Sociology in Everyday Life

Sociology in Everyday Life

MATTHEW GOUGHERTY AND JENNIFER PUENTES

OPEN OREGON EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

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Message to Students

Welcome to the *Introduction to the Sociology of Everyday Life*. Through this textbook, we hope you will learn more about sociological perspectives and how you can use this knowledge to develop your sociological imagination. We challenge you to keep an open mind as you learn about sociological ways of thinking that often center on understanding difference, power, discrimination, and equity.

This textbook is designed to engage you in learning about the discipline of sociology. With the required reading and video content, chapters range from 60 minutes to 2 hours. Your reading time will vary depending on how fast you read and how much time you are able to devote to your academic work. Many examples connect to experiences we share in Oregon and the region; however, we also incorporate serious issues that readers will be able to relate to across the United States.

This text is designed to pair with Sociology 204 Introduction to Sociology in the state of Oregon. You will find assignments and discussion questions that help you understand these readings more deeply. There are two types of activity boxes in the text: "Activity" and "A Closer Look." "Activity" boxes include media and discussion questions, while "A Closer Look" offers a deeper dive into topics related to the chapter content. We have included links to videos, blogs, papers, and other resources throughout the book. Please refer to your instructor for assistance in knowing which activities are required or recommended. Even if your instructor is not collecting the assignment, you may find the activities helpful as you work through the course and learn more.

One of the appeals of participating in the Open Oregon Educational Resources project was the ability to think of this textbook as a living document that has the potential to change. Our work only becomes better through your feedback. You may uncover small errors, as they do happen in a project of this magnitude. If you find an error related to accessibility, please let your instructor know so it can be fixed. Sometimes we cut topics and ideas that are more prominent in standard textbooks in favor of highlighting a lesser-known influential scholar or offering diverse perspectives. We look forward to learning about what works well for you with this text, as well as what could be improved on. Areas we'd like to learn more about include:

- What do you want to learn more about?
- Are there additional definitions that could clarify existing content?
- Are there features that you have seen in other textbooks that we could add and that would help you learn better?

Thank you for taking this journey with us. We look forward to seeing how you apply your sociological imagination to the world around you.

We created this text because we are passionate about offering an accessible introductory sociology textbook that connects to real life experiences. By drawing on recent sociological research and current events, we hope it helps readers better understand their social worlds. We entered this project excited to highlight a diversity of perspectives and frameworks. We attempt to center voices of lesserknown scholars who have still been influential in shaping sociology. The free and open license helps cut down on

overpriced textbook costs while allowing readers and instructors to customize and elaborate on the text in ways they see fit.

This book focuses on how race, class, and gender influence our experiences in a variety of social settings while providing an introduction to the core concepts of sociology. In doing so, we make connections to current events and social issues in the Pacific Northwest, emphasizing how social facts are embedded in particular places and times. The book is sequenced to first cover some of the basics of sociology, our theories for understanding social life, and our methods for studying the social world. Those first three chapters serve as the basis for the chapters that follow and would ideally be read first. The middle chapters move from small-scale social patterns to larger patterns of meaning-making. The final chapters relate to inequalities, pointing to how inequalities exist at multiple levels, from interpersonal interactions to larger-scale social patterns.

Best wishes,

Jennifer Puentes, Lead Co-Author

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About This Book

Accessibility Statement

This book was created in good faith to ensure that it will meet accessibility standards wherever possible and to highlight areas where we know there is work to do. It is our hope that by being transparent in this way, we can begin the process of making sure accessibility is top of mind for all authors, adopters, students, and contributors of all kinds on open textbook projects.

If you encounter an accessibility issue, please let your instructor know right away.

Equity Lens

The Open Oregon Educational Resources Targeted Pathways Project seeks to dismantle structures of power and oppression entrenched in barriers to course material access. We provide tools and resources to make diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) primary considerations when faculty choose, adapt, and create course materials. In promoting DEI, our project is committed to:

1. Ensuring diversity of representation within our team and the materials we distribute
2. Publishing materials that use accessible, clear language for our target audience
3. Sharing course materials that directly address and interrogate systems of oppression, equipping students and educators with the knowledge to do the same

Designing and piloting openly licensed, intersectional, and antiracist course materials is one starting point among many when addressing inequities in higher education. Our project invites students and educators to engage with us in this work, and we value spaces where learning communities can grow and engage together.

We welcome being held accountable to this statement and will respond to feedback submitted via **our contact page**.

Course Learning Outcomes

Educators, students, and future employers all benefit when course-level learning outcomes guide our shared work. When course-level learning outcomes are public, institutions demonstrate a commitment to equitable student success through the potential for increased collaboration and inclusive course design. This project analyzed learning outcomes across the state of Oregon to identify themes and com-

monalities. Authors used this analysis as a basis for developing course outcomes that could match the curriculum of multiple institutions in Oregon while still considering their local needs and context.

Course learning outcomes are as follows:

1. Understand sociological perspectives and sociological imagination and how they can be used to interpret historical and cultural contexts of social events.
2. Apply sociological concepts to everyday life and the broader social world.
3. Identify social inequality and stratification systems to evaluate the impact on societies.
4. Demonstrate the ability to use critical thinking when analyzing a diverse range of human experiences.
5. Participate as active citizens in their societies and communities, demonstrating respect for diversity, critical thinking, and collaboration.

Oregon adopted a statewide course name, number, description, and learning outcomes in 2024 (below). The learning outcomes developed in this textbook align with the new statewide learning outcomes, with a focus on respect for diversity, critical thinking, collaboration, and active citizenship. For more information please visit the Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission's **Educator Resources – Common Course Numbering [Website]**.

SOC/SOAN 204Z Introduction to Sociology

Course Description:

Introduces the central concepts, theories, and methods that define the sociological approach to investigating the social forces that shape our lives. Topics may include social structure, culture, socialization, race, class, gender, sexuality, and inequality.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Describe the central concepts, theories, and methods that define sociological approaches to social scientific inquiry.
2. Analyze social life using sociological concepts and theories.
3. Explain how the sociological imagination interrelates different levels of analysis such as social structures and individuals.
4. Identify how social factors contribute to inequalities in society.
5. Explain the role of theory and evidence in building sociological knowledge.

Teaching and Learning Approach

The authors of this book embraced an equity-minded design for the structure, scope, and sequence of chapters and chapter content. They sought to honor the needs and experiences of students who are often underserved in higher education in Oregon. Authors considered Transparency in Teaching and Learning (TILT), Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and culturally responsive teaching to design meaningful learning pathways for you. You will find rich images and multimedia in addition to written content. You will also find provocative discussion questions that align with learning outcomes and objectives.

The authors of this text attempt to incorporate inclusive language while also reflecting the complexities of social life, as well as academic research. You will see the terms Latino/Latina, Latinx, and Hispanic used within different contexts. The authors sought to honor the way group identities are experienced as well as identified in research. Latinx offers an inclusive and gender-neutral way to refer to people; however, research shows that only a 4 percent of Hispanic and Latino communities identify as Latinx (Newport 2022, **https://news.gallup.com/opinion/polling-matters/388532/controversy-term-latinx-public-opinion-context.aspx**). The authors of this text chose to use the umbrella term LGBTQIA+ as a way to acknowledge the expansiveness of the community and refer to the community as a whole. Any mentions that do not use the umbrella term are designed to accurately represent the data used in research discussed. LGBTQIA+ is an abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual. The additional "+" stands for all of the other identities not encompassed in the short acronym.

Instructors, please see the Instructor Resources section in the back matter for an overview of curriculum design as well as openly licensed course packs and teaching tools.

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CHAPTER

1

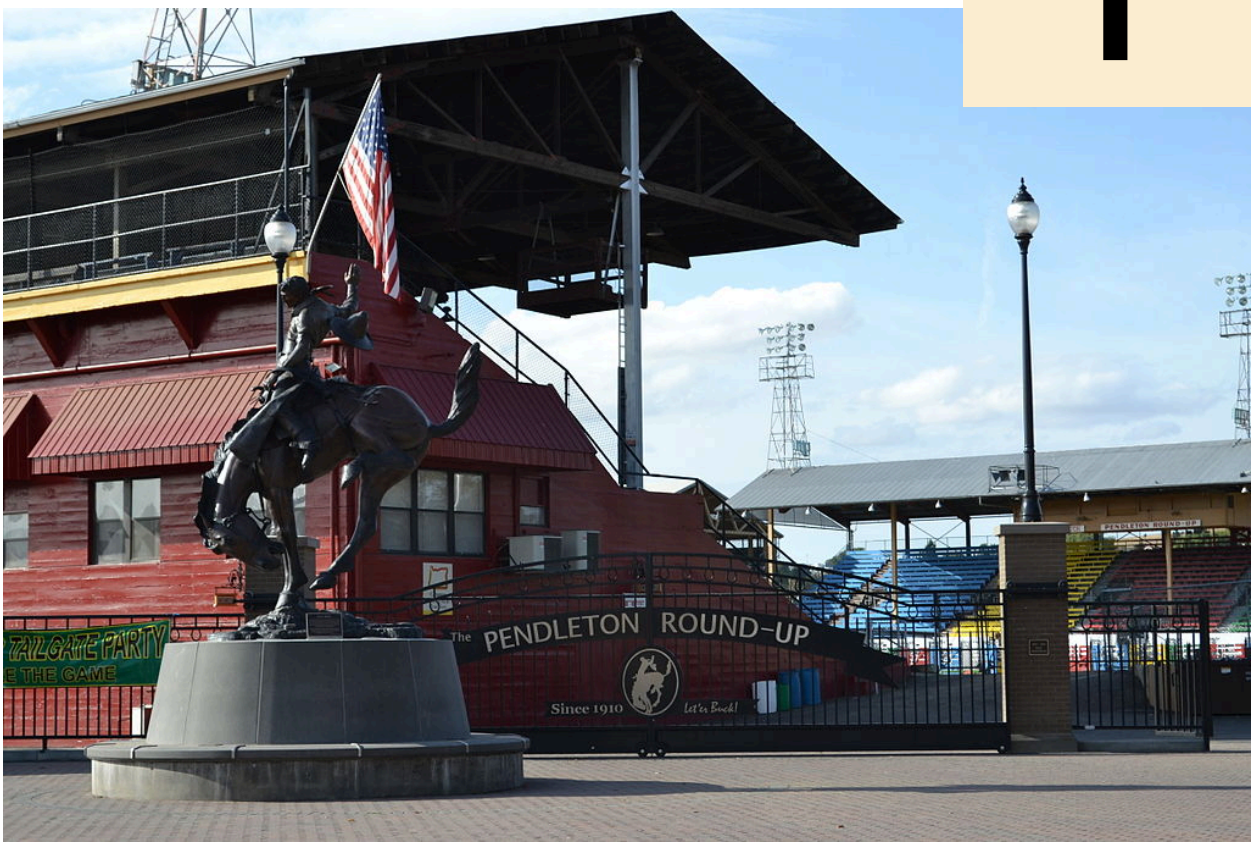

Figure 1.1 How can you use a sociological imagination at the Pendleton Round-Up?

Introduction to Sociology

1.1 Chapter Learning Objectives and Overview

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Describe concepts central to **sociology**, such as **society**, **sociological perspective**, structure, institutions, **agency**, and the **sociological imagination**.

2. Describe how **diversity** informs one's sociological perspective through the study of human differences that exist within systems of **privilege** and **oppression**.
3. Employ macro- and micro-level analysis to understand the role of structure, agency, and institutions in society.
4. Explain why it is worthwhile to study sociology.
5. Identify ways sociology is applied in the real world.

Overview

"Let 'er buck!"

If you've ever attended the Pendleton Round-Up in Pendleton, Oregon (figure 1.1), or participated in other rodeos, you've heard this catchphrase, first used in 1910 to kick off "a frontier exhibition of picturesque pastimes, Indian and military spectacles, cowboy racing and bronco busting" (Pendleton Round-Up n.d.). For many people living in the West, Oregonians in particular, rodeos are part of their history and hold a vital role in their communities.

You might wonder why a sociologist would be interested in studying rodeos. Rodeos, like many other activities, provide an opportunity to learn more about human behavior. Sociologists see events like the Round-Up as a way to learn more about history, culture, interactions between groups, and interactions between people within social structures. To study the sport of rodeo, we look past some of the physical activity to focus on the patterns of participation and exclusion, as well as to explore the connections between the event and other social phenomena.

On the surface level, we see that the Pendleton Round-Up provides entertainment, displays athleticism, and builds community. However, if we step back to examine the layers and levels of social interactions that occur there, we can uncover more about how and why groups of people behave as they do in particular situations. The Pendleton Round-up was founded in 1910 by the town's professionals and businessmen to provide entertainment centered on the community's roots in the Wild West (Willingham 2021). The Round-Up includes Native Americans by inviting the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) and tribal members throughout the Northwest to participate in the event (figure 1.2, figure 1.3). This event may appear to serve as entertainment that centers around the history and culture of the Wild West, but it also serves additional functions. The week of Round-Up and the days leading up to it are important for the community's economy. The event brings in tourism that supports local artisans, restaurants, and other businesses. For some, that week's worth of commerce helps cover less-lucrative periods. By examining the Pendleton Round-Up through a sociological perspective, we can start to see how an activity such as a rodeo has implications for **race**, economic systems, and public health. We will revisit this analysis in greater depth later in this chapter.

Figure 1.2 Indian War Dancers at the "Round-Up," Pendleton, Oregon, 1911. You can learn more about the **history of the Round-Up [Website]** (optional).

Figure 1.3 What can we learn by using the sociological perspective as we watch parades?

At times it may seem as though sociologists (and your professor) are speaking in some sort of code: Structure? Agency? **Social institutions**? Our specialized language reflects key concepts and ideas commonly used in the discipline of sociology. This chapter will help introduce you to these concepts and ignite your sociological imagination, a topic we'll discuss in the next section.

Sociologists seek opportunities to learn more about social life by using social scientific approaches to study everyday interactions and broader patterns in society. In this chapter, you will explore what sociology is and how the sociological perspective can be applied in everyday life. We will return to the Round-Up example as a tool to examine representations of diversity and understand more about the interconnections between social institutions. Finally, you will explore why it's useful to study sociology and the discipline's real-world applications.

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Figure 1.2. "Indian War Dancers at the 'Round-Up,' Pendleton, Ore., 1911." by Marcell is in the Public Domain. Courtesy of Library of Congress's Prints and Photographs division.

Figure 1.3. "Westward Ho! Parade Indians" by John Bromley is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

1.2 What Is Sociology?

Sociology is one of many social sciences that is interested in studying **society**. In this text, we define **sociology** as the scientific and systematic study of groups and **group** interactions and societies and social interactions, from small and personal groups to very large groups and mass culture. Another way to think of sociology is as the systematic study of human society and interactions. **Society** refers to a group of people who live in a defined geographic area, interact with one another, and share a common culture. All of these definitions emphasize the way that humans are social beings; society and the individual cannot exist without each other.

Sociologists identify and study patterns related to all kinds of contemporary social issues. Examples of topics sociologists might explore include the emergence of new political factions, how X influences everyday communication, the lack of racial and **gender diversity** in media portrayals of rodeo, and the stop-and-frisk policy. If you want to learn more, you have the option to read about the stop-and-frisk policy [Website].

Social Facts

Some sociologists study **social facts**—the laws, morals, **values**, religious beliefs, customs, fashions, rituals, and cultural rules that govern social life. These practices exist outside of us as individuals, but they still act to constrain our behavior. Social facts make it possible to move beyond studying individuals so we can learn about behavior of entire societies. Social theorist Émile Durkheim (1895) suggested that social facts are concrete ideas that influence the daily life of individuals. Durkheim discussed social facts within the context of kinship and marriage, language, and religion. Another well-known example of Durkheim's study of social facts examines suicide rates. Using police suicide statistics from different districts, he found patterns that suggest suicide is not solely something that occurs at the level of the individual.

Social facts can refer to material and non-material items (figure 1.4). Material social facts include **norms** and laws in society that are often observable, such as legal systems. Non-material social facts refer to codes of conduct or best practices. An example of a non-material social fact could be morality or institutionalized religion.

Examples of Social Facts	
Material	**Non-material**
Laws	Norms
Art	Values
Technology	Practices

Figure 1.4 Social facts are "things" created by people.

Sociological Perspective

How do sociologists "do" sociology? The first step is to develop your **sociological perspective** so that you can examine the world around you in a new way. Making the familiar strange enables you to think sociologically. The **sociological perspective** is a lens that allows you to view society and social structures through multiple perspectives simultaneously. Individuals can act independently within **social institutions**, but they are also bound by social structures that shape their lives. By becoming a skilled user of the sociological perspective, you will be able to see beyond the outside appearances of the actions of individuals and organizations (Berger 1963).

To develop our perspectives, we might draw from some of the following concepts: beginner's mind (McGrane 1994), culture shock (Berger 1963), **sociological imagination** (Mills 1959), and sociological mindfulness (Schwalbe 1998). We will discuss each of these approaches in the next section.

One strategy for developing the sociological perspective involves using the beginner's mind. The beginner's mind involves approaching the world without knowing in advance what to expect (figure 1.5). You take on the task of unlearning what you know so that you are open and receptive to the experience of seeing things through a new perspective (McGrane 1994). This concept draws on the Buddhist practices outlined by Shunryū Suzuki, a Sōtō Zen monk and teacher who helped popularize Zen Buddhism in the United States. At the core of this perspective is the idea that the beginner sees many possibilities, while an expert may only see a few possibilities (Suzuki 1970). A novice or beginner may see things with an open mind, setting aside preconceptions about how something *should* be. For example, a classically trained chef with expert status may believe there is only one correct way to run a dinner service at an event, but a newcomer may challenge this notion in favor of a dining style that reflects the changing desires and needs of current customers. While the expert chef may envision a plated dinner service for a formal event, the beginner's mind might see value in alternative approaches to dining, such as food stations (enter the innovation of the mac-and-cheese bar at weddings).

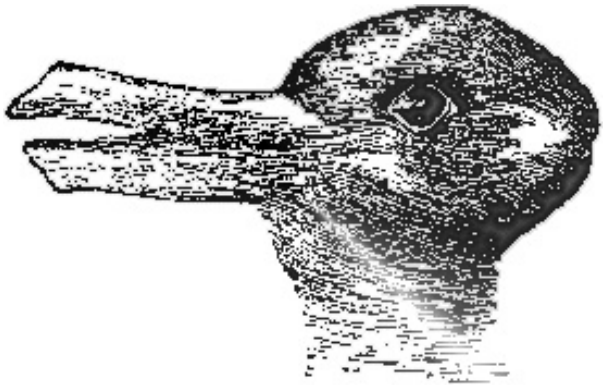

Figure 1.5 What do you see? How can you adjust your mindset to see another animal?

Another strategy for developing the sociological perspective is to create a sense of culture shock. Culture shock refers to the experience of disorientation that occurs when someone enters a radically new environment (Ferris and Stein 2018). We can experience new social or cultural environments by first examining our own culture from an outsider's perspective. The familiar can become strange or new when we take this approach. For example, you may have experienced the feeling of culture shock when you transitioned from high school to college. If you've traveled abroad, you may have encountered culture shock as you encountered new foods, languages, and styles of clothing (figure 1.6). You can recreate this feeling by examining your own culture from an outsider's perspective.

Figure 1.6 Culture shock can be common when we are exposed to new experiences. How might one respond the first time they encounter squat toilets or composting toilets?

A third approach to developing your sociological perspective is using what sociologist C. Wright Mills calls the **sociological imagination**, an awareness of the relationship between a person's behavior and experience and the wider culture that shapes the person's choices and perceptions. Mills saw the sociological imagination as a way of seeing our own and other people's behavior in relationship to history and social structure (Mills 1959).

The sociological imagination allows us to understand the relationship between how society influences us and how we can influence society. Typically, people think of their experiences in individualistic terms, meaning they see the impact of their experiences on themselves rather than

seeing how our experiences are often shared. The sociological imagination examines how what we are experiencing is connected to larger social patterns and contexts. One illustration of this is a person's decision to marry. In the United States, we often think of this as an individual choice influenced by feelings like love. However, decisions to marry are also influenced by the social acceptability of marriage and **marriage equality**. For example, interracial marriages were banned in some states until 1967 when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of Loving in *Loving v. Virginia*, determining that laws prohibiting people from marrying outside of their racial background are unconstitutional (for more optional information, see ***Loving v. Virginia*** **[Website]**). You will examine the sociological imagination in greater detail by completing the "Understanding the Sociological Imagination" activity in the next section.

Finally, another way to develop your sociological perspective is through sociological mindfulness. Author and sociology professor Michael Schwalbe uses the term "sociological mindfulness" to refer to how we should develop ways to pay attention to the social world and how it works. Mindfulness entails recognizing how other people might be similar or different from us and how our lives are intertwined with those same people (Schwalbe 1998).

Activity: Understanding the Sociological Imagination

In this short video, you will learn more about C. Wright Mills's concept of the sociological imagination. To understand and apply this perspective, you will learn how to distinguish between what he refers to as personal troubles and public issues.

Please watch the video in figure 1.7, and answer the following questions:

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BINK6r1Wy78**

Figure 1.7 How can you apply the sociological imagination to the world around you? This video is an introduction of **C. Wright Mills's concept of the sociological imagination [Streaming Video]**. **Transcript.**

1. Compare personal troubles with public issues. What example given in the video best helped you distinguish between the concepts?
2. Apply the idea of personal troubles and public issues to your own life. List and describe three examples to explain the connection between the concept of personal troubles and public issues.

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"Activity: Understanding the Sociological Imagination" by Jennifer Puentes is adapted from "Sociological Imagination" by Sociology Live!, which is licensed CC BY 3.0. Modifications include introduction and questions.

Figure 1.5. The duck-rabbit illusion is in the Public Domain.

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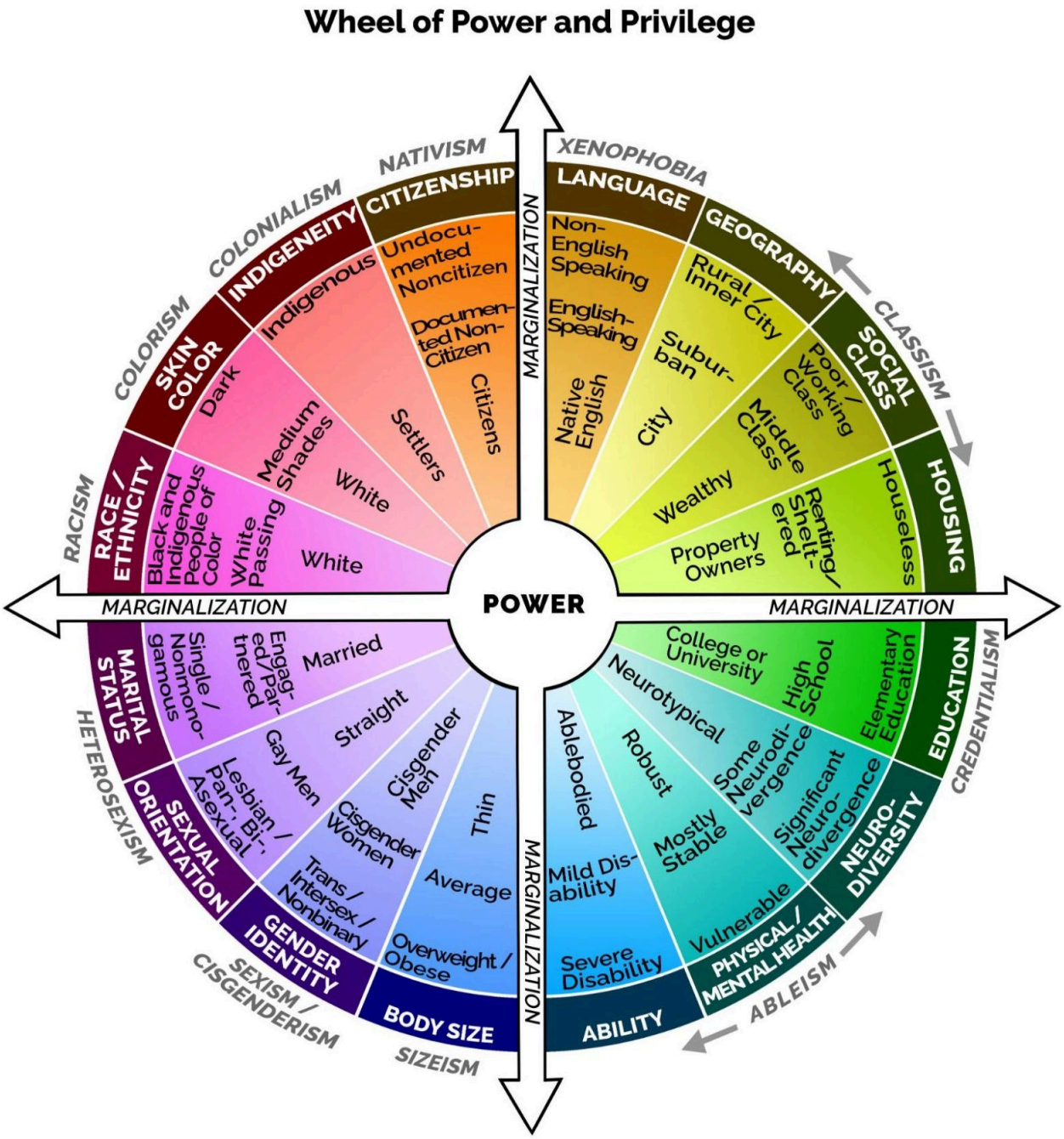
1.3 Examining Diversity

Sociologists are typically concerned with the full range of human experiences. **Diversity** refers to the presence of differences, including psychological, physical, and social differences, that occur among individuals. As we develop our sociological perspectives, we see that human differences exist within systems of **privilege** and **oppression**. In these systems, some people in certain social positions are included and gain rewards from the system, and others in different positions are excluded. **Privilege** is "an advantage that is unearned, exclusive to a particular **group** or social category, and socially conferred by others" (Johnson 2018:148). Privilege exists along a wide spectrum and can include factors like ability, religion, and **race**. For example, able-bodied privilege allows someone to visit new places without being concerned about accessibility factors like working elevators or ramps. Religious privilege may allow someone to expect that school and work holiday schedules will reflect the holidays they celebrate. People with light skin tones may be able to easily purchase "flesh-toned" items, such as band-aids that reflect their skin tone. You will learn more about privilege in chapters that cover social strat-

ification and class, **gender and interaction**, **sexuality**, and **race and ethnicity**.

In contrast to privilege, **oppression** refers to a combination of **prejudice** and institutional power that creates a system that regularly and severely discriminates against some groups and benefits other groups (NMAAHC 2019). Sociologists tend to refer to the inequities built into our **society** as systems of oppression. Some examples can include **sexism**, classism, ableism, and ageism.

Figure 1.8 offers a visual to help you understand the relationship between identities and social power. Describing just one characteristic of a person's identity is not enough to understand them. Similarly, understanding any social group requires understanding their complex experiences. For this, we turn to the concepts of **social location** and **intersectionality**.



This wheel describes an individual's or group's relationship to power and privilege. Social locations near the center of the wheel experience more power. Social locations near the edge of the wheel experience more oppression. Please keep in mind that as we try to describe the relationships between socially constructed power and identity, the categories we use can be imprecise, overlapping, and unstable. Based on the work of Patricia Hill Collins, Kimberlé Crenshaw and Allan Johnson, and the visual images of Sylvia Duckworth and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

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Figure 1.8 The Wheel of Power and Privilege shows the relationship between social identity and social power. When you examine this wheel, what do you see? Which of your identities have power and privilege? Which of your identities are more marginalized? **Image description.**

Social location is defined as the combination of various factors, including **gender**, race, social **class**, age, ability, religion, **sexual orientation**, and geographic location, *in relationship to power and privilege* (Brown et al. 2019). In the circle in figure 1.8, the word *power* sits at the center of the circle. People with characteristics near the center of the circle, such as White, non-disabled property owners, have more power and privilege. Power is the ability to sway the actions of another actor or actors, even against resistance. People in the center are members of the **dominant group**.

Non-dominant, or marginalized, groups are located near the outside of the wheel. Marginalization is a process of social exclusion in which individuals or groups are pushed to the outside of society through the denial of economic and political power (Oxford Reference 2022). People in marginalized groups have less access to power. These social locations may be linked to having only an elementary school education, being houseless, or being **queer**.

Rather than only being indicators of your identity, these social locations begin to describe the access that people in a group have to **wealth**, status, political power, economic stability, or other social resources. Identities that align with the groups who have power tend to have privilege. Those identities that align with less powerful groups experience oppression.

Citizens, for example, have the right to vote, the right to safely travel in and out of countries, and the possibility of applying for federal financial aid to finance school. They also have the right to work and receive government benefits like health insurance, social security, and unemployment. Citizenship itself conveys power to that social group. At the far end of citizenship, we find people who are undocumented or living in a country without any citizenship rights. Undocumented people cannot vote, legally enter the country, or receive government aid to pay for education. Undocumented people may be deported at any time. Being safe where you live is a privilege. When you lack this safety, you experience a specific kind of oppression called nativism.

Let's return to the example we started with at the beginning of this chapter, the Pendleton Round-Up. As you read the next section, "Representations of Diversity at the Round-Up," reflect on your experiences with rodeos as you analyze representations of race and gender.

Representations of Diversity at the Round-Up: Race and Gender

How does rodeo inform sociologists about group compositions and interactions? Sociologists look for patterns to identify who participates in events and what images become dominant. If we examine the history of rodeos, we see that contemporary events routinely incorporated into Wild West shows, such as roping, controlling, and riding wild bulls and horses, were shaped by Hispano-Mexican techniques of breeding and area games (Fredriksson 1993). What about representation? Who do you visualize when you think of cowboys? Men? Do some racial categories come to mind more than others? The version of the Wild West typically seen through stories and films undercuts the **roles** of vaqueros, who served as a great influence for what became the American cowboy (figures 1.9, 1.10). On occasions when vaqueros are included, they are portrayed as lazy and untrustworthy (Gandy 2008).

Figure 1.9 George Fletcher, African-American rough stock rider in early-day rodeo.

Figure 1.10 Vaquero in action roping cattle during 1830s Spanish California. How does the vaquero shape the way we think of rodeo today?

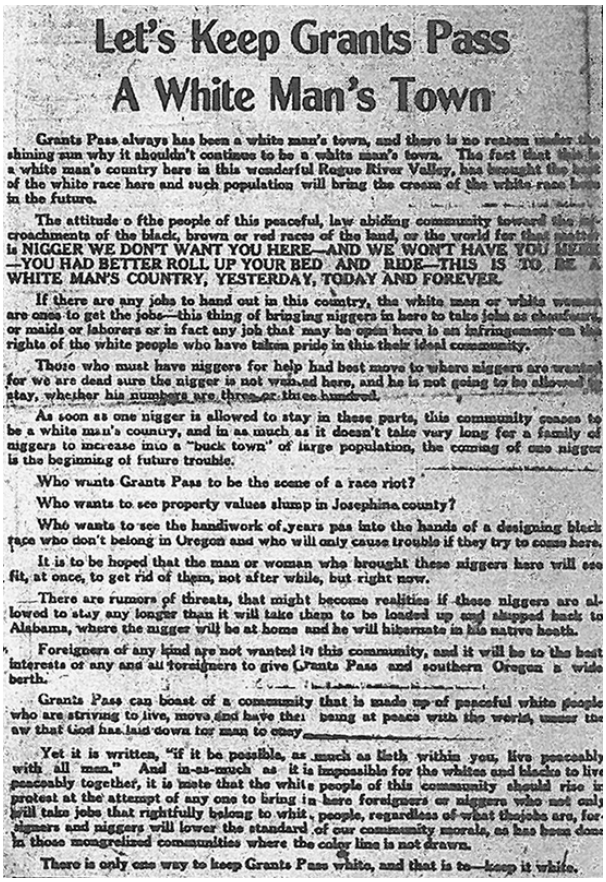
In addition to understanding how groups are portrayed, sociologists are also interested in examining who is not represented. The contributions of Black cowboys are routinely omitted from the myth of the Wild West as well. During the Civil War, as White ranchers went to fight in the war, Black cowboys arrived to take their place. Gandy (2008) suggests that about one in every four cowboys was African American. White and Black cowboys worked together, sharing living quarters and food. However, Black cowboys still experienced social **discrimination**, which limited employment opportunities and inclusion in some public spaces. Legalized racial **segregation** in the form of Jim Crow laws in North America led to discrimination against racial and ethnic minorities in society (Patton and Shedlock 2011). You have the option to learn more about **Jim Crow laws [Website]**.

In Oregon, Black cowboys (figure 1.11) brought an element of diversity to rodeos, but unlike other frontier states, few Black cowboys historically lived and worked in the state (Fonseca 2022). Why might this be, when historical documents suggest that in other spaces African Americans held vital roles in building non-Indigenous communities and participating in rodeos? Sociologists want to understand how policies in our social structure and inequalities experienced by groups contribute to demographic patterns.

Figure 1.11 How did George Fletcher help shape the Pendleton Round-Up? How have other people of color contributed to the sport of rodeo?

It's no secret that Oregon had sundown towns, which were almost exclusively White towns with an unspoken rule that it was unsafe for Blacks to

live or spend the night there. In the nineteenth century, this residential segregation was reinforced with the use of police, fire, bricks, and unwelcoming signs (Loewen 2005). A 1924 editorial from the *Southern Oregon Spokesman* explicitly promotes White supremacy (figure 1.12). The author casually and repeatedly uses dehumanizing expletives to refer to African-American people. Further, the author describes African Americans as "a designing Black race who don't belong in Oregon and who will only cause trouble if they come here" by "lower[ing] the standard of our community morals" and "tak[ing] jobs that rightfully belong to White people." The author contrasts these racist stereotypes with an idealized description of "peaceful White people who are striving to live, move, and have their being at peace with the world." You have the option to read more about **sundown towns [Website]** and **unwelcoming signs [Website]** if you would like.



Let's Keep Grants Pass
A White Man's Town

Grants Pass always has been a white man's town, and there is no reason under the shining sun why it shouldn't continue to be a white man's town. The fact that this is a white man's country here in this wonderful Rogue River Valley, has brought the best of the white race here and such population will bring the cream of the white race here in the future.

The attitude o fthe people of this peaceful, law abiding community toward the encroachments of the black, brown or red races of the land, or the world for that matter is NIGGER WE DON'T WANT YOU HERE—AND WE WON'T HAVE YOU HERE—YOU HAD BETTER ROLL UP YOUR BED AND RIDE—THIS IS TO BE A WHITE MAN'S COUNTRY, YESTERDAY, TODAY AND FOREVER.

If there are any jobs to hand out in this country, the white man or white woman are ones to get the jobs—this thing of bringing niggers in here to take jobs as chauffeurs, or maids or laborers or in fact any job that may be open here is an infringement on the rights of the white people who have taken pride in this their ideal community.

Those who must have niggers for help had best move to where niggers are wanted for we are dead sure the nigger is not wanted here, and he is not going to be allowed to stay, whether his numbers are three or three hundred.

As soon as one nigger is allowed to stay in these parts, this community ceases to be a white man's country, and in as much as it doesn't take very long for a family of niggers to increase into a "buck town" of large population, the coming of one nigger is the beginning of future trouble.

Who wants Grants Pass to be the scene of a race riot?

Who wants to see property values slump in Josephine county?

Who wants to see the handiwork of years pas into the hands of a designing black race who don't belong in Oregon and who will only cause trouble if they try to come here.

It is to be hoped that the man or woman who brought these niggers here will see fit, at once, to get rid of them, not after while, but right now.

There are rumors of threats, that might become realities if these niggers are allowed to stay any longer than it will take them to be loaded up and shipped back to Alabama, where the nigger will be at home and he will hibernate in his native heath.

Foreigners of any kind are not wanted in this community, and it will be to the best interests of any and all foreigners to give Grants Pass and southern Oregon a wide berth.

Grants Pass can boast of a community that is made up of peaceful white people who are striving to live, move and have their being at peace with the world, under the law that God has laid down for man to obey.

Yet it is written, "if it be possible, as much as lieth within you, live peaceably with all men." And in-as-much as it is impossible for the whites and blacks to live peaceably together, it is note that the white people of this community should rise in protest at the attempt of any one to bring in here foreigners or niggers who not only will take jobs that rightfully belong to white people, regardless of what the jobs are, for niggers and niggers will lower the standard of our community morals, as has been done in those mongrelized communities where the color line is not drawn.

There is only one way to keep Grants Pass white, and that is to—keep it white.

Figure 1.12 On May 24, 1924, the *Southern Oregon Spokesman* published this editorial. For more context, you have the option to explore the **2019 Oregon Historical Quarterly [Website]**.

At the state level, Black exclusion was written into the law. Only in 2002 did 70 percent of voters decide to remove the racist language from the state constitution (Camhi 2020). However, an examination of historical documents and life histories reveals the importance of Latino vaqueros and Black cowboys in shaping rodeo (Patton and Shedlock 2011). Further, even though there is little visual representation, the way women, Indigenous people, and small-town amateurs embraced rodeo as a sport influenced the organization of events (Mellis 2003) (figure 1.13, figure 1.14).

Figure 1.13 Multiple generations helping to watch children during events.

Figure 1.14 What images come to mind when you think about women's involvement in rodeo? Cowgirls Hazel Walker and Babe Lee challenge gravity with their riding trick at Pendleton Round-Up 1912–1916.

Gender ideologies connected with the myth of the Wild West also limited representational roles for cowgirls to participate in publicly (Patton and Schedlock 2012). The gendered nature of the organization of the sport inherently prevents women's participation in professional events (Forsyth and Thompson 2007). However, some roles and spaces are driven by women's participation. In addition to women's highly visible roles serving as Rodeo Queen and Princesses or competing in the American Indian Beauty Contest or Junior Indian Beauty Contest at the Round-Up, women provide emotional labor for men who are participating in professional events (figure 1.15, figure 1.16). Acting as a support system or a "helpmate," women are regularly involved in the activities associated with the Round-Up. Even though their participation may not be directly visible, the roles taken by secretaries, event organizers, wives, fans, and groupies offer the emotional support and financial contributions necessary for rodeos to occur (Forsyth and Thompson 2007).

Figure 1.15 Happy Canyon Princess during a parade. Princesses serve as ambassadors for the Happy Canyon Night Show at Pendleton Round-Up; you have the option to learn more about **Happy Canyon Princesses [Website]**.

Figure 1.16 Rodeo royalty during a parade. Initially, the Pendleton Round-Up Queen and Court served as a ceremonial "symbol of grace and elegance amidst the thundering hooves and dust of the rodeo arena." Today, the Queen and Court have a more active role in promoting rodeo year round; you have the option to learn more about the **Queen and Court [Website]**.

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Figure 1.8. "The Wheel of Power and Privilege" by Kimberly Puttman, Michaela Willi Hooper, and Lauren Antrosiglio, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Figure 1.10. "Vaquero, c. 1830" is in the Public Domain. Courtesy of Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley.

Figure 1.11. "George Pendleton Pendleton Round Up Rodeo" is in the Public Domain.

Figure 1.12. Image from the Southern Oregon Spokesman is in the Public Domain. Courtesy of the Oregon Historical Quarterly.

Figure 1.14. "Cowgirls Hazel Walker and Babe Lee performing a riding trick at the Round-Up, Pendleton, Oregon, between 1912 and 1916" by Walter S. Bowman is in the Public Domain. Courtesy of University of Oregon Libraries Special Collections.

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Figure 1.9. Photo from the Oregon Encyclopedia is included under fair use.

Figure 1.13. "Older woman and child watching festivities at the Pendleton Round-Up" by Ralph I. Gifford courtesy of Oregon Digital is included under fair use.

Figure 1.15. Photograph by The Oregonian/Oregon Live is included under fair use.

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1.4 Levels of Analysis: Macro Level and Micro Level

Sociologists study all aspects and levels of **society**. Level of analysis refers to the scale of the analysis, ranging from individuals to societies. We tend to talk about this concept in terms of micro-level analysis (microsociology) and macro-level analysis (macrosociology). Figure 1.17 illustrates the main focal point of each level of analysis.

Sociologists working at the micro level study small groups and individual interactions. **Micro-level analysis**, or **microsociology**, places a strong emphasis on context, meaning-making, and interactions. It involves analyzing "what people do, say, and think in the actual flow of momentary experience" (Collins 1981:984). For example, a micro-level study might look at the accepted rules of conversation in various groups, such as among teenagers or business professionals. You will learn more about this type of interaction in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5.

Sociologists who use **macro-level analysis**, or **macrosociology**, look at trends among and between institutions and societies. A macro-level

analysis emphasizes the influence of structures, institutions, and systems. It examines the aspects of the society that are larger scale and exist over extended periods of time (Collins 1981). In contrast to a micro-level analysis, a macro-level analysis might research how one institution impacts another, such as how religion influences politics.

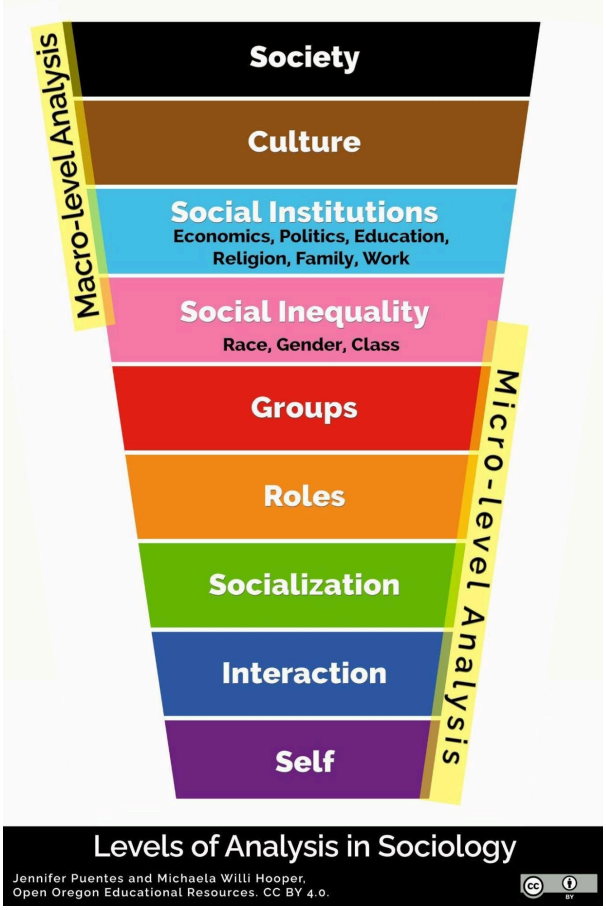

Figure 1.17 Levels of Analysis in Sociology: The Micro-Macro Continuum. Image description.

Structure, Institutions, and Agency

In the social sciences, we examine the relationship between structure and **agency** and their influence on human behavior. **Structure**, sometimes called **social structure**, refers to a set of long-lasting social relationships, practices, and institutions that can be difficult to see at work in our daily lives. They are intangible social relations. These patterned arrangements both limit and create opportunities for some individuals. In the United States, we typically see more opportunities for people who share similarities with those in positions of power.

Our social structure is made up of several institutions. Institutions, or **social institutions**, are mechanisms or patterns of social order focused on meeting social needs. Government, economy, education, family, health care, and religion are all examples of social institutions. Our institutions are often interconnected; for example, the economy, family, and education are separate social institutions that regularly intersect. The availability of employment opportunities depends on the state of the economy and individuals' access to education. Family arrangements and socioeconomic status may create or limit opportunities to pursue higher education. You will learn more about social institutions that you encounter daily as we explore social inequalities in the chapters of this text that examine social stratification and class, race and ethnicity, gender, and sexuality. Additional information on education, religion, and health/medicine as social institutions can be found in *Inequality and Interdependence: Social Problems and Social Justice*.

Social structures and institutions have rules and **norms** that are semi-durable, meaning they tend to be consistent and somewhat stable. However, social institutions are made up of individuals, which means that there is some room for change over time. **Agency** tends to refer to the ability to make independent decisions, yet as sociologists we understand that the choices we have available to us are often limited by larger structural constraints. Sometimes our willingness to challenge norms and exhibit free will overrides our need to conform to social structures, particularly when a social structure feels too confining.

The Interconnections between the Round-Up and Social Institutions

Let's return to our example of the Pendleton Round-Up to understand more about how events are connected to social institutions. By analyzing participation in the Round-Up from a **sociological perspective**, we can see connections to the social institutions of the economy and health care. Social issues, such as a global pandemic, affect many aspects of our lives, including sporting events. In 2020, with the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the Pendleton Round-Up Rodeo was canceled for the first time since 1943 (Castillo 2021). Financially, this resulted in a significant loss for small businesses, artisans, food vendors, and competitors who depend on the revenue generated by this annual event. However, Umatilla County was not the only place affected by a loss of tourism revenue during the pandemic.

Health and safety concerns stemming from an overburdened health-care system led to interventions to limit the transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19. For instance, government and public health officials implemented stay-at-home orders, curfews, and quarantines to reduce the spread of SARS-CoV-2. A medical sociologist might examine issues of social inequality by studying the ways that this virus leads to higher health disparities for Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) (Centers for Disease Control [CDC] 2022).

When we discuss healthcare at a structural level, we ask questions like who has access and what are barriers others may experience? How does access impact life chances, morbidity, and mortality for groups of people? In the case of the COVID-19 pandemic, these questions surrounded decision-makers when it came to the planning of events that may expose populations to SARS-CoV-2.

As previously mentioned, the Pendleton Round-Up includes participation from the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) and other tribal members in the region. CTUIR is made up of the Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla Tribes and was formed under the Treaty of 1855 signed in the Walla Walla Valley. Members of these communities are disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

In 2021, the Pendleton Round-Up was scheduled to occur with some health and social-distancing precautions in place. Leading up to the Round-Up that year, a second state of emergency was declared in Umatilla County due to COVID-19 case counts, the rise of new variants, and limited hospital bed capacity, all of which led to a mask mandate (Hagar 2021). Figure 1.18 shows the guidelines update from the Round-Up's website asking people to wear face masks after mask-wearing was mandated by the government in the state of **Oregon [Website]** (OHA 2023, optional link).

Figure 1.18 Round-Up event guidelines promote compliance with the Oregon mandate through the use of cowboy iconography.

During a global pandemic, decisions surrounding community gatherings impact several parts of our social structure. Despite signage requiring the use of masks, reports suggest that compliance may not have been high. This is particularly problem-

atic in a county with one of the lowest vaccination rates in the state. The county saw a spike in COVID-19 case numbers following the Round-Up to the extent that CTUIR declared a state of emergency in 2021 as case counts on the reservation rose to 72 within a week (CTUIR ICT 2021).

According to a report given by Umatilla County Public Health Director Joseph Fiumara on Oregon Public Broadcasting, hospitalizations and case counts rose following the Round-Up (AP Staff 2021). While Oregon was experiencing fewer hospitalizations and cases before the Round-Up, an event of this magnitude contributed an additional strain on the health-care systems in Umatilla and Wallowa Counties. Although we might only think of the Round-Up as an exciting rodeo, a closer examination of the event's interconnections with social institutions allows us to better understand the impact social institutions have on our lives.

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"Social Institutions" definition from "Society, Culture, and Social Institutions" by Lumen Learning in *Introduction to Sociology* is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

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Figure 1.18. Image from Pendleton Round-Up website is included under fair use.

1.5 Why Study Sociology?

There are many career paths available in the world today. **Sociology** is one path that offers ways to work toward improving **society**. Additionally, there are a wide range of fields (domestically and internationally) in which sociologists work.

To Build a Better Society

Many sociologists are driven by the scholarly desire to contribute knowledge to their field, while others see it as a way to not only study society but also improve it. Sociology has played a crucial role in social reform, including the desegregation of schools in the 1950s. Sociology has

also contributed to other important societal shifts, such as equal opportunity for women in the workplace, improved treatment for individuals with mental illnesses or learning disabilities, increased accessibility and accommodation for people with physical disabilities, the right of Indigenous populations to preserve their land and culture, and prison system reforms (figure 1.19).

Figure 1.19 Various versions of the "We welcome" sign emerge to promote the visibility of inclusivity.

To Understand Everyday Experiences

American sociologist Peter L. Berger describes a sociologist as "someone concerned with understanding society in a disciplined way." He asserts that sociologists have a natural interest in the monumental moments of people's lives, as well as a fascination with everyday occurrences. Berger also describes the "aha" moment when a sociological **theory** becomes applicable and understood:

> [T]here is a deceptive simplicity and obviousness about some sociological investigations. One reads them, nods at the familiar scene, remarks that one has heard all this before and don't people have better things to do than to waste their time on truisms—until one is suddenly brought up against an insight that radically questions everything one had previously assumed about this familiar scene. This is the point at which one begins to sense the excitement of sociology. (Berger 1963)

Learn more about the social construction of reality when you watch the video in the next activity (figure 1.20).

Activity: Discovering Sociology

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i4E0jBHS1N8**

Figure 1.20 Dr. Peter L. Berger shares insights on what makes a good sociologist and the social construction of reality. **Profile: Dr. Peter L. Berger (Social Construction of Reality) [Streaming Video]. Transcript.**

After viewing the embedded link, please return and answer the following questions:

1. What makes a good sociologist? Why does Berger suggest they need to have a good sense of curiosity?
2. How can we train ourselves to take a **sociological perspective**?

To Connect Our Differences

Sociology can be exciting because it teaches us how we fit into the world and how others perceive us. Looking at ourselves and society from a sociological perspective helps us see where we connect to different groups based on the many different ways we classify ourselves and how society classifies us in turn. It raises awareness of how those classifications—such as economic and status levels, education, **ethnicity**, or **sexual orientation**—affect how we are perceived.

Sociology teaches us to reject easy explanations. It teaches us how to organize our thinking, ask better questions, and formulate better answers. It reveals how others think differently from us. It increases our willingness and ability to try to see the world from other people's perspectives, preparing us to live and work in an increasingly diverse and integrated world.

To Prepare for the Workplace

Employers seek people with transferable skills. This means they want to hire people whose knowledge and education can be applied in a variety of settings and whose skills will contribute to various tasks.

Studying sociology can provide a broad knowledge base and a skill set that can contribute to many workplaces, including:

- An understanding of social systems and large **bureaucracies**
- The ability to devise and carry out research projects to assess whether a program or policy is working
- The ability to collect, read, and analyze statistical information from polls or surveys
- The ability to recognize important differences in people's social, cultural, and economic backgrounds
- The capacity for critical thinking about social issues and problems that confront modern society (Department of Sociology, University of Alabama n.d.)

Sociology can help prepare you for a wide variety of careers. Many students with a bachelor of arts in sociology pursue graduate work to become a professor, researcher, social worker, or even lawyer. With an undergraduate degree, you will be prepared for entry-level positions in business, social services, and government. The perspectives you learn will also prepare you for careers in journalism, politics, public relations, or public administration. If you would like to explore more ideas, see ***Careers in Sociology*** **[PDF]**, published by the American Sociological Association.

In relatively stable societies, sociologists are hired by government agencies and corporations in fields such as social services, counseling (e.g., family planning, career, substance abuse), community planning, health and welfare services, education, marketing, market research, and human resources. Some sociologists become independent consultants and help organizations examine issues such as workplace equity. Others pursue careers as social researchers and work for **survey** and polling organizations or as caseworkers, community organizers, public policy researchers, or data analysts. Even a small amount of training in sociology can be an asset in careers like sales, public relations, journalism, teaching, law, and criminal justice.

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1.6 Sociology's Real-World Applications

Jennifer Puentes and Aimee Samara Krouskop

We can rely on **sociology** to make sense of social challenges and help us take action. This is particularly important for societies experiencing crises or struggling to address challenges to their well-being. For example, early in the COVID-19 pandemic (March 2020), the German Sociological Association started documenting sociological contributions to better understand public response to the crisis. This study examined important social phenomena, such as the strong willingness of people in Germany to act in solidarity by following policies designed to protect the more vulnerable (such as stay-at-home policies). Sociologists are also researching motivations around hoarding consumer goods (such as toilet paper) and increases in domestic violence during the pandemic (Blättel-Mink 2020).

Sociologists are also employed by international agencies addressing well-being challenges in specific regions. They might work in larger organizations such as the many branches of the United Nations (UN), the World Bank, the U.S. **Agency** for International Development (USAID), the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), or the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The multitude of smaller, nongovernmental international organiza-

tions around the world also look for staff that have a strong understanding of how **society** functions.

Some examples in Oregon include the international humanitarian organization Mercy Corps; Green Empowerment, which works with rural communities to improve access to renewable energy, water, sanitation, and cookstoves; and the Rafiki Village Project foundation, which is dedicated to improving health, literacy, and economic prosperity in Tanzania.

Learn More

Can you picture yourself working with any of these agencies?

- United Nations (UN)
- World Bank
- U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
- European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)
- International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
- Mercy Corps

In Oregon:

- Rafiki Village Project Foundation
- Green Empowerment

Research professionals, program assistants, or directors with sociology educations might be hired to address public health and medical concerns, such as malaria, reproductive health, child survival, and HIV. They might work performing outreach and education regarding **gender** equality, sanitation, or agricultural support. Initiatives include improving educational access, fighting human trafficking, aiding community development, supporting human rights, providing legal aid, and offering support to elders. Sociologists hired with emergency response organizations might conduct needs assessments in humanitarian zones to determine the estimated numbers of victims who need shelter, water, food, or—in the case of children—physical protection.

Sociologists and other social researchers also work to understand cultural, political, psychological, and economic factors that affect global health and well-being. For example, the World Health Organization (WHO) examines these factors to apply them to the design, implementation, and evaluation of their policies. The better these factors are understood, the more effective, accepted, and equitable their interventions are (WHO n.d.).

Activity: Intersections of Gender, Race, and Health

Let's take a closer look at how sociology can be applied in daily life by studying how health and culture are examined by social research in areas where transmission of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) remains persistent. Social scientists with the branch of the UN tackling the AIDS epidemic, UNAIDS, report that 39 percent of new HIV infections occur in sub-Saharan Africa (UNAIDS 2021), leading the organization to focus its efforts in that region. Simultaneously, organizations like AIVI, a nonprofit scientific research organization developing vaccines and antibodies for HIV and other diseases, are examining how to deliver their treatments to address public health. Those examinations frequently include social research that involves **interviews** with people in the communities most affected by health crises.

Watch the four-minute video in figure 1.21, *The Need for Long-Acting HIV Prevention Methods* **[Streaming Video]**. Produced by AIVI, it highlights interviews with 12 women living in Kenya and South Africa and provides insights into the cultural and economic barriers that prevent them from taking precautions against HIV.

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sby8KafSPAI&t=10s**

Figure 1.21 Women in rural areas in Kenya and South Africa walk long distances for household supplies. **Transcript.**

After watching the clip, please return to answer the following questions:

1. What are some cultural and economic barriers that prevent people from taking precautions against HIV?
2. How does gender connect with the concept of power in the stories shared by women?
3. Reflect on the concepts of **privilege** and **oppression** that you learned in this chapter. What connections can you make to the stories shared in the clip?

During times of intense social unrest, members of societies frequently seek the advice of sociologists. Sociologists are often considered the conscience of a society and can help members understand their new and troubling current circumstances, as well as point them toward ways of improving the circumstances they face (Garretón 2005:361).

Another example of a situation that calls for the skills of a sociologist is when societies are experiencing protracted conflict, such as civil war. During the 1970s and 1980s, sociologists in Latin America produced a massive amount of research in response to the social and political conflicts suffered by nations in that region. Research, writing, and debate regarding social factors such as the roots of conflict, social movements, resistance fueled by civil society, and forensic human rights all contributed to a large body of knowledge. The goal of this research was to understand the social dynamics at play in southern countries and find ways to reduce conflict and suffering.

Political sociologists are especially engaged during times of social conflict. For example, in 2022, Ukrainian sociologist Volodymyr Ishchenko was able to apply his in-depth study of social dynamics in his country to helping the world understand Russia's war on Ukraine. His focus on protests and social movements, revolutions, right and left politics, nationalism, and civil society keenly positioned him to provide commentary for a number of media outlets (Ishchenko n.d).

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Figure 1.21. "The Need for Long-acting HIV Prevention Methods – Trailer" by AIVI is shared under the Standard YouTube License.

1.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, you learned about the **sociological perspective** and how sociologists use this framework to understand **society** and human interactions. We can explore seemingly ordinary events, such as the Pendleton Round-Up, from a sociological perspective to learn about **social institutions** and social inequalities. For instance, we learned how economically important a rodeo can be for communities. However, while the economy is certainly an important institution, we also learned that we need to consider how it intersects with other important social institutions, such as health care.

The Round-Up also offers an opportunity to study representation to understand more about **race** and **gender** in this athletic event. Take the

image in figure 1.22. Here we see a man participating in the Brahman bull riding event wearing a traditional Western hat rather than a helmet. You can compare this picture with the riders in figure 1.23 wearing helmets. The selection of a Western hat reinforces the boundaries of what it means to be "manly" and show power through displays of tough masculinity. You will learn more about gender and constructions of masculinity in Chapter 9. While we've explored the Pendleton Round-Up from a sociological perspective in this chapter, what other local events could you analyze with your newfound **sociological imagination**?

Figure 1.22 Rider with traditional Western hat in the Brahman bull-riding event at the Pendleton Round-Up.

Figure 1.23 Riders wearing helmets at the Pendleton Round-Up in 2019.

Sociologists are trained to use their sociological imaginations to examine social life and see things from different perspectives. This chapter has introduced you to many core concepts that you can apply to the world around you. You may notice that you are able to use your newly developed sociological imagination when you evaluate movies, music, and **group** interactions.

Now that you have a sense of what **sociology** is, it's time to take a closer look at the different theoretical perspectives sociologists use to make sense of human behavior and identify patterns. The **next chapter** will explore how sociological **theory** developed and shaped the perspectives that we use to examine the social world. You will learn about the origins of social theory and how social theory has been shaped by events such as the Industrial Revolution, imperialism, and **colonialism**. Finally, you will learn how classical theory has helped inform contemporary sociological theory.

KEY TERMS

- **Agency:** free will or the ability to make independent decisions. As sociologists, we understand that the choices we have available to us are often limited by larger structural constraints.
- **Diversity:** the presence of differences, including psychological, physical, and social differences, that occur among individuals.

- **Macro-level analysis/macrosociology:** the study of trends among and between institutions and societies. Macrosociology emphasizes the influence of structures, institutions, and systems.
- **Micro-level analysis/microsociology:** the study of small groups and individual interactions. Microsociology emphasizes context, meaning-making, and interactions.
- **Oppression:** a combination of prejudice and institutional power that creates a system that regularly and severely discriminates against some groups and benefits other groups.
- **Privilege:** something of value members of one group have that members of another group do not, simply because they belong to a group. The privilege may be either an unearned advantage or an unearned entitlement.
- **Social facts:** the laws, morals, values, religious beliefs, customs, fashions, rituals, and cultural rules that govern social life. These practices exist outside of us as individuals but still act to constrain our behavior.
- **Social institutions:** mechanisms or patterns of social order focused on meeting social needs, such as government, the economy, education, family, health care, and religion.
- **Society:** a group of people who live in a defined geographic area, interact with one another, and share a common culture.
- **Sociological imagination:** an awareness of the relationship between a person's behavior and experience and the wider culture that shaped the person's choices and perceptions.
- **Sociological perspective:** a lens that allows you to view society and social structures through multiple perspectives simultaneously.
- **Sociology:** the scientific and systematic study of groups and group interactions and societies and social interactions, from small and personal groups to very large groups and mass culture; also, the systematic study of human society and interactions.
- **Structure/social structure:** the complex and stable framework of society that influences all individuals or groups through the relationship between institutions (e.g., economy, politics, religion) and social practices (e.g., behaviors, norms, and values). These patterned arrangements both limit and create opportunities for some individuals.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some ways individuals can develop their sociological perspective?
2. Reflect on the social activities in which you participate. How might you analyze these activities from a sociological perspective to see examples of our social structure?
3. Based on your experiences, do you think discrimination and sundown towns are things of the past? Next, read **Road Tripping while Black in Oregon [Website]** from travel blogger Kay Kingsman to learn more about her experiences. What are some ways that policies limit opportunities?
4. In what ways have you experienced structure and agency in your own life? What opportunities and limitations were part of those experiences?

5. Why might someone want to study sociology? What are some ways you would like to see sociology applied in everyday life?
6. As you've learned in this chapter, sometimes what seems like an individual choice is influenced by larger social and cultural norms. Let's explore the example of marriage—read this short NPR article (Kurtzleben 2021): **The Story of Marriage Equality Is More Complicated—and Costly—than You Remember [Website]**. How are decisions to marry influenced by the social acceptability of marriage and marriage equality?

Additional Resources

1. **American Sociological Association's guide to Careers in Sociology [Website]**
2. **American Sociological Association Code of Ethics [Website]**
3. **What Is Sociology?: Crash Course Sociology #1 [Streaming Video]**

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Figure 1.23. "**To Be Bullish**" by **Ian Sane** is licensed under **CC BY-NC-ND 2.0**.

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CHAPTER

2

Figure 2.1 Using our sociological imagination, how can the example of Toussaint L'Ouverture and the Haitian Revolution help us think through what counts as sociological theory?

The History of Sociology and Social Theory

2.1 Chapter Learning Objectives and Overview

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Describe how the non-European predecessors of classical sociologists contributed to the foundation of **sociology**.
2. Identify the European theorists and theories that shaped the development of sociology as a discipline.
3. Explain how early American sociologists applied theories using empirical research methods.
4. Recognize the key concepts and limitations of the three dominant sociological frameworks.
5. Examine contemporary theoretical perspectives on **society**, **colonialism**, **race**, **gender**, and **intersectionality**.

Overview

During the same period as the American and French Revolutions, a country of enslaved people rose against their colonial enslavers. This revolution, which lasted from 1791 to 1804, resulted in the first country to abolish slavery and in the defeat of one of the most powerful European empires. Yet many people don't know about the Haitian Revolution, and few mainstream sociologists study this important event. Why is this? Why is the French Revolution given more attention than the Haitian Revolution?

Some argue that by erasing the importance of the Haitian Revolution from modern history, Euro-American countries were able "to claim abolitionist bragging rights rather than reckoning with their centuries-long participation in Atlantic slavery and only slow and grudging decisions to end it" (Gaffield 2020). In other words, Euro-American countries wrote history to make themselves appear as favorable as possible, while downplaying their role in slavery. Yet one theorist we will discuss in this chapter, W. E. B. Du Bois, wrote about the Haitian Revolution and one of its leaders, Toussaint L'Ouverture (figure 2.1).

Du Bois, a sociologist and the first Black American to receive a PhD from Harvard, connected L'Ouverture to several of the founders of sociology and pointed to the Haitian Revolution's contemporary relevance to the United States. Du Bois noted the Haitian Revolution made Napoleon give up his aims of expanding the French Empire in America. As a result, "All of Montana and the Dakotas, and most of Colorado and Minnesota, all of Washington and Oregon States, came to us as the indirect work of a despised Negro…but today let us not forget our debt to Touissant L'Ouverture" (Du Bois 1996:302).

Using our sociological imaginations, we can also point to how a person's social position influences what they know or what they deem worthy of theorizing. If influential theorists were largely White and European, how much attention would they give to racial **oppression**?

In this chapter, we will examine how sociology emerged in Europe and the United States and how social theorists tried to explain the patterns and changes they saw in their societies. In doing so, we will also explore voices that have typically been overlooked in American sociology because of their race, gender, and/or nationality. We will then turn to contemporary approaches to thinking about the social world.

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Figure 2.1. "Toussaint L'Ouverture reading the Abbé Raynal's work" by J.R. Beard is in the Public Domain. Courtesy of the New York Public Library.

2.2 History of Sociology

For millennia, people have been fascinated by the relationships between individuals and societies. Many topics studied by ancient philosophers in their desire to describe an ideal **society** are still studied in modern **sociology**, including theories of social conflict, economics, social cohesion, and power (Hannoum 2003).

While people continue to theorize about how social life works daily, sociologists use the term **theory** to refer to a proposed explanation about social interactions or society. North American and European sociologists typically point to several scholars from the nineteenth century as foundational to the discipline and sociological theory. These scholars are largely European White middle-**class** men whose position in their societies shaped their viewpoints. Yet sociologists continue to debate who should be included as a theorist and part of "classical" sociological theory (Connell 1997; Alatas and Sinha 2017; Morris 2017). In this section, we introduce some of the lesser-known predecessors of classical sociologists who helped create a foundation for the discipline.

Precursors to Sociological Theory

Sociology has a variety of rich traditions across the world and history. Outside of what was occurring in nineteenth-century Europe, scholars point to ideas developed by Ibn Khaldun, José Rizal, and Pandita Ramabai Sarasvati as offering insightful applications of the **sociological perspective** to their societies. Khaldun predates the development of sociology in Europe, while Rizal and Sarasvati were contemporaries of the classical theorists but remain largely overlooked.

Ibn Khaldun (Present-Day Tunisia, 1332–1406)

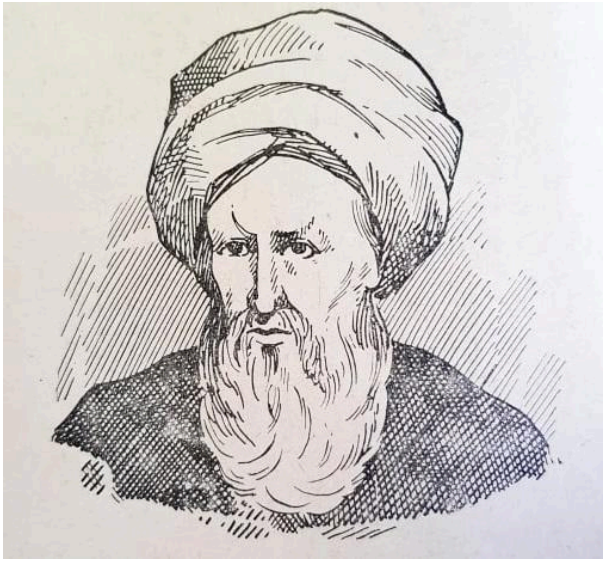

Figure 2.2 Ibn Khaldun focused on social cohesion. How would you characterize social cohesion at the present moment in the United States?

As one of the originators of sociology, Khaldun studied the causes of historical events and how societies changed (figure 2.2). To account for these changes, he argued that there needed to be a way to distinguish truth from falsehood. What he proposed was social science. According to Khaldun, what was crucial in understanding the rise and fall of North African states was the difference between social cohesion in nomadic societies and that in sedentary societies. He argued that nomadic societies had strong social cohesion and that sedentary societies had less cohesion (Alatas 2017a).

José Rizal (Philippines, 1861–1896)

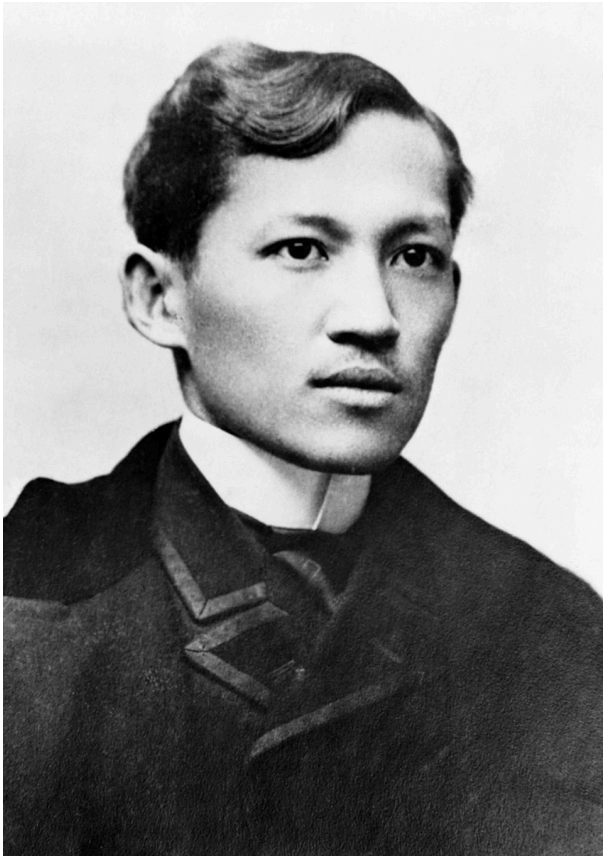

Figure 2.3 José Rizal examined some of the consequences of colonialism. Could his argument be extended beyond the Philippines?

Filipino social thinker and activist Rizal wrote both fiction and non-fiction that analyzed Spanish **colonialism** and the possibilities of emancipation in the Philippines (figure 2.3). He explained how the Spanish colonial bureaucracy and Catholic Church justified the exploitation of the Filipino people by claiming they were "lazy" or "backward." Instead, based on precolonial history, he pointed to how the Philippines was an advanced society. It was actually colonization that led to the myth of laziness and any "backwardness" the society was experiencing (Alatas 2017b).

Pandita Ramabai Sarasvati (India, 1858–1922)

Figure 2.4 Pandita Ramabai Sarasvati provided an alternative approach to producing social theory. What other present-day mediums could inform social theorizing?

A social reformer from India, Sarasvati was known for championing oppressed and exploited Hindu women and opposing British colonial rule (figure 2.4). Mostly through the form of social commentary and autobiography, she criticized the rigid and patriarchal organization of her society. Some scholars argue that she "should be considered the first sociologist of kinship and family in India" (Sinha 2017:255). She also provided insights about the United States based on her travels here in *The Peoples of the United States* (1889).

Europe and the Enlightenment

European social thought developed against the backdrop of the Enlightenment, a European intellectual movement that occurred during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and the large societal changes occurring in Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. During the Enlightenment, there was a major reevaluation of how people thought about individuality, society, rationality, government, and religion. Rather than relying on religion and superstition to explain the social world, explanations based on science and reason gained acceptance in Europe. The ideas of Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), John Locke (1632–1704), Charles Montesquieu (1689–1775), Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712–1831), and Georg Hegel (1770–1831) proved influential. For more information, you have the option to explore the **Age of Enlightenment [Website]**.

Industrial Revolution

During the same period, the economies of European countries were transitioning from those based on agriculture to those based on industrial production in factories. The Industrial Revolution was paired with the rise of capitalism and changed what work looked like. The workers, sometimes against their will, moved from working on the land to working in tightly controlled factories (figure 2.5). The work itself was largely monotonous and conducted with machines. It often did not pay well, and factory owners mistreated the workers. For more information, you have the option to explore the **Industrial Revolution [Website]**.

Figure 2.5 Confectionery packaging line at the MacRobertson's factory in Australia. What do you think work in factories was like over 100 years ago?

Alongside the changes in the economy, major political and geographical changes led to political revolutions that challenged the authority of kings and queens in Europe. One of the most influential was the French Revolution (1789–1799). The revolution, inspired by the **values** of liberty, equality, and fraternity, resulted in the overthrow and execution of King Louis XVI. It ultimately led to a series of wars across Europe and Napoleon Bonaparte becoming emperor. Geographically, people started concentrating in urban areas where there were more opportunities for work. Science grew and increased in prestige, and some of the early sociologists in Europe sought to tie sociology to what they perceived as the "successful" sciences.

Imperialism and Colonialism

Some histories gloss over the violence committed by European countries during this period of colonization. Specifically, the British, French, Belgian, American, and Spanish empires, among others, engaged in colonial projects in Africa, Asia, Oceania, and Latin America. Imperialism involves a country dominating a distant territory. **Colonialism** entails the dominating country creating settlements in the distant territory (Said 1994). Examples of this are the French colonization of Algeria and the British colonization of India. However, the boundaries between colonialism and imperialism can be blurry.

During this period, racial hierarchies, slavery, White supremacy, colonialism, and **patriarchy** ran amok within Europe and the United States (Morris 2022). However, most European and American social theorists of the day did not address those social dynamics. As we continue this discussion, it is important to keep in mind that "sociology was formed within the culture of imperialism, and embodied an intellectual response to the colonized world" (Connell 2007:9) and to pay attention to whose voices have been included and whose have been excluded.

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Figure 2.2. "Sketch of Ibn Khaldun" is in the Public Domain.

Figure 2.3. "Jose Rizal" is in the Public Domain.

Figure 2.4. "Pandita Ramabai Sarasvati 1858–1922 front-page-portrait" is in the Public Domain.

Figure 2.5. "MacRobertsons Factory 3" is in the Public Domain. Courtesy of the State Library of Victoria Collections.

2.3 Creating a Discipline: European Theorists

As previously noted, the origins of **sociology** are typically traced back to a variety of European thinkers who lived primarily in the 1800s and early 1900s. Often, these theorists sought to explain the major social changes that were occurring in their societies at the time. Some theorists wrote extensively about very different aspects of **society**. To help maintain some coherency, we will focus on what the theorists said about the economy and religion when appropriate. Yet, as noted earlier, there were some topics these theorists did not address, such as issues related to **gender**, **race**, and **colonialism**.

Positivism and Social Science: Auguste Comte (France, 1798–1857)

Figure 2.6 Auguste Comte theorized social dynamics and statics. What parts of our society would you characterize as dynamic?

The term *sociology* was first coined in 1780 by the French essayist Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès (1748–1836) in an unpublished manuscript. In 1838, the term was reintroduced by Auguste Comte (figure 2.6). Comte was a pupil of social philosopher Claude Henri de Rouvroy Comte de Saint-Simon (1760–1825). They both thought that social scientists could study society using the same scientific methods utilized in the natural sciences. Comte developed a **theory** of **positivism**, which means that science produces universal laws, science controls what is true, and objective methods allow you to pursue that truth. Comte viewed sociology as the study of two important forces: stability, which he called statics, and change, which he called dynamics. Statics are the laws or structures that contribute to the stability of society. Dynamics are aspects of the society that are changing.

Capitalism and Morals: Harriet Martineau (England, 1802–1876)

Figure 2.7 Harriet Martineau argued that capitalism and the morality of the people of the United States were at odds. Do you agree or disagree with her perspective?

Harriet Martineau introduced sociology to English-speaking scholars through her translation of Comte's writing from French to English (figure 2.7). She was an early analyst of social practices, including economics, social **class**, religion, government, and women's rights. Her career began with *Illustrations of Political Economy*, a work educating ordinary people about the principles of economics (Johnson 2003). She later developed the first systematic methodological international comparisons of **social institutions** in two of her most famous sociological works: *Society in America* (1837) and *Retrospect of Western Travel* (1838).

Martineau found the workings of capitalism at odds with the professed moral principles of people in the United States. She pointed out the faults with the free enterprise system in which workers were exploited and impoverished while business

owners became wealthy. She further noted that the belief that all are created equal was inconsistent with the lack of women's rights. Martineau was often discounted in her own time because academic sociology was a male-dominated profession. In the 1970s, feminist scholars rediscovered her work. What would the foundations of sociology look like today if her work had been included earlier on?

Class and Conflict: Karl Marx (Germany, 1818–1883)

Karl Marx was a social critic and philosopher from Germany (figure 2.8). Exiled from his homeland due to his political beliefs and publications, he ultimately settled in London. He, along with Friedrich Engels (1820–1895), wrote an influential pamphlet called *The Communist Manifesto* (Marx and Engels 2015 [1848]). In the manifesto, they outline their approach to history and class struggle while arguing for communism. In *Capital* (1992 [1867]), Marx developed an analysis of how capitalism works. His ideas proved very influential for critical social theories within sociology. To this day, some sociologists continue to draw inspiration from his writings.

Marx argued that history could be divided into a series of distinctive periods, or epochs, based on the social relations and technologies available at the time. The main driver between epochs was class struggle (masters versus slaves, landlords versus serfs, owners versus workers). In each epoch, a revolutionary class would emerge and overthrow those in control, which would instigate the next epoch.

In capitalist societies, Marx identified two distinct social classes: the bourgeoisie and the **proletariat**. The **bourgeoisie** were the wealthy owners/capitalists, who controlled economic production. The **proletariat** were the workers, who had to sell their labor to live and make a wage. The relationship between the two classes is inherently antagonistic. The bourgeoisie wants to make as much profit as possible while paying the proletariat as little as possible. The proletariat wants to be paid higher wages. Marx argued that the owners exploited the workers by paying them less than what their labor was worth and what the products sold for.

Marx also argued that workers become alienated from their work and that this can happen in four different ways. People can be alienated from the objects they produce, from the process of work itself, from one's sense of **self** ("species-being"), and from other workers.

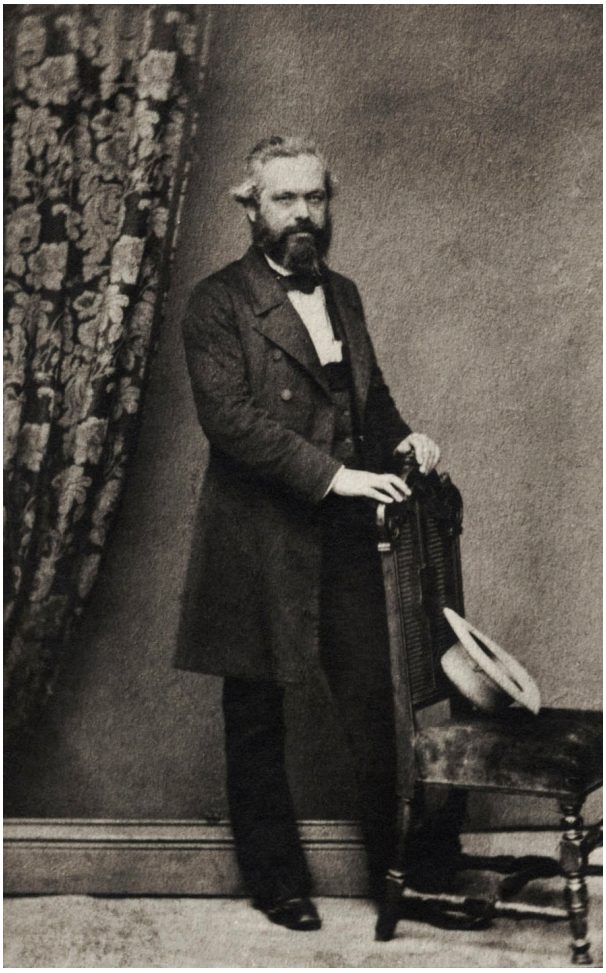

Figure 2.8 Karl Marx emphasized the influence of social class within society. What might be some problems with conceptualizing only two distinct classes?

Thinking more broadly about the structures of societies, Marx argued that society could be divided into an economic base and cultural superstructure. The economic base includes economic relations and technology. The cultural superstructure includes all the institutions of a society outside of the economy, including religion, education, family, media, politics, and, more generally, culture. Marx argued the base determines and shapes the superstructure. The superstructure then reinforces what is happening in the base by promoting a specific set of ideas and **values**. To Marx, whichever class controls the economic base controls the larger superstructure and the dominant ideas of the society. In capitalist societies, that would be the bourgeoisie.

Ultimately, all of this leads to the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer. Workers get stuck because there is a reserve army of other workers who are willing to jump in for lower pay if the current workers decide to unionize or challenge the owners. Given the exploitation experienced by the workers, Marx argued they would eventually decide to rise up and overthrow capitalism and the owners. This would result "in communist society, where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticise after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, herdsman or critic" (Marx 1998 [1845]). How might we envision other utopias?

Activity: Marx and Mario

Let's take a moment to consider Marx's thinking and how it might be applicable to today. Watch the clip in figure 2.9 to further explore Marx's theory using classic video games.

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vz3eOb6Yl1s&ab_channel=Wisecrack**

Figure 2.9 **Karl Marxio Bros [Streaming Video].** How can video games become an object of social theorizing? **Transcript.**

Then answer the following questions:

1. How fundamental is work to humans? How might work have changed since Marx's time?
2. Have you ever felt alienated from your work? What was that experience like?
3. Marx was in favor of socialism and communism. Why do you think what he predicted did not happen?

Science and Religion: Émile Durkheim (France, 1858–1917)

Figure 2.10 Émile Durkheim explored the social underpinnings of religion. How could we extend his analysis of the sacred and profane to secular matters?

Émile Durkheim was a crucial voice in the promotion of sociology as a legitimate area of study within France (figure 2.10). In his writing, he argued that sociology was a science, and he provided a set of rules for conducting social scientific research in *Rules of the Sociological Method* (Durkheim 2014 [1895]; Adams and Sydie 2001). He wrote on a variety of topics, but we will explore his work on the economy, suicide, and religion.

Émile Durkheim was interested in how societies cohere and how people connect. In *The Division of Labor in Society* (2014 [1893]), he explores how social cohesion changed during the rapid economic and social transition associated with the switch from a feudal economy to an industrial-based economy. Durkheim argued that people in pre-industrial societies related to each other based on common sentiments and moral values. This was possible because of mechanical solidarity. This type of solidarity is based on people feeling similar to each other. In such societies, groups take precedence over the individual. In terms of work, there is not much specialization, and people complete a wide variety of tasks.

In contrast, in organic solidarity, people relate to each other based on specialization and interdependence. Individuality and differences are maximized. He argued that organic solidarity characterized modern industrial societies. With the increased division of labor and specialization of work, we depend more and more on people that we do not know personally.

In 1897, Durkheim attempted to demonstrate the effectiveness of his rules of social research when he published a work titled *Suicide* (1997 [1897]). Durkheim examined suicide statistics in different police districts to research differences between Catholic and Protestant communities. He attributed the differences in suicide rates to socio-religious forces rather than to individual or psychological causes.

One of his final studies, the *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, explores the social underpinnings of religion (Durkheim 2001 [1915]). He defined religion as a unified system of beliefs and practices related to sacred things, or things that are set apart and forbidden. He argued that the common denominator of all religions is their beliefs that divide the world into the sacred and the profane, along with prescriptions for particular ways of behaving toward the sacred.

So what did Durkheim mean by the sacred and the profane? The sacred involves feelings of awe, fear, and reverence. Animals, places, plants, or people can be designated as sacred. It is something added to the object or thing by the **group**. The profane is the opposite of the sacred. It is routine daily life, such as work and household chores.

Durkheim saw the profane as weakening social bonds and shared commitments to beliefs.

How does society sustain itself in the face of the profane? Durkheim argued that rituals play a significant role in helping people reaffirm their worship of shared objects, have shared experiences, and sustain emotional bonds. Rituals are when society comes together to worship the sacred and reaffirm people's connections with one another. Rituals such as music, chants, and dance create a collective emotional excitement called collective effervescence. This provides a strong sense of group belonging, with people losing their sense of self in the collective experience. This collective energy sustains people in the face of the profane.

Overall, this led Durkheim to view the existence of religion as resulting from the need of societies to reconstruct their social bonds and counteract the feelings of disconnection caused by daily routines. The other conclusion Durkheim reached about religion was that it was nothing less than the worship of society itself.

The Protestant Ethic and Rationality: Max Weber (Germany, 1864–1920)

Figure 2.11 According to Max Weber, we are currently in a disenchanted and overly bureaucratic "iron cage." Do you agree with his argument?

Max Weber was a well-known German intellectual whose work spanned multiple disciplines (figure 2.11). A prolific scholar, he was also politically active in pre-World War I Germany. Within sociology, his writings on the development of capitalism, the economy, social action, and research methods continue to be influential. Weber was interested in how capitalism emerged and where it was going. Unlike Marx, who based his theories on class struggle and economic relations, Weber focused on the role that ideas played in the spread of capitalism.

