

FOURTH EDITION

INTRODUCTION TO  
*Sociology*  
A CANADIAN FOCUS

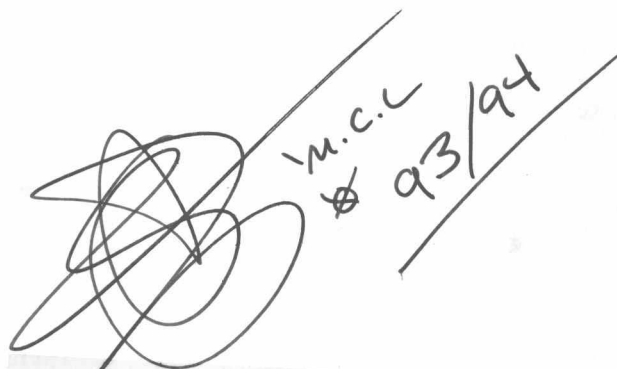


EDITED BY James J. Teevan

# INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY

A Canadian Focus

Fourth Edition



EDITED BY  
James J. Teevan

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Dedicated to our families

*Thanks to*

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## PREFACE

Because sociology is such a broad discipline with many subtopics, in the first edition of this book I decided to have teachers in the various fields of sociology each write a part of the text. The specialists, I felt, would possess the greatest depth of understanding of their topics, and would be abreast of the most recent research in their individual fields, and therefore they would be best able to interest beginning sociology students in the many different insights sociologists have about Canadian society. Now in our fourth edition, I am still happy with that original decision. Each author has much information to offer, both about sociology and about Canada.

The book is divided into six sections. The first section introduces the field of sociology, its major variants, and includes a brief history of Canadian sociology. The next section focuses on society and the individual—the core of sociological thought—which includes discussions on *culture*, the shared way of life that is passed on from generation to generation; on the learning of culture through a process called *socialization*; on *gender roles*, a product of that socialization and a source of both considerable inequality and current interest in sociology; and on *deviant behavior* (such as crime or mental illness), which some sociologists believe is due to the failure of socialization. The third section discusses the *research methods* and strategies sociologists use to collect the data for their analyses of Canadian society.

Social differentiation and inequality in Canada are considered in the fourth part of the text. *Social stratification* (briefly defined as the relatively

enduring differences in possession of wealth, power, and scarce resources), and Canada's *racial and ethnic groups* receive detailed attention in that section. The fifth section on social institutions contains chapters on the major structures of society: *families, religion, education, and politics and state*. Social organization is examined in the last section, with discussions on *formal organization* and bureaucracy, *social movements, population, and urbanization*.

There is, as you will soon see, more than one sociological perspective. The variety of sociologies is demonstrated throughout this volume, as the authors analyze their subject areas and apply the various perspectives to past and present Canadian society.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would again like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the authors of this book for their cooperation, hard work, and patience. I am also grateful to The University of Western Ontario's Department of Sociology for its support, both financial and otherwise.

