in the social sciences (Chapters 3 and 6). One summarizes an event from a novel (Chapter 5), and one is fictional (Chapter 10). Many students have told their instructors that they find these vignettes compelling, that they stimulate their interest in the chapter.

**Thinking Critically About the Chapters** I close each chapter with three critical thinking questions. Each question focuses on a major feature of the chapter, asking students to reflect on and consider some issue. Many of the questions ask the students to apply sociological findings and principles to their own lives.

**On Sources** Sociological data are found in a wide variety of sources, and this text reflects that variety. Cited throughout this text are standard journals such as the *American Journal of Sociology*, *Social Problems*, *American Sociological Review*, and *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, as well as more esoteric journals such as the *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, *Chronobiology International*, and *Western Journal of Black Studies*. I have also drawn heavily from standard news sources, especially the *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal*, as well as more unusual sources such as *El País*. In addition, I cite unpublished papers by sociologists, such as the study in Chapter 9 on job discrimination among applicants who have “white-sounding” and “black-sounding” names.

**On Terms** Although some people still use the terms *First World*, *Second World*, and *Third World*, these terms are biased. Even though unintentional, to say “First World” inevitably connotes superiority of some sort—an implication of coming in first place, with other nations trailing in lesser, inferior positions. Because the collapse of the Soviet Union's system of socialism-communism made these terms outmoded, some have replaced them with *Most Developed Countries*, *Less Developed Countries*, and *Least Developed Countries*. These terms, however, carry the same ethnocentric burden. They indicate that our economic state is superior: *We* are “developed,” but *they* are not—but maybe they'll be fortunate enough to become like us some day.

To overcome these problems of ethnocentric bias and misplaced cultural superiority, I have chosen neutrally descriptive terms: *Most Industrialized Nations*, *Industrializing Nations*, and *Least Industrialized Nations*. These terms do not carry an ethnocentric value burden, for they indicate only that a nation's amount of industrialization is measurable and relative, without a connotation that industrialization is desirable.

## Acknowledgments



The gratifying response to this text indicates that my efforts at making sociology down to earth have succeeded. The years that have gone into writing this text are a culmination of the many more years that preceded its writing—from graduate school to that equally demanding endeavor known as classroom teaching. No text, of course, comes solely from its author. Although I am responsible for the final words on the printed page, instructors who have taught from the earlier versions of *Sociology: A Down-to-Earth Approach*, from which *Core Concepts* is adapted, have given me excellent feedback. I am especially grateful to:



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



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