Weber began by observing that Protestants were overrepresented in capitalist economic activity and asking why. He argued in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (2002 [1904–1905]) that

Protestants had a "Protestant ethic" that involved the systematic pursuit of salvation in the everyday world.

According to German priest and religious reformer Martin Luther, to live in a way acceptable to God was to live in the world and fulfill one's duties. This contrasted with the idea that the most virtuous existence was a monastic one in which people renounce worldly obligations and **wealth**. Luther preached that the best way to serve God was to pursue one's vocation, which became known as a "calling." This meant each person had a specific place and job in God's scheme. Hard work in one's calling would bring about material rewards to the believer. These rewards would provide psychological reassurance that one was headed toward heaven because Protestants assumed that God would not reward those who were damned. Thus, the wealth people accumulated while working hard in their calling became acceptable.

The Protestant ethic resulted in people who worked hard but didn't spend or enjoy their profits. This pattern of behavior aligned with what Weber called the "spirit of capitalism," or the overall guiding principles of capitalism. One of these principles is acquisition, which the Protestant ethic encouraged through hard work and as evidence of salvation. Another principle is reinvestment, which entails a commitment to continuously use profits to increase capital instead of using the profits for consumption, something religious doctrine frowned upon. The beliefs associated with the Protestant ethic helped capitalism emerge and make it morally acceptable.

By the twentieth century, capitalism no longer needed the direct support of religious beliefs. Once it came into power, secular capitalism had a self-sustaining, treadmill-like character. What was left was instrumental rationality, a way of thinking that focused on short-term goals and acting in a self-interested manner. To some extent, people with this way of thinking approach social life by asking "What is in it for me?" With the increase in instrumental rationality and the declining influence of moral beliefs and values over capitalism, Weber saw capitalism heading toward an "iron cage" of disenchantment. There is a loss of values and meaning, coupled with a rise in cold calculations and efficiency.

Weber also believed that it was difficult, if not impossible, to use standard scientific methods to accurately predict the behavior of groups as some sociologists hoped to do. He argued that the influence of culture on human behavior had to be taken into account. This even applied to researchers, who should be aware of how their own cultural biases could influence their research. To deal with this problem, Weber and German academic Wilhelm Dilthey introduced the concept of *verstehen*, a German word that means to understand in a deep way. In seeking *verstehen*, outside observers of a social world—an entire culture or a small group—attempt to understand it from an insider's point of view.

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Paragraph on Durkheim's study of suicide in "Science and Religion" is modified from "1.2 The History of Sociology" by Tonja R. Conerly, Kathleen Holmes, Asha Lal Tamang in *Introduction to Sociology 3e*, OpenStax, which is licensed under CC BY 4.0. Edited for consistency.

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Figure 2.6. "Top Auguste Comte place Sorbonne Paris" is in the Public Domain, CC0 1.0.

Figure 2.7. "Portrait of Harriet Martineau by Richard Evans" is in the Public Domain.

Figure 2.8. "Karl Marx, May 1861" is in the Public Domain.

Figure 2.10. "Emile Durkheim" is in the Public Domain.

Figure 2.11. "Max Weber, 1918" is in the Public Domain.

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2.4 Applying the Discipline: American Theorists and Practitioners

In the early 1900s, **sociology** reached universities in the United States. William Sumner held the first professorship in sociology (Yale University), Franklin Giddings was the first full professor of Sociology (Columbia University), and Albion Small wrote the first sociology textbook. Early American sociologists tested and applied the theories of the Europeans and became leaders in social research. Lester Ward (1841–1913) developed social research methods and argued for the use of the scientific method and quantitative data to show the effectiveness of policies. For sociology to gain respectability in American academia, social researchers understood that they must adopt empirical approaches.

Race in America: W. E. B. Du Bois (1868–1963)

Figure 2.12 W. E. B. Du Bois was one of the first sociologists to study race. What insights might his work provide on contemporary race relations?

William Edward Burghardt (W. E. B.) Du Bois, a Harvard-trained historian, pioneered the use of rigorous empirical methodology in sociology (figure 2.12). His groundbreaking 1896–1897 study of the African-American community in Philadelphia incorporated hundreds of **interviews** Du Bois conducted to document familial and employment structures and assess the chief challenges of the community. Published as *The Philadelphia Negro* (1899), it was the first American urban **ethnography**. These new, comprehensive research methods stood in stark contrast to the less scientific practices of the time, which Du Bois critiqued as being similar to researching through the window of a moving car. His scientific approach became highly influential to entire schools of sociological study and is considered a forerunner to contemporary practices.

In addition, he was the first sociologist of **race**. Race was at the center of his theorizing and work. He argued that race is a social construct and could not be reduced to biology or a scientific category. This challenged pseudoscientific ideas of biological **racism** (Morris 2017; Green and Wortham 2018), which had been used as justification to oppress people of different races. His book analyzing the Reconstruction after the American Civil War still provides insights into contemporary American **society** (Bouie 2022).

Du Bois also played a prominent role in the effort to increase rights for Black people. Concerned by the slow pace of progress and some Black leaders' recommendation that Black people be more accommodating of racism, Du Bois became a leader in what would later be known as the Niagara Movement. In 1905, he and others drafted a declaration that called for immediate political, economic, and social equality for African Americans. A few years later, he helped found the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and served as its director of publications.

Even with his important sociological insights and activism, Du Bois has been largely ignored and erased by sociologists. Only recently has there been an interest in creating a Du Boisian sociology (Morris 2022).

A Closer Look: Du Bois and Double Consciousness

Watch the following video based on Du Bois's writing about the experiences of being Black in the United States (figure 2.13). We will revisit this idea in a later chapter.

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z04KVyhZM5g&t=1s**

Figure 2.13 W. E. B. Du Bois describes the experience of "looking at one's self through the eyes of others" as double-consciousness. **"How Does it Feel to be a Problem?" [Streaming Video]. Transcript.**

Meaning-Making and Interaction in the City: The Chicago School of Sociology

In 1892, the department of sociology was founded at the University of Chicago. For the next 40 or so years, the department was the center of American sociology. Several influential textbooks emerged from the school, the *American Journal of Sociology* was founded, and members of the school played important **roles** in establishing the professional association for sociologists called the American Sociological Society (ASS, now known as the American Sociological Association, or ASA). For more information, you have the option to explore the **ASA website**.

During that time, Chicago was undergoing a rapid transformation. The city was industrializing, with major growth in the manufacturing and retail sectors. There were large numbers of people immigrating to the area, including people from nearby rural areas, African Americans from the southern United States, and immigrants from Eastern Europe. This led to a rather ethnically and racially diverse city.

Sociologists at the University of Chicago sought to explain these changes while also focusing on marginal groups. They did this by going out into the field and collecting data on the everyday lives of people in Chicago. Their research included studying immigrants (Thomas and Znaniecki 1996), gangs (Thrasher 2013 [1927]), homeless bohemians (hobos) (Anderson 2014 [1961]), and taxi-hall dancers (Cressey 2008 [1932]). Theories of the **self** developed by Charles Cooley (1864–1929) and George Herbert Mead (1863–1931), which we will explore in **Chapter 4**, also informed their perspective.

Jane Addams (1860–1935) worked closely with the University of Chicago's Chicago School of Sociology. She founded Hull House, a center that served needy immigrants through social and educational programs while providing extensive opportunities for sociological research. Research conducted at Hull House informed child labor, immigration, health care, and other areas of public policy.

Some other well-known Chicago School sociologists include Robert Park (1864–1944), W. I. Thomas (1863–1947), Ernest Burgess (1886–1966), and Everett Hughes (1897–1983). By the 1940s and 1950s, the influence of the Chicago School within American sociology had begun to decline.

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Paragraph on Jane Addams in "Meaning-Making and Interaction in the City" is from "**1.2 The History of Sociology**" by Tonja R. Conerly, Kathleen Holmes, Asha Lal Tamang in ***Introduction to***

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Figure 2.12. "W.E.B. (William Edward Burghardt) Du Bois, 1868–1963" the Public Domain. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

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2.5 Theoretical Perspectives in Sociology

During the mid-twentieth century in the United States, three dominant theoretical frameworks emerged: **structural functionalism**, conflict **theory**, and **symbolic interactionism**. You are likely to encounter these theories in your introductory **sociology** courses. As you will see, these frameworks draw on different combinations of the work of the classical theorists while attempting to explain social phenomena. Similar to the classical theorists, mid- to late-twentieth-century American sociologists seldom questioned whose voices they included and whose voices they excluded.

Structural Functionalism

Structural functionalism was the dominant theoretical framework in American sociology from the 1940s into the 1960s and 1970s. Functionalist theorists drew from Durkheim's work and from a rather narrow interpretation of Weber's. Structural functionalism tends to focus on macro-level phenomena, such as the relationship between institutions.

Functionalists proposed that **society** is a stable system made up of interrelated parts. Those parts constitute the different institutions within the society, such as the education system, families, and the economy. Each of those parts has a function that contributes to the stability of the whole system. They solve a particular problem for society. For example, families and schools help socialize and educate young people, and the economy helps solve the problem of distributing and producing goods.

Within this framework, social integration is important because that is how people come to feel connected within their society. As an example of social integration, think back to Durkheim's discussion of the different types of solidarity. In modern societies, common rituals and shared **values** help people feel connected. Based on this framework, it may seem that societies are relatively stable and lack conflict. However, conflict can emerge when different institutions tell us to do different things. This can result in social strain and **deviance**, which we will explore in more depth in Chapter 7.

A figurehead of functionalism, Talcott Parsons (1902–1979) was concerned with the problem of order. He tended to think through problems and issues in an abstract and at times an unclear way. Robert Merton (1910–2003), a student of Parsons and the functionalist tradition, broadened the concerns of functionalism by developing a unique blend of his teacher's abstraction and data. He argued for theories that integrated abstract theorizing and empirical research. He saw exemplars of this in Durkheim's theory of suicide and Weber's arguments about the Protestant work ethic (figure 2.14) (Ritzer and Stepnisky 2022).

Figure 2.14 A modern workspace. How have aspects of the Protestant work ethic influenced Americans' views toward work? What function does this work ethic have in our society?

Structural functionalism has been heavily criticized within sociology. Some critics argue that functionalists present a rather static view of society that fails to account for social change. Others argue there are logical flaws within the framework. Specifically, critics argue there is a problem in assuming that everything that persists in society serves a function. For example, does poverty or **discrimination** provide a function for society? Functionalism also has a hard time explaining inequality and, at its worst, may help justify existing inequalities.

Conflict Theory

Conflict theory is another macro-level theory. It arose in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s against the backdrop of the rise of various social movements. It draws heavily from Marx, and to some extent from Weber, and in doing so challenges functionalism.

In this framework, conflict is a basic fact of social life. Groups with antagonistic interests are constantly struggling with each other. In the classical Marxist formulation, it is the owners versus the workers. Beyond **class**, it could include men versus women, White people versus people of color, and so on.

Rather than seeing institutions as benign, conflict theorists argue the institutions of society promote the interests of the powerful while subverting the interests of the powerless. For example, consider how school funding is distributed. Schools in urban areas receive less financial support compared to their suburban counterparts. Those in suburban schools are given tools to get ahead, while those in urban schools are not (Kozol 1991). As a result, the students who go to well-funded schools have pathways into college and well-paying jobs. For the students that attend schools with fewer resources, they face barriers that can make it hard to get ahead.

Instead of viewing common rituals and shared values as integrating people into society, conflict theorists argue these values and rituals are ideologies that deceive people and make them comfortable with their position in society. One **dominant ideology** within the United States that is heavily criticized by conflict theorists is the idea of the "American Dream," which proposes that if you work hard, you will get ahead. Conflict theorists argue that the opportunities to get ahead for most people are severely curtailed due to artificial barriers in most institutions (figure 2.15). The American Dream ideology, according to conflict theorists, justifies the position of those already at the top of the power structure (Colomy 2010).

Figure 2.15 A line of Louisville, Kentucky, residents waiting for relief supplies after the 1937 Ohio River Flood. How might the American Dream be inaccessible to some groups?

For conflict theorists, social change emerges from people organizing and mobilizing together to pressure the institutions of society. Change is not something that will emerge from within the institutions. Recent social movements related to environmental justice are a good example of this.

Some well-known conflict theorists include C. Wright Mills (1916–1962), Ralf Dahrendorf (1929–2009), and Randall Collins (1941–).

Critics of conflict theory argue that it overemphasizes social change. It is also seen as centering social class in the analysis of the social world, rather than other sources of **oppression** and **privilege**, such as **race** and **gender**. We will revisit this perspective in Chapter 8.

Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism grew out of the Chicago School of Sociology. Unlike functionalism and conflict theory, symbolic interactionism provides a micro-level theory for understanding society.

The most famous statement on symbolic interactionism was made by Herbert Blumer, who coined the term "symbolic interactionism" in 1937. Blumer was a student of several sociologists at the Chicago School.

Blumer (1986 [1969]:2) stated that **symbolic interactionism** was based on the following premises:

- "Humans act toward things on the basis of the meanings they ascribe to those things."

- "The meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with others and the society."
- "These meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he/she encounters."

In other words, interactionists are concerned with how meanings are constructed through interactions with others. We attach meanings to situations, **roles**, relationships, and things whenever we encounter them. For a symbolic interaction to occur, these meanings have to be shared and agreed upon by the people you are interacting with.

For example, if we attach the meaning of "family member" to someone, we will treat them as a family member (or act based on the meaning of family member) as we interact with them. What we define as family originates from interactions with others, such as parents, siblings, teachers, the media, and elsewhere. As we interact with other people, we may come to modify our interpretations of what it means to be family, especially if the people we are interacting with have more inclusive or exclusive definitions of family.

Erving Goffman (1922–1982), Howard Becker (1928–), Sheldon Stryker (1924–2016), Patricia (1952–) and Peter Adler (1952–), and Gary Alan Fine (1950–) are some well-known interactionists.

Critics argue that symbolic interactionism has a hard time explaining macro-level phenomena. Other critics argue that it tends to downplay power, privilege, and oppression. Some present-day interactionists have tried to correct these problems by showing how symbolic interactionism can be used to explain power (Athens 2010) and organizational patterns (Hallett and Ventresca 2006). Within sociology, a separate professional association, the Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction (SSSI), continues to debate symbolic interactionism. We will explore this framework more in Chapter 4.

For a comparison of the three theories, check out figure 2.16.

Sociological Theories/ Paradigms	Level of Analysis	Focus	Analogies	Questions That Might Be Asked
Structural Functionalism	Macro or Mid	The way each part of society functions together to contribute to the functioning of the whole.	How each organ works to keep your body healthy (or not).	How does education work to transmit culture?
Conflict Theory	Macro	The way inequities and inequalities contribute to social, political, and power differences and how they perpetuate power.	The ones with the most toys win, and they will change the rules to the games to keep winning.	Does education transmit only the values of the most dominant groups?
Symbolic Interactionism	Micro	The way one-on-one interactions and communications behave.	What does it mean to be an X?	How do students react to cultural messages in school?

Figure 2.16 Sociological theories or perspectives. Different sociological perspectives enable sociologists to view social issues through a variety of useful lenses.

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Figure 2.14. "Grey Leather Office Rolling Armchair Beside White Wooden Computer Desk" by James McDonald is licensed under the Unsplash License.

Figure 2.15. "American way of life" is in the Public Domain.

Figure 2.16. "Sociological Theories or Perspectives" from "1.3 Theoretical Perspectives in Sociology" by Tonja R. Conerly, Kathleen Holmes, Asha Lal Tamang in *Introduction to Sociology 3e*, OpenStax, which is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

2.6 Social Theory Today

Since the 1970s, sociologists have used numerous theoretical frameworks that cannot be reduced to functionalism, conflict **theory**, or **symbolic interactionism**. Some of the frameworks expand upon the insights of the classical theorists, while others heavily criticize them for focusing on a narrow range of topics from very specific viewpoints. We will start with some of the internal and external critiques of American and European sociological theory before we consider contemporary theories of **gender** and **race**.

Postmodern Theory

Postmodern theory emerged in the late twentieth century in Europe and the United States. During that period, significant changes were occurring in those societies. Their economies moved from being based on industrial production to being based on services and knowledge. Changes in technology meant that people across the globe became much more connected to each other. **Wealth** became increasingly concentrated, and as a result, the middle classes in most societies started to shrink. In intellectual circles, some of the assumptions associated with classical theory came under fire.

Postmodern theory offers a powerful critique of most of the theories and ideas we have discussed up to this point. In its more extreme forms, it can also make doing **sociology** difficult as it questions some of the foundations of the discipline. A wide range of thinkers could be classified under the framework of postmodernism, even though they might disagree with each other. Postmodern sociologists generally agree that the utopian and visionary theories of the past have lost their authority. People no longer believe science, reason, or truth will provide answers to social problems or allow us to build a better social world. From this perspective, no single theory or worldview (such as Marxism, functionalism, or **positivism**) can successfully unify all knowledge and experience. To postmodern theorists, knowledge becomes based on heterogeneity, subjectivity, plurality, and pragmatism. As a result, knowledge and **society** fragment into multiple local fields.

Postmodern theorists have attacked the social sciences and social theory on other issues. Some argue that the social sciences are linked to domination and control, rather than to truth and emancipation. Some claim postmodern theorists legitimize the preferences of the powerful.

Postmodernists argue that knowledge and knowledge production are influenced by individuals' social position, instead of assuming one can disconnect those aspects of a person from their theory and research. Here, a person's position within society shapes the questions investigated, the theories used to explain social life, and the research findings. Your **social location** is your position within society. This often includes your position in terms of race, **class**, gender, **sexuality**, age, ability, religion, and geography. Instead of privileging one particular vision or interpretation of something, postmodern social science documents, juxtaposes, and challenges multiple visions of the phenomena under study (Rosenau 1991).

Some postmodernists might focus their studies on alternative meanings and ways of thinking. They refocus social science on the taken-for-granted and neglected, the irrational, and the marginal. Attention is also directed to the local rather than the general. Overall, it results in a social science that is more subjective and humble (Rosenau 1991).

Well-known postmodern theorists include Jean-Francois Lyotard (1924–1998), Michel Foucault (1926–1984), Jean Baudrillard (1929–2007), Fredric Jameson (1934–), and Zygmunt Bauman (1925–2017).

Postcolonial Theory

After World War II, people in the European colonies in Africa and Asia began rising up and challenging their colonizers. This led to the dismantling of European empires. Sometimes this occurred somewhat peacefully, but other times it involved war between the colonizer and colonized. One example of this is the Algerian War of Independence fought against the French in the 1950s and 1960s. Against this backdrop of decolonization, **postcolonial theory** emerged. Generally, **postcolonial theory** explores colonial relations and their aftermath. It also examines how those relations were created. The framework tends to focus on subjugated people and their ways of thinking about such themes as race, nation, power, and hybridity.

In a similar vein to postmodern theory, postcolonial theory challenges the theoretical frameworks of mainstream American sociology. Most classical and modern theorists assume that their frameworks are universal and can be applied to all societies (Connell 2007). This is despite the fact that the theorists, who have specific backgrounds and positions within their societies, developed their theories in very specific societies at particular points in time. As noted earlier, most of what is considered sociological theory is derived from the ideas of White, upper-middle-class men living in the United States and Europe. Typically, the theorists are from societies that are or were engaging in colonial and imperial projects. This standpoint leads to theorizing that engages in "grande erasure" in which there is an "erasure of the experience of the majority of human kind from the foundations of social thought" (Connell 2007:46).

Postcolonial thought critiques empires and their legacies. As noted by sociologist Julian Go, "if social theory was born from and for empire, postcolonial thought was born *against* it" (Go 2016:1). While there is great **diversity** in the theorists and thought included in postcolonial theory, there are a couple of points that hold the framework together. One is that empire, **colonialism**, and imperialism matter. These processes shaped and continue to shape societies across the globe. Second, empire, colonialism, and imperialism should be critiqued. This includes critiquing the ways colonialism and imperialism influence how people

understand the social world. The critique is paired with seeking out alternative ways of knowing and thinking (Go 2016).

Postcolonial theory starts from a very different place than most classical theories. Go argues that it should begin from the standpoint of the subaltern. Subaltern groups are groups that are made subordinate by powerful groups because of their class, caste, gender, nationality, or any other dimension of difference. This means that postcolonial theory "instead of starting from atop or from afar, instead of starting with theories and concepts cultivated from the standpoint of power, the subaltern standpoint starts on the ground. It starts from the standpoint of the subjugated" (Go 2016:143). Even when they challenge the **oppression** they face, subaltern groups have to deal with the dominant **group** in some manner (Macey 2000).

Some well-known postcolonial theorists include W. E. B. Du Bois, Frantz Fanon (1925–1961), Aimé Césaire (1913–2008), Amilcar Cabral (1924–1973), and C. L. R. James (1901–1989). More recent thinkers include Edward Said (1935–2003), Homi Bhabha (1949–), Gayatri Spivak (1942–), and Dipesh Chakrabarty (1948–).

Feminist Theory

Feminist theory is a branch of sociological theory that argues women suffer **discrimination** because they belong to a particular **sex** category (female) or gender (woman), and that women's needs are denied or ignored because of their sex. **Feminism** centers the notion of **patriarchy** in understandings of inequality and largely argues that major changes are required to various social structures and institutions to establish gender equality.

Feminist theories and ideas have undergone a transformation during different waves of feminism, but the common root of all feminisms is the drive towards equity and justice. A new "wave" emerges as we work towards greater inclusivity of groups that were previously marginalized or left out of the discussion. You will learn more about each wave in **Chapter 9**. If you would like to learn more now, you can explore **A Brief Look at the Four Waves of Feminism [Website]**.

Feminist theory emerges from a context in which society is viewed as patriarchal with uneven distributions of power that fall along sex and gender lines. In patriarchal societies, men's contributions are seen as more valuable than those of women. Patriarchal perspectives and arrangements are widespread and taken for granted. As a result, women's viewpoints tend to be silenced or marginalized to the point of being discredited or considered invalid. We have seen some of this in sociology with the women theorists we discussed previously in this chapter.

Given some of the overlapping premises of feminist theory, we can think of feminism as a position that advocates for the equal rights of women and men. Despite the emphasis on equal rights, there continues to be a social stigma surrounding feminism. What's going on here? Some point to the lack of knowledge about what feminism is, others argue that people are misinterpreting the ideas of different types of feminism. While not everyone necessarily believes in equal rights, we need to see the value in equity to understand feminist perspectives.

There are many different types of feminisms, with many different perspectives that often overlap. But there are three basic commonalities to most feminist theories:

1. Gender matters. In other words, gender is one of the most important parts of society; gender is a basis of the structure and organization of the social world.
2. Society is arranged so that women are given less status or value (patriarchy).

3. Regardless of the causes of these differences, they can and should be reduced or eliminated.

One type of feminism referred to as "standpoint feminism" centers on the viewpoint of subjugated individuals or groups. Dorothy Smith helped develop the ideas of feminist standpoint theory. She saw standpoint theory as a way to examine society from the perspectives of women and as a way to help women understand their worlds (Lorber 2010). Viewpoints are seen as having a partial "truth," and knowledge itself can be situational. From the perspective of this theory, since women's lives and **roles** are often different from those of men, women have a different type of knowledge. As a subordinated group in a patriarchal society, women can understand the world in ways that may challenge conventional beliefs.

In this section, we mentioned that there are many types of feminism. If you find yourself wondering why we need so many different types of feminism, you are not alone. Check out the short video linked in "Activity: Feminism and Pizza" to understand why sociologists continue to develop so many competing theoretical perspectives.

Some well-known feminist theorists include Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860–1935), Betty Friedan (1921–2006), Simone de Beauvoir (1908–1986), Nancy Hartsock (1943–2015), Judith Butler (1956–), Donna Haraway (1944–), Sandra Harding (1935–), and Joan Acker (1924–2016).

Activity: Feminism and Pizza

Let's take a moment to review and think about why sociologists have developed and continue to use so many competing theoretical perspectives. Check out the fun clip in figure 2.17 using pizza and burgers as an analogy to explain some of the complexities that exist within feminism (and why we need so many different forms of feminism).

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FgK3NFvGp58**

Figure 2.17 Akilah uses the metaphor of burgers, pizza, and toppings to explain **intersectionality in feminism [Streaming Video]**. **Transcript.**

Please answer the following questions:

1. How does this comparison help you understand the need for multiple forms of feminism?
2. How can you apply what you learned in the clip to your own life?

After viewing this clip, you may begin to wonder how we can understand multiple systems of oppression. In the next section, we will examine Black feminist theory and **intersectionality**, two approaches that center marginalized voices.

Black Feminist Theory and Intersectionality

During the third wave of feminism, sociologists began to criticize second-wave feminists as focusing too much on the experiences of White women and ignoring the experiences of women who identified as non-White. They argued that experiences of BIPOC needed to be centered in feminist discussions. Gender is important, they agreed, but it wasn't the only social identity that shaped the experiences of women of color in the United States. Women of color experience more prejudices during face-to-face interactions and higher disparities in pay compared to their White counterparts. Research suggests that in addition to gender, race also plays an important role and can create a "double disadvantage" or "double jeopardy" (Browne and Misra 2003; McCall 2005).

Patricia Hill Collins added the dimension of social class when she conceptualized this experience as the "matrix of domination" in *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (1990). Black feminist theory suggests that social change requires us to change the consciousness of individuals. The social transformation of economic and political institutions and new knowledge is important for dimensions of change. Black feminist theory fosters a fundamental paradigm shift in feminist theory and the sociology of knowledge concerning the assessment of "truth" (Collins 1990).

Intersectionality is the idea developed by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 that refers to the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, gender, age, and the multiplicative effect on victimization. Intersectionality, then, suggests that we should view gender, race, class, and sexuality not as individual characteristics but as interconnected social situations. Intersectionality studies have their origins with women of color in the United States. Much of the research in this field has its roots not just in academic discourse but also in attempts to initiate social change. Crenshaw highlights the ways that gender and race have been historically separated into separate fields of study, which creates a situation where "race" (the universal racial subject) ends up referring to the experiences of men of color. Meanwhile, in studies of "gender," White women are perceived as the universal female subject.

We will revisit the concept of intersection throughout the text, particularly in **Chapter 9**. Well-known intersectional feminists include Kimberlé Crenshaw (1959–), Patricia Hill Collins (1948–), bell hooks (1952–2021), Angela Davis (1944–), and Gloria Anzaldúa (1942–2004).

Critical Theories of Race

Critical race theory emerged from the study of law and the growing realization that the civil rights movement in the United States had lost its momentum. This framework draws from intersectional feminism and the work of W. E. B. Du Bois.

Critical race theory is an intellectual and social framework that examines how **racism** is embedded in American social life through its systems and institutions. While racism is prevalent, there are few incentives for those that benefit from the current arrangement to eradicate racism. In this framework, race is a social construct, something that changes depending on the social and political conditions of the society at a particular point in time. Race is not something that is rooted in biology or has some essence behind it. The framework centers on the knowledge and experiences of people of color and points to how those knowledges and experiences intersect with other identities, such as gender and sexuality. Within sociology, this involves critiquing how sociology has privileged White ideals, culture, and interpretations (Bonilla-Silva 2003; Zuberi and Bonilla-Silva 2008; Omi and Winant 2015).

The work of sociologists Michael Omi (1951–), Howard Winant (1946–), Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (1962–), and Joe Feagin (1938–) align with this framework. We will explore these in more detail in **Chapter 11**.

A Closer Look: Attacks on Critical Race Theory

Recently there have been attacks and criticisms leveled at critical race theory, usually in an effort to inflame cultural tensions. Frequently, those doing so do not have an understanding of what they are actually attacking. Watch this video in which experts explain what critical race theory is (figure 2.18).

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=svj_6w0EUz4**

Figure 2.18 What is critical race theory? [Streaming Video]. Transcript.

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Figure 2.17. "On Intersectionality in Feminism and Pizza | Akilah Obviously" by Akilah Obviously is shared under the Standard YouTube License.

Figure 2.18. "On Critical Race Theory: Experts Break Down What it Actually Mean" by The Washington Post is shared under the Standard YouTube License.

2.7 Conclusion

Let's return to the Haitian Revolution. C. L. R. James, a postcolonial theorist from Trinidad, provided a thorough interpretation of the Haitian Revolution in his book *The Black Jacobins* (1989 [1938]). James described how the enslaved people formed a **class**. Pushing against the sole focus on class, he pointed to how **race** and **colonialism** also played a role in the events of the revolution. While comparing slavery to the slave revolt, he argued, "The cruelties of property and **privilege** are always more ferocious than the revenges of poverty and **oppression**. For the one aims at perpetuating resented injustice, the other is merely a momentary passion soon appeased" (James 1989:88–89).

James's account of the Haitian Revolution provided a **theory** of capitalism that showed capitalism was "rooted in colonialism and the exploitation of the racialized masses" (Itzigsohn 2013:179). Simultaneously, James provided a "theory of emancipation and democracy based on the action of these masses" (Itzigsohn 2013:179). In *The Black Jacobins*, he shows how class struggle and racial struggle are connected and that the racialized, colonized people had to emancipate themselves. They could not wait for the French White working class or anyone else to save them (Itzigsohn 2013). He even wrote a play based on the revolution, called *Toussaint L'Ouverture: The Story of the Only Successful Slave Revolt in History* (James 1992). However, American sociologists continue to ignore James's contributions, just as they have done with the work of Du Bois (Itzigsohn 2013; Morris 2017). How might we explain this given what we have learned about **sociology** in this chapter? What might **postcolonial theory**, **critical race theory**, or intersectional **feminism** have

to say about this? What additional theoretically rich events might have sociologists overlooked?

Sociologists utilize a variety of different theoretical perspectives to help make sense of human behavior and identify patterns. Some classical theories provide frameworks that contemporary sociologists built on as our world continues to change. Now that you have a sense of what sociology is, you might be asking how sociologists "do" sociology. The **next chapter** will explore how sociologists use social science research methodology to understand more about human interactions within various contexts.

KEY TERMS

- **Bourgeoise**: in Marx's theory, the wealthy owners/capitalists that control economic production.
- **Colonialism**: when a dominating country creates settlements in a distant territory.
- **Conflict theory**: a macro-level theory that proposes conflict is a basic fact of social life. It tends to argue that the institutions of society benefit the powerful.
- **Critical race theory**: a theoretical framework that examines how racism is embedded in American social life through its systems and institutions.
- **Feminist theory**: a theoretical framework that argues women suffer discrimination because they belong to a particular sex category (female) or gender (woman), and that women's needs are denied or ignored because of their sex.
- **Intersectionality**: the idea that inequalities produced by multiple interconnected social characteristics can influence the life course of an individual or group. Intersectionality, then, suggests that we should view gender, race, class, or sexuality not as individual characteristics but as interconnected social situations.
- **Positivism**: Comte's theory that suggests science produces universal laws, science controls what is true, and objective methods allow you to pursue that truth.
- **Postcolonial theory**: a theoretical framework that explores colonial relations and their aftermath. The framework tends to focus on subjugated people.
- **Postmodern theory**: a set of theories that emphasize heterogeneity, subjectivity, plurality, and pragmatism while questioning previous modes of theorizing that focus on objectivity. It is a broad and somewhat intentionally difficult to define term. Postmodern theory tends to be skeptical of "objective" universal explanations of how society and culture operate.
- **Proletariat**: in Marx's theory, the workers that must sell their labor.
- **Social location**: your position within society. This often includes your position in terms of race, class, gender, sexuality, age, ability, religion, and geography.
- **Structural functionalism**: a macro-level theory that proposes society is made up of stable institutions and each institution has a function for the society.
- **Symbolic interactionism**: a micro-level theory that emphasizes the importance of meanings and interactions in social life.
- **Theory**: a statement that proposes to describe and explain why facts or other social phenomena are related to each other based on observed patterns.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Select one of the theories discussed in this chapter. What are some of the strengths and limitations of this theory? How might another theory covered in this chapter help address some of the limitations you identified in the theory you selected?
2. Pick one of the theories discussed in the chapter. How might it be applied to the Pendleton Round-Up discussed in **Chapter 1**? What would it emphasize? What might it miss?
3. Which historical events were important to the development of sociological theory? Are there events besides the Haitian Revolution that should be theorized? What contemporary events might shape future sociological theorizing?
4. How does the social location of individual theorists influence the theories they produced? How does your social location influence what you know about the world and how you see the world?

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CHAPTER

3

Sociological Research Methods: Studying Social Life

3.1 Chapter Learning Objectives and Overview

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Explain the importance of developing a research question and the steps of the scientific method in sociological research.
2. Describe the significance of interpretive and critical frameworks in sociological research.
3. Explain the benefits and limitations of quantitative and **qualitative research** and how to evaluate various research methodologies.
4. Examine common methods of quantitative research, including surveys and experiments.
5. Analyze the use of ethnographic research to study people in their environments.
6. Examine common methods of qualitative research, including interviewing and **content analysis**.
7. Discuss the purpose of community-based research as a tool for social change.
8. Recognize the importance of ethical research and professional codes of ethics.

Overview

We open this chapter with a brief introduction to what American sociologist Matthew Desmond refers to as the eviction epidemic. His research allows us to identify structural barriers that increase the experience of houselessness. Throughout this chapter, we will examine Desmond's approach to research methodology to better understand why social scientists need to be systematic in how they conduct research and how research can be used to help improve conditions for others. We include Rosemary's story as a way to understand how eviction disrupts connections to community and education (figure 3.1). Imagine trying to keep up with your school work while you and your family are struggling to keep a stable home. Many people maintain certain beliefs about someone who "gets evicted." They might suggest those people made poor choices and are responsible for their circumstances.

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gXqNtHtUa1U**

Figure 3.1 Please watch **Rosemary: A Life Disrupted [Streaming Video]** to learn more about one child's experience with eviction. How does Rosemary's story compare with families you know? **Transcript.**

Sociologists use a broader lens to examine social life; instead of solely focusing on individual choices, we also study how social structures limit and create opportunities for groups. We step back from experiences at the individual level to identify how those experiences indicate larger patterns in our world. Often those patterns intersect with inequalities.

Sociologists conduct research to systematically understand a wide range of social issues, including housing. Matthew Desmond (2016) used ethnographic research methods to learn more about how eviction impacts families in the United States. He observed eight families in Milwaukee during the 2007–2008 financial and housing crises as they struggled with evictions. He wrote about their experiences in his book, *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*, and combined his ethnographic fieldwork with statistical analysis. We will learn more about these and other research methods in this chapter.

By examining the lives of families struggling with substandard housing conditions and evictions, Desmond uncovers information that helps us better understand how poverty and economic exploitation intersect with access to housing. As Desmond shares in a PBS interview, **The stories behind the unseen eviction crisis [Streaming Video]**, "Eviction isn't just a condition of poverty, it's also a cause of it. It's making things worse." Eviction isn't about one or two "bad choices"—often there are multiple contributing factors that place renters in vulnerable positions with limited options. For example, even though Milwaukee has renter protections, for some landlords it was cheaper to evict tenants than keep their building up to code.

Social science research such as Desmond's enables us to see the complexities of the issues surrounding the housing crisis. It humanizes the experience of eviction and reveals the effects

on mental and physical health, while also demonstrating how structural inequalities put groups of people at a disadvantage.

In this chapter, you will learn more ways to use research methodology to analyze the world around you from a **sociological perspective**. First, we will examine the scientific method and different frameworks used in sociological research before introducing quantitative and qualitative approaches to research. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the **code of ethics** sociologists follow.

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Figure 3.1. "Rosemary: A Life Disrupted" by The Eviction Lab is shared under the Standard YouTube License.

3.2 The Scientific Method and Sociological Research

When sociologists apply the **sociological perspective** and begin to ask questions, no topic is off-limits. Every aspect of human behavior is a source of possible investigation. Sociologists question the world that humans have created and live in. They notice patterns of behavior as people move through that world. Using sociological methods and systematic research, sociologists have discovered social patterns in the workplace that have transformed industries and in education that have helped structural changes in classrooms.

Sociologists often begin the research process by asking a question about how or why things happen in this world. It might be a question about a new trend or a common aspect of life. Once the question is formed, the sociologist proceeds through an in-depth process to answer it. In deciding how to design that process, the researcher may adopt a scientific approach or an **interpretive framework**. The following sections describe these approaches to knowledge.

Developing a Research Question

As **sociology** made its way into American universities, scholars developed it into a science that relies on research to build a body of knowledge. Sociologists began collecting data (observations and documentation) and applying the scientific method or an interpretative framework to increase understanding of societies and social interactions.

Our observations about social situations often incorporate biases based on our views and limited data. To avoid subjectivity, sociologists conduct systematic research to collect and analyze empirical evidence. Peers review the conclusions from this research. Examples of peer-reviewed research are found in scholarly journals.

Sociologists use a variety of methods for research, such as surveys, ethnographies (field research), and **interviews**. Humans and their social interactions are so diverse that these interactions can seem impossible to chart or explain. However, scientific models and the scientific process of research can be applied to the study of human behavior. A scientific approach to research establishes parameters that help make sure results are objective and accurate. Scientific methods provide limitations and boundaries that focus a study and organize its results.

The Steps of the Scientific Method

The scientific method involves developing and testing theories about the social world based on empirical evidence. It is defined by its commitment to systematic observation of the empirical

world and strives to be objective, critical, skeptical, and logical. The scientific method follows deductive reasoning, rather than the inductive approach we see with grounded **theory**. It involves a series of seven steps as shown in figure 3.2. Not every research project follows the steps in order, but this approach provides a plan for conducting research systematically.

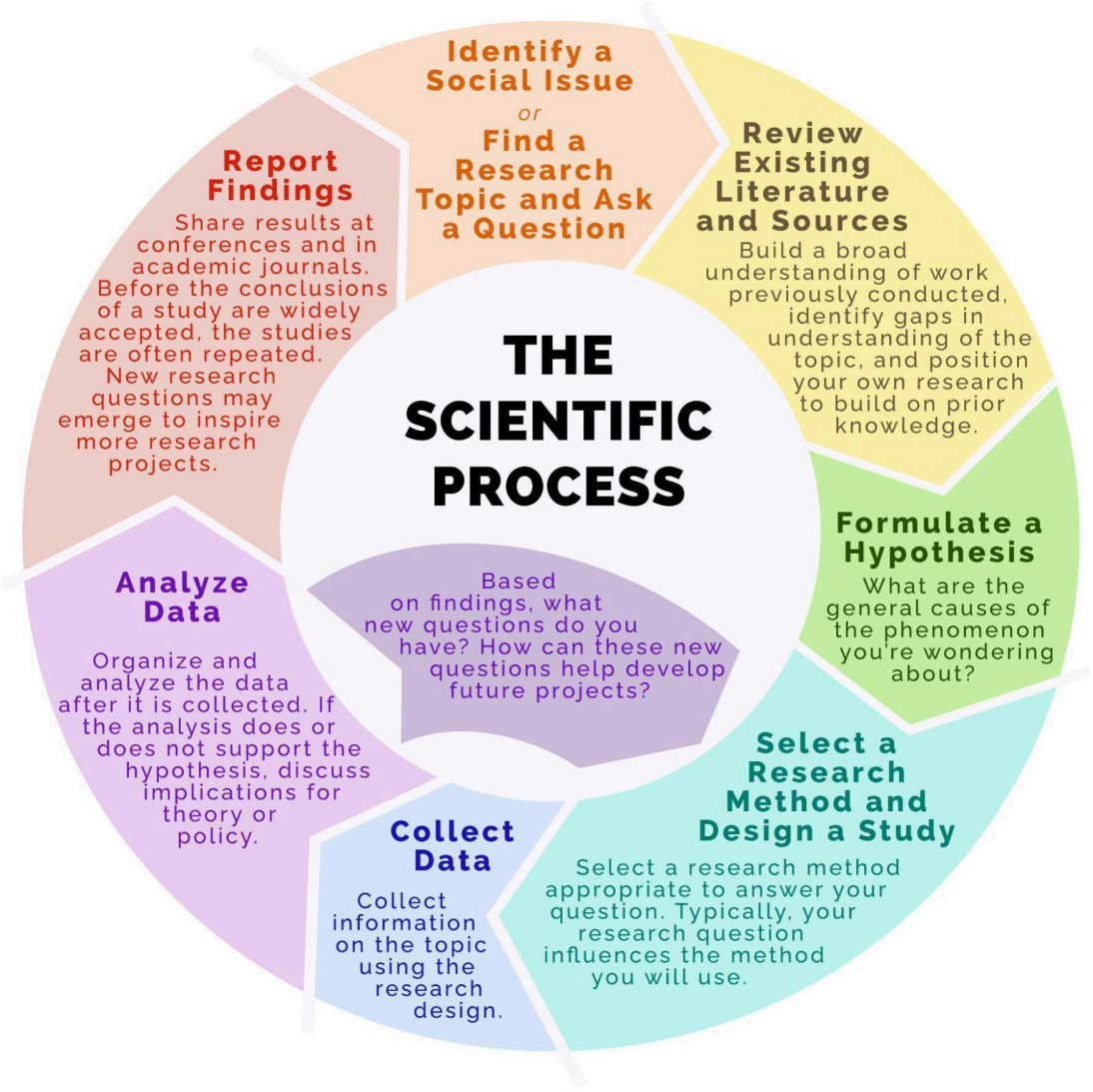

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Figure 3.2 The stages of the scientific method and research process. How do sociologists conduct research? **Image description.**

Figure 3.2 outlines key stages in the research process. Please note that these stages or steps can be experienced as an ongoing process. Researchers and students undertaking projects may need to repeat steps as they go through the research process.

In general, sociologists tackle questions about the role of social characteristics in outcomes or results. For example, how do different commu-

nities fare in terms of community cohesiveness, employment, **wealth**, **crime** rates, and so on? Sociologists often look between the cracks to discover obstacles to meeting basic human needs. They might also study environmental influences and patterns of behavior that lead to crime, substance abuse, divorce, poverty, unplanned pregnancies, or illness. And, because sociological studies are not all focused on negative behaviors or challenging situations, social researchers might study vacation trends, neighborhood organizations, and higher education patterns.

Good research questions address sociological issues, connect to prior sociological research studies, are narrow enough that one study could help answer it, and can be examined through data (readily available or able to be collected, given your time and resources) (Smith-Lovin and Moskovitz 2017:57). The process of designing research questions emphasizes first reviewing the previous literature to identify connections the researcher should explore in their study (Loske 2017). This is something you will want to keep in mind; it is not uncommon for research questions to evolve as you continue to incorporate new literature.

Step 1: Identify a Social Issue/Find a Research Topic and Ask a Question

The first step of the scientific method is to ask a question, select a problem, and identify the specific area of interest. The topic should be narrow enough to study within a geographic location and time frame. "Are societies capable of sustained happiness?" is too vague. The question should also be broad enough to be of significance. "What do personal hygiene habits reveal about the **values** of students at XYZ High School?" is too narrow. Sociologists strive to frame questions that examine well-defined patterns and relationships.

Step 2: Review the Literature/Research Existing Sources

The next step researchers undertake is to conduct background research through a literature review, which is a review of any existing similar or related studies. A visit to the library, a thorough online search, and a **survey** of academic journals will uncover existing research about the topic of study. This step helps researchers gain a broad understanding of work previously conducted, identify gaps in understanding of the topic, and position their own research to build on prior knowledge. Researchers—including student researchers—are responsible for correctly citing existing sources they use in a study or that inform their work.

Step 3: Formulate a Hypothesis

A **hypothesis** is an explanation for a phenomenon based on a conjecture about the relationship between the phenomenon and one or more causal factors. In sociology, the hypothesis will often predict how one form of human behavior influences another. For example, a hypothesis might be in the form of an "if, then" statement. Let's relate this to the topic of crime: If unemployment increases, then the crime rate will increase.

In scientific research, we formulate hypotheses to include an independent variable, which is the *cause* of the change, and a dependent variable, which is the *effect*, or the thing that is changed. In the previous example, unemployment is the independent variable and the crime rate is the dependent variable.

With a sociological study, the researcher would establish one form of human behavior as the independent variable and observe the influence it has on a dependent variable. How does **gender** (the independent variable) affect the rate of **income** (the dependent variable)? How does one's religion (the independent variable) affect family size (the

dependent variable)? How is social **class** (the dependent variable) affected by the level of education (the independent variable)? The table in figure 3.3 demonstrates the relationship between a hypothesis, independent variable, and dependent variable.

Hypothesis	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
The greater the availability of affordable housing, the lower the houseless rate.	Affordable Housing	Houseless Rate
The greater the availability of math tutoring, the higher the math grades.	Math Tutoring	Math Grades
The greater the police patrol presence, the safer the neighborhood.	Police Patrol Presence	Safer Neighborhood
The greater the factory lighting, the higher the productivity.	Factory Lighting	Productivity
The greater the amount of media coverage, the higher the public awareness.	Observation	Public Awareness

Figure 3.3 What are some examples of dependent and independent variables? Typically, the independent variable causes the dependent variable to change in some way.

Taking an example from figure 3.3, a researcher might hypothesize that teaching children proper hygiene (the independent variable) will boost their sense of **self**-esteem (the dependent variable). Note, however, that this hypothesis can also work the other way around. A sociologist might predict that increasing a child's sense of self-esteem (the independent variable) will increase or improve habits of hygiene (now the dependent variable). Identifying the independent and dependent variables is very important. As the hygiene example shows, simply identifying two related topics or variables is not enough. Their prospective relationship must be part of the hypothesis.

Step 4: Select a Research Method and Design a Study

In this step, researchers select a research method that is appropriate for answering their research question. Surveys, experiments, interviews, **ethnography**, and **content analysis** are just a few examples that researchers may use. You will learn more about these and other research methods later in this chapter in the section **Research Methods**. Typically, your research question influences the type of methods that will be used.

Step 5: Collect Data

Next the researcher collects data. Depending on the research design (step 4), the researcher will begin the process of collecting information on their research topic. After all the data is gathered, the researcher will be able to organize and analyze the data.

Step 6: Analyze the Data

After collecting the data, sociologists categorize and analyze it to formulate conclusions. If the analysis supports the hypothesis, researchers can discuss what this might mean. For example, there

could be implications for public policy or existing theories. If the analysis does not support the hypothesis, that can be an important finding to report.

Even when results contradict a sociologist's prediction of a study's outcome, the results still contribute to sociological understanding. Sociologists analyze general patterns in response to a study, but they are equally interested in exceptions to patterns. For example, in a study of education, a researcher might predict that high school dropouts have a hard time finding rewarding careers. While many people assume that the higher the education, the higher the salary and degree of career happiness, there are certainly exceptions. People with little education have had stunning careers, and people with advanced degrees have had trouble finding work. A sociologist prepares a hypothesis knowing that results may substantiate or contradict it.

Step 7: Report Findings

Researchers report their results at conferences and in academic journals. These results are then subjected to the scrutiny of other sociologists in the field. Before the conclusions of a study become widely accepted, the studies are often repeated in the same or different environments. Sociological theories and knowledge develop as the relationships between social phenomena are established in broader contexts and different circumstances.

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3.3 Frameworks Shaping Sociological Research

As you learned in **The Scientific Method and Sociological Research**, sociologists design their research by building on existing scholarship. We use many different frameworks to shape our approaches to research design, data collection, and analysis. In this chapter, we offer a closer look at some common approaches: interpretive frameworks, grounded **theory**, and critical **sociology**.

Interpretive Framework

While many sociologists rely on empirical data and the scientific method as a research approach, others operate from an **interpretive framework**. An **interpretive framework**, sometimes referred to as an interpretive perspective or approach, is a sociological research approach that seeks in-depth understanding of a topic or subject through observation or interaction. This approach is not based on **hypothesis** testing. Interpretive frameworks allow researchers to have **reflexivity**. **Reflexivity** refers to the ability of the researcher to examine how their social position influences how and what they research (Cambridge 2022). It requires the researcher to evaluate how their feelings, reactions, and motives influence how they think and behave in a situation.

While systematic, this approach doesn't follow the hypothesis-testing model that seeks to find generalizable results. Instead, an interpretive framework seeks to understand social worlds from the point of view of participants, which leads to in-depth knowledge or understanding of the human experience. **Ethnography** is one research method that uses an interpretive framework. You will learn more about this method in the next section.

Interpretive research is generally more descriptive or narrative in its findings. Rather than formulating a hypothesis and method for testing it, an interpretive researcher will develop approaches to exploring their topic that may involve a significant amount of direct observation or interaction with subjects, including storytelling. This type of researcher learns through the process and sometimes adjusts the research methods or processes midway to optimize findings as they evolve.

Grounded Theory

Grounded theory uses an interpretive framework to make sense of the social world. Grounded theory is an approach developed by sociologists Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (1967) at a time when researchers were questioning **positivism**. As you learned in **Chapter 2**, positivism refers to Auguste Comte's theory that science produces universal laws, science controls what is true, and objective methods allow you to pursue that truth. A counter perspective, **anti-positivism**, offers a different theoretical perspective that suggests social researchers should strive for subjectivity as they work to represent social processes, cultural **norms**, and societal **values**.

Grounded theory offers a different approach to analysis that is sometimes used in **qualitative research** and aims to help with the development

of theory (Charmaz 2003). This systematic theory is "grounded in" or based on observations. It uses induction or inductive reasoning, which means you use specific observations or evidence to arrive at broad conclusions. With grounded theory, the research starts by gathering observations before creating categories to organize the data in. After initially organizing the data into categories, they begin to look for patterns and relationships among categories (Glaser and Strauss 1967). A few methods that commonly utilize a grounded theory approach are participant observation, interviewing, and secondary data collection of artifacts and texts.

Critical Sociology

Critical sociology focuses on the deconstruction of existing sociological research and theory. This approach to methods is informed by the work of Karl Marx, and feminist, postmodern, postcolonial, and critical **race** scholars. Critical sociologists propose that social science is embedded in systems of power. Power is constructed by the set of **class**, caste, race, **gender**, and other relationships that exist in **society**. Consequently, power cannot be treated as purely objective. Critical sociologists view theories, methods, and conclusions as serving one of two purposes: they can either legitimize and rationalize systems of social power and **oppression** or liberate humans from inequality and restriction on human freedom. We'll explore examples of this approach in the section "A Closer Look: Indigenous Knowledge and Decolonizing Research Methods" later in this chapter.

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3.4 Research Methods

Sociologists examine the social world, see a problem or interesting pattern, and set out to study it. Just as Matthew Desmond approached his study on evictions in Milwaukee, researchers must decide what methodology to use when designing a study.

Planning the research design is a key step in any sociological study. Sociologists generally choose from widely used methods of social investigation. Primary source data collection, such as through surveys, participant observation, **ethnography**, case studies, unobtrusive observations, and experiments, refers to data collection conducted by the researcher. Secondary data analysis, or the use of existing sources, occurs when the researcher examines data that was previously collected and has been made available by the original researcher.

There are benefits and limitations to every research method. The topic of study and your research question strongly influence the methodology you select. When you are conducting research, think about the best way to gather knowledge about your topic. For instance, think of yourself as an architect. An architect needs a blueprint to build a house; as a sociologist, your blueprint is your research design, including your data collection method.

When entering a particular social environment, a researcher must be thoughtful. There are times to remain anonymous and times to be overt. Occasionally, we conduct covert research, during which people do not know they are being observed. Can you think of times when this would be the best approach to data collection?

Making sociologists' presence invisible is not always realistic. For example, researchers can't just stroll into prisons or kindergarten classrooms and unobtrusively observe behaviors. In situations like these, other methods are needed. Researchers choose methods that best suit their study topics, protect research participants or subjects, and fit with their overall approaches to research.

Qualitative, Quantitative, or Mixed Methodology in Social Science Research

Quantitative research tends to refer to research that uses numerical data; the social world and experiences are translated into numbers that can be examined mathematically through statistical analysis. For example, we can learn a great deal about large populations through surveys, but we might miss some of the interactional processes and other data better collected through direct observation. **Qualitative research** tends to work with non-numerical data and attempts to understand the experiences of individuals and groups from their perspectives. With qualitative approaches, researchers examine how groups participate in their own meaning-making and development of culture. Researchers who use this approach may use ethnography, in-depth **interviews**, focus groups, and/or **content analysis** to examine social life. Qualitative data may also involve the reading of texts and images. In the next section, we will explore some of these methodologies in greater detail.

Mixed methods research refers to the process of combining more than one method when conducting sociological research. This approach may help researchers gain a better understanding of the topic they are studying. Some research, like community-based research, focuses on improving social conditions in local communities by establishing partnerships between organizations and researchers.

Sociologists consider the benefits and limitations of each method to determine how they will

design their study. For example, Desmond (2016) primarily used qualitative research methods to learn about the experiences of families in poverty who experienced eviction. Desmond lived and worked in the same communities as the people he studied, and he talked with them about their experiences. This qualitative approach offers us great insight into lived experiences and interactions that are observable. Desmond paired his qualitative approach with quantitative methods, specifically statistical analysis to learn more about larger patterns related to evictions in the United States. He learned that what he observed in the families he studied was part of a larger trend in the country—evictions create more poverty for people who have low incomes. In the next section, you will learn how researchers use **reliability**, **validity**, and **generalizability** to evaluate studies.

Evaluating Research Methodologies

Researchers design studies to maximize **reliability**, which refers to how likely research results are to be replicated if the study is reproduced. Reliability increases the likelihood that what happens to one person will happen to all people in a **group** or that what happens in one situation will happen in another. For instance, baking is a science. When you follow a recipe and measure ingredients with a standardized tool, such as a measuring cup, the same results are obtained as long as the cook follows the same recipe. The measuring cup introduces accuracy into the process. If a person uses a less accurate tool, such as their hand, the same result may not be replicated. Accurate tools and methods increase reliability.

Researchers also strive for **validity**, which refers to how well the study measures what it was designed to measure. To produce reliable and valid results, sociologists develop an operational definition—that is, they define each concept, or variable, in terms of the physical or concrete steps it takes to objectively measure it. The operational definition identifies an observable condition of the concept. By operationalizing the concept, all researchers can collect data in a systematic or replicable manner.

Generalizability is the degree to which the results of a study can be applied to a larger population. As you learned in this chapter, not all research methods are designed to produce generalizable results. Instead, qualitative research offers depth and nuance to the topic being studied.

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3.5 Quantitative Research Methods

In this section, we take a closer look at **quantitative research methods** that are commonly used in social science research. Here you will learn more about surveys and experiments. In the next section, we'll explore **qualitative research** methods, including **ethnography**, **interviews**, **content analysis**, and community-based action research.

Surveys

Do you strongly agree? Agree? Neither agree nor disagree? Disagree? Strongly disagree? If you've heard this before, you've probably completed your fair share of surveys. At some point, most people in the United States respond to some type of **survey**. The 2020 U.S. Census is an excellent example of a large-scale survey intended to gather sociological data. Since 1790, the United States has conducted a survey consisting of six questions to collect demographic data about the residents who live in the United States.

As a research method, a **survey** collects data from subjects who respond to a series of questions about behaviors and opinions, often in the form of a questionnaire or an interview. Surveys are one of the most widely used scientific research methods. The standard survey format allows individuals a level of anonymity in which they can express personal ideas.

Surveys gather different types of information from people. While surveys are not great at capturing the ways people really behave in social situations, they are a useful method for discovering how people feel, think, and act—or at least how they say they feel, think, and act. Surveys can track preferences (such as for presidential candidates) or reported individual behaviors (such as sleeping, driving, or texting habits). They can also be used to collect information such as employment status, **income**, and education levels. Not all surveys are considered sociological research. Many surveys people encounter focus on identifying marketing needs and strategies rather than testing a **hypothesis** or contributing to social science knowledge. Questions such as, "How many hot dogs do you eat in a month?" or "Were the staff helpful?" are not usually designed as scientific research.

A survey targets a specific population, people who are the focus of a study, such as college athletes, international students, or teenagers living with type 1 (juvenile-onset) diabetes. Most researchers choose to survey a small sector of the population, or a sample. A sample is a manageable number of subjects who *represent* a larger population. Survey data can be quantified, and researchers can analyze responses using statistics.

Numbers that are presented in the media are routinely assumed to be correct. However, we should think a bit more about the samples used in data collection and the strategies used to evaluate statistics. For example, if you were to hear that 90 percent of college students still use Facebook as their main source of social media, you would likely be pretty surprised. However, if you learned that the sample consisted of 10 college students, perhaps who are all in the same Facebook **group**, the findings might seem a bit less surprising and maybe not entirely representative of all college students. In this case, it is important to examine both the sample size and the response rate of your survey. Response rate refers to the

percentage of surveys completed by respondents and returned to the researchers. For a survey to be valid, there must be an adequate response rate. Once surveys are returned, researchers can begin analyzing the data.

Sociologist Joel Best offers some suggestions to help us identify common mistakes when examining statistical data. In popular media, there are a few statistical blunders that lead to misconceptions about data (Best 2008). Misplaced decimal points, misleading graphs, careless calculations, and inaccurate translations of numbers are the main issues that lead to statistical mistakes. To avoid some of these issues, it's important to be clear about the relationship between variables.

Researchers aim to understand the relationship between variables. Researchers look for ways to identify relationships like **causation** and **correlation**. **Causation** refers to a change in one variable that directly affects or causes another variable (I hiked 10 miles, and now my feet are tired). **Correlation** is when a change in one variable coincides with a change in another variable, but does not necessarily indicate causation. For more examples explaining causation and correction, check out the five-minute video in the next section, "Activity: A Closer Look at Causation and Correlation."

Activity: A Closer Look at Causation and Correlation

Distinguishing between these concepts is a valuable skill. For example, does ice cream kill? Or is something else going on? Learn more about causation and correlation by watching the video in figure 3.4.

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMUQSMFGBDo**

Figure 3.4 **Causation or correlation? [Streaming Video].** Learn how important it is to understand these concepts. **Transcript.**

Be sure to come back and answer these questions:

1. What are some examples of correlations that do not indicate causation?
2. How does the ability to distinguish between these concepts help us when we are analyzing data?

Experiments

One way researchers test social theories is by conducting an **experiment**. An **experiment** refers to the testing of a hypothesis under controlled conditions. This approach closely resembles the scientific method. Researchers select this approach when they want to focus on isolating variables. To do this, they create a controlled setting, a setting in which the researcher has complete control of factors associated with the study. Not all questions about social interaction and social life can be answered with this approach, but it helps us learn more about patterns in controlled environments.

As a research method, either type of sociological experiment is useful for testing "if-then" statements: *if* a particular thing happens (cause), *then* another particular thing will result (effect). To set up a lab-based experiment, sociologists create artificial situations that allow them to manipulate variables.

Typically, the sociologist selects a set of people with similar characteristics, such as age, **class**, **race**, or education. Those people are divided into two groups. One is the experimental group, and the other is the control group. The experimental group is exposed to the independent variable(s), and the control group is not. To test the benefits of tutoring, for example, the sociologist might provide tutoring to the experimental group of students but not to the control group. Then both groups would be tested for differences in performance to see if tutoring affected the experimental group of students.

However, using controlled experiments can pose certain challenges. As you can imagine, in a case like this, the researcher would not want to jeopardize the accomplishments of either group of students, so the setting would need to be somewhat artificial. For example, the test would not result in a grade that was reflected on the student's permanent record.

Furthermore, if a researcher told the students they were going to be observed as part of a study on measuring the effectiveness of tutoring, the students might not behave naturally. This is called the Hawthorne effect—which occurs when people change their behavior because they know they are being watched as part of a study. The Hawthorne effect is unavoidable in some research studies because sociologists have to make the purpose of the study known. Subjects must be aware that they are being observed, and a certain amount of artificiality may result (Sonnenfeld 1985).

Although this approach closely resembles the scientific method, there are some limitations researchers need to consider. Experiments work best when research can be conducted in a controlled setting, but controlled settings may not accurately reflect the complexities of the real world. Another limitation to consider is that experimental research with human subjects often uses some level of deception to gather information. To avoid influencing the results of the experiment, participants may not be told of the true purpose of the study. It is important to follow ethical guidelines and have a post-participation debriefing during which researchers fully explain the experiment and offer subjects support as they work through the effects of deception.

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3.6 Qualitative Research Methods Part 1

In the next two sections, we will cover a variety of **qualitative research** methods. This section will focus on many different forms of ethnographic research, or **ethnography**. We will explore interviewing and **content analysis** in the next section.

Ethnography

Another research method sociologists use to collect data is **ethnography**—studying people in their environments to understand the meanings they give to their activities. The work of **sociology** rarely happens in limited, confined spaces. Rather, sociologists go out into the world. They meet people where they live, work, and play. Ethnography, or ethnographic research, involves gathering primary data from a natural environment. This field research, or fieldwork, requires the sociologist to step into new environments and observe, participate, or experience those worlds.

In fieldwork, sociologists are the ones out of their element. The researcher interacts with or observes people and gathers data along the way. While field research often begins in a specific setting, the study's purpose is to observe specific *behaviors* in that setting. Ethnographers aim to provide a "thick description" of the setting and interactions they observe (Geertz 1973). For example, rather than writing "Parker smiled," the researcher would elaborate on what is observable and may write something like "They parted their lips with an upward lift at the ends of their mouth, displaying a few top teeth." The aim of the "thick description" approach is for researchers to account for both what they see and the context in which they view it as a way to deeply understand **society**. This level of detail can make the reader feel as though they are experiencing the setting firsthand.

Ethnographic research is conducted through participant observation. Generally, the goal is to

study groups of people and understand what is meaningful to **group** members, but there are other types of ethnography that we will learn about in the next sections. Some center on the experience of the researcher (autoethnography), while other approaches analyze gendered relations in power structures (institutional ethnography).

Participant Observation

Participant observation refers to a style of ethnographic research in which researchers join people and participate in a group's routine activities for the purpose of observing them within that context. This method lets researchers experience a specific aspect of social life. A researcher might go to great lengths to get a firsthand look into a trend, institution, or behavior. For instance, at the beginning of a field study, a researcher might have a question like "What really goes on in the kitchen of the most popular diner on campus?" or "What is it like to be houseless?" The researcher might then work as a server in a diner, experience houselessness for several weeks, or ride along with police officers as they patrol their regular beat. Often, these researchers try to blend in seamlessly with the population they study, and they may not disclose their true identity or purpose if they feel it would compromise the results of their research.

Participant observation is a useful method if the researcher wants to explore a certain environment from the inside. The ethnographer will be alert and open-minded to whatever happens, recording all observations accurately. Soon, as patterns emerge, questions will become more specific, and the researcher will be able to either make connections to existing theories or develop new theories based on their observations. This approach will guide the researcher in analyzing data and generating results.

How do researchers decide what **roles** to maintain in their field site? Several factors influence this. The conditions of the setting may limit or enable the researcher's level of participation. The personal characteristics of the researcher, including abilities, theoretical orientations, and demographic characteristics, may influence the researcher's membership in the setting. Finally, a researcher's role may change over time due to changes in either the researcher or the setting during data collection (Adler and Adler 1987).

Researchers gain insights into cultural practices over time and through repeated analysis of many aspects of field sites. To facilitate this process, ethnographers must learn how to take useful and reliable notes regarding the details of life in their research contexts. These fieldnotes are a major part of the data researchers will analyze and connect to sociological theories. As you can see in figure 3.5, fieldnotes are often taken with brief handwritten notes' while a researcher is observing participants in the field. Figure 3.6 shows an example of an observation protocol or template that the authors of your text find helpful in their own research. Consistently documenting your observations helps with data. Many researchers use qualitative data management software to help them organize the documents they analyze which later conclusions will be based.

Figure 3.5 Examples of tools, such as phones, notepads, and pens, that ethnographers may use in the field to document their observations. What are some tools you use to take notes?

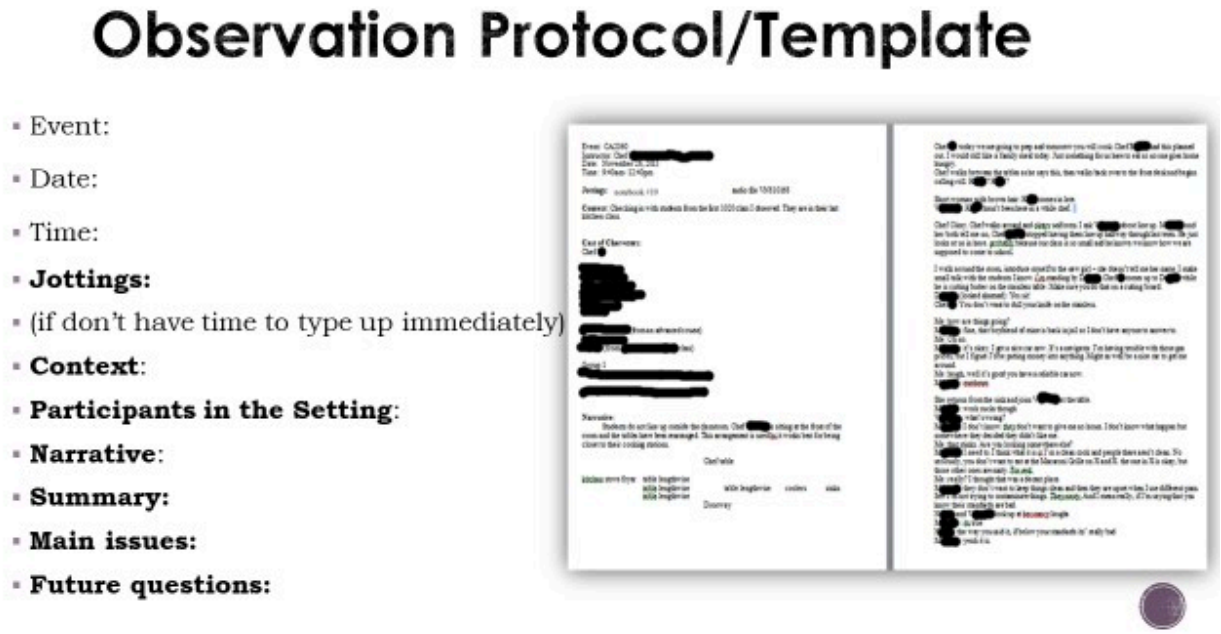

Figure 3.6 Example of an observation protocol researchers might use as they expand their fieldnotes and prepare to use qualitative data management software.

Autoethnography

Autoethnography is a form of participant observation in which the researchers use **self**-reflection and writing to examine their experiences in a setting. They connect their autobiographical story to wider cultural, political, and social meanings and understandings (Ellis 2004; Marechal 2010). Autoethnographic methods include journaling, interviewing one's self, and generating cultural understanding through reflective writing.

Institutional Ethnography

Institutional ethnography is an extension of basic ethnographic research principles that focus on gendered relationships within institutions. Developed by Canadian sociologist Dorothy E. Smith (1990), institutional ethnography is often considered a feminist-inspired approach to social analysis and primarily considers women's experiences within male-dominated societies and power structures. Smith's work is seen to challenge sociology's exclusion of women, both academically and in the study of women's lives (Fenstermaker n.d.).

Historically, social science research tended to objectify women and ignore their experiences except as viewed from the male perspective. Modern feminists note that describing women, and other marginalized groups, as subordinates helps those in authority maintain their dominant positions (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada n.d.). Smith's three major works explored what she called "the conceptual practices of power" and are still considered seminal works in feminist **theory** and ethnography (Fensternmaker n.d.).

International Research

International research is conducted outside of the researcher's immediate geography and society. This work carries additional challenges considering that researchers often work in regions and cultures different from their own. Researchers need to make special considerations to counter their own biases, navigate linguistic challenges, and ensure the best cross-cultural understanding possible. For an optional deeper dive, look at this **map and descriptions of field projects around the world [Website]** by students at Oxford University's Masters in Development Studies. What are some interesting projects that stand out to you?

For example, in 2021, Jörg Friedrichs at Oxford published his research on Muslim hate crimes in areas of North England where Islam is the majority religion. He studied police data on racial and religious hate crimes in two districts to look for patterns related to the crimes. He related those patterns to the wider context of community relations between Muslims and other groups and presented his research to practitioners in police, local government, and civil society (Friedrichs 2021).

A Closer Look: Indigenous Knowledge and Decolonizing Research Methods

An emerging fieldwork methodology involves the production of Indigenous knowledge by Indigenous communities themselves. Indigenous communities are distinct social and cultural groups that share collective ancestral ties to the natural resources and lands where they live, occupy, or from which they have been displaced. As the world becomes increasingly aware of the environmental crisis, researchers are more often acknowledging the ways that Indigenous peoples care for their ecological surroundings. For example, communities and fire agencies in Northern California and the Northwest are looking to Indigenous fire management practices to help control wildfires (Kuhn 2021). As Indigenous communities conduct their own fieldwork to identify and document their knowledge, they can engage with research as agents of ecological conservation.

Alongside better recognition of Indigenous knowledge is a recent emphasis on research method insights led by Indigenous leaders and scholars. This body of methods emerges as a response to the colonialist roots of international fieldwork and the damage that has been caused by some researcher-community relationships. The roots of international fieldwork are tied to the regime of settler **colonialism** and the colonialist thinking that came with it. Until recently, international fieldwork was viewed as the study of the "exotic" other.

Many argue that contemporary international fieldwork needs to be decolonized (Kim 2019, Datta 2018). Decolonization refers to the active resistance against colonial powers. It involves a shifting of power toward political, economic, educational, cultural, and psychic independence that originates from a colonized nation's own Indigenous culture. This context reflects the need for diverse voices and perspectives, and carries with it an expectation that researchers engage in some level of **reflexivity** in their studies. In other words, researchers should acknowledge their own reactions and motives in the field.

An early promoter of these ideas is Linda Tuhiwai Smith (of the Māori iwi [tribes] Ngati Awa and Ngati Porou) in New Zealand. In her 1999 book, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, Tuhiwai Smith encourages scholars to "research back," or critically and creatively interrogate the role that one's self, discipline, and community has played in engaging with communities of study in a way that can shift our knowledge in the present. Researching back disrupts colonizing practices and attempts to move toward respectful, ethical, and useful practices (Tuhiwai Smith 1999).

We can explore this concept more in the following **five-minute video [Streaming Video]** (figure 3.7) during which Dr. Shawn Wilson and Dr. Monica Mulrennan at Concordia University in Montréal, Québec, explore decolonized methodologies in research.

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rqYiCrZKm0M**

Figure 3.7 While watching, consider these main ideas: Research should be community defined with the process itself collaborative; research should look for and be guided by community strengths; and outcomes should be meaningful, promoting improvements to the community and at times serving as part of a reconciliation process. **Transcript.**

Considering the ideas in the video, take a moment to reflect on these questions:

1. The film mentioned that Indigenous research methods can provide an opportunity for the renewal of relationships between those working within systems of research and Indigenous communities. How do you see this renewal happening?
2. What does the quote by the Indigenous geographer, mentioned in the film, mean to you? "…if we assume we're guests we will be welcome, but if we assume we'll be welcome we're no longer guests."

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Figure 3.7. "Decolonizing Methodologies: Can relational research be a basis for renewed relationships?" by Concordia University is shared under the Standard YouTube License.

3.7 Qualitative Research Methods Part 2

In this section, we will take a closer look at the **qualitative research** methodologies of interviewing and secondary data analysis. The next section will focus on community-based research.

Interviews

Interviews, sometimes referred to as in-depth interviews, are one-on-one conversations with participants designed to gather information about a particular topic. When you have a research topic, there are several questions to consider to determine if interviewing is the best method for your study:

- Are you looking for nuance and subtlety?
- Does answering the research question require you to trace how present situations resulted from prior events?
- Is an entirely fresh view required? If the existing literature cannot explain your research problem or the current approaches to the topic do not seem to be headed anywhere,

interviews can possibly provide new perspectives on the issue.
- Are you trying to explain the unexpected?

If you answered yes to these questions, qualitative interviewing would most likely be an appropriate method (Weiss 1994).

Interviews can take a long time to complete, but they can produce very rich data. In fact, a respondent might say something that the researcher had not previously considered, which can help focus the research project. However, researchers have to be careful not to use leading questions that prompt respondents to give certain answers. For example, avoid asking questions like, "You really like eating vegetables, don't you?" Instead, researchers should allow the respondent to answer freely by asking questions like, "How do you feel about eating vegetables?" A strength of interviews is the back-and-forth conversation that occurs, which gives the researcher the opportunity to ask for clarification, spend more time on a subtopic, or ask additional questions.

Secondary Data Analysis

While sociologists often engage in original research studies, they also contribute knowledge to the discipline through secondary data analysis. Secondary data does not result from firsthand research collected from primary sources. Instead secondary data analysis (also called existing research data) uses data collected by other researchers or data collected by an **agency** or organization. Sociologists might study works written by historians, economists, teachers, or early sociologists. They might search through periodicals, newspapers, magazines, or organizational data from any period in history.

Content analysis applies a systematic approach to record and value information gleaned from secondary data as it relates to the study at hand. Using available information not only saves time and money but can also add depth to a study. Sociologists often interpret findings in a new way that was not part of an author's original purpose or intention. For example, to study how women were encouraged to act and behave in the 1960s, a researcher might watch movies, television shows, and situation comedies from that period. Similarly, to research changes in behavior and attitudes due to the emergence of television in the late 1950s and early 1960s, a sociologist would rely on new interpretations of secondary data. Decades from now, researchers will most likely conduct similar studies on the advent of mobile phones, the internet, or social media.

Social scientists also learn by analyzing the research of a variety of agencies. Governmental departments and global groups, like the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics or the World Health Organization (WHO), publish studies with findings that are useful to sociologists. A public statistic like the foreclosure rate might be useful for studying the effects of a recession. A racial demographic profile might be compared with data on education funding to examine the resources accessible by different groups.

One of the advantages of secondary data like old movies or WHO statistics is that it is nonreactive research (or unobtrusive research), meaning that it does not involve direct contact with subjects and will not alter or influence people's behaviors. Unlike studies requiring direct contact with people, using previously published data does not require entering a population or the investment and risks inherent in that research process.

Using available data does have its challenges. Public records are not always easy to access. A researcher will need to do some work to track them down and gain access to records. To guide their search through a vast library of materials and avoid wasting time reading unrelated sources, sociologists employ content analysis techniques.

Another problem arises when data are unavailable in the exact form needed or do not **survey** the topic from the precise angle the researcher seeks. For example, the average salaries paid to professors at a public school are public record. However, these figures do not necessarily reveal how long it took each professor to reach the salary range, what their educational backgrounds are, or how long they've been teaching.

When conducting content analysis, it is important to consider the date of publication of an existing source and to take into account attitudes and common cultural ideals that may have influenced the research. For example, when Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd gathered research in the 1920s on a small town in the Midwest, attitudes and cultural **norms** were vastly different than they are now. Beliefs about **gender roles**, **race**, education, and work have changed significantly since then. At the time, the study's purpose was to reveal insights about small U.S. communities. Today, it is an illustration of 1920s attitudes and **values**.

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3.8 Community-Based Research

Social scientists, including sociologists, sometimes use their research skills to work on projects within their communities. The goal of this research is often to improve conditions for some part of the population and to help community groups gather insight that they might not otherwise be able to collect themselves.

Community-Based Research and Participatory Action Research

Community-based research takes place in community settings and involves community members in the design and implementation of research projects. Research projects involve collaboration between researchers and community partners. This type of research aims to benefit the community by achieving social justice through social action and change (SFSU n.d.).

Community-based research is sometimes called participatory action research (Stringer 2007). In partnership with community organizations, you utilize your social science research skills to help assess needs, outcomes, and provide data that can be used to improve living conditions. The research is often published in professional reports and presented to the board of directors for the organization you are working with. The term "action research" suggests that we make a plan to implement changes. Often with academic research, we aim to learn more about a population and leave

the next steps up to others. This is an important part of the puzzle, as we need to start with knowledge, but action research often has the goal of "fixing" something, or at least quickly translating the newly acquired findings into a realistic solution for a social problem.

Community-based action research is rigorous research developed from empirical findings. At times, this research uses an **interpretive framework** (this reflective approach is discussed in **Frameworks Shaping Sociological Research**). It engages people who have traditionally been referred to as "subjects" as active participants in the research process. The researcher works with the organization throughout the process and will likely bring in different project design elements based on the needs of the organization. As a social scientist, you may have more formalized training, but you must draw both on existing research/literature and the goals of the organization you are working with. Community-based research, or participatory research, can be thought of as an orientation for research rather than strictly a method. Often, multiple methods are used to collect data. Change can often be one of the main aims of the project (e.g., how to improve access to housing). Think of this as a practical outcome related to the lives or work of research participants (Kemmis and McTaggart 1988; Anderson, Herr, and Nihlen 1994; Reason 1994).

Community-based research projects can benefit the community in a variety of ways, but there are a few considerations researchers and organizations should consider before entering into a partnership. For example, limited financial resources may make it difficult to complete projects promptly or at all. For projects that include collaboration between universities (faculty and students) and community organizations, the groups may have different timelines and goals. Projects may take longer to complete than one quarter or semester, which means there may be turnover in the research team. Researchers also need to consider the readiness of communities to undertake research that may challenge current practices.

In the next sections, we will look at some examples of how ethnographic fieldwork has been used in community-based research and social action efforts both locally and internationally. A quick examination of your local community in Oregon demonstrates how social science research methods are applied in the region. Consider how the case shared in the next section reveals the consequences of interlocking systems of **oppression**.

Activity: A Closer Look at Participatory Research

To learn more about participatory action research, check out this short four-minute clip for an introduction with Shirah Haasan of Just Practice (figure 3.8).

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6D492AP9JP4**

Figure 3.8 What is participatory action research? **Participatory Action Research [Streaming Video]** answers the question: What is participatory action research? **Transcript.**

Be sure to come back after watching to answer these questions:

1. What are the benefits of participatory action research? Who holds the "power" in this type of research?
2. What are some ways that elements of this type of research are transferable to other settings? What examples does Shirah Haasan give?

Research in the Community

Research is not always equitable, but it impacts our **society**, our local communities, and us as individuals in a multitude of ways. Let's examine one instance.

Lisa Saldana, a clinical psychologist, uses social research methods to address the needs of children who are referred to the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) or child protective services. A disproportionate number of these children come from families with substance use disorder or a drug-related referral, such as neglect (Saldana 2016). Psychology and **sociology** tend to have different points of analysis, with sociologists focusing on societal issues and patterns and psychologists focusing on the brain and the mind. Saldana used a sociological approach to her research, focusing on the micro-experience of the individual within the mesosystem and macrosystem (family and ODHS, respectively) to address societal issues that increased referrals to child protective services.

Saldana's (2021) **qualitative research** resulted in the formation of Families Actively Improving Relationships (FAIR), a community-based program that provides services to people where they live and work. FAIR's treatment program focuses on mental health, parenting, substance use disorder, and ancillary needs. Clinicians meet the clients wherever they can, whether that's McDonald's, the park, their home, or homeless shelters. This integral part of the program seeks to address the barriers often found within these communities, such as poverty, lack of access to transportation, and unemployment.

One of the barriers Saldana was surprised by was the insistence by National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) that only women be allowed to participate in the trial. On the surface, this seems to challenge the exclusion of women in social research. However, when we examine this through Dorothy Smith's (1990) theoretical framework, we realize that this **gender** restriction continues to objectify women and excludes men as fathers and their experiences within the system.

Following the successful trial, Saldana and her team received requests from the community to continue their work. As a result of the research, they opened a funded clinic in a Medicaid-billable environment in Lane County. This project allowed FAIR to be accessed by more individuals, including men. The rate of success for men was approximately the same as that for women, allowing families to grow and remain together, which benefits not only the children and the parents, but also society as a whole.

While this new clinic allowed more individuals to be reached and engaged, it was only for people who had co-occurring mental health and substance use problems and were also looking for or needing parent skills training. Saldana, her team, and community members realized that there were more individuals who needed support and assistance but were ineligible for existing services as they were not currently misusing opioids or methamphetamine.

Employing semi-structured **interviews** with graduated FAIR parents and current or former FAIR clinicians, the FAIR program was adapted to create a prevention-oriented intervention (PRE-FAIR). PRE-FAIR is currently in its efficacy trial in Benton, Douglas, Linn, and Lane counties. These efficacy trials would not be in place today without the use of social science research methods. We rely on social science research to help us identify the needs of people in our communities.

Saldana's work showcases the unique and often unexpected ways research impacts or fails to impact various populations and identities due to ingrained biases, objectification, and oppression.

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3.9 Ethics

Sociologists conduct studies to shed light on human behaviors. Knowledge is a powerful tool that can be used to achieve positive change. As a result, conducting a sociological study comes with a tremendous amount of responsibility. Like all researchers, sociologists must consider their ethical obligation to avoid harming human subjects or groups while conducting research.

Research studies that use human subjects often undergo review by a community at the researcher's university called the Institutional Review Board (IRB). If projects are approved, researchers seek out participants. Research participants are thanked for their participation and sometimes offered a chance to see the results of the study.

German sociologist Max Weber identified another crucial ethical concern. Weber understood that personal **values** could distort the framework for disclosing study results. While he accepted that some aspects of research design might be influenced by personal values, he declared it was entirely inappropriate to allow personal values to shape the interpretation of the responses. Sociologists, he stated, must establish value neutrality, a practice of remaining impartial, without bias or judgment, during the course of a study and in publishing results (Weber 1949). Sociologists are obligated to disclose research findings without omitting or distorting significant data.

Is value neutrality possible? Many sociologists believe it is impossible to retain complete objectivity. They caution readers, rather, to understand that sociological studies may contain a certain amount of value bias. This does not discredit the results but allows readers to view them as one form of truth—one fact-based perspective. Investigators are ethically obligated to report results, even when they contradict personal views, predicted outcomes, or widely accepted beliefs.

ASA Code of Ethics

The American Sociological Association, or ASA, is the major professional organization of sociologists in North America. The ASA is a great resource for students of **sociology** as well. The ASA maintains a **code of ethics**—formal guide-

lines for conducting sociological research—consisting of principles and ethical standards to be used in the discipline. These formal guidelines were established by practitioners in 1905 at John Hopkins University and revised in 2018. You can read the **full code of ethics [Website]**, if you wish. When working with human subjects, these codes of ethics require researchers to do the following:

1. **Professional Competence**: Sociologists should maintain a high level of competence and recognize the limitations of their expertise. Sociologists should participate in ongoing education to remain professionally competent and consult with other professionals when necessary.
2. **Integrity**: Sociologists should be honest, fair, and respectful to others. Sociologists do not intentionally engage in practices that harm the welfare of themselves or others.
3. **Professional and Scientific Responsibility**: Sociologists maintain high scientific and professional standards. They accept responsibility for their work and show respect for other sociologists when they disagree on theoretical and methodological approaches.
4. **Social Responsibility**: Sociologists respect people's rights, dignity, and **diversity**. They are aware of cultural, individual, and role differences in serving, teaching, and studying groups of people with different characteristics.
5. **Human Rights**: Sociologists are committed to promoting the human rights of all people through their research, teaching, practice, and service.

Unethical Studies

Unfortunately, when these codes of ethics are ignored, it creates an unethical environment for humans involved in research studies. Throughout history, there have been numerous unethical studies, some of which are summarized next. Unethical research in the past led to the development of the *Belmont Report*, a document that outlines ethical principles and guidelines for human subject research. You have the option to read the **full report [Website]**. Three core principles are identified: respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. As you learned in the last section, the *Belmont Report* influences the code of ethics followed by sociologists today.