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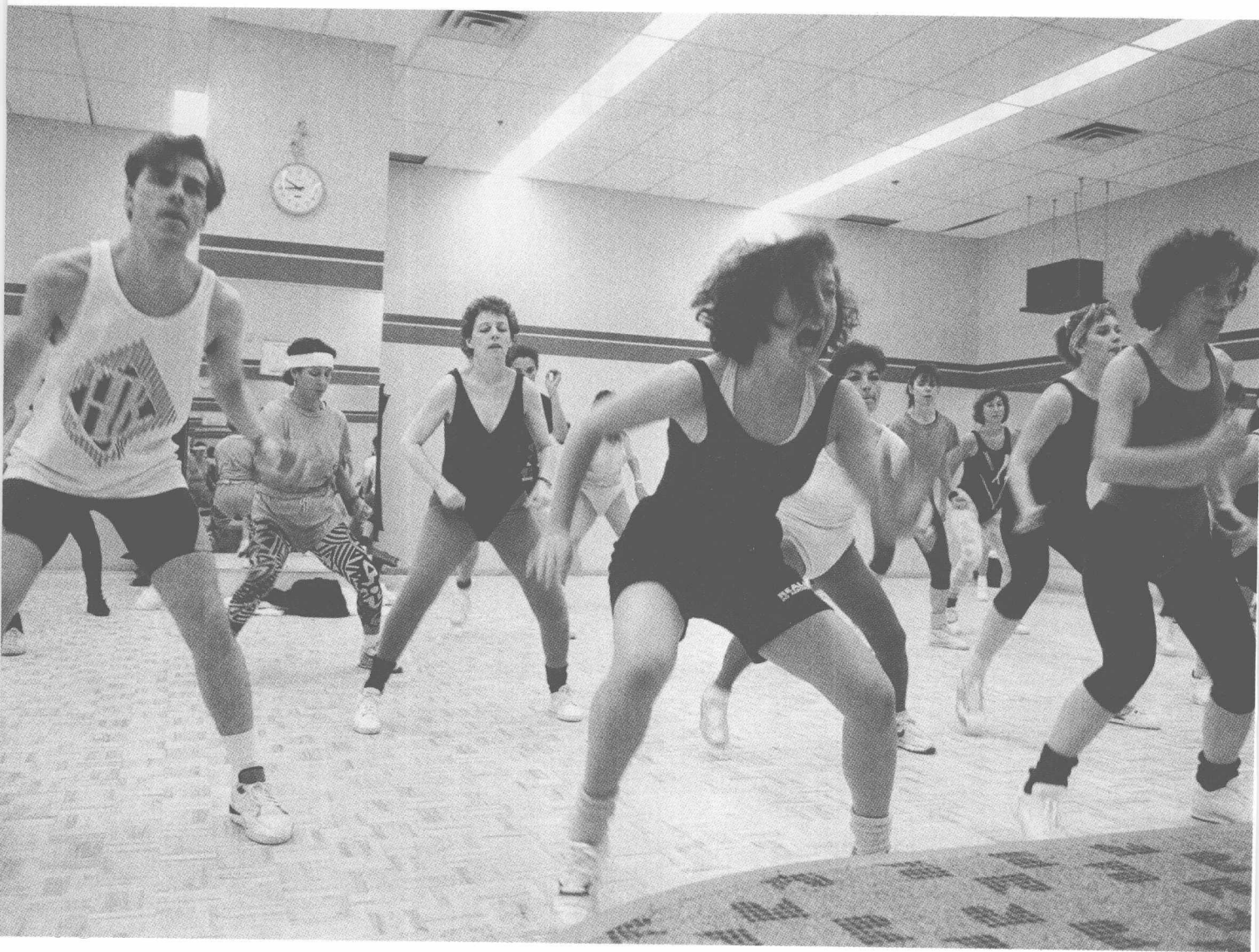
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Part  
I

# Introduction



# WHAT IS SOCIOLOGY?

James J. Teevan & Marion Blute



One of the major concerns of sociology is to explain how membership in social groups affects individual behavior. Thus, sociology attempts to answer such questions as why the U.S. has more crime than Canada (Lipset, 1990), why first-born children may or may not be slightly brighter on the average than second-born (see Chapter 3), why women are under-represented in certain professions (see Chapter 4), why more B.C. than Newfoundland residents are alcoholic (see Chapter 5), or why married people live longer than single people (see Chapter 15). The groups that affect individual behavior can range from societies, defined as a collection of individuals who share a common territory and way of life, such as the U.S. and Canada; to smaller groups that share a common trait, such as trade unionists, doctors, or right-to-life advocates; to social categories, individuals who may not see themselves as forming groups at all but who possess some social characteristic in common, such as very tall people, urban Canadians, childless couples, or people who have lived through the Depression.

In seeking their answers, many sociologists adopt a strategy used almost one hundred years ago by a French sociologist named, Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) who sought to investigate the causes of suicide. Durkheim's contemporaries thought that mental illness, inherited tendencies, or unhappiness might be causes of suicide. Although each of these explanations had some merit, Durkheim was not satisfied with any of them because they focused so much on the person as an isolated individual. Durkheim believed that social factors—factors pertaining to group structure or to the relationships between individuals in groups—were also crucial for understanding suicide.

Durkheim called these social sources of behavior *social facts*. Social facts point to social or group level explanations of behavior, such as nationality, birth order, gender, province, and marital status—in the previous examples, factors that may exist outside individual consciousness but still impinge upon individuals and affect their behavior. Social facts are thus unlike psychological facts, which more often try to