

FOURTH EDITION

# Sociology

CONCEPTS AND APPLICATIONS IN A DIVERSE WORLD



Thomas J. Sullivan

# SOCIOLOGY

*Concepts and Applications* — *Human World*

F O U R T H E D I T I O N

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**FOR NANCY**

# Preface

**A**s the twentieth century draws to a close, the world has been changing in dramatic ways. The Soviet Union has collapsed, the Berlin Wall has fallen, and Germany has been reunited. Communications satellites and computer technology have produced some wondrous advances, such as the Internet, that hold the potential for uniting peoples around the globe. At the same time, ethnic antagonisms rage with tragic consequences in places like Bosnia and Herzegovina, Rwanda, and Burundi. The racial and ethnic diversity of the U.S. population means that such events might occur here if social conditions change. The nations of the world exhibit growing levels of interdependence; well-paying manufacturing jobs in the United States disappear as employers seek cheaper labor in Mexico, Korea, and other Third-World nations. The scourge of cocaine, heroin, alcohol, and other drugs continues to increase health and crime problems in the United States. Greater gender equality has been achieved in the United States and some other nations than could have been imagined one hundred years ago; yet further progress on this front seems to be stalled, and women in many nations still struggle against highly inequitable social institutions.

Sociology emerged as a field of study in the nineteenth century because people found that the sociological perspective provided useful insight into the problems societies faced as they industrialized. Against the backdrop of late-twentieth-century progress and problems alluded to in the preceding paragraph, the discipline of sociology has continued to develop and make contributions to society. Most importantly, sociology has continued to expand our understanding of how societies work and how human behavior is shaped by cultural, structural, and institutional forces. This understanding is especially important today because of the persistence of beliefs among many people that human behavior can be understood on purely individualistic and voluntaristic grounds—that people's personal characteristics, qualities, and motivations determine their actions and that their behavior is a consequence of their own free choices. This individualistic approach can be misleading

because it ignores the power of social and cultural structures in shaping people's behavior.

Another important development in sociology in the late twentieth century has been the reemergence of an interest in applying sociological knowledge to make positive changes in social institutions, social structures, and people's everyday lives. This application goes beyond the goal of understanding how societies operate or what determines human behavior. Using the well-developed foundation of basic sociological theory and research, many contemporary sociologists focus their work on suggesting and evaluating solutions to social problems or helping people to improve their lives. Today, sociological work is as likely to culminate in recommendations for changes in social policy or suggestions for restructuring people's personal lives as it is to stop with an understanding of why people do what they do. In fact, I believe that these efforts to apply sociology have been as exciting, innovative, and important as the more basic research that is still being done by many sociologists.

This fourth edition of *Sociology: Concepts and Applications in a Diverse World* has been prepared to reflect these changes in both the world at large and the discipline of sociology. It retains the features from earlier editions, and adds some significant new features that assist in achieving that goal. This edition provides a solid introduction to the discipline of sociology while developing these themes: the excitement and contribution of *applied sociology*, the value of taking a *global perspective* that recognizes the interdependence of all cultures and societies, the growing importance of *diversity and difference* in the United States and the world, and the central role that *modern technologies of communication and the mass media* have in shaping society and people's daily lives.

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## New Features in the Fourth Edition

In order to develop these themes, address the changes that are occurring in the world, and assist the student in gaining sociological insight into today's world, I have added three significant new features to the fourth edition.

### 1. Mass Media and Modern Communications Technology

In the high-tech, global environment of the twenty-first century, the mass media and modern communications technologies will become far more pervasive and important than many people imagined thirty or fifty years ago. They influence values, norms, and behavior as well as help to shape social institutions and contribute to patterns of dominance and inequality. Whereas earlier editions of this book addressed issues of the mass media, a significant amount of new material, including some discussions of the Internet (for example, Chapters 4 and 12), has been added to the fourth edition, and some of the earlier material has been expanded and highlighted. Twelve of the fifteen chapters now have a special section devoted to the sociological analysis of the mass media and modern communications technologies; one-quarter of Chapter 12 is devoted to discussing the media as a social institution. The titles of these sections are listed, by chapter, on pp. xvi–xvii, and this special icon (M) is used to highlight the media discussion in each chapter.

2. **Sociology on the Internet** Extending the focus of the fourth edition on modern communications technologies, an Appendix has been added to this edition that teaches the student to explore sociological issues on the Internet. It begins with a brief introduction to the Internet and then offers exercises for finding sociological materials related to every chapter in the book. The exercises are designed to encourage the students to gain insight into the sociological significance of what they find on the Internet and to use it as a vehicle for deepening their understanding of the sociological imagination. The results that students obtain from these exercises could be used by the student as a part of a term paper project or by the instructor as a focus for classroom discussions.

3. **Study and Review** At the end of each chapter, a new *Study and Review* section has been added to give students an opportunity to test how well they have grasped the material in the chapter. Each section contains a list of key terms, multiple-choice questions, true-false questions, fill-in questions, matching questions, and essay questions. Correct answers are also provided. These various testing formats offer an assess-

ment of the different kinds of information found in each chapter and will assist students in organizing their study. Students will thereby have a good measure of how much they have learned and a comprehensive review of the content in the chapter, as well as help in preparing for exams.