The Tuskegee Experiment

This study was conducted in 1932 in Macon County, Alabama, and included 600 African-American men, including 399 diagnosed with syphilis (figure 3.9). The participants were told they were diagnosed with a disease of "bad blood." Penicillin was distributed in the 1940s as the cure for the disease, but unfortunately, the African-American men were not given the treatment because the objective of the study was to see "how untreated syphilis would affect the African-American male" (Caplan 2007).

Figure 3.9 Participants in the Tuskegee study were denied important information about their diagnosis, leading to significant health issues.

Henrietta Lacks

Ironically, this study was conducted at the hospital associated with Johns Hopkins University, where the ASA code of ethics originated. In 1951, Henrietta Lacks was receiving treatment for cervical cancer at John Hopkins Hospital when doctors discovered that she had "immortal" cells that reproduce rapidly and indefinitely, making them extremely valuable for medical research (figure 3.10). Without her consent, doctors collected and shared her cells to produce extensive cell lines. Lacks's cells were widely used for experiments and treatments, including the polio vaccine, and were put into mass production. Today, these cells are known worldwide as HeLa cells (Shah 2010).

Figure 3.10 Henrietta Lacks's [Website] cells have contributed greatly to medical research, but this progress comes with great costs. Researchers did not inform Henrietta of their true intentions when harvesting cells. Overall, there was a lack of informed consent, exposure of her medical information, and commercialization of her cells that did not benefit her family.

Milgram Experiment

In 1961, psychologist Stanley Milgram conducted an **experiment** at Yale University. Its purpose was to measure the willingness of study subjects to obey an authority figure who instructed them to perform acts that conflicted with their conscience. Figure 3.11 is a diagram of his study. Participants who were assigned the role of "teacher" believed they were administering electric shocks to "learners" who gave incorrect answers to word-pair questions. No matter how concerned they were about administering the increasingly intense shocks, the teachers were told to keep going. Very few of the teachers refused to participate. The extreme emotional distress faced by the teachers, who believed they were hurting other people, is a major ethical concern (Vogel 2014). Subjects who were teachers were debriefed after the experiment and met the learner they were paired with.

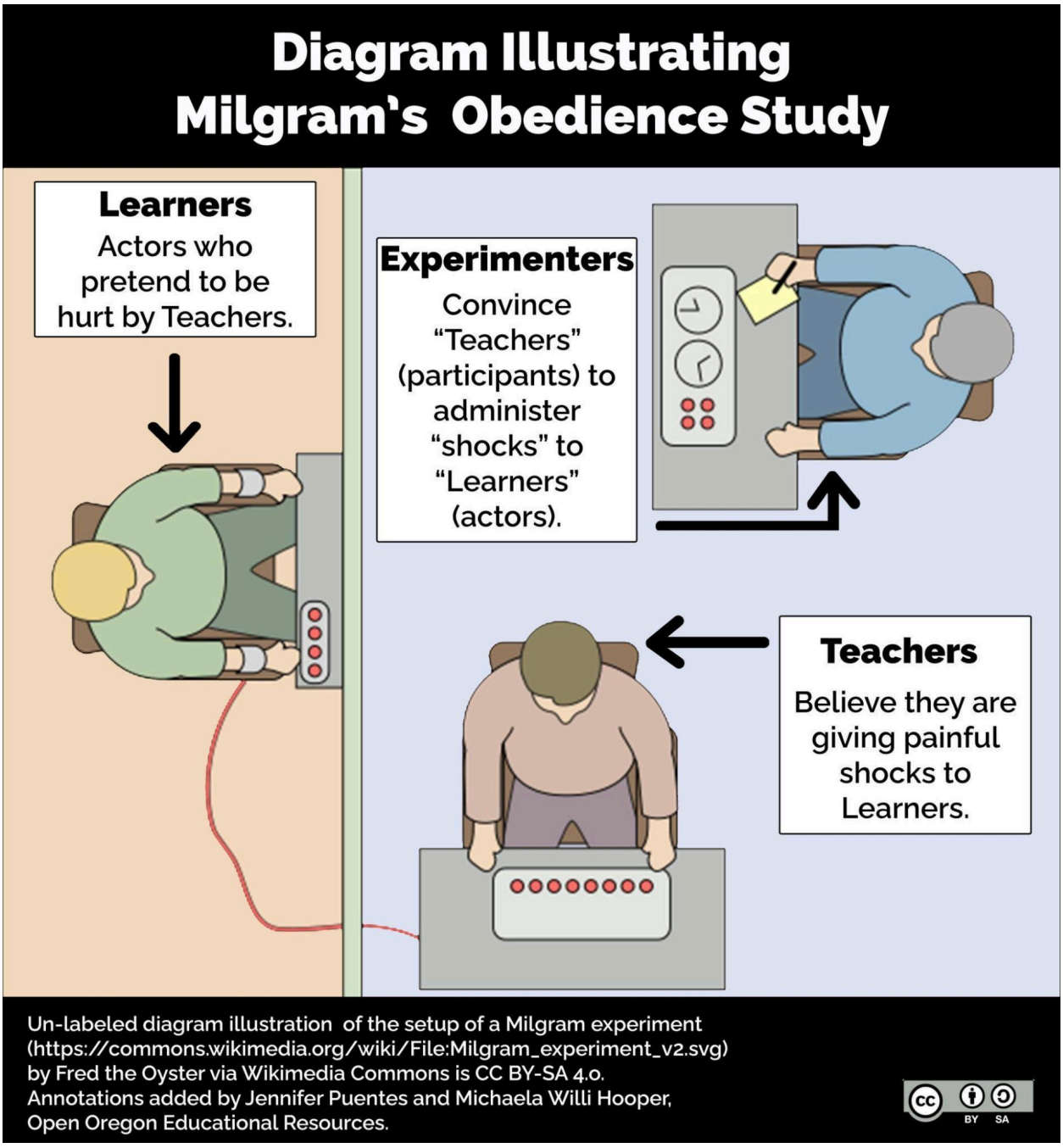

Figure 3.11 Teachers and learners. Who is really being evaluated in Milgram's Obedience Study? Image description.

Laud Humphreys

In the 1960s, Laud Humphreys conducted an experiment at a restroom in a park known for same-**sex** sexual encounters. His objective was to understand the diversity of backgrounds and motivations of people seeking same-sex relationships. His ethics were questioned because he misrepresented his identity and intent while observing and questioning the men he interviewed (Nardi 1995).

Ethics in International Research

Research in international settings follows the same ethical guidelines as research in the sociologist's home environment. However, researchers must also consider the cross-cultural nature of the work and navigate the unequal power imbalances that exist between researchers and the communities they are studying.

In international settings, there may exist different cultural approaches and understandings about ethics in research in general, so it is helpful for researchers to establish relationships with local organizations to better understand those cultural differences. Members of local organizations can advise on any cultural, moral, and political sensitivities that might influence risks to the safety and dignity of participants.

Researchers are encouraged to pay close attention to power imbalances between themselves and local communities. This is especially true in low-**income** countries or countries that are in conflict or facing political instability. These power imbalances may be real or perceived and may impact the degree to which community members feel their participation is voluntary, how freely they grant specific consent for participation, and what they expect the research will contribute, if anything, to their community. Special attention needs to be provided to bridge cultural and language gaps to make certain that participants understand the details of the informed consent, which may require providing translated or orally-presented information (International Research n.d).

Activity: A Closer Look at Research Ethics

Let's look at how one organization outlines ethics for international research. The Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) works to strengthen organizations' impact on poverty, so their focus on international research has a humanitarian or development lens (figure 3.12).

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ylkKCgEIMws**

Figure 3.12 What does it mean to design an ethical research study? As you watch **Principles and Guidelines for Ethical Research and Evaluation in Development [Streaming Video]**, keep track of the principles that ACFID encourages. **Transcript.**

Please answer the following question:

1. How do ACFID's principles for ethical research compare to the principles we covered in this section?

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Figure 3.11. "Diagram Illustrating Milgram's Obedience Study" is adapted from Milgram experiment v2 by Fred the Oyster, and is licensed CC BY-SA 4.0. Modifications: Annotations added by Jennifer Puentes and Michaela Willi Hooper, Open Oregon Educational Resources.

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3.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, you learned the many ways sociologists "do" **sociology**. Social science research draws on the scientific method and is important to the discipline. Along with the scientific method, sociologists must determine what research method is appropriate to use when assessing social life. We must consider the **validity** and **reliability** of our findings. Quantitative and qualitative approaches to research help us answer different types of questions. Quantitative methods use statistical analysis to quantify and measure social phenomena. Qualitative methods seek to understand the experiences of individuals or groups from their perspective by focusing on observable material such as texts, fieldnotes, photographs, and interview transcripts. There are strengths and limitations to every approach we've discussed in this chapter.

Social science research methods help us understand a great deal about **society** and human experiences. If we return to Matthew Desmond's research on housing and evictions, we see how understanding those experiences allowed Desmond to make sound conclusions about housing in Milwaukee. For an optional, closer look into this topic, Desmond outlines some of the key findings related to policy that impact families with evictions here: Unstable Housing: Matthew Desmond [Streaming Video]. In 2017, Desmond founded the Eviction Lab, which is a project to collect national data on eviction as a means to address questions about residential instability, forced moves, and poverty in America. You can

read more from the **Eviction Lab [Website]** if you wish. Desmond's findings led him to advocate for a universal housing voucher. What do you think? Is housing a right? What would change if we understood housing as something everyone should have access to?

Chapter 4 will focus on micro-level sociology, exploring the frameworks sociologists use to understand how society shapes our understanding of reality. We will examine various theories related to the **self** and how practices of **socialization** are embedded in our lives.

KEY TERMS

- **Anti-positivism**: the view that social researchers should strive for subjectivity as they work to represent social processes, cultural norms, and societal values.
- **Causation**: a change in one variable that directly has an effect on or causes another variable.
- **Code of ethics**: formal guidelines for conducting sociological research, consisting of principles and ethical standards to be used in the discipline.
- **Content analysis**: a systematic approach to record and value information gleaned from secondary data as it relates to the study at hand.
- **Correlation**: when a change in one variable coincides with a change in another variable, but does not necessarily indicate causation.
- **Critical sociology**: a sociological approach that focuses on deconstruction of existing sociological research and theory. Critical sociologists view theories, methods, and conclusions as serving one of two purposes: they can either legitimize and rationalize systems of social power and oppression or liberate humans from inequality and restriction on human freedom.
- **Ethnography:** the study of people in their environments to understand the meanings they give to their activities.
- **Experiment**: the testing of a hypothesis under controlled conditions.
- **Generalizability**: the degree to which the results of a study can be applied to a larger population.
- **Grounded theory**: an interpretive framework sometimes used in qualitative analysis with the goal of developing theory; an approach developed by sociologists Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (1967) that offers an alternative to positivism.
- **Hypothesis:** an explanation for a phenomenon based on a conjecture about the relationship between the phenomenon and one or more causal factors.
- **Interpretive framework**: a sociological research approach that seeks in-depth understanding of a topic or subject through observation or interaction; this approach is not based on hypothesis testing. Interpretive frameworks allow researchers to have reflexivity so they can describe how their own social position influences what they research.
- **Interviews:** one-on-one conversations with participants designed to gather information about a particular topic
- **Qualitative research**: research methods that work with non-numerical data and attempt to understand the experiences of individuals and groups from their own perspectives. With

qualitative approaches, researchers examine how groups participate in their own meaning-making and development of culture.

- **Quantitative research:** research methods that use numerical data; the social world and experiences are translated into numbers that can be examined mathematically through statistical analysis.
- **Reflexivity:** the ability of the researcher to examine how their own social position influences how and what they research. Reflexivity requires the researcher to evaluate how their own feelings, reactions and motives influence how they think and behave in a situation.
- **Reliability**: how likely research results are to be replicated if the study is reproduced.
- **Survey**: a method of collecting data from subjects who respond to a series of questions about behaviors and opinions, often in the form of a questionnaire or an interview. Surveys are one of the most widely used scientific research methods.
- **Validity**: how well the study measures what it was designed to measure.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What types of questions are best answered with survey questions? What additional information might you gather by using qualitative interviews?
2. What are some important skills for a qualitative researcher to have?
3. In this chapter you learned about community-based participatory research. Learn more by listening to this talk from Dr. Blake Poland at University of Toronto Public Health **Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) [Streaming Video]**. Questions to consider while watching:
    1. What is community-based participatory research?
    2. How are research projects designed? What is different about this approach compared to traditional approaches to research?
    3. What are some of the skills needed to conduct this type of research?
    4. How might you use this type of research outside of the area of public health?
4. Create a brief research design about a topic in which you are passionately interested. Now write a letter to a philanthropic or grant organization requesting funding for your study. How can you describe the project in a convincing yet realistic and objective way? Explain how the results of your study will be a relevant contribution to the body of sociological work already in existence.
5. Why do you think the American Sociological Association (ASA) crafted such a detailed set of ethical principles? What type of study could put human participants at risk? Think of some examples of studies that might be harmful. Do you think that, in the name of sociology, some researchers might be tempted to cross boundaries that threaten human rights? Why?
6. Would you willingly participate in a sociological study that could potentially put your health and safety at risk, but had the potential to help thousands or even hundreds of thousands of

people? For example, would you participate in a study of a new drug that could cure diabetes or cancer, even if it meant great inconvenience and physical discomfort for you or possible permanent damage?

Additional Resources

1. **Evicted [Website]**
2. **Eviction Lab [Website]**
3. You can learn more about Desmond's research in this optional seven-minute interview with PBS here: **The stories behind the unseen eviction crisis [Streaming Video]**.
4. Saldana's (2021) qualitative research resulted in Families Actively Improving Relationships (FAIR), a community-based program that provides services to people where they live and work. Learn more about the **FAIR program [Website]**, and explore the **ODI Clinic [Website]**.

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CHAPTER

4

Figure 4.1 Which self leads the way today?

Socialization and Interaction

4.1 Chapter Learning Objectives and Overview

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Interpret the sociological concept of reality as a social construct.
2. Apply the different micro sociological theories to a variety of scenarios.

3. Explain how individuals present themselves and perceive themselves in a social context.
4. Outline how sociologists approach the **self** and emotions.
5. Describe the importance of **socialization** both for individuals and **society**.
6. Distinguish between the agents and **targets of socialization**.
7. Explain how socialization occurs and recurs throughout life.

Overview

In all people I see myself, none more and not one a barley-corn less,
And the good or bad I say of myself I say of them.
– "Song of Myself, 20" by Walt Whitman
Do I contradict myself?
Very well then I contradict myself,
(I am large, I contain multitudes.)
– "Song of Myself, 51" by Walt Whitman

Do we contain multitudes? What are these poems saying about the human experience in general? Do we appear differently to different people as the opening image suggests (figure 4.1)? In this chapter, we explore the different identities and selves we may contain. Think about how you define yourself and make a list. What would you put down if you had to answer the question, "Who am I?"

Would you include your family? Friendships? Groups you belong to? Your **race**? Nationality? **Ethnicity**? **Gender**? **Sex**? **Sexuality**? Class? Some of these identities might be close to defining who we are, but other aspects of our identity might be less relevant. While we are complex, there is some coherence to us. How can we explain these selves and identities sociologically?

In this chapter, we begin by addressing how we socially construct our worlds. We will then explore different theories that explain how we develop selves and identities. After that, we will discuss the social construction of emotions and end with a discussion of socialization. This chapter aims to give insight into how our social and **group** memberships influence who we are and how we understand the world around us.

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Figure 4.1. "Identity-Persona" by NCSU16 is licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0.

4.2 Social Construction of Reality

Matthew Gougherty and Aimee Samara Krouskop

Race, **gender**, families, scientific facts, **sexuality**, nationalism, and reality: What might they have in common? One commonality is that they are all socially constructed. What do sociologists mean when they say something is a social construct? At the most basic level, **social constructionism**, or the social construction of reality, means "what we take to be the truth about the world importantly depends on the social relationships of which we are a part" (Gergen 2018:7). Humans make meaning collectively. It's something we are socialized into from birth. In this section, we will explore several traditions that focus on meaning-making and its connection to social reality.

Human Interaction and Institutions

One of the more influential takes on social constructionism emerged from the work of Austrian-American sociologists Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann. In their 1966 book, *The Social Construction of Reality*, they argued that **society** is created by humans and human interaction, which they call **habitualization**. Habitualization describes how "any action that is repeated frequently becomes cast into a pattern, which can then be … performed again in the future in the same manner and with the same economical effort" (Berger and Luckmann 1966).

Habits allow us to efficiently go about our day-to-day lives. If we had to start from scratch every day, our lives would be weighed down by way too many choices. For example, each of us probably has a morning routine we follow, often without thinking about it too much. This allows us to prepare for our day promptly.

Not only do we construct our society, but we also accept it as it is because others created it before us. Society is, in fact, "habit." For example, your school exists as a school and not just as a building because you and others agree that it is a school. If your school is older than you are, it was created by the agreement of others before you. In a sense, it exists by consensus, both prior and current. This is an example of the process of **institutionalization**, the act of implanting a convention or norm into society. Bear in mind that the institution, while socially constructed, is still quite real.

Once meanings are institutionalized, they may appear durable or even "natural." Through **socialization**, which we will soon explore in more detail, people learn these institutionalized meanings and become members of their society.

Another way of looking at this concept is through William I. and Dorothy S. Thomas's

notable **Thomas theorem** which states, "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (Thomas and Thomas 1928). That is, people's behavior can be determined by their subjective construction of reality rather than by objective reality. For example, a teenager who is repeatedly given a label—overachiever, player, bum—might live up to the term even though it initially wasn't a part of their character. Similarly, people believe that race, even though it is socially constructed, is real. As a result, it has real-life consequences, especially when considering access to opportunities.

Constructionism and Cross-Cultural Comparisons

Because we live enmeshed within our own cultures, it can be difficult to see how reality is constructed by the society to which we belong. One way to practice seeing how our immediate society constructs segments of its reality is by applying a constructionist lens to cultures outside of our own. In this section, we'll look at the concept of beauty across time and culture as an example of social construction.

Researchers have shown that people's sense of beauty varies across time and culture. In societies around the world, people exaggerate the features of beauty that their culture deems attractive. Ideal characteristics might include neck length, foot size, or lip size. This illustrates the cultural evaluation of beauty and the (often painful) techniques used to achieve the unnaturally extreme forms of beauty.

We don't have to look extensively to find societies that express beauty differently than Western culture. Figure 4.2 shows a bronze sculpture of a woman named Ilchee, or Moon Woman, who was born in the late 1700s. She belonged to the Chinook Nation in present-day Oregon and Washington and was the daughter of an influential chief. The sculpture is installed along the waterfront in Vancouver, Washington, and was designed by the sculptor Eric Jensen to honor the Chinook people who lived in the area for thousands of years. Jensen represented Ilchee looking toward her family's ancestral home nearby.

Figure 4.2 Bronze sculpture of Ilchee, or Moon Girl, sculpted by Eric Jensen. What can the sculpture tell us about the social construction of beauty?

As a child, Ilchee's caretakers bound her head to create the striking angle of her profile. The elite of some Chinook tribes practiced **head binding** as a mark of social status as well as to enhance their sense of beauty. Some tribes bound the heads of children regardless of gender, while other tribes focused on flattening the heads of girls (Ruby and Brown 1993, Dingwall 1931).

Another example of the social construction of beauty is evident in the preference for *yaeba* in Japan. *Yaeba* refers to a dental pattern in which one tooth, especially one of the upper canines, overlaps another or protrudes from a spot higher in the gum as shown in figure 4.3. To some, this may portray a fang-like appearance. To many in Japan, it is considered a mark of youthfulness and natural beauty. It has recently become a trend for teenage

girls to have dental procedures to create or emphasize this look. Others point to it as an expression of the Japanese traditional aesthetic of *wabi*, which is a consideration of beauty in imperfect things, in simplicity and authenticity (Yaeba Dentistry: The Appeal of Pointy Teeth 2018).

Figure 4.3 Hino Masora is a model and singer in Japan, whose *yaeba* teeth demonstrate a culturally specific conception of beauty.

As an example of how people construct beauty varies within a single society, research from Venezuela explores how beauty connects to gender. Taking an innovative approach, anthropologist Marcia Ochoa (2014) devised a research project on "spectacular femininity" in Venezuela by examining two communities: female beauty pageant contestants and **transgender sex** workers who also hold beauty pageants. Ochoa traces the emergence of the beauty pageant in Venezuela and identifies this ritual competition as a carrier of notions of modernity and nationhood. She explores the competition of young women, or *misses*, in the Miss Venezuela pageant as well as the local and regional beauty pageants for *transformistas*, gay Venezuelans who identify as women. The stylized performances of *transformistas* carry over into their displays on Avenida Libertador in central Caracas, the neighborhood where they conduct their trade as sex workers. To compete in these realms of spectacular femininity, both *misses* and *transformistas* undergo painful surgical procedures to make their bodies conform to an exaggerated ideal of Eurocentric femininity.

Ochoa's work is pathbreaking in its ability to bring together concepts often explored separately or held in opposition: heterosexuality and non-heterosexuality, gender and sexuality, and **cisgender** and transgender identities (*cisgender* describes **gender identity** constructed on the sex assigned at birth). By juxtaposing *misses* and *transformistas*, she shows how these seemingly disparate concepts are threaded together in the complex web of Venezuelan culture.

How do other cultures see the standards of beauty in the United States? Tanning to achieve the ultimate sun-kissed look is considered an odd practice by women from cultures that prioritize fair and porcelain-like skin. Similarly, the U.S. preference for very straight and very white teeth is sometimes seen as obsessive and overly uniform (Barford 2022). Professor Jimmy Steele of the School of Dental Science at Newcastle University finds that,

> U.S. teeth are sometimes whiter than it is physically possible to get in nature—there is a new reality out there. The most extreme tooth bleaching is terrifying, it looks like it's painted with gloss paint and has altered what people perceive as normal. (Barford 2022)

What are other ways societies outside of the United States might find the U.S. social construction of beauty peculiar? How else might we identify beauty as a social construct?

Activity: Gender and the Social Construction of Beauty

Let's explore gender and the social construction of beauty. In 1949, the French philosopher Simone de Beauvoir published the book, *The Second Sex.* In it, she introduced the idea that "one is not born, but rather becomes a woman." A woman becomes one through men's construction of femininity and the feminine ideal. Both constructs, she explained, serve men's economic and physical ends. Beauty itself has been determined by men, Beauvoir would say. As a result, society emphasizes women's bodies and prioritizes them being on display. Furthermore, women are socialized into accepting a more passive role in life, except for actively tending to their appearance.

In this two-minute video, pay attention to the ways Beauvoir and the narrator describe how this social construct shows up in real life (figure 4.4). That is, what behaviors do they point out are related to the social construction of beauty?

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xT6wjgssVK4**

Figure 4.4 How might resistance to beauty stereotypes lead to more equality? **Transcript.**

Beauvoir held an activist stance, encouraging women to reject male expectations of beauty and femininity. She asserted that women shouldn't have to act, engage, or present themselves to please men. She also suggested that resistance to male stereotypes of beauty can mean greater equality.

Beauvoir criticized Western society's **patriarchy**, a system in which men hold power. She advocated for the destruction of patriarchal institutions and was critical of the Western practice of the traditional nuclear family. Living in France, this was the society in which she lived and evaluated.

Questions to consider:

1. How do other societies construct beauty and femininity?
2. Do societies that are not patriarchal construct beauty differently?

Symbolic Interactionism

Let's revisit **symbolic interactionism**, a micro-level **theory**, that we first discussed in Chapter 2 and think about how it could be applied to beauty standards. As Herbert Blumer (1969:2) stated, symbolic interactionism was based on the following premises:

- Humans act toward things on the basis of the meanings they ascribe to those things.
- The meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with others and society.
- These meanings are handled, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he/she encounters.

Interactionists are concerned with how meanings are constructed through interactions with others. We attach meanings to situations, **roles**, relationships, and most things in our lives whenever we encounter them. For a symbolic interaction to occur, the people you are interacting with must share and agree upon these meanings to some extent.

If we were to take beauty standards as our object of study from a symbolic interactionist perspective, we would most likely start by trying to understand how people interpret beauty and how they act based on it. We might ask: how do people define beauty? What assumptions do people make about beauty? The interactionist perspective would also help us understand how people learn what beauty is from other people and institutions, such as the media. A key interactionist point would be that beauty standards are continually changing, with each interaction concerning the meanings of beauty providing an opportunity for it to change.

Activity: Ethnomethodology and TikTok

Ethnomethodology is another micro-level theory that can help explain our daily interactions. In simple terms, **ethnomethodology** is the study of everyday folk methods and how we go about ordering our day-to-day lives. Often, how we organize our lives is taken for granted and can be hard to explain. Harold Garfinkel, the founder of ethnomethodology, developed an approach to showing the hidden rules for how we live our lives. He called these breaching experiments. In breaching experiments, the experimenter goes out in public and breaks everyday unspoken rules and expectations. The breaking of unspoken rules helps reveal people's expectations. The **experiment** also shows how people will repair interactions once an unspoken rule has been broken. As an example, say you and your classmates started dancing **Laxed (Siren Beat) [Streaming Video – TikTok]** through the library. Questions to consider:

1. How do you think people in the library would respond? What might be the consequences of violating the unspoken rules of the library?
2. What **norms** related to libraries might this impromptu dance party reveal?

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Figure 4.3. "Masora hino 20161112" by Bject is licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0.

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Figure 4.4. "Feminine Beauty: A Social Construct?" is shared under the Standard YouTube License.

4.3 Theories of Self and Identity

When we are born, we have a genetic makeup and biological traits. However, who we are as human beings develops through social interaction. Many scholars, both in the fields of psychology and **sociology**, have described the process of **self**-development as a precursor to understanding how that **self** becomes socialized. Psychologists and psychoanalysts, such as Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), Erik Erikson (1902–1994), and Jean Piaget (1896–1980), provided some of the initial understandings of the self within the social sciences. In this section, we will focus on how sociologists have understood the self.

Cooley and the Looking-Glass Self

Charles Cooley (1864–1929) argued our development of a self is similar to looking through a looking glass. According to **looking-glass self theory**, we base our image on what we think other people see (Cooley 1902). We imagine how we must appear to others, and then react to this speculation. We wear certain clothes, prepare our hair in a particular manner, wear makeup, use cologne, and the like, all based on the notion that our presentation of ourselves is going to affect how others perceive us. We expect a certain reaction, and, if we're lucky, we get the one we desire and feel good about it. Yet we have no way of knowing what other people are thinking and if they are

responding to our presentations. Regardless, Cooley believed that our sense of self is based upon this idea: we imagine how we look to others, draw conclusions based upon what we think other people are thinking about, and then develop our sense of self. In other words, people's reactions to us are like partial mirrors in which we are reflected (figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5 What are some strengths and weaknesses to thinking of the self as a mirror?

Mead and the Stages of Self-Development

Later, George Herbert Mead (1863–1931) studied the **self**, a person's distinct identity that is developed through social interaction. Mead argued that our selves have two components, an "I" and a "Me." The "I" is our creative, novel response to a situation. The "Me" is the part of our self that accounts for the larger social world. Our self is an internal dialogue between these two components. In most situations, our "Me" prevails because of how we are socialized.

To engage in this process of self, an individual has to be able to view themself through the eyes of others. That's not an ability that we are born with (Mead 1934). Through **socialization**, we learn to put ourselves in someone else's position and look at the world through their perspective. This assists us in becoming self-aware, as we look at ourselves from the perspective of the "other."

How do we go from being newborns to being humans with "selves"? Mead believed that there is a specific path of development that all people go through. During the preparatory stage, children are only capable of imitation: they cannot imagine how others see things. They copy the actions of people with whom they regularly interact, such as their caregivers. This is followed by the play stage, during which children begin to take on the role that one other person might have. For example, children might play dress-up and act out the "mom" role or talk on a toy cell phone the way they see adults do. This is taking the role of a particular other.

During the game stage, children learn to consider several **roles** at the same time and how those roles interact with each other (figure 4.6). They learn to understand interactions involving different people with a variety of purposes. For example, a child at this stage is likely to be aware of the different responsibilities of people in a restaurant who together make for a smooth dining experience (someone seats you, another takes your order, someone else cooks the food, while yet another clears away dirty dishes).

Finally, children develop, understand, and learn the idea of the **generalized other**, the common behavioral expectations of general **society**. By this stage of development, individuals can imagine how they are viewed by one or many others—and thus, from a **sociological perspective**, to have a "self" (Mead 1934; Mead 1964).

Figure 4.6 How important are games and team sports in children learning how to engage in collective actions and developing their sense of self?

W. E. B. Du Bois and the Double Consciousness

First introduced in Chapter 2, W. E. B. Du Bois made great contributions to sociology and our understanding of **race**. You'll remember that he was the first sociologist who studied race. The concept of race was central to his theories and research. In *The Souls of Black Folk,* Du Bois (1903) developed the concept of **double consciousness** to explain the conflicting identities experienced by Black people in the United States. He talks about a sense of "two-ness." For Black Americans, they have two competing identities—one as a Black person, the other as an American in a White-centric America.

We will apply Du Bois's concept of double consciousness in the next section, "Activity: Race and Double Consciousness: Examining Representations within Media."

Activity: Race and Double Consciousness: Examining Representations within Media

Let's look at representations of race and double consciousness in the media. Please read or listen to a short four-minute article, "**Issa Rae Turns Basic Into Revolutionary With 'Insecure' [Website]**," then return to answer the questions that follow (figure 4.7).

Figure 4.7 Issa Rae. How has popular culture addressed double consciousness?

1. What is double consciousness? How does double consciousness relate to self and socialization?
2. Are there other **social institutions**, such as the media, in which we see a lack of representation? If we conceptualize the media as an agent of socialization, how might this be a problem?
3. Why might national and racial identities be fraught with tension?

Goffman and the Presentation of Self

Sociologist Erving Goffman presented the idea that a person is like an actor on a stage and that we can use the metaphor of theater to understand social life (figure 4.8). Calling his theory **dramaturgy**, Goffman believed that we use "impression management" to present ourselves to others as we hope to be perceived. Each situation is a new scene, and individuals perform different selves depending on who is present (Goffman 1959). Think about the way you behave around your coworkers versus the way you behave around your grandparents versus the way you behave with a blind date. Even if you're not consciously trying to alter your personality, your grandparents, coworkers, and date probably see different sides of you.

From this perspective, social life can be divided into different regions. In front-stage regions, we carry out our performances. In backstage regions, we prepare for our performances. Think about the building where you attend your sociology **class**. The classroom is a front stage region where you and your professors carry out your classes. Within the building, there are several backstage regions. The offices of your professors allow them to prepare for class. Bathrooms are also another backstage region within the building. However, there are aspects of behavior in public bathrooms that may be more front-stage (Cahill et al. 1985). Stepping outside of your college campus, you can see this division of interactional space within the home (Collett and Child 2009), restaurants (Grazian 2007), or even tourist attractions (MacCannell 1976).

Similar to a play, people will also use props to help carry out their performances. For example, a judge in a courtroom wears a robe and uses a gavel to create an impression of fairness, gravity, and control. Those entering the courtroom are expected to adhere to the scene being set. Imagine the impression that can be made by how a person dresses. This is why attorneys frequently select the hairstyles and apparel worn by witnesses and defendants in courtroom proceedings.

Figure 4.8 How much of social life is a performance we are putting on for other people?

In terms of performances of **gender identity**, Goffman maintained that **gender** differences are only significant because culture makes them so. He argued that children acquire normative gendered interaction patterns as a result of differential treatment by parents based on the **sex** of the child. He argued against seeing gender differences as natural. Rather, he saw gender as something constructed in rituals of everyday interactions, which must be accounted for when attempting to change gender power relations.

Identity Theory

Let's go back to the beginning of the chapter and the list of responses you came up with when asked, "Who are you?" As you probably noticed, you have a lot of different selves or identities, and these selves are connected to interactions with other people.

Some of the responses you provided are probably roles. **Roles** are patterns of behavior that are representative of a person's social status. Did you list any of the roles you have in your family? You may be a brother, sister, child, grandchild, mother, father, aunt, uncle, or serve in some other role. If you listed something related to where you work, you may be an assistant, team member, manager, or fill another role.

Given that you have multiple identities and selves, is there any consistency in your actions across different situations? Sociologists argue yes, and it is associated with **identity salience**. **Identity salience** is "the subjective importance or value that persons attach to the various roles that they accept as self-defining" (Thoits 2012:362). This means that some identities are closer to how we define ourselves and are more likely to come up in our interactions with other people. Going back to your list, are there any identities/selves that you see as more central to who you are? When you have choices between different activities associated with particular identities, which do you choose?

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4.4 Sociology of Emotions

Figure 4.9 The many faces of emotion. How easy is it to change your emotions to match a social situation?

What exactly are emotions, and how can we understand them sociologically? Sociologist Peggy Thoits (1989) provides one definition; she argues that emotions have four components (figure 4.9). First, there has to be some kind of situational stimulus. For example, someone could express something you dislike or discriminate against you based on one of your identities. Second, there is some physiological change or bodily sensation. Your breathing could change, or your heart rate might increase. Third, there is an expressive gesture. You might smile, frown, or move your body in a particular way. Finally, there is a label applied to at least one of the first three components. These labels can vary from **society** to society and **group** to group.

While sociologists tend to argue that emotions are socially constructed, some social scientists argue that every society has the same set of basic emotions. Specifically, positivists argue that people can universally identify fear, surprise, anger, disgust, sadness, and happiness. From this perspective, all other emotions are some combination of these basic emotions. Using pictures of people's facial expressions, there is perhaps some evidence for this. Yet this narrow focus on facial expressions misses many nuances and cross-cultural differences in understanding and expressing emotions. Furthermore, it ignores how emotions can be connected to inequalities.

Emotion Work

Within social psychology, one influential concept in understanding emotion is **emotion work**, which entails either suppressing or evoking a particular emotion (Hochschild 1979). How often have you been in a situation where you felt something but were not allowed to express it? If you have worked a job that involved regular interaction with customers, you may have wanted to say or express something but couldn't because of the informal or formal rules that were in place. In this instance, you may have been suppressing your emotions.

Alternatively, you may have found yourself in a situation where most people were expressing a particular emotion, but you were not. This may have led you to evoke the same emotion. For example, maybe you attended a wedding and felt ambivalence toward the couple or had other things going on in your life. But once you were at the celebration where everyone else was seemingly happy, you began to evoke the same emotion (figure 4.10).

Figure 4.10 Weddings and other formalized rituals have rules about what kinds of emotions can be expressed. What emotions are typically expected at a wedding?

There are a variety of ways to evoke or suppress an emotion. First, you can change what you are thinking. For instance, you could think happy thoughts or think sad thoughts. You can invoke an image that you relate to a particular emotion. Second, you can attempt to change bodily sensations. For example, you could alter your breathing. Third, you can change your expressive gestures. For instance, you could put on a smile or frown.

One part of managing emotions is regulating the language that we use (Schwalbe et al. 2000). Sometimes language can be used to gloss over decisions that end up hurting people. As an example, Cohn (1987) researched how intellectuals in the defense industry inhibit their emotions by using abstract and euphemistic language. They use terms such as "strikes" and "collateral damage," when in actuality they are talking about decisions that end up killing people and putting people's

lives at risk. Often, this language use is highly gendered, with men dominating the U.S. national security apparatus. Any challenges to the language or wider expressions of emotions are dismissed as feminine (Cohn 2018).

Surface and Deep Acting

Sometimes there is a disconnect between what we are feeling and how we present ourselves. This is called **surface acting**. This is a change in body language, tone of voice, or facial expression, but not a change in feeling (Hochschild 2012). This might mean engaging in behavior that one feels to be false. It involves trying to act the part expected in a particular situation, even if it doesn't match your underlying feeling. For example, while working you might put on a friendly smile for a customer who is getting on your nerves.

Other times you might engage in emotion work and end up feeling the emotion you want to express. This is called **deep acting**, an intentional, **self**-induced change in feeling itself (Hochschild 2012). You change your emotions to meet the expectations of the part you are playing in a situation. So you might put on a friendly demeanor for work even though your underlying mood is sour, but in doing so, you start to feel happy.

The management of emotions is closely tied to the existing inequalities within a society. Along the lines of **gender** and **race**, different emotions are seen as acceptable for different groups (Bonilla-Silva 2018; Wingfield 2010). As an example, people often expect men to express a limited range of emotions, such as those revolving around anger (Jackson and Wingfield 2013).

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4.5 Socialization

Socialization is the process wherein people come to understand societal **norms** and expectations, to accept **society**'s beliefs, and to be aware of societal **values**. Socialization is critical both to individuals and to the societies in which they live. It illustrates how completely intertwined human beings and their social worlds are. It is through teaching culture to new members that a society perpetuates itself. If new generations of a society don't learn its way of life, it ceases to exist. Whatever is distinctive about a culture must be transmitted to those who join it for a society to survive.

For example, for U.S. culture to continue, children in the United States must learn about cultural values related to democracy: they have to learn the norms of voting, as well as how to use material objects such as voting machines. They may learn these through watching their parents or guardians vote, or, in some schools, by using real machines in student government elections. Of course, some

would argue that it's just as important in U.S. culture for the younger generation to learn the etiquette of eating in a restaurant or the rituals of tailgate parties at football games. There are many ideas and objects that people in the United States teach children about in hopes of keeping the society's way of life going through another generation.

Recent Developments in the Study of Socialization

Some experts assert that who we are is a result of nurture—the relationships and caring that surround us. Others argue that who we are is based entirely on genetics. According to this belief, our temperaments, interests, and talents are set before birth. From this perspective, then, who we are depends on nature. Though genetics and hormones play an important role in human behavior, **sociology**'s larger concern is the effect society has on human behavior, or the nurture side of the nature versus nurture debate.

In sociology, socialization has typically been associated with the structural functionalist theoretical tradition. From this perspective, people internalize or download the values and culture of which they are a part. We, in effect, download culture from our parents and caregivers much like our phones download and install updates. Structural functionalists argue this happens at a young age. Socialization then provides stability and continuity for a society. However, this understanding of socialization tends to downplay **agency**, one's ability to choose, and the influence of power relationships (Guhin, Calarco, and Miller-Idriss 2021).

Contemporary sociological perspectives on socialization draw from **symbolic interactionism** and **social constructionism**. These perspectives emphasize that people are active within their socialization. As an example, Corsaro (2003) shows that children develop their own peer cultures, which helps children reinterpret the adult culture that surrounds them.

Agents of Socialization

When discussing socialization, it is useful to distinguish between the **agents of socialization** and the target of socialization. The **agents of socialization** are the ones doing the socializing and incorporating the new person into the particular culture and **group**. The **targets of socialization** are the people being socialized.

Among the agents of socialization, you can distinguish between social group agents and institutional agents. Social groups often provide the first experiences of socialization. Families, and later peer groups, communicate expectations and reinforce norms. People first learn to use the tangible objects of **material culture** in these settings and are introduced to the beliefs and values of society.

Family is the first agent of socialization. Mothers and fathers, siblings, and grandparents, plus members of an extended family, all teach children what they need to know. For example, they show children how to use objects (such as clothes, computers, eating utensils, books, and bikes); how to relate to others (some as "family," others as "friends," still others as "strangers" or "teachers" or "neighbors"); and how the world works (what is "real" and what is "imagined"). As you are aware, either from your own experience as a child or from your role in helping to raise one, socialization includes teaching and learning about an unending array of objects and ideas.

Keep in mind, however, that families do not socialize children in a vacuum. Many social factors affect the way a family raises its children. For example, we can use **sociological imagination** to recognize that individual behaviors are affected by the historical period in which they take place. Sixty years ago, it would not have been considered especially strict for a father to hit his son with

a wooden spoon or a belt if he misbehaved, but today that same action might be considered child abuse.

A peer group is made up of people who are similar in age and social status and who share interests. Peer group socialization begins in the earliest years, such as when kids on a playground teach younger children the norms about taking turns, the rules of a game, or how to shoot a basket. As children grow into teenagers, this process continues. Peer groups become important to adolescents in a new way as they begin to develop an identity separate from their parents and exert independence. Additionally, peer groups provide opportunities for socialization since kids usually engage in different types of activities with their peers than they do with their families. Peer groups provide adolescents' first major socialization experience outside the realm of their families. Interestingly, studies have shown that although friendships rank high in adolescents' priorities, this is balanced by parental influence.

The **social institutions** of our culture also inform our socialization. Formal institutions like schools, workplaces, and the government teach people how to behave in and navigate these systems. Other institutions, such as the media, contribute to socialization by inundating us with messages about norms and expectations.

Most U.S. children spend about seven hours a day, 180 days a year in school, which makes it hard to deny the importance school has on their socialization (U.S. Department of Education 2004). Students are not in school only to study math, reading, science, and other subjects—the intended function of this system. Schools also serve an unintended, and often unrecognized, function in society by socializing children into behaviors like practicing teamwork, following a schedule, and using textbooks.

Just as children spend much of their day at school, many U.S. adults at some point invest a significant amount of time at a place of employment. Although socialized into their culture since birth, workers require new socialization in a workplace in terms of both material culture, such as how to operate the copy machine, and nonmaterial culture, such as whether it's okay to speak directly to the boss.

While some religions are informal institutions, here we focus on practices followed by formal institutions. Religion is an important avenue of socialization for many people. The United States is full of synagogues, temples, churches, mosques, and similar religious communities where people gather to worship and learn. Like other institutions, these places teach participants how to interact with the objects that constitute the religion's material culture, such as a mezuzah, a prayer rug, or a communion wafer. For some people, important ceremonies related to family structure, such as marriage and birth, are connected to religious celebrations. Many religious institutions also uphold **gender** norms and contribute to their enforcement through socialization. From ceremonial rites of passage that reinforce the family unit to power dynamics that reinforce gender **roles**, organized religion fosters a shared set of socialized values that are passed on through society.

Socialization as a Life-Long Process

Although we do not think about it, many of the rites of passage people go through today are based on age norms established by the government. To be defined as an "adult" usually means being eighteen years old, the age at which people become legally responsible for themselves. Similarly, 65 years old is the start of "old age" since most people become eligible for senior benefits at that point.

Each time we embark on one of these new categories—senior, adult, taxpayer—we must be socialized into our new role. Seniors must learn the ropes of Medicare, Social Security benefits, and senior shopping discounts. When U.S. males

turn 18, they must register with the Selective Service System within 30 days to be entered into a database for possible military service. These government dictates mark the points at which we require socialization into a new category.

In the process of socialization, adulthood brings a new set of challenges and expectations, as well as new roles to fill. As the aging process moves forward, social roles continue to evolve. The pleasures of youth, such as wild nights out and serial dating, become less acceptable in the eyes of society. Responsibility and commitment are emphasized as pillars of adulthood, and adults are expected to "settle down." During this period, many people enter into a marriage or civil union, bring children into their families, and focus on a career path. They become partners or parents instead of students or significant others.

Just as young children pretend to be doctors or lawyers, play house, and dress up, adults also engage in **anticipatory socialization**, the preparation for future life roles. Examples include a couple who cohabitate before marriage or soon-to-be parents who read infant care books and prepare their home for the new arrival. As part of anticipatory socialization, adults who are financially able begin planning for their retirement, saving money, and looking into future healthcare options. The transition into any new life role, despite the social structure that supports it, can be difficult.

In the process of **resocialization**, old behaviors that were helpful in a previous role are removed because they are no longer of use. Resocialization is necessary when a person moves to a senior care center, goes to boarding school, or serves a sentence in the prison system. In the new environment, the old rules no longer apply. The process of resocialization is typically more stressful than normal socialization because people have to unlearn behaviors that have become customary to them. While resocialization has a specific meaning, many organizations consider their training or retraining processes to embody elements of resocialization.

A Closer Look: The Impact of Socialization on Domestic Violence

People often ask, "Why did they stay with their abuser?" or "What did they do to be treated that way?" as if the victim somehow deserved violence, but rarely do we hear people ask, "Why did they abuse?" Intimate partner violence and domestic violence are rooted in conflicts between individuals and more broadly in a society that is rife with power imbalances and structures that serve to maintain and reinforce these differences. As children, we grow up in families that convey implicit messages that originate in familial traditions, religious beliefs, culture, and society. These messages are continually reinforced and built upon as we are exposed to more agents of socialization such as the media, peers, colleagues, and the educational system.

Often, discussions of domestic violence or intimate partner violence (IPV) are avoided or met with discomfort. Sometimes these discussions are discounted as we hear "not all men," "not me," or "not anyone I know." But statistics suggest something different. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, nearly 20 people per minute experience physical abuse by an intimate partner, and one in four women and one in nine men have or will experience severe intimate partner violence ("National Statistics"). Yet we continue to engage in violence, as participants, victims, or bystanders.

Take this quote from a 32-year-old domestic violence survivor attending a domestic violence support **class** in Oregon:

> He was so sweet, supportive and really there for me, ya know....everybody else took from me and bailed, brought me flowers and coffee to me at work, showed up wherever I was, just to be there...but it all changed and no one believe me, because he was just so nice, so loving, so concerned out in front of everyone, but with just me, oh no, totally different, like Jekyll and Hyde.

Why didn't anyone notice or believe? Is it because the abusers put on a charming facade, but hide their true selves so that no one knows much about them? Or is it because we believe it is normal in our society for those in power to act as they wish, a social norm engrained from childhood?

Consider what the following messages might convey to young children: "What a big boy!" "You are daddy's little man." "Boys don't cry, they buck up!"

How many of us have heard or said this to our little brothers, nephews, sons, or the neighbor's son? Alternatively, how many of us have reinforced gender stereotypes for women by giving pink, princess-themed gifts? How many have heard or said to little girls, "You are so beautiful," "What a pretty dress," "Be careful, you'll get dirty," or "Be nice, he is being that way because he likes you"?

These ideas are reflected in the top-selling toys Lego and Barbie. Legos, aimed predominantly at boys, reinforce adventure and creativity, while Barbies, aimed predominantly at girls, reinforce ideals of beauty and nurturing. These toys and messages are socializing young individuals to value being pretty, kind, and forgiving as females or being rough, strong, and independent as males.

Reflecting on the direct or implied messages to boys to "not cry" and girls to "be pretty and careful," we see that both model repression of certain emotions based on gender and over-expression of other emotions or actions. Socialization reinforces the power imbalance between genders with greater ramifications for those at risk of or in domestic violence scenarios. One 22-year-old domestic violence survivor attending a domestic violence support class in Oregon reflected on her childhood socialization and how it was gendered:

> I couldn't argue or question anything when I was little. I would get in so much trouble…was just supposed to be seen and not heard but my brother could say or ask whatever he wanted and he was 'so great' because he was critically thinking. Today, I don't know how to stand up for myself in my relationships and I just keep getting smacked around because I just take it, 'cause that's what I was told to do.

These socializing messages are not just confined to young children with toys and cartoons. Popular shows marketed to adults are contributing to the continued socialization and reinforcement of violence. A prime example is the popular Netflix show *You*, which showcases an obsessive individual who engages in stalking and violence. The portrayal of a handsome father who experienced childhood trauma and is now a serial stalker and killer can and has led viewers to empathize with and justify his behaviors. This helps perpetuate the problems of violence against women and domestic violence overall. From the following quotes you can see how a show like *You* gives a distorted view of reality:

> "I love that show [*You*]! Even though I know it's just a prettier version of my life…well, minus the killing and add some beat-downs, but all the other shit." ~46-year-old domestic violence survivor attending domestic violence support classes in Linn County, Oregon

> "I watched that *You* show because my clients were talking about it and my kid liked it. It makes it hot to be obsessed over or have people show up on your doorstep, distorts or glamorizes the reality of it." ~LCSW, Linn County, Oregon

These cultural messages can be layered on the messages from our families of origin, as girls and women are taught to preserve the family at any cost. The woman, allocated the role of being responsible for raising children and maintaining the family, is often given cues that it is better for the family—for the children—to accept this abuse. These learned behaviors of dominance and acceptance are then passed on to the children.

One way to highlight that power dynamic is to look at what men do while women are performing unpaid childcare and housework. Recent research has found that men spend between 47 percent and 35 percent of their time in leisure activities, while mothers are engaging in childcare and household labor. This points to a dramatic difference in who has power within the home, where one person is doing what they want while the other partner is still essentially working (Kamp Dush, Yavorsky, & Schoppe-Sullivan 2018). While who gets to relax and who does the unpaid household labor does not seem on par with who is experiencing abuse, the power dynamic of who has the power to "do as they wish" as opposed to doing what is expected of them reinforces socialized messages of dominance and **oppres-**

sion, of belief and dismissal, of power and authority, and of powerlessness and dependence. These imbalances typically fall along the lines of gender. In an interview, one domestic survivor reflected on the experience:

> "There was a lot of gaslighting and minimizing of my experience, which feels rooted in the norms of society and the version of history that gets believed. The hardest part was that in our broader community, I felt like I wasn't believed as a woman. It was really astounding—despite everything that was happening in the world with awareness about violence against women, Me Too, etc.—that the response from so many people was to believe my male partner and not me. And he totally took advantage of that and refused to see how he exploited his **privilege**."

Consider the following data, which reports how IPV/DV increased during the COVID-19 pandemic (figure 4.11).

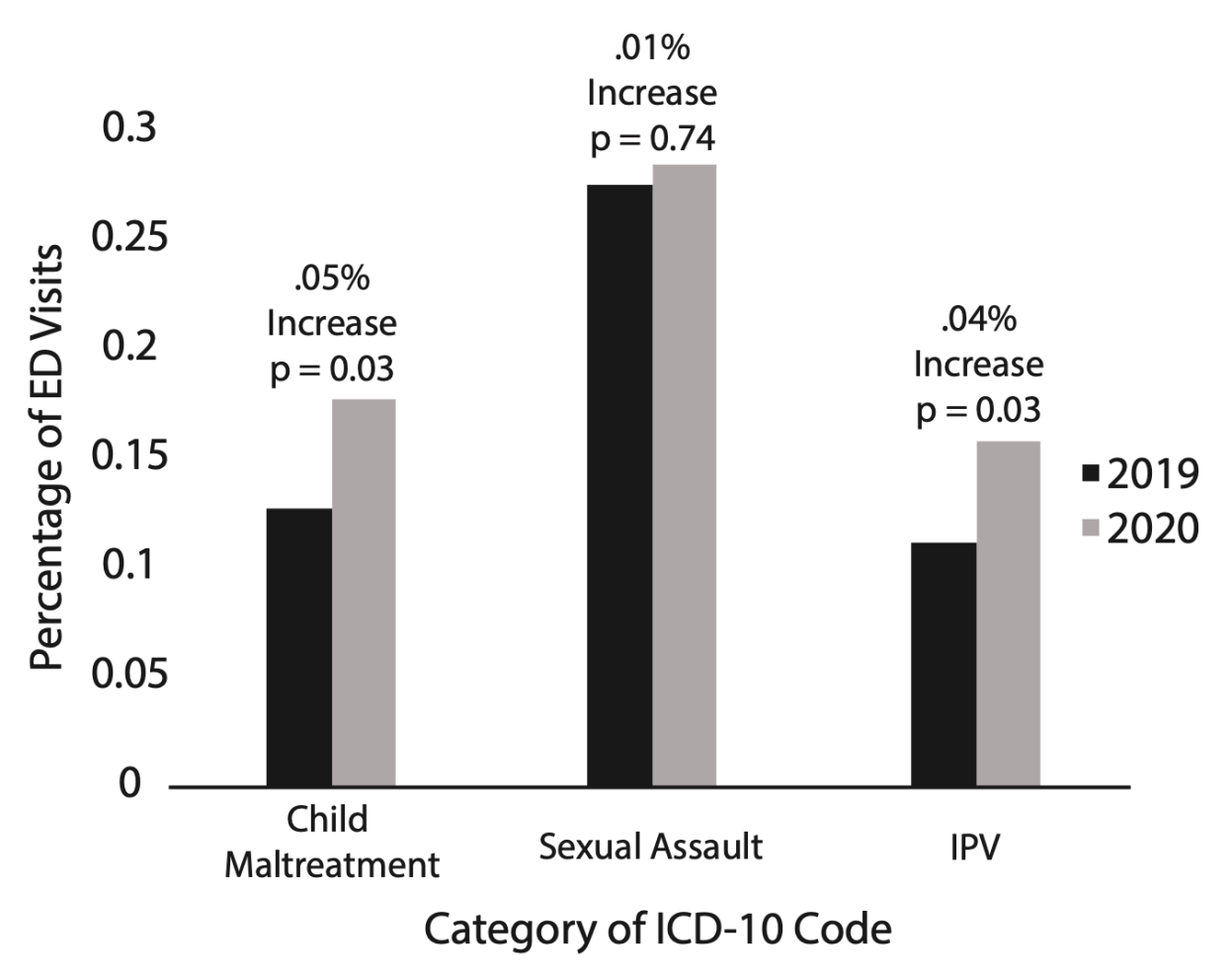

Figure 4.11 How did the pandemic impact reports of IPV? This graph shows the percentage of emergency department visits related to child maltreatment, sexual assault, and intimate partner violence during the pandemic (Pallansch et al. 2022).

Overall, our responsibility is to recognize how we are socialized to view the power dynamics of gender and how we can begin to alter our interactions that influence others.

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Figure 4.11. "Percentage of emergency department visits with ICD-10* codes related to child maltreatment, sexual assault, and intimate partner violence" by Pallansch et al. 2022 is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

4.6 Conclusion

As we have seen in this chapter, who we are is closely tied to the societies in which we live and to the groups to which we belong. Our identities and senses of **self** are not created in isolation, they are created through the process of interaction with other people. We may think of our identities and emotions as uniquely our own, but they are embedded in larger social patterns. How we learn to become human is influenced by our parents and families, peers, and the larger institutions of our **society**. While we may think the process of **socialization** ends once we become adults, it continues throughout our lifetimes. In later chapters, we will explore how people are socialized into their gender, class, and race. In the next chapter, we will focus on how **group**-level interactions, social networks, and organizations shape our lives.

KEY TERMS

- **Agents of socialization**: individuals or institutions that socialize people.

- **Anticipatory socialization**: preparation for future life roles.
- **Deep acting**: an intentional, self-induced change in feeling.
- **Dramaturgy**: a framework for understanding social life as a form of theater.
- **Emotion work**: the process of suppressing or evoking emotions.
- **Ethnomethodology**: the study of everyday folk methods, how we go about ordering our day-to-day lives.
- **Generalized other**: the common behavioral expectations of general society.
- **Habitualization**: repeated actions that form a pattern.
- **Identity salience**: the subjective importance of the various roles or identities we hold.
- **Institutionalization**: the implantation of a convention or norm into society.
- **Looking-glass self**: the theory that our self is developed based on what we think others think about us.
- **Resocialization**: a process through which people unlearn previous socialization, while being socialized by new individuals or institutions.
- **Roles**: patterns of behavior that are representative of a person's social status.
- **Self**: a person's distinct identity that is developed through social interaction.
- **Social constructionism**: a framework that explains how the meaning of something is dependent on our social relationships.
- **Socialization**: the process wherein people come to understand societal norms and expectations, to accept society's beliefs, and to be aware of societal values.
- **Surface acting**: a change in body language, tone of voice, or facial expression, but not a change in feeling.
- **Targets of socialization**: the people that are being socialized.
- **Thomas Theorem**: the theory that if people define something as real, it will have real consequences.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which theory of the self do you find most convincing? Why?
2. If you were to analyze the image at the beginning of the chapter in terms of one of the sociological theories of the self, which one would you apply? What would the theory emphasize?
3. How would you conduct a dramaturgical analysis of your college's student center? Where are the front stages and backstages? What roles are people performing?
4. When have you engaged in surface acting? Deep acting? What could be the long-term consequences of having to continually engage in surface acting?
5. Where do you think sociology lands in the nature versus nurture debate? Why? Are there any aspects of sociology that fall in the middle or opposite side of your answer?
6. What are examples from your life of socialization beyond childhood? What have your occupational socialization experiences been like? How formal were they?

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CHAPTER

5

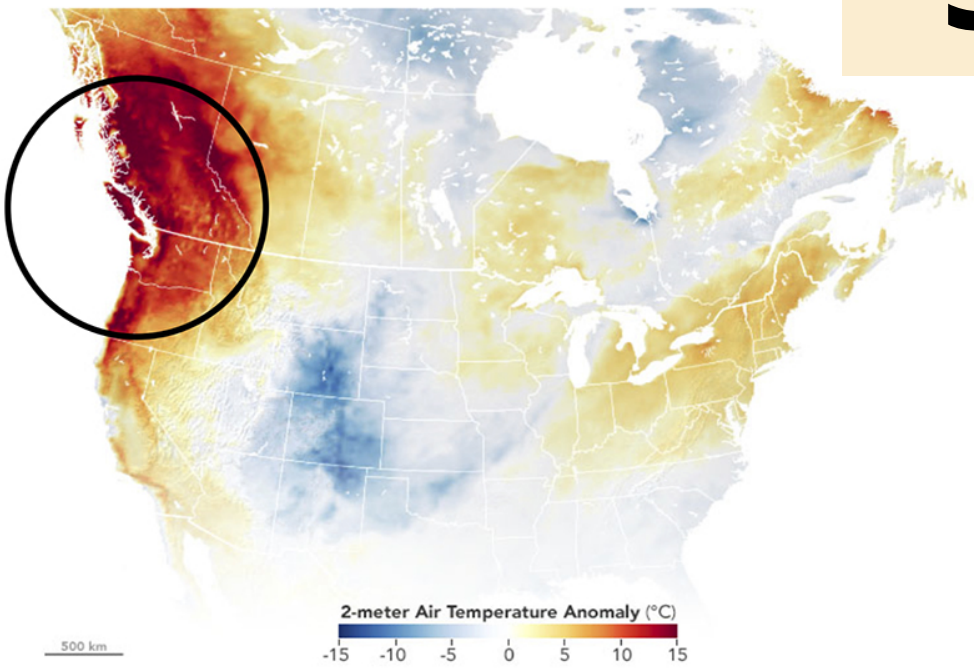

Figure 5.1 Where were you during the June 2021 Pacific Northwest heat wave? A map of the United States shows how the country fared during the heat wave. The dark colors in the circle represent temperatures 10 to 15 degrees above normal.

Groups, Networks, and Organizations

5.1 Chapter Learning Objectives and Overview

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Identify different groups within real world situations.
2. Explain the ways that **group** size and structure influences group dynamics.
3. Differentiate among styles of leadership and types of authority.
4. Interpret the impact of groups on individual behavior.

5. Distinguish strong and **weak ties** in your social networks.
6. Distinguish the types of formal organizations.
7. Recognize the characteristics of **bureaucracies** and **collectivist organizations**.
8. Explain why organizations tend to appear similar.

Overview

In late June 2021, temperatures across the Pacific Northwest region of the United States spiked to over 100 degrees (figure 5.1). This was particularly problematic because it was early in the summer when people had not adjusted to the summer heat. In addition, temperatures did not cool off much at night, so it was difficult to cool down living spaces if you did not have an air conditioner.

In preparation for the heat wave, Oregon's Multnomah County government opened several cooling centers and nine libraries to serve as spaces for those without air conditioning. County employees reached out to vulnerable residents, while teams of people roamed the city handing out water and other items to help people cool off (Flaccus 2021).

Lyle Crawford, in his early 60s, was in his home as the temperatures hit 108 degrees. He was alone. He had few close friends and was further isolated because of the pandemic. He had a box fan to help provide some air circulation. When his sister called him to see how he was doing, he didn't pick up. She left a message on his answering machine. It would be the last time she heard his voice (Guernsey and Vines 2021).

By some estimates, over 800 people died in Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia as a result of the heat wave (Guilfoil 2022). Heat waves are often the deadliest type of severe weather in the United States (Lewis 2021). How could we use our **sociological imagination** to explain the consequences of the heat wave? What social factors explain some people's exposure to the risks associated with the heat wave? What role did organizations play in response?

In this chapter, we will explore meso-level phenomena that exist between the micro and macro aspects of social life. In what follows, we will explore different types of groups and how they are structured. We will then turn our attention to social networks, **social capital**, and social isolation. We will end this chapter by focusing on organizations and some of their dynamics.

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Figure 5.1. "NASA Earth Observatory image of temperature anomalies on June 27th, 2021, compared to 2014-2020 average for the same day during the 2021 western North America heat wave" by NASA Earth Observatory/Joshua Stevens is in the Public Domain.

5.2 Types of Groups

Figure 5.2 Which groups do you belong to? How do they influence your behavior?

While we may use the word "**group**" in everyday life to mean numerous things, sociologists define groups specifically. A **group** is any collection of at least two people who interact with some frequency and who share some sense of aligned identity (figure 5.2).

A group, at minimum, must include at least one other person besides yourself. However, there are limits to a group's size. At some point, if there are too many people involved in the group, it becomes impossible to coordinate activity (Flamino et al. 2021) and recognize that people are part of the group (Fine 2012). To be part of a group, we have to identify with each other in some way. This identity could be based on our social position, such as our **race**, **class**, or **gender**. Or it could be based on our shared cultural interests, say if you are a fan of a particular sports team, like the Portland Timbers, or television show. Interactions, in person or virtual, are also crucial in determining

whether a collection of people is a group. If people are not interacting with some frequency, it is hard to argue they are a group.

How is a group different from a crowd? **Crowds** are people who happen to be in the same place at the same time but who do not interact or share a sense of identity. An example could be walking down the street or riding public transportation in a busy city. We may be sharing the same spaces, but we don't share an identity or even verbally interact with other people in the setting. In public settings, it is quite typical for us to engage in civil inattention. Civil inattention is when we unobtrusively acknowledge other people in a setting, while simultaneously preventing more personal forms of attention.

Sociologists have identified different types of groups we may belong to. These include primary and **secondary groups**. **Primary groups** are small, intimate groups whose members share face-to-face contact and emotional connections. **Primary groups** are typically small, informal groups of the people who are closest to us. This includes our families, close friends, and significant others. Primary groups contrast with **secondary groups**, which are larger and more impersonal groups that are task-focused and time limited. Rather than serving our emotional needs, secondary groups help us get things done. They can help us complete big projects or assignments. This might include your co-workers or classmates.

In-Groups and Out-Groups

As we explored earlier, groups can define who is accepted and who is not, determining access to valuable resources. Thinking about this, social psychologists identify in-groups and out-groups.

An **in-group** is one to which we belong and toward which we hold favorable opinions (figure 5.3). The tendency to favor our in-groups develops from a young age. This favoritism develops quickly in young children, increasing up to about six years of age, and almost immediately begins to influence our behavior (Aboud 2003; Aboud and Amato 2001). Young children show greater liking for peers of their **sex** and race and typically play primarily with same-sex others after the age of three. There is a norm that we should favor our in-groups: people like people who express in-group favoritism better than those who are more egalitarian (Castelli and Carraro 2010). Amazingly, even infants as young as nine months old prefer those who treat people similar to them well and people dissimilar to them poorly (Hamlin et al. 2013).

In-group favoritism is found in many different types of social groups, settings, dimensions, and cultures (Bennett et al. 2004; Pinter and Greenwald 2011). In-group favoritism also occurs on trait ratings, such that in-group members are rated as having more positive characteristics than **out-group** members (Hewstone 1990). People also take credit for the successes of other in-group members. People remember more positive than negative information about in-groups while being more critical of the performance of out-groups than of in-group members. They also believe that their own groups are less prejudiced than out-groups (Shelton and Richeson 2005).

Figure 5.3 What are some of the negative effects of in-group behavior?

An **out-group** is one we do not belong to and toward which we may hold negative attitudes. The

tendency to see members of social groups as similar to each other is particularly strong for members of out-groups, resulting in out-group homogeneity—the tendency to view members of out-groups as more similar to each other than we see members of in-groups (Linville, Salovey, and Fischer 1986; Ostrom and Sedikides 1992; Meissner and Brigham 2001).

Out-group homogeneity occurs in part because we don't have as much contact with out-group members as we do with in-group members. Additionally, the quality of interaction with out-group members is often more superficial. This prevents us from really learning about the out-group members as individuals. As a result, we tend to be unaware of the differences among the group members.

Once we begin to see the members of out-groups as more similar to each other than they are, it becomes very easy to apply our stereotypes to the members of the groups without having to consider whether the characteristic is actually true of the particular individual. If men think that women are all alike, then they may also think that they all have the same positive and negative characteristics (for example, they're nurturing, and emotional). Women may have similarly simplified beliefs about men (for example, they're strong and unwilling to commit). This dynamic related to in-groups and out-groups is especially pronounced when racial and ethnic group membership is involved.

An in-group/out-group dynamic can emerge in a variety of organizations and institutions, such as schools and workplaces. As an example of this, Adler and Adler (1995) explored cliques among pre-adolescents in late elementary school. They found a variety of ways the cliques included and excluded people. When students were included and recruited into the clique, they were given a trial period in the group. After gaining acceptance, the clique encouraged the recruits to shift their friendship to those within the clique. Exclusion from the group took several forms. Sometimes the clique would pick on and bully people who were not members of the group. Other times, those with lower status within the clique were picked on by those with a higher status. Have you ever experienced this type of dynamic before?

Reference Groups

A **reference group** is a group that people compare themselves to—it provides a standard of measurement. In U.S. **society**, peer groups are common reference groups. Kids and adults pay attention to what their peers wear, what music they like, and what they do with their free time—and they compare themselves to what they see. Most people have more than one reference group, so a middle school student might look not only at their classmates, but also at their older sibling's friends and see a different set of **norms**. They might observe the behaviors of their favorite athletes for yet another point of reference.

Some other examples of reference groups can be one's cultural center, workplace, family gathering, and even parents. Often, reference groups convey competing messages. For instance, on television and in movies, young adults often have wonderful apartments and cars and lively social lives despite not holding a job. At all ages, we use reference groups to help guide our behavior and establish our social norms. So how important is it to surround yourself with positive reference groups? You may not recognize a reference group, but it still influences the way you act. Identifying your reference groups can help you understand the source of the social identities you aspire to or want to distance yourself from.

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Figure 5.3. "Brown Game Pieces on White Surface" by Markus Spiske is shared under the Unsplash License.

5.3 Group Size and Structure

A small **group** is typically small enough that all members of the group know each other and share simultaneous interactions, such as a nuclear family, a **dyad**, or a **triad**. German sociologist Georg Simmel (1858–1915) wrote extensively about the differences between a **dyad**, or two-member group, and a **triad**, or three-member group (Simmel 1950 [1902]). In the former, if one person withdraws, the group can no longer exist. For example, a divorce effectively ends the "group" of the married couple. Often dyads do not create a group structure, so a high level of individuality remains.

In a triad, however, the dynamic is quite different. If one person withdraws, the group lives on. A triad has a different set of relationships. If there are three in the group, two-against-one dynamics can develop, and a majority opinion may form on any issue.

In triads, a group structure can emerge in which new social **roles** become possible. The third person can serve as a mediator between the two other people in the group if a disagreement emerges. The third member could also try to instigate conflict between the other two people. Creating conflict then helps the third member take control of the group (Ritzer and Stepnisky 2022).

Small groups generally have strong internal cohesiveness and a sense of connection. However, they may face challenges when trying to achieve big goals. They can struggle to be heard or to be a force for change if they are pushing against larger groups.

It is difficult to define exactly when a small group becomes a large group. Perhaps it occurs when one group grows so large that there are too many people to join in a simultaneous discussion. Sometimes it occurs when a group joins with other groups as part of a movement. These larger groups may share a geographic space, such as a fraternity or sorority on the same campus, or they might be spread out around the globe. The larger the group, the more attention it can garner, and the more pressure members can put toward whatever goal they wish to achieve. At the same time, the larger the group becomes, the greater the risk for division and lack of cohesion.

Authority and Group Leadership

In most groups, some form of leadership emerges. This leadership could be temporary or long-lasting. The leader of the group needs to be perceived as legitimate by the group. This legitimacy allows the leader to make decisions and exercise power. German sociologist Max Weber identified three different types of authority that can exist in groups and organizations, building up to the larger social structures of the **society** like the government.

Traditional authority is power legitimized on the basis of long-standing customs or traditions. These traditions can be that leadership is inherited from one's family or parents. Besides being inherited, traditional authority is often closely tied to religion, and the rulers justify their positions by arguing that a god or spiritual being chose them. Examples of traditional authority include kings and queens who typically justified their position by birth and divine right to rule. Those with traditional authority have few constraints on their actions. They can reward friends and family, even when those friends and family are not the most deserving.

In contrast to traditional authority, **rational legal authority** is a power that is legitimized by rules, regulations, and laws. This type of authority is often associated with bureaucratic organizations, and there are usually formal rules to decide who can exercise power. As an example, consider how we elect the president of the United States. There are formal rules in the Constitution and a variety of laws that state how elections are supposed to be run. While the events of January 6, 2021 (Beauchamp 2021), showed how precarious this process can be, in most instances these rules and laws have allowed for the peaceful transfer of power. The rules and laws also place constraints on the leaders. Leaders typically cannot appoint their friends and family to important positions. Instead, those positions are filled by people with relevant qualifications and expertise.

Finally, Weber identified **charismatic authority** as power legitimized on the basis of a leader's exceptional personal qualities. In other words, the person who is the leader has charisma of some sort. They could be seen as exemplary, heroic, or having special powers. As a result, there are very few constraints on the leader. Since the authority is intertwined with the charisma of the individual leader, there can be issues when the leader declines or dies. The legitimacy of the regime could be lost if they do not establish a way to pick

a new leader. As a result, in trying to establish a way to select the next leader, a group might turn more toward traditional or rational legal types of authority.

You may have noticed aspects of each type of authority within one individual leader. In the real world, there is going to be some combination of these types of authority (figure 5.4).

Figure 5.4 Mahatma Gandhi was a leader in India's independence from the British Empire. Scholars argue he had both charismatic and traditional qualities (Rudolph and Rudolph 1983). What are other examples of these types of authority among real world leaders?

Sociologists recognize three leadership styles. Democratic leaders encourage group participation in all decision-making. They work hard to build consensus before choosing a course of action and moving forward. This type of leader is particularly common in clubs in which the members vote on which activities or projects to pursue. Democratic leaders can be well-liked, but there is often a danger that decisions will proceed slowly since consensus-building is time-consuming. A further risk is that group members might pick sides and entrench themselves into opposing factions rather than reaching a solution.

In contrast, a laissez-faire (French for "leave it alone") leader is hands-off, allowing group members to **self**-manage and make their own decisions. An example of this kind of leader might be an art teacher who opens the art cupboard, leaves materials on the shelves, and tells students to help themselves and make some art. While this style can work well with highly motivated and mature participants who have clear goals and guidelines, it risks group dissolution and a lack of progress.

Finally, authoritarian leaders issue orders and assign tasks with little to no feedback from group members. They are often instrumental leaders with a strong focus on meeting goals. Often, entrepreneurs fall into this mold, like Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg. Not surprisingly, authoritarian leaders risk alienating the workers. When decisions need to be made quickly or informed by a high level of expertise, however, this style of leadership can be required.

In different circumstances, each of these leadership styles can be effective and successful. Consider which leadership style you prefer. Why? Do you like the same style in different areas of your life, such as a classroom, a workplace, and a sports team?

When we think of leadership, we have a particular image in our minds of what a leader looks like and how they should act. Feminists and symbolic interactionists point out that how we define leadership is wrapped up in our understanding of **gender**. This includes how we evaluate leaders, how leaders perform, and how leaders attain authority. In the United States, we have widely held beliefs about gender and leadership. We often assume, without evidence, that men are more competent leaders. These beliefs create unspoken performance expectations for women. As a result, when women do achieve leadership roles, they might be negatively sanctioned for violating these unspoken assumptions or face greater resistance to their orders (Ridgeway 2001).

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Figure 5.4. "**Mahatma Gandhi and Kasturba**" by Unknown is in the **Public Domain**.

5.4 Networks

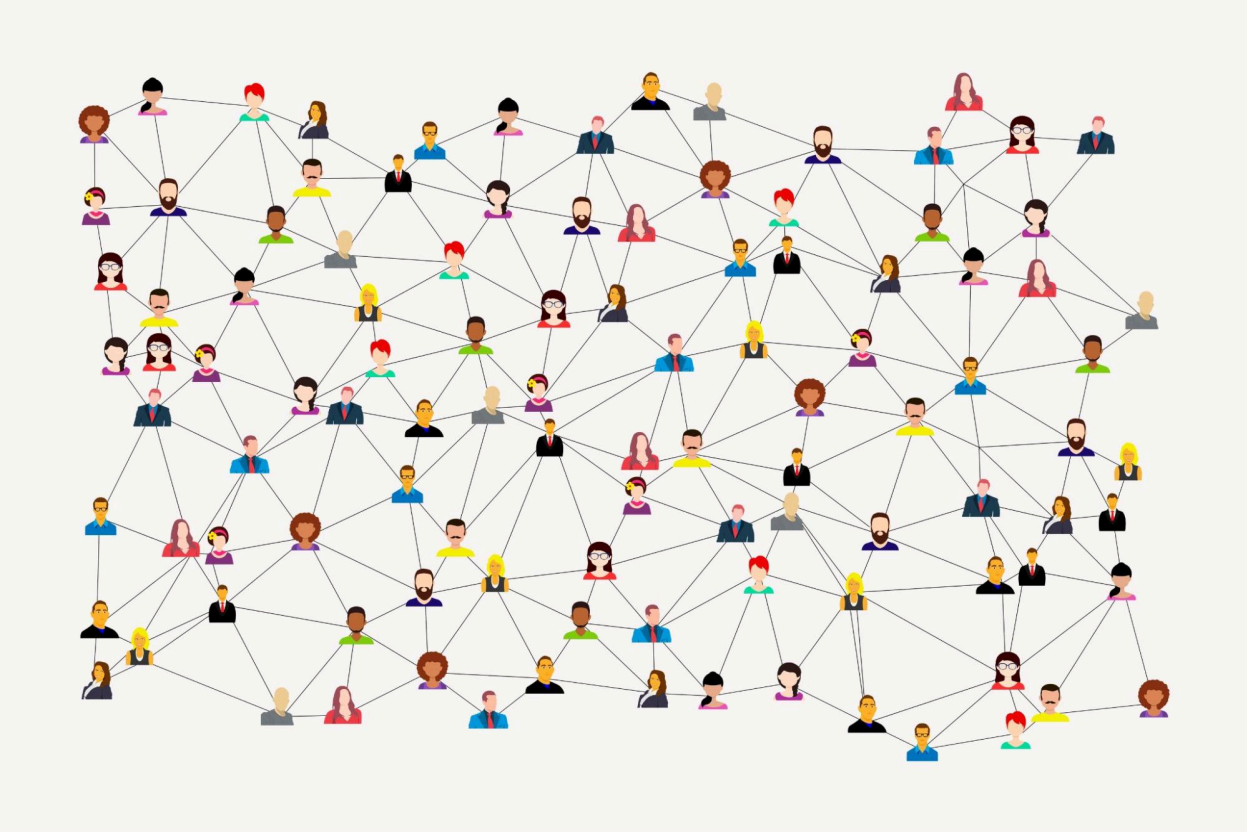

Figure 5.5 Who is in your social network? Why is it useful to have both strong and weak ties in your networks?

We are surrounded by webs of people (figure 5.5). Look no further than your smart device. If you look at your contact list and your friends or followers on social media, you can get a sense of who you share some connection with. Yet even though we can now easily keep in contact with distant family members and friends from grade school, Americans are increasingly socially isolated (Parigi and Henson II 2014). The pandemic may have exacerbated this trend in a variety of areas. In this section we will explore the basics of social networks, but also why we might have decreasing numbers of close connections with people.

Understanding Social Networks

Our social networks are a crucial feature of our social lives. A **social network** is a collection of people who exchange resources (emotional, informational, financial, etc.) and who are tied together by a specific configuration of connections. Our groups and networks are often intertwined. You could think of the groups we belong to as dense, small networks (Fine 2012), while our social networks include our broader connections to a wide range of people.

The networks we belong to influence what kind of choices we make. Social networks have been found to influence our educational choices. If a lot of people in your network go to college, it will seem like the right decision to go to college. Our

networks influence major life decisions, including whether we get married, divorced, and/or decide to have children. Not all network effects are positive. Our networks can also make it more likely we engage in risky behavior. This includes drug use or sexual conduct (DiMaggio and Garip 2012).

As an example, let's explore how networks are connected to immigration. By using networks to understand immigration, we can challenge assumptions that immigration and migration are largely individual decisions. We can see how immigrants are embedded in webs of affiliation. For immigrants, their networks include a variety of people. It includes fellow immigrants, former immigrants, and non-immigrants. These ties can exist in both the place the immigrant is coming from and the place the immigrant is going to.

There are a variety of ways networks impact immigration patterns. The existence of network ties increases the likelihood of immigration by lowering the costs, raising the benefits, and mitigating the risks of immigrating. Family members can provide their opinions about whether a journey is worth it. Prepaid tickets may be purchased for a potential immigrant by family or friends, indicating the collective nature of decision making. The ongoing sharing of information between origin and destination about whether the economic or other conditions are conducive to immigration is also an important factor in the decision to immigrate (Kivisto and Faist 2010).

Thinking about how our networks operate, sociologists distinguish between **strong ties** and **weak ties**. **Strong ties** are people that you know and have regular contact with. Often they are close family members and friends. Your strong ties allow you to have people that you trust and feel connected with. They can provide us with emotional support if we are facing a crisis. Our strong ties tend to occupy social positions very similar to our own.

Weak ties are people that are further out in your network. They are friends of your friends, coworkers, and some extended family members. These people are important for providing access to opportunities because they have connections or information that you may not have. In an influential study exploring how people found jobs, American sociologist Mark Granovetter argued that there is "strength in weak ties" (Granovetter 1973). He found that weak ties in your network can provide useful information about job opportunities. Learn more from Granovetter in the next section, "Pedagogical Element: Networks and Finding a Job."

Activity: Networks and Finding a Job

Mark Granovetter discusses his research about the influence of networks on finding a job. Please watch the six-minute clip in figure 5.6, then come back and answer the questions.

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g3bBajcR5fE**

Figure 5.6 How is there strength in weak ties? **Transcript.**

Discussion Questions:

1. How did Granovetter set up the study? What were the findings?
2. Do you think the findings still hold with the rise of the internet? Is it now easier to form and maintain weak ties? Why or why not?
3. What role do websites like LinkedIn play in finding jobs? How have you found jobs?

Network Homophily

Our networks tend to be homophilous, meaning they tend to be composed of people who are like us. **Homophily** is "the principle that a contact between similar people occurs at a higher rate than among dissimilar people" (McPherson et al. 2001:416). This means the people in our networks are similar to us. This similarity is based on our **race**, **class**, education, behavior, **values**, and other personal characteristics. We can distinguish between status homophily and value homophily. Status homophily involves being similar to other people in our networks along the lines of sociodemographic characteristics. Value homophily involves holding similar values and beliefs as those in our networks (McPherson et al. 2001).

Since our networks tend to be similar to us in a variety of ways, let's narrow our focus to race and age. Divisions based on race and **ethnicity** in networks are one of the most noticeable features in the United States. Homophily along the lines of race and ethnicity impacts marriage, friendships, and who we get along with at work. White people tend to have more homogeneous networks than other racial or ethnic groups. These racial differences in networks often combine with homophily in education, work, and religion (McPherson et al. 2001).

Our networks also include people who are often very similar to us in age. In terms of close friendships, we are often friends with people who are within a few years of us in age. This is aided by schools grouping students based on age. Our ties based on age tend to be closer and last longer. You can think back, for example, to close friends you developed in elementary or middle school.

There are several reasons why people in our networks are similar to us (McPherson et al. 2001).

1. We are likely to have contact with people who are geographically close to us. Think of the neighborhood you live in and who you are regularly interacting with—most often those people are like us.
2. The internet and other technological developments may make contact with people who are more distant from us easier; often the basis of those interactions is having something in common.
3. Our families, which often are the same race/ethnicity and religion, help create another source of similarity in our networks.
4. Schools, which often draw their students from neighborhoods of similar people, can also be a source of homophily.

While our networks often are very similar to us, this can lead to some issues. The information we receive in our networks might not challenge our worldviews, but reinforce it. This could be problematic when the information is false or misleading, such as the spread of misinformation about COVID-19 vaccines and lies about the 2020 election. Also, this means the **diversity** of the people we are interacting with is limited, which can lead to issues in understanding how people outside of our groups experience the social world.

Social Capital

Your social networks are also tied to inequality and power. **Social capital** involves using social connections as a resource. As we discussed earlier, your social networks can provide you with valuable information. This can be about opportunities you may not have known about. Besides providing access to valuable opportunities, social capital in networks provides a variety of support. If there are gaps between different groups in your networks, and you are the one person that connects those groups, this could give you a lot of social capital. It allows you to serve as a bridge between two groups.

Figure 5.7 Social isolation is an increasing problem in the United States. What can be done to overcome it?

In an influential book, *Bowling Alone*, Robert Putnam (2000) argues that there has been a decline in America's social capital. People have fewer and fewer close social relationships and are more socially isolated (figure 5.7). Instead of participating in activities with other people, such as volunteering or joining a bowling team, Americans increasingly do things alone. Evidence suggests that a considerable amount of the U.S. population has no one or only one person to discuss important matters with (McPherson et al. 2001). More recently, the surgeon general of the United States issued a report warning about the dangers of loneliness and social isolation (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2023). Putnam argues the decline in social capital creates a detrimental impact on our **society** and leads people to become less trusting and disengage from their communities. It is also corrosive to our democracy if we do not have engaged citizens. At a more individual level, social isolation has also been shown to have negative impacts on people's physical and mental health (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2023).

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Figure 5.7. "Woman in a Purple Dress Sitting on a Couch" by Annie Spratt is shared under the Unsplash License.

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5.5 Organizations

Jennifer Puentes; Matthew Gougherty; and Aimee Samara Krouskop

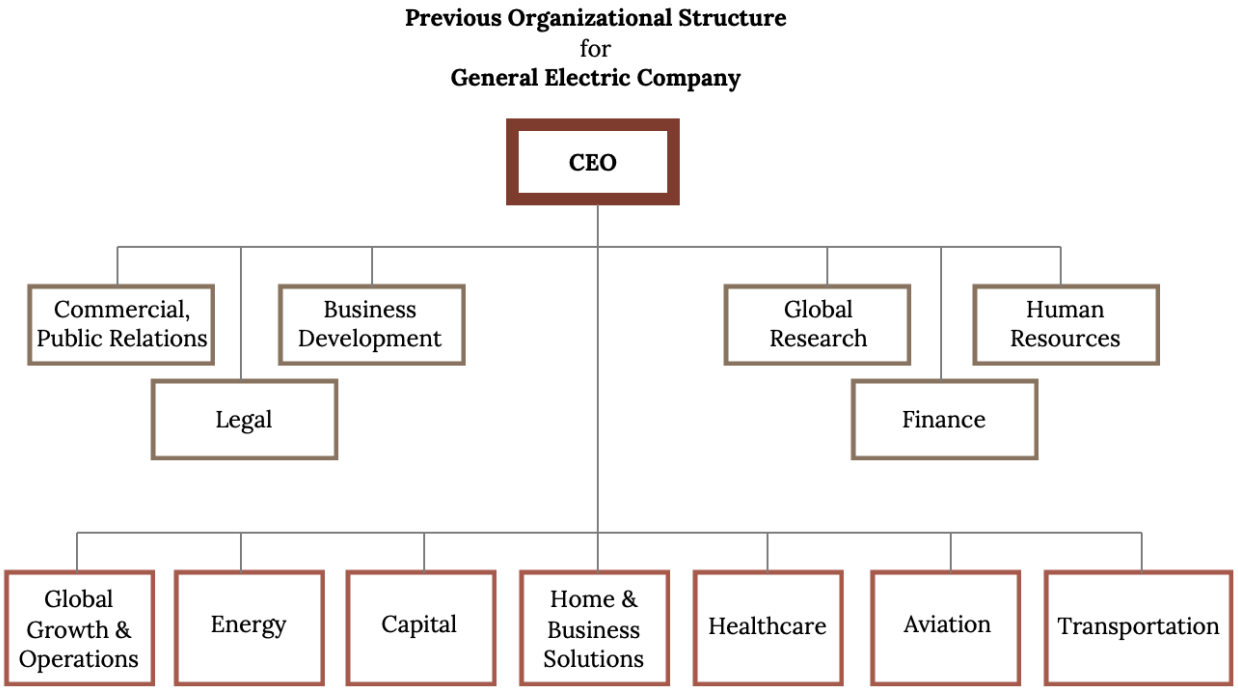

Figure 5.8 What can we learn about society when we study organizational charts? What types of organizations are you part of?

We live in a **society** of organizations (figure 5.8). Tasks that were previously accomplished by informal groups are now done by large **bureaucracies** (Perrow 1991). On most days, we interact with a variety of organizations. Take, as an example, going to the store to buy groceries. Public organizations make sure the roads we use to get there are maintained and that the food being sold is safe to consume. The grocery store, typically a private organization, ensures the store is properly stocked and staffed by helpful employees. The grocery store or chain is relying on other organizations to produce and supply food. If you use a credit card to pay, you were at some point approved for the card through a bank and met certain criteria to be eligible. The grocery store may donate expiring groceries to a food bank, a nonprofit organization. In this section, we will explore some of the different types of organizations that exist in our society and how they are structured.

Types of Organizations

Sociologist Amitai Etzioni (1975) posited that formal organizations fall into three categories. **Normative organizations**, also called **voluntary organizations**, are based on shared interests. As the name suggests, joining them is voluntary. People find membership rewarding in an intangible way. They receive non-material benefits. An intramural sports team and a community organization focused on the arts are examples of normative organizations.

Coercive organizations are organizations that we must be coerced, or pushed, to join. These may

include a prison or a rehabilitation center. Symbolic interactionist Erving Goffman states that most coercive organizations are total institutions (1961). A total institution is one in which inmates or military soldiers live a controlled lifestyle and in which total **resocialization** takes place.

The third type is **utilitarian organizations**, which, as the name suggests, are joined because of the need for a specific material reward. High school and the workplace fall into this category—one is joined in pursuit of a diploma, the other to make money.

For-Profit, Public, and Nonprofit Organizations

Another way to think about the types of organizations is to explore whether they are for-profit, public, or nonprofit. Sociologists argue that there are essential differences between markets and politics, which helps create the difference between for-profit and public organizations. Political authority can be a useful, inexpensive means of control. For example, it may be cheaper to have laws in place and get people to willingly stop at red lights than to try to figure out a market-based compensation system to induce people to stop. Markets, on the other hand, tend to be flexible and efficient. For-profit organizations operate in competitive markets where they seek to maximize profits.

However, for-profit organizations operating in a market can have difficulties handling some of the problems governments have to deal with. There can be unintended consequences from market exchanges. Some costs of market exchanges end up affecting those that are not part of the exchange. An example could be a factory polluting the air or water in the surrounding community. As a result, it might make sense for the government to regulate air and water quality. In other instances, there might be some services and goods that benefit everyone, but for-profit organizations do not want to provide them. For example, in the Northwest, it was not profitable for private companies to provide electricity to rural areas. In response, public utilities developed to help distribute electricity to those areas.

In analyzing public organizations, a variety of authors have explored the importance of public **values** as a rationale for government. Usually, these values have something to do with obligations toward the public. Intertwined with the idea of public values is the belief that people who work in public organizations have a different motivation for their work, called public service motivation. These motivations are seen as different from those that motivate people to work in the private sector. At the broadest level, public service motivation is characterized as an altruistic motivation to help and serve other people (Rainey and Steinbauer 1999).

Nonprofit organizations (or the nonprofit sector) include a wide range of organizations (figure 5.9). Generally, they are defined as being neither private organizations nor public organizations, though the exact boundaries between these types of organizations can be blurry. For example, in the United States, nonprofit organizations commonly include museums, orchestras, schools, universities, adult education organizations, research institutions, policy think tanks, health organizations, mental health organizations, human services, environmental and natural resource organizations, local development and housing organizations, and many additional types of organizations (Anheier 2005).

Figure 5.9 What roles can nonprofit organizations fill within a community?

There are a variety of ways to define nonprofit organizations, but let us focus on the legal definition. This may be the simplest and easiest way to define a nonprofit. In the United States, nonprofit organizations are defined by the Internal Revenue Code. Although there are around 20 different types of nonprofits, a majority of the nonprofits in the United States are 501(c)(3) organizations or 501(c)(4) organizations. Both types of organizations are exempt from taxation. To qualify as such a 501(c)(3), the organization has to pass three tests: an organizational test, a political test, and an asset test. If they pass those tests, they can receive contributions that are tax deductible (Anheier 2005).

International Organizations

Organizations exist at the regional and international levels as well. For example, our global trade and financial systems run on a set of organizations. These international trade and financial systems were catapulted into existence after World War II. In response to the political instability that led to the war and the failure to deal with economic problems after the First World War, a system of global monetary management was created requiring that payments between countries be defined in relation to the dollar.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) was established to promote greater cooperation among countries to prevent currency wars. It exists today, monitoring exchange rates and providing loans to nations in debt. The World Bank was created to meet the need for post-WWII reconstruction and development of Europe. Today, the World Bank focuses on development, particularly of infrastructure such as dams, electrical grids, irrigation systems, and roads.

Several other global organizations have been shaped to support countries in crisis, especially during or after war. These organizations deliver foreign government assistance or humanitarian aid and development. The U.S. government also directs and funds development initiatives through non-governmental organizations (NGOs) abroad. Agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Department of Defense (DoD) implement the goals of the larger U.S. development initiatives.

International organizations dedicated to humanitarian relief, foreign assistance, and development include the many branches of the United Nations, the World Health Organization, Doctors without Borders, and the International Federation of the Red Cross.

Another set of international organizations is related to militarism and policing. These bodies also have a dual role of supporting the implementation of humanitarian ideals and defending national interests. One example is the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), an intergovernmental military alliance between 28 European states, the United States, and Canada. It was set up in the **aftermath of World War II**, with member states agreeing to defend each other against attacks by third parties. The United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) is another example; it works to protect civilians, prevent conflict, reduce violence, and strengthen security for countries in turmoil.

Organizational Structure: Bureaucracy and Collectivism

Most days you probably have to interact with bureaucracy of some sort. **Bureaucracies** are organizations that have a clear division of labor, a hierarchy, and formal rules and procedures. You encounter them when you engage with your college or go to a grocery store or chain restaurant. Although he was writing over 100 years ago in Germany, Max Weber identified bureaucratic organizations and their spread across the globe as one of the key features of modern societies.

Weber argued that you can identify a bureaucracy by looking for several distinct characteristics. In a bureaucracy, there is a systematic division of labor, where it is clear who does what. Using your college campus as an example, you can identify different jobs that people engage in to make your college experience possible. Your professors teach you, information technicians make sure your course websites are functioning properly, and a registrar releases the schedule of classes and helps you enroll in courses.

According to Weber, the employees in a bureaucratic organization should be promoted and selected based on their professional or technical competence. This means your professors should have credentials and knowledge relevant to the courses they are teaching. Similarly, the people in the information technology office should be knowledgeable about learning technology.

Bureaucracies are also hierarchies with job positions arranged in relationship to each other. For most organizations, their organizational chart will give you a sense of which positions are above or below others (figure 5.8). Most colleges have a university president, who is overseen by the board of the college, at the top of their hierarchy. Below the president is the provost, below the provost are the deans of the colleges, below the deans are the department chairs, and below the department chairs are the faculty.

Bureaucracies also have formal, written rules that guide decision-making. Rather than making decisions based on the arbitrary whims of those in power, there are formal procedures that should be followed. Colleges have constitutions that outline some of these rules. As a student, you also face particular rules about maintaining a certain grade point average, course sequencing, taking required courses, and meeting certain college requirements. A lot of these rules are written in the student handbook and course catalogs.

Finally, Weber argued that recordkeeping on decisions, rules, and other organizational activities was a feature of bureaucracy (figure 5.10). As you may suspect, most of this record-keeping is now done digitally. When the college board has meetings, a public record of the agenda and meeting minutes is typically made available. As students, there are records of the courses you have taken and your grades.

Figure 5.10 Recordkeeping in Ukraine. What are records so important for bureaucracy?

It is important to note that these characteristics are part of an ideal type, meaning that in real life organizations fall on a continuum of bureaucratization. It is a question of the degree of bureaucratization. Generally, as organizations age and grow in size, they tend to adopt bureaucratic elements.

While bureaucracy provides an orderly way to run an organization, it also has some limitations. Sometimes bureaucracies will lead to top-heavy management, with a large number of employees at

the top of the organizational hierarchy; in other words, administrative bloat. These employees often are more engaged in managing the organization than directly involved in what the organization is supposed to be doing. In higher education, there have been concerns about the increasing number of upper-level administrators who are disconnected from the primary goal of such organizations, which is education.

Another issue bureaucracies can face is that decision-making can become centralized, with decisions made at the top and then pushed down. Employees then have little input in what is happening in the organization. This can lead to feelings of alienation and dissatisfaction. With low morale, there are few incentives for employees to be creative or devoted to their work.

Bureaucracies have become so taken for granted, it is hard to imagine other ways to run an organization. Yet, there are **collectivist organizations** that are more concerned with pursuing their mission or values. These organizations are essentially the opposite of bureaucracies. Most bureaucracies are focused on achieving a rational goal, such as maximizing profits.

In collectivist organizations, positions in the organization can rotate and be assigned based on the member's interest. Someone does not have to be an expert in a particular area to have something worthy to contribute. Decision-making in collectivist organizations is not confined to those at the top. Decisions are often made collectively and democratically, enabling all participants in the organization to have a say. Some of these organizations engage in consensus decision-making (Chen 2009).

In contrast to bureaucracies, whose rules can proliferate and be difficult to change, rules in collectivist organizations are flexible. In the United States, organizations in the civil rights and feminist movements of the 1960s and 1970s tended to adopt more collectivist types of organization.

There are limitations to how collectivist organizations operate. Sometimes their efforts can become diluted, and too much time can be spent discussing what the **group** is rather than accomplishing a task. Collectivist organizations may choose leaders based on informal relations, such as who is more charismatic or has the most personal connections. Activities within the organization can also become misdirected, with more time focused on disorganization than pursuing the goals or mission of the organization (Chen 2009).

Examples of collectivist organizations include mutual aid groups that developed during the COVID-19 pandemic. These groups provided support to people in their communities during the early stages of the pandemic. Informal and largely ad hoc, these groups were a bottom-up response to the challenges people faced. Members of the organizations engaged in a range of activities, including providing people with meals, going grocery shopping for people who were at higher risk, providing childcare and pet care, and raising money for those most impacted by the closing down of certain industries. These types of organizations proliferated in communities the government has typically overlooked, including Black, Indigenous, and Latinx communities (Toletino 2020; Hastings 2021).

In the real world, organizations combine elements of collectivist and bureaucratic organizations. In doing so, they can overcome some of the weaknesses of each type of organization. Burning Man is an organization that has successfully balanced these approaches (figure 5.11). Initially starting as a collectivist organization, Burning Man later incorporated bureaucratic elements, which provided some stability (Chen 2009).

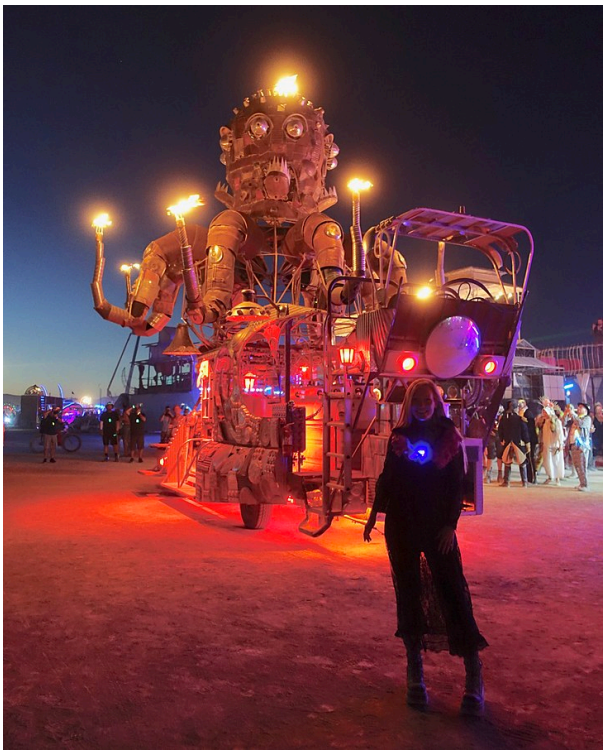

Figure 5.11 As an organization, Burning Man has combined both bureaucratic and collectivist structures (Chen 2009).

Organizational Isomorphism

Within organizational **sociology**, one of the primary questions has been, "Why do organizations tend to look so similar?" Organizational sociologists refer to the process by which organizations come to look similar and homogeneous as **isomorphism**.

Powell and DiMaggio (1983) identify three different mechanisms of isomorphic change. Coercive isomorphism is when an organization changes itself as a result of direct or indirect pressure from another organization. Coercive isomorphism results from political influences and issues surrounding legitimacy. For example, a government mandate, such as putting into place pollution controls, can cause coercive isomorphism. Further, the common legal environment influences organizations. As we saw with the example of the tax status of nonprofit organizations, legal requirements can be imposed by the government.

Mimetic isomorphism occurs when organizations model themselves after other organizations, particularly organizations they view as successful or more legitimate. For example, some universities will model what they do after what is occurring in various Ivy League schools.

Normative isomorphism derives from the shared professional **norms** and standards that guide the work of professionals in organizations. Professionals bring those norms and standards into organizations, thereby shaping the organizations.

A Closer Look: Racialized Organizations

As you may have gathered from the title of this section, organizations are not **race**-neutral bureaucratic structures. Organizations play a role in the **social construction of race** and **ethnicity**.

Sociologist Victor Ray developed a **theory** of organizations to explain how they are not race-neutral. In his theory of **racialized organizations**, Ray (2019) argues there are ways of thinking that connect organizational rules to social and material resources. There are four main ideas to this theory:

1. Racialized organizations enhance or diminish the **agency** of racial groups.
2. Racialized organizations legitimate the unequal distribution of resources.
3. Whiteness is a credential.
4. Racialized decoupling of formal rules from organizational practice (Ray 2019).

We can use the racialized theory of organizations to understand how state policy and individual attitudes are shaped by organizations. By understanding organizations as a site of racial inequality, we are better able to identify the internal and external sources of change that need to occur to work toward equity.

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Figure 5.11. "Pulpo Mechanico at Burning Man 2019" by jurvetson is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

5.6 Conclusion

Thinking back to the story at the beginning of this chapter, Lyle Crawford died during the 2021 heat wave. His sister, Donna, in Virginia, had called his former girlfriend to check on him. When he didn't answer the door, Donna called the police who found him in his home. His sister said, "He would have answered the door if someone knocked, and that might have done it. An actual human being. But how can there be enough human beings to go to the door of every older person?" (Guernsey and Vines 2021).

His death is part of a larger social pattern in which people who are socially isolated and living alone face dire consequences during heat waves (Klinenberg 2001). As we have discussed in this chapter, Americans have grown more socially isolated. In Multnomah County, 48 of the 72 people who died during the 2021 heat wave lived alone (Ehrlich 2022). As sociologist Eric Klinenberg notes, when someone dies alone in their home, it symbolizes social abandonment and social failure. For seniors, living alone leaves them vulnerable during crises. They have no one to help identify emerging problems or help draw support from their networks (Klineberg 2001).

As we saw in the introduction, public and nonprofit organizations played a crucial role in the response to the heat wave. However, these organizations were not prepared for the heat wave. While cooling centers help, not having strategies in place to get people to the cooling centers is a problem. Some argue that socially isolated people need to be checked on. At the time of the heat wave, the state of Oregon did not have an early warning and response system for heat. Government and nonprofit employees had a hard time communicating with the people who needed the most help (Kaplan 2021).

There is also the larger issue of our social infrastructure needing to be repaired to be able to ade-

quately respond to extreme weather events. Leaving inequities in housing or health care only exacerbates the problem and leaves our most disadvantaged at risk (Kaplan 2021). What will happen next time the Northwest faces an extreme weather event or a major earthquake? How will our social networks and organizations respond?

In this chapter, we explored a variety of topics that exist in between individuals and the large institutions of **society**. We explored the different types of groups we belong to and how they can impact our behavior. We then discussed the importance of social networks and social ties. We ended by looking at the many different organizations we participate in. In the **next chapter**, we will explore how sociologists study culture.

KEY TERMS

- **Bureaucracies**: organizations that have a clear division of labor, a hierarchy, and formal rules and procedures.
- **Charismatic authority**: power legitimized on the basis of a leader's exceptional personal qualities.
- **Coercive organization**: organizations we are forced to join.
- **Collectivist organization**: organizations concerned with pursuing their mission or values. Often the opposite of a bureaucratic organization.
- **Crowds**: people who happen to be in the same place at the same time, but who do not interact or share a sense of identity.
- **Dyad**: a two-member group.
- **Group**: any collection of at least two people who interact with some frequency and who share some sense of aligned identity.
- **Homophily**: similarity within networks.
- **In-group**: a group we belong to and toward which we hold favorable opinions.
- **Isomorphism**: a process by which organizations come to look similar and homogeneous.
- **Normative or voluntary organizations**: organizations we join based on shared interest.
- **Out-group**: a group we do not belong to and which we may hold negative attitudes toward.
- **Primary groups**: small, informal groups of people who are closest to us.
- **Rational legal authority**: power that is legitimized by rules, regulations, and laws.
- **Reference group**: a group that people compare themselves to.
- **Secondary groups**: larger and more impersonal groups that are task-focused and time limited.
- **Social capital**: using social connections and networks as a resource.
- **Social network**: a set of relationships that link an individual to other individuals.
- **Strong tie**: people in your network that you know and have regular contact with.
- **Traditional authority**: power legitimized on the basis of long-standing customs.
- **Triad**: a three-member group.
- **Utilitarian Organization**: organizations we join based on seeking a material reward.
- **Weak tie**: people in your network that you are not that close to.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What in-groups do you belong to? How does that group membership impact your life? What are your reference groups?
2. How would you characterize the leadership of your employer? What kind of authority do they have? Why?
3. Why do you think Americans are socially isolated? What are some of the consequences of this isolation? How can we become less socially isolated?
4. Pick an organization. Would you characterize it as voluntary, coercive, or instrumental; for-profit, public, or nonprofit; or bureaucratic or collectivist?

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CHAPTER

6

Figure 6.1 "Revolution grrrl style now!" graffitied on a brick wall near a road. How is graffiti part of culture?

Sociology of Culture

6.1 Chapter Learning Objectives and Overview

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Outline how the social sciences and humanities approach the study of culture.
2. Compare and contrast **ethnocentrism** and **cultural relativism**.
3. Identify the different elements of a culture.
4. Explain material versus nonmaterial culture, declarative versus **nondeclarative culture**.
5. Explain the significance of symbols and language to a culture.
6. Differentiate **values** and **norms**.
7. Compare **subculture** to **dominant culture**.
8. Discuss the **roles** of both **high culture** and pop culture within **society**.
9. Explain how **cultural capital**, boundary drawing, **othering**, and taste patterns can create inequalities.

Overview

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, a movement within punk rock, called riot grrrl, emerged from Olympia, Washington, and Washington, D.C. (figure 6.1). The "riot" part of the name emphasizes the challenge to a society that continually devalues women. The "grrrl" part of the name makes a connection to childhood (girl) and sounds like an angry growl (Schilt 2003). Drawing inspiration from **feminism**, the movement addressed issues related to abuse, **sexuality**, **patriarchy**, rape, and **racism**. They did so through music, but also magazines (zines) and additional forms of media. One of the most well-known groups to emerge from the movement was Bikini Kill, fronted by Kathleen Hanna. Their song "Rebel Girl" struck at some of the core themes of the movement.

In the riot grrrl manifesto authored by Hanna (2011) for the Bikini Kill zine, she outlined some of the values of the movement:

> BECAUSE we are interested in creating non-hierarchical ways of being AND making music, friends, and scenes based on communication + understanding, instead of competition + good/bad categorizations.
>
> BECAUSE doing/reading/seeing/hearing cool things that validate and challenge us can help us gain the strength and sense of community that we need in order to figure out how bullshit like racism, able-bodieism, ageism, speciesism, classism, thinism, **sexism**, anti-semitism and **heterosexism** figures in our own lives.
>
> BECAUSE we see fostering and supporting girl scenes and girl artists of all kinds as integral to this process.
>
> BECAUSE we are angry at a society that tells us Girl = Dumb, Girl = Bad, Girl = Weak"

Yet most people in the United States probably remain unfamiliar with the movement. The mainstream media of the day did cover the movement, but a lot of the coverage was negative, claiming the movement was immature and ridiculous (Schilt 2003). Reflecting on her experiences, Hanna noted, (Burbank 2015) "[Bikini Kill was] very vilified during the '90s by so many people, and hated by so many people, and I think that that's been kind of written out of the history," she says. "People were throwing chains at our heads—people hated us—and it was really, really hard to be in that band."

How can we use our **sociological imagination** to help us understand riot grrrl? What does the movement and public reaction to it say about American culture? Reflecting on equity and **diversity**, whose voices were included and excluded in the movement? What role does culture play in those processes of inclusion and exclusion? In what follows, we will explore how sociologists understand culture, while developing some of the conceptual tools to answer these questions.

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Figure 6.1. "Pintada: "Revolution Grrrl Style Now" en Brighton (Inglaterra)" by Feral 78 is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

6.2 What Is Culture?

What comes to mind when you hear the word "culture"? Beliefs? Symbols? Art? Music? **Values**? While our answers may vary, there are a lot of different ideas attached to the word "culture." As cultural critic Raymond Williams explained, culture is "one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language" (Williams 1976:76). There is no correct or definitive meaning attached to the word "culture." It is an ambiguous term, whose meanings change depending on time and context.

The word began as a noun connected to growing crops and livestock (cultivation). This was later broadened to encompass the human mind or spirit, and the idea of a cultivated person or cultured person emerged. Within academia, several traditions to study culture have emerged.

Humanities

One approach to the study of culture is based in the humanities. Here culture is taken as "The best that has been thought and known" (Griswold 2004:4), in other words, the wisest and most beautiful human expressions. This largely ends up confining the meaning of culture to the arts and literature, religion, meanings and values, and intellectual life. It is seen as separate from the rest of **society**. This is culture with a capital C. This has several implications.

This approach leads to the evaluation of some cultural works as being better than others. Generally, in this tradition, "**high culture**" like art and opera are understood as culture. Ultimately, this ends up producing a rather elitist view of culture and privileging European culture over culture from other places. In other words, it is ethnocentric**. Ethnocentrism** means to evaluate and judge another culture based on one's own cultural **norms**. Ethnocentrism is believing your **group** is the correct measuring standard, and if other cultures do not measure up to it, they are wrong.

Since culture is defined as a narrow range of elite objects, there is a fear it is fragile. As a result, it can be lost or destroyed, and therefore it must be preserved. Educational institutions, archives, libraries, and museums aid in that preservation. Finally, since culture in this approach is something so unique and special and removed from everyday life, it does not make much sense to critically analyze it. This can lead to a downplaying of a cultural object's economic, political, and social dimensions (Griswold 2004).

Social Sciences

In the social sciences, a broader definition of culture developed, where culture was understood as a "people's entire way of life." This emerged from nineteenth-century anthropology and emphasized lived experience. In this tradition, there is not one culture, but multiple cultures. Instead of engaging in some of the elitism and ethnocentrism of the humanities approach, the social sciences try to take a culturally relativistic perspective. **Cultural relativism** is the practice of assessing a culture by its own standards, and not in comparison to another culture.

The social scientific understanding of culture has several implications. First, this is an expanded definition of culture, from the best/European culture to culture as a complex whole. This includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, and other capabilities and habits acquired by people within a society. It includes material and symbolic elements of culture. **Popular culture** becomes something to be studied. The social sciences try to avoid evaluating cultural objects against some abstract standard (such as the "best") in favor of understanding a culture in terms of its context.

Instead of being seen as fragile, culture is durable and persistent. Rather than being a piece of artwork that needs to be protected in a museum, culture is the way everybody lives their lives. Culture can be studied like anything else. There is nothing that makes it sacred or fundamentally different from other human activities (Griswold 2004).

Over the past century, American and European sociologists developed a wide variety of definitions of culture (Sewell 1999). At the broadest level, you could sociologically think of culture as "different ways of seeing and doing things" (Wray 2014: xix). Cultural **sociology**, the specific subfield within sociology, is focused on meaning-making, with a particular emphasis on symbols, categories, and interpretation. In what follows, we will explore some of these different sociological traditions for studying culture and discuss the role that the meaning-making process plays in the creation of inequalities. We begin by discussing cultural objects as a way to start thinking about the connections between culture and society.

Cultural Objects

Wendy Griswold, an influential cultural sociologist, focuses on cultural objects as a way to understand and study culture. Cultural objects are socially meaningful expressions. They can be audible, visible, physical, or articulated. They tell a story. This can range widely from slang and particular styles to beliefs and material things.

Being a cultural object is not something built into the object; it is something we as sociologists analytically decide upon. Specifying a cultural object gives us a way to grasp some part of the broader system we call "culture."

To do this, Griswold proposes a framework she calls **the cultural diamond** (figure 6.2). The framework begins with the cultural objects. It then looks at who created the objects (creator), which can be an individual or a group of people.

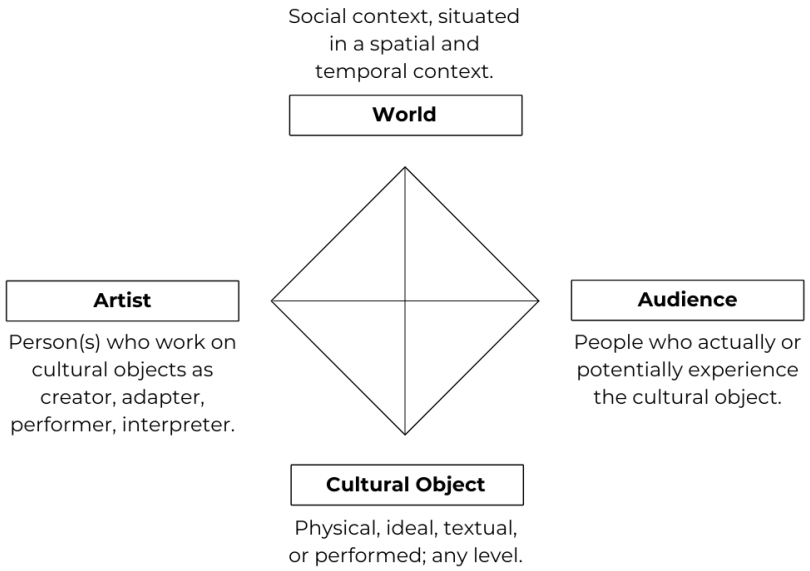

Figure 6.2 What are the parts of Griswold's cultural diamond?

Every cultural object has a receiver, or the people that experience the object. Griswold's diamond refers to these people as the audience. They hear, read, understand, think, participate in, recall, and actively make meaning from the objects. The cultural objects, those who create them, and those who receive them are not floating freely along. Rather, they are embedded in the social world and particular contexts. This includes the economic, political, and social patterns that occur at a particular point in time. When analyzing a cultural object, you need to consider who created it, who received it, the society it is occurring within, and the linkages between the corners of the diamond (Griswold 2004).

As an example, consider a zine associated with riot grrrl. We could look at who created it, both the individuals and groups involved in its creation. We could then explore how people accessed the zine and interpreted it. What did they make of zine? How did the audience's social position influence their interpretation of the zine? We would then step back and focus on the larger sociological context of the time. Were there trends in politics or social movements influencing the ideas presented in the zine? Using the cultural diamond helps us narrow our focus when studying something cultural, while also allowing us to account for how the specific object is produced, consumed, and understood.

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Figure 6.2. "Griswold's Cultural Diamond" by Mindy Khamvongsa, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

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"Cultural Relativism" definition from "Ch. 3 Key Terms" by Heather Griffiths and Nathan

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6.3 Elements of Culture

Up to this point, you may have noticed that culture has a lot of different meanings attached to it. In this section, we are going to explore some of the various aspects of culture sociologists focus on. We will begin with language and symbols, and then discuss **values** and **norms**. We will then turn to how we each have a cultural toolkit that helps guide us as we move through **society**. Finally, we will focus on subcultures and how meaning-making can occur at a **group** level while still challenging mainstream culture.

Signs, Symbols, and Meaning

Sociologists often distinguish between **symbolic culture** and **material culture**. The focus on meaning-making and symbols aligns with the perspective of most symbolic interactionists. **Symbolic culture** includes ways of thinking, beliefs, values, and assumptions. It also includes ways of behaving, such as norms, habits, and communication. Symbolic culture often does not have a material existence. Symbolic culture allows us to communicate via signs, gestures, and language.

Signs are the building blocks of symbolic culture. Signs are symbols that convey an idea. For example, traffic signals and price tags are both signs that convey information. Numbers and letters are the most common signs, and their meaning is usually taken for granted. Gestures, or body language, are the signs that people make with their bodies. They include things like facial expressions and how much personal space people give each other during an interaction.

Language is a system of communication using vocal sounds, gestures, and written symbols. Language is probably the most significant component of a culture because it allows us to communicate with other people in interaction. Furthermore, language allows culture to be transmitted from one generation to the next.

Even as it constantly evolves, language shapes our perception of reality and our behavior. In the 1920s, linguists Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf advanced this idea, which became known as the Sapir-Whorf **hypothesis**, or linguistic relativity. It is based on the idea that people experience their world through their language and therefore understand their world through the cultural meanings embedded in their language. The hypothesis suggests that language shapes thought and thus behavior (Swoyer 2003).

Words have attached meanings beyond their definitions that can influence thought and behavior. For example, in the United States, where the number 13 is associated with bad luck, many high-rise buildings do not have a 13th floor. In Japan, however, the number four is considered unlucky, since it is pronounced similarly to the Japanese word for "death." Overall, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis emphasizes how language filters our understanding of the social world.

Let us now turn to material culture. **Material culture** includes, art, and artifacts, tools and utensils, machines and weapons, clothing and furniture, and so on (figure 6.3). It is anything physical or tangible that people create, use, or appreciate that has a meaning attached to it. Studying material culture can tell you a lot about a group or society. Sociologists have studied the art people

hang in their homes (Halle 1996) to how buildings influence people's actions (Gieryn 2002).

Figure 6.3 What aspects of material culture are present in a surgical operating room? How might the material culture of surgeons differ from those of other professions?

Material and nonmaterial aspects of culture are linked, and physical objects often symbolize cultural ideas. A metro pass is a material object, but it represents a form of nonmaterial culture, namely, capitalism and the acceptance of paying for transportation. Clothing, hairstyles, and jewelry are part of material culture, but the appropriateness of wearing certain clothing for specific events reflects nonmaterial culture. A school building belongs to material culture, symbolizing education, but the teaching methods and educational standards are part of education's nonmaterial culture.

Values and Value Orientations

Figure 6.4 These students in an 1899 classroom are pledging allegiance to the American flag. Are there a core set of American values that all Americans can agree upon? Have these values changed over time?

When exploring culture, functionalist sociologists tend to emphasize shared values. **Values** are a culture's standard for discerning what is good and just in society. Values are deeply embedded and critical for transmitting and teaching a culture's beliefs (figure 6.4). You can think back to Weber's discussion of the Protestant work ethic in Chapter 2, in which Protestant values place an emphasis on hard work and being frugal. Values tend to exist at a rather abstract level. They are agreed upon, but how they influence everyday life can be difficult to determine.

Functionalist Talcott Parsons emphasized the importance of culture. His work, which studied values, was popular in American **sociology** from the late 1940s until the mid-1960s. Notably, he equated culture with values. Parsons and colleagues argued that without common values, social order would be impossible. In other words, values are at the heart of social order. Without values, people would not know how to interact with each other. Further, if values are followed by everyone in a group, they could lead to harmony. Parsons argued that there were **value orientations** that are systems of linked values. This linkage can be either in an individual's mind or at

the societal level. For example, a society or individual could have goal-directed values or expressive values.

Some researchers argue that countries can be grouped based on the different value orientations that they have. Based on **survey** research in 80 countries, the researchers found that there were four distinctive value orientations across the world: traditional values, secular-rational values, survival values, and **self**-expression values. Traditional values emphasize the importance of religion, family, and nationalism. These values are often contrasted with secular-rational values, which place less emphasis on religion and family life as sources of authority. Survival values tend to focus on economic and physical security. These are contrasted with self-expression values, which strongly emphasize freedom and individuality and take survival and security for granted.

In research on values orientation, the United States and most of Latin America score high on traditional and self-expression value measures. Countries in Africa and the Middle East score high on traditional and survival value measures. A large part of Europe scores high on secular-rational and self-expression values, while countries in Eastern Europe, like Ukraine, score high on secular-rational and survival values (Inglehart and Baker 2000). You have the option to view a **cultural map [Website]** based on this research. Specifically, focusing on the United States, some of these different value orientations may point to differences between urban and rural areas. In urban areas there is a stronger emphasis placed on self-expression values, and in rural areas, a stronger emphasis is placed on traditional values (Edsall 2022).

Some research from 50 years ago suggested there was a set of central American values (Williams 1970). These included achievement and success, activity and work, efficiency, and practicality. Some people argue this is evidence of a self-centered, individualistic culture. More recent research suggests that the values of Americans are more complicated and shift depending on social events (Cerulo 2008).

An example of this can be seen in debates around democratic values within the United States. Within the politics of the United States, there exist pro-democratic and counter-democratic values. These values can be seen undergirding different types of political actors, interactions, and institutions. In terms of democratic actors, those motivated by such values are seen as rational, calm, and realistic decision-makers. In contrast, counter-democratic actors are typically portrayed as irrational, passionate, and angry. In our interactions with other people, democratic-coded interactions are open, trusting, and based on being truthful. Anti-democratic interactions lean toward being secretive, deceitful, conspiratorial, and deferential to authority.

Democratic and anti-democratic values are also present in **social institutions**. Those institutions following democratic rule are regulated, law-abiding, and impersonal. This again contrasts with counter-democratic institutions, which tend to be arbitrary and focus on personal loyalty (Alexander and Smith 1993). How might this apply to contemporary American politics?

Norms

Up to this point, we have focused on rather abstract values. But what about the beliefs that guide most of our everyday interactions? **Norms** are the social expectations of how to behave in a situation. Norms develop out of a value system, while values operate at an abstract level, norms provide the specific dos and don'ts of a specific situation. The American political system has relied on many norms over the decades, one of which is mutual toleration. Mutual toleration involves recognizing that our political rivals are decent and patriotic. As long as our rivals follow the constitu-

tional rules, they should have the right to govern (Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018).

Some norms are officially codified and made into formal laws or rules. Others are informal and left unspoken. They are implicit and simply the "way things are done." That said, norms are specific to a culture, and time, and are not universal.

There are different types of norms:

- **Folkways** are loosely enforced norms and ordinary conventions of everyday life. Examples of folkways include standards of dress or dinner table etiquette. Usually, if people don't conform to these norms, they are considered eccentric or peculiar, but they are not seen as a real threat.
- **Mores** are norms that carry greater moral significance than folkways. They are closely related to the core values of a social group, and we are expected to conform to them. Breaches are treated seriously and bring severe repercussions. Examples include theft or committing fraud.
- **Taboos** are the most powerful type of norm. They are so deeply ingrained that violations can create a sense of disgust or horror. Examples include incest or cannibalism.

Norms are enforced through sanctions**.** Sanctions can be negative or positive. Positive sanctions express approval for following a particular norm. Negative sanctions express disapproval for not following a norm. In other words, it is a type of punishment. Both positive and negative sanctions are mechanisms of **social control**. You can find a more thorough discussion of norms, social control, and sanctions in Chapter 7.

Cultural Toolkits

Contemporary cultural sociologists have moved away from emphasizing values and norms. There are questions about how values influence people's actions. Instead, there has been a move to understand culture as a "toolkit"—that is, culture as a "repertoire from which actors select differing pieces for constructing lines of actions" (Swidler 1986:275). Our cultural toolkits allow us to piece together and carry out different actions as we go about our days. The toolkits include symbols, rituals, habits, and stories that may conflict. Even though our toolkits might not be too coherent, people can employ their toolkits to meet most circumstances they find themselves in.

Let's focus for a moment on the influence of habits on our actions. How often have you driven a car or ridden a bike from point A to point B without really thinking about it? How often do you regularly engage in a variety of morning rituals, such as drinking coffee, eating breakfast, and brushing your teeth? All of these habits are part of what sociologists call **nondeclarative culture**.

This type of culture is acquired slowly, and we usually aren't that conscious of it. **Nondeclarative culture** is something we have internalized deeply and typically employ automatically in our actions. Examples include skills, dispositions, and classification schemes. This type of culture contrasts with **declarative culture**, which can be verbally expressed. It includes when we consciously classify the world or provide justifications or rationalizations for our actions (Lizardo 2017; Cerulo 2018). In our interactions, declarative culture tends to be slower and more deliberate. This includes our values, attitudes, worldviews, and ideologies.

Karen Cerulo (2018) provides an interesting application of these forms of culture to how we interpret and understand smells. Using focus groups, she had people smell perfumes and then reflect on them. She found that the people in her

study had nondeclarative/automatic reactions to the perfumes. Drawing on their declarative culture, the participants also attached particular smells to different classes and races. In other words, she found that smell could be used by people to create boundaries between groups. In this particular study, Cerulo found that the participants associated the smells of cheaper perfumes (floral) with a lower-**class** standing. In contrast, the participants associated a daytime professional scent (citrus/apple/fresh) with Whiteness and being a member of the middle class. Research such as this shows how our cultural toolkits are connected to larger social forces and our social locations.

Subcultures

Figure 6.5 A hand-made sign explains the norms and rules of the Rainbow Gathering in Borneo, Indonesia. How do rules establish norms within subcultures?

Let's return to the example at the beginning of the chapter. How exactly can we understand riot grrrl given what we have discussed so far? What were some of the values and norms associated with the movement? What might be some material and symbolic cultural objects associated with the movement? Perhaps the movement might be best categorized as a **subculture**.

As a concept, subcultures don't make sense unless we have a notion of dominant or mainstream culture. **Dominant culture** includes the values, norms, meanings, and practices of the group within society that is the most powerful. It is hegemonic, meaning it is everywhere within our society and largely taken for granted. Often in the United States, the dominant culture is the culture of the White, upper-middle class.

As an example of dominant culture, consider commercial radio stations. They typically only play a limited type of music, with songs and artists selected by various business interests that are determined to make as much money as possible. Artists not on large labels and with fewer resources might then only be played on college radio, public radio, or online.

One way to define a **subculture** is as a group within society that is differentiated by its distinctive values, norms, and lifestyle (figure 6.5). The culture is different from the dominant culture. The people making up subcultures have distinctive ways of life, yet they exist within the larger cultural system and have contact with external cultures. Within a subculture, there are powerful and elaborate symbols and meanings. They produce cultural objects that are significant to insiders and mystifying to outsiders.

Teenagers and young people are drawn to subcultures because they provide a way for them to express themselves and differentiate themselves from their peers. Subcultures tend not to be as anchored by the institutions of adult life.

The group boundaries of a subculture can become problematic. If the group boundaries are strong, non "authentic" members might be kicked out, and it might be hard to admit new members to the subculture. If the group boundaries are fluid, the subculture might become absorbed and assimilated into mainstream culture.

When sociologically examining subcultures, style is a major theme. Style is a way to indicate membership in a subculture. Style can be defined as including image, demeanor, and **argot**. Image is the appearance component, which includes clothing and accessories, such as hairstyle, jewelry, and artifacts. Demeanor is made up of expression and posture. Think of how members of a subculture present themselves, and how they wear the clothing. **Argot**, or jargon, is the special vocabulary and language of the subculture and how it's delivered. For example, for punk rockers a mosh pit is "an area at a punk show where punk rockers bang into each other (mosh), pogo, slam dance, etc." (Reid 2006:26).

Activity: Analyzing Subcultures

For this activity, pick a subculture of your choosing (if you need ideas, check out this **list of subcultures [Website]**). Then do an internet image search for the subculture and address the following questions:

1. How would you describe the subcultural style present in the images?
2. What does the style say about the subculture? How might it connect to the norms and values of the subculture?

Next, think more broadly about the subculture's style as a cultural object. What is the impact of the larger "social world" on this style?

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Figure 6.4. "Pledge of Allegiance 1899" by Frances Benjamin Johnston is in the Public Domain.

Figure 6.5. "Our Tradition at Rainbow Gathering Borneo, Indonesia" by Briegel the Soup is licensed Under CC BY-SA 4.0.

6.4 Culture and Inequality

As we have discussed so far, culture encompasses a lot of how we live and experience our day-to-day lives. However, culture is not neutral. It can be used to create and sustain inequalities. Specifically, it can be used in the production of **class**, **gender**, and **race** inequalities. In this section, we will explore some of the cultural processes involved in creating inequalities.

High Culture and Popular Culture

One area where culture is intertwined with inequalities is within taste cultures. Scholars and the general population will commonly refer to taste cultures, such as **high culture**, **popular culture**, or mass culture. Gans (1974) defined **taste culture** as areas of culture that share aesthetics and standards of taste. Aesthetics broadly refers to standards of beauty, but also to a variety of other emotional and intellectual **values** people see in particular cultural content.

High culture is the form of cultural expression associated with elite groups. This includes art museums, opera, the symphony, ballet, classical music, plays, and high-end restaurants. In the United States, this is typically the culture of elite White people from coastal cities (for example, New York City, Boston, and San Francisco). Historically, this culture was called "highbrow" because of eighteenth century theories that associated the capability to understand this type of culture with intellectual superiority and having a particular skull shape that had a high brow. These theories are discredited. Familiarity with high culture can be used by the elites to help determine access to opportunities, as we will explore in the next section on **cultural capital**.

Figure 6.6 Food culture is an important aspect of any culture. Consider the visitors who frequent this food cart pod in autumn as you reflect on these questions: When might we consider food part of high culture? When might it be considered part of popular culture? What are some unique features of the food culture of the Pacific Northwest?

Popular culture refers to the pattern of cultural experiences and attitudes that exist in mainstream **society** (figure 6.6). Popular culture events might include a parade, a baseball game, or the season finale of a television show. Music, anime, and cosplay are pieces of popular culture.

Popular culture is accessible by most and is expressed and spread via commercial and social media outlets such as radio, television, movies, the music industry, publishers, and corporate-run websites. For example, you can share a discussion of your favorite football team with a new coworker or comment on a reality show when making small talk in line at the grocery store. But if you tried to launch into a deep discussion on the classical Greek play *Antigone* in these settings, you might get some strange looks. Although high culture may be considered by some to be superior to popular culture, the lines between high culture and popular culture vary over time and place. Shakespearean plays, considered to be popular culture when they were written, are now part of our society's high culture. From a **sociological perspective**, high culture is not inherently better or more important than popular culture, and sociologists study both.

Cultural Capital

The concept of cultural capital has its origins in the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1984; 1986), a well-known French sociologist. **Cultural capital** can be defined as the resources and power derived from being familiar with high (or legitimated) culture. This includes tastes, habits, expectations, skills, knowledge, and other dispositions.

Cultural capital is something that is learned. It is taught in the family, primarily in the families of the upper-middle class and upper class. Cultural capital is also taught and reinforced in the education system, especially higher education (think art history classes, studying literary classics). The idea is that schools are middle-class institutions that put a value on particular tastes, behaviors, and skills. Schools will reward people who have the "correct" cultural capital, while also helping build one's cultural capital. As we will discuss more in

Chapter 8, schools tend to reward children from middle-class backgrounds. The concept assumes there is a one-to-one mapping of class onto culture; those in the dominant class will consume high or legitimate culture, while those that are working class or poor will consume mass or popular culture.

The three types of cultural capital identified by Bourdieu are embodied cultural capital, objectified cultural capital, and institutionalized cultural capital. Embodied cultural capital is cultural capital that is internalized during **socialization** and constitutes schemes of appreciation and understanding. It requires the investment of time by parents, family members, or hired professionals to sensitize one to cultural distinctions (Swartz 1997). It is not only how we think, but also how we hold ourselves and present ourselves to others (Hallett 2003). Objectified cultural capital is when cultural capital is turned into specific objects, such as books or works of art, that require embodied cultural capital to be understood. An example could be possessing and displaying an original work of a well-known artist in your home. Institutionalized cultural capital materializes as degrees and diplomas from the education system that show you have the correct cultural capital (Lamont and Lareau 1988). It means going to the "right" school and having the diploma to show it.

Cultural capital preserves and reproduces the class structure, because it's used to include and exclude others, defining access to a particular class. For those wishing to get important jobs or acquire (political or economic) power, cultural capital serves as a criterion for access. You have to show a familiarity with high culture to be accepted. Research by Lauren Rivera (2012) shows that notions of "fit" will be used to evaluate applicants for jobs at elite professional service firms. "Fit" ends up meaning having the same culture as the people who already work there. This limits opportunities for a diverse workforce and the exchange of different perspectives.

Further, familiarity and participation in high culture operate to build connections among the dominant class. Attending something like an opera in New York City is an opportunity to interact with other people in a similar class situation and create class solidarity. Furthermore, participating in such events could be used in interactions as a means to judge others' class standing. The overall point of the concept in Bourdieu's work was "to suggest that culture (in the broadest sense of the term) can become a power resource" (Swartz 1997:75).

Activity: Cultural Capital

Cultural capital is a crucial concept to understand how privileges and disadvantages can be distributed outside the context of financial resources. Review the concept by watching the following video (figure 6.7).

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://youtu.be/5DBEYiBkgp8**

Figure 6.7 What different forms can cultural capital take? **Transcript.**

Then answer the following questions:

1. How would you describe your embodied and objectified cultural capital?
2. Do you think your food choices say something about your social class? How about the sports you play or are interested in?
3. Do you agree that a college degree is an institutionalized version of cultural capital? Why or why not?
4. Why might notions of "cultural fit" be problematic?

Taste Patterns

Within **sociology**, there are a variety of arguments about the relationship between class hierarchies and cultural hierarchies. Bourdieu's perspective aligns with the **homology argument**, which states that consumption patterns and cultural tastes are associated with specific occupations and class fractions. Similar to cultural capital, we see a one-to-one mapping of class onto culture. This means that the elite consume high culture, while the lower class consumes popular culture.

Bourdieu (1984) specifically argued the upper class has a "taste for freedom" that informs all of their cultural choices. This entails a distance from the material necessities and practical urgencies of everyday life. Those in the upper class don't have to worry about paying rent or providing food for their family. Instead, they can focus on things like art or opera, high culture, things that aren't that practical to everyday life (figure 6.8). In contrast, the working class must confront the needs and urgencies of making a living, resulting in a "taste for necessity." Here there is a general preference for things that are substantive and informal.

Figure 6.8 Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra. Does attending such events say something about social class?

The opposite of the homology argument is the **individualization argument**, which is a rather postmodern argument. From this perspective, consumption patterns are no longer determined by class. Theorists holding this position generally point to the supposed decomposition of class hierarchies and the rising influence of gender, race, and religion as sources of consumption patterns. They also point to the changing production, marketing, and consumer patterns and how they have led to a proliferation of images and identities that no longer correspond to particular classes. Just think of the number of cultural objects that are now available to us through the internet. With so many options available, it might be hard to predict someone's consumption based on their **social location**. Some supporters of this argument claim that it is almost a free-for-all, and there is no way to determine consumption patterns (Beck 1992).

Between the class homology argument and the individualization argument is the omnivore/univore argument. Here the argument is that there has been a transition in the tastes of the dominant class away from participation in a limited number of high-status activities. Instead, there is a move by the dominant groups toward greater participation in all types of activities and taste preferences, some of which are considered low status. They become **cultural omnivores** (Chan and Goldthorpe 2005**).** This has been referred to as a shift from snobbishness to omnivorousness (Peterson and Kern 1996**)**. It means a new way to show your eliteness is by being open to appreciating a wide range of cultural activities and genres. However, there are limits to this openness, with particular activities or genres associated with groups seen as having a lower social standing being excluded (Bryson 1996).

While this has occurred, those in the dominated classes have been shown to mainly participate in just a few types of cultural activities or a narrow range of activities. Usually, those cultural activities are associated with their **ethnicity**, occupation, or locality, hence their label as **cultural univores**. One of the best ways to think about this is in terms of a particular medium, like music. An omnivore would like a bunch of different types of music, while a univore would probably like only one. This

taste pattern has been found in a variety of national contexts and different areas of life, such as the visual arts and food consumption (Alderson et al. 2007; Katz-Gerro 2002). What might be a limit to understanding taste patterns in terms of omnivores and univores?

Boundary Drawing

Figure 6.9 How does the border wall at the United States and Mexico border near San Diego draw boundaries?

Another way culture can be used to create and sustain inequalities is through the process of boundary drawing. Boundaries can be symbolic or social. **Symbolic boundaries** are conceptual distinctions made by people to categorize a wide variety of social things. This can include people, groups, and objects, but also more broadly how we categorize space and time. You can think of them as defining who or what is included and excluded. Social boundaries result when symbolic boundaries are widely agreed upon. Social boundaries involve unequal access to resources and opportunities (Lamont and Molnar 2002). These social boundaries can be built into our society, including some people, while excluding others.

A concrete example of boundary drawing is the borders that exist between countries (figure 6.9). It is at these borders that citizenship is enforced. Decisions are made to allow some people into a country while denying access to others. Some sociologists have described borders as "instrumental in the construction of difference" (Lamont and Molar 2002:184).

We could also apply boundary drawing to the attempted construction of a southern border wall in the United States. One way to interpret it would be through the writings of Frantz Fanon. He developed a sociology of walls to explain French colonization practices in Algeria (Go 2020). He argued "The colonized world is a compartmentalized world. The dividing line, the border, is represented by the barracks and the police stations. . . . The 'native' sector is not complementary to the European sector. The two confront each other, but not in the service of a higher unity" (Fanon [1961] 1968:3–4). In his framework, such a boundary is tied to race, while having strong effects on those that are included and those that are excluded. While both a symbolic and social boundary, the southern border wall also has clear connections to race and exclusion.

Boundary drawing can also be used to define who belongs and who benefits in terms of race, class, and gender. Determining ethnic **group** membership and identity is wrapped up in processes of boundary drawing (Sanders 2002). Boundary drawing is also closely tied to the dynamics of in-groups and out-groups. Cultural capital is one way people draw boundaries along the lines of class. We will explore classed boundary drawing more in Chapter 8. In terms of race, the boundaries around Whiteness are something that sociologists have increasingly turned their attention toward. Over time, some groups that were previously defined as non-White became to be seen as White. Being included as White comes with a variety of privileges. We will explore this more in Chapter 11.

Othering

Othering refers to the process through which a group that already has a lot of power defines into existence a group they construct as an "other." The powerful group does this by attributing negative characteristics to the "other" and deems the less powerful group as inferior (Schwalbe et al. 2000). In other words, it involves creating categories and assigning people to those categories. Those with power assume the less powerful group is inferior in some manner. Often, the "other" is seen and treated as part of an **out-group**. As a recent example, some political actors have othered **transgender** people and passed a series of anti-trans laws, negatively impacting the lives of trans individuals in those states (Narea and Cineas 2023).

Othering is commonly used to support racial and imperial **oppression**. Within the West, there is a tendency to engage in Orientalism. Here "the Orient" is seen as an "other." Edward Said (1979) argues that "the Orient" was invented by those in the West during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This process "is predicated upon an unquestioned belief in Western superiority and upon the conviction that, as the East cannot understand itself" (Macey 2000:283). It allowed those in the West to develop an identity as "Western," and to present themselves as the center of the world and human progress. Simultaneously, this included defining those outside the West as "other," "inferior," "backward," or "child-like." This helped justify European **colonialism** and exploitation. Even sociology and anthropology from the United States have reinforced such othering (Fabian 1983; Connell 2007). Orientalism as a particular form of othering still exists in the United States—look no further than media coverage of people from the Middle East (Lajevardi 2021).

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6.5 Conclusion

Let us return to riot grrrl. How can we understand it given what we have discussed in this chapter? It should now be clear that it was a **subculture**, with its own unique set of symbols, cultural objects, **norms**, **values**, style, and habits that challenged dominant American culture. The subculture developed a cultural toolkit combining **feminism** with punk rock. To some extent, mainstream media othered and drew **symbolic boundaries** against the people associated with the subculture. However, some scholars have expressed concerns that riot grrrl engaged in some boundary drawing of its own, particularly regarding **race** and **sexuality**. The focus of the subculture was mainly on the concerns of **cisgender**, middle-**class** women even though the subculture aspired to be inclusive of people of color and combat classism (Perry 2015). Overall, riot grrrl subculture shows the importance of resistance and incorporating cultural objects and ideas that might be seen as controversial to the **dominant culture**. By challenging dominant culture, they made it easier for others to follow in their footsteps.

In this chapter, we explored how the social sciences approach the study of culture and how the approach differs from the humanities approach. We then discussed what makes up culture, specifically focusing on symbolic and **material culture**, values and norms, cultural toolkits and subcultures. We ended the chapter by examining how culture can be connected to the creation of inequalities. We specifically focused on **cultural capital**, taste patterns, boundary drawing, and **othering**. Next, in Chapter 7, we focus on the concepts of **deviance** and **social control** by examining theories of deviance and the **criminal justice system**.

KEY TERMS

- **Argot**: the special vocabulary and language of a subculture and how it's delivered.
- **Cultural capital**: the resources and power derived from being familiar with high (or legitimated) culture.
- **Cultural diamond**: a framework for understanding culture that focuses on specific cultural objects, how they are created and received, and the embeddedness of these patterns within society.
- **Cultural omnivore**: someone who appreciates a wide range of cultural activities and genres. Often associated with eliteness.
- **Cultural relativism**: the practice of assessing a culture by its own standards and not in comparison to another culture.
- **Cultural univore**: someone who appreciates a narrow range of cultural activities and genres.
- **Declarative culture**: culture that is verbally expressed.
- **Dominant culture**: the values, norms, meanings, and practices of the group within society that is the most powerful.

- **Ethnocentrism**: to evaluate and judge another culture based on one's own cultural norms. Ethnocentrism is believing your group is the correct measuring standard, and if other cultures do not measure up to it, they are wrong.
- **Folkways**: loosely enforced norms; the ordinary conventions of everyday life.
- **High culture**: forms of cultural expression associated with elite groups.
- **Homology argument**: the argument that consumption patterns and cultural tastes are associated with specific occupations and class fractions.
- **Individualization argument**: the argument that consumption patterns are no longer determined by class.
- **Material culture**: anything physical or tangible that people create, use, or appreciate that has meaning attached to it.
- **Mores**: norms that carry moral significance. We are expected to conform to them.
- **Nondeclarative culture**: deeply internalized and unconscious culture.
- **Norms**: the social expectations of how to behave in a situation.
- **Othering**: the process by which a powerful group defines into existence a group they construct as an "other." The powerful group does this by attributing negative characteristics to the "other" and deems the less powerful group to be inferior.
- **Popular culture**: the pattern of cultural experiences and attitudes that exist in mainstream society.
- **Subculture**: a group within society that is differentiated by its distinctive values, norms, and lifestyle.
- **Symbolic boundaries**: conceptual distinctions made by people to categorize social things.
- **Symbolic culture**: ways of thinking, beliefs, values, and assumptions, including language and gestures.
- **Taboos**: the most powerful type of norm.
- **Taste culture**: areas of culture that share aesthetics and standards of beauty.
- **Value orientations**: systems of linked values.
- **Values**: shared beliefs about what a group considers worthwhile or desirable.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Pick a cultural object. How might you analyze it in terms of the cultural diamond? How do you think the social world influenced its creation and reception?
2. How can our culture influence what we taste, hear, and smell?
3. Make a list of what you think are core American values. Do you think other societies may have similar values? Why or why not? Is America exceptional?
4. How closely do you think social class is tied to taste patterns? Which argument about taste patterns did you find most convincing? Why?
5. What type of symbolic boundaries do those in your community draw? Who is typically included? Who is excluded?

6. What are other examples of othering? How can you challenge this process?

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CHAPTER

7

Figure 7.1 As public opinion and laws around cannabis change in the United States, is the substance an illegal drug, a medicine, or a legal recreational substance? Does the way we define cannabis depend on what city or state we are in, or is there a broader consensus about the role of cannabis in everyday life?

Deviance, Crime, and Social Control

7.1 Chapter Learning Objectives and Overview

Alexandra Olsen

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this chapter, you will be able to do the following:

1. Explain how **deviance** is socially constructed and how **social control** is enforced.
2. Discuss historical and contemporary theories of deviance and **crime**.

3. Identify and explain key elements of the U.S. **criminal justice system**.
4. Examine the relationship between **race**, identity, and the U.S. criminal justice system
5. Describe challenges to the contemporary U.S. criminal justice system.
6. Compare and contrast cross-cultural examples of justice systems.

Overview

In 1937, the U.S. government passed the Marijuana Tax Act, which effectively banned the plant in response to political pressure from those who feared its use by Mexicans (Musto 1972). Cannabis's later association with hippies helped justify crackdowns on anti-war protestors and other leftist movements by the Nixon administration (Baum 2016). In the decades that followed, police and judges disproportionately arrested and imprisoned Black and Latinx people for the use and sale of cannabis (Golub, Johnson, and Dunlap 2007; American Civil Liberties Union [ACLU] 2020). Even today, cannabis continues to be illegal in many states in the United States, with penalties ranging from jail time to fines to probation.

Within the past decade, though, cannabis laws have slowly shifted (figure 7.1). As of 2022, 19 states had legalized cannabis for recreational use, and 39 states had legalized cannabis for medical use (National Conference of State Legislators [NCSL] 2022). With so many different policies, how should we view cannabis? Should cannabis be considered a dangerous, illegal drug because it is federally illegal? Should cannabis be regarded as a healing plant? Should cannabis be subject to legal penalties for its use or possession? Or should cannabis be considered a legal, acceptable substance to use recreationally? There are no correct answers to these questions, but they demonstrate how the status of cannabis continues to be redefined by **society**.

Equity issues have become apparent as cannabis has become legalized in many states. Black and Latinx communities have been disproportionately arrested and imprisoned for cannabis offenses. As cannabis has become legalized, these groups have not had the same ability to participate in the legal market. Licenses to open medical or recreational dispensaries often cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. Consequently, White men dominate the legal cannabis market because they can afford the exorbitant start-up costs. All the while, Black and Latinx people (in both legal and non-legal states) serve prison sentences for engaging in the same activity. How do we ensure equity in this emerging legal market and new legal context?

How can we use our **sociological imagination** to understand the role of cannabis in our society? As cannabis has become legalized, how do we ensure that those most impacted have the opportunity to participate in the legal market?

In what follows, we will provide you with tools to understand how and why our definitions of what is legal or illegal and acceptable or unacceptable change over time. We will spend some time exploring different theories explaining deviance. Then we'll dig deeper into debates around equity. By looking at how groups have been treated differently by the criminal justice system, we'll think critically about the impacts of cannabis legalization.

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Figure 7.1. "**woman holds plants**" by Andrea Porziella, **Terre di Cannabis**, is shared under the **Unsplash License**.

7.2 Deviance and Social Control

Alexandra Olsen

What, exactly, is **deviance**? And what is the relationship between deviance and **crime**? According to sociologist William Graham Sumner, **deviance** is a violation of established contextual, cultural, or social **norms**, whether **folkways**, **mores**, or codified law (1906). It can be as minor as picking your nose in public or as major as committing murder. Although the word "deviance" has a negative connotation in everyday language, sociologists recognize that deviance is not necessarily bad (Schoepflin 2011). For instance, the actions of Black activists who occupied public spaces reserved for Whites only were considered deviant during the civil rights movement. Yet, these forms of deviance led to significant positive social and legal changes that began to address racial inequality in the United States (figure 7.2).

Figure 7.2 Engaging in acts of deviance can be a way to bring attention to issues, such as police violence against Black Americans, that have been ignored by the media or politicians.

Crime versus Deviance

When we think about deviance we often think about **crime**, a behavior that violates official law and is punishable through formal sanctions. However, deviance is a more encompassing term than crime, meaning that it includes a range of activities, some of which are crimes and some of which are not. Essentially, anything that breaks social norms is an act of deviance, such as attending a Black Lives Matter protest, making funny faces at your professor during **class**, or taking off your shoes and socks on an airplane.

Sociologists may study both deviance and crime with equal interest, but, as a whole, **society** views crime as far more significant. Crime preoccupies several levels of government, and it drives concerns among families and communities. Because of this, we see more research on crime than on the breaking of other social norms, such as students cursing in class. It should also be noted that scholars rarely frame research on civil rights or gay rights activism as an examination of deviance. Instead, this research examines the dynamics of social resistance, how social change occurs, and the effectiveness of different social movement tactics. Sociologists view "positive" deviance through the lens of community-led struggles to address inequality rather than through the lens of socially undesirable behavior that should be analyzed in the same way as crime.

Still, deviance also encompasses crime, and our definitions of crime have changed over time. For example, on November 3, 2020, ballot Measure 110 passed in Oregon. This ballot measure decriminalized drug possession and established drug addiction treatment and recovery program funding through both the state's cannabis tax rev-

enue and prison savings. The passage of this ballot measure was significant because it was the first of its kind in the United States. In passing the measure, it shows how what is considered criminal and deviant can vary across time and place, even from state to state. While cities and other localities have passed measures decriminalizing drugs, this was the first time a state had shifted its policies so significantly. Then in 2024, in a reversal, Oregon recriminalized drug possession. Decriminalized and recriminalizing drug possession in Oregon is not the only significant change we've seen in how drugs are dealt with in society—numerous other states have legalized cannabis for recreational or medical use. While cannabis possession and sales used to be defined by the state as a crime, it is now legal to possess and consume cannabis.

More broadly, there has been public debate about how to address issues in the **criminal justice system**, such as the vast racial disparities in policing, arrests, and sentencing. The Black Lives Matter movement has done much to bring awareness to how the criminal justice system is steeped in institutional **racism** and has offered policy recommendations to address these disparities. At the same time, politicians across the aisle are interested in finding ways to improve recidivism rates, which means the rate of repeat offenses. They want to find ways to improve outcomes for people who have been incarcerated. We can see these trends in how many states have also begun reforming "tough on crime" policies like mandatory minimums or sentence enhancements. In all of these examples, we see how society constantly reevaluates definitions of what is considered deviant or a crime and how society should address crime within the criminal justice system.

Societies also vary significantly in how they define deviance, address crime, and their criminal justice systems. For instance, Portugal decriminalized all drugs in 2001, instead investing in drug treatment for individuals struggling with addiction. In contrast, in countries such as Saudi Arabia, China, and Iran, drug offenses can be punished with the death penalty.

The Social Construction of Deviance

We introduced the concept of social construction in Chapter 4. Similar to other examples discussed in this chapter, deviance is socially constructed. Because of this, the question of "What is deviant behavior?" cannot be answered in a straightforward manner. Whether an act is labeled deviant or not depends on many factors, including location, audience, and the individual committing the act (Becker 1963). Listening to music on your phone on the way to class is considered acceptable behavior. Listening to music during your 2:00 p.m. **sociology** lecture is considered rude. Listening to music when on the witness stand before a judge may cause you to be held in contempt of court and consequently fined or jailed.

We learn these socially constructed definitions of what behavior is and is not deviant through **socialization**. Because of this, acts defined as deviant reflect broader social ideas about what behaviors society sees as acceptable, rather than an individual's ideas about which kinds of behavior are or are not acceptable. A person may disagree that an act should be considered deviant. Still, the power of social construction means that a person will likely try to avoid being labeled by society as someone who engages in that behavior unless they're trying to create social change. For example, a person may think that having a speed limit of 65 miles per hour on the highway is too slow and that all drivers should be able to drive up to 80 miles per hour. Still, they'll likely avoid driving 80 miles per hour (especially in the presence of a police officer) because they don't want to get a ticket and be labeled as someone who's a speeder.

In contrast, groups can use deviance to challenge social constructions. We can see an example

of this use of deviance in the activism of undocumented youth. Even though entering the United States without authorization is considered a deviant act, many undocumented youth activists have publicly shared their stories of how they were brought to the United States as children and have lived here for most of their lives. The purpose of drawing attention to their deviant behavior is to motivate changes to social and cultural norms by challenging the social construction of all undocumented immigrants as "deviants" or "criminals." Additionally, these activists want to see changes to current immigration policies and to convince politicians to pass legislation that would provide them with a path to citizenship: both of which would formally redefine their existence in the United States as legitimate rather than as deviant.

As norms vary across cultures and time, it also makes sense that notions of deviance change over time. While getting tattoos, divorcing a spouse, and wearing pants as a woman are common today, these actions used to be considered deviant. Recently, the act of wearing or not wearing a mask became a matter of deviance, and in some cases, political affiliation and legality. Whether an act is deviant or not also depends on society's response to that act. In Oregon, for example, cannabis is now recreationally legal and can be legally purchased by adults over 21 at state-licensed dispensaries. Consequently, it is hard to argue that consuming cannabis in Oregon is still considered deviant in the same way that it was during the period when cannabis was illegal for medicinal or recreational use.

Sanctions and Social Control

When a person violates a social norm, what happens? A driver caught speeding can receive a speeding ticket. A student who wears a bathrobe to class gets a warning from a professor. An adult belching loudly is avoided. All societies practice **social control**, the regulation and enforcement of norms. The underlying goal of social control is to maintain social order, an arrangement of practices and behaviors on which society's members base their daily lives. Think of social order as an employee handbook and social control as a manager. When a worker violates a workplace guideline, the manager steps in to enforce the rules; when an employee is doing an exceptionally good job at following the rules, the manager may praise or promote the employee.

The means of enforcing rules are known as sanctions. Sanctions can be positive as well as negative. Positive sanctions are rewards given for conforming to norms. A promotion at work is a positive sanction for working hard. Negative sanctions are punishments for violating norms. Being arrested is a punishment for shoplifting. Both types of sanctions play a role in social control.

Sociologists also classify sanctions as formal or informal. Figure 7.3 shows the relationship between different types of sanctions. Although shoplifting, a form of social deviance, may be illegal, there are no laws dictating the proper way to scratch your nose. That doesn't mean picking your nose in public won't be punished; instead, you will encounter informal sanctions. Informal sanctions emerge in face-to-face social interactions.

Formal sanctions, on the other hand, are ways to officially recognize and enforce norm violations or adherence. On the positive side, a soldier who saves a life may receive an official commendation. In contrast, if a student violates a college's code of conduct, the student might be expelled. Someone who commits a crime may be arrested or imprisoned. An issue we'll explore later in the chapter is whether formal negative sanctions are applied equally to all groups. Sociologists study this issue because of how inequalities based on **race** and class affect outcomes in the criminal justice system.

	Informal Sanctions	Formal Sanctions
Positive	A compliment	A raise at work
Negative	Being ignored	A criminal conviction

Figure 7.3 Informal and formal sanctions. Formal and informal sanctions may be positive or negative. Informal sanctions arise in social interactions, whereas formal sanctions officially enforce norms.

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Figure 7.2. "people sitting on gray concrete pavement during daytime" by Clay Banks is licensed under the Unsplash License.

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7.3 Classical Theoretical Perspectives on Deviance and Crime

Alexandra Olsen

Sociologists have tried to understand why people engage in **deviance** or **crime** by developing theories to help explain this behavior. It is important to note that these theories focus primarily on why people engage in crime, why some behaviors are defined as criminal while others aren't, and how people learn criminal behavior, rather than on deviance more broadly. The focus of these theories reflects the idea that **society** is much more concerned about crime than people who break other kinds of social or cultural **norms**.

Inspired by Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species*, early scholars trying to explain crime turned to the concept of evolution. They claimed that certain physical features were identifying markers of criminals. Several characteristics were

said to indicate criminality, including skull shape, size, body type, and facial features. For example, Cesare Lombroso (1911), the father of positivist criminology, argued that criminals were evolutionary throwbacks. He claimed that criminals can be identified by their abnormal, apelike facial and physical features. A visual depiction of these features can be seen in figure 7.4. This school of thought is closely associated with the eugenics movement, discussed more in-depth in Chapter 11. These theories were quickly disproven and have received harsh critiques for their blatantly racist foundation.

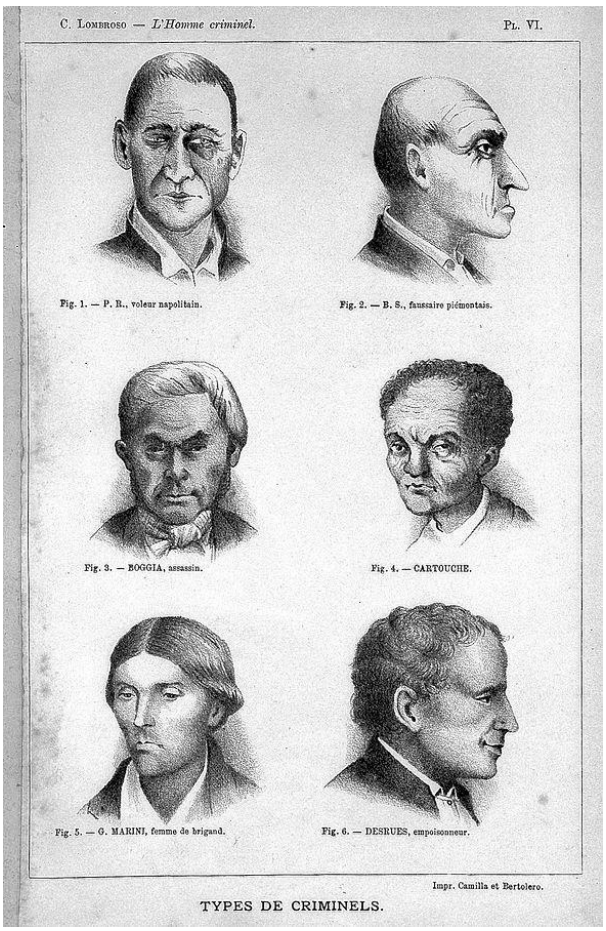

Figure 7.4 Lombroso's visual guide to types of criminals, which used pseudoscience to argue that law enforcement could identify criminals through physical features.

Durkheim and Functionalism

Émile Durkheim believed that deviance is a necessary part of a successful society. One way deviance is functional, he argued, is that it challenges people's present views (1893). For instance, Colin Kaepernick taking a knee during the national anthem to protest police violence challenged people's ideas about racial inequality in the United States. Moreover, Durkheim noted that when deviance is punished, it reaffirms currently held social norms, which also contributes to society (1960 [1893]). Seeing a student given detention for skipping **class** reminds other high schoolers that playing hooky isn't allowed and that they, too, could get detention.

Durkheim's point regarding the impact of punishing deviance speaks to his arguments about law. Durkheim saw laws as an expression of the collective conscience, which are the beliefs, morals, and attitudes of a society. He discussed how societal size and complexity contributed to the collective conscience and the development of justice systems and punishments. In larger, industrialized societies that were largely bound together by the interdependence of work (the division of labor), punishments for deviance were generally less severe. In smaller, more homogeneous societies, deviance might be punished more severely.

Modern theories have a few significant critiques of Durkheim's perspective on crime. Sociologists have critiqued Durkheim's argument that deviance is functional for not being generalizable to all crimes. For instance, it can be hard to argue that murder is functional for society solely because it reaffirms currently held social norms. Moreover, his idea that law is an expression of collective consciousness has also been critiqued. Conflict theorists argue that the bourgeois or elite have significant influence over political and legal institutions, allowing them to pass laws that benefit their interests and avoid harsh punishments when they commit crimes. This challenges the

idea that the law reflects what society thinks is just or right.

Social Disorganization Theory

Developed by researchers at the University of Chicago in the 1920s and 1930s, **social disorganization theory** asserts that crime is most likely to occur in communities with weak social ties and the absence of **social control**.

Some research supports this theory. Even today, crimes like theft or murder are more likely to occur in low-**income** neighborhoods with many social problems. Still, a critique of this research is that many of these studies rely on official crime rates, many of which reflect police surveillance rather than actual crime rates. For this reason, **social disorganization theory** does not adequately explain **white-collar crimes** committed by individuals living in wealthy neighborhoods, such as financial fraud or insider trading. White-collar crimes are nonviolent crimes of opportunity, often involving money. Similarly, research from a social disorganization theory often uses circular logic: an area with a high crime rate is assumed to signal a disorganized neighborhood, leading to a high crime rate (Bursik 1988).

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Figure 7.4. "Plate 6 of L'Homme Criminel" by Cesar Lombroso is in the Public domain, courtesy of the Wellcome Collection.

7.4 Modern Theories of Deviance

Jennifer Puentes; Matthew Gougherty; and Alexandra Olsen

In response to the historical theories of **deviance**, new theories emerged that critiqued or expanded upon them to address shortfalls in their explanations. At the end of this section, figure 7.6 summarizes these key theories.

Robert Merton's Functionalist Strain Theory: Rethinking Durkheim

Sociologist Robert Merton agreed that deviance is an inherent part of a functioning **society**, but he expanded on Durkheim's ideas by developing **strain theory**, which notes that access to socially acceptable goals plays a part in determining

whether a person conforms or deviates. Merton defined five ways people respond to the gap between having a socially accepted goal and having no socially accepted way to pursue it. To understand the five ways people respond, we'll look at the somewhat exaggerated example of the American Dream: the idea that to be successful, you should own a house, a car, and have a happy and functional family.

1. Conformity: People who conform choose not to deviate. They pursue their goals to the extent that they can through socially accepted means.
   Example: "I may not be able to afford to buy a house in my lifetime, but I have a working car, a loving partner, and a cute dog. I'm content with the lot I've been given in life."
2. Innovation: People who innovate pursue goals they cannot reach through legitimate means by instead using criminal or deviant means.
   Example: "I grew up in a neighborhood that didn't have good schools, and I never had an opportunity to get ahead. I want a house, a nice car, and to take care of my family, but the only way I can see myself doing that is by continuing to sell cocaine and counterfeit goods."
3. Ritualism: People who ritualize lower their goals until they can reach them through socially acceptable ways. These members of society focus on conformity rather than attaining a distant dream.
   Example: "I'm never going to be able to afford a nice home and car, but I don't need those things anyway! I like the apartment I rent, and my cat's the only other form of life I want to be responsible for. Why not just love the things that I do have?"
4. Retreatism: People who retreat reject society's goals and means.
   Example: "Why would I even participate in society at all? The deck is stacked against me. I know I'm only 20, but (illegally) hopping on trains and traveling around the country with my friends is where it's at! "
5. Rebellion: People who rebel and replace a society's goals and means with their own. Terrorists or freedom fighters look to overthrow a society's goals through socially unacceptable means.
   Example: "I'm gonna overthrow the government, that's what I'm going to do! The system is unjust, and it's not one that's designed for how humans really are!"

William Julius Wilson and Conflict Theory: Rethinking the Role of Neighborhoods

William Julius Wilson refined ideas in **social disorganization theory** to explain why people in poverty, particularly members of Black and immigrant communities, are more likely to live in high-**crime** neighborhoods. Rather than focusing on the role of cultural factors like previous theorists, Wilson (1987) focused on how economic changes have contributed to these groups being more likely to live in high-crime neighborhoods.

Wilson (1997) argued that, before the decline of industrial and manufacturing jobs, these groups could be economically successful despite having low levels of education due to their access to high-paying factory jobs. When these jobs disappeared, Black people and recent immigrants became trapped in low-**income**, high-crime areas with few jobs or low-wage, service sector jobs. According to Wilson's (1997) theory, crime emerges because policy leads to little economic opportunity and traps disadvantaged groups in poor, high-crime areas where turning to crime is one of the few opportunities for advancement. While providing important insights, Wilson's theorizing has sometimes been criticized for focusing too much on social **class**.

Michele Foucault: Discipline and Punishment Theory

The panopticon, as seen in figure 7.5, is a late eighteenth-century circular prison designed by philosopher Jeremy Bentham. In the panopticon prison design, guards could continuously monitor prisoners without the prisoners knowing if the guards were watching. Since prisoners would not know when guards were watching them, they would constantly surveil their behavior to avoid punishment. French philosopher Michele Foucault (1977) drew parallels between Jeremy Benthan's panopticon and how modern institutions control the population. He argued that punishment currently occurs through discipline and surveillance by institutions, such as prisons, mental hospitals, schools, and workplaces. These institutions produce compliant citizens without the threat of violence.

Ultimately, Foucault (1977) argued that surveillance created an effect where individuals conformed to society because they never knew if they were being watched. His ideas have gained new importance with the rise of surveillance technologies, which make it harder to engage in deviance without getting caught. Examples of this phenomenon are federal mass surveillance policies and the rise of police departments using technologies to scour social media networks for information about criminal activities. Broadly, Foucault (1977) proposed that **social control** and punishment are not just formal sanctions, like a prison sentence or ticket, but also something more mundane and built into **social institutions**.

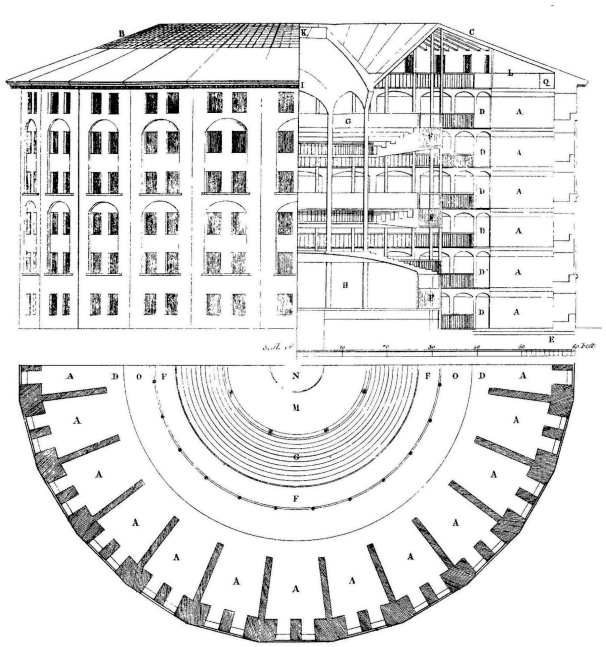

Figure 7.5 The panopticon prison design can be seen as a metaphor for how the threat of being surveilled can cause individuals to police their behavior, even when they're not actually being watched.

Lemert's Symbolic Interactionist Labeling Theory

Rooted in **symbolic interactionism**, **labeling theory** examines how members of society ascribe a deviant behavior to another person. What is considered deviant is determined not so much by the behaviors themselves or the people who commit them, but by the reactions of others to these behaviors. As a result, what is considered deviant changes over time and can vary significantly across cultures.

Sociologist Edwin Lemert expanded on the concepts of labeling theory and identified two types of deviance that affect identity formation. **Primary deviance** is a violation of **norms** that do not result in any long-term effects on the individual's **self**-image or interactions with others. Speeding is a deviant act, but receiving a speeding ticket generally does not make others view you as a bad person, nor does it alter your own self-concept.

Individuals who engage in primary deviance still maintain a feeling of belonging in society and are likely to continue to conform to norms in the future.

Sometimes, in more extreme cases, primary deviance can morph into **secondary deviance**. In secondary deviance, a person who has been labeled a deviant may begin to take on and fulfill the role of a "deviant" as an act of rebellion against the society that applied the label. In many ways, secondary deviance is captured by the assertion, "If you tell a child that they're a bad kid often enough, they'll eventually believe that they're a bad kid." This perspective hits on how negative social labels, especially of juveniles, have the power to create more deviant or criminal behavior.

Often, the labels imposed by those with power lead to the unequal treatment of disadvantaged groups. This can be particularly problematic in school settings. For example, Morris (2005) found that adults in an urban school labeled African-American girls as not "ladylike." As a result, the adults tried to discipline the girls' clothing and behaviors, in ways they thought were **gender** appropriate.

Sykes and Matza's Techniques of Neutralization

How do people deal with the labels they are given? This was the subject of a study done by Gresham Sykes and David Matza (1957). They studied teenage boys who had been labeled as juvenile delinquents to see how they either embraced or denied these labels. They argued that criminals don't have vastly different cultural **values** but rather adopt attitudes to justify criminal behavior. Sykes and Matza developed five techniques of neutralization to capture how people justify engaging in criminal acts. Individuals may not necessarily internalize labels if they have developed strategies to reject associating their actions with these labels.

Let's apply each of these techniques by pretending to be a teenager justifying shoplifting at a major retail chain department store. From this example, we can see how individuals can justify engaging in an act that may be illegal and violates social norms through these kinds of cognitive strategies

1. The denial of responsibility: rejecting a label because it's not their fault
   Example: "I don't want to steal from this store, but I've applied to so many jobs, and no one seems to want to hire a teenager these days."
2. The denial of injury: judging a situation based on its effect on others
   Example: "It's not like anyone is being hurt by me stealing."
3. The denial of the victim: no victim, no crime
   Example: "Who am I hurting anyway? This is a big corporation! They expect some level of theft."
4. The condemnation of the condemners: shifting the narrative away from the deviant behavior to critique by blaming individuals who may hold you accountable or who are impacted
   Example: "This corporation is way more corrupt considering the fact most of their goods come from sweatshops that use child labor.
5. The appeal to higher loyalty: actions were for a higher or more significant purpose
   Example: "I'm only stealing because I really don't have enough money to get my sister a nice birthday present, and she matters way more to me than any stupid corporation does. I'm a modern-day Robin Hood."

Sutherland's Differential Association Theory

In the early 1900s, sociologist Edwin Sutherland sought to understand how deviant behavior developed among people. Since criminology was a young field, he drew on other aspects of **sociology**, including social interactions and **group** learning (Laub 2006) and the work of George Herbert Mead, whose ideas are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4. His conclusions established **differential association theory**, which suggested that individuals learn deviant behavior from those close to them who provide models of and opportunities for deviance.

According to Sutherland, deviance is less a personal choice and more a result of differential **socialization** processes. He argues that people learn all aspects of criminal behavior through interacting with others and being part of intimate personal groups. Sutherland's theory captures not only how people learn criminal behavior, but also how people learn motives, rationalizations, and attitudes toward crime.