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## Continuing Features

A number of features from the third edition were effective in developing the themes of this book and assisting students in exploring the world as sociologists. These features have been retained:

1. **Theoretical Perspectives** The presentation of the discipline of sociology continues to be organized around the three core theoretical perspectives: functionalism, conflict theory, and interactionism. These perspectives, which serve as a foundation on which to build a framework of understanding of the sociological approach, are introduced in the first chapter and then used throughout the book. This approach provides students with a sound understanding of the perspectives by the end of the semester, and the perspectives can then be used to analyze any sociological issue.
2. **Applied Sociology** Throughout the book, sociology is applied to the understanding, evaluation, and solution of problems in the United States and the world. In addition, each chapter contains at least one boxed section titled *Applying Sociology* that addresses issues of applied research, social policy development, clinical sociology, and personal applications of sociological principles in the student's life and work. This feature addresses the discipline's growing focus on applied sociology and shows how sociological theory and research can guide the search for solutions to societal and personal problems. In addition, Chapter 1 includes a major section describing the field of applied sociology. The titles of the Applying Sociology inserts are listed, by chapter, on p. xvi.
3. **Globalization, Cross-Culturalism, and Diversity** An important theme running through this book is globalization: the trend toward increasing interdependence among the nations and peoples

of the world. Nations can no longer be studied as independent entities because the political, economic, and social forces that shape people's lives now operate on a worldwide level. This makes a global perspective essential to preparing students to live and work in the modern world. A part of this global view is a *cross-cultural perspective* that helps students to understand the social and cultural nature of human societies and to see how cultures and peoples are similar to and different from one another. In addition, an emphasis on *diversity* is important because diversities of race, ethnicity, gender, or cultural heritage are often at the core of discrimination, differential opportunities, and social conflict. Issues of globalization, cross-culturalism, and diversity are addressed in this book in four ways:

- A. The book begins with an extensive discussion of the importance of diversity, a global perspective, and the sociological imagination in Chapter 1.
- B. Practically every chapter has a section that explores a global perspective on the topic of that chapter. This assists the student in exploring issues of, say, gender inequality or changes in family structure not only in the United States but also in societies around the world.
- C. Boxed sections called *Other Worlds, Other Ways* illustrate sociological concepts and issues in the context of societies and cultures around the world. Two such sections are included in each chapter; their titles are listed, by chapter, on pp. xv–xvi.
- D. Each chapter opens with an in-depth discussion of the issues in that chapter as they apply to a culture different from the contemporary, mainstream culture of the United States.

All these features discuss cultures and nations from all parts of the world, although they take a repeated look at some nations that are especially important to the United States or the world, such as China, Mexico, and Japan. In addition to these specific features, issues of globalization, cross-culturalism, and diversity are incorporated throughout the book.

4. **Myth–Fact Feature** This feature encourages students to recognize that social reality is complex and that our commonsense knowledge of the

world can be either wrong or so overly simplified that it seriously distorts our understanding of the social world. This feature encourages students to distinguish beliefs that have no scientific foundation from sociological facts that have been substantiated through systematic research. It highlights the central role of research in understanding social issues. This feature is introduced in Chapter 1 in the first *Applying Sociology* section; thereafter, it appears as a boxed section at the beginning of each chapter.

5. **Further Readings** Each chapter concludes with a short list of books relevant to topics in that chapter. These books should be available in college or community libraries or bookstores. They include books that further the themes of cross-culturalism, diversity, and applied sociology that are central to this textbook. Students whose imaginations have been stimulated by this introduction to sociology can continue to sharpen their sociological eye by looking at some of these suggested readings.
6. **Thorough Updates** This fourth edition has been thoroughly updated with new theories, research, and data where appropriate. To assist the instructor in making the transition to the new edition, I have listed the significant changes in each chapter in the Instructor's Manual that accompanies this book.
7. **Pedagogical Aids** A number of elements are designed into the text to assist the student in learning the material. The *Study and Review* section and the *Summary* at the end of each chapter give the student the opportunity to review the material in a variety of different ways. A *Learning Objective* has been placed, in color, below every major heading in the text; this cues students to the broad points to learn and remember as they read each section.
8. **Ancillaries** To assist the instructor, I have prepared an *Instructor's Manual and Test Bank* for use with this textbook. It includes a large test bank of essay questions, multiple-choice questions, and true/false questions. It also contains, for each chapter, suggestions for teaching and discussion, a list of films to be used, and a list of the changes in the fourth edition. A *Computerized Test Bank* is also available.

A variety of video options are available with this textbook; please contact your local Allyn and Bacon representative for more information. And finally, be sure and check out the Allyn and Bacon website at <http://www.abacon.com> for a variety of resources related to this text.

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## Organization

The sequence of chapters remains the same in the fourth edition. The chapters are grouped according to sociological themes. Consequently, the book is organized into five parts: Part One has one chapter that introduces the student to the *sociological perspective*, including a discussion of theoretical perspectives and research methods. Part Two contains four chapters that focus on the major links between *the individual and society*, including culture, social structure, socialization, groups and organizations, and deviance and social control. Part Three consists of three chapters whose focus is *social stratification and social inequality*, including analyses of class, race, ethnicity, and gender. Part Four includes five chapters that cover the major *social institutions*: the family, health care, religion, education, politics and the economy. Part Five contains two chapters whose theme is *human ecology and social change*, including population issues, urbanization, collective behavior, social change, and modernization.

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For me, sociology continues to be one of the most exciting, fast-paced, and demanding disciplines because it presents a continual challenge to traditional and established ways of thinking about the world. Over the years that I have been a sociologist, I have engaged in sociological research and practice in many diverse settings. I have evaluated programs to help schoolchildren in need and programs for services targeted at pregnant teenagers; I have advised administrators who run programs for homeless teens as well as those providing services to women recovering from drug addictions; I have conducted research on people's responses to life-threatening illnesses. Through all of this, my passion for the sociological enterprise has grown stronger. Sociology engenders an openness, an eagerness, and an intense desire to learn more about all aspects of the human condition. By knowing other people, their lives, and their society, we can better understand ourselves. My hope is that this book will generate the same passion in the students who read it; as a result, a few may start down the exciting road to becoming the next generation of sociologists.

Thomas J. Sullivan  
Marquette, Michigan

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