Differential association theory also demystifies crime, conceptualizing it as a behavior just like any other. This is a radical departure from early theories of crime, which viewed criminals as inherently, biologically different. In Sutherland's theory, anyone has the potential to engage in crime if they learn how to commit crime and embrace favorable definitions of crime. This theory also helps explain why not all people who grow up in poverty engage in criminal activity, as historical theories such as cultural deviance theory suggest. Rather, they encounter different situations that shape their definitions of violating the law.

Feminist Theories of Deviance and Crime

Feminists point out how most of the preceding theories of deviance and crime we have explored tend to focus primarily on men. In response, feminists argue that scholars should address and explain women offenders, women victims, and the experiences of women with the **criminal justice system** (Lempert 2016). One influential feminist theorist of deviance and crime is British sociologist Frances Mary Heidensohn. She argued that sociologists have failed to explain the deviance of women while centering their analysis on men. This is problematic since women make up around half of any human society. Further, she pointed out that there might be distinct differences in how men and women are deviant (Heidensohn 1968).

For a summary of all the theories covered in this section, check out figure 7.6.

Theory	Associated Theorist	Contribution to the Study of Deviance and Crime
Differential Association Theory	Edwin Sutherland	Argues that deviance arises from learning and modeling deviant behavior seen in other people close to the individual
Discipline and Punishment Theory	Michel Foucault	Highlights how social control mechanisms are not just formal sanctions, but also built into modern institutions
Labeling Theory	Edwin Lemert	Argues that deviance arises from the reactions of others, particularly those in power who are able to determine labels
Revised Social Disorganization Theory	William Julius Wilson	Argues that crime emerges because policy leads to little economic opportunity and traps disadvantaged groups in poor, high-crime areas where turning to crime is one of the few opportunities for advancement
Strain Theory	Robert Merton	Argues that deviance arises from a lack of ways to reach socially accepted goals using accepted methods
Techniques of Neutralization	Gresham Sykes and David Matza	Developed five techniques of neutralization to capture how people justify engaging in criminal acts
Feminism	Frances Mary Heidensohn	Turned attention to how gender impacts crime and deviance; focuses on the experiences of women offenders and victims

Figure 7.6 How do modern theories of deviance and crime help explain society?

Activity: Applying Theories of Deviance to Public Events

Exposing one's genitals in public is a behavior that is typically met with negative sanctions and consequences. Though it varies by state, most states have laws prohibiting indecent exposure. However, these rules and norms shift when nudity is used as a form of free speech and protest. Portland's World Naked Bike Ride provides us with an opportunity to analyze our social norms and think through how different theoretical perspectives may view a naked bike protest (figure 7.7).

Figure 7.7 Naked Bike Ride, Portland, Oregon, 2013. Do you consider the ride deviant?

First, visit the following websites to learn more about **Portland's World Naked Bike Ride [Website]** and **pdxwnbr [Website]**. After reviewing the websites, come back and answer the following questions:

1. What is the goal of Portland's World Naked Bike Ride?
2. Select three theories of deviance discussed in this chapter. Explain how each theory would analyze the actions of participants in the event.
3. Which theory of deviance do you think best explains this event? Why?
4. What theory of deviance is useful in understanding why people participate in protests?

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Figure 7.5. "Panopticon" by Jeremy Bentham is in the Public Domain.

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Figure 7.7. "Naked Bike Ride 2013" by drburtoni is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0.

7.5 Race, Identity, and the Criminal Justice System

Alexandra Olsen

A **criminal justice system** is an organization that exists to enforce a legal code. There are three branches of the U.S. criminal justice system: the police, the courts, and the corrections system.

Police are a civil force in charge of enforcing laws and public order at a federal, state, or community level. No unified national police force exists in the United States, although there are federal law enforcement officers. Once a **crime** has been committed and a violator has been identified by the police, the case goes to court. A court is a system that has the authority to make decisions based on law. The U.S. judicial system is divided into federal courts and state courts. The corrections system is charged with supervising individuals who have been arrested, convicted, and sentenced for a criminal offense, plus people detained while awaiting hearings, trials, or other procedures.

While the criminal justice system, like other institutions in the United States, is supposed to treat all people equally, there are significant inequalities in how this system treats different groups. Criminal justice inequalities are a serious social problem because of the life-altering impact of the criminal justice system on a person's life.

For instance, once an individual has been convicted of a felony, they can no longer access public benefits, such as food stamps or public housing. In addition, they often struggle to find employment and can be legally denied housing. In some states, they are denied the right to vote.

Racial inequality is incredibly prevalent throughout the criminal justice system (figure 7.8, figure 7.9). Black and Latinx Americans are overrepresented at every stage of the legal process (from policing to parole and probation) and regularly face harsher consequences than White Americans for similar offenses.

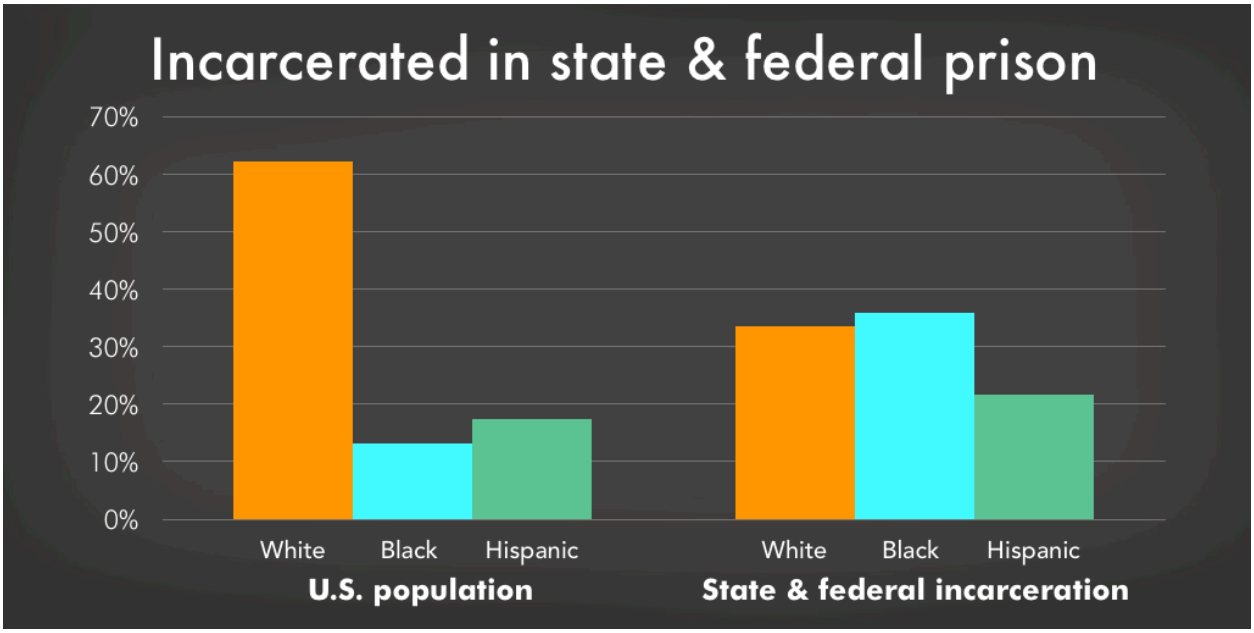

Figure 7.8 How do the racial demographics of the U.S. population compare with the racial demographics of individuals who are incarcerated in state and federal prisons?

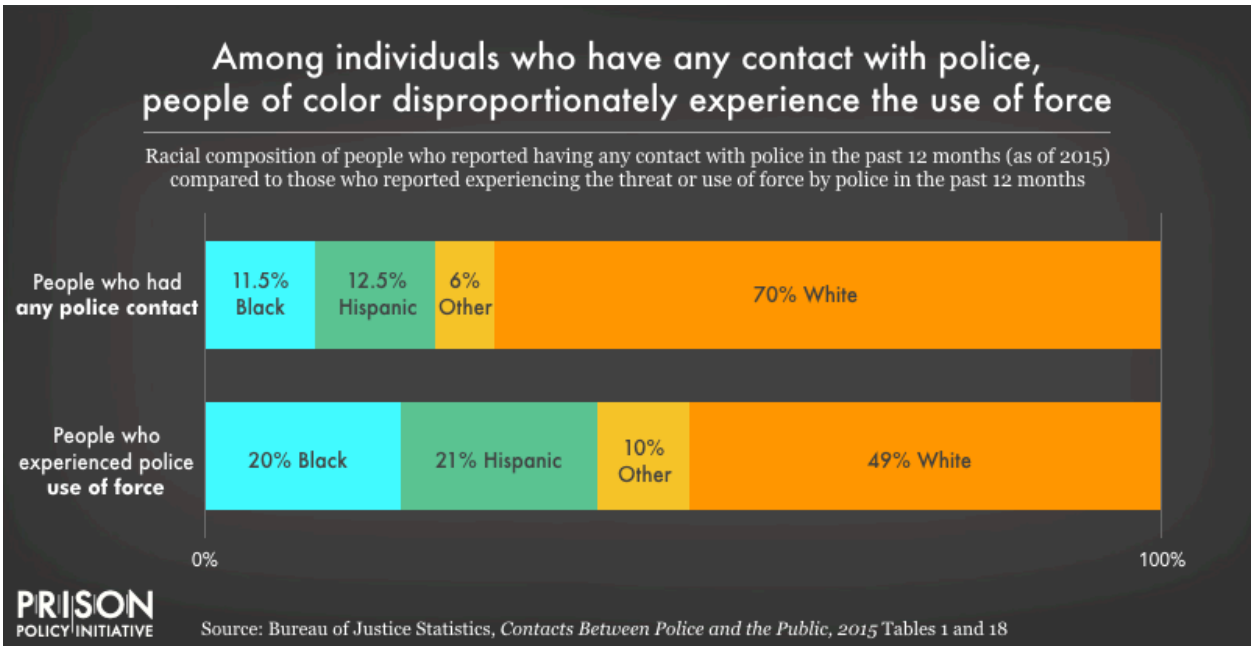

Figure 7.9 Among individuals who have contact with the police, people of color disproportionately experience the use of force.

These inequalities did not arise by accident. Instead, scholars have outlined how the war on drugs and other "tough on crime policies" are simply the latest iteration of racialized institutional practices designed to control, disenfranchise, and marginalize Black and Latinx Americans by further perpetuating racial inequality. You can read more about the **war on drugs [Website]** if you would like to.

Racial disparities are not the only concerning trends and inequalities in this system. More recently, women's incarceration rates have been increasing, despite broader trends to reduce prison populations. There is also considerable evidence that individuals marginalized by their **sexuality** or **gender identity** are disproportionately funneled into the criminal justice system and lack basic civil rights protections if incarcerated.

Finally, there are significant issues with how the system addresses mental health issues. The criminal justice system disproportionately impacts people with mental health issues. They are more likely to be killed by police officers than those without mental health issues and are more likely to be arrested and incarcerated. Many jails and prisons incarcerate individuals who require mental health services that are absent or inadequate within these facilities.

As we've mentioned, it is important to take an intersectional approach to understand how people's experiences vary. It is not just one aspect of an individual's identity that determines their experience with the criminal justice system. Instead, we need to look at how these **group** memberships (**race**, sexuality, **gender** identity, or ability) interact and influence individuals' treatment and patterns of inequality.

Policing and Race

People of color, Black and Latinx Americans along with Indigenous people, are disproportionately surveilled and killed by the police. Between 1980 and 2018, police killed an estimated 30,800 people. Black and Latinx Americans were significantly more likely to be killed than White Americans (Sharara et al. 2021). Public opinion studies from the Pew Research Center show that Black Americans are more likely to report having been stopped

unfairly by police. It is obvious that Black Americans have very different interactions with police than White Americans, which is reflected in their differences in opinion about the police. They are also less likely to have a positive view of how officers treat different racial and ethnic groups, and they see fatal police shootings as signs of broader issues with the criminal justice system (Desilver, Lipka, and Fahmy 2020).

What is causing the disproportionate impact? There are a few factors that contribute to these trends. The first explanation for racial disparities in policing is the role of spatial profiling. Compared to low-crime, middle and upper-**class** neighborhoods, high-crime, low-**income** neighborhoods are more heavily surveilled by the police. It is in these neighborhoods that Black and Latinx Americans are more likely to live, exposing them to more significant contact with the police.

Police training may also play a significant role. For example, only a few training hours are dedicated to topics such as ethics, de-escalation tactics, and providing social services. Instead, using firearms, defensive tactics, and police procedures comprise most of the training. Consequently, it is not surprising that police are more adept at using their weapons when a situation escalates rather than turning to nonviolent options.

The next explanation is bias—both explicit and implicit. Explicit bias is still an issue with at least some proportion of law enforcement officers. A recent study analyzing 40 years of General Social **Survey** data has shown that police, unlike most Americans, believe that they should receive more funding and have the right to use physical force against citizens (Roscigno and Preito-Hodge 2021). They also found that White male officers were, in particular, more racist than the general population or those in similar occupations (Roscigno and Preito-Hodge 2021). **Implicit bias** is also an issue among law enforcement, as it is in the broader American population. Studies have found that implicit bias plays a role in decisions about whether officers will use deadly force (Fridell and Lim 2016).

Racism and **discrimination** have a direct role in creating explicit and implicit biases, which is evident when looking at the history of the institution of policing. Historically, in both the North and the South, police have been used as a tool of **social control** to manage "unruly" populations. In the North, police intended to control the growing poor European immigrant population and quell labor protests. In the South, the earliest manifestations of police were slave patrols. While these institutions became more bureaucratic over time and looked more like northern police agencies, they still enforced Jim Crow laws and were not afraid to beat and arrest anyone who dared protest these racially discriminatory laws and practices. Given this history, it is not surprising that there is distrust between Black communities and police departments. In this next section, we'll examine the role of **institutional racism** in the criminal justice system by examining **mass incarceration**.

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Figure 7.9. "Among individuals who have any contact with the police, people of color disproportionately experience the use of force" by the Prison Policy Initiative is included with permission.

7.6 Mass Incarceration and the New Jim Crow

Alexandra Olsen

The war on drugs is one of the major drivers of the prison population in the United States. In 1971, President Richard Nixon declared a war on drugs, dedicating increased federal funding and resources to quelling the supply of drugs in the United States. This war continued to ramp up, and between 1980 and 2010, the U.S. prison population quintupled. **Mass incarceration** refers to the overwhelming size and scale of the U.S. prison population.

Some of this dramatic increase was due to the public portrayal of crack cocaine as a highly addictive drug sweeping its way through America. Politicians capitalized on the resulting hysteria and passed policies that rapidly increased the prison population. Even so, the vast majority of arrests and enforcement were not of high-level, violent dealers but, more often, small-time dealers or people struggling with addiction. In fact, during the 1990s, the period of the largest increase in the U.S. prison population, the vast majority of prison growth came from cannabis arrests (King and Mauer 2005).

The 1980s and 1990s were also an era during which states turned to partnerships with private companies to meet the booming demand for facilities, leading to the rise of **private prisons**. **Private prisons** are for-profit incarceration facilities run by private companies that contract with local, state, and federal governments (figure 7.10). The business model of private prisons incentivizes them to keep their prisons as full as possible, while spending as little as possible on care for inmates. Down 16 percent from its peak in 2012, private prisons still held 8 percent of all people incarcerated at the state and federal level as of 2019 (The Sentencing Project 2021). Still, it is essential to note that the use of these facilities varies by local context. For instance, Oregon has no private prison facilities in the state, while Texas has the highest number of people incarcerated in private prisons.

Figure 7.10 Oregon has no private prison facilities in the state. How does this aerial view of Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution in Pendleton, Oregon, compare to prison facilities in your state?

From the inception of the war on drugs, racial biases were at the center of these policy changes. For instance, John Erlichman, one of Richard Nixon's top advisors, explicitly admitted to this in a 2016 interview:

> You want to know what this [war on drugs] was really all about? The Nixon campaign in 1968, and the Nixon White House after that, had two enemies: the antiwar left and black people. You understand what I'm saying? We knew we couldn't make it illegal to be either against the war or black, but by getting the public to associate the hippies with cannabis and blacks with heroin, and then criminalizing both heavily, we could disrupt those communities. We could arrest their leaders, raid their homes, break up their meetings, and vilify them night after night on the evening news. Did we know we were lying about the drugs? Of course we did. (Baum 2016)

Political sociologists have also traced this back to the so-called **Southern strategy**. The **Southern strategy** is a Republican Party political strategy to get White voter support through explicitly or implicitly coded **racism** against Black Americans. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Republicans in the South mobilized seemingly **race**-neutral "tough on **crime**" appeals to draw support from southern White voters to pass policies like mandatory minimums, sentence enhancements, and other anti-drug policies. These policies impacted the incarceration rate for Black Americans compared to White Americans.

Even as the racial gap in incarceration has narrowed in recent years, the United States disproportionately incarcerates Black Americans. While Black Americans make up 13 percent of the population, they make up over 30 percent of incarcerated individuals (Gramlich 2019). Similar trends exist among Latinx Americans: while Latinx people comprise 16 percent of the U.S. population, they account for over 20 percent of incarcerated individuals (Gramlich 2019). In contrast, while White Americans comprise 64 percent of the population, they only make up 30 percent of those incarcerated (Gramlich 2019).

This network of policies and unequal institutional practices led to what scholar Michelle Alexander terms **the New Jim Crow**. **The New Jim Crow** refers to the network of laws and practices that disproportionately funnel Black Americans into the **criminal justice system**, stripping them of their constitutional rights as a punishment for their offenses in the same way that Jim Crow laws did in previous eras. Because of these new mass incarceration policies, a new iteration of the racial **caste system** has emerged: one in which Black Americans can legally be denied public benefits, housing, the right to vote, and participation on juries because of a criminal conviction.

Activity: Detention and Incarceration of Immigrants

In several ways, the detention of immigrants intersects with the system of mass incarceration. Recently, attention has been brought to how immigration law and criminal law have been combined in the form of "crimmigration" (Hernandez 2022). The combination of these laws has had a detrimental effect on immigrants. The same companies that run private prisons also play a role in running immigrant detention centers. Watch the following video exploring one of these centers in Colorado (figure 7.11).

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UttL8utsvLA**

Figure 7.11 Men and children being interviewed by agents at an ICE immigration center. **Transcript.**

Then address the following questions:

1. What are conditions like in immigration detention centers?
2. How are the detention centers financed?
3. Why might politicians continue to support the company?

Intersectionality of Criminal Justice Issues

While racial disparities are one of the most pressing and continuing concerns in the criminal justice system, other marginalized groups face similar institutional inequalities. Recently, there has been an uptick in incarceration rates of women and folks who identify as part of the **LGBTQIA+** community. Between 1980 and 2019, the number of incarcerated women increased by more than 700 percent (The Sentencing Project 2022). Furthermore, while the United States incarcerates more men than women, the rate of growth of women's incarceration has been twice as high as that of men since 1980 (The Sentencing Project 2022).

This increase in women's incarceration is also directly connected to the disproportionate involvement of the LGBTQIA+ population in the criminal justice system. As of 2019, gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals were over two times as likely to be arrested in the past 12 months than straight individuals (Jones 2021). This disparity particularly impacts lesbian and bisexual women, who are four times as likely to be arrested as straight women (Jones 2021). The high rates of gay, lesbian, and bisexual people behind bars can, in part, be attributed to the longer sentences courts impose on them (Meyer et al. 2017). **Transgender** individuals also report high arrest and incarceration rates and uncomfortable encounters with the police, with one in six transgender individuals having spent time incarcerated (Grant et al. 2011).

Individuals marginalized as a result of their sexual or **gender identity** may also face issues when incarcerated. These groups are more likely to be sexually victimized while incarcerated, placed into solitary confinement, and report current psychological distress (Meyer et al. 2017). Similarly, transgender and **gender** nonconforming individuals lack the same civil rights protections as other groups, which leads to poor treatment in incarceration facilities. For instance, President Trump revoked Obama-era federal guidance, which stated that people who are transgender and incarcerated should be held in facilities matching their gender identity and have access to gender-affirming healthcare services. Then, when President Biden took office, he again instituted the Obama-era guidance. This reversal from administration to administration is just one example of how contested federal and state political issues directly impact the lives of individuals.

Finally, the criminal justice system has significant problems with how it addresses mental health issues. In terms of policing, people with mental health issues are more vulnerable to experiencing violence at the hands of police. In 2015, 27 percent of police shootings involved a mental health crisis (Oberholtzer 2017). These inequalities by ability—whether due to disability or mental illness—are pervasive throughout the criminal justice system, including in incarceration.

Jails and prisons have been called modern-day asylums because of the high concentration of individuals with mental illnesses. About one-third of people in all federal or state prisons have been diagnosed with a mental illness, most of whom are not receiving treatment (Wang 2022). In some areas, these issues are even more acute. For instance, in Chicago's Cook County jail, nearly 50 percent of the people incarcerated had some form of mental illness (Cook County Sheriff's Office 2022).

Incarceration facilities rarely have the resources to address these mental health needs. More than 60 percent of people with a history of mental illness do not receive mental health treatment while incarcerated in state and federal prisons (Bronson and Berzofsky 2017). Even those on treatment regimens before incarceration often cannot continue that treatment once incarcerated. Over 50 percent of individuals taking medication for mental health conditions at admission did not con-

tinue to receive their medication once in prison (Reingle Gonzalez and Connell 2014).

It's important to remember that we cannot talk about how identity impacts individuals' experiences without taking an intersectional approach to these conversations. For instance, Black, Indigenous, and Latinx transgender people have significantly higher incarceration rates than White transgender people (Jones 2021). This is just one example of how identity is intersectional. To better understand how the criminal justice system impacts people, we must look at all of the different aspects of their identity—gender, race/**ethnicity**, class, **sexuality**, citizenship, ability, and other forms of **group** membership.

Licenses and Attributions for Mass Incarceration and the New Jim Crow

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7.7 Cross-Cultural Comparisons

Alexandra Olsen

There are still many issues in our **criminal justice system** that scholars, community members, and policymakers are trying to address. One way to think about different possibilities for this system is by looking at how other countries have tackled these problems. Using our **sociological imagination**, we can critically examine our institutions and think more deeply about what we could learn from the different ways **crime** is addressed around the globe.

Next, we explore three examples of how other countries have addressed criminal justice issues. In these examples, we'll look at how countries have reformed their systems, effectively addressed recidivism, and created cultures of rehabilitation rather than punishment. In each system, crime is taken seriously, especially violent crime. At the same time, these systems address many of the issues we have examined in the U.S. system.

Policing and Prison in Nordic Countries

Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden, and Norway) have very different systems of policing and imprisonment compared to other wealthy Western nations. While there are differences between each country's political system, there are many more commonalities in their approach to criminal justice. Foremost, compared to other wealthy Western nations, they have much lower punishment severity, imprisonment rates, and violence rates. The primary focus of these systems is preventing crime from occurring in the first place. When crime does occur, the goal of these systems is to reduce recidivism and restore justice rather than simply punitively punishing an individual for an offense. Nordic countries have strong welfare states. By providing the essential resources that individuals need to survive, fewer individuals turn to criminal activities to make ends meet (Lappi-Seppälä and Tonry 2011). Figure 7.12 shows comparisons between a prison in Iceland and Oregon prisons.

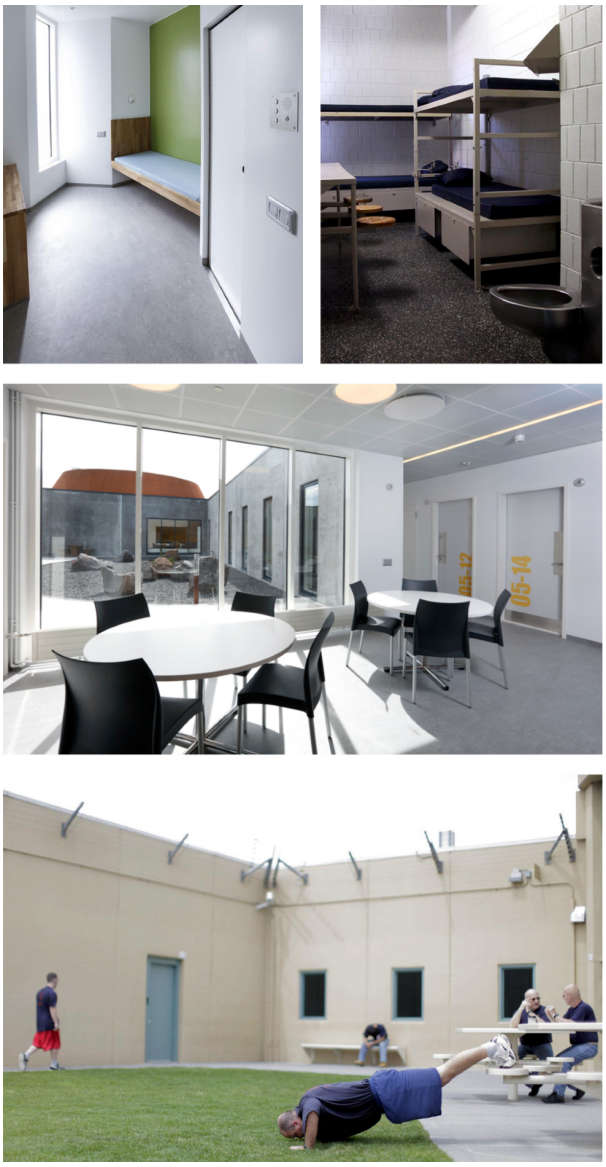

Figure 7.12 Two of these pictures are from Hólmsheiði Prison in Reykjavik, Iceland, and two are from Oregon, U.S. Can you guess which are which? The top two pictures compare living quarters (left is Iceland, right is Oregon); the bottom two compare recreational spaces (middle is Iceland, bottom is Oregon). How do they differ, and what does that difference reveal about cultural approaches to corrections? **Image description.**

Differences in social policies and lower crime levels between Nordic countries and the United States are not the only factors leading to lower incarceration rates. The structure of the police looks very different in Nordic countries. Unlike in the United States, where police are organized at the state and local levels, all Nordic countries have unified, federally-organized police forces (Lappi-Seppälä and Tonry 2011). From here, the country

is divided into police districts that are then overseen by chiefs of police. Police training looks much different in Nordic countries, as well. Police in these countries spend considerably more time being trained and cover topics such as criminological **theory**, health science, behavioral science, and social work. Use of force against citizens is incredibly low in these countries, with fatal police shootings being rare rather than commonplace, as they are in the United States.

In terms of incarceration, all Nordic countries have abolished the death penalty and only use incarceration for the most serious offenses. Generally, penalties for crimes are less severe in these countries, tending to hold individuals accountable through formal warning, fines, and community sanctions rather than imprisonment. When possible, the goal is for individuals to remain in their communities and access resources including therapy, job training, and other services to prevent individuals from committing crimes again. These policies are incredibly effective. Nordic countries have some of the lowest rates of lethal violence and extremely low levels of recidivism.

Decriminalization of Drugs

There have been multiple countries around the world that have decriminalized drugs, aiming to address inequality created by criminalization policies and to focus on addressing drug addiction as a health issue. Uruguay has decriminalized personal possession of all drugs since 1974. Uruguay took this one step further in 2013, becoming the first country in the world to fully legalize cannabis and establish a regulatory framework for its sale. Similar policies can be seen in places like Portugal, where drugs have been decriminalized since 2001. In the decades since, there have been significant increases in the number of people voluntarily entering drug treatment, while they have seen decreases in several negative drug-related outcomes, such as overdoses, HIV infections, problematic drug use, and incarceration. In both of these countries, drug trafficking is still heavily criminalized, but people who use drugs every day are now more likely to be connected to health resources or (at the very least) not face the prospect of incarceration for possession of a personal stash of drugs. These examples of policy interventions helped inspire Measure 110 in Oregon, which established similar decriminalization, meaning people possessing a personal amount would not face serious criminal charges and could more easily gain access to drug treatment.

Roots of Restorative Justice

In some jurisdictions in the United States, courts have begun engaging in practices of **restorative justice** in their efforts to reform the criminal justice system. **Restorative justice** is a set of practices that bring together the person who committed the act, those who were harmed by the action, and other relevant community stakeholders to identify ways to heal the harm caused by an offense. The practice has roots in North American Indigenous communities, and as such, is particularly significant for community members, representing a return to Indigenous healing and **values**. These communities did not conceptualize law and the state in the same way as European or American societies, and acts against individuals or the community were seen as crimes (Centennial College n.d.). Rather than punish offenders, the goal was to repair harm and promote healing (Centennial College n.d.).

Similarly, restorative justice today is a community-based and trauma-informed practice used to build relationships, strengthen communities, encourage accountability, repair harm, and restore relationships when wrongdoings occur. Participating in restorative justice is voluntary. Working with a facilitator, participants identify harms,

needs, and obligations, then make a plan to repair the harm and put things as right as possible. Through victim-offender dialogues, both groups gain an opportunity to express the impact the offense had on them. It also allows the offender to potentially take responsibility directly to the victim(s) and to the community as a whole for the acts committed.

Restorative justice has been shown to have positive outcomes in accountability for harm, and both offenders and victims have reported satisfaction in the restorative justice process. Some research suggests there may be cognitive change that occurs as individuals complete restorative justice programs. This approach is becoming an area of increasing interest for practitioners who may find this tool useful in their work within community justice and community corrections.

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7.8 Conclusion

Alexandra Olsen

What do a gay rights activist of the 1960s, a student who screams out curse words in **class**, a man who gets into a fight at a bar, and a businessman who engages in financial fraud have in common? After reading this chapter, you know that they all are engaging in **deviance**. When people think of deviance, they often think of **crime**, but deviance is a broader concept. This chapter has shown that deviance includes any violation of social **norms**, not just the breaking of formal laws. Because social norms change over time, whether an action is seen as deviant or not can also change.

In this chapter, we explored the concept of deviance and crime in greater detail, highlighting the ways that deviance is socially constructed and how **society** responds to different kinds of deviance and crime. Both of these concepts are

socially constructed, varying across time periods and societies.

Let's return to the original discussion of cannabis now that we have a new lens through which to understand it. It is not only a question of whether it is legal and where it is legal, but also a question that must be informed by **race** and class. Given the vast racial disparities in the **criminal justice system**, policies related to cannabis legalization must address the harm that the war on drugs has done to Black and Latino communities. At the same time, there are clear class issues at play too; when wealthy individuals open recreational dispensaries, they are entrepreneurial, but when impoverished individuals sell cannabis on the underground market, they are criminals.

There are a few ways that communities and governments have tried to address the equity issues related to cannabis. In some cities, such as San Francisco, the district attorney has automatically expunged all cannabis charges from individuals' records now that cannabis is recreationally legal in California (Serna 2019). In other places, such as Los Angeles, community groups have offered free expungement clinics (My Prop 47 2011). At these clinics, free legal services are provided so that people who were previously charged with cannabis crimes can also expunge them from their records.

Other ways that governments have tried to address this is through cannabis equity programs. The goal of these programs is to provide opportunities for marginalized groups to participate in the legal cannabis market. An example of this can be seen in the City of Los Angeles' Social Equity program. Their mission is "to promote equitable ownership and employment opportunities in the cannabis industry in order to decrease disparities in life outcomes for marginalized communities, and to address the disproportionate impacts of the war on drugs in those communities" (City of Los Angeles Department of Cannabis Regulation 2022). This mission clearly takes into account the systemic inequalities in the criminal justice system that we discussed in this chapter.

All considered, questions of equity around cannabis (and the criminal justice system more broadly) are ones that don't have easy solutions. But, if we use our **sociological imagination**, we can critically think about how policies impact communities in different ways. It was through communities, governments, and individuals identifying issues with cannabis legalization that these innovative approaches to equity were developed. There are likely many more challenges that will come to the criminal justice system in our lifetimes. With each new reform, we should continue to ask how we can make our society more equitable and address injustices of the past.

By looking at the criminal justice system in the United States and abroad, you should begin to see the ways that groups have vastly different experiences within **social institutions**. Now that you have a better sense of the basics of **sociology**, we'll dive deeper into learning about social inequality, highlighting how individuals have different life opportunities based on their class, **gender**, race, and **sexuality**. In **the next chapter**, we'll begin by learning about **social stratification** and social class.

KEY TERMS

- **Crime**: a behavior that violates official law and is punishable through formal sanctions.
- **Criminal justice system**: an organization that exists to enforce a legal code, which in the United States includes the police, courts, and corrections system.

- **Deviance**: a violation of established contextual, cultural, or social norms.
- **Differential association theory**: a theory that states individuals learn deviant behavior from those close to them who provide models of and opportunities for deviance.
- **Labeling theory**: the ascribing of a deviant behavior to another person by members of society.
- **Mass incarceration**: the overwhelming size and scale of the U.S. prison population.
- **The New Jim Crow**: the network of laws and practices that disproportionately funnel Black Americans into the criminal justice system, stripping them of their constitutional rights as a punishment for their offenses in the same way that Jim Crow laws did in previous eras.
- **Primary deviance**: a violation of norms that does not result in any long-term effects on the individual's self-image or interactions with others.
- **Private prisons**: for-profit incarceration facilities run by private companies who contract with local, state, and federal governments.
- **Restorative justice**: a set of practices that bring together the person who committed the act, those who were harmed by the action, and other relevant community stakeholders to identify ways to heal the harm caused by an offense and prevent it from occurring again, rather than engaging in punitive punishment.
- **Secondary deviance:** deviance that occurs when a person's self-concept and behavior begin to change after their actions are labeled as deviant by members of society.
- **Social control**: the regulation and enforcement of norms.
- **Social disorganization theory**: a theory that asserts crime occurs in communities with weak social ties and the absence of social control.
- **Southern strategy**: a Republican Party political strategy to get White voter support through explicitly or implicitly coded racism against Black Americans.
- **Strain theory**: a theory that addresses the relationship between having socially acceptable goals and having socially acceptable means to reach those goals.
- **White-collar crime**: a nonviolent crime of opportunity, often involving money.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which theory of crime and deviance do you find to be most believable? What about it do you find particularly compelling?
2. What are some of the barriers to addressing racism in the criminal justice system?
3. How does institutional racism in the criminal justice system impact the lives of Americans and their families?
4. Pretend that you have a meeting with your local representative to encourage them to make a positive change to the criminal justice system. What issues in the criminal justice system would you want them to address? What evidence would you use to persuade them that there are issues with our current system?
5. If you could make one reform to the criminal justice system, what would it be? Do you think

that there is anything useful that the United States could learn from other countries' criminal justice systems?

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CHAPTER

8

Figure 8.1 Workers striking outside the National Labor Relations Board for better work conditions.

Social Stratification and Class

8.1 Chapter Learning Objectives and Overview

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Critically analyze stratification systems.
2. Apply classic and contemporary theories of stratification to the **class** structure of the United States.
3. Describe the U.S. class structure.
4. Explain how class impacts people's experiences in a variety of institutions.

5. Explain how class impacts **socialization** processes.

Overview

Take a moment to think about the wealthy former chief executive officer (CEO) who is one of the largest landowners in the United States, with a net worth estimated to be around $151 billion (Bloomberg's Billionaire Index 2022, Brandt, Warran and Davis 2021). He used his **wealth** to buy Whole Foods and the *Washington Post*. Also, he founded a company that builds rocket ships. He then got to fly to space on one of those rocket ships. By some estimates, while he was CEO, he made more than the median salary of a typical employee (around $28,000) every 10 seconds (Glum 2018).

In contrast, we have an employee in a warehouse whose job is a "picker," which involves gathering items to fulfill people's online orders. One of the most productive workers in the warehouse, he was chosen to train others. Once, he applied for a promotion, but he found the odds stacked against him; 382 people had applied for the same position. The company intentionally made it hard to get ahead. As a result, he felt let down by his job that did not let him share in the overall success of the company (Kantor, Weise, and Ashford 2021a) (figure 8.1).

You probably guessed that the first paragraph was about Jeff Bezos, the founder of Amazon. The second is about Derrick Palmer, an Amazon warehouse employee at the JFK8 Warehouse in New York. How can we use our **sociological imagination** to explain the vast disparities in wealth? Does wealth always connect to access to other valuable resources? How crucial is the distinction between employee and owner for the accumulation of resources? Can you work hard and still not get ahead? These are questions about **social stratification**, inequality, and social class.

In this chapter, we will explore stratification systems and the various sociological explanations for their existence. We will follow this by examining what social class looks like in the United States.

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Figure 8.1. "Amazon warehouse workers outside the National Labor Relations Board" by Joe Pietet is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

8.2 What Is Stratification?

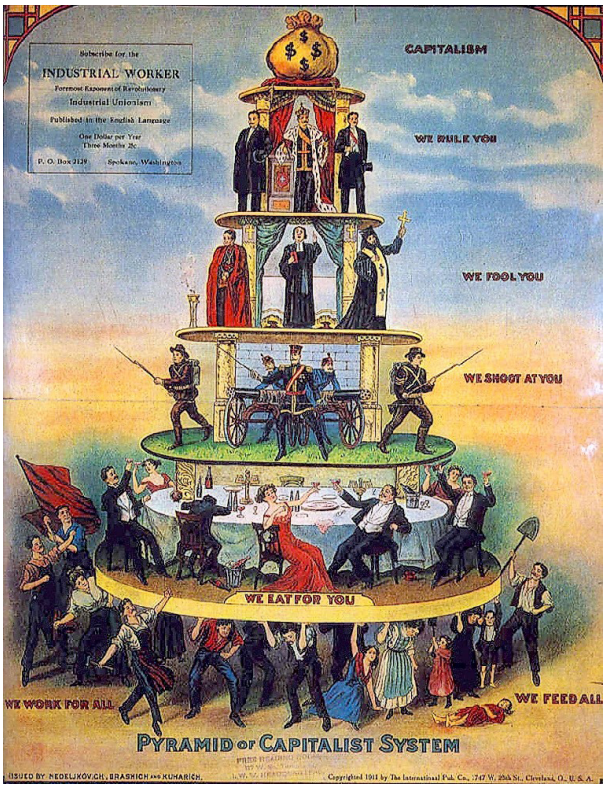

Figure 8.2 Consider the groups represented in the "pyramid of the capitalist system." Are any groups missing? How do we contribute to capitalism?

Social stratification impacts most of our experiences within our **society** (figure 8.2). Recent accounts point to increasing disparities between the wealthy and everybody else in the United States (Pinketty 2017). Even as the wealthy have accumulated more and more resources, other forms of inequality persist. These inequalities include racial **segregation** and occupational **sex** segregation, meaning that in workplaces and neighborhoods throughout the United States, people are treated differently based on their **race** and sex. Increasing inequalities not only negatively affect the macro aspects of our society, but also have individual consequences. In this chapter, we are going to explore some of the different stratification systems that exist and explanations for those systems. We will follow this by exploring social **class** in the United States and how it impacts our experiences.

Defining Stratification

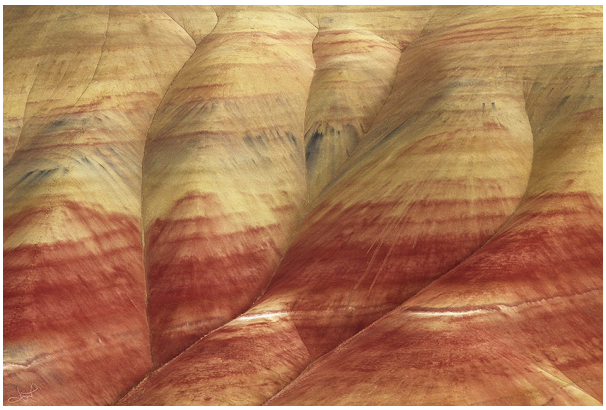

Figure 8.3 Geological stratification at the Painted Hills in Oregon. How might groups of people be organized in the same way?

Sociologists use the term social stratification to describe the system of social standing. **Social**

stratification refers to a society's categorization of its people into rankings based on factors like **wealth**, **income**, education, family background, and power.

Geologists also use the word "stratification" to describe the distinct vertical layers found in rock (figure 8.3). Typically, society's layers, made of people, represent the uneven distribution of society's resources. Society views the people with more resources as the top layer of the social structure of stratification. Other groups of people, with fewer and fewer resources, represent the lower layers. An individual's place within this stratification is called **socioeconomic status** (SES).

Most people and institutions in the United States indicate that they value equality, a belief that everyone has an equal chance at success. In other words, hard work and talent—not inherited wealth, prejudicial treatment, institutional **racism**, or societal **values**—determine social mobility. This emphasis on choice, motivation, and **self**-effort perpetuates the American belief that people control their social standing.

However, sociologists recognize social stratification as a society-wide system that makes inequalities apparent. While inequalities exist between individuals, sociologists are interested in larger social patterns. Sociologists look to see if individuals with similar backgrounds, **group** memberships, identities, and locations in the country share the same place in the social stratification system. No individual, rich or poor, can be blamed for social inequalities, but instead, all participate in a system where some rise and others fall. Most Americans believe that rising and falling are based on individual choices. But sociologists see how the structure of society affects a person's social standing and therefore is created and supported by society.

Stratification is about resources, and there are a variety of resources that can be dispersed or concentrated. Often, when we talk about inequality, it has to do with economic inequalities related to money. Here, it is useful to distinguish between wealth and income. **Wealth** is the net value of money and assets a person has. **Income** is a person's wages or investment dividends. You can think of wealth as something that accumulates over time, such as property or stocks. Income is something that is being earned on a month-to-month or year-to-year basis. Wealth and income do not necessarily have to be connected, but they typically are. As an example, if someone inherited a lot of wealth, they could live off that and not have to earn a wage. Alternatively, someone could have income but be unable to turn it into wealth for reasons that are outside of their control.

Power is another resource that can be a source of stratification. This resource can be political power or power in a workplace. For example, the president of the United States has more influence than a typical citizen. As we discussed in **Chapter 6**, culture can be used as a resource to create inequalities. The same goes for our social networks and the related **social capital**. Education can be another source of stratification. Some people do not complete high school, while other people get graduate degrees from prestigious universities. We also have civil resources, where there are benefits to being a citizen of a country. If you are not a citizen, there may be additional hurdles you will face (Grusky and Ku 2008).

Stratification Systems

Sociologists identify different stratification systems across the globe. These systems vary in terms of their major classes (strata); the degree of inequality, rigidity, crystallization; and the ideas that those with power and influence use to justify their position at the top of the hierarchy (Grusky and Ku 2008). We'll cover some of these new terms in this section.

When we discuss social stratification, "rigidity" describes how much movement people have

between the different layers of society (Grusky and Ku 2008). Typically, sociologists distinguish between open and closed systems. **Open systems** allow people to move between the different layers. In **closed systems,** people do not or cannot shift between the different layers. Whatever strata you are born into is the one you are likely to live your life in. There are also constraints on how you can interact with people from other strata.

Crystallization refers to the relationship between the various resources within the society (Grusky and Ku 2008). Some stratification systems tend to be highly crystallized and to have **status consistency**, meaning the consistency of an individual's rank across the factors that determine social stratification within a lifetime. An example of this is when you compare the different resources people can be stratified along. If there is status consistency, a group will score high on all the different resources. **Status inconsistency**, associated with lower levels of crystallization, is when an individual can have a lot of one type of resource, but not another. For example, someone could have a lot of money but limited political power or **cultural capital**.

For most of human history, humans lived in societies characterized by tribal stratification systems. These types of systems tended to have lower degrees of inequality and few strata. For example, chiefs and shamans might inhabit different strata than everyone else in the community. While the systems were somewhat open, there were also high levels of status consistency.

Before the emergence of capitalism, a lot of Western societies had feudalist stratification systems. The main sources of stratification were economic, specifically, holding land and control over labor. The different levels included the nobility, clergy, and commoners. This led to high levels of inequality. Overall, feudalist stratification systems tended to be closed systems with high degrees of status consistency.

Another stratification system is the **caste system**. In comparison to a feudalist system, the main sources of stratification in a caste system are cultural and honorific. The **caste system** determines all aspects of an individual's life: occupations, marriage partners, and housing. Individual talents, interests, or potential do not provide opportunities to improve a person's social position.

In the Hindu caste tradition, people expect to work in an occupation and to enter into a marriage based on their caste. Accepting this social standing is considered a moral duty, and people are socialized to accept their social standing. Cultural values reinforce the system. Caste systems promote beliefs in fate, destiny, and the will of a higher power, rather than promoting individual freedom as a value. Overall, caste systems are closed systems with high degrees of status consistency.

The various revolutions and social changes we explored in Chapter 2 changed the stratification systems within Western societies. The result was a shift from feudalism to class-based stratification. In class-based systems, economic resources play a crucial role, and the main distinction is between workers and owners.

A **class system** is based on both social factors and individual achievement. A **class** consists of a set of people who share similar status based on factors like wealth, income, education, family background, and occupation. Unlike caste systems, class systems have some degree of openness. People may move to a different level (vertical movement) of education or employment status than their parents. Though family and other societal models help guide a person toward a career, personal choice and opportunity play a role. Overall, there is still a lot of status consistency.

Recent scholarship on race argues the United States can be best characterized as a racial caste system. As you learned in Chapter 7, in the *New Jim Crow*, American civil rights activist and writer Michelle Alexander argues that throughout U.S.

history there have been a series of systems of control based on race. These systems gave systemic advantages to White people, while subjugating Black and minority groups defined as "others." Slavery, Jim Crow, and **mass incarceration** are all variations of this same system. Specifically, we can understand racial caste as a "stigmatized racial group locked into an inferior position by law and custom" (Alexander 2012:15). As a result of this system, for Black Americans there is limited to no mobility within society. Dunbar-Ortiz, in *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States* (2014), shows how the origins of stratification in the United States are tied to settler **colonialism** and the dispossession of Indigenous people. She argues that the possession of land is the basis of U.S. history, resulting in settler colonialism and "the founding of a state based on the ideology of White supremacy, the widespread practice of African slavery, and a policy of **genocide** and land theft" (Dunbar-Ortiz 2014:1).

Activity: Stratification, Race, Class, and the Criminal Justice System

Social stratification might not be labeled or identified much in our society, but it is recognized and often guarded against. Let's examine one such experience by an individual who experienced the criminal legal system in Oregon.

"Do not admit you are not all White. You look White, and that will help your case when you are standing in front of the judge." These were the words uttered by the lawyer representing the recently arrested young individual. The individual admitted to being confused by the statement, but in a state of shock and confusion due to their situation, they did not question the lawyer. The individual recalled that, upon being incarcerated, they began to understand the statement as they adapted to the carceral system and the **roles** within that system.

> *"The first thing you have to do when you go in [into the prison], is show your papers, prove that you aren't a bad person, ya know, like hurting little kids and stuff. When I showed my cellie my papers, they were shocked at the time I got…they told me I shoulda' been locked up for at least a nickel [five years], not just a year and a few days."*

The individual explained that these comments by their cellmate, along with the stories shared by others in their unit, allowed them to see there was more to incarceration than just being a "criminal."

> *"People who didn't look like me and had done far less than I, were locked up for five, six, or more years. The only difference I consistently found was I am part white and look it."*

The status and appearance they held had given them an advantage within the carceral system. Furthermore, it allowed them to create a healthy and societally approved life as they transitioned back into society. This was something that many of the people they had been incarcerated with were unable to attain.

> *I thought I was pretty basic, ya know? But really, I had a lot going in my favor and I never knew until I saw the disparities in prison. My family was middle class, I am white presenting, and had access to education and even though I did time due to my response to trauma and domestic violence, I was able to leverage my connections, my appearance, including my* ***gender*** *and my access to resources to escape what so many are still locked in, that inferior designation and position in society due to their appearance, their record, their upbringing, or lack of resources.<//blockquote>*
>
> The intersections of race, gender, income, family background, and resources in this individual's life impacted their journey to involvement with the criminal court system, their experience within it, and their transition back into society. Their upward mobility was directly influenced by how others viewed them and assigned them status. This experience showcases how mobility is impacted by race and points toward the systemic advantages that those who are White or White-presenting can access.
>
> Questions for your consideration:

1. How have you experienced social stratification? How can you identify examples of social stratification around you/in your daily life?
2. Suppose you were arrested for something: how might your position in society influence your experiences within the criminal legal system? How would you present yourself to survive?

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Figure 8.2. "Pyramid of Capitalist System" is in the Public Domain.

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Paragraphs on caste system and class systems from "Stratification Systems" are modified from "9.1 What Is Social Stratification?" by Tonja R. Conerly, Kathleen Holmes, Asha Lal Tamang in *Introduction to Sociology 3e*, OpenStax, which is licensed under CC BY 4.0. Added comparison to feudal system and detail on status consistency.

Figure 8.3. "Painted Hills" by tsaiproject is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

8.3 Explanations of Stratification and Class

Sociologists have developed a variety of perspectives to explain stratification, **class**, and inequality. Some of those perspectives are critical of class-based inequalities, such as Marxism and **feminism**. Other perspectives, such as functionalism, come close to justifying class inequality by intellectually legitimizing the unequal distribution of resources.

Class Matters: Marx and Neo-Marxists

Since the writings of Karl Marx, sociologists have explored the relationship between social class, stratification, and work. As a quick recap of Chapter 2, Marx argued there were two social classes in capitalism: the workers (**proletariat**) who had to sell their labor to live, and the owners (bourgeoisie) who profited from the labor of the workers. A key difference between the classes was who owned and controlled the means of production, such as the factories and machines.

Others have expanded on Marx's work to incorporate a wider range of factors in defining class. A neo-Marxist is someone who extends Marxist theorizing, often incorporating insights from other theoretical traditions. German-British sociologist Ralf Dahrendorf (1959) argued that Marx failed to predict numerous developments in capitalism. Specifically, he pointed to how a lot of companies were not owned and run by an individual or a family. Instead, the owners of the companies were the people who owned stock in the companies. From his perspective, this separated ownership and control.

According to Dahrendorf (1959), this separation of ownership and control allowed a new **group** to

emerge that replaced the capitalist-owner in the workplace: managers. He also pointed to the increased differences between workers. Rather than being a unified group, workers could be divided into three groups: 1) highly skilled workers such as engineers and white-collar employees, 2) semi-skilled workers, and 3) unskilled workers. By introducing these distinctions, he argued that Marx's categories of "owner" and "worker" were too homogeneous and unified.

Beyond challenging Marx's conceptualization of class, Dahrendorf focused on how one's social class position was intertwined with authority in the workplace. Authority is legitimate power. He argued that different positions in **society** had different amounts of authority and that authority resided in positions rather than the people occupying the positions. Authority, he asserted, always implies superordination and subordination. In the context of work, if one is in a superordinate position, those in the subordinate position are supposed to do what you say. If you are in a subordinate position and do not follow the orders, you could get a warning or a written reprimand for insubordination.

American sociologist Erik Olin Wright (1997, 2001) explained class differently. He argued that there were up to six different classes based on the relationship of the workers to the means of production, their skills and knowledge, and their authority. Like Dahrendorf, he focused on the middle classes, which do not own the means of production but also do not seem to be part of the working class.

He argued that some members of the middle class have authority over others, while the owners have authority over them. This authority involves surveilling those who are lower in the workplace hierarchy and having the ability to sanction them. Depending on where one is in the hierarchy, one's class might be closer to the owners (think CEOs and CFOs) or closer to the workers (think lower-level supervisors).

Besides authority, Wright points to the importance of skills and knowledge in determining one's class standing. Employees with high levels of skills/knowledge can also improve their position in the hierarchy. The control of specialized knowledge and skills by some groups of employees can make it difficult for supervisors to monitor and control them (especially if they are not experts in a particular area or subject). Overall, the middle classes are in contradictory class locations, where they are exploiters but also exploited in some ways (Wright 2001).

From the Marxist perspective, the **class system** is supported by a variety of ideas called the **dominant ideology** (Marx 1987). This ideology has several characteristics. First, it reflects the views and interests of the bourgeoisie and serves to legitimize their position in society. Second, the dominant ideology makes what is socially constructed seem natural, inevitable, and universal. For example, a Marxist would argue that wage labor is something that is used to exploit the workers and provide a profit to the rich. However, it is so commonplace that it is almost impossible to think of alternatives. Few, if any, challenge the idea of it, which makes wage labor a dominant ideology. This has not always been the case; some societies developed elaborate forms of gift-giving and barter systems.

Another example of a dominant ideology is the idea that the stratification system in the United States is a **meritocracy**. In other words, this dominant ideology is the American Dream, the belief in being able to work hard and get ahead. A **meritocracy** is a hypothetical system in which **social stratification** is determined by personal effort and merit. The concept of meritocracy is an ideal because no society has ever existed in which social standing was based entirely on merit. Rather, multiple factors influence social standing, including processes like **socialization** and the realities of inequality within economic systems. If you view the United States as a meritocracy, then you'll see

the inability to get ahead as an individual problem, rather than a feature of the stratification system.

Class and Status: Weber and Neo-Weberians

German sociologist Max Weber addressed social class differently than Marx. As you learned in the previous section, Marx and neo-Marxists have tended to assume that class is associated with one's location in the economy. In contrast, Weber distinguished between class and status and examined the complex relations between the two in stratification systems. In doing so, Weber pointed out how stratification systems can have multiple dimensions.

First, Weber (2008) argued that property and the lack of property are the basic components of all class situations. Within each of those categories, there are a lot of different ways to have property or not. From his perspective, classes exist within the economic order.

Weber introduced the concept of status as an important component of stratification that he distinguished from class. Weber argued that **status groups** are normally communities based on estimations of "honor," which is linked to a specific lifestyle. People consume certain goods associated with a specific lifestyle. These goods then signal group membership. In the United States, we have a saying for this notion: "Keeping up with the Joneses." The assumption is that we are paying attention to our neighbor's lifestyle and that we want to copy it. In doing so, we hope to raise, or at least maintain, our status.

While Weber tried to make a clear distinction between class and status, the relationship between the two is rather complex. Sometimes class and status overlap. In other instances, there might be a disconnect between class and status. Someone might have a particular class standing, but their lifestyle might not gain them status. For example, people who have recently become wealthy might not fit in with those whose families have been wealthy for generations. The newly wealthy might not have the right cultural tastes or dispositions to be accepted by the established elites.

Weber also identified certain economic conditions that he argued favored either stratification by status or stratification by class. When the acquisition and distribution of goods are stable, status stratification is favored. In contrast, when technological and economic transformations are occurring, class stratification becomes predominant.

Scholars influenced by Weber have further developed his ideas about class and status. As an example, British sociologist Frank Parkin provides a neo-Weberian account of class. He points to the different ways classes as groups can draw social boundaries and exclude other classes. According to Parkin, the bourgeoisie use the exclusion from property and credentials as a way to exclude the proletariat. While this is occurring, the workers attempt to gain a greater share of the valued resources. Overall, he proposes that class relations are mutually antagonistic and exist in permanent tension (Parkin 1979).

Just Rewards: Functionalism

One influential argument coming out of the structural-functionalist framework is known as the **Davis and Moore hypothesis**. American sociologists Kingsley Davis and Wilbert Moore (1942) argued that stratification was both universal and functionally necessary. Specifically, they examined the system of positions in society and how those positions attain prestige. They argued that there must be incentives so that the best individuals fill a role (or job) and that there must be a way of distributing rewards among the positions.

Davis and Moore pointed to two determinants of the position rank of an occupation in the overall

occupational hierarchy. One determinant they identified is the functional importance of the job. This includes how unique the position is and whether the associated duties can be performed by other positions. It also includes the degree to which other positions and occupations are dependent on it. The greater the functional importance of an occupation, the more rewards a society attaches to it.

The other determinant is the scarcity of personnel, talent, and training. If the position requires more talent and is difficult to train for, and if there are few people who can fill the position, higher rewards will be necessary to encourage people to pursue the position.

As a result, Davis and Moore assume that the positions highest in the occupational prestige and reward system require the greatest talent and ability. Those positions, from their perspective, are less pleasurable (and the most difficult), but are more important to the survival of the system. Davis and Moore argue that those in top positions must receive rewards, otherwise they would not do their work. Those occupations would be left unfilled, and society would crumble. In contrast, the lower positions are more pleasant (and less difficult), but less important for society. Fewer rewards are then needed to get people to do those jobs.

This hypothesis has been severely criticized. Critics argue that this perspective privileges those who already have power and prestige. Davis and Moore are more or less arguing that those in high-status/reward occupations deserve their rewards, and they need those rewards for the good of society. However, this does not always hold true. For example, nurses are probably more important to society than movie stars, but movie stars receive greater prestige and rewards.

Figure 8.4 Celebrities can have great influence in society and receive great recognition, but what types of occupations might contribute more to the betterment of society?

Is this process for determining rewards meritocratic? Critical sociologists point to how high-status professions are intertwined with people who already have power. Credentials are used to exclude and access to those credentials/education system is highly influenced by **race**, class, and **gender**. Furthermore, most professions have been dominated by White men from upper-middle-class backgrounds.

Gender and Class: Feminism

As we explored in Chapter 2, there are a variety of feminisms. Several of these varieties deal specifically with social class and were influenced by Marx's theorizing about social class. From these

perspectives, class becomes a starting point to better understand the complex relations between gender, race, and exploitation.

Feminists point out that Marx's analysis of class applies largely to men. It might explain some class dynamics, but it largely overlooks the experiences of women, particularly in the workplace and the home. In the workplace, given the laws in the nineteenth century, the wages of married women technically belonged to their husbands. In addition, any labor outside of the home was paid a low wage. As a result, women helped make up a reserve army of laborers who were hired when the capitalists needed workers and fired when they did not.

In the home, wives and mothers engaged in unpaid labor. This work remains crucial for capitalist economies. Unpaid labor helps maintain the homes of the bosses and workers, while also helping create the next generation of bosses and workers. In pointing out these gendered differences related to class, Marxist feminists showed the interconnections between capitalism and **patriarchy** (Lorber 2010). Later, third-wave feminists pointed out how this analysis of gender and class overlooked the influence of race. We'll discuss the different waves of feminism in Chapter 9.

Class and Colonialism: Postcolonial Theory

As was noted before in our brief discussion of settler **colonialism**, contemporary stratification systems and their histories are closely tied to colonialism. Several scholars, such as W. E. B. Du Bois and Frantz Fanon provided a class analysis of these dynamics.

Du Bois analyzed capitalism in the United States after the Civil War. He argued that capitalism was further concentrated in the hands of the few during this time. Big businesses exerted economic and political control over the United States, a condition he called super-capital (Du Bois 1935). He also provided a **theory** of imperialism and showed how White supremacy originated in capitalism and colonialism (Wendland-Lu 2020). According to Du Bois, imperialism led to enormous profits for the imperialist countries. European countries, rather than wanting to export their surpluses, coveted the raw materials and cheap labor of African countries. Within both the imperialist countries and the colonies, the capitalists dominated (Du Bois 1945).

Fanon wrote about the Algerian experience of colonization by the French. Fanon argues that it is the landless peasants and dispossessed of the towns surrounding cities (lumpenproletariat) that are the true agents of revolutionary change in colonized countries, rather than the industrial working class. He described the class as desperate and susceptible to being co-opted by counterrevolutionary forces. As a result, he argued that the education of this class should be part of any revolution (Fanon 1961). Among the people being colonized, Fanon argues a comprador class is likely to emerge. These are local elites/bourgeoisie who want to be part of the colonizing/dominating class and align themselves with the colonizers. They have a vested interest in the occupation and do not favor a radical restructuring of society (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 1998).

A Plethora of Classes: Social Mobility and Status Attainment

Other sociologists understand social class differently. In particular, they argue that the dividing lines between class categories are too broad and do not reflect the modern stratification system. Instead, some argue that it is better to focus on the small gradations in **income**, status, or prestige. Such approaches tend to rely on 1) prestige scales based on people's evaluations of an occupation's standing, and 2) scales that combine occupational income and education (Grusky and Ku 2008).

Scholars who use these approaches tend to focus on **socioeconomic mobility**, the movement of people between classes and occupations. There are a variety of different forms of mobility:

- *Intergenerational mobility* is the movement between classes that occurs from one generation to the next. This occurs when a child pursues an occupation different from that of their parents.
- *Intragenerational mobility* is the movement between social classes that happens during an individual's lifetime. It occurs when a worker moves from one employer or occupation to the next, and there are changes in the rewards, prestige, and status.
- *Upward mobility* is movement into more prestigious, better-paid, or responsible positions.
- *Downward mobility* is the movement into less prestigious, less well-paid, or less responsible positions.

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8.4 Social Classes in the United States

In this section, we will explore how **class** operates in the United States. We will begin by exploring those high up in the class hierarchy and then discuss the middle class. We will end by examining poverty in the United States, how it is patterned, and explanations for its persistence.

Upper Class

The upper class is at the top of the social hierarchy. In the United States, people with extreme **wealth** make up one percent of the population, and they own roughly one-third of the country's wealth (figure 8.5) (Beeghley 2008).

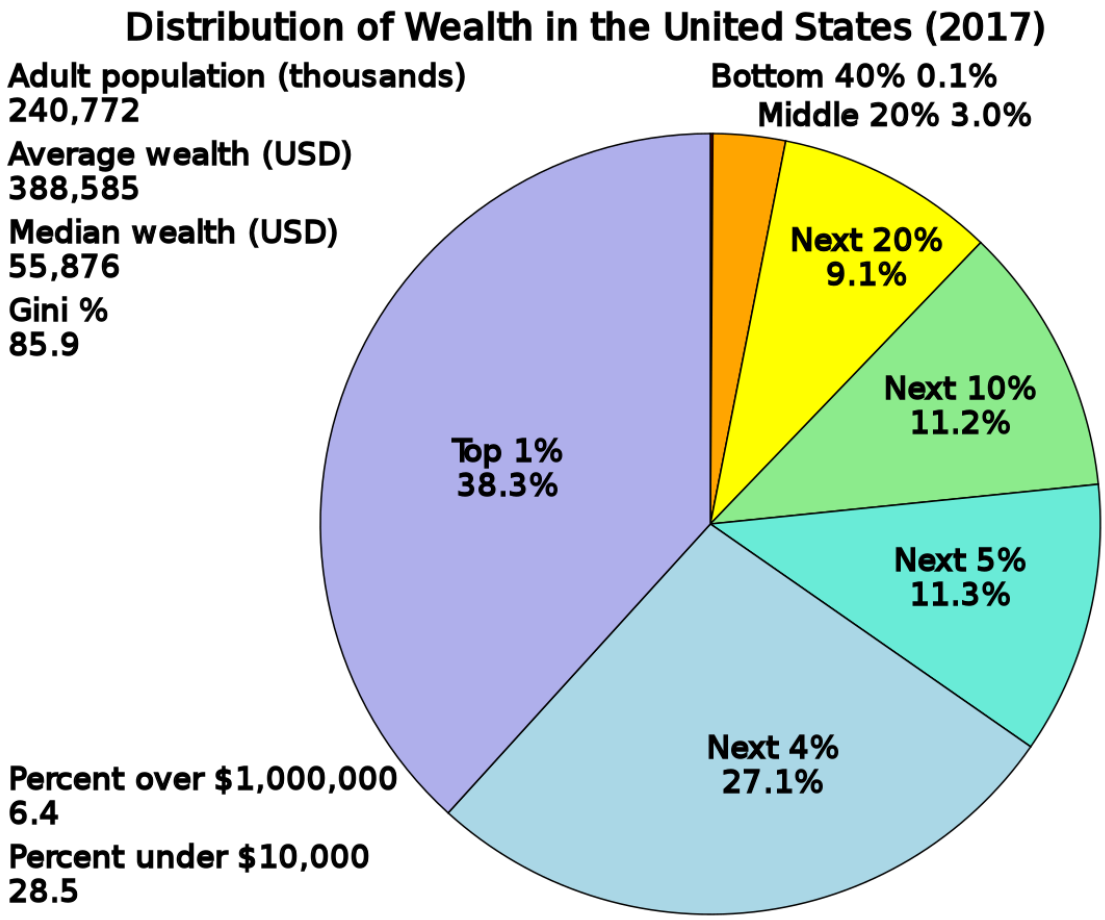

Figure 8.5 Distribution of wealth in the United States. Is there anything surprising about this diagram?

Money provides not only access to material goods, but also access to power. As corporate leaders, members of the upper class make decisions that affect the job status of millions of people. As media owners of the major network television stations, radio broadcasts, newspapers, magazines, publishing houses, and sports franchises, they influence the collective identity of the nation. As board members of the most influential colleges and universities, they influence cultural attitudes and **values**. As philanthropists, they establish foundations to support social causes they believe in. As campaign contributors and legislation drivers, they fund political campaigns to sway policymakers, sometimes to protect their economic interests and at other times to support or promote a cause.

Sociologists have explored the composition and dynamics of the American elites. American sociologist C. Wright Mills coined them the "**power elite**" (2000) The **power elite** is the class in command of the major hierarchies and organizations of modern **society**. Mills points to the government, corporations, and the military as the three main institutions in which the elite circulate. As an example, someone who held a high position in the government might go on to serve on the board of a corporation. Someone who was a corporate executive (such as Michael Bloomberg, Mitt Romney, or Donald Trump) might then be elected to a high position in the government.

This interconnectedness of the power elite also takes place outside of formal institutions due to overlapping social networks and connected

groups. Mills suggests that the power elite use a particular ideology to justify their location. They promote the belief that they have a finer moral character and that there is something about them that makes them "naturally" elite. In doing so, they downplay the importance of shared experiences and training in reproducing elite statuses. Furthermore, the power elite in the United States tend to deny that they are powerful.

American sociologist G. William Domhoff also studied elites in the United States. He found that they developed separate **social institutions** to help create social cohesion and mold wealthy people into the upper class (Domhoff 2021). This social cohesion develops from both common membership in specific institutions and friendships based on social interaction within the institutions.

Domhoff focuses on education and social clubs as areas where the upper class builds their cohesion and can reproduce itself. In terms of education, children of the upper class receive a distinctive education that socializes them into their privileged class position. This education starts in preschool and elementary school, with the kids of the upper class going to local private schools. As the children of the upper class get older, there is a strong chance that they will spend a few years away at a boarding school in a rural setting (Cookson and Persell 1985; Khan 2011). In terms of higher education, those from the upper class generally go to a small number of private colleges and universities (Karabel 2006; Stevens 2011).

Private social clubs also play an important role in the lives of upper-class adults. These clubs are formed around a variety of activities, with many families belonging to several types of clubs in different cities (Domhoff 2021).

Middle Class

Many people consider themselves middle class, but there are differing ideas about what that means. People with annual incomes of $150,000 call themselves middle class, as do people who annually earn $30,000. That helps explain why, in the United States, the middle class is broken into upper and lower subcategories.

Lower-middle-class members tend to complete a two-year associate's degree from community or technical colleges or a four-year bachelor's degree. Upper-middle-class people tend to continue to postgraduate degrees. They've studied subjects such as business, management, law, or medicine.

Figure 8.6 How is social class connected to housing? What might you be able to assume about this suburban subdivision in Colorado Springs?

Middle-class people work hard and live fairly comfortable lives (figure 8.6). Upper-middle-class people tend to pursue careers, own their homes, and travel on vacation. Their children receive high-quality education and healthcare (Gilbert 2010). Parents can better support the specialized needs and interests of their children, such as more extensive tutoring, art lessons, and athletic efforts, which can lead to greater social mobility for the next generation. Families within the middle class may have access to some wealth, but they must also work to earn an **income** to maintain this lifestyle.

In the lower-middle class, people hold jobs supervised by members of the upper-middle class. They fill technical, lower-level management, or administrative support positions. Compared to lower-class work, lower-middle-class jobs carry more prestige and come with slightly higher paychecks. With these incomes, people can afford a decent, mainstream lifestyle, but they struggle to maintain it. They generally don't have enough income to build significant savings. In addition, their class standing is more precarious than those in the upper tiers of the **class system**. When companies need to save money, lower-middle-class people are often the ones to lose their jobs.

Sociologists have conducted a variety of studies on the middle class. In one influential study, sociologist Michèle Lamont (1992) explored the **symbolic boundaries** that middle-class men drew to determine who was part of the middle class and who was not. Lamont found that the men drew boundaries based on cultural, socioeconomic, and moral criteria. Focusing on the socioeconomic criteria, she discovered that they associated money with freedom, control, and security. Money provided a certain comfort level that became a symbol and reward of professional success. It also provided cars, homes, and vacations.

The middle-class men also valued membership in prestigious groups and associations, including churches, chambers of commerce, political parties, and alumni associations. All of these organizations provide additional opportunities to meet other middle-class people and build connections with them. Furthermore, belonging to such groups and associations provides information on socioeconomic status, signaling that members have achieved a certain income level and that they've been accepted by the right kinds of people.

The middle class tends to raise their children in a particular way. They engage in what sociologist Annette Lareau calls "**concerted cultivation**." **Concerted cultivation** is when parents "deliberately try to stimulate their children's development and foster their cognitive and social skills" (Lareau 2003:5). To accomplish this, middle-class parents encourage their children to become involved in activities outside the home. This leads middle-class children to develop a set of skills and dispositions that help them navigate institutions that value such skills. As a result, the children start developing a sense of entitlement, the belief that they deserve these benefits.

Lower Class

The lower class is also referred to as the working class. Just like the middle and upper classes, the lower class can be divided into subsets: the working class, the working poor, and the underclass. Compared to the lower-middle class, people from the lower economic class have less formal education and earn smaller incomes. They work jobs that require less training or experience than middle-class occupations and often do routine tasks under close supervision.

Working-class people, the highest subcategory of the lower class, often land steady jobs. The work is hands-on and often physically demanding, such as landscaping, cooking, cleaning, or building.

Michèle Lamont (2000) also conducted a study looking at the boundaries drawn by working-class men. She found that, unlike men from the middle class, working-class men placed a stronger emphasis on moral boundaries. Emphasizing morality helped the workers maintain a sense of **self**-worth. The moral boundaries allowed them to affirm their dignity independently of their relatively low social status and to locate themselves above others. Particularly, they drew a line between themselves and the more economically advantaged whom they perceived as less morally pure.

Working-class families tend to engage in the accomplishment of the natural growth method of

child-rearing. In this approach, families provide the basic necessities, which is an accomplishment given the harsh economic conditions they face. Parents assume that their children's growth will occur naturally. As a result, there is less emphasis placed on participating in after-school activities. Instead, the children engage in child-initiated play with friends and family (Lareau 2003).

While there are benefits to this approach to raising children, our institutions tend to favor middle-class child-rearing techniques. For example, schools tend to expect heavy parental involvement. For working-class kids, this disconnect between their **socialization** and what institutions expect from them leads to a sense of constraint (Lareau 2003; Calarco 2018).

Beneath the working class is the working poor. They have unskilled, low-paying employment. Their jobs rarely offer benefits such as healthcare or retirement planning, and their positions are often seasonal or temporary. They may work as migrant farm workers, house cleaners, or day laborers. Member education is limited. Some lack a high school diploma.

How can people work full-time and still be poor? Even working full-time, millions of the working poor earn incomes too meager to support a family. The government requires employers to pay a minimum wage that varies from state to state and often leaves individuals and families below the poverty line. In addition to low wages, the value of the wage has not kept pace with inflation. "The real value of the federal minimum wage has dropped 17 percent since 2009 and 31 percent since 1968" (Cooper, Gould, and Zipperer 2019). Furthermore, the living wage, the amount necessary to meet minimum standards, differs across the country because the cost of living differs. Therefore, the amount of income necessary to survive in an area such as New York City differs dramatically from a small town in Oklahoma (Glasmeier 2020).

A Closer Look: Wealth and Inequality in the Western United States

Figure 8.7 Downtown Aspen, Colorado. How does wealth change the dynamics of small towns?

Recently, some sociologists explored class disparities in small towns across the Western United States. In his book *Billionaire Wilderness: The Ultra-Wealthy and the Remaking of the American West* (2020), Justin Farrell examines the class relationships between billionaires/millionaires and working-class people in Jackson, Wyoming. He found that billionaires and millionaires were attracted to Wyoming not only because they wanted to be "closer to nature" and authentic rural communities but also because living in Wyoming offered significant tax breaks. The resulting high concentration of wealthy people created the "richest county in the United States and the county with the nation's highest level of income inequality" (Farrell 2020:3).

For the billionaires, the natural environment provided "therapeutic" experiences and became the focus of their engagement with the community. Instead of supporting organizations that provided social services, the ultra-wealthy turned their philanthropic efforts toward

environmental and arts organizations, what Farrell calls "gilded green philanthropy." The billionaires and millionaires adopted some of the fashion of the working class and used working-class people to help navigate the stigma they thought they faced. In contrast, the working class, which was largely Latinx, struggled to get by, especially when it came to finding affordable housing.

Focusing on a similarly wealthy community, Jenny Stuber (2021) explored Aspen, Colorado, (figure 8.7) in her book *Aspen and the American Dream: How One Town Manages Inequality in the Era of Supergentrification*. In the book, Stuber begins with a contradiction, asking "How is it possible for a town to exist where the median household income is $73,000, but the median home price is about $4 million?" (Stuber 2021:1). She found that the unique place-based class culture of Aspen allowed the middle class to survive. In Aspen, its history of progressiveness, a priority on "Keeping Aspen, Aspen," and an extensive affordable housing program made it possible for middle-class families to continue to live in the community. Families making up to $300,000 per year were eligible for subsidized housing (Stuber 2021:55). The city used a variety of tax policies to help fund the program and land use codes to help control the growth of the town.

In her book *Dividing Paradise: Rural Inequality and the Diminishing American Dream*, Jennifer Sherman examined a rural valley in Eastern Washington that was close to a variety of natural amenities. While the wealth disparities were not as vast as those in Jackson or Aspen, there still existed a complicated class dynamic. She documented the influx of "newcomers," who tended to be wealthier and have higher amounts of economic, cultural, and **social capital** than the existing working-class community, called the "old timers."

The newcomers felt a sense of community and connected to what was going on in the valley. They also had better access to housing, well-paying jobs, and social support. In contrast, old-timers felt increasingly isolated and struggled to get by. They faced an unstable and unaffordable housing market, while working low-wage and seasonal jobs. The newcomers displayed "class blindness," the inability to comprehend how their class advantages worked for them, while blaming the struggles of old timers on individual characteristics (Sherman 2021:63).

As you reflect on these three studies, what similarities can you identify between the locations? What are some major differences in these places? How might the characteristics of these places contribute to wealth inequality?

Poverty

In the United States, poverty is most often referred to as a relative rather than an absolute measurement. **Absolute poverty** is an economic condition in which a family or individual cannot afford basic necessities, such as food and shelter, so day-to-day survival is in jeopardy. **Relative poverty** is an economic condition in which the income of a family or individual is less than 50 percent of the average median income. This is sometimes called the poverty level or the poverty line.

The Social Security Administration established the official poverty line in the 1960s as a way to measure the number of people living in poverty and to assess how much it changed. In the United States, the government uses the poverty line (figure 8.8), to indicate the total annual income below which a family would be impoverished. It is based on a minimum family food budget and assumes the average low-income family spends a third of their income on food. The official U.S. poverty rate in 2020 was 11.4 percent, which equates to about 37.2 million people (Shrider et al. 2021)

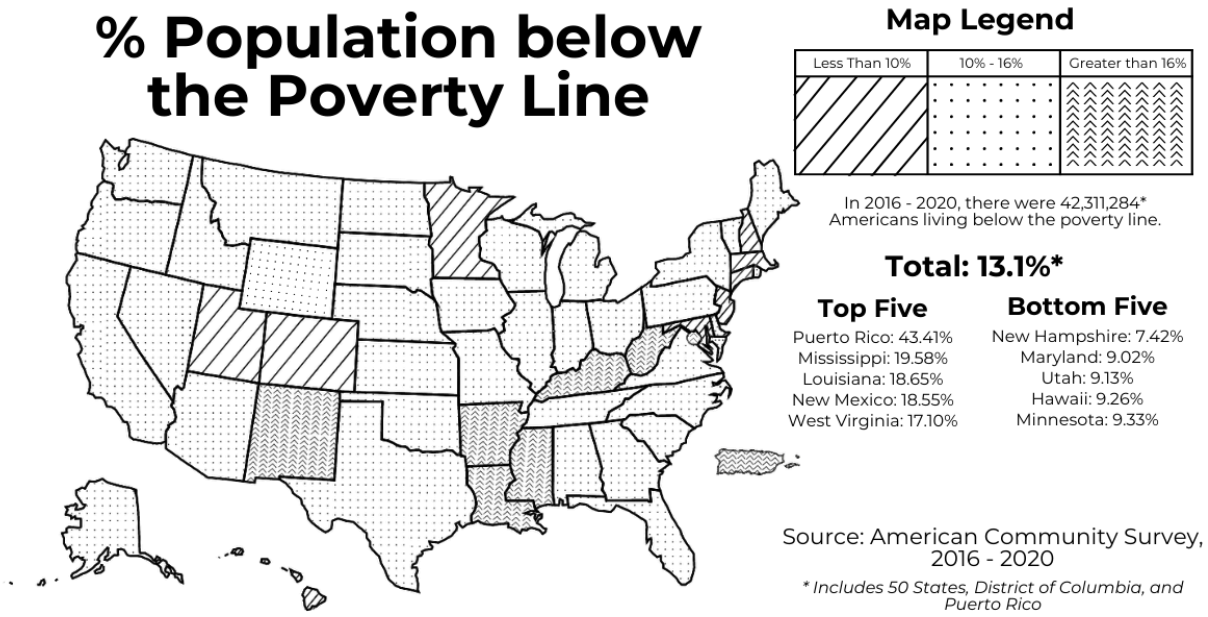

Figure 8.8 The poverty line refers to the minimum amount of money a person needs to fulfill the basic necessities of life. How is poverty patterned across the country? County-level poverty rates based on the American Community Survey 2016–2020.

There has been a continuing debate about the poverty line. Conservatives argue that if benefits provided to poor people, such as Medicaid, subsidized housing, and reduced-price school lunches, are included in the measure, then the extent of poverty is much less than reported. Liberals argue the federal poverty line underestimates poverty and that the thresholds are too low. They point to costs other than food, such as childcare, heating, and housing, that should be incorporated into the measure. There are also regional differences in the cost of living, and therefore the poverty line neglects poor people in expensive cities.

Demographically, some groups are more likely to experience poverty than others. These include (Shrider et al. 2021):

1. **Single-parent families**: For female-headed single-parent households, the poverty rate was 23.4 percent in 2020. For male-headed single-

parent households, the poverty rate was 11.5 percent. For married couples, the poverty rate was 4.7 percent. With a couple, there is the potential for dual incomes and more childcare options.

2. **Children**: In 2020, 16.1 percent of children under the age of 18 were living in poverty. The United States generally has lower-quality childcare services than other developed countries. Without high-quality, affordable childcare, it can become difficult for a parent to work steadily.
3. **Minority groups**: While White people make up the largest **group** of people living in poverty (15.9 million people), minority groups disproportionately experience poverty. In 2020, 19.5 percent of Black people experienced poverty, and 17 percent of Hispanics experienced poverty. This can be traced to numerous factors, such as low wages, **discrimination** (in housing, education, health care), and differences in education level. We will explore the influence of **race** on these processes in Chapter 11.
4. **People with disabilities**: In 2020, 25 percent of adults (18 to 64) with a disability lived in poverty. Significant numbers of those who are poor have struggled with disabilities since childhood. A serious disability can make it hard to get a job and can hamper other aspects of life. It is important to note that poverty can lead to and worsen disabilities, but disabilities are not unique to poor families.

There are several explanations for why people become poor. A lot of Americans believe in rags-to-riches stories and the American Dream (exemplified by the sayings "if you work hard, you'll get ahead" and "pull yourself up by the bootstraps"). From this perspective, the poor are those who fail to work hard. Poverty is seen as the result of individual laziness or lack of motivation. In other words, the poor only have themselves to blame for their situation. Often, moral or genetic deficiencies will be attributed to those experiencing poverty. You have the opportunity to learn more about commonly held myths related to poverty in the next section "Pedagogical Element: Myths of Poverty."

Structural explanations attribute poverty to the institutions of society, such as trends in the labor markets or corporations. It assumes poverty is a result of economic and social imbalances within the society. These can include larger forces such as severe recession, low wages, and the rise of part-time work. During severe recessions, breadwinners can lose their jobs or have their incomes reduced. People can lose their homes to foreclosure. They may use their retirement savings to live on and rack up credit card debt. When wages are low, people may not be able to cover all of their expenses. Another structural condition is the rise of part-time and gig work. These types of work receive minimal benefits and often have a minimum wage. As a result, those with jobs end up living on bare-bones budgets and have difficulty affording the basics of life.

More recently, sociologists have adopted a relational perspective to understand poverty. Rather than being something that is individually determined or the product of social forces, poverty is seen as emerging through interactions between those who have resources and those who do not (Desmond and Western 2018). Exploitation is one of the transactional mechanisms between people that helps produce poverty. This could be owners exploiting workers or landlords exploiting tenants. Discrimination and violence also play a role in producing poverty.

Activity: Myths of Poverty

Poverty affects different groups in many ways. However, there are a number of misconceptions when it comes to understanding the experience of poverty and who lives in poverty.

Mark Rank, a well-known sociologist who studies poverty, has identified several myths that people tend to believe about poverty. Read the **six myths about poverty [Website]** Rank describes on his website, then discuss:

1. Where do the myths originate?
2. Which groups might benefit from the myths?
3. Are there other myths you might add to the list?

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8.5 Conclusion

While the **class** and racial **caste system** in the United States limits our potential, it does not have to remain that way. The stratification system is something that was created by people, so it can be altered and challenged by people. Let's return to the two individuals with very different positions in the stratification system at the beginning of the chapter that had one organization tying them together—Amazon.

Given what we have discussed in this chapter, Jeff Bezos is part of the elite. He has a variety of resources that most of us do not. He also is clearly an owner. In contrast, Derrick Palmer is a worker who does not have much control over his work.

Derrick Palmer and his best friend from the warehouse, Christian Smalls, helped organize the first union at an Amazon warehouse (JFK8 in New York). Smalls, an African American like Palmer, was a high performer on Amazon's performance metrics and hoped to rise in the company.

Their initial small walkout in the early days of the pandemic resulted in the company forming a reaction team. Amazon's counsel, in an email accidentally sent to over a thousand people, smeared Smalls as "not smart, or articulate." An anti-union consultant allegedly called Palmer and Smalls "thugs." Amazon ultimately fired Smalls (Kantor et al. 2021a, 2021b).

Palmer and Smalls continued their unionization efforts despite the heavy resistance from Amazon. Adopting more of a collectivist organizational structure and working independently of established unions, the leaders used social media and in-person events, such as potlucks and bonfires to build support. In April 2022, the workers at JFK8 voted to unionize. Smalls thanked Jeff Bezos, "because while he was up in space, we were signing people up" (Lyons 2022).

In this chapter, we explored different forms of stratification and how those systems tend to cohere. We then turned to how sociologists have

sought to explain stratification and social class. We concluded with a tour of the class structure in the United States. In the next chapter, we will explore **gender** and how it is intertwined with stratification.

KEY TERMS

- **Absolute poverty**: an economic condition in which a family or individual cannot afford basic necessities, such as food and shelter, so that day-to-day survival is in jeopardy.
- **Caste system**: a stratification system based on culture and honor. It is a closed system and has high status consistency.
- **Class**: a set of people who share similar status based on factors like wealth, income, education, family background, and occupation.
- **Class system**: a stratification system that is based on social factors and individual achievement. It has some degree of openness.
- **Closed system**: a stratification system in which people cannot move between different layers.
- **Concerted cultivation**: a middle-class child rearing technique in which parents actively foster their children's development.
- **Davis and Moore hypothesis**: a functionalist theory that argues stratification is universal and necessary.
- **Dominant ideology**: in Marxist theory, the dominant ideas of a time period. It reflects the interests of the owners and makes what is socially constructed seem natural.
- **Income**: a person's wages or investment dividends. Earned on a regular basis.
- **Meritocracy**: a hypothetical system in which social stratification is determined by personal effort and merit.
- **Open system**: a stratification system that allows people to move between layers.
- **Power elite**: the class in command of the major hierarchies and organizations of modern society.
- **Relative poverty**: an economic condition in which a family or individuals have 50 percent income less than the average median income.
- **Social stratification**: a society's categorization of its people into rankings based on factors like wealth, income, education, family background, and power.
- **Socioeconomic mobility**: the movement of people between classes and occupations.
- **Socioeconomic status (SES)**: an individual's place within the stratification system.
- **Status consistency**: the consistency of an individual's rank across the factors that determine social stratification within a lifetime.
- **Status groups**: communities based on living a specific lifestyle.
- **Status inconsistency**: when an individual can have a lot of one type of resource, but not another.
- **Wealth**: the net value of money and assets a person has. It is accumulated over time.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If you were to update figure 8.2 with contemporary classes in the United States, what classes would you include? What might you say about those classes? Why?
2. How would you characterize the stratification system in the United States? What aspects are like a class system? When might it be like a caste system?
3. Which explanation of stratification do you find most convincing? Why? How does it align with how you think about social class?
4. What are some examples of upper-class institutions in your community? How might they exclude people from different classes?
5. Why do you think people tend to idealize the middle class in the United States?
6. How does the work of Annette Lareau compare to your upbringing and socialization? What might it miss?
7. How is poverty socially patterned? What are some sociological explanations for its causes?

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CHAPTER

9

Figure 9.1 Pink is for girls and blue is for boys?

Gender: Identities, Interactions, and Institutions

9.1 Chapter Learning Objectives and Overview

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Define and differentiate between **sex** and **gender**.
2. Define and discuss what is meant by **gender identity**.
3. Distinguish the meanings of different sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions.

4. Examine how gender is socially constructed.
5. Explain the influence of **socialization** on gender **roles** in the United States.
6. Discuss cross cultural and historical variations in gender.
7. Recognize examples of how **gender policing** limits gender expression.
8. Examine how gender intersects with other identities, such as **race** and **ethnicity**.
9. Explain the stratification of gender in major American institutions.
10. Analyze examples of gender inequality in the United States.
11. Describe the rise of **feminism** in the United States.

Overview

June 24, 2022

My spouse and I sit on the couch watching our 15-month-old twins play. Born during the pandemic, they don't have many playmates, but fortunately they have each other. Like other parents with the **privilege** of time and financial resources, we read about different styles of parenting and ways to foster their development. Inundated with so much information, which may very well change by the time this textbook is published, we ultimately decided to do our best and to deemphasize traditional gender roles. Our children wear "girl" clothes and "boy" clothes, and we often allow them to select their clothing by pointing to one outfit or another (figure 9.1). We try not to reinforce a gender ideology behind the toys they select or the ways they interact with others. Instead, we try to work on skills like sharing, kindness, and speaking up for what they want (as much as possible, which currently looks more like gestures, signs, and squeals). We model behavior where sometimes Mom cooks/cleans/drives, and sometimes Dad cooks/cleans/drives.

I open this chapter with a story that links to gender socialization or at least our attempt at degendering (deemphasizing gender roles) because gender is often discussed at the individual level, such as practices of socialization. Don't worry, we do that in this chapter; however, right now I'd like to bring your attention to how gender acts to organize us at a structural level. For many students, this concept is a hard one to grasp. Our **social institutions** and how gender is viewed within them have real consequences on our daily lives (and the lives of our children).

What do I mean when I say gender itself structures our lives and opportunities? Sociologists view gender as something that is embedded in our organizations and how they are structured. In other words, our organizational structure itself is not gender neutral. Instead, assumptions about gender are built into positions and jobs, a fact that is made invisible by obscuring the gendered nature of work (Acker 1990). In a patriarchal **society**, the universal worker, voter, and so on, becomes a man. Sociologist Joan Acker theorizes that organizations are structured along the lines of **class** and gender by looking at hierarchies within the organization of work. By examining how gender and the **norms** that we construct around it act to shape our daily experiences, we learn more about how gender structures social order. First, we focus on distinctions between the concepts of sex, gender, and identity. We will also explore the relationship between gender and **intersectionality** before moving on to examining inequalities within social institutions. Finally, we will review the waves of feminist social movements that contributed to changing the ways women and men experience the world.

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9.2 Sex, Gender, and Identity

When filling out a document such as a job application or school registration form, you are often asked to provide your name, address, phone number, birth date, and **sex** or **gender**. But have you ever been asked to provide your sex *and* your gender?

Like most people, you may not have realized that sex and gender are not the same. However, sociologists and most other social scientists view them as conceptually distinct. **Sex** refers to physical or physiological differences between males and females, including both primary sex characteristics (the reproductive system) and secondary characteristics, such as height and muscularity. **Gender** refers to behaviors, personal traits, and social positions that **society** attributes to being a woman or a man.

A person's sex, as determined by their biology, does not always correspond with their gender. Therefore, the terms sex and gender are not interchangeable. A baby who is born with male genitalia will most likely be identified as male. As a child or adult, however, they may identify with the feminine aspects of culture. Since the term "sex" refers to biological or physical distinctions, characteristics of sex will not vary significantly between different human societies. Generally, persons of the female sex, regardless of culture, will eventually menstruate and develop breasts that can lactate.

Characteristics of gender, on the other hand, may vary greatly between different societies. For example, in U.S. culture, it is considered feminine (or a trait of the female gender) to wear a dress or skirt. However, in many Middle Eastern, Asian, and African cultures, sarongs, robes, or gowns are considered masculine. The kilt worn by a Scottish man does not make him appear feminine in that culture.

Perception versus Expectation

The way we use language is influenced by our culture. Culturally coded words can also impact how we perceive gender or, more specifically, **roles** for women and men. U.S. society allows for some level of flexibility when it comes to acting out gender roles. To a certain extent, men can assume some feminine roles, and women can assume some masculine roles without interfering with their **gender identity**. **Gender identity** is a person's deeply held internal perception of one's gender. **Gender expression**, or gender presentation, is a person's behavior, mannerisms, interests, and appearance that are associated with gender, specifically with the categories of femininity or masculinity. The ways in which people express their gender identity are both particular to each individual and variable across cultures. This can

include gender roles and categories that often rely on stereotypes about gender. Genderbread Person (figure 9.2) offers a visual to help you distinguish between gender identity and gender expression. Learn more about these concepts in the next section "Activity: Gender Identity, Gender Binaries, and **Colonialism**."

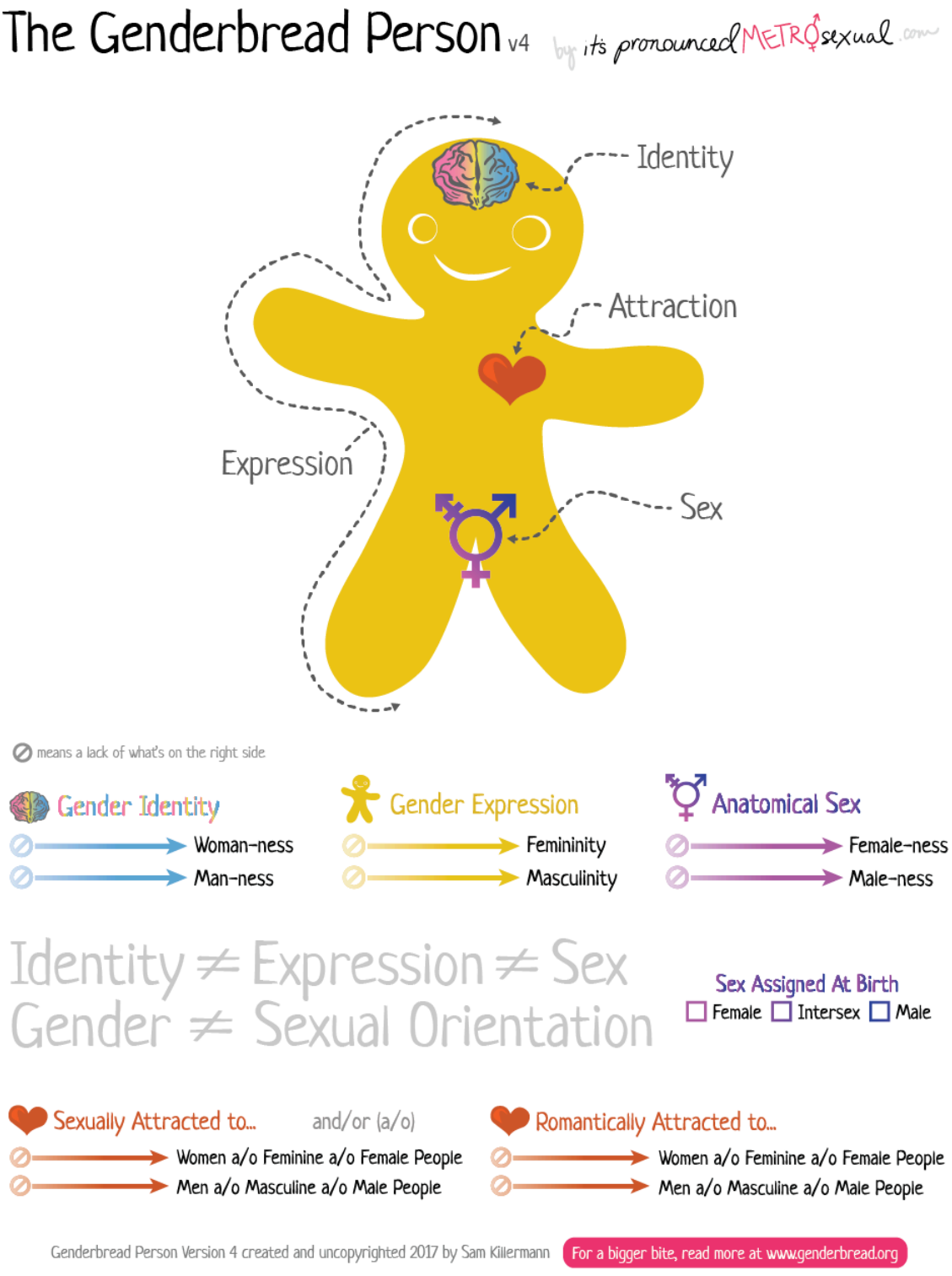

Figure 9.2 The Genderbread Person graphic distinguishes between gender identity, expression, sex, and attraction.

Activity: Gender Identity, Gender Binaries, and Colonialism

In this short video, you will see people across the world discuss the **diversity** of their experiences with gender identity (figure 9.3).

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AqEgsHGiK-s**

Figure 9.3 What role has colonialism played in shaping gender identities? **Transcript.**

Please watch **Gender identity: 'How colonialism killed my culture's gender fluidity' [Streaming Video]** and come back to answer the following questions:

1. How does your culture influence your gender identity?
2. How do different attitudes toward gender fluidity shape individuals' experiences with gender identity?
3. How has colonialism affected gender diversity?

The "rules" of gender are based on accepted gender roles. **Gender role** refers to the expected role for individuals based on society's notions of the attitudes, behaviors, **norms**, and **values** that are appropriate for women and men. Traditionally, American culture associates masculine roles with strength, aggression, and dominance, while feminine roles are usually associated with passivity, nurturing, and subordination.

Social Construction of Gender

Gender is a constant part of who and what we are, how others treat us, and our general standing in society. Gender differences are visible in different aspects of behavior, emotions, and relationships and in the organization of **social institutions**, such as work and family. Often, gender is divided into two major categories: women and men. The social construction of gender helps us understand how people produce differences between women's and men's characteristics and behavior. By understanding how gender is socially constructed, we can see how gender inequality is reproduced.

Patriarchy or a patriarchal society refers to an environment where characteristics associated with men and masculinity have more power and authority. In the evaluation of gender differences within a patriarchal society, women are ranked lower than men. Even the valued characteristics of women, such as empathy, nurturance, and care for others, are ranked lower. Because men and boys are held in higher social regard than women and girls and are granted additional advantages and rights, gender differences produce gender inequality.

The social constructionist perspective allows us to understand changes in gendered practices and shows that social norms change over time. However, change does not come easily. Many foundational assumptions of the gendered social order are legitimated by religion, taught by education, upheld by mass media, and enforced by systems of **social control**. From a **sociological perspective**, we examine how trends change over time. Historically, all infants in the United States wore gowns that were typically white. After the invention of manufacturing and mass production, we saw the use of color but pink was identified as a strong masculine color, while blue was associated with femininity (Paoletti 2012).

Some researchers suggest that the process of gender **socialization** begins in utero. During pregnancy after learning the sex, parents and guardians begin talking to their fetus in gendered ways (Martin 2003). Other researchers argue that children learn gender as infants. Between the ages two and three years, most children understand what sex they are and begin to identify the types of social norms they should participate in. Around this age, children develop preferences for same-sex playmates and have positive attitudes toward their own **group** (Martin and Ruble 2002; Shows and Gerstel 2009).

Masculinity

Masculinity involves the performance of gender shaped by society's expectations for men. At a young age, parents of boys express concern over their children's participation in "feminine" activities, such as wearing pink, dressing up in feminine attire, or wearing nail polish (Kane 2006). In Emily Kane's research, outside of learning to cook and clean, parents assumed "feminine" behaviors were inappropriate for boys and often expressed distress by questioning why a particular behavior was occurring. Interestingly enough, parents who were open to gender non-conforming behavior still discouraged femininity as a way to protect their children from social disapproval. As this example illustrates, the fear of social disapproval stems from a culture that defines masculinity in opposition to femininity (figure 9.4). Boys and

men are taught to avoid femininity or being perceived as feminine.

Figure 9.4 Growing up, what were your favorite toys? What did those toys teach you about what behaviors and style of play were acceptable?

In her foundational text, *Gender & Power,* Connell (1987) introduces the idea that there are multiple masculinities. Forms of masculinity that are generally valued and perceived as socially acceptable in **dominant culture** can be extremely constraining. **Hegemonic masculinity** is the masculine ideal that is viewed as superior to any other kind of masculinity as well as to any form of femininity (Connell 1987; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). Characteristics and behaviors associated with this ideal standard of masculinity may change over time (Connell 1987, 1995). However, we continue to see an emphasis placed on masculinity that aligns with characteristics of independence, aggression, competition, and toughness.

Extreme versions of hegemonic masculinity that conform to the more aggressive rules of masculinity are sometimes referred to as hypermasculinity (Wade and Ferree 2015). In our culture, hypermasculinity tends to glorify the aggression that one might associate with action movies, video games, and even some athletic performances. In reality, men are not inherently violent, but hypermasculine performances of gender make some men's violence, aggression, and anger seem normal.

Some scholars identify an even more extreme form of hegemonic masculinity as toxic masculinity. The term "toxic masculinity" captures some of the cultural pressures placed on men to conform to hegemonic masculinity. Men may engage in risky behaviors to achieve the culturally approved standards of manhood. Psychologists argue that these standards of manhood take a negative toll on men's mental and physical health (Iwamoto et al. 2018). Toxic masculinity can be found in both academic and popular cultural contexts. Both generally depict a masculinity that exhibits toughness, rejects anything feminine, and prioritizes power and status (Thompson and Pleck 1986; Morin 2020).

While there is debate over how much new styles of masculinity challenge hegemonic masculinity, scholars agree that our constructions of masculinity fit into a larger issue of gender inequality (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). Research on masculinities has explored a few different areas including: 1) various forms and styles of masculinity, 2) different ways scholars use the concept of hegemonic masculinity, 3) female masculinities, and 4) how power and masculinity intertwine through the lens of globalization. Some researchers argue that masculinity is no longer strictly defined against femininity. Instead, the intersections of **class** and **race** create a new line of division. For example, the class-privileged, White "new man" of the 1990s may challenge traditional depictions of hegemonic masculinity. However, this "new man" is constructed against the "macho" masculine gender display of subordinated men of color who have less power and socioeconomic status (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Messner 1994). Instead of emphasizing power dynamics along the lines of gender, we see the ways that race and socioeconomic status play a role in constructing a masculine ideal.

The notion of a "new man" comes from what sociologist Tristen Bridges refers to as hybrid masculinities. Hybrid masculinities are created

when subordinated styles and displays of gender are co-opted by men with privileged identities (Bridges 2014; Bridges and Pascoe 2014, 2018). For instance, men with class **privilege** may participate in personal grooming practices that are traditionally perceived as feminine as a way to enhance their positions of privilege with displays of metrosexual style (Barber 2016). Rather than undermining the unequal power relations embedded in hegemonic masculinity, Bridges and Pascoe (2018) argue that hybrid masculinities conceal systems of inequalities related to gender and **sexuality**.

Femininity

While men's performances of **doing gender** are routinely subjected to **gender policing**, women often have more freedom and are sometimes rewarded for performances of masculinity. **Gender policing** refers to the responses we receive when we violate gender rules. A "tomboy" (a girl who acts masculine) is usually regarded more positively than a "sissy" (a boy who acts feminine). Think back to Emily Kane's research that we learned about in the masculinity section. Parents were nervous about boys' performances of femininity and discouraged the practices, but expressed delight in their girls' gender non-conforming behavior and even encouraged participation in traditionally male activities such as T-ball, football, and using tools (Kane 2006:156-7).

However, this does not mean that women are free of gender policing completely. Instead, the approval reflects how masculinity is perceived as more highly valued in a patriarchal society. Women are simply tapping into the characteristics that are already highly sought after and rewarded in their culture.

Even so, women engaging in what others consider too much masculinity will receive the same gender policing men who participate in a little femininity receive. The expectation that women learn to balance their interest in "masculine" activities and traits with a feminine gender performance is called the feminine apologetic (Wade and Ferree 2015). For example, women athletes often participate in the feminine apologetic by making efforts to appear feminine (figures 9.5*A* and 9.5*B*; 9.6), apologizing for aggression, or marking themselves as heterosexual to counter their success in sports, an arena that is often considered masculine (Davis-Delano et al. 2009). The strategy of using the feminine apologetic enables women to benefit from participating in masculinity without attracting violent gender policing (Hardy 2014).

Figure 9.5 Representations of emphasized femininity on magazine covers and in advertisements. Women athletes like Candace Parker and Anna Rawson are often posed in ways that have little to do with their sport.

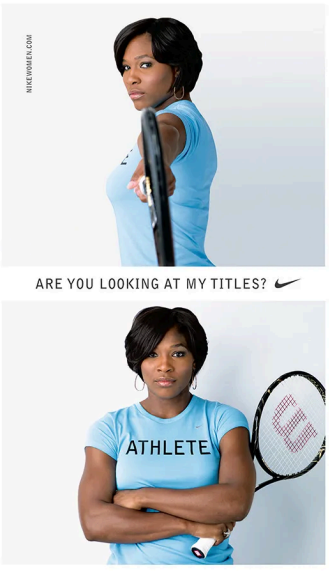

Figure 9.6 Got titles? Overtly sexualized images have implications for how women's athletics are perceived.

When we examine power relations, there are some disadvantages to "doing" femininity. In dominant culture, many of the traits associated with femininity are largely devalued in society. Power is gendered, and the current construction of femininity draws on traits that are passive and show deference to hegemonic masculinity. In other words, "doing" femininity also requires the embodiment of powerlessness to some extent.

In *Gender & Power,* Connell (1987) also spent some time theorizing femininity, particularly the concept of **emphasized femininity**. **Emphasized femininity** is "the pattern of femininity which is given most cultural and ideological support" (Connell 1987:24). It is "defined around compliance with subordination and is oriented to accommodating the interests and desires of men" (Connell 1987:187). She argues that this version of femininity is a reaction to hegemonic masculinity, and although it has value, masculinity at large is still perceived as more highly valued. Originally, theories on femininity focused on it as a subordinated gender performance and did not expand

on the ways that some forms of femininity have power over others. The limitations of this approach are evident when we consider femininity and its connections to hegemonic power relations (Hamilton et al. 2019).

Sociologist Patricia Hill Collins (1990; 2004) extends Connell's theorizing of femininity by incorporating an intersectional lens. She argues that hegemonic femininity is race-based, class-based, and gender-based. When women accomplish the ideals of femininity, they are contributing to **oppression** through what Collins refers to as the matrix of domination. Hegemonic femininities hold a powerful position in the matrix, resulting in some women receiving benefits over others (Hamiliton et al. 2019). We will examine the concept of **intersectionality** more in the next section.

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9.3 Beyond the Binary

Gender binary refers to classifying gender into distinct forms of masculine and feminine. The classification of gender may occur through the social systems or cultural beliefs dominant in a particular environment. In the last section, you learned that the idea of a binary system for gender has roots in **colonialism**. Similar to the way power relations affect the social construction of gender, there are different ideologies used when understanding gender. **Essentialists** see gender as a biological and unchanging, two-category system. They view gender as something that can be classified into distinct categories. **Essentialism** views chromosomes, hormones, and genitalia as key factors in determining one's **gender identity**. This perspective does not create much space to account for the role of culture, how one views themselves, and how they interact with others.

Most sociologists view gender from a constructionist approach. As introduced in Chapter 4, social constructionism is the **theory** that all reality and meaning is subjective and created through dynamic interactions with other individuals and groups. According to this approach, gender is shaped socially and changes over time. Behaviors that are associated with femininity and masculinity reflect culture and patterns of interaction that are considered normative during certain historical time periods.

The binary view of gender (the notion that someone is either masculine or feminine) is specific to certain cultures and is not universal. In some cultures, gender is viewed as fluid. Anthropologists found that among some Indigenous tribes, the terms *berdache* or "two-spirit" people refer to individuals who occasionally or permanently dressed and lived as a different gender. Berdaches may also participate in labor **roles** traditionally associated with their preferred masculine or feminine style of clothing. Samoan culture accepts what Samoans refer to as a "third gender." *Fa'afafine*, which translates as "the way of the woman," is a term used to describe individuals who are born biologically male but embody both masculine and feminine traits. Fa'afafines are considered an important part of Samoan culture. Individuals from other cultures may mislabel their **sexuality** because fa'afafines have a varied sexual life that may include men and women (Poasa 1992).

Examining Sex Assignment and Gender Identity

Gender identity may or may not correspond with the **sex** a person was assigned at birth. **Cisgender** refers to those who identify with the sex they were assigned at birth. The term cisgender uses the Latin prefix *cis-*, which means "on the same side." For example, a child is assigned female at birth and later **self**-identifies as a woman or a child is assigned male at birth and self-identifies as a man. The term cisgender does not indicate a person's **sexual orientation** or gender expression.

Transgender refers to a person whose sex assigned at birth and gender identity are not necessarily the same. A transgender woman is a person who was assigned male at birth but who identifies and/or lives as a woman; a transgender man was assigned female at birth but identifies and/or lives as a man. While determining the size of the transgender population is difficult, it is estimated that 1.4 million adults (Herman 2016) and 2 percent of high school students in the United States identify as transgender (Johns 2019). The term transgender does not indicate sexual orientation or a particular gender expression, and we should avoid making assumptions about people's

sexual orientation based on knowledge about their gender identity (GLAAD 2021).

Some transgender individuals may undertake a process of transition, in which they move from living in a way that is more aligned with the sex assigned at birth to living in a way that is aligned with their gender identity. Transitioning may occur in the social, legal, or medical aspects of someone's life, but not everyone undertakes any or all types of transition. Social transition may involve the person's presentation, name, pronouns, and relationships. Legal transition can include changing their gender on government or other official documents, changing their legal name, and so on. Some people may undergo a physical or medical transition, in which they change their outward, physical, or sexual characteristics so their physical presentation better aligns with their gender identity (UCSF Transgender Care 2019).

Not all transgender individuals choose to alter their bodies: many will maintain their original anatomy but may present themselves to **society** as another gender. This is typically done by adopting the dress, hairstyle, mannerisms, or other characteristics typically assigned to another gender. It is important to note that people who cross-dress or wear clothing that is traditionally assigned to a gender different from their biological sex are not necessarily transgender. Cross-dressing is typically a form of self-expression or personal style, and it does not indicate a person's gender identity or that they are transgender (TSER 2021).

Actress and activist Laverne Cox speaks publicly supporting transgender rights. Figure 9.7 shows Cox during part of her "Ain't I a Woman?" **speaking tour [Website]**, which you can explore if you wish. She discusses how the intersection of **race**, **class**, and gender contributes to our complex identities and how trans people in particular are affected.

Figure 9.7 Laverne Cox during her "Ain't I a Woman?" speaking tour. You have the option to learn more about her and her work by reviewing **Laverne Cox bio [Website]** and **RFK Human Rights [Website]**.

Intersex is a general term used to describe people whose sex traits, reproductive anatomy, hormones, or chromosomes are different from the usual two ways human bodies develop. Some intersex traits are recognized at birth, while others are not recognizable until puberty or later in life (interACT 2021). While some intersex people have physically recognizable features that are described by specific medical terms, intersex people and newborns are healthy. Most in the medical and intersex community reject unnecessary surgeries intended to make a baby conform to a specific sex assignment. Medical ethicists indicate that any surgery to alter intersex characteristics or traits—if desired—should be delayed until an individual can decide for themselves (Behrens 2021).

It must be noted that intersex and transgender are not interchangeable terms. Many transgender people have no intersex traits, and many intersex people do not consider themselves transgender. Some intersex people believe that intersex people should be included within the LGBTQ community, while others do not (Koyama n.d.). Let's learn more through Shane's story (figure 9.8). Shane is a 42-year-old person who identifies on the **LGBTQIA+** spectrum. They are genderqueer, nonbinary, masculine of center, and discovered as a teenager through genetic testing that they are intersex. They were assigned female at birth, but they have an extra male chromosome. You can learn more about **what genderqueer means [Website]** if you wish.

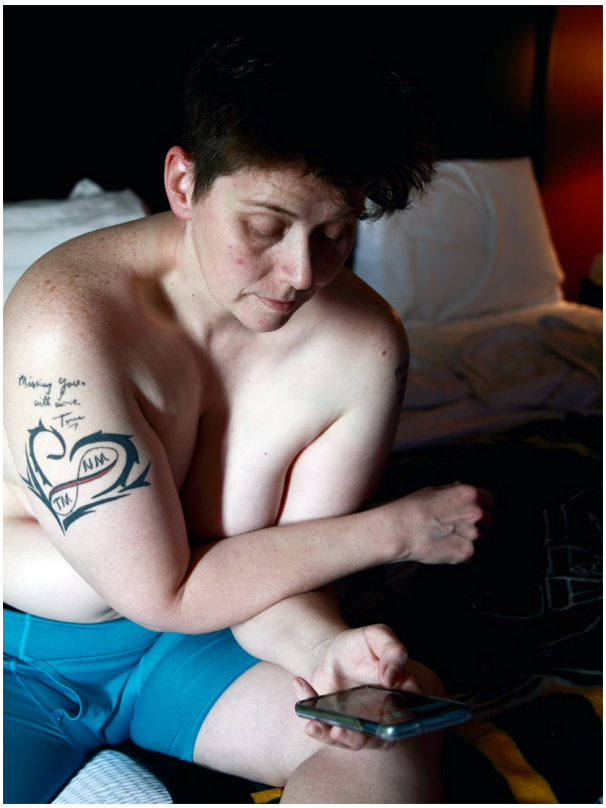

Figure 9.8 Shane gets ready for a new day. How does your morning routine contribute to how others view you as masculine, feminine, or nonbinary?

The language of sexuality, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression is continually changing and evolving. To get an overview of some of the most commonly used terms, you have the option to explore the **Trans Student Educational Resources Online Glossary [Website]**.

When individuals do not feel comfortable identifying with the gender associated with their biological sex, then they may experience **gender dysphoria**. **Gender dysphoria** is a diagnostic category in the fifth edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (*DSM-5*) that describes individuals who do not identify as the gender that most people would assume they are. This dysphoria must persist for at least six months and result in significant distress or dysfunction to meet *DSM-5* diagnostic criteria. For children to be assigned this diagnostic category, they must verbalize their desire to become the other gender.

It is important to note that not all transgender people experience gender dysphoria and that its diagnostic categorization is not universally accepted. For example, in 2019, the World Health Organization reclassified "gender identity disorder" as "gender incongruence," and categorized it under sexual health rather than as a mental disorder. However, health and mental health professionals indicate that the presence of the diagnostic category does assist in supporting those who need treatment or help.

Awareness of Gender Identity

People become aware that they may be transgender at different ages. Even if someone does not have a full (or even partial) understanding of gender terminology and its implications, they can still develop an awareness that their gender assigned at birth does not align with their gender identity. Society, particularly in the United States, has been reluctant to accept transgender identities at any age, but we have particular difficulty accepting those identities in children. Many people feel that children are too young to understand their feel-

ings and that they may "grow out of it." It is true that some children who verbalize their identification or desire to live as another gender may ultimately decide to live in alignment with their assigned gender. But if a child consistently describes themselves as a gender (or as both genders) and/or expresses themselves as that gender over a long period, their feelings cannot be attributed to going through a "phase" (Mayo Clinic 2021).

Some children, like many transgender people, may feel pressure to conform to social **norms**, which may lead them to suppress or hide their identity. Most children have a limited understanding of the social and societal impacts of being transgender, but they can feel strongly that they are not aligned with their assigned sex. Considering that many transgender people do not come out or begin to transition until much later in life—well into their 20s—they may live for a long time under that distress.

Queer is a term used to describe gender and sexual identities other than cisgender and heterosexual. The term queer has been used in different ways and has many different meanings. Originally a term meaning "strange" or "peculiar," queer came to be used in a derogatory way toward those with same-sex desires or relations in the nineteenth century. Starting in the late 1980s, queer activists began to reclaim the word and embraced it as a politically radical alternative to other LGBTQIA+ identities (Sycamore 2008). The Universalist Unitarian Association does a good job of capturing some of the common ways queer is used today, so explore Queer 101 [Website] if you wish.

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Figure 9.7. "Laverne Cox, an actress on the television show, "Orange is the New Black," speaks at CSUF" by CSUF photos is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.

Figure 9.8. "topless man with tattoo on his chest sitting on bed" by Shane is licensed under the Unsplash License.

9.4 Examining Interactions

Applying the framework of symbolic interactionism to **gender**, we have an opportunity to see how the meanings associated with gender categories are produced through the process of interaction. "**Doing gender**" is a phrase developed by sociologists Candace West and Don Zimmerman (1987). The phrase and concept continue to be built on by other scholars, but at its core, it refers to the idea that individuals perform gender based on the way that gender is socially constructed within their **society**. We accomplish or "do" gender in our daily lives through our interactions

with others and how we speak and think about gender, including the "rules" of gender that we may choose to follow or challenge.

Although we have **agency** to construct performances and engage in behaviors that are gender conforming or nonconforming, we are often held accountable for accomplishing certain "accepted" presentations of gender (West and Zimmerman 1987). Others expect people to engage in gendered performances, and they contribute to why we think about gendered behavior as "natural." In this section, you will learn more about how gender is socially constructed and learned through the process of **socialization** and the policing of behaviors. We will explore the idea that some performances and embodiments of masculinity and femininity may be more highly valued in different contexts. Finally, we will explore how gender intersects with other identities, such as **race**, **class**, and **sexuality**.

Socialization

Sociologists tend to view socialization as a lifelong process of learning and re-learning gendered expectations. Part of this learning process requires that we continually adjust to new contexts. As we age, travel, and experience new contexts we continue to learn about gender. This model of socialization explains how the "rules" of gender can change over time and how we are able to show agency, or personal control, in resisting gender rules.

Gender socialization occurs through four major **agents of socialization**: family, education, peer groups, and mass media. Each of these reinforces gender **roles** by creating and maintaining expectations of what is normal for gender-specific behavior. Gender socialization also happens in other places, such as religious institutions and the workplace. Over time, these agents lead people into a false sense that they are acting naturally rather than following a socially constructed role. In this section, we will focus primarily on the role of families in socialization.

Family is the first agent of socialization we come into contact with. Evidence shows that parents socialize sons and daughters differently. Generally speaking, girls are given more permission to step outside of traditionally feminine roles (Coltrane and Adams 2004; Kimmel 2000; Raffaelli and Ontai 2004). However, the different ways that girls and boys are socialized tend to result in more privileges for boys (figure 9.9). For instance, boys are allowed more autonomy and independence at an earlier age than daughters. They may be given fewer restrictions on appropriate clothing, dating habits, or curfews. Sons are also often free from cleaning or cooking and other household tasks that are considered feminine. Daughters are limited by their expectation to be obedient, passive, and nurturing. They are expected to take on many of the domestic responsibilities.

Figure 9.9 Watch children? Or watch daughters?

For example, something as simple as who is expected to participate in certain household chores can vary by gender. Figure 9.10 depicts a father and son maintaining the lawn, a household task that is typically completed a few times a month, while figure 9.11 shows a mother and daughter preparing a meal in the kitchen, a chore that is completed daily.

Figure 9.10 What types of household chores are this father and son participating in? How do chores vary by gender?

Figure 9.11 What types of household chores do you expect to see mothers and daughters completing?

Children tend to absorb everything around them and quickly learn about gender stereotypes. They may align themselves to certain toys as they look for parental praise. However, children are active participants in their socialization, and they may challenge gender expectations with what they know (or think they know). Children often actively participate in peer socialization when it comes to gender and help establish some "rules" about what is "right" through rigid policing (Messner 2000; Thorne 1993).

Even when parents set gender equality as a goal, there may be underlying indications of inequality. For example, boys may be asked to take out the garbage or perform other tasks that require strength or toughness, while girls may be asked to fold laundry or perform duties that require neatness and care. It has been found that fathers are firmer in their expectations for gender conformity than are mothers, and their expectations are stronger for sons than they are for daughters (Kimmel 2000). Parental socialization and normative expectations also vary along lines of social class, race, and **ethnicity**. African-American families, for instance, are more likely than Whites to model an egalitarian role structure for their children (Staples and Boulin Johnson 2004).

The drive to adhere to masculine and feminine gender roles continues later in life, a tendency sometimes referred to as "occupational sorting" (Gerdeman 2019). Men tend to outnumber women in professions such as law enforcement, the military, and politics. Women tend to outnumber men in care-related occupations such as childcare, healthcare (even though the term "doctor" still conjures the image of a man), and social work (figure 9.12). These occupational roles are examples of typical U.S. male and female behavior, derived from our culture's traditions. Adherence to these roles demonstrates fulfillment of social expectations but not necessarily personal preference (Diamond 2002). Sometimes, people work in a profession because of societal pressure and/or the opportunities afforded to them based on their gender.

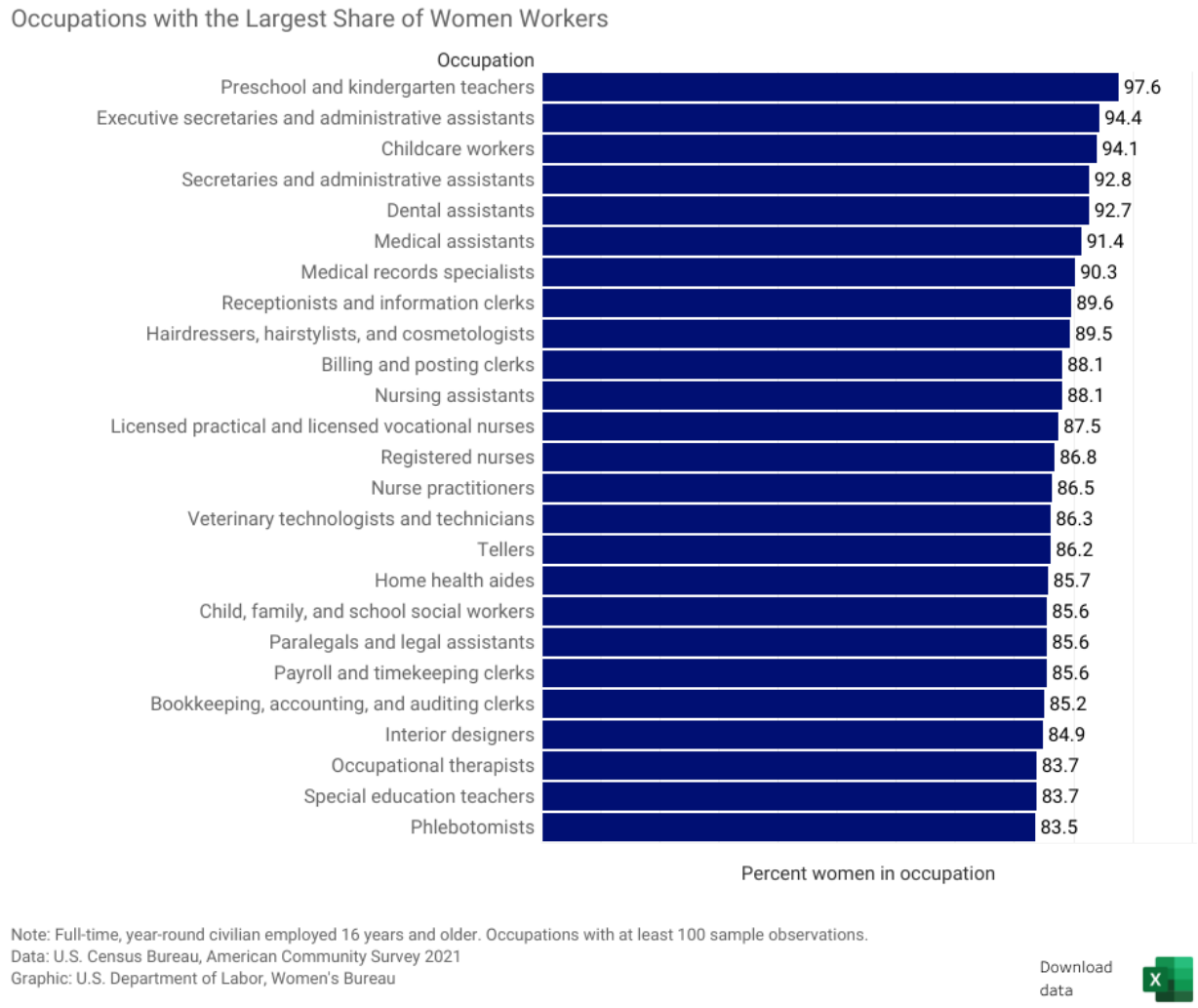

Figure 9.12 The U.S. Department of Labor tracks information on employment. Are there any occupation categories that surprise you on this list?

Historically, women have had difficulty shedding the expectation that they cannot be a "good mother" and a "good worker" at the same time, which results in fewer opportunities and lower levels of pay (Ogden 2019). Generally, men do not share this difficulty. Since the assumed role of men as fathers does not seem to conflict with their perceived work role, men who are fathers (or who are expected to become fathers) do not face the same barriers to employment or promotion (González 2019). This is sometimes referred to as the "motherhood penalty" versus the "fatherhood premium" and is prevalent in many higher-**income** countries (Bygren 2017).

Gender Policing

Socialization is a powerful force that is ongoing and occurs through many **social institutions**, such as education, mass media, and government. Considering that we have agency or free will to behave as we want, you might be wondering why so many of us follow gender rules. Often, we follow gender rules out of habit, pleasure, and out of concern for how we will be viewed by others (Wade and Ferree 2015). Gender rules become part of our culture, and we often participate in gendered practices unconsciously. In public spaces, men tend to take up more physical space

than women. Figure 9.13 illustrates how the way we take up space in public is gendered. The man, with his legs spread wide apart appears to be taking up space on the woman's seat.

Figure 9.13 Manspreading on the Stockholm Metro.

We may receive pleasure when we enact forms of masculinity and femininity that are expected of us given our genders. Quinceañeras, high school proms, and weddings all provide us with opportunities to elaborately participate in gendered displays—most often suits or tuxedos for men and dresses or gowns for women. Many people enjoy these events and invest a great deal of time, energy, and money into them.

Finally, the reactions we receive from others regarding our gender performances shape our behavior. As you learned in Chapter 4, we are often expected to conform to social **norms** or normative behaviors. In many cultures, this means conforming to binary expressions, which leads to gender inequality (figure 9.14). However, members of a society are strongly invested in maintaining the existing gender order and thus engage in "**gender policing**" to remind people of the rules of "doing" gender (Zellavos 2014). Typically, violating gender rules will lead to negative attention, which acts to reinforce the rules of gender. Consequences for violating gender rules can range from friendly, humorous teasing to more brutal and painful reactions.

Figure 9.14 Gender policing reinforces gender order and promotes inequality.

Let's look at an example from the research of American sociologist, Catherine Connell (2010), who applied West and Zimmerman's concept of "doing gender" to see the extent to which gender could be undone in a professional context where **transgender** people worked. She aimed to study if transgender people challenge how gender is "done" through their jobs and work relationships. As part of her research, Connell conducted in-depth **interviews** with 19 transgender people. Five of the participants were in "stealth mode" in their workplace, meaning they did not identify themselves as a transgender person. They saw their gender was private, and they had no desire to share this information with work colleagues. The other 14 participants had "come out" as transgender to work colleagues.

Connell found that male-to-female transgender people put a lot more work into doing gender after their transition. The transgender women talked about taking a lot more time and care in thinking about their outfits and putting on makeup. The female-to-male transgender men reported the opposite. One transgender man talked about life being easier, with less time spent on grooming. These people were acknowledging how "doing gender" happens. Society expects women to put a lot of time into their appearance, but the same

expectation is not placed on men (and yes, this is changing, but the imbalance still places women under more scrutiny).

The participants in Connell's study found that their colleagues were constantly giving them advice about how to do gender "properly"—how to dress, how to behave, how not to behave. Even though some of their colleagues were supportive, others expressed reservations about how gender reassignment might affect their employees. One computer programmer who transitioned from male to female said that her boss was afraid she wouldn't be able to do programming as well. In this respect, the transgender women felt devalued in their workplace after their transition, and they adopted what they saw as masculine traits to gain back respect. This included being "more aggressive" during meetings. For example, they might raise their voice, bang on the table, and adopt other "more assertive" behavior.

The risks of nonconformity can be high. More than being perceived as "weird" or unpopular, we may lose the support of friends and family or even experience **discrimination** in the workplace based on our gender presentation. It might be difficult to imagine blatant gender inequality today, considering the progress made by women's rights movements over the past several decades. However, despite being a numerical majority, women still hold a minority position in society. This means that women (as well as others who are members of minority groups) hold less power and experience unequal treatment in society. For example, men can take up more physical space compared to women and are less likely to be interrupted when speaking.

Inequalities emerge through **sexism,** the belief that some individuals or groups are superior to others based on **sex** or gender. Sexism connects with the concepts of **prejudice** and discrimination. Prejudice refers to a set of strongly held beliefs or attitudes about the characteristics of a **group** that are unlikely to change, even when evidence challenges those beliefs. Prejudices are difficult to change because they are often rooted in stereotypes that are part of our shared culture. Discrimination refers to behaviors or actions that create unequal treatment for individuals or groups because of their statuses (e.g., age, beliefs, ethnicity, sex) by limiting access to social resources (e.g., education, housing, jobs, legal rights, loans, or political power). Prejudice and discrimination can be based on **sexual orientation**, gender expression, and **gender identity**, which you will learn more about in Chapter 10.

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Figure 9.9. "UNITED STATES – CIRCA 1950s: Two girls walking along suburban street" by Unsplash collaboration with Getty Images is licensed under the Unsplash+ License.

Figure 9.10. "AJ and Daddy on Father's Day" by hose902 is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0.

Figure 9.11. "Women cooking foods, Vietnam, 1969" by manhai is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

Figure 9.13. "Manspreading on Stockholm Metro" by Peter Isotalo is licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0.

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Figure 9.12. "Occupations with the largest share of women workers" by U.S. Department of Labor is in the Public Domain.

9.5 Gender and Intersectionality

Intersectionality is a key idea that grew out of the third-wave feminist movement (which you will learn more about in the section "Movements for Change: **Feminism**") and feminist analyses of how **gender** and **race** are socially constructed. As you learned in Chapter 2, intersectionality is the idea that inequalities produced by multiple and interconnected social characteristics can influence the life course of an individual or **group**. Intersectionality, then, suggests that we should view gender, race, **class**, and **sexuality** not as individual characteristics but as interconnected social situations.

This perspective allows us to appreciate the ways different social structures and aspects of our identities intersect. For example, intersectionality allows us to understand how a person's identity and life experiences are shaped by **racism**, **sexism**, classism, and **homophobia** (among other systems of **oppression**). At the "intersection" of various social forces, we experience ways of being and moving about the world that differ from another person whose **social location** may be distinct from our own.

Intersectionality also examines how interlocking systems of power affect the most marginalized people in a **society**. From an intersectional perspective, multiple forms of **discrimination** combine and transform the experience of oppression. The purpose of using an intersectional lens is to understand how overlapping categories of identity change in combination with each other and how they impact individuals and institutions. The framework of intersectionality is essential to studying relations of **privilege** and power in efforts to promote social and political equity.

The Origin of Intersectionality

The **theory** of intersectionality was first articulated by Kimberlé Crenshaw (figure 9.15), a lawyer and critical race theorist who was trying to understand how antidiscrimination law could fail to account for how a Black woman might be discriminated against (Crenshaw 1989). She developed the analogy of an "inter-section" where racism and sexism meet to help us understand and see how multiple aspects of our identities—and multiple social forces that helped to shape those identities—could impact us. Crenshaw invented the term intersectionality in 1989, and it was adopted in the years that followed by feminist

scholars. More than 30 years later, the idea of intersectionality is still an urgent one. Explore Crenshaw's 2016 TED talk, "**The Urgency of Intersectionality [Streaming Video]**" if you wish.

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akOe5-UsQ2o&t=2s

Figure 9.15 Kimberlé Crenshaw speaking about intersectionality in 2018. **Transcript.**

Intersectionality and Inequality

Examining the intersection of gender, sexuality, and race provides us with an opportunity to better understand inequalities within **social institutions**. In addition to facing potential conformity pressures around gender and sexuality, **queer** youth of color may have limited social support to help them navigate the hostile environments they encounter regularly. Nationwide, schools are hostile environments for **LGBTQIA+** and gender nonconforming students of color (GSA Network 2022b). Harassment and bullying negatively affect any student's ability to succeed in school, but the impact is amplified for LBGTQ youth of color as they may be bullied based on their race, **sexual orientation**, and **gender identity** all at once (GSA Network 2022a).

The compounded bullying and harassment threaten students' learning environment and feelings of safety. In a study of queer youth who identified as Hispanic/Latinx or African American/Black, researchers found a disproportionally higher experience of suicidal ideations (Lardier 2020). In this study, the combination of limited social support and school bullying amplified the effect of suicidal ideations for queer youth of color. Figure 9.16, "Queer Youth of Color," provides additional information on the percentage of youth that have experienced harassment, assault, and houselessness.

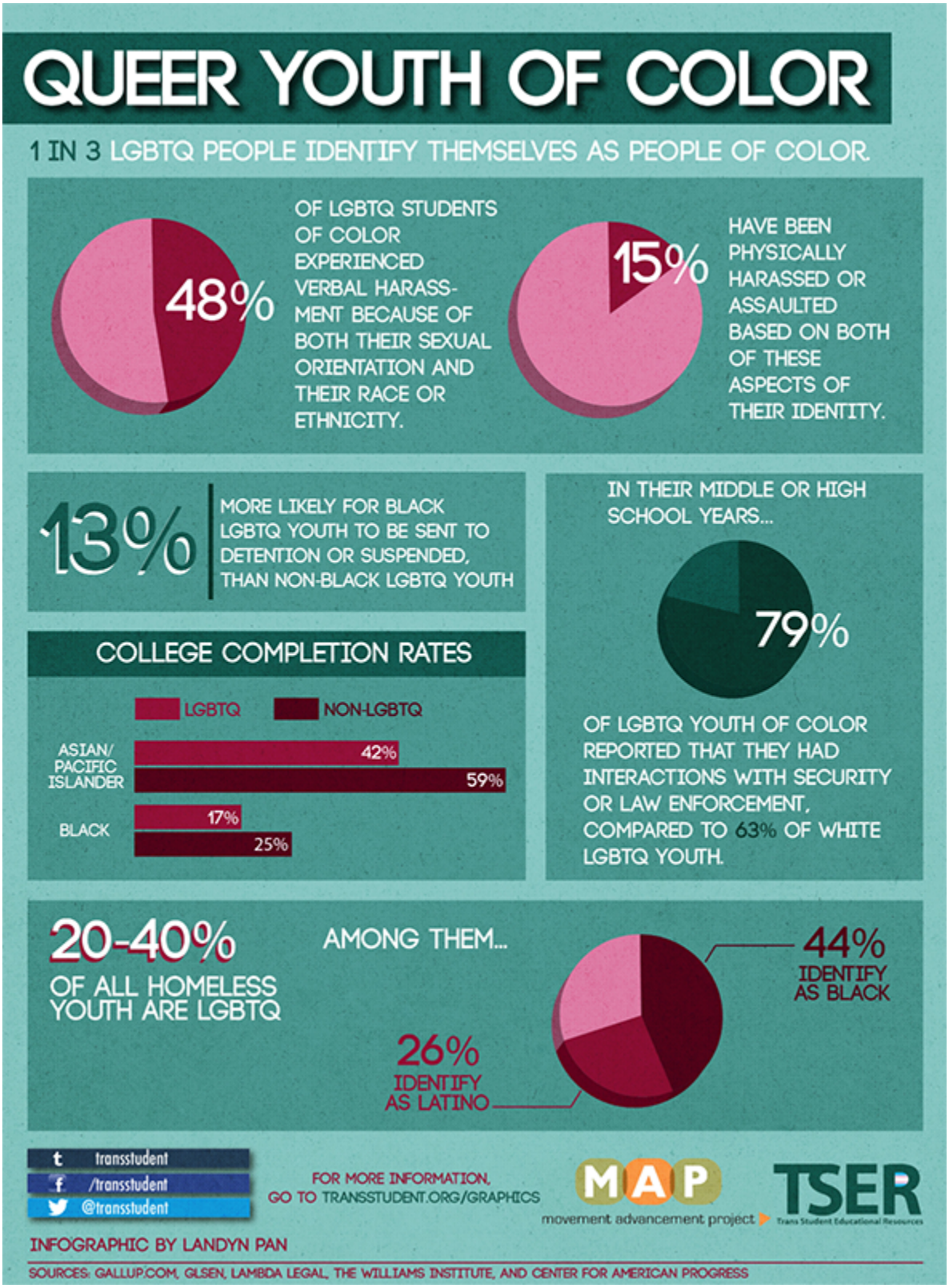

Figure 9.16 TSER research helps us learn more about the experiences of queer youth of color.

To learn more, you may want to explore the informative visual guide "**Intersectionality: A fun guide [Website]**" by Miram Dobson with a description by Zoe Stavri. In the next activity, you'll have an opportunity to learn more about intersectionality from Kimberlé Crenshaw (figure 9.17).

Activity: Intersectionality

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ROwquxC_Gxc**

Figure 9.17 In this short video, you will see an interview with Dr. Crenshaw at Lafayette College where she discusses intersectional feminism and the need for this approach. **Transcript.**

Please watch the video and come back to answer the following questions:

1. How does Dr. Crenshaw's definition of intersectionality compare with your understanding?
2. How does Dr. Crenshaw's biography shape her understanding of gender and race?
3. In what ways does the language of intersectionality offer tools to engage in social justice work?

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Figure 9.15. "Kimberlé Crenshaw" by Mohamed Badarne by Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung is licensed under CC-BY-SA-4.0.

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Figure 9.16. "Queer Youth of Color" by Landyn Pan in Trans Student Educational Resources is included under fair use.

Figure 9.17. "Kimberlé Crenshaw Discusses 'Intersectional Feminism' [YouTube]" by Lafayette College is licensed under the Standard YouTube License.

9.6 Institutions and Inequalities

Throughout this chapter, we've examined **gender** as an identity, a set of ideas individuals may internalize, how our gender performances are policed, and the consequences of gendered power relations. Now let's focus on the many ways in which gender acts to structure both our lives and opportunities. Our ideas about gender shape the world that we live in, including our **social institutions**. Over the past few decades, countless studies have been dedicated to examining how gender inequalities are built into the organizational structure of our social institutions. For example, we continue to see gender inequalities in education (Ballantine et al. 2021), workplaces (Black 2021), and the military (Reis and Menezes 2020).

In this section of the chapter, we will turn our attention to the social institutions of family and work, but first let's take a moment to review some of the key concepts you learned in "Examining Interactions." We can build on that knowledge by starting to think about how gender inequalities are experienced in social institutions. Please complete the activity "Activity: Gender Stratification" before heading to the next sections "Families" and "**Social Stratification** in Work/Public Sphere" where we will take a closer look at how gender inequalities are experienced within institutions.

Activity: Gender Stratification

In this short video (figure 9.18), you will learn more about gender stratification. First, you'll have an opportunity to reflect on gender **socialization**. Then, you'll consider how gender structures our major social institutions.

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yb1_4FPtzrI**

Figure 9.18 How does gender shape our lives? **Transcript.**

Please watch the video and come back to answer the following questions:

1. What does it mean when sociologists say that "gender is a social construct"?
2. What is gender stratification? What examples from the clip resonated with your experiences?
3. How do social institutions, such as media, families, and education, contribute to or perpetuate gender stratification?

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9.7 Families as a Social Institution

Families shape our lives and experiences of **gender** in fundamental ways. Legal reforms and social change have created many ways for us to build our families, yet studies show us that there are some patterns when it comes to families, gender, and life chances. Research demonstrates that housework and childcare continue to be gendered, which contributes to gender inequalities within families. Keep in mind that we are discussing "families" as a broad organizing principle of daily life, not just our individual experiences in our own families. Families in this broader sense offer us a tool to understand how gender inequalities are reproduced.

Ideological and Institutional Barriers to Egalitarian Families

In our current economy, dual-**income** households and even single-parent families far outnumber the model where one parent financially supports the entire family. To learn more about the division of labor within families and how people feel about that division, sociologist Arlie Hochschild (1989) studied different families. She identified three common ideologies across families that structured their ability to engage in equal sharing of housework.

- ***Traditionalists*** valued the breadwinner/housewife model and believed men should primarily be responsible for earning income while women are responsible for housework and childcare.
- ***Neo-traditionalists*** supported the idea of women working if they desired to do so, but only if it did not interfere with her ability to take care of her family.
- ***Egalitarians*** preferred relationships where both partners do a fair share of earning income, housework, and childcare.

Current research suggests that an egalitarian family is the preferred structure for young adults (Pedulla and Thebaud 2015; Schwartz 2022). Sociologist Kathleen Gerson sought to understand more about decisions around household divisions of labor and gender power relations. She found that most of the people in her study (80 percent of women, 70 percent of men across all races, classes, and family backgrounds) preferred "flexible gender boundaries" where partners shared in completing both paid and unpaid work (Gerson 2010).

Research on multigenerational Mexican American families also suggests that there is an ongoing shift in the construction of masculinity, femininity, and gender relations. For men, the family dynamics of their families or origin have them rethinking male dominance in favor of improved familial and romantic relationships (Vasquez 2014). In these families, Mexican American women draw on their biographies and cross-generational advice to challenge **patriarchy** by becoming more educated and assertive (Vasquez 2014).

The breadwinner model where one spouse specializes in paid labor while the other manages home life seems to be falling out of favor. However, the reality is that this does not always mean there is equal sharing of responsibilities (Carlson 2022). For example, the ideology of intensive motherhood is a barrier to equal sharing of responsibilities. Intensive motherhood, which remains pervasive in the United States, refers to the idea that mothers should serve as the primary caretaker. Additionally, childrearing is viewed as an activity that requires large amounts of time, energy, and material resources that should take priority over other interests, desires, and responsibilities (Hays 1996). The ideology of intensive motherhood places great pressure on women specifically, but this model of parenting is not a cultural universal. For an optional example, you can examine the popular Netflix show ***Old Enough!*** **[Website]** as it highlights ways that families in other countries give their children, even toddlers, more responsibility and independence.

There are ideological and institutional barriers to implementing equal sharing of housework. Furthermore, as you will learn in the next section, economic, ideological, and structural factors may limit individual choices when it comes to equal participation in the workforce. For example, affluent families have additional financial resources to handle some of the burdens associated with housework and childcare. They may be able to outsource some domestic work by hiring nannies, housekeepers, laundry services, and ordering prepared meals.

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9.8 Social Institutions and Stratification in Work/Public Spheres

As you learned in **Chapter 8**, stratification refers to a system in which groups of people experience unequal access to basic, yet highly valuable, social resources. There is a long history of **gender** stratification in the United States:

- Before 1809—Women could not execute a will.
- Before 1840—Women were not allowed to own or control property.
- Before 1920—Women were not permitted to vote.
- Before 1963—Employers could legally pay a woman less than a man for the same work.
- Before 1973—Women did not have the right to safe and legal abortion (Imbornoni 2009).

When looking to the past, it would appear that **society** has made great strides in terms of abolishing some of the most blatant forms of gender inequality but underlying effects of male dominance still permeate many aspects of society.

The Pay Gap

Despite making up nearly half (49.8 percent) of payroll employment, men vastly outnumber women in authoritative, powerful, and, therefore, high-earning jobs (U.S. Census Bureau 2010). Even when a woman's employment status is equal to a man's, she will experience what's known as a **pay gap**: generally, a woman makes only 81 cents for every dollar (figure 9.19) made by her male counterpart (Payscale 2020). Women in the paid labor force also still do the majority of the unpaid work at home. On an average day, 84 percent of women (compared to 67 percent of men) spend time doing household management activities (U.S. Census Bureau 2011). This double duty keeps working women in a subordinate role in the family structure (Hochschild and Machung 1989). For additional, optional information, you can learn more at **AAUW [Website]**.

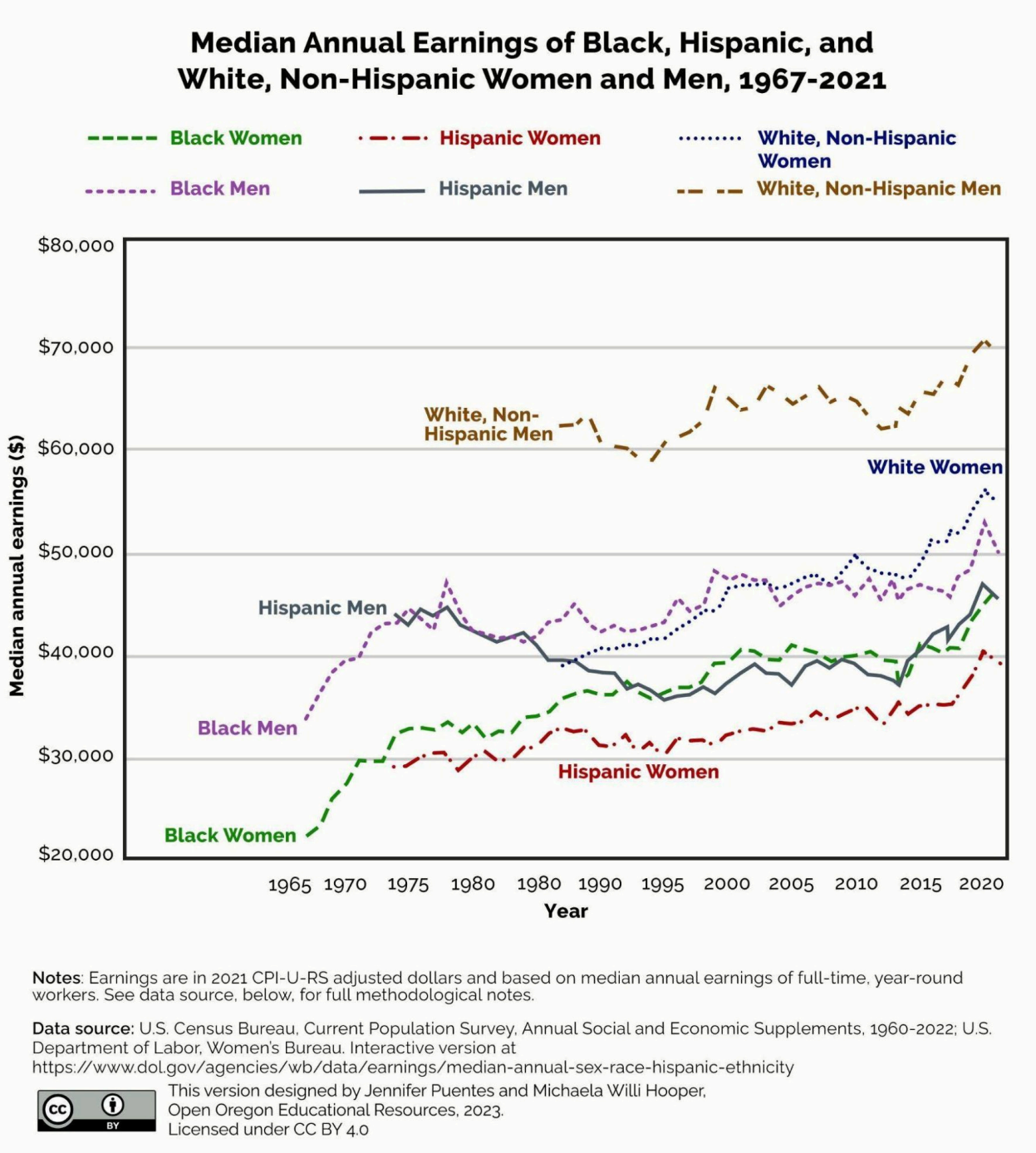

Figure 9.19 What is the wage gap? Who is affected by it? Image description.

Part of the gender pay gap can be attributed to unique barriers faced by women regarding work experience and promotion opportunities. A mother of young children is more likely to drop out of the labor force for several years or work on a reduced schedule than a father. As a result, women in their 30s and 40s are likely, on average, to have less job experience than men. This effect becomes more evident when considering the pay rates of two groups of women: those who did not leave the workforce and those who did. In the United States, childfree women with the same

education and experience levels as men are typically paid in amounts close to but not exactly the same as men. However, women with children are paid less. Employers offer mothers a 7.9 percent lower starting salary than non-mothers, which is 8.6 percent lower than men (Correll et al. 2007). Research interviewing women shows that women in leadership positions experience ageism at every age in the workplace. Older women are routinely discounted as outdated and not worthy of advancement, while younger women's credibility is questioned (Diehl, Dzubinski, and Stephenson 2023).

Furthermore, not all states have laws that prohibit employers from discriminating against **LGBTQIA+** individuals when it comes to hiring practices and wages (Gates 2017). **Survey** research by Singh and Durso (2017) demonstrates that there is a high rate of **discrimination** for LGBTQIA+ workers. They found that 27 percent of **transgender** workers reported being fired, not hired, or denied a promotion because of their gender identities.

The Glass Ceiling

The idea that women are unable to reach the executive suite is known as the **glass ceiling**. It is an invisible barrier that women encounter when trying to win jobs in the highest level of business. At the beginning of 2021, for example, a record 41 of the world's largest 500 companies were run by women. While a vast improvement over the number 20 years earlier, when only two of the companies were run by women, these 41 chief executives still only represent 8 percent of those large companies (Newcomb 2020).

Why do women have a more difficult time reaching the top of a company? One explanation is that there is still a **stereotype** in the United States that women aren't aggressive enough to handle the boardroom (Reiners 2019). Other issues stem from the gender biases based on gender **roles** and motherhood that we previously discussed. Another possible explanation is that women lack executive mentors with the power to get them into the right meetings and introduce them to the right people (Murrell and Blake-Beard 2017).

Feminization of Poverty

Women disproportionately make up the majority of individuals who live in poverty across the world. The gender wage gap, the higher proportion of single mothers compared to single fathers, and the high cost of childcare create a gendered experience when it comes to living in poverty. Considering the economic situation produced by these factors, women (11 percent) are more likely to live in poverty than men (8 percent) (Fins 2020). Women in all racial and ethnic groups are more likely than White men to live in poverty. United States census data shows that poverty rates are higher for Black women (18 percent), Native American women (18 percent), Latinx women (15 percent), and Asian women (8 percent) (Fins 2020).

Women in Politics

One of the most important places for women to help other women is in politics. Historically in the United States, like many other institutions, political representation has been mostly made up of White men. By not having women in government, their issues are being decided by people who might not share their perspective. The number of women elected to serve in Congress has increased over the years, but it does not yet accurately reflect the general population (figure 9.20). In 2021, the population of the United States was 49 percent male and 51 percent female (Census.gov 2022), but the population of Congress was 72.3 percent male and 27.7 percent female (Manning 2022). Until

the number of women in the federal government accurately reflects the population, there will be inequalities in our laws.

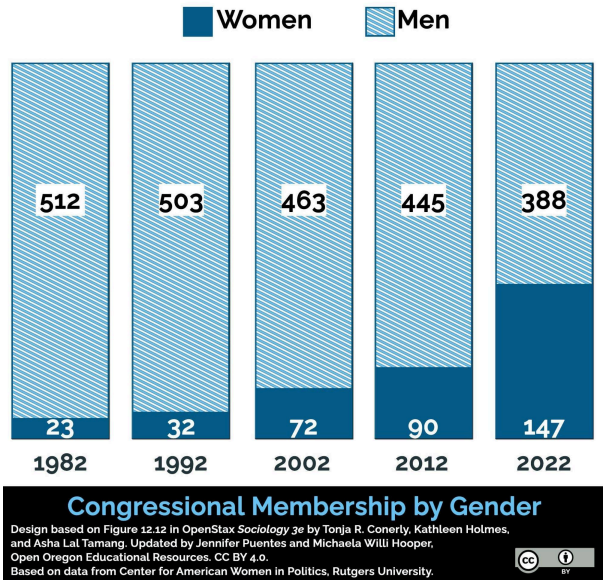

Figure 9.20 Breakdown of congressional membership by gender. In 2021, there were a record number of women in Congress, with 120 women serving in the House and 24 serving in the Senate. Gender representation has been steadily increasing over time, but it is not close to being equal. **Image description.**

Women's bodies are often brought into political conversations. Often, decisions are made regarding what is appropriate for women with little feedback from the **group** that is directly affected. In the next section, you will learn more about a recent court decision that greatly affects some women's decision-making abilities today.

A Closer Look: *Roe v. Wade*

On June 24, 2022, in a 6-to-3 decision, the Supreme Court overturned the *Roe v. Wade* ruling that protected women's autonomy to choose abortion. The due process clause added to the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution that provided a "right to privacy" and protected pregnant women's rights to an abortion has changed. This decision comes at a time when data from the PEW Research Center shows that 61 percent of adults believe that abortion should be legal in all or most cases (Pew Research Center 2022a, 2022b).

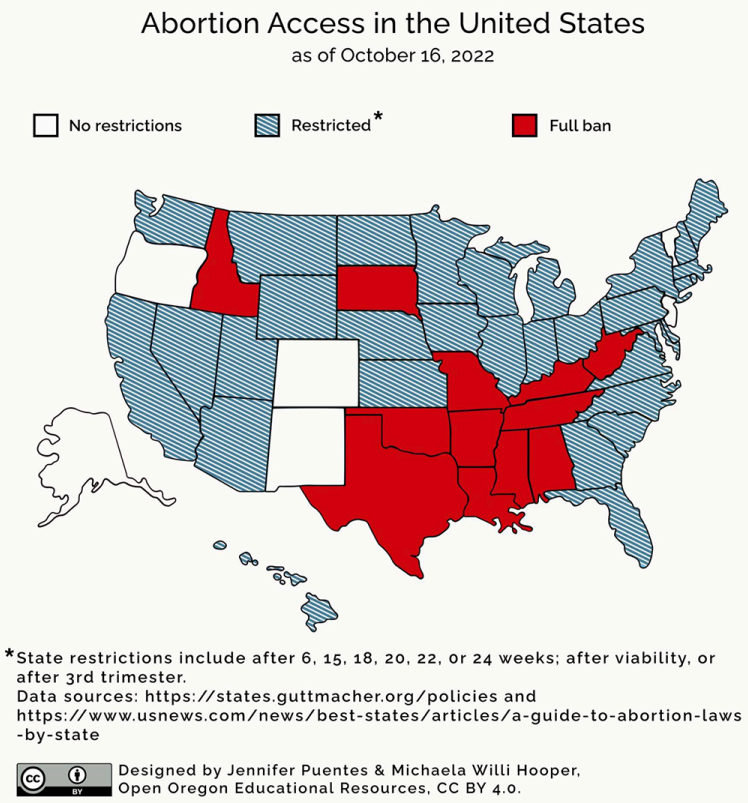

Figure 9.21 States where the right to an abortion is not restricted, is restricted, or is completely banned. What do restrictions look like in your state? **Image description.**

A decision made by nine individuals appointed by a handful of (male) presidents impacts the lives of families and fundamentally restricts women's autonomy and choices. Now, individual states and government officials have the power to determine women's reproductive rights (figure 9.21). Current laws and policies within individual states will make accessing safe medical procedures difficult. Several states already had laws banning abortion that predated *Roe v. Wade*, and others had trigger laws (bans on abortion that would go into effect with the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*) (Mangan 2022a). Some states have bans on abortions after six weeks of gestation. At such an early stage, many women might not be aware that they are pregnant. Others might not be able to secure doctor's appointments within the narrow timeframe.

Justices Samuel Alito, Clarence Thomas, Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh, and Amy Coney Barrett, argued that the 1973 ruling was an error made on weak arguments and an "abuse of judicial authority" (Totenberg and McCammon 2022). Dissenting Justices Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor, and Elena Kagan said that the court decision means that "young women today will come of age with fewer rights than their mothers and grandmothers . . . from the very moment of fertilization, a woman has no rights to speak of. A state can force her to bring a pregnancy to term even at the steepest personal and familial costs" (Totenberg and McCammon 2022). This ruling has significant implications for women's positions in society—or at least for some women. As we will discuss later in this chapter, affluent women have always and will continue to have options when it comes to seeking medical care.

There are many reasons a woman may choose to get an abortion. Rather than questioning why someone might want control over their reproductive rights and bodies, it is interesting from a **sociological perspective** to understand how complicated this court decision becomes when we examine our current **social institutions**. As the dissenting justices pointed out, women will be expected (and can be forced) to carry pregnancies to term when our current work and family policies do not uniformly support family life.

In the United States, parental leave policies are limited. If workplaces offer parental leave, it is often unpaid. This can either create an additional financial burden or make time off inaccessible at a time when new parents and guardians need to adjust to the mental and physical demands that come with newborns. If eligible, employees may need to take short-term disability or use the **Family and Medical Leave Act [Website]**, which you can explore if you wish. Government programs like Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) attempt to offer financial support for low-**income** families with children, but there is still a stigma associated with participating in welfare programs (McLaughlin 2021). Eligibility requirements are restrictive and benefits are low. For example, in Oregon the current maximum monthly benefit for a family of three is $503, which you can optionally learn more about at **Benefits.gov (2022)[Website]**. We also should consider how this decision will impact the growing fertility industry.

Keep in mind that this discussion is intended to point out how women's rights are now restricted. This decision disproportionately affects women of color and those with lower socioeconomic status (Dehlendorf, Harris, and Weitz 2013; Johnson 2022). The overturning of *Roe v. Wade* also brings into question other rulings where it was used as precedent. For example, Justice Clarence Thomas has mentioned that we need to reexamine **marriage equality** and contraceptive rights (Mangan 2022b). This single court decision demonstrates that gender organizes our daily lives, from how we learn to interact with others to how our laws serve to protect us.

Licenses and Attributions for Social Institutions and Stratification in Work/Public Spheres

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Figure 9.19. "Median Annual Earnings of Black, Hispanic, and White, Non-Hispanic Women and Men, 1967-2021" by Jennifer Puentes and Michaela Willi Hooper is licensed under CC BY 4.0. Data from U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau.

Figure 9.21. "Abortion Access in the United States as of October 16, 2022" by Jennifer Puentes and Michaela Willi Hooper, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

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"Social Institutions and Stratification in Work/Public Spheres" paragraphs one through three, five, six, and eight edited for clarity, consistency, and to update content from "12.2 Gender and Gender Inequality" by Tonja R. Conerly, Kathleen Holmes, Asha Lal Tamang in *Introduction to Sociology 3e*, OpenStax, which is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Figure 9.20. "Congressional Membership by Gender" is adapted from figure 12.12: Breakdown of Congressional Membership by Gender by Tonja R. Conerly, Kathleen Holmes, and Asha Lal Tamang in *Introduction to Sociology 3e*, OpenStax, which is licensed under CC BY 4.0. Updated by Jennifer Puentes and Michaela Willi Hooper, Open Oregon Educational Resources. Modifications: Improved accessibility and updated data. Based on data from the Center for American Women in Politics, Rutgers University.

9.9 Movements for Change: Feminism

In this chapter, you learned about many different types of **gender** inequality. You might be wondering what has been done to address these issues. The feminist movement (also known as the women's liberation movement, the women's movement, or simply **feminism**) refers to a series of political campaigns for reform on a variety of issues that affect women's quality of life. **Feminism** argues that women and men should have equal legal and political rights. The movement advocates for economic, political, and social equality regardless of the **sex** one is assigned at birth. It also argues that the systematic **oppression** of people based on gender is problematic and should be changed. Although there have been feminist movements all over the world, this section will focus on the four eras of the feminist movement in the United States, which are referred to as "waves."

When we first introduced feminist **theory** in Chapter 2, we focused on the third wave. Now you will learn how each wave of feminism has had slightly different goals, often highlighting the needs of an underrepresented **group** at a given historical moment. Current social movements suggest we are in the fourth wave.

First Wave: Suffrage Movement (1800s–1920s)

The first wave of feminism aimed to obtain voting rights for women and educational access. The movement began with a convention in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848 organized by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott (History.com 2022). With about 300 women and men participants at the convention, a Declaration of Sentiments was signed stating that men and women were created equal and that women should be granted the right to vote. American women eventually won the right to vote in 1920. Women's suffragists collected signatures to support their right to vote and marched in parades to increase the visibility of their cause (figure 9.22).

The movement had significant links to the abolitionist and suffragette forums through activists such as Sojourner Truth and Paulie Murray. The first wave understood equal rights as the admission of women to political and economic spaces. However, legally achieving the right to vote and having access to education did not mean feminism had achieved the goal of equality.

Figure 9.22 Women's suffragists parade in New York City in 1917, carrying placards with the signatures of more than a million women. How have protests changed since 1917?

Second Wave: The Problem That Had No Name (1960s–1980s)

The second wave was fueled by activism centered on gaining equal access to education and employment for women (figure 9.23). Culturally and politically, we saw the publication of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* in 1963, the establishment of the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1966, and the development of women's consciousness raising groups. You can explore the **NOW [Website]** more if you wish. Friedan's (1963) writings uncovered the "problem with no name" that was impacting women everywhere. This "problem" was the widespread unhappiness of women in the 1950s and 1960s. She argued that the dissatisfaction women expressed about their lives indicated that women no longer found traditional gender **roles** fulfilling.

Figure 9.23 How have women's protest efforts contributed to women's equality?

The 1960s and 1970s unfolded within a framework of anti-war movements, distrust of the state, the civil rights movement, and growing awareness about social minorities beyond gender or **race**. Radical thinking within the movement already existed from the first wave. It became normalized and adopted as a fundamental part of feminist behavior. Voices like those of Gloria Steinem, Angela Davis, and Dolores Huerta became representative of the movement. Themes centered on reproductive and sexual rights, feminine empowerment, anticolonialism, and the stirrings of intersectionality.

The involvement of more women outside the home transformed feminism. It was no longer just about women as a single group. Popular magazines served as useful tools to spread information about the feminist movement (figure 9.24). Feminism began to encompass diverse topics such as women and civil rights, women and work, and women and rural labor, among others. By the 1990s, feminism had consolidated as a social movement with a global reach. These years marked the end of the second wave and the beginning of the third. A different conceptual framework emerged to change how we understand grassroots feminism and its diversification, including **queer theory**.

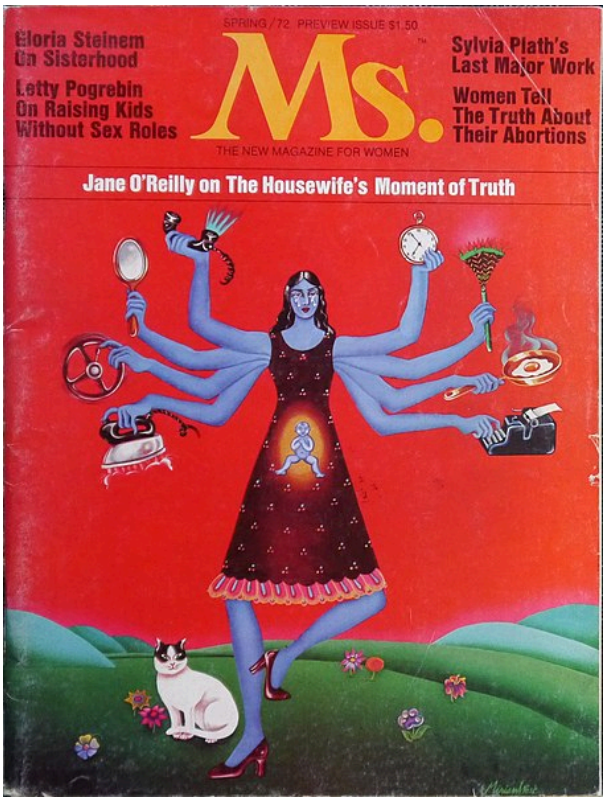

Figure 9.24 Print media played a large role in organizing women around feminist issues. What can you learn about society by examining this *Ms.* magazine cover from Spring 1972?

Third Wave: Centering Diverse Voices (1990s–2008)

The third wave emerged out of the feminist criticisms that the first two waves primarily focused on the needs of women who were mostly White and middle **class**. This reaction came at a time when feminism was influenced by postmodernism. Previous feminist movements often marginalized and overlooked the concerns of women of color, lesbians, and working-class individuals. One of the goals we see in the third wave is to work toward social justice and equity along the lines of race, social class, sex, gender, and **sexuality**. By centering the experiences of women of color, the third wave is also concerned with globalization and women's rights in all countries.

As you learned in **Activity: Intersectionality**, **Dr. Kimberlé Crenshaw discusses** **intersectionality** as the idea that we experience life, including opportunities and **discrimination**, based on several different identities that we have. Dr. Crenshaw's concept of intersectionality became important to understanding how multiple identities are intertwined and impact life chances for individuals and groups.

In addition to intersectionality, we see the emergence of **queer** theory during the third wave. You will learn more about queer theory in **Chapter 10**. The 1980s were especially hard for the **LGBTQIA+** community. The public response to the AIDS epidemic made clear the need to create organizations that advocated for the human dignity of non-heteronormative people. You may choose to learn more about this from a **2016 paper [Website]**. Gender and sexuality became the subject of both feminism and the LGBTQIA+ movement. Queer theory encompasses three actions: 1) promoting sexual expressions other than heterosexuality, 2) challenging the belief that lesbian and gay sexuality studies are one, and 3) shining a light on how race influences sexual biases.

Third wave feminists effectively used mass media, particularly the web ("cybergrrls" and "netgrrls"), to create a feminism that is global, multicultural, and boundary-crossing. One important third wave sub-group was the Riot Grrrl movement (figure 9.25), whose DIY (do it yourself) ethos produced several influential, independent feminist musicians, such as Bikini Kill and Sleater-Kinney. However, third wave feminism's focus on identity and the blurring of boundaries did not effectively address many persistent macrosociological issues such as sexual harassment and sexual assault, which will become a focus of fourth wave feminists.

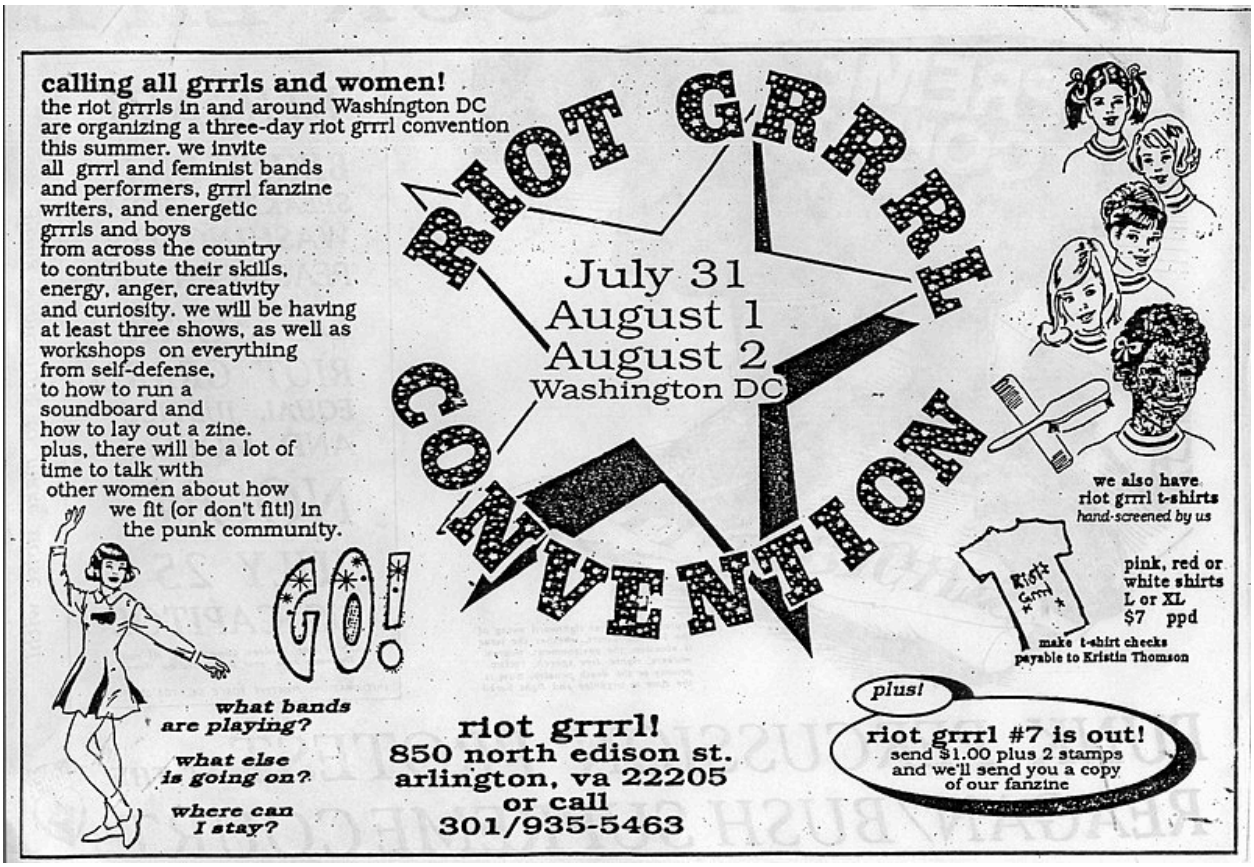

Figure 9.25 Riot Grrrl Convention advertisement. Music shapes and is shaped by our culture. What kinds of messages does the music you listen to convey about the status of women?

Fourth Wave: #MeToo #TimesUp (2008–present)

The fourth and current wave of feminism maintains a focus on intersectionality and empowering women by removing the stigma associated with experiences with sexual harassment, body shaming, and **rape culture**. Social media and the internet play important roles in building awareness around social injustices, particularly through internet activism. The fourth wave critically examines gender **norms** and the marginalization of women, while seeking gender equity.

During this wave, social media has offered women an opportunity to speak up and share their experiences with sexual harassment, sexual violence, and **sexism** in the workplace. Within a matter of seconds, the internet provided a tool for women to speak freely about topics in their own words. In the next section, "Activity: Origins of the #MeToo Movement," you'll have an opportunity to learn more about how this movement started and evolved with the use of social media.

Accusations against men in powerful positions—from Hollywood directors to Supreme Court justices to the president of the United States, have catalyzed feminists in a way that appears to be fundamentally different from previous movements. We can already see the impact of this movement on some laws. Initially, some states banned nondisclosure agreements that cover sexual harassment and expanded protections for workers that are not covered by federal sexual harassment and state laws, such as independent contractors (North 2019). The passing of the Speak Out Act in 2022 prohibits the enforcement of non-disclosure agreements when there are allegations of workplace sexual harassment or sexual

assault as a way to provide increased options for people to bring their claims in court (if you'd like to learn more, **visit this website**).

Historian Martha Rampton captures the spirit of fourth wave feminists well. Rampton (2015) states, "The emerging fourth wavers are not just reincarnations of their second wave grandmothers; they bring to the discussion important perspectives taught by third wave feminism; they speak in terms of intersectionality whereby women's suppression can only fully be understood in a context of the marginalization of other groups and genders—feminism is part of a larger consciousness of oppression along with **racism**, ageism, classism, ableism, and **sexual orientation** (no "ism" to go with that)."

Will the next generation of activists help us move into the fifth wave of feminism? How might this movement intertwine with the U.S. Supreme Court ruling to overturn *Roe v. Wade* in June 2022? How will leaders of a new movement continue to draw on the work of their predecessors? As we raise these questions, we are excited to see how feminist movements will continue to evolve.

Activity: Origins of the #MeToo Movement

In this short video (figure 9.26), you will learn more about #MeToo and how it connects to a movement started in 2006.

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fSbFFwHDzQo**

Figure 9.26 What can we learn from Tarana Burke about the #MeToo movement? Hear her own words in **Founder of "Me Too" movement speaks out [Streaming Video]**. **Transcript.**

Please watch the video and come back to answer the following questions:

1. In what ways does the #MeToo movement connect experiences across racial categories?
2. How has technology played a role in shaping activism?

To learn more about women's opinions on the #MeToo movement, check out this optional video, **Women are not as divided on #MeToo as it may seem [Streaming Video]**.

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Figure 9.22. "Women's suffragists parade in New York City in 1917, carrying placards with the signatures of more than a million women" by Unknown author – The New York Times photo archive is in the Public Domain.

Figure 9.24. "Ms. magazine Cover – Spring 1972" by Liberty Media for Women, LLC is licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0.

Figure 9.25. "Riot Grrrl Convention 1992 by Rockcreek" by RockCreek is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

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Figure 9.26. "Founder of "Me Too" movement speaks out" by CBS News is licensed under the Standard YouTube License.

9.10 Conclusion

We opened this chapter by discussing some of the key implications for women, women's bodies, and families with the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* in 2022. In addition to the individual hardships women may experience during a time when they have fewer reproductive rights, nationally we are seeing a shift in how women are viewed. A judicial decision by the U.S. government has rendered women less powerful when it comes to making medical decisions regarding their bodies. Regardless of your personal views on abortion, we can see that the decision removes women's rights that were previously protected at the federal level.

In this chapter, you learned more about **gender** through a social constructionist perspective. You learned to distinguish between concepts like **sex**, gender, **gender identity**, **transgender**, and **intersex**. In addition to interactional inequalities related to gender, you examined how inequalities are embedded in some of our **social institutions**.

Gender is experienced at the individual, interactional, and structural levels. From our gender

identity to our interactions with others, we constantly participate in the process of "**doing gender**." We tend to be held accountable for performances of masculinity and femininity that align with our sex. Yet, for some of us, those performances may be unattainable. Others may choose to intentionally avoid participation in hegemonic forms of masculinity and femininity. The experience and embodiment of gender also intersects with other aspects of our lives, such as **race** and **class**. As you've learned in this chapter and others, our identities are closely tied to power relations. We can encounter **sexism** during our interactions, but what escalates the experience of **oppression** is when we begin to see sexism built into our social institutions. Finally, you learned about social change through the continual evolution of feminist **theory**. The next chapter will explore the ways sociologists study **sexuality**.

KEY TERMS

- **Cisgender**: people who identify with the sex they were assigned at birth are often referred to as cisgender, utilizing the Latin prefix *cis-*, which means "on the same side."
- **Doing gender**: the idea that individuals perform gender based on the way that gender is socially constructed within their society; they are held accountable for enacting gendered behaviors. These gendered performances are expected and contribute to why we think of gendered behavior as "natural."
- **Emphasized femininity**: the pattern of femininity that is given the most cultural and ideological support. This type of femininity involves compliance with subordination and is oriented to accommodate the interests and desires of men.
- **Essentialism**: a view of gender as a biological and unchanging, two-category system.
- **Feminism**: a perspective based on the idea that women and men should have equal legal and political rights. Feminism views the systematic oppression of people based on gender as problematic and something that should be changed. Also discussed as a feminist movement or a series of political campaigns for reform on a variety of issues that affect women's quality of life.
- **Gender**: a term that refers to the behaviors, personal traits, and social positions that society attributes to being a woman or a man.
- **Gender dysphoria**: a diagnostic category in the fifth edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (*DSM-5*) that describes individuals who do not identify as the gender that most people would assume they are**.**
- **Gender expression or gender presentation**: a person's behavior, mannerisms, interests, and appearance that are associated with gender, specifically with the categories of femininity or masculinity. Expression can be specific to individuals and may also vary across cultures.
- **Gender identity**: a deeply held internal perception of one's gender.
- **Gender policing**: the practice of judging people's gender practices and reminding others of the rules of "doing gender." This practice reinforces gender order and reproduces gender inequality.

- **Gender role**: the expected role for individuals based on society's notions of the attitudes, behaviors, norms, and values that are appropriate for women and men.
- **Glass ceiling**: an invisible barrier that women encounter when trying to win jobs in the highest level of business.
- **Hegemonic masculinity**: the masculine ideal that is viewed as superior to any other kind of masculinity as well as any form of femininity.
- **Intersex**: a general term used to describe people whose sex traits, reproductive anatomy, hormones, or chromosomes are different from the usual two ways human bodies develop. Some intersex traits are recognized at birth, while others are not recognizable until puberty or later in life.
- **Patriarchy:** an environment where characteristics associated with men and masculinity have more power and authority.
- **Pay gap**: the difference in earnings between men and women.
- **Queer**: a term used to describe gender and sexual identities other than cisgender and heterosexual.
- **Sex**: physical or physiological differences between males and females, including both primary sex characteristics (the reproductive system) and secondary characteristics such as height and muscularity.
- **Sexism**: the belief that some individuals or groups are superior to others based on sex or gender.
- **Transgender**: a person whose sex assigned at birth and gender identity are not necessarily the same.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. According to sociologists, what is the difference between sex and gender? Why do they suggest it's important to distinguish these terms?
2. How does gender socialization shape children's play? Are toys and activities becoming more or less "gendered" compared to when you were a child?
3. What is intersectionality, and how does it change the approach we use when studying gender?
4. What can be done to lessen the effects of gender stratification in the workplace? How does gender stratification harm both men and women?
5. What can be done to narrow the pay gap for women?
6. Why is it important to have women in politics?
7. List and describe the different waves of feminism. What inspired the emergence of each wave? What inequalities do you think the fifth wave will hope to address?

Additional Resources

1. **Genderbread Person discussion [Website]**, Sam Killerman
2. *Roe v. Wade* **[Website]** – Learn more about *Roe v. Wade* decision and challenges.
3. **Trans Student Educational Resources [Website]**
4. **Waves of Feminism [Website]** – Information on each wave and influential work during those time periods.
5. Gender violence is a serious issue, and there are resources available for support:

1. **Oregon.gov LGBTQ2SIA+ Resource [Website]**
2. **YWCA Seattle [Website]**
3. **International Rescue Committee [Website]**

6. To learn more about intersex activism, go to **Amnesty.org [Website]** and **ISNA.org [Website]**.
7. Feminism and movements for change: To learn more about key participants in the suffrage movement, click these optional links: **Sojourner Truth [Website]** and **Paulie Murray [Website]**. The second wave of feminism, which focused on **reproductive and sexual rights [Website]**, is captured by voices like those of **Gloria Steinem [Website]**, **Angela Davis [Website]**, and **Dolores Huerta [Website]**.

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CHAPTER
10

Figure 10.1 People protesting in support of LGBTQIA+ rights in October 2018.

Sexuality

10.1 Chapter Learning Objectives and Overview

Jennifer Puentes and Heidi Esbensen

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Explain sexual scripts and the inequalities they can produce.
2. Differentiate among attitudes associated with **sex** and **sexuality**.
3. Discuss sociological perspectives and research on sex and sexuality.
4. Examine experiences of **privilege** and **discrimination** related to sex and sexuality.
5. Explain how inequalities related to sexuality are experienced at the structural level.

Overview

Florida House Bill 1557, also known as the Parental Rights in Education Act and often referred to as the "Don't Say Gay" law, was passed into law in 2022 in Florida. This law prohibits teaching lessons on **sexual identity** or **gender identity** to kids in kindergarten through third grade, as well as any grade if the lesson is considered "age or developmentally inappropriate." While the term "gay" is not written into the act, critics of the policy refer to "don't say gay" ideologies as one of the most recent controversies in a long-standing debate about sexual and **gender** equity in educational settings.

State regulations for what is considered "instruction" and "developmentally inappropriate" are not clearly defined. This ambiguity introduces issues for teachers and students, limiting teachers' abilities to respond to student questions due to fear that they will be susceptible to litigation or job loss. Students may be unable to ask questions related to gender identity, diverse family forms, or sexuality in a classroom setting. Further, students may experience difficulty having their own gender identities validated in the classroom if their preferred pronouns are not to be discussed by the teacher. Critics claim this law is attempting to erase the experience and presence of the **LGBTQIA**+ community in educational settings (figure 10.1).

Florida House Bill 1557 also requires teachers to grant parents full access to their students' education and health records. On the surface, permitting parents access to records and engaging in age-appropriate conversations around sexuality and gender identity may not seem like a bad policy. However, if a child "comes out" to a teacher or school official, then that information cannot be withheld from parents. The bill allows exceptions to protect a student's information if a "reasonably prudent person would believe that disclosure would result in abuse, abandonment, or neglect," but the language surrounding exceptions is vague. If it is not clear when teachers can protect students' information, it is unlikely that teachers will be able to maintain confidence. By examining the Parental Rights in Education Act through a **sociological perspective**, we can start to see how this policy may have greater consequences that may impact the privacy, safety, and access to support and health resources for LGBTQIA+ youth. Research shows that LGBTQIA+ youth are already at high risk for mental health issues (Trevor Project 2022; NEA 2022).

This chapter will look at the intersection of sexual identities with **social institutions** such as education, as well as how sexuality fits into **society** at both the micro and macro levels. We will also look at how we construct the "rules" of sexuality, sexual attitudes, **sexual orientation**, and social inequalities.

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Figure 10.1. "2018.10.22 We Won't Be Erased – Rally for Trans Rights, Washington, DC USA 06815" by Ted Eytan is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0.

10.2 Sexuality

Jennifer Puentes and Heidi Esbensen

In **sociology**, researchers study and describe **sexuality** by examining sexual attitudes, **norms**, practices, and their social implications. They view sexuality as a social construct, created and given meaning by societies, which can change and evolve. As discussed in Chapter 4, humans collectively create meanings, and we are socialized into prevalent societal norms from an early age. Sociologists consider sexuality a cultural universal, which means the idea of sexuality exists in most societies and cultures worldwide and throughout history.

What we view as "normal" varies depending on location, age, culture, and many other factors. It also changes over time. Being open about one's sexuality can be dangerous in one space and celebrated in another. For example, if you watched the film *Joe Bell* [Website] (optional link), you are likely familiar with the story of the Bell family living in rural Oregon. Joe's son, Jadin Bell, died by suicide after being bullied in high school and on social media for being gay. Research from national surveys on LGBTQ youth mental health found that almost half of LGBTQ youth in rural spaces report that their communities are "somewhat or very unaccepting of LGBTQ people" compared with youth in urban and suburban spaces (Trevor Project 2022).

As you will learn in the next section, sexuality and **sexual orientation** are viewed within the context of a variety of factors, including geographic place and time period. Researchers who study sexuality from a social constructionist perspective examine how sexuality is continually constructed and reconstructed through sociocultural practices (Seidman 2014). Sociocultural practices reflect the types of social relationships that are found within a shared culture. These practices shape our shared understanding of sexual identities, sexual bodies, and sexual behaviors (Seidman 2014). You can think of the **social construction of sexuality** as the process by which we learn, through interaction with others, sexual knowledge, attitudes, norms, and expectations associated with sexuality. You will learn more about these concepts in this chapter. However, we will first focus on the concepts of sexuality, sexual orientation, and **heteronormativity**, before moving on to sexual attitudes, sexual practices, and sexual **socialization**.

Sexuality and Sexual Orientation

Sexuality refers to the sexual feelings, thoughts, attractions, and behaviors individuals have toward other people. **Sexual orientation** refers to enduring patterns of romantic or sexual attraction (or a combination of these) to persons of another **sex** or **gender**, the same sex or gender, or to both sexes or more than one gender. **Sexual identity** is the social identity ascribed to individuals based on their gender and the gender of the object of their sexual desire. In Chapter 9, you learned the term **cisgender**, which refers to those who identify with the sex they were assigned at birth. You can apply this concept to your understanding of sexuality. For example, a cis woman who is attracted to cis men would likely be categorized as heterosexual, and a man who is attracted to other men would likely be categorized as homosexual, or gay.

It should be noted that the authors of this text chose to use the umbrella term **LGBTQIA+** as a way to acknowledge the expansiveness of the community and refer to the community as a whole. Any mentions that do not use the umbrella term are designed to accurately represent the data used in the research discussed. **LGBTQIA+** is an abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, **transgender**, **queer**, **intersex**, and asexual. The additional "+" stands for all of the other identities not encompassed in the short acronym. Due to space limitations, we are not able to provide comprehensive definitions of all of the sexual identities and orientations included in LGBTQIA+, but for an optional review of these terms, we encourage you to view the **glossary [Website]** compiled by staff at UC Davis LGBTQIA Resource Center.

Studying sexuality in the United States poses challenges due to its evolving definitions over time. Different generations may interpret broad terms like "gay" in varying ways, leading to ambiguity in **survey** responses. For instance, some individuals may identify as asexual but still consider themselves gay, making questions about intimate relations less relevant. Social stigma also plays a significant role, as respondents may feel uncomfortable or unsafe disclosing their non-heterosexual identities. Even if a survey is random and anonymous, it can feel uncomfortable or even dangerous for some to claim a sexuality other than heterosexual. Some may not be in a place where they are accepting of their own identity given social norms and the expected sexuality, which we will cover in the next section. This fear of judgment can result in underestimating the LGBTQIA+ population in surveys (Powell 2021). Researchers face the complex task of accurately reflecting the **diversity** of identities and experiences within this population.

There is no scientific consensus regarding the exact reasons why an individual holds a heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual orientation. Some argue that sexuality is chosen and those who do not identify as heterosexual are making a choice. However, there are unknown biological factors that support sexual orientation as biology and not choice, which is why some literature has moved away from talking about sexuality in terms of "preference." Furthermore, although research has been conducted to study the possible genetic, hormonal, developmental, social, and cultural influences on sexual orientation, there has been no evidence that links sexual orientation to one factor (Bogaert and Skorska 2020; Vasquez 2022).

Heteronormativity/Compulsory Heterosexuality

In this section, we'll discuss several concepts that will help us understand how social norms often intersect with other dimensions of our lives, like sexuality. **Heteronormativity** is the idea that heterosexuality is the preferred or "normal" mode of sexual orientation (Harris and White 2018). Compulsory heterosexuality refers to the notion that our patriarchal and heteronormative **society** cre-

ates an environment where heterosexuality is assumed. Societal expectations for both gender and sexuality shape how we interact with others. Adrienne Rich, an American poet and feminist, wrote about how women are socialized to devalue and minimize their relationships with other women and encouraged to prefer relationships with men (1980).

An examination of **popular culture** highlights the prevalence of compulsive heterosexuality. For example, what types of relationships are commonly displayed in movies and television shows? While more diverse representations are making their way into mainstream media, most visual and textual representations of relationships center on heterosexuality, leading to the continuing dominance of heteronormativity. For example, take a moment to review the **heterosexual questionnaire [Website]** and think about how the questions sound. The dominance of heteronormativity and compulsory heterosexuality in mainstream culture makes it difficult for those who do not fit into these expected categories.

Learning the "Rules" of Sexuality

The spoken and unspoken "rules" of sexuality are learned through socialization. As you learned in **Chapter 4**, socialization is an ongoing and lifelong process; however, you may not have thought about how this practice connects to our understanding of sexuality. **Sexual socialization** refers to the process of social interaction and communication in which individuals learn and internalize the sexuality associated with their **gender role** and biological sex. Through sexual socialization, you develop ideas about what types of desires, bodies, acts, identities, and communities are acceptable. These "rules" are bound to sexual scripts which reflect social norms that promote heteronormativity.

For example, at the beginning of the chapter you learned that Florida has already passed a bill that restricts educators' ability to discuss sexuality in schools. Other U.S. states are considering similar bills. These bills are designed to limit discussions of relationships that fall outside of heteronormativity. This limits representation of diverse family forms and recognition of a range of identities. As you will learn later in this chapter, sex education in schools can vary greatly and largely relies on state and local governments for funding (Planned Parenthood 2024). If access to developmentally appropriate, evidence-based education on healthy sexuality is limited in schools, where do individuals learn the "rules"? Our actions and interactions are guided through sexual scripts.

Sexual Scripts

A **sexual script** is a phrase that refers to the social rules that guide sexual interaction (Gagnon and Simon 1973). Sexual scripts come from our culture and are like a set of rules that society gives us to guide how we behave when it comes to sex. These rules tell us who we should have sex with, when and where we should do it, and in what order. When we start having sex or when we're with a new partner, we often follow these rules closely because they help us know what to expect and how to interact. For example, we might expect to kiss someone before touching them in more intimate ways. The predictability of sexual scripts helps us move from less intimate to more intimate behaviors.

Michel Foucault, a postmodern social theorist made great contributions to our understanding of sexuality that can be applied to the sexual scripts. His work on power and the relationships between power, knowledge, and discourse influence contemporary discussions of sexuality. As Foucault suggests, we learn that there are rules for whom we should be attracted to, what is attractive, how

to be sexual, and what we should and shouldn't do with one another. We may resist or engage in some activities over others, but there are patterns to our behavior that go beyond individual choice/preference.

The sexual behaviors we participate in are also embedded in a larger power dynamic because sexual scripts are gendered (Endendijk et al. 2020). Given the conflation of masculinity and power, the masculine role in sex is perceived as the assertive role. Similar to the ideas shared about **emphasized femininity** in Chapter 9, the feminine role is perceived as primarily responsive. This conflation of sexual power, desire, and masculinity leads to the **push-and-resist dynamic** (Gavey 2005). The **push-and-resist dynamic** refers to the idea that it's normal and expected for men to push for more sexual activity, while women are tasked with stopping or slowing sexual activity. Rather than focusing on consent, there is a gender imbalance as one gender is expected to push for activity, while another gender becomes the keeper of consent. In practice, we know that masculinity and femininity can be performed by anyone, so we don't always think of this as directly tied to a particular sex but rather as reflecting who might be participating in masculine or feminine **roles**.

To this point, we've mostly discussed sexual scripts in terms of heterosexual relationships, but sexual scripts are part of gay culture too. Sexual scripts for gay men in the United States tend to differentiate between the roles of tops, bottoms, and versatiles (Moskowitz and Roloff 2017; Moskowitz et al. 2021). These roles are gendered, with topping being perceived as masculine and bottoming as feminine. Given the dynamics between sex, gender, and power in the United States, people tend to think of topping, or men who identify as tops, as being not only masculine but also more dominating. Men who identify as bottoms often have to deal with stereotypes that perceive them as feminine. Other gay men will avoid replicating sexual scripts or reject labels completely by adopting a versatile identity, engaging in both penetrative and receptive roles in their sexual encounters.

While there is less research on lesbian sexual scripts, we know that women who have sex with other women have the least scripted sexual relationships. Research suggests that lesbians do not have a single standard they use to define encounters as sex, unlike many of their heterosexual counterparts who often use penile-vaginal intercourse as a way to define the occurrence of a sexual encounter (Sewell et al. 2017).

Activity: Sex, Gender, and Sexuality

The following 11-minute video (figure 10.2) discusses how sociologists view sex, gender, and sexuality. Please reflect on connections you can make with **Chapter 9** as you watch the video and return to answer the questions that follow:

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://youtu.be/Kqt-_ILgv5c**

Figure 10.2 How can you apply your sociological perspective to understanding **sex and sexuality [Streaming Video]**? **Transcript.**

1. What can sociology teach us about sex and sexuality?
2. Reflecting on what you learned in the last chapter and this video, what do sociologists mean when they say that gender is a social construction? Discuss a few examples to show how gender is created through meanings made in society.
3. What are sexual scripts?

Licenses and Attributions for Sexuality

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10.3 Sexual Attitudes and Practices

Jennifer Puentes and Aimee Samara Krouskop

Attitudes and practices related to **sexuality** have changed significantly in the past 50 years. In a nationally representative study, Twenge and colleagues (2015) found that people reported more sexual partners, were more likely to have casual **sex**, and were more accepting of non-marital sex (Twenge et al. 2015). Rather than procreation, individuals think about sex in terms of pleasure (Treas et al. 2014). Research suggests that sexual practices are diverse and discussions of non-normative sexual behaviors such as kink play are on the rise (Wignall and McCormack 2015).

Researchers study sexuality to learn more about how humans participate in the world and identify patterns in both attitudes and practices related to sexuality. As you learned in the last section, the **social construction of sexuality** enables us to understand how practices that are perceived as normative change over time. Interactions with others, access to education, and policies that shape our **social institutions** shape our ideas about what behaviors and ideas related to sexuality are acceptable.

Sexuality in the United States

The 2006–2008 National **Survey** of Family Growth (NSFG), which was administered to 13,459 Americans ages 15–44 nationwide, provides data about Americans' sexual behaviors. Research using this survey suggests that although many people think that men are much more sexually active than women, **gender** differences in heterosexual contact are practically nonexistent (Candra et al. 2011).

Studies show that religiosity is strongly associated with greater disapproval of premarital sex. Sociologists have different measures of religiosity, such as the strength of religious beliefs and how often people participate in religious practices. Research focusing on adolescents finds that those who are more religious are less likely to participate in risky sexual behavior (Landor et al. 2010). Authoritative parenting, affiliation with less sexually permissive peers, and a gendered double standard for daughters also influenced adolescent behaviors.

Survey data on adults produce a similar finding: Among all never-married adults in the General Social Survey, those who reported being more religious were also more likely to have had fewer sexual partners (McFarland et al. 2011). Among never-married adults between the ages of 18 and 39, never-married adults who identified as very religious were more likely to have had no sexual partners in the past five years and, if they had sexual partners it was fewer than their counterparts. Although it is hypothetically possible that not having sexual partners leads someone to become more religious, it is much more likely that being very religious reduces the number of sexual partners that never-married adults have (Smith et al. 2011).

When studying sexuality, sociologists consider more than just sexual behavior. They also examine how people construct their identities. In the United States, the majority identifies as heterosexual (Jones 2021). This majority establishes societal expectations and expressions of sexuality. However, changes are happening, and we are seeing an increase in sexual identities other than heterosexual, as shown in figure 10.3. This shift indicates a potential movement toward a new understanding of sexuality.

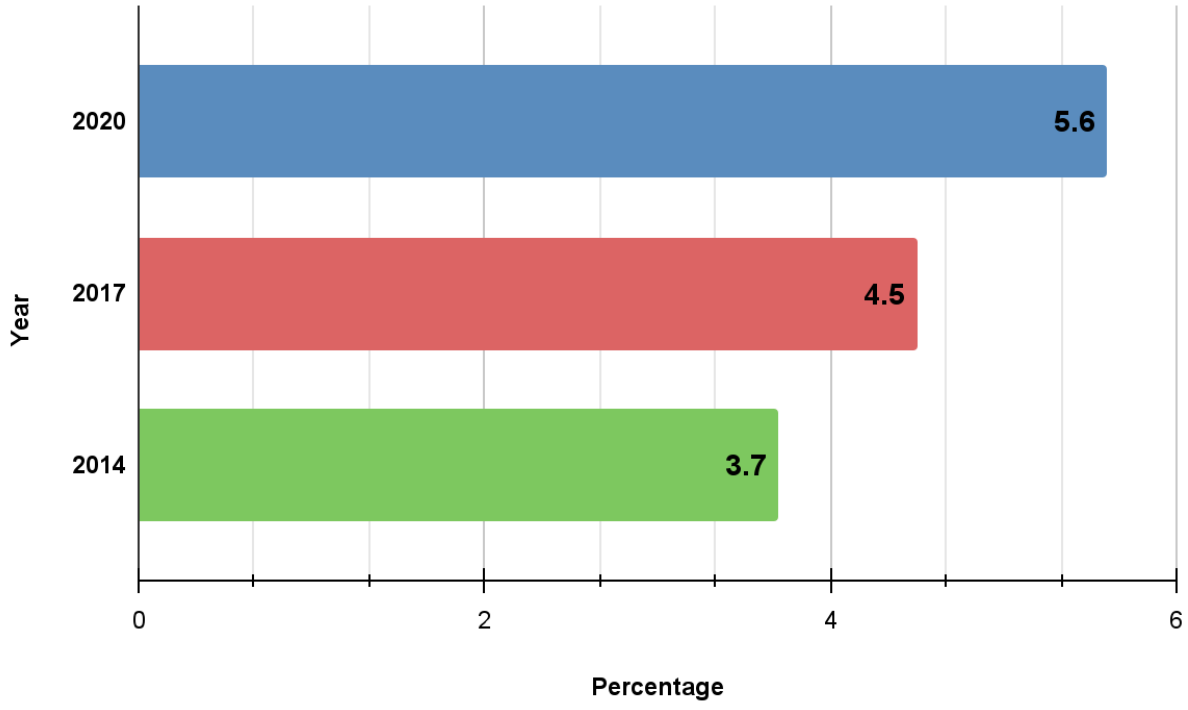

Figure 10.3 As attitudes toward sexuality in the United States become more open, research identifies an increase in sexual identities other than heterosexual. The percentage of Americans, 18 or older, who self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.

Although **discrimination** and harassment persist today, those who identify as non-straight have gained more visibility and rights compared to 50 years ago. Even so, they remain at high risk of assaults and attacks. Despite this fact, more individuals are willing to openly express their identity, making it increasingly acceptable for others to do the same.

As you learned earlier in this chapter, **heteronormativity** significantly impacts our current **norms** and expectations for both gender and sexuality. These ideas have a strong hold on what is accepted, expected, and normalized. The pressure and assumption of heteronormativity can significantly impact many aspects of our **society** and our own daily lives. The next section will explore the relationship between **sexual orientation**, **privilege**, and inequality.

Activity: Changing the Coming Out Narrative to Inviting In

How do gender, sexuality, **race**, **class**, and other intersections impact our understanding and experience of the world? Please watch this video from The Root (figure 10.4) and return to answer the questions that follow. Be sure to draw on the material you've read in this text as you respond to the questions.

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jdCKe0QBuwQ**

Figure 10.4 "Coming out" or "inviting in"? This is a framework for rethinking narratives and understanding the complexities of intersectionality. **Transcript.**

1. Consider the dynamics and intersections of power and privilege. What impact does that have on your life related to your own sexuality? Or someone you know?
2. How do you think these intersections impact sexual attitudes and practices in the United States?
3. What would supports and spaces look like if they were informed by **intersectionality**?
4. How might policy changes impact social institutions like workplaces, schools, healthcare? What could this look like on a global scale?

Sexual Orientation and Inequality

Did you know that as recently as 20 years ago, individuals who engaged in consensual same-sex relations could be arrested in many states for violating so-called sodomy laws? The U.S. Supreme Court, which had upheld such laws in 1986, finally outlawed them in 2003 in *Lawrence v. Texas* by a six to three vote. The majority opinion of the court declared that individuals have a constitutional right under the Fourteenth Amendment to engage in consensual, private sexual activity. Despite this landmark ruling, the **LGBTQIA+** community continues to experience discrimination. Sexual orientation is a significant source of social inequality, just as race/**ethnicity**, gender, and social class are sources of social inequality. Discrimination or **prejudice** against gay people on the assumption that heterosexuality is the normal sexual orientation is referred to as **heterosexism**. In this text, we examine the relationship between sexual orientation and inequalities by focusing on privilege, power, and interactions.

Heterosexual Privilege

Heterosexual privilege refers to the advantages that heterosexuals (or people perceived as heterosexuals) enjoy simply because their sexual orientation is not LGBTQIA+. There are many such advantages, and we have space to list only a few:

- Heterosexuals can be out day or night or at school or workplaces without fearing that they will be verbally harassed or physically attacked because of their sexuality or that they will hear jokes about their sexuality.
- Heterosexuals can express a reasonable amount of affection (holding hands, kissing, etc.) in public without fearing negative reactions from onlookers.
- Heterosexuals do not have to worry about being asked why they prefer opposite-sex relations, being criticized for choosing their sexual orientation, or being urged to change their sexual orientation.
- Heterosexuals do not have to feel the need to conceal their sexual orientation.
- Heterosexuals do not have to worry about being accused of trying to "push" their sexuality onto other people.

Heterosexual privilege can have different consequences in various locations. You will learn more about discrimination and how one's sexuality intersects with government policy and human rights in Uganda in "A Closer Look: Examining Discrimination Internationally."

A Closer Look: Examining Discrimination Internationally

In Uganda, legal, social, and professional LGBTQIA+ discrimination has been lengthy and severe. Laws prohibiting same-sex sexual acts were first put in place when Uganda was under British colonial rule in the nineteenth century. After Uganda gained independence in 1962, the laws were retained (Human Rights Watch 2008).

Since then, the LGBTQIA+ community in Uganda has faced widespread discrimination. For example, in 2005, a local tabloid published the names, addresses, and occupations of gay men, putting them at risk for retribution by their employers, family, and neighbors. The paper later threatened to publish a similar list of alleged lesbians (Human Rights Watch 2006). Then, in 2013, the Ugandan parliament passed a bill criminalizing homosexuality and authorizing the government to take children away from LGBTQ parents. In 2014, legislators proposed a death penalty for gay sex (International Rescue Committee 2021). Much of the support for these laws in Uganda comes from fundamentalist Christian religious communities (Harris 2013).

The 2014 proposal was rescinded, in part due to the pressure of local Uganda activists and the international community of human rights organizations. There is some evidence that their work may also be shifting perspectives. A 2013 Pew Research Center opinion survey reported that 96 percent of Ugandans believed homosexuality should not be accepted by society, while 4 percent believed it should (The Global Divide on Homosexuality 2022). But in 2017, a poll carried out by the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and **Intersex** Association found attitudes toward LGBTI people had significantly changed. Fifty-nine percent of Ugandans agreed that gay, lesbian, and bisexual people should enjoy the same rights as straight people, while 41 percent disagreed (ILGA 2016). However, despite this, the international community has been alarmed at laws recently put in place that discriminate against and endanger nonbinary Ugandans.

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LXmosqvayeM**

Figure 10.5 LGBT Activist in Uganda discussing human rights. **Transcript.**

Please watch this four minute video (figure 10.5), which tells more about the dangers of being gay in Uganda, as well as the spirit of activism countering that discrimination. After viewing, please return to answer the following questions:

1. How do social institutions such as government, religion, and family shape the way LGBTQIA+ individuals experience discrimination?
2. What other countries have policies similar to Uganda? What does LGBTQIA+ activism look like in those spaces?

Licenses and Attributions for Sexual Attitudes and Practices

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Figure 10.3. "Percentage of Americans, 18 or Older, Who Self-Identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender" by Jean M. Ramirez; Suzanne Latham; Rudy G. Hernandez; and Alicia E. Juskewycz in 10.1 Sex, Sexual Orientation and Gender – Exploring Our Social World: The Story of Us from Exploring Our Social World: The Story of Us is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

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Figure 10.4. "Why Some Black LGBTQIA+ Folks Are Done 'Coming Out'" by The Root is licensed under the Standard YouTube License.

Figure 10.5. "Fighting for LGBT rights in Uganda [Streaming Video]" by BBC World Service is licensed under the Standard YouTube License.

10.4 Sexualities: Perspectives and Sociological Research

The study of human **sexuality** is interdisciplinary and covers a wide range of topics, some of which are the focus of this chapter. You've already learned about sexuality, sexual scripts, **sexual orientation**, and power dynamics associated with **heteronormativity**. Beyond what we explored, sociologists also focus on identities, bodies, sexual violence, migration/globalization, and sexual politics and social movements. **Intersectionality** is a useful lens to use when studying sexuality. Social locations like **gender** and **race** intersect with one's experience of sexuality and can impact interactions. Attitudes and practices related to sexuality can inform the structure of **social institutions**

such as work, education, religion, and media. In this section, we focus on sexuality as a continuum and **queer theory**.

Understanding sexuality as fluid or on a continuum is not a new idea. Alfred Kinsey was among the first to conceptualize sexuality as a continuum rather than as a strict dichotomy of gay or straight. He created a six-point rating scale that ranges from exclusively heterosexual to exclusively homosexual (figure 10.6). For an optional closer look at Kinsey's research and his contemporaries, you can refer to the **Kinsey Institute [Website]** at Indiana University.

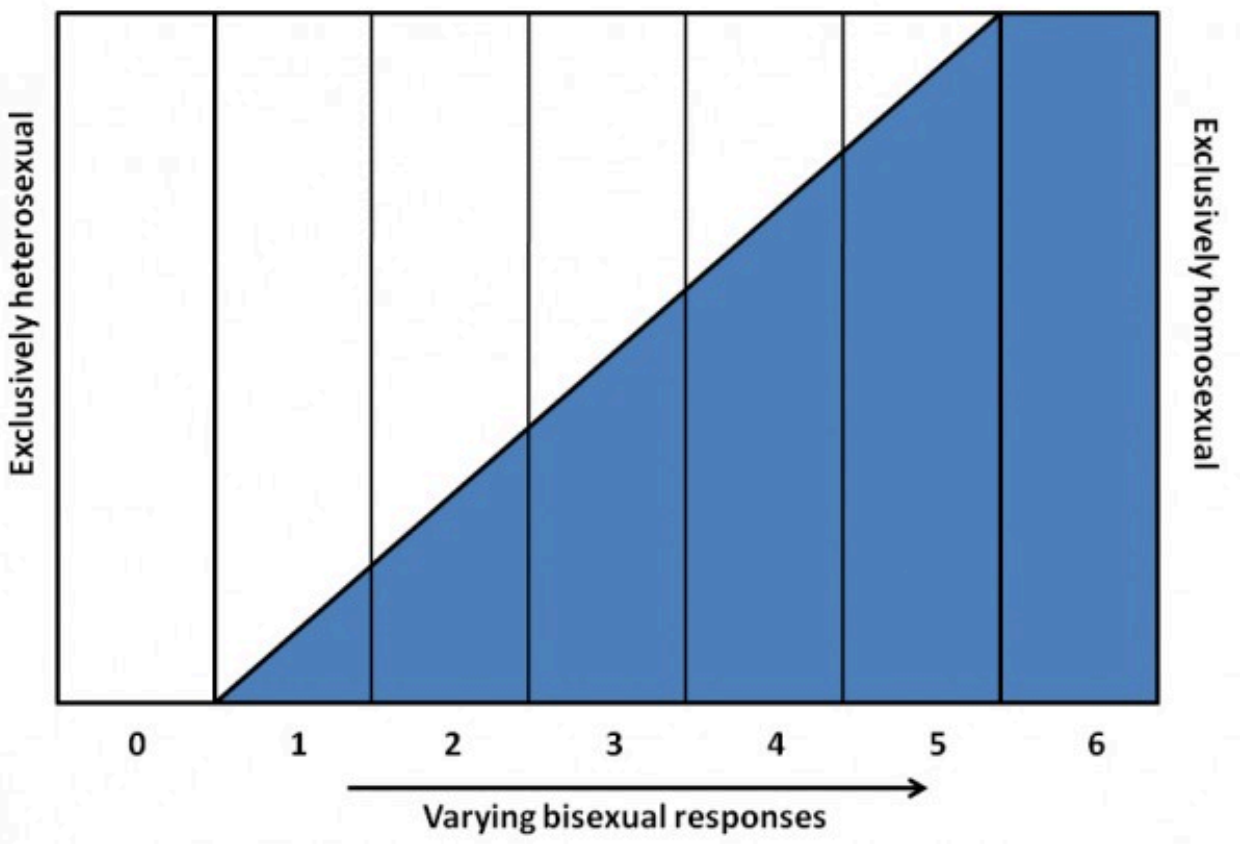

Figure 10.6 The Kinsey scale indicates that sexuality can be measured by more than just heterosexuality and homosexuality.

Later scholarship by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick expanded on Kinsey's notions. She coined the term "homosocial" to oppose "homosexual" and to describe nonsexual same-**sex** relations. Sedgwick recognized that U.S. culture influences gendered behavior. Women can express homosocial feelings (nonsexual regard for people of the same sex) through hugging, handholding, and physical closeness. In contrast, men refrain from these expressions since they violate the heteronormative expectation that male sexual attraction should be exclusively for women. Research suggests that it is easier for women to violate these **norms** than men, because men are subject to more social disapproval for being physically close to other men (Sedgwick 1985). Sedgwick was also one of the founders of **queer theory**.

Queer theory is a field of critical theory that emphasizes the fluidity of gender and sexualities and the performative qualities of them. It is an interdisciplinary approach to sexuality studies that questions how we have been taught to think about sexual orientation. This theory emerged in the early 1990s from queer studies and women's

studies. The approach problematizes the way Western culture has rigidly split gender and sexuality into specific **roles**. According to Jagose (1996), queer theory focuses on mismatches between anatomical sex, **gender identity**, and sexual orientation, and how people cannot just be divided into male/female or homosexual/heterosexual. By calling their discipline "queer," scholars rejected the effects of labeling; instead, they embraced the word "queer" and reclaimed it for their own purposes. This perspective highlights the need for a more flexible and fluid conceptualization of sexuality—one that allows for change, negotiation, and freedom. This mirrors other oppressive schemas in our culture, especially those surrounding gender and race (Black versus White, man versus woman).

Sedgwick argued against U.S. **society**'s monolithic definition of sexuality and its reduction to a single factor: the sex of someone's desired partner. Sedgwick identified dozens of other ways in which people's sexualities were different, such as:

- Even identical genital acts mean very different things to different people.
- Sexuality makes up a large share of the **self**-perceived identity of some people, but only a small share of others' identities.
- Some people spend a lot of time thinking about sex, others little.
- Some people like to have a lot of sex, others little or none.
- Some people experience their sexuality as deeply embedded in a matrix of gender meanings and gender differentials. Others do not (Sedgwick 1990).

Theorists utilizing queer theory strive to question the ways society perceives and experiences sex, gender, and sexuality, opening the door to new scholarly understandings.

Research on human sexuality indicates that there is a connection between power, pleasure, and inequality. The myth of a gendered love/sex binary where men are sexual and women are romantic creates expectations for men to be sexual while women are sexy (Wade and Sharp 2011). This myth is seen in how the media constructs images through an assumed heterosexual **male gaze**. In **feminist theory**, the **male gaze** is the act of depicting women from a masculine, heterosexual perspective that presents and represents women as sexual objects for the pleasure of the male viewer. Women are constructed as hypersexualized, passive subjects (Mulvey 1975). Sexual objectification of bodies happens to both men and women in **popular culture**; however, it is more common to see women's bodies objectified (Hatton and Trautner 2011; figure 10.7). Research that examines the intersection of power and pleasure highlights gendered inequalities when it comes to sexuality. This section will focus on some of that research by taking a closer look at the **orgasm gap**, **hookup culture**, and online dating.

Figure 10.7 The male gaze reveals an unequal social power between men and women.

Orgasm Gap

The **orgasm gap** refers to the difference between reported orgasms by gender. This gap is notably higher in women who have sex with men compared to men who have sex with women (Frederick et al. 2018). According to the 2018 National **Survey** of Sexual Health and Behavior, which

sampled U.S. adults, 91 percent of men reported they had an orgasm during their most recent sexual event. In contrast, only 64 percent of women reported they had an orgasm during their most recent sexual event.

What drives this difference in sexual pleasure? The social factors that are at play, including double standards, sexual norms, scripts, and social pressures, might make this gap seem inevitable, but research shows that the orgasm gap in the United States is twice as large as in Brazil (Beauchamp 2015). Women report their rate of orgasm as being significantly higher when they are without a partner (Kinsey et al. 1953; Harvey, Wenzel, and Sprecher 2004). In a survey with a large U.S. sample of adults, Fredrick and colleagues (2018), found that women's orgasms were linked to having more oral sex, having sex that lasted longer, and experiencing more satisfaction within the relationship.

The myth of a gendered love/sex binary produces a double standard in which women need to be willing participants in sexual acts, but not too willing. Women attempt to "fulfill" their sexual partner's needs with minimal focus on their own pleasure. Similar to the sexual norms of satisfying men in U.S. culture, sex is perceived as something for men to enjoy and women to participate in for men's pleasure. The myth is further perpetuated through pornography, which has become a main source of sex education in the United States. Men and women mirror the sex acts depicted in pornography, many of which are designed to prioritize men's pleasure (Sun et al. 2014).

How does this play into **LGBTQIA+** relationships? Do the same norms situate themselves within relationships in some way? There is limited research that examines the orgasm gap across the full continuum of sexual identities, but Fredrick and colleagues (2018) make some comparisons across heterosexual men, gay men, bisexual men, heterosexual women, lesbian women, and bisexual women (Figure 10.8). Lesbian women reported more frequent orgasms than heterosexual women, while bisexual women's experiences were similar to heterosexual women's. Gay and bisexual men reported similar rates of orgasms compared to heterosexual men; however, they were slightly less likely to always orgasm when sexually intimate. Across this study, men reported more frequent orgasms than women.

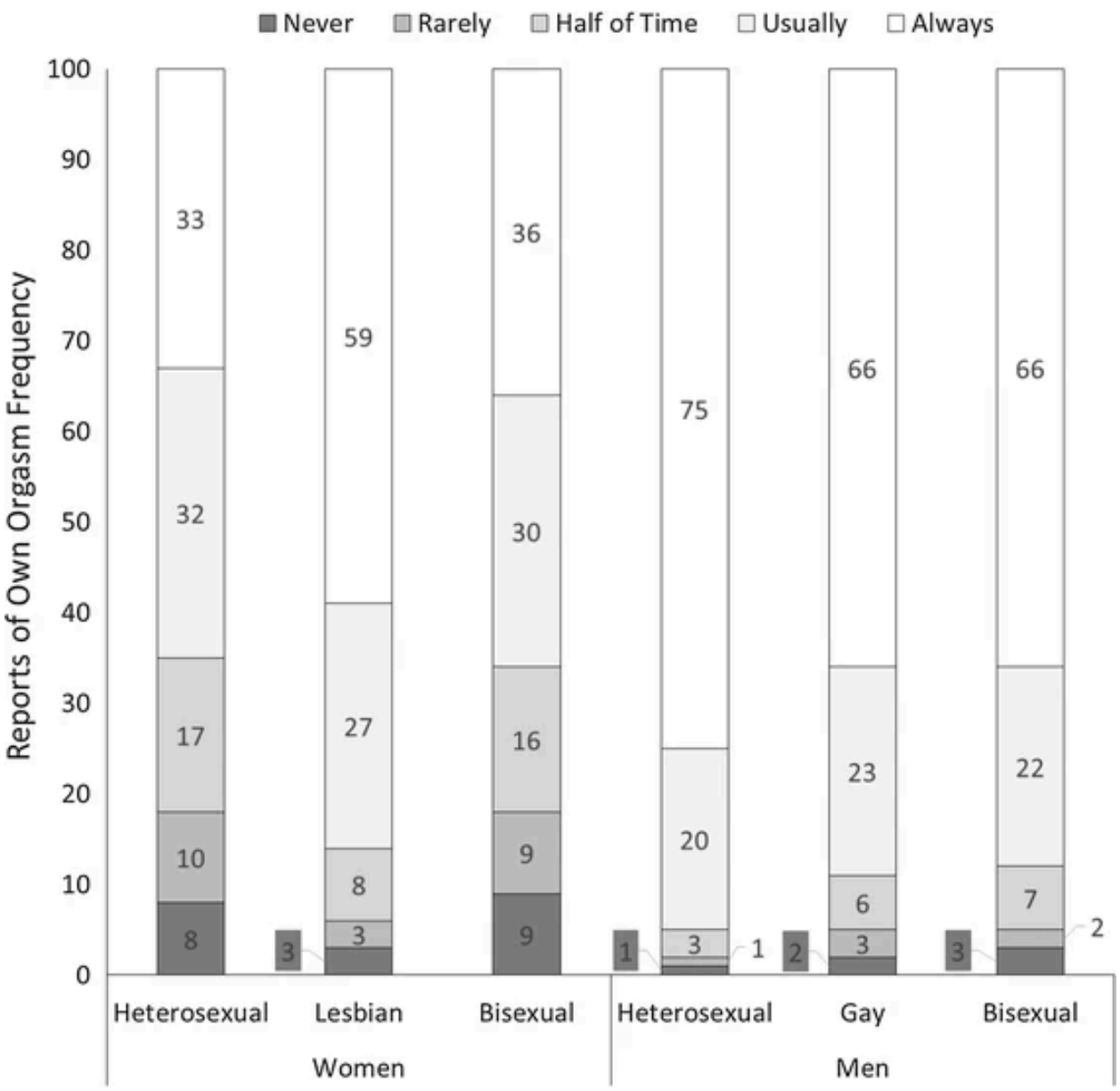

Figure 10.8 How often have you experienced orgasms in the past month? Data from **Differences in Orgasm Frequency Among Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Heterosexual Men and Women in a U.S. National Sample [Website]**. **Image description.**

Hookup Culture

Hookup culture is when individuals connect for sexual relations outside of romantic relationships. A majority of the research on hookup culture occurs on college campuses or with college age individuals (figure 10.9*A* and 10.9*B*). College party scenes tend to center on fraternity houses, where college students under the drinking age can easily access alcohol (Armstrong and Hamilton 2013). Research continues to find that there is a double standard for men and women. Social stigma surrounds women's sexuality in ways that are restrictive and policed by both women and men (Armstrong, Hamilton, and England 2010; Kettrey 2016; Cera, Ford, and England 2017).

Figure 10.9 What does the party scene look like at your school?

Hookup culture creates gendered expectations for both women and men. These expectations can be identified in research on the orgasm gap, gender differences in initiating hookups, and the double standard. As with the orgasm gap, women report experiencing less physical pleasure from hookups than men do, so the enjoyment of a hookup is gendered in favor of men. Men are also more prone to initiate the hook up and interactions leading up to a hook up.

However, the primary gendered issue with hookups is the double standard we see for women. Social stigmas surround women's sexuality in ways that are highly restrictive and contradictory. After sexual encounters, men are praised for their actions and for "scoring." In contrast, women are often criticized and labeled negatively by peers and society regardless of how they handle sexual advances. If they turn down advances, they are called a "prude" or "bitch," but if they accept advances, they are labeled as "easy" or a "slut." Recent research on hookup culture shows that women are being criticized less than they were previously, but the stigma and social responses are still frequently negative, regardless of a hookup attempt's outcome (Armstrong et al. 2014).

Although women are most frequently negatively targeted for their sexual activity, men are not exempt from social censure. In a study of Facebook users, Papp and colleagues (2015) found that men targeted as "sluts" were judged more harshly than women. Future research would benefit from continuing to examine women's and men's experiences in a variety of settings, including other social media platforms that might be more popular with younger generations. As you reflect on this section, consider, how does hookup culture inform our social and sexual lives?

Online Dating and the Intersection of Gender, Race, and Sexuality

Today, online dating is accessible and viewed as normative. Currently, over 30 percent of U.S. adults report using online dating sites or apps, and most report having overall positive experiences (Pew Research Center 2020). How does online dating intersect with gender, race, and sexuality?

Data analyzing online dating patterns demonstrates that for Americans, particularly heterosexual people, gender conformity is desirable. The

limited research on queer individuals also identifies a connection between gender conformity and sexual desirability. Women looking to date other women have a slight preference for gender-conforming partners (Smith and Stillman 2002), while men looking to date other men have a strong preference for men who embody **hegemonic masculinity** (Reynolds 2015; Cascalheira and Smith 2020).

Women's and men's experiences with online dating demonstrate differences when it comes to sexual harassment and fear of assault when arranging face to face meetings. Women are more often the recipients of sexually explicit photos and unwanted contact (figure 10.10). Men receive unwanted sexually explicit photos or conversations, but the social norms are gendered and reflect a power dynamic in which unwanted contact with women may lead to fear and concerns for safety. Women are twice as likely to say that they are concerned about their physical and emotional risks in dating (Pew Research Center 2020).

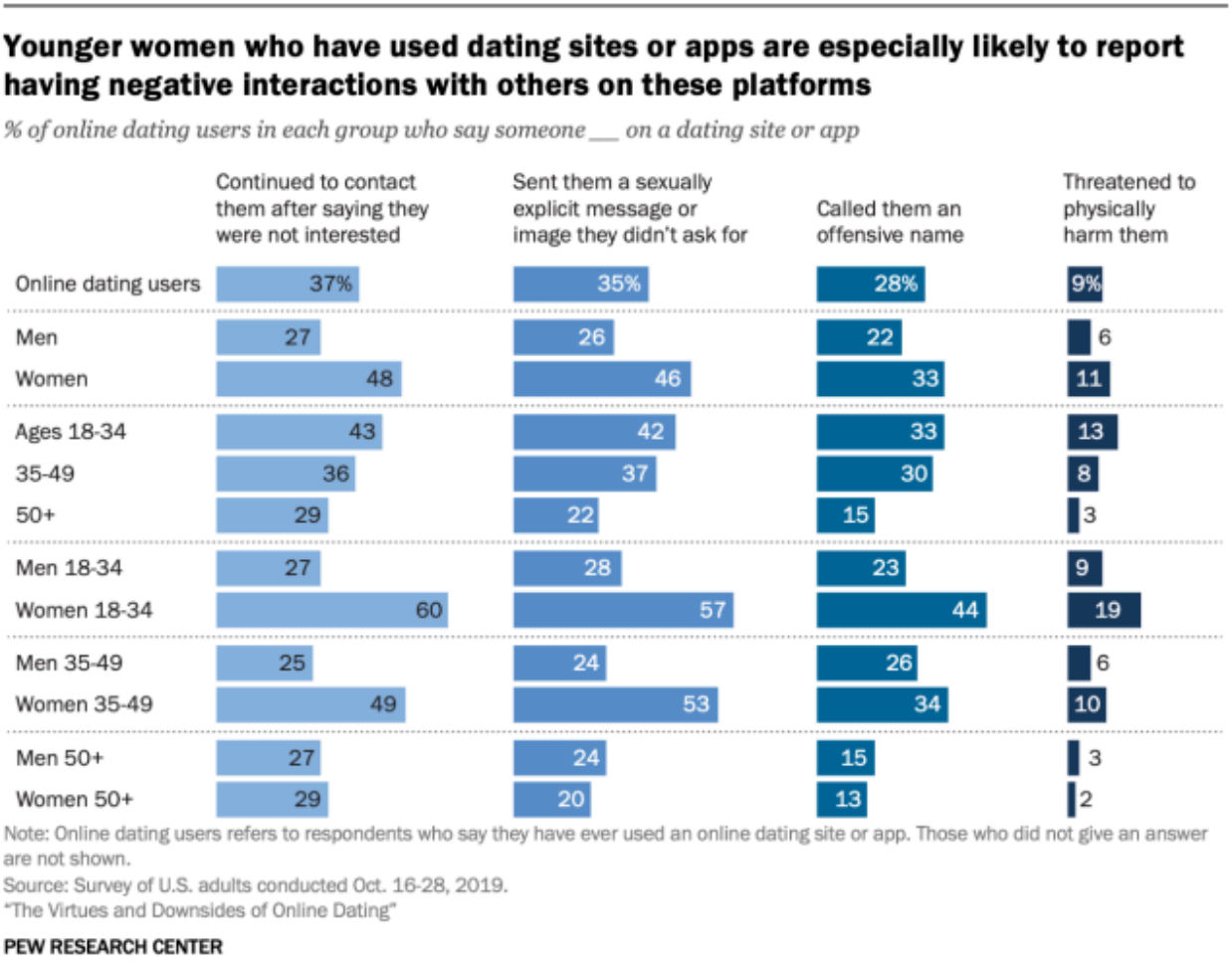

Figure 10.10 Gender differences and the downside of online dating. Younger women report higher incidences of being harassed or sent sexually explicit messages.

Remember OkCupid? Cofounder Christian Rudder (2014) used online dating profiles to analyze the relationship between gender, race, and sexuality when it comes to partner selection. Racist sexual stereotypes about Black and Asian people influence response rates on dating profiles. For Black men, racial stereotypes have favorable and unfavorable consequences. Being stereotyped

as hyper masculine, Black men are seen as especially sexy, sexual, and sexually skilled compared to White men. Though they may be sought out as sexual partners because of these stereotypes, the idea that they are too masculine and too sexual may make them seem like frightening or inappropriate partners. Black men are the least likely to get a response from women and men.

White men have an advantage on dating apps and are more likely to receive responses from people across all racial groups (Curington, Lundquist and Lin 2021). You will learn more about Whiteness and **privilege** in the **next chapter**, but an examination of online dating patterns reflects the privilege associated with Whiteness in U.S. culture.

Historically, women of color have been oversexualized and eroticized, which translates into online platforms in multiple ways. Bias and **racism** underlie comments like "I'm just not into (insert racial identity)." Selecting a partner based on their race is a type of sexual objectification. Like Black men, Black women are among the least likely to receive a response. The racial stereotypes that masculinize African Americans of all genders undermine a Black woman's value in online dating (Rudder 2014). Changes in culture and how people interact may alter how individuals engage with dating apps and partner preferences.

Dating apps have expanded to reach a broader audience. There are apps for queer women, gay men, trans people, Black people, religiously affiliated, kink, etcetera. Apps like Bumble have been developed to put the "power" in the hands of women as they control who can and can't message them. Her, Lex, and Grindr are specifically made for lesbian, gay, trans, nonbinary, and queer people and attempt to create a safe and accepting space that may not be accessible in other apps like Tinder, Bumble, Match, and Hinge (figure 10.11).

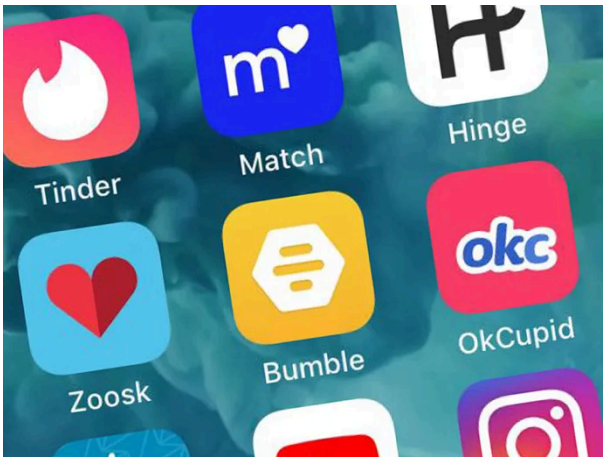

Figure 10.11 Swipe right? Hookups, relationships, or marriage are all at the tip of your fingers.

LGBTQIA+ individuals express a lack of acceptance and report experiencing harassment and hate on the more "traditional" dating sites (Griffins and Armstrong 2023; Pym, Byron, and Albury 2020). The percentage of LGBTQIA+ couples who have met online is higher than for other sexuality groups (figure 10.12). Some evidence suggests that this is due to safety, as well as knowing that the other person would be attracted to you (Byron, Albury, and Pym 2020). Given our cultural adherence to heteronormativity, it might not be clear if someone is interested in someone sexually. Making assumptions about someone's **sexual identity** can be dangerous if that person feels that the assumption threatens their desired presentation of self.

Figure 10.12 "Oh yeah, we met through a dating app." The normalization of dating app use creates more opportunities for connection.

Licenses and Attributions for Sexualities: Perspectives and Sociological Research

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"Male gaze" definition is adapted from Wikipedia and licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0.

Figure 10.6. "The Kinsey Scale" from "Sex and Gender" by Heather Griffiths et al., *Introduction to Sociology 2e*, OpenStax, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

Figure 10.9, left. "laughing people in party" by Samantha Gades is licensed under the Unsplash License.

Figure 10.9, right. "man in red polo shirt pouring wine on clear wine glass" by Jonah Brown is licensed under the Unsplash License.

Figure 10.12, left. "man in black jacket standing beside man in black jacket" by Kyle Bushnell is licensed under the Unsplash License.

Figure 10.12, right. "woman lying on white bed" by Womanizer Toys is licensed under the Unsplash License.

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Figure 10.7. Photo by Estelle Rodrigues is included under fair use.

Figure 10.8. Graph from Differences in Orgasm Frequency Among Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Heterosexual Men and Women in a U.S. National Sample by Frederick, St. John, Garcia, and Lloyd is included under fair use.

Figure 10.10. "Younger women who have used dating sites or app are more likely to report having negative interactions with others on these platforms" by Pew Research Center is included under fair use.

Figure 10.11. Image included under fair use via ctgirlwiththeredscarf.

10.5 Inequalities Experienced through Interactions

Jennifer Puentes and Heidi Esbensen

Members of the **LGBTQIA+** community experience **discrimination** in everyday interactions and a variety of settings, including workplaces, education, and healthcare. **Microaggression** refers to the commonplace verbal, behavioral, or environmental slights, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative attitudes toward stigmatized or culturally marginalized groups (Sue 2010). Microaggressions occur during interactions and can be seen in hateful comments or harassment experienced on the streets, in schools, workplaces, grocery stores, or even sporting events. In the past couple years in Oregon, there have been issues with a high school that threw out racial slurs at a sports game (Manning 2022) and homophobic slurs being used during school board meetings (Portland Tribune 2021). These examples highlight the way that one's **race** and **sexuality** continue to be weaponized during interactions within the community. Furthermore, the intersection of race and sexuality for people of color who are LGBTQIA+ leaves them at higher risk for interactional harassment. In fact, LGBTQIA+ people who are also people of color have higher rates of harassment, assault, and mistreatment in most areas of their lives when compared to their White counterparts (Mahowald 2021). These issues occur throughout all areas of **society**, including in housing, employment, and the **criminal justice system**.

Bullying and Violence

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (2023), there were 1,132 hate crimes (violence and/or property destruction) based on **sexual orientation** bias. This number, which includes anti-heterosexual, and anti-lesbian, gay, bisexual, and **transgender** hate crimes, is likely an underesti-

mate because many victims do not report their victimization to the police. Anti-trans and anti-**gender**-nonconforming hate crimes (identity-based, rather than sexual orientation based) totaled 669. In a Washington state study of school-age youths, researchers found that youth who are gay, lesbian, or bisexual or perceived as LGBTQIA+ are often the targets of taunting, bullying, physical assault, and other abuse in schools (Patrick et al. 2013). **Survey** evidence indicates that 76 percent of LGBTQIA+ students report being verbally harassed at school, 31 percent report being physically harassed (pushed or shoved), and 12.5 percent report being physically assaulted based on sexual orientation, gender expression, or gender. Over 60 percent of students who were harassed or assaulted did not report the incident to school staff because they did not think the staff would do anything about the behavior (Kosciw, Clark, and Menard 2021).

The bullying, violence, and other forms of mistreatment experienced by gay teens have significant educational and mental health effects. LGBTQIA+ teens are much more likely than their peers to skip school, do poorly in their studies, drop out of school, and experience depression, anxiety, and low **self**-esteem (Mental Health America 2011; Choukas-Bradley and Thoma 2022). These mental health problems tend to last at least into their twenties (Russell, Ryan, Toomey, Diaz, and Sanchez 2011). According to a 2011 report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), LGBTQIA+ teens are also much more likely to engage in risky and/or unhealthy behaviors such as using tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs, having unprotected **sex**, and not using a seatbelt (Kann et al. 2011).

Ironically, despite the bullying and other mistreatment that LGBTQIA+ teens receive at school, they are much more likely to be disciplined for misconduct than straight students accused of similar misconduct. This disparity is greater for girls than for boys. The reasons for the disparity remain unknown but may stem from unconscious bias against gays and lesbians by school officials (St. George 2010).

As you listen to the video in the next section, start thinking about some of the intersecting experiences one may have and how it shapes their ability to navigate the world around them.

Activity: Violence and Intersecting Systems of Oppression

Please watch this video on anti-violence and how the connections between race, gender, and sexuality are intersecting (figure 10.13). Be sure to come back to answer the questions in this activity.

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p0-hgvf3XSA**

Figure 10.13 How can anti-violence work connect to intersectionality? **Transcript.**

After you watch the video, consider the following questions.

1. How does **intersectionality** apply to your life and the lives of others in your community?
2. What steps can we take to recognize power dynamics and change them?
3. How does **oppression** and power connect to the topics we have covered so far? Sex education? Sexuality and **heteronormativity**?

Sexual Violence

Sociologists examine topics like sexual assault and violence to better understand underlying inequities and how these behaviors are part of our current culture. Language, **norms**, and everyday behaviors contribute to a culture that permits sexual violence. Sexual violence is normalized through environments that promote an unequal distribution of power and value toxic masculinity. From these environments springs **rape culture**, which justifies, naturalizes, and may glorify sexual pressure, coercion, and violence (Marcus 1992; Pascoe and Hollander 2016). Rape culture facilitates sexual assault and is perpetuated through the presence of persistent gender inequalities and attitudes about gender and sexuality. As you learned in Chapter 9, gender norms organize **social institutions** in our society, including power structures and institutional discrimination. Sexuality works to structure our world similarly.

One way rape culture is normalized is through displays of sexual violence in **popular culture**. Campaigns and advertisements are meant to grab attention, but is there a point at which they can go too far? Please think about these questions as you view the images in figure 10.14. What messages are being conveyed about bodies, gender relations, and consent in these Dolce & Gabbana ads? How do these messages shape our culture? You will learn more about how violence becomes part of our culture in the section "Activity: Understanding the Normalization of Violence."

Figure 10.14 A series of ads from Dolce and Gabbana that have since been banned in some countries. They explicitly depict sexual violence in several ways.

In the United States, sexual assault and rape are statistically underreported. The variation in how the data is measured and defined contributes to the significant discrepancies in reported numbers (RAINN 2024). According to RAINN, there are 463,634 reported cases of rape and sexual assault each year involving individuals aged 12 and older. Females are at the highest risk, with a higher percentage of reported and assumed assaults. Males are also impacted, accounting for about 1 out of 10 reported rape victims. Additionally, transgender, genderqueer, and gender nonconforming individuals face a higher risk of rape and sexual assault compared to **cisgender** men and women.

Another way rape culture is perpetuated is by teaching young girls and women to minimize their discomfort to avoid hostile situations with men to protect themselves. Normalizing this behavior occurs in several ways. For an optional closer look at this topic, read the article "**The Thing All Women Do That You Don't Know About [Website]**."

The ideas and norms that are part of rape culture also serve as barriers to reporting sexual violence. In U.S. culture, there is a great deal of uncertainty around the types of consequences perpetrators of sexual violence will experience. Influenced by how the media portrays such cases, people may not report incidents of sexual violence due to fears of not being believed. Concerns include doubts about men's ability to control themselves, mistrust in authority figures'

responses, embarrassment, self-blame, and lack of support from others. These fears create barriers for survivors seeking help and justice.

Sexual violence is not mainly about sex; it's more about control and dominance. In situations of sexual assault, sex is used as a weapon to gain power over another person. The images in figure 10.15 show how violence is excused and victims are unfairly blamed. These victims can be anyone.

Figure 10.15 Sexual assault and violence affects people of differing ages, status, race, and other identities.

Research shows that men are also victims of sexual violence, with 1 in 26 men reporting that they suffered completed or attempted rape at some point in their lifetime, compared to 1 in 4 women. In other words, approximately 14 percent of reported rapes involve men or boys, with 1 in 6 reported sexual assaults being perpetrated against

a boy, and 1 in 25 reported sexual assaults being perpetrated against a man.

There are many barriers to reporting for women and men. However, for men there is a specific culture of silence that is based on several factors, one of which is personal shame in response to cultural norms of strength and dominance. According to 2015–16 data, 1.3 percent of men reported incidents of being "made to penetrate" in the past year, either through physical force or because of intoxication (Smith et al. 2018). This shows the normalization of sexual harassment and violence as a way for some people to assert dominance and control over others. It also highlights the challenges people face in reporting and dealing with the trauma after such events. Victims often face criticism, rejection, disbelief, and blame and are made to feel like the events they experienced either were not real or were their fault. Others may say or imply that the victim should have been stronger, said no more forcefully, or behaved or dressed differently. Our responses to acts of violence send messages about what types of behaviors and language are acceptable.

Rates of sexual violence in the LGBTQIA+ community are the same or higher than in heterosexuals (Human Rights Campaign 2024). Sexual violence will be experienced by about half of all trans individuals and bisexual women during their lifetimes (Flanders, Anderson, and Tarasoff 2020). Their experiences relate to having higher risk factors such as poverty, stigma, and marginalization. Another factor is hate-motivated violence, which can often take the form of sexual assault and sexual violence. There are also high rates of intimate partner violence and sexual assault by partners within the LGBTQIA+ community (Human Rights Campaign 2024).

Transphobia and **homophobia**, an extreme or irrational aversion to LGBTQIA+ people, are evident in the rates of sexual assault experienced by transgender individuals, with almost half experiencing such assaults in their lifetime. People who are trans and BIPOC experiencing even higher rates (Griffiths and Armstrong 2023). Another concerning trend is that people identifying with the LGBTQIA+ community are less likely to access services, and if they do attempt to get help, they may be denied services due to their sexual or **gender identity** (Kumar and Joseph 2021). This lack of access further adds to the barriers faced by LGBTQIA+ individuals. The next section of this chapter will examine a few of the other ways that policies and social institutions create barriers for LGBTQIA+ individuals.

Activity: Understanding the Normalization of Violence

Please watch this video (figure 10.16) on how we can challenge the normalization of violence against women and come back to answer the questions in this activity.

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hBtXiTumdY0**

Figure 10.16 Susana Pavlou asks us to take a deeper look at rape culture and forces us to deconstruct preconceptions and prejudices in relation to sexual violence. **Transcript.**

1. What was one thing that really stuck out to you about this video?
2. Susana Pavlou discusses some myths around sexual violence. Have you heard, witnessed, or experienced these myths in your experiences with society? How prevalent are they?
3. What suggestions does the speaker present for decreasing sexual assault? How do you think we can decrease sexual assault?

Licenses and Attributions for Inequalities Experienced through Interactions

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10.6 Policies and Social Institutions: Inequalities Experienced at the Structural Level

Jennifer Puentes and Heidi Esbensen

In the last section, we focused on some of the ways people experience **discrimination** at the interactional level. To gain a better understanding of how inequalities persist at a structural level, let's take a closer look at a few **social institutions**, such as marriage and families, healthcare, and workplaces. As you consider the relationship between interactions and social institutions, you'll see it is nearly impossible to completely disconnect harassment in interactional situations from policies built into

social institutions. For example, consider perspectives on **heteronormativity** and how they influence daily interactions and structures in our **society**, as well as **gender norms** and expectations. Those norms influence institutions and policy, both of which are deeply rooted systems with power dynamics based on binaries and patriarchal ideologies.

Families: Marriage Equality

Marriage equality did not exist for same-**sex** couples until 2015, making this a very recent step toward equality given the historical patterns of the United States. **Marriage equality** refers to the legal recognition of the rights of marriage regardless of one's **sexual orientation** or **gender identity**. For a long time, legal marriage was not a possibility for everyone. In 1967, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that laws banning interracial marriage violate the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution in *Loving v. Virginia*. Forty-eight years later in 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Obergefell v. Hodges* that the Fourteenth Amendment requires all states to grant same-sex marriages and recognize same-sex marriages granted in other states. You will learn more about this important decision in "Activity: Same-Sex/Same Gender Marriage."

Prior to the Supreme Court ruling, same-sex marriage was legal, but only in certain states, and legal rights were not guaranteed federally. Massachusetts was the first state to grant same-sex marriages in 2004. Congress recently passed the Respect for Marriage Act, which allows recognition of all marriages in all states but does not necessarily protect same-sex marriage if the Supreme Court overturns *Obergefell*. If you'd like to learn more, you can read about what the **Respect for Marriage Act [Website]** means. However, in light of *Roe* v. *Wade* being overturned, there are still concerns about the possibility of the Supreme Court overruling *Obergefell*, which would be catastrophic for the **LGBTQIA+** community (Webber 2022). According to recent Gallup polls, overturning the Marriage Equality Act goes against public perspectives as most Americans support gay marriage by a significant percentage (figure 10.17).

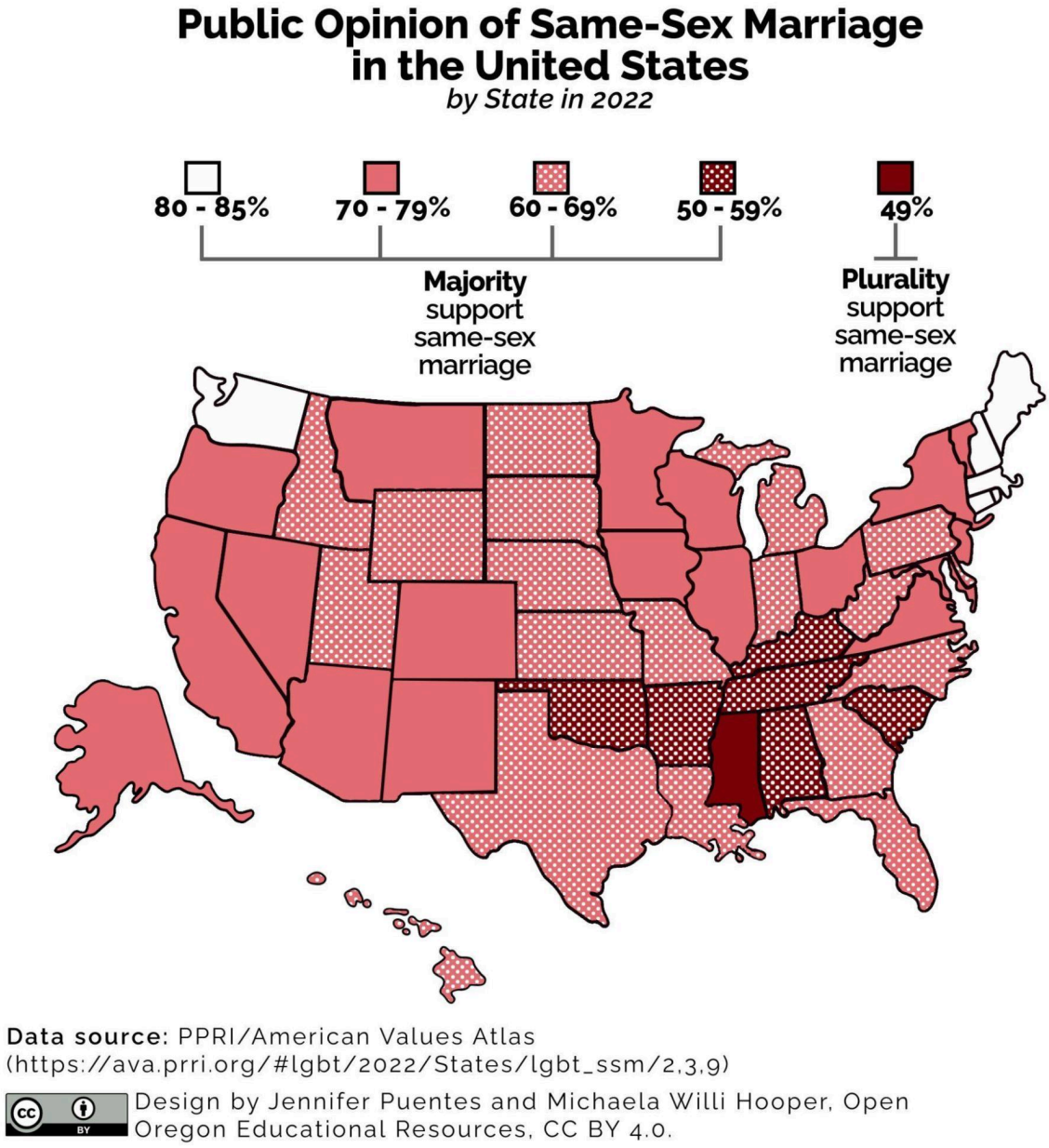

Figure 10.17 Review this map to learn more about public opinion of same-sex marriage in the United States by state in 2021. How does your state compare to others? **Image description.**

If you'd like more information and data on same-sex marriage and public opinion, you can review **this recent Gallup poll [Website].**

Activity: Same-Sex/Same-Gender Marriage

The U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges* created equal access to marriage for gay men and women in 2015. To learn more about this decision, please watch the video (figure 10.18) and answer the questions that follow.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ymrzc7a_LmU

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ymrzc7a_LmU**

Figure 10.18 The Supreme Court ruling in *Obergefell v. Hodges* requires all states to grant same-sex marriages and recognize same-sex marriages granted in other states. **Transcript.**

1. What has made our society limit who can access the benefits of marriage?
2. The four dissenting judges cited that states should independently decide whether the state should allow same-sex marriages based on popular votes. What effects do you think this would have federally? What about in states that would vote no?
3. After the decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, decisions about abortion access are left up to individual states. What rights would same-sex couples lose if some states decided their marriage was illegal? How does the Respect for Marriage Act support couples?

Education: Sex Education in the United States and Abroad

Sex education in U.S. classrooms continues to be a controversial topic. Unlike many other countries, sex education is not required in all public school curricula in the United States. Should sex education be taught in school? Research indicates that only 7 percent of U.S. adults oppose sex education in middle schools, and 4 percent of parents oppose sex education in high schools (Planned Parenthood 2024). The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) advocates in favor of children and adolescents having access to developmentally appropriate, evidence-based education. Specifically, the AAP stresses the importance of youth developing a safe and positive view of **sexuality**, learning how to build healthy relationships, and learning how to make informed choices about their sexuality and sexual health (American Academy of Pediatrics 2024). Given this, what are people debating about sex education?

Much of the debate is over the issue of abstinence. Abstinence-only programs or "sexual risk avoidance" programs focus on avoiding sex until marriage and/or delaying it as long as possible. This form of education does not focus on the prevention of unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections. As a result, according to the Sexuality and Information Council of the United States, only 38 percent of high schools and 14 percent of middle schools across the country teach all 19 topics identified as critical for sex education by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Janfaza 2020). The lack of access to sex education in schools does not reflect parents' attitudes on the topic. Figure 10.19 outlines U.S. adults' attitudes about what content should be included in a comprehensive sex education program.

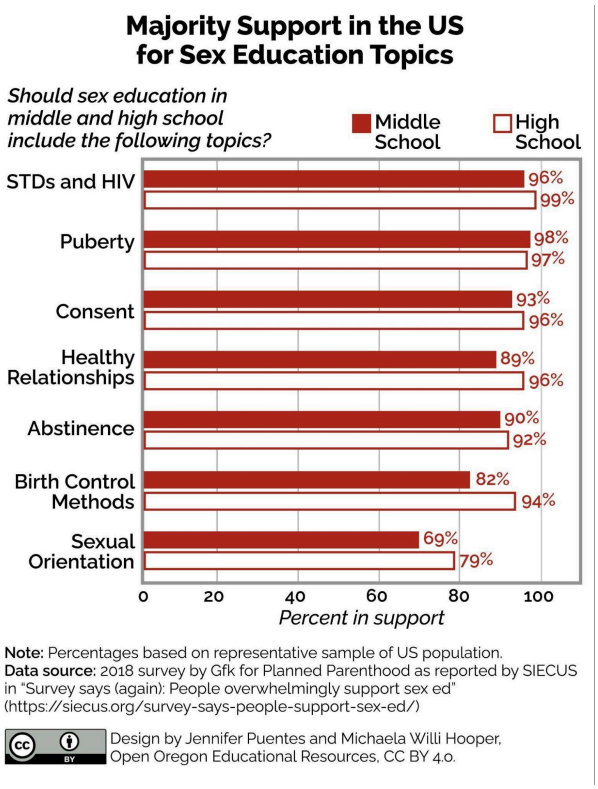

Figure 10.19 This chart shows that a majority of a representative sample in the United States thinks most of these topics (abstinence, birth control, sexually transmitted infections, healthy relationships, sexual orientation, puberty, and consent) should be included in our educational systems curriculum in sex ed. Image description.

Research suggests that while government officials may still be debating about the content of sexual education in public schools, the majority of U.S. adults are not. Two-thirds (67 percent) of Americans say education about safer sexual practices is more effective than abstinence-only education in terms of reducing unintended pregnancies. A slightly higher percentage—69 percent—say that emphasizing safer sexual practices and contraception in sexuality education is a better way to reduce the spread of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) than emphasizing abstinence (Davis 2018).

Furthermore, research suggests that abstinence-only or sexual risk avoidance education programs do not work (McCammon 2017). Yet despite this research and the clear majorities in favor of comprehensive education, the federal government offers roughly $110 million per year to commu-

nities for abstinence-only and sexual risk avoidance programs (Planned Parenthood Action 2024). Decisions regarding guidance on what should be included in sex education are made at the state and local level. Currently, 39 states require discussions of HIV and/or sex education in schools, but fewer than half require the education to be medically accurate (Planned Parenthood Action 2024).

Sweden, whose comprehensive sex education program in its public schools educates participants about safe sex, can serve as a model for this approach. In 2020, the teenage birthrate in Sweden was 5 per 1,000 births (worldbank.org 2020), compared with 15.4 per 1,000 births in the United States (CDC 2021). Among 15- to 19-year-olds, reported cases of gonorrhea in Sweden are nearly 600 times lower than in the United States (Grose 2007).

A sociologist using the **sociological perspective** would want to look at the **correlation** between sex education curriculum and outcomes such as teen pregnancies and STIs. Mississippi has the highest rates of teen pregnancy with 28 births per 1,000 women ages 15 to 19. Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Alabama are next in line with around 25 births per 1,000 women ages 15 to 19 (CDC 2021). What does sex ed look like in those states? Is there a correlation? What other factors could influence teen pregnancy in these states?

Healthcare: Physical and Mental Health Stressors

Healthcare is a critical part of how societies organize and respond to the health needs of their members. Individual health and access to healthcare are often influenced by a variety of factors, including one's **ethnicity**, **race**, **class**, gender, and sexuality. Affluent or wealthy individuals have significantly higher life expectancies when compared to individuals with fewer economic resources (Chetty et al. 2016). For folks who identify as LGBTQIA+, in addition to any concerns or stigma they may have regarding the services they need to seek from a healthcare provider, they may also experience harassment or discrimination based on their sexual orientation or gender identity.

HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) and AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) racked the LGBTQIA+ community beginning in the 1980s. Many gays and lesbians eventually died from AIDS-related complications. HIV and AIDS remain serious illnesses for gays and straights alike. An estimated 1.2 million Americans now have HIV, and about 35,000 have AIDS. Fortunately, HIV can now be controlled fairly well by appropriate medical treatment (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2011).

LGBTQIA+ adults have higher rates of other physical health problems and mental health problems than heterosexual adults (Frost, Lehavot, and Meyer 2011; Institute of Medicine 2011). These problems are thought to stem from the stress that the LGBTQIA+ community experiences from living in a society in which they frequently encounter verbal and physical harassment, job discrimination, and lack of equal treatment to the point where some feel the need to conceal their **sexual identity**. Earlier in this chapter, you learned that LGBTQIA+ youth experience various kinds of educational and mental health issues because of the mistreatment they encounter. By the time LGBTQIA+ individuals reach their adult years, the various stressors they have experienced have begun to take a toll on their physical and mental health.

Because stress is thought to compromise immune systems, LGBTQIA+ individuals generally have lower immune functioning and lower perceived physical health than straight individuals. Because stress impairs mental health, they are also more likely to have higher rates of depression, loneliness, low **self**-esteem, and other psychiatric and psychological problems, including a tendency to attempt suicide (Sears and Mallory 2011).

Among all LGBTQIA+ individuals, those who have experienced greater levels of stress related to their sexual orientation have higher levels of physical and mental health problems than those who have experienced lower levels of stress. It is important to keep in mind that these various physical and mental health problems do not stem from an LGBTQIA+ sexual orientation in and of itself, but rather from the experience of living as an LGBTQIA+ individual in a homophobic society.

Workplace Practices and Policies

Research on gender and racial/ethnic labor force inequality uncovers disadvantages experienced by LGBTQIA+ individuals. Inequalities take the form of exclusionary policies, discriminatory hiring and promotion practices, and biased interpersonal interactions (Patridge, Barthelemy, and Rankin 2014; Ragins and Cornwell 2001; Tilcsik 2011). Workplace heteronormativity and **heterosexism** contribute to disadvantages experienced by LGBTQIA+ workers (Collier and Daniel 2017; Tilcsik 2011). In the workplace, almost half of LGBTQIA+ individuals reported some form of discrimination in the year 2019–2020 (Sears et al. 2022). LGBTQIA+ workers are often excluded from benefits and protections extended to their non-LGBTQIA colleagues (HRC 2021; James et al. 2016). Research documents a wage penalty for gay men, lesbian women, and bisexual workers (Mishel 2016; Mize 2016). The lack of enforcing legal protections leaves members of the LGBTQIA+ community at risk.

In addition to formal processes of discrimination, biased interpersonal interactions create challenges in the workplace. One's sexual orientation, or even presumed orientation based on gender expression, could be used against them by their employer (figure 10.20). Interactionally, LGBTQIA+ employees may experience marginalization in workplace social networks (Connell 2015). As an additional form of labor, workers engage in "status management" as they negotiate when, to whom, and how to disclose information about their identities at work (Jones and King 2014), or make the decision to conceal their identities as a way to minimize bias (Giuffre, Dellinger, and Williams 2008)

Figure 10.20 Have you ever been treated differently in a workplace because of your gender, sexual orientation, or something else?

The structure of work tasks within organizations may impact LGBTQIA+ workers' experiences of marginalization and devaluation. Research examining the work organization at NASA found that the project-based teams had less inclusive and respectful interactions with coworkers since workers have to become familiar with new management strategies as they move teams. LGBTQ professionals were more likely to report marginalization in project-based teams. LGBTQ professionals were better able to navigate management styles and build trust in the tradi-

tional unit-based structure at NASA (Cech Waidzunas 2022). This demonstrates how work structure directly impacts workers' experiences with workplace inequality.

Licenses and Attributions for Policies and Social Institutions: Inequalities Experienced at the Structural Level

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Figure 10.20. "A non-binary person writing in a notepad" from The Gender Spectrum Collection is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

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10.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, we introduced concepts related to **sexuality** and **sexual orientation**, before going into more depth on sexual attitudes and practices. Much of our lives is structured through the lens of **heteronormativity**. This structure of compulsory heterosexuality influences the way sexuality is experienced in the United States. Our **sexual identity** cannot be isolated or separated from our

other identities. Multiple parts of our identities come together to build our experiences in the social world. Identities related to **race**, **ethnicity**, **gender**, and sexuality intersect to shape our experiences, but they are also subject to broader power structures that are pervasive in our lives.

This chapter opened with a discussion of the Parental Rights in Education Act, often referred to as the "Don't Say Gay" law from Florida. We use this example to illustrate the connection between institutional inequalities and policies. These types of policies affect people based on their sexual identity. The impact of inequalities at the interactional level can lead to bullying and violence, while the structural arrangements of our **social institutions** create spaces where we see harassment and **discrimination** in marriage, healthcare, and workplaces.

Our sexual attitudes and behaviors shape the way we think about sexuality and participate in sexual scripts. **Sex** education can frame one's ideas about what sex should and shouldn't be, and it has a long history rooted in debates of abstinence and excludes **LGBTQIA+** populations. In learning about the rules of sexuality, you saw that they are highly gender-based double standards, which align with the **norms** of the United States. They result in significant differences across gender lines regarding what is acceptable or unacceptable and how someone is perceived. Some interactions may lead to an increased risk of violence based on one's sexual identity or gender presentation. Finally, you learned that social institutions are shaped by policies that perpetuate social inequalities. In Chapter 11, you will learn more about **prejudice** and discrimination as we examine race and ethnicity. After examining theories related to race, you will learn how race is connected to people's identities, influences **group** interactions, and is embedded in institutions and structures.

KEY TERMS

- **Heteronormativity**: an ideology and a set of institutional practices that privileges heterosexuality over other sexual orientations.
- **Heterosexism**: discrimination or prejudice against gay people on the assumption that heterosexuality is the normal sexual orientation.
- **Homophobia**: an extreme or irrational aversion to gay, lesbian, bisexual, or all LGBTQIA+ people, which often manifests as prejudice and bias.
- **Hookup culture**: a culture in which casual sexual encounters, including one-night stands, sexual engagements, and so forth, are accepted and encouraged.
- **LGBTQIA+**: an abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual. The additional "+" stands for all of the other identities not encompassed in the short acronym. An umbrella term that is often used to refer to the community as a whole.
- **Male gaze**: the act of depicting women from a masculine, heterosexual perspective that presents and represents women as sexual objects for the pleasure of the male viewer.
- **Marriage equality**: the legal recognition of the rights of marriage regardless of one's sexual orientation or gender identity.
- **Microaggression**: a term used for commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental slights, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative attitudes toward stigmatized or culturally marginalized groups.

- **Orgasm gap**: the disparity or unequal outcome in orgasms between couples, genders, and sexualities.
- **Push-and-resist dynamic**: the situation in which it is normal for men to press sexual activity and advances toward women in pursuit of increased sexual intimacy.
- **Queer theory**: a field of critical theory that emerged in the early 1990s out of queer studies and women's studies; it emphasizes the fluidity of gender and sexualities and the performative qualities of them.
- **Rape culture**: a society or environment that justifies, naturalizes, and may glorify sexual pressure, coercion, and violence. This type of environment is perpetuated through the presence of persistent gender inequalities and attitudes about gender and sexuality.
- **Sexual identity**: a social identity ascribed to individuals based on their gender and the gender of the object of sexual desire. Sexuality includes personal and interpersonal expression of sexual desire, behavior, and identity.
- **Sexual orientation**: enduring patterns of romantic or sexual attraction (or a combination of these) to persons of another sex or gender, the same sex or gender, or to both sexes or more than one gender.
- **Sexual script**: the social rules that guide sexual interaction; these scripts are based in one's culture.
- **Sexual socialization**: a process of social interaction and communication in which individuals learn and internalize the sexuality associated with their gender role and biological sex.
- **Sexuality**: the sexual feelings, thoughts, attractions, and behaviors individuals have toward other people. Sexuality includes desire, power, sexual bodies, sexual acts, reproduction, sexual identity, communities, and discourses.
- **Social construction of sexuality**: how sexuality is continuously constructed and reconstructed through both social and cultural practices. The process by which we learn, through interaction with others, the sexual knowledge, attitudes, norms, and expectations associated with sexuality, sexual behaviors, and sexual identities.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Visit the linked website and complete the **Heterosexual Questionnaire [Website]**. After you've answered the questions, consider: how does heteronormativity shape the world you live in?
2. As you reflect on discussions of queer theory, take a moment to answer the following questions:
    1. Think of some ways that you have experienced, seen, or interpreted some of the differences discussed in this chapter and how that connects to your development of your own sexuality.
    2. What would our society look like through the lens of queer theory if we embraced the

ideals discussed in this chapter? How would our interactions and social institutions be arranged differently?

3. What is the orgasm gap? Why does it persist?
4. Discuss debates around sex education in schools.
5. List and describe three ways people may experience inequalities related to their sexual orientation.

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CHAPTER
11

Race and Ethnicity

11.1 Chapter Learning Objectives and Overview

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Explain how **race** and **ethnicity** are socially constructed, and distinguish between majority and minority groups.
2. Explain historical and contemporary theories related to race and ethnicity.
3. Discuss how stereotypes, **prejudice**, **discrimination**, and **racism** function in contemporary **society**.
4. Discuss how race is connected to people's identities, influences **group** interactions, and is embedded in institutions and structures.

Overview

"What are you?" This question carries several meanings and can put additional pressure on non-White people as they navigate the balance between their identities, family history, and how others perceive them. To learn about how others respond to this question, you can refer to this short clip in the Pew Research Center video (figure 11.1).

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2WaNmhvEzo&t=3s**

Figure 11.1 Please start this chapter by watching a short video in which people share their experiences being multiracial in the United States. **Transcript.**

As you learned from the stories shared at the beginning of this chapter, identities are complicated. At times, the perceived status of one's racial or ethnic group creates additional pressure for people to explain who they are. For those who are multiracial, there can be an additional amount of emotional work involved in explaining who they are, particularly if their appearance doesn't align with what others may expect for a given racial category. For example, Roo shared the struggles he faced with the need to prove his racial category membership by using a narrative that outlines his connections to the Catawba Indian community.

Roo's story also highlights the complexities of **intersectionality** as he reflects on his identities and how they fit together. Rather than stacking categories of experience, he encourages us to think about how he has to understand what it means to be a man who is Native American, White, and gay.

Almost seven percent of all U.S. adults identify as having at least two races in their background. Studies from the Pew Research Center indicate that most Americans are proud of their multiracial background and find that their experiences help them be more open to other cultures (Parker et al. 2015). With interracial marriages on the rise and the increasing **diversity** in the United States, we can expect these numbers to grow. For instance, the number of multiracial or multiethnic U.S. infants has nearly tripled since 1980 (Livingston 2017).

How can we use our **sociological imagination** to understand the complexities of race? How can we use theoretical perspectives on race in **sociology** to help us understand patterns of interaction and practices of discrimination? How do we develop racialized identities, and how does this process vary for Whites and non-Whites? What is institutionalized discrimination, and why does it persist?

These questions about race, identity, and inequities are the focus of this chapter. First, we will explore the distinctions between race and ethnicity and discuss how both are socially constructed. Next, we will evaluate a variety of sociological perspectives on race. Then, we will turn to issues of racial prejudice and discrimination. Finally, we will end by exploring how race impacts peoples' identities and the interaction between groups.

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Figure 11.1. "Multiracial American Voices: Identity – Pew Research Center [Streaming Video]" by Pew Research Center is licensed under the Standard YouTube License.

11.2 Racial, Ethnic, and Minority Groups

Jennifer Puentes and Nora Karena

In the United States, **race** is a grouping of people believed to share common descent, based on the perception of innate physical similarities. The **social construction of race** refers to the idea that race is more meaningful on a social level than on a biological level. More genetic differences exist within a particular race than between races. We also see historical and cultural variations in how race is defined. Race is a socially constructed status that is real in its consequences. Race is systematically rooted in American culture and used to create, establish, maintain, and enhance **group** differences.

Like **class** and **gender** systems explored in Chapter 8 and Chapter 9, racial stratification has structural foundations. The meaning and significance of race were fundamentally changed at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The blatant forms of **racism** that existed in the past have given way to new, more subtle practices.

In America, race seems to function on two main levels: 1) at the individual, micro level through face-to-face interaction and 2) at the institutional, macro level through institutions, such as education, the **criminal justice system**, family, and/or community. In the next section, we will examine the concepts of race and **ethnicity**.

What Is Race?

Race is a category of identity that ascribes social, cultural, and political meaning and consequence to physical characteristics. These commonly understood categories of human difference are unsupported by genetic research. There is far more genetic **diversity** within racial groups than between them. Even though ideas about race have been vigorously contested over time, many people accept contemporary racial categories as essential. Even people who say they don't believe in race can describe characteristics and meanings associated with the racial categories we use most in the United States. If you would like to explore how you understand race and human variation, you can learn more by visiting Understanding Race [Website].

Formal classification of racialized human differences is a much newer concept. It was not until the late eighteenth century when German anthropologist Johan Friedrich Blumenbach applied and expanded upon ideas about dark-skinned people from the global south. His ideas defined a racial hierarchical classification system that artificially correlated geographic location, skin color, and aesthetic value. Painter (2010) argues this system was incorrectly premised on a **theory** that humans

were originally Caucasian (White) and that people classified as Mongoloid (Brown), Malaysian (Yellow), Ethiopian (Black), and American (Red) represent successively "degenerate" races.

Racial categories are unstable and constantly changing in response to social and historical contexts (Omi and Winant 1994). For example, the U.S. Census listed three racial categories in 1860 and five in 2020. You may choose to explore **What Census Calls Us [Website]** to learn more. That means people considered Black or mulatto (a term meaning a mix of Black and White that is now considered offensive) in the 1860 census, might choose to identify as White or "one or more races" in 2020. As you learned in the Overview, we can expect that the use of the multiracial option will grow on the census, especially among younger populations as interracial marriages continue to rise. Furthermore, racial classification is also organized differently from one country to another. This fluidity and inconsistency reveals the illusion and the persistence of race (figure 11.2).

Figure 11.2 Racial categories continue to change as America becomes more multiracial. What does this say about the social construction of race?

What Is Ethnicity?

Ethnicity refers to categories of difference organized around shared language, culture, and faith tradition. Ethnicity is closely tied to place in terms of shared ancestral homelands. Human history being as it is, most modern nation-states are home to multiple ethnic groups with diverse, interconnecting, and conflicting cultures, languages, and **values**. As with race, individuals may be identified or **self**-identify with ethnicities in complex, even contradictory, ways. For example, ethnic groups such as Irish, Italian, Russian, Jewish, and Serbian might all be groups whose members are predominantly included in the "White" racial category.

Ethnicity, like race, is an identification method individuals and institutions use by way of the census, diversity initiatives, non-**discrimination** laws, or simply in personal day-to-day relations. The U.S. Census delineates between ethnicity and race so that a person may identify by ethnicity as Hispanic and by race as White, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. Limiting the definition of ethnicity to a binary—Hispanic or non-Hispanic—reveals how unstable the line between race and ethnicity can be.

National origin associates racial and ethnic identities with political locations and affiliations. It is common for diverse but closely associated ethnic groups to develop "pan-ethnic" identities. For example, the various ethnic groups and national origins of people from Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and adjoining nations, who may share cultural, linguistic, or other values, may group themselves in a collective identity.

Nativism exploits ethnic identity and ideas about racial hierarchy by assuming a shared connection to ancestral homelands, real or imagined, to build and consolidate political power. For example, Christian Nationalists in the United

States are constructing a White, Christian, English-speaking ethnicity that is "native" to the United States. Within this emerging identity are people who claim diverse, mostly European ethnic heritages, some of which have not always been classified as White.

What Are Minority Groups?

Sociologist Louis Wirth (1945) defined a **minority group** as "any group of people who, because of their physical or cultural characteristics, are singled out from the others in the **society** in which they live for differential and unequal treatment, and who therefore regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination." Because "minority" suggests discrimination, sociologists often use the term "subordinate group" instead. A **dominant group** is the group that represents a society's rulers, is often in the majority, and can access power and **privilege** in a given society. These definitions correlate to the idea that the dominant group holds the most power in their society, while subordinate groups lack power compared to the dominant group. Because it is the ability to access power that matters, larger groups can be considered minority groups if they lack power.

According to Charles Wagley and Marvin Harris (1958), a minority group is distinguished by the following five characteristics:

1. Unequal treatment and less power over their lives
2. Distinguishing physical or cultural traits like skin color or language
3. Involuntary membership in the group
4. Awareness of subordination
5. High rate of **in-group** marriage

Additional examples of minority groups might include the **LGBTQIA+** community, religious practitioners whose faith is not widely practiced where they live, and people with disabilities.

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Figure 11.2. Photo by Sarah Leen for National Geographic is included under fair use.

11.3 Theoretical Perspectives on Race and Ethnicity

Jennifer Puentes; Matthew Gougherty; and Nora Karena

Contemporary sociologists reject the argument that **race** is rooted in biology and have devoted decades of sociological research to understanding how race is socially constructed. According to German-American anthropologist Franz Boas (1911), "The existence of any pure race with special endowments is a myth, as is the belief that there are races all of whose members are foredoomed to eternal inferiority" (figure 11.3). In the following sections, we'll explore a variety of theories used to understand race. First, we will examine the role of pseudoscience in understanding racial categories, before moving on to theories that challenge some initial constructions of race and difference.

Figure 11.3 Anthropologist Franz Boas argued there is no such thing as a pure race.

"Science" and Social Theory

Thanks to Charles Darwin's work on natural selection, early European scientists came to accept that all humans descend from a common ancestor and therefore are the same species. However, the misleading racial categories outlined by Blumenbach endured and created the false assumption that race was a biological phenomenon. The superiority of the White race was accepted by early scientists and social theorists. This led them to believe that race was rooted in biology and that White people were "naturally" superior, even as they struggled to understand and describe the origins of social inequality.

Many scientists and social theorists doubled down on biological race by way of social Darwinism. This worldview combines Darwin's ideas about biological evolution with unsupported theories that race is genetically determined and can therefore be selected for through breeding. During the late 1800s, eugenics was a pseudoscientific political project to "improve humanity" through selective breeding of the "best" specimens of White humans. Eugenics lent a veneer of scientific legitimacy to Hitler's racist campaign of **genocide** in Europe. In addition, eugenics undergirded the forced sterilization by the U.S. government of women of color, mostly Indigenous and Black women, who were seen as unfit mothers. Even with these faulty and problematic foundations, eugenics and biological race were also widely accepted in the United States for much of the twentieth century.

Emancipatory Theories

The anthropologist Franz Boas began to question commonly held ideas about biological race and European racial superiority while working with Inuit people on Baffin Island in 1883. He developed the **theory** of **cultural relativism**, which asserts that the differences between groups of people were culturally determined and could only be understood by considering specific cultural and historic contexts. Throughout his career, Boas challenged **racism** with rigorous social science. Despite his broad impact in the field of cultural anthropology, the biological basis for race remained a basic assumption of physical anthropology until the 1960s (Caspari 2003).

In his classic 1903 sociological text, *The Souls of Black Folks*, W. E. B. Du Bois—you met him in Chapter 2—theorized about racial identity. Du Bois posed a provocative question, "How does it feel to be a problem?" Starting with his own childhood experience of being excluded and treated differently by children who were White, he describes a growing awareness of his racialized identity and of how racial identity connects to meaning, power, and social consequence (figure 11.4). His groundbreaking field research described the harsh economic and social consequences of racial **segregation**, including extreme poverty, exploitation, and alienation.

Du Bois also described the "spiritual strivings" of an enduring human community subject to the harsh impacts of a racist state. He celebrated the **agency**, beauty, and inherent human dignity of people who are Black and of the Black community. His research demonstrated that the problem is not Black folks, the problem is racism, which he described as "the color line." He urgently invited White people to look through the veil of racism that divides us. Aldon Morris, a Du Boisian scholar, argued that *The Souls of Black Folks* was an early iteration of #BlackLivesMatter (Morris 2017).

Figure 11.4 W. E. B. Du Bois (seated, far right) at Harvard graduation. He described his experience as being "in Harvard, but not of it" as he was not permitted to live in the dorms (Almore 2011).

Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory is an intellectual and social framework that examines how racism is embedded in American social life through its systems and institutions. This theoretical framework emerged from the intellectual and social movements of civil rights scholars and activists who want to examine the intersection of race, **society**, and law. In this framework, race is a social construct, something that changes depending on the social and political conditions of the society at a particular point in time. The framework centers on the knowledge and experiences of people of color and points to how they intersect with other identities, such as **gender** and **sexuality**.

A Closer Look: Race, Institutions, and Housing

As an example of how racism is embedded in institutions, let us consider race in relation to housing patterns and changes in law. Housing segregation refers to residential segregation or the grouping of people in residential areas by a defining characteristic such as age, socioeconomic status, religion, race, or **ethnicity**. In the United States, the government and banking institutions have played a role in racial housing segregation through discriminatory practices such as **redlining** (figure 11.5).

Figure 11.5 Segregated neighborhoods did not come about organically but rather through deliberate planning of policies and practices.

Redlining is the discriminatory practice of refusing loans to creditworthy applicants in neighborhoods that banks deem undesirable or racially occupied. Although homeownership became an emblem of American citizenship and the American dream during the twentieth century, Black people and other nationalities were specifically limited in their abilities to purchase homes (figure 11.6). Both the federal government, which created the Home Owners'

Loan Corporation in 1933 and the Federal Housing Association (FHA) in 1934, and the real estate industry worked to segregate Whites from other groups to preserve property **values**.

Lending institutions and the federal government did this by creating maps in which the places where people of color and/or foreign-born individuals lived were colored red or yellow. Then those areas were designated to be "dangerous" or "risky" in terms of loaning practices.

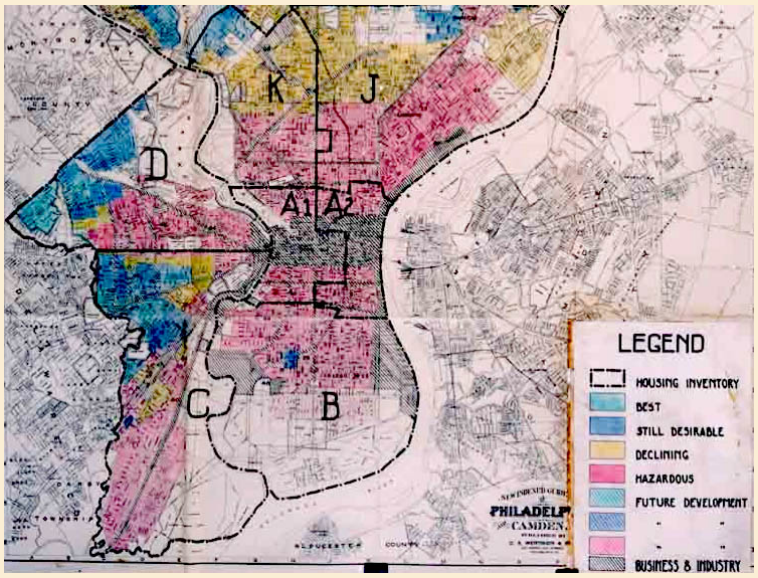

Figure 11.6 Lending institutions and the federal government created maps in which the places where people of color and/or foreign-born lived were colored red.

It was then less likely that loans with favorable terms could be secured in the red and yellow neighborhoods. As a result, because Black and foreign-born families were often denied access to the neighborhoods designated to be "good" or "the best," they were forced to take loans that required higher down payments and/or higher interest rates. Unscrupulous private lenders used this opportunity to create unfair practices, often with devastating consequences for missed or partial payments, such as the homeowner losing their home and all equity that had been earned (Coates 2014).

In 1968, these practices were outlawed by the Fair Housing Act, which was part of the Civil Rights Act. The Fair Housing Act is an attempt at providing equitable housing to all. Still, much damage was done before its passage. For decades, the federal government poured tax monies into home loans that almost exclusively favored White families. Home ownership is the most accessible way to build equity and **wealth**, and it was denied to many minority families for decades. Even after the Fair Housing Act passed, local governments, residential covenants, and deed modifications continued to discriminate well into the 2000s, and families in minoritized groups still had less success in achieving home loans.

The result of these institutionalized efforts resulted in residential segregation, the physical separation of two or more groups into different neighborhoods. Many times this is associated with race, but it can also be associated with **income**. Segregated neighborhoods did not come about organically but through deliberate planning of policies and practices that have

systematically denied equal opportunity to minority populations. Segregation has been present in the United States for many years, and while now it is illegal, it has been institutionalized in neighborhood patterns. From information collected in the 2010 census, we see that a typical White person lives in a neighborhood that is 75 percent White and 8 percent Black, while a typical African-American person lives in a neighborhood that is 35 percent White and 45 percent Black (Frey 2020).

Racial Formation Theory

Racial formation theory refers to the fact that society is continually creating and transforming racial categories (Omi and Winant 1994). For example, groups that were once **self**-defined by their ethnic backgrounds (Mexican American, Japanese American) are now racialized as "Hispanics" and "Asian American." The notion of racial formation points to how what we define as race varies and changes as political, economic, and historical contexts change. In other words, different race classifications arise at particular places and at particular points in time.

As examples, we can look at several Supreme Court decisions around a century ago that quickly changed the definitions of race, which at that point was important for determining citizenship. In *Takao Ozawa v. United States*, Ozawa argued that Japanese people should be classified as White and allowed to become citizens. The Court unanimously argued that White people were part of the Caucasian race and Japanese people were not White. Three months later in *United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind*, Thind argued that Indians and Europeans shared common ancestry, therefore making Indians part of the Caucasian race and eligible for citizenship. This time the Supreme Court argued that Whiteness was not something that could be scientifically defined, but was based on the "common understanding" of White people. The court ruled that Thind was not White using that standard and thus not eligible for citizenship. Considering what you've learned in this chapter, how might the Supreme Court's decision to link a "common sense" definition of Whiteness to one's ability to become a naturalized citizen create legislative **discrimination**?

For more about the **social construction of race**, revisit **What Is Race?** earlier in this chapter.

Colorblindness/Theory of Racial Ignorance

Colorblindness, or colorblind racism, is a form of racism that is hidden and embedded in our **social institutions**. The notion that one "does not see color" is problematic and serves to erase the experiences of racial and ethnic minority groups. The United States cultural narrative that typically focuses on individual racism fails to recognize systemic racism. Colorblind racism has arisen since the post-civil rights era and supports racism while avoiding any reference to race (Bonilla-Silva 2015).

The theory of racial ignorance explains how racial ignorance ("I don't see color") reinforces White supremacy, the belief that White people are better than other races. Racial ignorance is built into the core of racialized social systems and leads to the reproduction of inequalities (Mueller 2020). Colorblindness or claiming racial ignorance is problematic at both individual and structural levels. At the level of the individual, White ignorance refers to a person's willful ignorance of racial injustice. From a structural perspective, racial ignorance develops from a process that systematically perpetuates racial injustice. The structuralist view allows us to identify patterns of ignorance that contribute to White racial domination. By examining racial ignorance as a structural problem, we can begin to work toward building equity (Martín 2021).

Intersection Theory

Feminist sociologist Patricia Hill Collins (1990) (figure 11.7) further developed intersection theory, originally articulated in 1989 by Kimberlé Crenshaw (figure 11.8), which suggests we cannot separate the effects of race, **class**, gender, **sexual orientation**, and other attributes. You previously learned about this theory in **Chapter 2** and **Chap-**

ter 9. When we examine race and how it can bring us both advantages and disadvantages, it is important to acknowledge that the way we experience race is shaped by other factors, such as our gender and class. Multiple layers of disadvantage intersect to create the way we experience race. For example, if we want to understand **prejudice**, we must understand that the prejudice focused on a White woman because of her gender is very different from the layered prejudice focused on an Asian woman in poverty, who is affected by stereotypes related to being poor, being a woman, and being Asian.

Figure 11.7 Scholar Patricia Hill Collins authored *Black Feminist Thought* in 1990.

Figure 11.8 Dr. Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term "intersectionality" in her 1989 article "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics."

Postcolonial Theory

Postcolonial theory explores colonial relations and their aftermath and challenges the theoretical frameworks of mainstream American **sociology**. Most classical and modern theorists assume that their frameworks are universal and can be applied to all societies (Connell 2007). Generally, postcolonial theories critique empire, **colonialism**, and imperialism and tend to focus on subjugated people and their ways of thinking. Theorists believe that power struggles tied to colonialism shape societies and influence how individuals view the social world (Go 2016).

Smith (2012) argues that there are three primary logics associated with White supremacy in the United States. The first is slavery and anti-Black racism. This is rooted in treating Black people as property. The second pillar is genocide, specifically the genocide of Indigenous people. She argues "this logic holds that Indigenous people must disappear; in fact, they must *always* be disappearing, in order to enable non-Indigenous peoples' rightful claim to land" (57). This anchors capitalism. As the last pillar of White supremacy, she identifies Orientalism (see Chapter 6), labeling some people as inferior and a threat to the empire. She argues that this becomes a justification for the United States to be in perpetual war with enemies that are conceptualized as threats.

White Privilege

White privilege, the unearned set of social advantages available to White people, was first identified by Du Bois as a "psychic wage of Whiteness." As White theorists began to respond to critical theories of race, their scholarship became more reflexive and attentive to the meanings and impacts of White racial identity on people who are White. White theorists have explored this idea, by considering White **privilege** (McIntosh 1988), White

fragility (DiAngelo 2018), and racial identity formation in working-class people who are White (Roediger 2017).

To get at the unspoken privileges associated with Whiteness, McIntosh (1988:31-33) points out some of these taken-for-granted advantages of being White:

"I can go shopping alone most of the time, pretty well assured that I will not be followed or harassed."

"I can be sure that my children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race."

"I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race."

"I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial **group**."

What are some of the other ways White people might be privileged?

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Figure 11.3. "Franz Boas – posing for figure in USNM exhibit entitled – Hamats'a coming out of secret room – 1895 or before" is in the Public Domain.

Figure 11.4. "Du Bois, W. E. B., Harvard graduation" is in the Public Domain.

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11.4 Prejudice, Discrimination, and Racism

Jennifer Puentes and Nora Karena

It is important to learn about stereotypes before discussing the terms **prejudice**, **discrimination**, and **racism**, which are often used interchangeably in everyday conversation. **Stereotypes** are oversimplified generalizations about groups of people. Stereotypes can be based on **race**, **ethnicity**, age, **gender**, **sexual orientation**—almost any characteristic. They may be positive (usually about one's **group**) but are often negative (usually toward other groups, such as when members of a dominant racial group suggest that a subordinate racial group is stupid or lazy). In either case, the **stereotype** is a generalization that doesn't take individual differences into account.

Where do stereotypes come from? New stereotypes are rarely created; rather, they are recycled from subordinate groups that have integrated into dominant **society** and are reused to describe newly subordinate groups. For example, many stereotypes that are currently used to characterize new immigrants were previously used to characterize Irish and Eastern European immigrants.

Prejudice

Prejudice refers to the beliefs, thoughts, feelings, and attitudes someone holds about a group. A prejudice is not based on personal experience; instead, it is a prejudgment originating outside one's experience. Recall from Chapter 7 that the criminalization of marijuana was based on anti-immigrant sentiment. Proponents used fictional, fear-instilling stories and rampant immoral and illegal activities to justify new laws and harsh treatment of people who used marijuana. Many people who supported criminalizing marijuana had never met any of the new immigrants who were rumored to use it; the ideas were based on prejudice.

While prejudice is based on beliefs outside of experience, experience can lead people to feel that their prejudice is confirmed or justified. This is a type of confirmation bias. For example, if someone is taught to believe that a certain ethnic group has negative attributes, every negative act committed by someone in that group can be seen as confirming the prejudice. Even a minor social offense, such as crossing the street outside the crosswalk or talking too loudly on a bus, could confirm the prejudice.

Prejudice—as well as the stereotypes that lead to it and the discrimination that stems from it—is most often taught and learned. The teaching may take many forms, from direct instruction and indoctrination to observation and **socialization**. Movies, books, charismatic speakers, and even a desire to impress others can all support the development of prejudices.

Discrimination

While prejudice refers to biased thinking, **discrimination** consists of actions against a group of people. Discrimination can be based on race, ethnicity, age, religion, health, and other categories. It can take many forms, from unfair housing practices such as **redlining** to biased hiring systems. Overt discrimination has long been part of United States history. In the late nineteenth century, it was not uncommon for business owners to hang signs that read, "Help Wanted: No Irish Need Apply." Similarly, "Whites Only" signs existed in the South through much of the twentieth century,

exemplifying overt discrimination that is generally not tolerated today.

Discrimination also manifests in different ways. The scenarios above are examples of individual discrimination, but other types exist. Institutional discrimination occurs when a societal system has developed with embedded disenfranchisement of a group, such as the U.S. military's historical nonacceptance of minority sexualities. If you want to learn more, review this optional example, the **Don't Ask, Don't Tell [Website]** policy (1993–2011), which reflected this norm.

Prejudice and discrimination can overlap and intersect in many ways. To illustrate, here are four examples of how prejudice and discrimination can intersect:

1. Unprejudiced nondiscriminators are open-minded, tolerant, and accepting individuals.
2. Unprejudiced discriminators might be those who unthinkingly practice **sexism** in their workplace by not considering women or gender nonconforming people for certain positions that have traditionally been held by men.
3. Prejudiced nondiscriminators are those who hold racist beliefs but don't act on them, such as a racist store owner who serves minority customers.
4. Prejudiced discriminators include those who actively make disparaging remarks about others or perpetuate hate crimes.

Racism

Racism is a type of prejudice and discrimination used to justify inequalities against individuals by maintaining that one racial category is somehow superior or inferior to others; it is a set of practices used by a racial **dominant group** to maximize advantages for itself by disadvantaging racial minority groups. Such practices have affected **wealth** accumulation, employment, housing discrimination, government surveillance, incarceration, drug arrests, immigration arrests, infant mortality, and much more (Race Forward 2021).

Broadly, individuals belonging to minority groups experience both individual racism and systemic racism during their lifetime. While reading the following common forms of racism, ask yourself, "Am I a part of this racism?" or "How can I contribute to stopping racism?":

- *Individual or interpersonal racism:* Prejudice and discrimination executed by individuals consciously and unconsciously that occurs between individuals.
- *Institutionalized or systemic racism:* Also called structural racism or **institutional racism**, this involves systems and structures that have procedures or processes that disadvantage racial minority groups.
- ***Racial profiling:*** This type of systemic racism involves the singling out of racial minorities for differential treatment, usually harsher treatment.
- *Historical racism:* Economic inequality or social disparity caused by past racism.
- *Cultural racism:* The assumption of inferiority of one or more races is built into the culture of the subordinate group.
- *Colorism:* A form of racism in which someone believes one type of skin tone is superior or inferior to another within a racial group (for example see figure 11.9).

Figure 11.9 How does colorism impact women today? After ten years of using skin-lightening creams, Grazia becomes unrecognizable to family members.

In the next subsection, "A Closer Look: Myths of Racism," you will learn more about the myths surrounding racism that serve to preserve this type of prejudice and discrimination. Take a moment to read through each fallacy or mistaken belief before answering the question for discussion.

A Closer Look: Myths of Racism

Sociologists Matthew Desmond and Mustafa Emirbayer (2009) identify five common misconceptions about racism in the United States:

1. *Individualistic fallacy:* A person assumes that racism is a byproduct of the ideas and prejudices a "racist individual" has about a group.
2. *Legal fallacy:* A person assumes removing racist laws eliminates racism in practice.
3. *Tokenistic fallacy:* A person assumes that having a few people of color in influential positions means that there are no longer racial obstacles.
4. *Ahistorical fallacy:* A person overlooks the way that racial discrimination created blocked opportunities that continue to affect people today.
5. *Fixed fallacy:* A person tends to view racism as something that does not change, instead of acknowledging that the ways racism is experienced and embodied changes over time. (2009:342)

These five myths show that racism is more than racial violence. Rather than focusing on questions like "Has racism increased or decreased in the past decade?" Desmond and Emirbayer suggest it is more useful to understand how racism has changed over generations (2009:344). Keep this approach in mind as you participate in the question for discussion

Question for discussion: After getting familiar with these five myths of racism, identify examples of each from media, pop culture, and your lived experience.

Institutionalized Racism

Institutionalized racism, or systemic racism, refers to systems and structures that have policies and processes in place that disadvantage racial minority groups. When discriminatory practices are built into the structure of **social institutions**, we see inequitable outcomes for people of color.

Racism commonly involves racial prejudice and the ability to act on that prejudice through power. In other words, racist ideas, which can be conscious or unconscious, can inspire interpersonal hostility, but personal or institutional power is required for racist actions to occur. Historian Ibram X. Kendi describes racism as "a marriage of racist policies and racist ideas that produce and sustain racial inequity." Racist ideas or racial prejudice are ideas that one race is superior or inferior to another. Structural racism describes the social structures that emerge from racist policies and practices (Kendi 2017). You have an opportunity to learn more about Kendi's approach in the next section, "Activity: Understanding **Antiracism**."

Where do racist ideas come from? Why do racist ideas exist? Put in more functionalist terms, what do racist ideas do? According to Kendi, racist ideas normalize and justify racial inequity. For example, if we ask why people who are Black get arrested at a higher rate than people who are White, derogatory racist ideas about Black people can do the work of making inequity seem regrettable but understandable. When we ask why people who are Black are killed by police at a higher rate than people who are White, racist ideas can keep us from seeing the humanity and vulnerability of people who are Black. Racist ideas are available to fill in the blank when the answer is, "It happens because ____. "

Structural and systemic racism can be identified by the presence of racial inequity. Racial inequity shows up as either disproportionality or as disparities. Disproportionality is the overrepresentation or underrepresentation of a racial or ethnic group compared with its percentage in the total population. Disparities are unequal outcomes for one racial or ethnic group compared with outcomes for another racial or ethnic group. For example, when people who are Black are killed by Portland police 3.9 times more often than people who are White, we recognize outcome disparities. If you want to learn more, you can review **Portland's racial disparity data [Website]**. Similarly, since Portland police arrest people who are Black at a rate 4.3 times higher than people who are White, we can say that people who are Black are overrepresented in Portland jails and can confidently conclude that policing in Portland is dealing with issues of systemic racism.

This structural definition of racism does a good job of helping us understand how conscious or unconscious racist ideas can normalize institutions and social systems that impact racialized populations in uneven and harmful ways. Because those inequities are racially defined, we can say that the institution or system is racist. Once constructed, racist systems and institutions can continue to impact people unevenly, even if the people who currently hold power do not share all of the same founding racist ideas (Bonilla-Silva 2014). Understanding the structural and systemic dimensions of racism helps us understand how persistent racist policies, procedures, and systems can sustain racial inequity, even as racist ideas begin to recede, or at least change.

Activity: Understanding Antiracism

Let's take a closer look at the concept of antiracism. **Antiracism** refers to an active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies, practices, and attitudes so that power is redistributed and shared equitably (California Speech Language and Hearing Association 2024). Learn more about what it means to be antiracist from Dr. Kendi in the following video (figure 11.10).

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dCUOX3NMd4U**

Figure 11.10 Stephen Colbert interviewing Ibram X. Kendi on creating an equitable society. **Transcript.**

Be sure to come back and answer these questions:

1. What does it mean to be antiracist?
2. Why is being antiracist in the interest of White people?

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Figure 11.9. Photo from "Skin-lightening creams: Woman 'not recognised' by father" in BBC, June 2021. Used under fair use.

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11.5 Race and Identities

How do we develop racial and/or ethnic identities? There are several different approaches to understanding the process of identity development. A few key principles center on one's ability to either **self**-identify with a **group** or be labeled as a member of a group by others.

Our racial and ethnic identities may provide us with a sense of belonging as we develop positive attitudes toward one's group. Think back to the video you watched at the beginning of the chapter. What stories did the speakers share that helped you understand belonging to and developing positive attitudes toward group membership? Our identities also grow through social participation in cultural practices. For many groups, racial and ethnic identities offer an opportunity to practice shared languages, develop friendships, and engage in religious practices.

Racial Identity Development

As you learned in Chapter 4, there are many different theories on the process of self and identity development, including W. E. B. Du Bois's **theory** of **double consciousness**. In this section, we will focus primarily on theories that focus on racial identity and ethnic identity development.

Non-White Racial Identities

In her influential book, *Why Are all the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? And Other Conversations about* ***Race****,* Beverly Tatum examines identity formation for Black and White youths. She applies a theory of identity development first created by social psychologist William Cross. Cross (1971, 1991, 2001) suggests there are five stages in the development of a Black identity:

1. *Pre-encounter*: Children absorb beliefs and **values** of dominant White culture, including the idea that it's more favorable to be White. Unless parents and teachers encourage critical evaluation of these messages, children will not critique them.
2. *Encounter*: In early adolescence, an event or series of events forces a young person to acknowledge the personal impact of **racism**. The individual begins to grapple with what it means to be a member of a group targeted by racism.
3. *Immersion/Emersion*: During this stage, people begin to surround themselves with symbols of their racial identity. They may seek out opportunities to learn about one's history and culture while actively avoiding symbols of Whiteness.
4. *Internalization*: People begin to gain a sense of security about their racial identity and develop meaningful relations across group boundaries. People will continue to surround themselves with symbols of their racial identity and associate with their racial group.
5. *Internalization-Commitment*: A stronger sense of security about one's racial identity develops. This sense of security translates into activism about the concerns of one's racial group.

Tatum (2017 [1997]) finds evidence to support Cross' theory of racial identity formation. In her study, youth of color internalized the negative stereotypes that are dominant in White culture. Many youths of color tried to assimilate to receive acceptance from Whites and distanced themselves from other people of color. As they entered into the encounter stage, they began to recognize the impact of racism on their lives. After learning more about their racial identity group and unlearning internalized stereotypes, youth may exhibit resentment for racism and develop an oppositional identity (Tatum 2017 [1997]). By defining themselves in opposition to Whites, they develop their own music, dress, speech patterns, and a supportive community for one another.

Youth of color may be ostracized by other youth of color for socializing with White youth or living in the suburbs. During the internalization stage, Tatum saw youths develop the ability to maintain connections with their peers while also building relationships with Whites who are respectful of their definition of racial identity. At this point, individuals began developing coalitions with other oppressed groups. In the commitment stage, youths' sense of Blackness emerged into a plan of action focused on the concerns of Blacks as a group. Stages in this model are not linear; after completing a stage, individuals may return to that stage later. However, their experience may change. The main ideas presented in Cross' work and elaborated on by Tatum have been adopted by others to theorize the development of other cultural identities, including minority, racial, ethnic, feminist, and gay/lesbian identities.

Another approach to understanding ethnic identity development centers on Jean Phinney's work, which uses a three-stage model: unexamined, identity search, and achieved ethnic identity. Initially, race and **ethnicity** are not particularly salient for the individual. During this stage, children are not exposed to ethnic identity issues and often express a preference for the **dominant culture**. As individuals begin the identity search stage, they actively look for ways to define them-

selves as members of their own racial or ethnic group. Something typically occurs that forces an "awakening" or awareness of one's ethnicity. In the final stage, individuals can assert a positive sense of their ethnic identity. At this point, they may have come to terms with cultural differences between their group and the **dominant group** (Phinney 1996).

White Racial Identities: An Unspoken Norm of Whiteness

We tend not to think about the experiences of White people when we talk about race because we live in a **society** where the experiences of White people are already at the forefront of our minds. For a lot of White people, Whiteness is an unexamined norm. A White person can reach adulthood without having to think about their racial group and the privileges it may provide. Instead, race is seen as something other people have. This leads to a lack of critical understanding and appreciation of the experiences of Whiteness and the **diversity** within the group, particularly as you look at how Whiteness intersects with other identities.

To abandon practices of individual racism and move toward recognizing and opposing **institutional racism**, White folks need to experience several stages of identity development. Tatum (2017 [1997]) draws on the work of Janet Helms to discuss the six stages of White identity formation:

1. *Contact* (*Pre-Contact*): The White person is not aware of themself as a racial being. They may view people of color through stereotypes learned from family, friends, and media. They see racism as a form of individual **prejudice**, rather than systemic in nature.
2. *Disintegration* (*Encounter*): The White person begins to see racism as a problem and can identify that their lives and the lives of people of color are impacted by racism. Whites may experience guilt, shame, and anger as they recognize their position as part of an oppressive system. They may withdraw, experience denial, and place blame on victims. Or they may speak out, risking rejection from other White people.
3. *Reintegration*: The White person experiences social pressure to be accepted by their racial group. Pressure to not speak out against racism is prevalent and may reshape an individual's belief system.
4. *Pseudo Independence*: The White person can move beyond victim blaming and deepen their awareness of racism, but they seek answers from people of color. They may express a commitment to understanding racism as a system of disadvantage, but they do not know how to create change.
5. *Immersion/Emersion*: The White person seeks to replace previously held racial stereotypes and myths about race with accurate information. Rather than look to people of color to help find solutions to deal with issues of Whiteness, they look to other Whites to help them deal with racism.
6. *Autonomy*: The White person begins to confront oppressions in daily life by implementing the issues they began working on in the immersion/emersion phase. They actively seek to develop a positive and constructive racial identity.

Disintegration is an important turning point in White identity development. Tatum suggests that to change an oppressive system, Whites need to learn to feel comfortable with the discomfort they experience when calling out racism. Social pressure placed on Whites by other Whites may lead to collusion, during which a person will begin to accept racism and even start to blame the victim. During this stage, Whites may experience fear and

anger toward people of color as a reaction to the discomfort they feel.

If Whites make it through disintegration but avoid interacting with people of color, it is easy for them to become stalled in the reintegration stage of development (Helms 1990). During the stage of immersion, Whites are on their way to becoming an ally. They seek out ways to unlearn racism and find ways to participate in the fight for racial justice. Finally, in the last stage, people incorporate a White antiracist identity and join with people of color to dismantle White power and **privilege** within institutions.

Developing an Antiracist White Identity

Almost all mainstream voices in the United States oppose racism. Despite this, racism is prevalent in several forms. For example, when a newspaper uses people's race to identify individuals accused of a **crime**, it may enhance stereotypes of a certain minority. Another example of racist practices is racial steering, in which real estate agents direct prospective homeowners toward or away from certain neighborhoods based on their race.

Racist attitudes and beliefs are often more insidious and harder to pin down than specific racist practices. They become more complex due to **implicit bias** (also referred to as unconscious bias) which is the process of associating stereotypes or attitudes with categories of people without conscious awareness—which can result in unfair actions and decisions that are at odds with one's conscious beliefs about fairness and equality (figure 11.11) (Osta and Vasquez 2021). For example, the practice of "tracking" which involves sorting students based on actual or assumed differences in academic development or interests can have long-term effects on students' opportunities. In schools, we often see "honors" and "gifted" classes quickly filled with White students while the majority of Black and Latinx students are placed in the lower track classes. As a result, our mind consciously and unconsciously starts to associate Black and Latinx students with being less intelligent and less capable. Osta and Vasquez (2021) argue that by placing the students of color on a lower and less rigorous track, we reproduce the inequity, and the vicious cycle of structural racism and implicit bias continues.

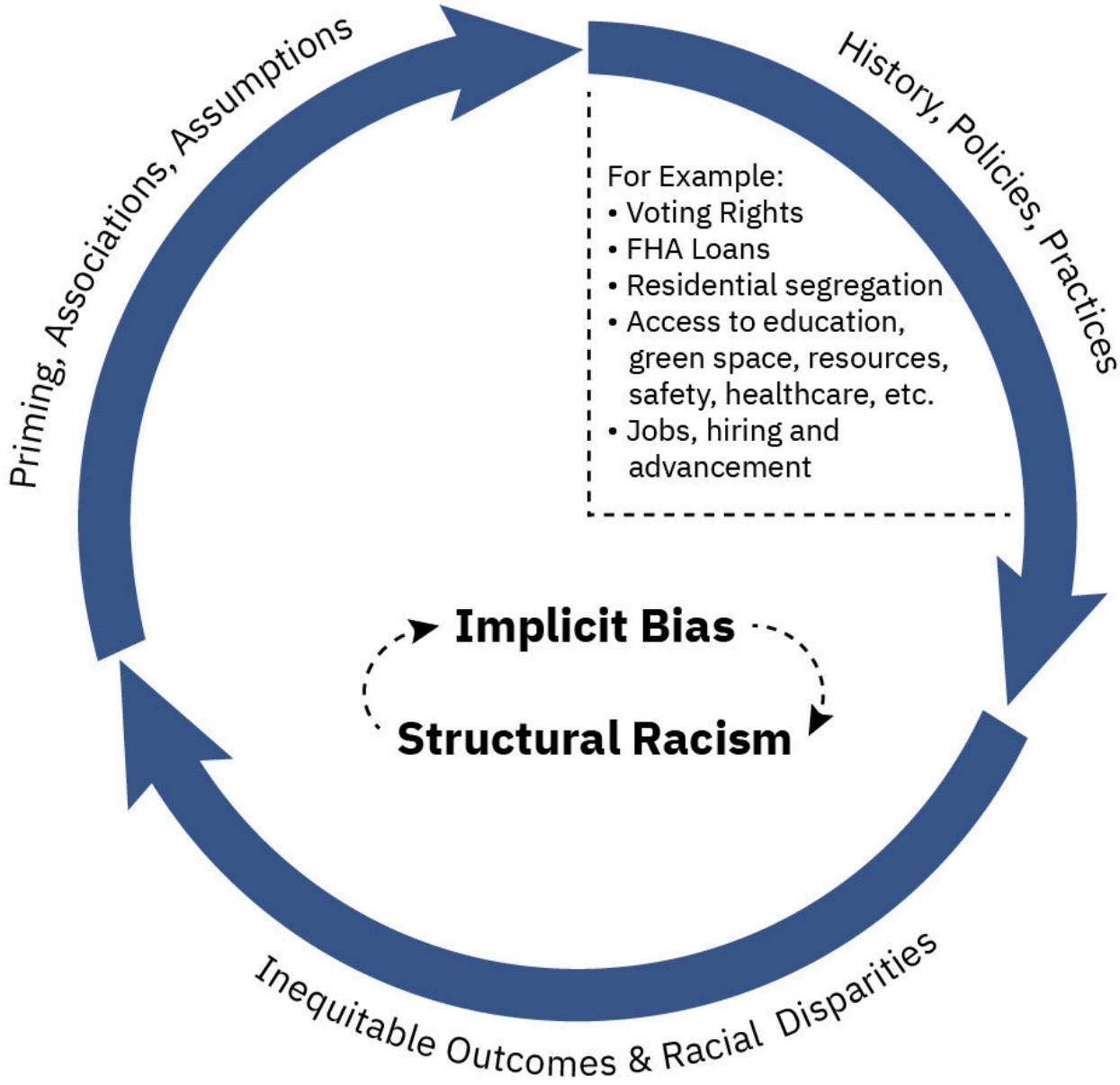

Figure 11.11 How do implicit bias and structural racialization affect each other? (Osta and Vasquez 2021)

Proponents of **antiracism** indicate that we must work collaboratively within ourselves, our institutions, and our networks to challenge racism at local, national, and global levels. The practice of antiracism can include the following:

- Understand and own the racist ideas in which we have been socialized and the racist biases that these ideas have created within each of us.
- Identify racist policies, practices, and procedures and replace them with antiracist policies, practices, and procedures (Carter and Snyder 2020).

Antiracism need not be confrontational in the sense of engaging in direct arguments with people, feeling terrible about your privilege, or denying your own needs or success. Many people who are a part of a **minority group** acknowledge the need for allies from the dominant group (Melaku 2020).

Understanding and owning the racist ideas, and recognizing your privilege, is a good and brave thing. As proponents of this approach suggest, being racist or antiracist is not about who you are; it is about what you do (Carter and Snyder 2020).

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11.6 Race and Group-Level Interactions

At this point, we've discussed theoretical perspectives on **race** and how race is experienced by the individual. Another key aspect of the experience of race happens at the level of **group** interactions. Intergroup relations (relationships between different groups of people) range along a spectrum between tolerance and intolerance. The most tolerant form of intergroup relations is **pluralism**, in which no distinction is made between minority and majority groups. Instead, there is equal standing. At the other end of the continuum are **amalgamation**, **expulsion**, and even **genocide**—stark examples of intolerant intergroup relations. We'll discuss each of these in turn.

Pluralism

Pluralism is represented by the ideal of the United States as a "salad bowl": a great mixture of different cultures where each culture retains its own identity and yet adds to the flavor of the whole. This is in contrast to the nation's past model of a melting pot, which posits a **society** where cultural differences aren't embraced but rather erased. True pluralism is characterized by mutual respect on the part of all cultures, both dominant and subordinate, creating a multicultural environment of acceptance. In reality, true pluralism is a difficult goal to reach. In the United States, the mutual respect required by pluralism is often missing.

Assimilation

Assimilation describes the process by which a minority individual or group gives up its own identity by taking on the characteristics of the **dominant culture**. In the United States, assimilation has been a function of immigration.

Most people in the United States have immigrant ancestors. In relatively recent history, between 1890 and 1920, the United States became home to around 24 million immigrants. In the decades since then, further waves of immigrants have come to these shores and have eventually been absorbed into U.S. culture, sometimes after

facing extended periods of **prejudice** and **discrimination**. Assimilation may lead to the loss of the **minority group**'s cultural identity as they become absorbed into the dominant culture, but assimilation has minimal to no impact on the majority group's cultural identity.

Some groups may keep only symbolic gestures of their original **ethnicity**. For instance, many Irish Americans may celebrate Saint Patrick's Day, many Hindu Americans enjoy a Diwali festival, and many Mexican Americans may celebrate Cinco de Mayo. However, for the rest of the year, other aspects of their originating culture may be forgotten.

Assimilation is antithetical to the "salad bowl" created by pluralism; rather than maintaining their own cultural flavor, subordinate cultures give up their own traditions in order to conform to their new environment. When faced with racial and ethnic discrimination, it can be difficult for new immigrants to fully assimilate.

Amalgamation

Amalgamation is the process by which a minority group and a majority group combine to form a new group. Amalgamation creates the classic "melting pot" analogy. Unlike the "salad bowl," in which each culture retains its individuality, the "melting pot" ideal sees the combination of cultures that results in a new culture entirely.

Amalgamation is achieved through intermarriage between races. In the United States, antimiscegenation laws, which criminalized interracial marriage, flourished in the South during the Jim Crow era. It wasn't until *Loving v. Virginia* (1967) that the last antimiscegenation law was struck from the books, making these laws unconstitutional. For an optional closer look at this case, watch **How *Loving v. Virginia* Led to Legalized Interracial Marriage [Streaming Video]**.

The concept of the "melting pot" makes it seem like there is a blending of cultures, but in reality, this notion was exclusively extended to White immigrants. You can explore **Race: Power of an Illusion [Streaming Video]**, where sociologist Eduardo Bonilla-Silva points out that people of color were not included in the melting pot. Instead, they were used as wood to produce fire for the pot.

Genocide

Genocide, the deliberate annihilation of a targeted (usually subordinate) group, is the most toxic intergroup relationship. Historically, we can see that genocide has included intentional and unintentional extermination of groups.

Possibly the most well-known case of genocide is Adolf Hitler's attempt to exterminate the Jewish people in the first part of the twentieth century. Also known as the Holocaust, the explicit goal of Hitler's "Final Solution" was the eradication of European Jewish people, as well as the destruction of other minority groups, such as people with disabilities and **LGBTQIA+** people. With forced emigration, concentration camps, and mass executions in gas chambers, Hitler's Nazi regime was responsible for the deaths of 12 million people, 6 million of whom were Jewish. Hitler's intent was clear, and the high Jewish death toll certainly indicates that Hitler and his regime committed genocide.

European colonizers committed genocide against Native Americans. Some historians estimate that Indigenous populations dwindled from approximately 12 million people in the year 1500 to barely 237,000 by the year 1900 (Lewy 2004). European settlers coerced American Indians off their lands, often causing thousands of deaths in forced removals, such as occurred with the Cherokee or Potawatomi Trail of Tears. Settlers also enslaved Native Americans and forced them to

give up their religious and cultural practices. But the major cause of Native American death was neither slavery nor war nor forced removal: it was the introduction of European diseases. Smallpox, diphtheria, and measles flourished among Indigenous American tribes who had no previous exposure to the diseases and no ability to fight them. Quite simply, these diseases decimated the tribes. The use of diseases as a weapon was most likely unintentional in some cases and intentional in others. For example, during the Seven Years War, the British knowingly gave smallpox-infected blankets to the Native tribes to "reduce them." Similar practices likely continued throughout the centuries-long assault on the Native American people.

Genocide is not just a historical concept; it is practiced even in the twenty-first century. For example, ethnic and geographic conflicts in the Darfur region of Sudan have led to hundreds of thousands of deaths. As part of an ongoing land conflict, the Sudanese government and their state-sponsored Janjaweed militia have led a campaign of killing, forced displacement, and systematic rape of Darfuri people. Although a treaty was signed in 2011, the peace is fragile.

Expulsion

Expulsion refers to a subordinate group being forced by a **dominant group** to leave a certain area or country. As seen in the Trail of Tears and the Holocaust, expulsion can be a factor in genocide. However, it can also stand on its own as a destructive group interaction. Expulsion has often occurred historically on an ethnic or racial basis. In the United States, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066 in 1942 after the Japanese government attacked Pearl Harbor. The order authorized the establishment of internment camps for anyone with as little as one-eighth Japanese ancestry (i.e., one great-grandparent who was Japanese). Over 120,000 legal Japanese residents and Japanese U.S. citizens, many of them children, were held in these camps for up to four years, even though there was never any evidence of collusion or espionage. Many Japanese Americans continued to demonstrate their loyalty to the United States by serving in the U.S. military during the war. In the 1990s, the U.S. executive branch issued a formal apology for this expulsion; reparation efforts continue today.

Segregation

Segregation refers to the physical separation of two groups, particularly in residence, but also in workplace and social functions. It is important to distinguish between *de jure* segregation (segregation that is enforced by law) and *de facto* segregation (segregation that occurs without laws but because of other factors). A stark example of *de jure* segregation is the apartheid movement in South Africa, which existed from 1948 to 1994. Under apartheid, Black South Africans were stripped of their civil rights and forcibly relocated to areas that segregated them physically from their White compatriots. Only after decades of degradation, violent uprisings, and international advocacy was apartheid finally abolished.

De jure segregation occurred in the United States for many years after the Civil War. During this time, many former Confederate states passed Jim Crow laws that required segregated facilities for Black and White people. These laws were codified in 1896's landmark Supreme Court case *Plessy v. Ferguson*, which stated that "separate but equal" facilities were constitutional. For the next five decades, Black people were subjected to legalized discrimination and forced to live, work, and go to school in separate—but unequal—facilities (figure 11.12). It wasn't until 1954 and the *Brown v. Board of Education* case that the Supreme Court declared that "separate educational facilities are inherently

unequal," thus ending *de jure* segregation in the United States. If you'd like to learn more, you can explore ***Plessy v. Ferguson*** **[Website]** and ***Brown v. Board of Education*** **[Website]**.

Figure 11.12 In the Jim Crow South, it was legal to have "separate but equal" facilities for Black people and White people.

De facto segregation, however, cannot be abolished by any court mandate. Few institutions desegregated as a result of Brown. In fact, government and even military intervention was necessary to enforce the ruling, and it took the Civil Rights Act and other laws to formalize equality. Segregation is still alive and well in the United States, with different racial or ethnic groups often segregated by neighborhood, borough, or parish. Sociologists use segregation indices to measure the racial segregation of different races in different areas. The indices employ a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 is the most integrated and 100 is the least. In the New York metropolitan area, for instance, the Black-White segregation index was 79 for the years 2005 to 2009. This means that 79 percent of either Black or White people would have to move for each neighborhood to have the same racial balance as the whole metro region (Population Studies Center 2010).

In the next subsection, "Activity: Race and Interactions," you will learn more about intergroup relations. First, you'll have the opportunity to review theories of prejudice and types of interactions covered in this section before thinking about how race structures our major **social institutions**.

Activity: Race and Interactions

The following 11-minute video reviews concepts of prejudice and discrimination before making connections to racial groups and patterns of interaction (figure 11.13).

This interactive content is not available in this version of the text. It can be accessed online here: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gSddUPkVD24**

Figure 11.13 Why does prejudice continue to exist? **Transcript.**

After watching the video, please return and answer the following questions:

1. Why does prejudice continue to exist?
2. What are some examples of institutional **racism**?
3. Reflect on the patterns of interaction discussed in the video and your chapter. Find news stories related to a couple of the patterns, and share them with your classmates.

A Closer Look: Racial Tensions in the United States

The death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, on August 9, 2014, illustrates racial tensions in the United States as well as the overlap between prejudice, discrimination, and **institutional racism**. On that day, Brown, a young unarmed Black man, was killed by a White police officer named Darren Wilson. During the incident, Wilson directed Brown and his friend to walk on the sidewalk instead of in the street. While eyewitness accounts vary, they agree that an altercation occurred between Wilson and Brown. Wilson's version has him shooting Brown in **self**-defense after Brown assaulted him, while Dorian Johnson, a friend of Brown also present at the time, claimed that Brown first ran away, then turned with his hands in the air to surrender, after which Wilson shot him repeatedly (Nobles and Bosman 2014). Three autopsies independently confirmed that Brown was shot six times (Lowery and Fears 2014).

The shooting focused attention on a number of race-related tensions in the United States. First, members of the predominantly Black community viewed Brown's death as the result of a White police officer racially profiling a Black man (Nobles and Bosman 2014). In the days following the shooting, it was revealed that only 3 members of the town's 53-member police force were Black (Nobles and Bosman 2014). The national dialogue shifted during the next few weeks, with some commentators pointing to a nationwide sedimentation of racial inequality and identifying **redlining** in Ferguson as a cause of the unbalanced racial composition in the community, in local political establishments, and in the police force (Bouie 2014). As discussed earlier, redlining is the practice of routinely refusing mortgages for households and businesses located in predominately minority communities. Sedimentation of racial inequality is the intergenerational impact of both practical and legalized racism that limits the ability of Black people to accumulate **wealth**.

Ferguson's racial imbalance may partly explain why, even though only about 63 percent of its population was Black in 2010, in 2013 Black people were detained in 86 percent of stops, 92 percent of searches, and 93 percent of arrests (Missouri Attorney General's Office 2014). In addition, *de facto* segregation in Ferguson's schools, a race-based wealth gap, urban sprawl, and a Black unemployment rate three times that of the White unemployment rate worsened existing racial tensions in Ferguson while also reflecting nationwide racial inequalities (Bouie 2014).

This situation has not changed much in the United States. Since Wilson killed Michael Brown, dozens of unarmed Black people have been shot and killed by police. Studies have found no change to the racial disparity in the use of deadly force by police (Belli 2020).

Discussion

1. Do you think that racial tension can be reduced by stopping police action against racial minorities?
2. What types of policies and practices are important to reduce racial tension?
3. Who is responsible? Why?

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11.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, you explored the **social construction of race** and **ethnicity**. After examining ways that people internalize racial identities, you learned to think about groups in relation to their power dynamics. By examining historical and contemporary theories of **race**, you are able to better understand how racial inequalities persist. While this chapter opened with a video of individuals discussing their identities, you can quickly see that the experience of race impacts everyone. The way that we collect (or fail to collect) data will reflect the accuracy of how categories of race and ethnicity are understood.

Since 2000, when the U.S. Census allowed people to select more than one racial category, an increasing number of Americans have begun choosing two or more categories to describe themselves (Parker et al. 2015). Our multiracial population is on the rise in part because there is an opportunity for Americans to select identities that reflect their experiences. Furthermore, we are seeing a rise in the number of multiracial infants, which demographers predict will continue to grow. How will people navigate several racial and ethnic identities simultaneously?

As we become more multiracial, will we continue to see **prejudice** and **discrimination**? A study by the Pew Research Center [Website] suggests that it is likely. Currently, over half of multiracial Americans report being subjected to racial slurs or jokes. In addition to acts of discrimination, such as being called racial slurs or receiving poor service, many Americans identify ways that discrimination is systemic. Being unfairly stopped by police continues to be indicative of the larger issue of **institutionalized racism** (Parker

et al. 2015). Consider what you've learned about racialized housing in this chapter. How might experiences of discrimination continue to affect housing practices and interactions with the **criminal justice system**?

KEY TERMS

- **Amalgamation**: the process by which a minority group and a majority group combine to form a new group. Amalgamation creates the classic "melting pot" analogy in which there is a combination of cultures that results in a new culture entirely.
- **Antiracism**: an active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies, and practices and attitudes so that power is redistributed and shared equitably.
- **Assimilation**: the process by which a minority individual or group gives up its own identity by taking on the characteristics of the dominant culture.
- **Colorblindness**: also called color-blind racism; a form of racism that is hidden and embedded in our social institutions. The notion that one "does not see color" is problematic and serves to erase the experiences of racial and ethnic minority groups.
- **Discrimination**: actions against a group of people. Discrimination can be based on race, ethnicity, age, religion, health, and other categories.
- **Dominant group**: a group that holds the most power in a given society, while subordinate groups are those who lack power compared to the dominant group.
- **Ethnicity**: categories of difference organized around a shared language, culture, and faith tradition.
- **Expulsion**: the act of a dominant group forcing a subordinate group to leave a certain area or country.
- **Genocide**: the deliberate annihilation of a targeted (usually subordinate) group; the most toxic intergroup relationship.
- **Implicit bias**: also referred to as unconscious bias; the process of associating stereotypes or attitudes toward categories of people without conscious awareness.
- **Institutional racism:** also called structural racism or systemic racism; involves systems and structures that have procedures or processes that disadvantage racial minority groups.
- **Minority group**: any group of people who, because of their physical or cultural characteristics, are singled out from the others in the society in which they live for differential and unequal treatment, and who therefore regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination.
- **Pluralism**: a great mixture of different cultures where each culture retains its own identity and yet adds to the flavor of the whole; represented by the ideal of the United States as a "salad bowl."
- **Prejudice**: the beliefs, thoughts, feelings, and attitudes someone holds about a group. A prejudice is not based on personal experience; instead, it is a prejudgment, originating outside actual experience.

- **Race**: a category of identity that ascribes social, cultural, and political meaning and consequence to physical characteristics.
- **Racial formation theory**: a theory that points to how what we define as race varies and changes in different political, economic, and historical contexts.
- **Racial profiling**: a type of systemic racism involves the singling out of racial minorities for differential treatment, usually harsher treatment.
- **Racism**: a type of prejudice and discrimination used to justify inequalities against individuals by maintaining that one racial category is somehow superior or inferior to others; it is a set of practices used by a racial dominant group to maximize advantages for itself by disadvantaging racial minority groups.
- **Redlining**: the discriminatory practice of refusing loans to creditworthy applicants in neighborhoods that banks deem undesirable or racially occupied.
- **Segregation**: the physical separation of two groups, particularly in residence, but also in workplace and social functions.
- **Social construction of race**: the idea that race is more meaningful on a social level than on a biological level.
- **Stereotype**: oversimplified generalizations about groups of people. Stereotypes can be based on race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation—almost any characteristic. They may be positive (usually about one's own group) but are often negative (usually toward other groups, such as when members of a dominant racial group suggest that a subordinate racial group is stupid or lazy).
- **White privilege**: an unearned set of social advantages available to White people; the societal privilege that benefits White people, or those perceived to be White, over non-White people in some societies, including the United States.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How do you describe your ethnicity? Do you include your family's country of origin? Do you consider yourself multiethnic? How does your ethnicity compare to that of the people you spend most of your time with?
2. Select one of the theoretical perspectives discussed in this chapter. Describe the main ideas and explain how it explains racial inequality.
3. Give an example of stereotyping that you see in everyday life. Explain what would need to happen for this to be eliminated.
4. Provide two examples of White privilege. Do you know people who have experienced this privilege? From what perspective?
5. How do redlining and racial steering contribute to institutionalized racism?
6. How does institutionalized racism impact health and life changes?

Additional Resources

1. **Multiracial American Voices: Being Multiracial – Pew Research Center [Streaming Video]**
2. **W. E. B. Du Bois and Race Conflict [Streaming Video]**
3. **Double Consciousness and Two-ness [Website]**
4. **Stages of Racial Identity Development Explained [PDF]**
5. **Racial Identity Development Facilitator Guide [PDF]**
6. **Racial Identity Development [PDF]**

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Glossary

Absolute poverty
an economic condition in which a family or individual cannot afford basic necessities, such as food and shelter, so that day-to-day survival is in jeopardy.

Agency
freewill or the ability to make independent decisions. As sociologists, we understand that the choices we have available to us are often limited by larger structural constraints.

Agents of socialization
individuals or institutions that socialize people.

Amalgamation
the process by which a minority group and a majority group combine to form a new group. Amalgamation creates the classic "melting pot" analogy in which there is a combination of cultures that results in a new culture entirely.

Anti-positivism
the view that social researchers should strive for subjectivity as they work to represent social processes, cultural norms, and societal values.

Anticipatory socialization
preparation for future life roles.

Antiracism
an active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies, and practices and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably.

Argot
the special vocabulary and language of a subculture and how it's delivered.

Assimilation
the process by which a minority individual or group gives up its own identity by taking on the characteristics of the dominant culture.

Bourgeoise
in Marx's theory the wealthy owners/capitalists that control economic production.

Bureaucracies
organizations that have a clear division of labor, a hierarchy, and formal rules and procedures.

Caste system
a stratification system based on culture and honor. It is a closed system and has high status consistency.

Causation
a change in one variable that directly has an effect on or causes another variable.

Charismatic authority
power legitimized on the basis of a leader's exceptional personal qualities.

Cisgender
people who identify with the sex they were assigned at birth are often referred to as cisgender, utilizing the Latin prefix cis-, which means "on the same side."

Class
a set of people who share similar status based on factors like wealth, income, education, family background, and occupation.

Class system
a stratification system that is based on social factors and individual achievement. It has some degree of openness.

Closed system
a stratification system in which people cannot move between different layers.

Code of ethics
formal guidelines for conducting sociological research, consisting of principles and ethical standards to be used in the discipline.

Coercive organizations
organizations we are forced to join.

Collectivist organizations
organizations concerned with pursuing their mission or values. Often the opposite of a bureaucratic organization.

Colonialism
when a dominating country creates settlements in a distant territory.

Colorblindness
also called color-blind racism; a form of racism that is hidden and embedded in our social institutions. The notion that one "does not see color" is problematic and serves to erase the experiences of racial and ethnic minority groups.

Concerted cultivation
a middle-class child rearing technique in which parents try to actively foster their childrens' development.

Conflict theory
a macro level theory that proposes conflict is a basic fact of social life. It tends to argue that the institutions of society benefit the powerful.

Content analysis
a systematic approach to record and value information gleaned from secondary data as it relates to the study at hand.

Correlation
when a change in one variable coincides with a change in another variable, but does not necessarily indicate causation

Crime
a behavior that violates official law and is punishable through formal sanctions.

Criminal justice system
an organization that exists to enforce a legal code, which in the United States includes the police, courts, and corrections system.

Critical race theory
a theoretical framework that examines how racism is embedded in American social life through its systems and institutions.

Critical sociology
a sociological approach that focuses on deconstruction of existing sociological research and theory. Critical sociologists view theories, methods, and conclusions as serving one of two purposes: they can either legitimize and rationalize systems of social power and oppression or liberate humans from inequality and restriction on human freedom.

Crowds
people who happen to be in the same place at the same time, but who do not interact or share a sense of identity.

Cultural capital
the resources and power derived from being familiar with high (or legitimated) culture.

Cultural diamond
a framework for understanding culture that focuses on specific cultural objects, how they are created and received, and the embeddedness of these patterns within society.

Cultural omnivore
someone who appreciates a wide range of cultural activities and genres. Often associated with eliteness.

Cultural relativism
the practice of assessing a culture by its own standards and not in comparison to another culture.

Cultural univore
someone who appreciates a narrow range of cultural activities and genres.

Davis and Moore Hypothesis
a functionalist theory that argues stratification is universal and necessary.

Declarative culture
culture that is verbally expressed.

Deep acting
an intentional, self-induced change in feeling.

Deviance
a violation of contextual, cultural, or social norms.

Differential association theory
a theory that states individuals learn deviant behavior from those close to them who provide models of and opportunities for deviance.

Discrimination
actions against a group of people. Discrimination can be based on race, ethnicity, age, religion, health, and other categories.

Diversity
the presence of differences, including psychological, physical, and social differences that occur among individuals.

Doing gender
the idea that individuals perform gender based on the way that gender is socially constructed within their society; they are held accountable for enacting gendered behaviors. These gendered performances are expected and contribute to why we think of gendered behavior as "natural."

Dominant culture
the values, norms, meanings, and practices of the group within society that is the most powerful.

Dominant group
a group that holds the most power in a given society, while subordinate groups are those who lack power compared to the dominant group.

Dominant ideology
in Marxist theory, the dominant ideas of a time period. It reflects the interests of the owners and makes what is socially constructed seem natural.

Double consciousness
concept developed by W.E.B. Du Bois referring to a sense of "twoness" experienced by African-Americans because of their racialized oppression and devaluation in a white-dominated society

Dramaturgy
a framework for understanding social life as a form of theater.

Dyad
a two member group.

Egalitarians
relationships in which both partners do a fair share of earning income, housework, and childcare.

Emotion work
the process of suppressing or evoking emotions.

Emphasized femininity
the pattern of femininity that is given the most cultural and ideological support. This type of femininity involves compliance with subordination and is oriented to accommodate the interests and desires of men.

Essentialism
a view of gender as a biological and unchanging, two-category system.

Ethnicity
categories of difference organized around shared language, culture and faith tradition.

Ethnocentrism
to evaluate and judge another culture based on one's own cultural norms. Ethnocentrism is believing your group is the correct measuring standard, and if other cultures do not measure up to it, they are wrong.

Ethnography
the study of people in their environments to understand the meanings they give to their activities.

Ethnomethodology
the study of everyday folk methods, how we go about ordering our day-to-day lives.

Experiment
the testing of a hypothesis under controlled conditions.

Expulsion
the act of a dominant group forcing a subordinate group to leave a certain area or country.

Feminism
a perspective based on the idea that women and men should have equal legal and political rights. Feminism views the systematic oppression of people based on gender as problematic and something that should be changed. Also discussed as a feminist movement or a series of political campaigns for reform on a variety of issues that affect women's quality of life

Feminist theory
a theoretical framework that argues women suffer discrimination because they belong to a particular sex category (female) or gender (woman), and that women's needs are denied or ignored because of their sex.

Folkways
loosely enforced norms; the ordinary conventions of everyday life.

Gender
a term that refers to the behaviors, personal traits, and social positions that society attributes to being female or male

Gender dysphoria
a diagnostic category in the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) that describes individuals who do not identify as the gender that most people would assume they are.

Gender expression or gender presentation
a person's behavior, mannerisms, interests, and appearance that are associated with gender, specifically with the categories of femininity or masculinity. Expression can be specific to individuals and may also vary across cultures.

Gender identity
a deeply held internal perception of one's gender.

Gender policing
the practice of judging people's gender practices and reminding others of the rules of "doing gender." This practice reinforces gender order and reproduces gender inequality.

Gender role
the expected role determined by an individual's sex and the associated attitudes, behaviors, norms, and values.

Generalizability
the degree to which the results of a study can be applied to a larger population.

Generalized other
the common behavioral expectations of general society.

Genocide
the deliberate annihilation of a targeted (usually subordinate) group; the most toxic intergroup relationship.

Glass ceiling
an invisible barrier that women encounter when trying to win jobs in the highest level of business.

Grounded theory
an interpretive framework sometimes used in qualitative analysis with the goal of developing theory; an approach developed by sociologists Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (1967) that offers an alternative to positivism.

Group
any collection of at least two people who interact with some frequency and who share some sense of aligned identity.

Habitualization
repeated actions that form a pattern.

Hegemonic masculinity
the masculine ideal that is viewed as superior to any other kind of masculinity as well as any form of femininity.

Heteronormativity
an ideology and a set of institutional practices that privileges heterosexuality over other sexual orientations.

Heterosexism
discrimination or prejudice against gay people on the assumption that heterosexuality is the normal sexual orientation. (Oxford dictionary)

High culture
forms of cultural expression associated with elite groups.

Homology argument
the argument that consumption patterns and cultural tastes are associated with specific occupations and class fractions.

Homophily
similarity within networks.

Homophobia
an extreme or irrational aversion to gay, lesbian, bisexual, or all LGBTQIA+ people, which often manifests as prejudice and bias.

Hookup culture
a culture in which casual sexual encounters including one night stands, sexual engagements, and so forth are accepted and encouraged.

Hypothesis
an explanation for a phenomenon based on a conjecture about the relationship between the phenomenon and one or more causal factors.

Identity salience
the subjective importance of the various roles or identities we hold.

Implicit bias
also referred to as unconscious bias; the process of associating stereotypes or attitudes towards categories of people without conscious awareness.

In-group
a group we belong to and toward which we hold favorable opinions.

Income
a person's wages or investment dividends. Earned on a regular basis.

Individualization argument
the argument that consumption patterns are no longer determined by class.

Institutional racism
also called structural racism or systemic racism; involves systems and structures that have procedures or processes that disadvantage racial minority groups.

Institutionalization
the implantation of a convention or norm into society.

institutionalized racism **Interpretive framework**
a sociological research approach that seeks in-depth understanding of a topic or subject through observation or interaction; this approach is not based on hypothesis testing. Interpretive frameworks allow researchers to have reflexivity so they can describe how their own social position influences what they research.

Intersectionality
the idea that inequalities produced by multiple interconnected social characteristics can influence the life course of an individual or group. Intersectionality, then, suggests that we should view gender, race, class, or sexuality not as individual characteristics but as interconnected social situations.

Intersex
a general term used to describe people whose sex traits, reproductive anatomy, hormones, or chromosomes are different from the usual two ways human bodies develop. Some intersex traits are recognized at birth, while others are not recognizable until puberty or later in life

Interviews
one-on-one conversations with participants designed to gather information about a particular topic.

Isomorphism
a process by which organizations come to look similar and homogeneous.

Labeling theory
the ascribing of a deviant behavior to another person by members of society.

LGBTQIA+
an abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual. The additional "+" stands for all of the other identities not encompassed in the short acronym. An umbrella term that is often used to refer to the community as a whole.

Looking-glass self
the theory that our self is developed based on what we think others think about us.

Macro-level analysis/macrosociology
the study of trends among and between institutions and societies. Macrosociology emphasizes the influence of structures, institutions, and systems.

Male gaze
the act of depicting women from a masculine, heterosexual perspective that presents and represents women as sexual objects for the pleasure of the male viewer.

Marriage equality
the legal recognition of the rights of marriage regardless of one"s sexual orientation or gender identity.

Mass Incarceration
the overwhelming size and scale of the U.S. prison population.

Material culture
anything physical or tangible that people create, use, or appreciate that has meaning attached to it.

Meritocracy
a hypothetical system in which social stratification is determined by personal effort and merit.

Micro-level analysis/microsociology
the study of small groups and individual interactions. Microsociology emphasizes context, meaning-making, and interactions.

Microaggression
a term used for commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental slights, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative attitudes toward stigmatized or culturally marginalized groups.

Minority group
any group of people who, because of their physical or cultural characteristics, are singled out from the others in the society in which they live for differential and unequal treatment, and who therefore regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination.

Mores
norms that carry moral significance. We are expected to conform to them.

Neo-traditionalists
a modified version of traditionalism in which they support the idea of a woman working if she wishes to, but only if doing so does not interfere with her ability to take care of her family.

Nondeclarative culture
deeply internalized and unconscious culture.

Normative or voluntary organizations
organizations we join based on shared interest.

Norms
the social expectations of how to behave in a situation.

Open system
a stratification system that allows people to move between layers.

Oppression
a combination of prejudice and institutional power that creates a system that regularly and severely discriminates against some groups and benefits other groups.

Orgasm gap
the disparity or unequal outcome in orgasms between couples, genders, and sexualities.

Othering
the process by which a powerful group defines into existence a group they construct as an “other." The powerful group does this by attributing negative characteristics to the “other” and deems the less powerful group to be inferior.

Out-group
a group we do not belong to and which we may hold negative attitudes toward.

Patriarchy
an environment where characteristics associated with men and masculinity have more power and authority.

Pay gap
the difference in earnings between men and women.

Pluralism
a great mixture of different cultures where each culture retains its own identity and yet adds to the flavor of the whole; represented by the ideal of the United States as a "salad bowl."

Popular culture
the pattern of cultural experiences and attitudes that exist in mainstream society.

Positivism
Comte's theory which suggests that science produces universal laws, science controls what is true, and objective methods allow you to pursue that truth.

Postcolonial theory
a theoretical framework that explores colonial relations and their aftermath. The framework tends to focus on subjugated people.

Postmodern theory
a set of theories that emphasize heterogeneity, subjectivity, plurality, and pragmatism, while questioning previous modes of theorizing that focus on objectivity. It is a broad and somewhat intentionally difficult to define term. Postmodern theory tends to be skeptical of "objective" universal explanations of how society and culture operate.

Power elite
the class in command of the major hierarchies and organizations of modern society.

Prejudice
the beliefs, thoughts, feelings, and attitudes someone holds about a group. A prejudice is not based on personal experience; instead, it is a prejudgment, originating outside actual experience.

Primary deviance
a violation of norms that does not result in any long-term effects on the individual's self-image or interactions with others.

Primary groups
small, informal groups of people who are closest to us.

Private prisons
for-profit incarceration facilities run by private companies who contract with local, state, and federal governments.

Privilege
something of value members of one group have that members of another group do not, simply because they belong to a group. The privilege may be either an unearned advantage or an unearned entitlement.

Proletariat
in Marx's theory, the workers that must sell their labor.

Push-and-resist dynamic
the situation in which it is normal for men to press sexual activity and advances toward women in pursuit of increased sexual intimacy.

Qualitative research
research methods that work with non-numerical data and attempt to understand the experiences of individuals and groups from their own perspectives. With qualitative approaches, researchers examine how groups participate in their own meaning making and development of culture.

Quantitative research methods
research methods that use numerical data; the social world and experiences are translated into numbers that can be examined mathematically through statistical analysis.

Queer
a term used to describe gender and sexual identities other than cisgender and heterosexual.

Queer theory
is a field of critical theory that emerged in the early 1990s out of queer studies and women's studies; it emphasizes the fluidity of gender and sexualities and the performative qualities of them.

Race
a category of identity that ascribes social, cultural, and political meaning and consequence to physical characteristics.

Racial formation theory
a theory that points to how what we define as race varies and changes in different political, economic, and historical contexts.

Racial profiling
a type of systemic racism involves the singling out of racial minorities for differential treatment, usually harsher treatment.

Racialized organizations
theory that explains how organizations are not race-neutral. In this theory racialized organizations are seen as enhancing or diminishing the agency of racial groups.

Racism
a type of prejudice and discrimination used to justify inequalities against individuals by maintaining that one racial category is somehow superior or inferior to others; it is a set of practices used by a racial dominant group to maximize advantages for itself by disadvantaging racial minority groups.

Random sample
every person in a population has the same chance of being chosen for the study.

Rape culture
a society or environment whose prevailing social attitudes have the effect of normalizing or trivializing sexual assault and abuse.

Rational legal authority
power that is legitimized by rules, regulations, and laws.

Redlining
the discriminatory practice of refusing loans to creditworthy applicants in neighborhoods that banks deem undesirable or racially occupied.

Reference group
a group that people compare themselves to.

Reflexivity
the ability of the researcher to examine how their own social position influences how and what they research. Reflexivity requires the researcher to evaluate how their own feelings, reactions and motives influence how they think and behave in a situation.

Relative poverty
an economic condition in which a family or individuals have 50 percent income less than the average median income.

Reliability
how likely research results are to be replicated if the study is reproduced.

Resocialization
a process through which people unlearn previous socialization, while being socialized by new individuals or institutions.

Restorative justice
a set of practices that bring together the person who committed the act, those who were harmed by the action, and other relevant community stakeholders to identify ways to heal the harm caused by an offense and prevent it from occurring again, rather than engaging in punitive punishment.

Roles
patterns of behavior that are representative of a person's social status.

Secondary deviance
deviance that occurs when a person's self-concept and behavior begin to change after his or her actions are labeled as deviant by members of society.

Secondary groups
larger and more impersonal groups that are task-focused and time limited.

Segregation
the physical separation of two groups, particularly in residence, but also in workplace and social functions.

Self
a person's distinct identity that is developed through social interaction.

Sex
physical or physiological differences between males and females, including both primary sex characteristics (the reproductive system) and secondary characteristics such as height and muscularity.

Sexism
the belief that some individuals or groups are superior to others based on sex or gender.

Sexual identity
a social identity ascribed to individuals based on their gender and the gender of the object of sexual desire. Sexuality includes personal and interpersonal expression of sexual desire, behavior, and identity.

Sexual orientation
enduring patterns of romantic or sexual attraction (or a combination of these) to persons of the opposite sex or gender, the same sex or gender, or to both sexes or more than one gender.

Sexual script
the social rules that guide sexual interaction; these scripts are based in one's culture.

Sexual socialization
a process of social interaction and communication in which individuals learn and internalize the sexuality associated with their gender role and biological sex.

Sexuality
the sexual feelings, thoughts, attractions and behaviors individuals have toward other people.

Social capital
using social connections and networks as a resource.

Social construction of race
the idea that race is more meaningful on a social level than on a biological level.

Social construction of sexuality
socially created definitions about the cultural appropriateness of sex-linked behavior that shape how people see and experience sexuality

Social constructionism
a framework that explains how the meaning of something is dependent on our social relationships.

Social control
the regulation and enforcement of norms.

Social disorganization theory
a theory that asserts crime occurs in communities with weak social ties and the absence of social control.

Social facts
the laws, morals, values, religious beliefs, customs, fashions, rituals, and cultural rules that govern social life. These practices exist outside of us as individuals; instead, these rules act to constrain our behavior.

Social institutions
mechanisms or patterns of social order focused on meeting social needs, such as government, the economy, education, family, healthcare, and religion.

Social location
your position within society. This often includes your position in terms of race, class, gender, sexuality, age, ability, religion, and geography.

Social network
a set of relationships that link an individual to other individuals.

Social stratification
a society's categorization of its people into rankings based on factors like wealth, income, education, family background, and power.

Socialization
the process wherein people come to understand societal norms and expectations, to accept society's beliefs, and to be aware of societal values.

Society
a group of people who live in a defined geographic area, interact with one another, and share a common culture.

Socioeconomic mobility
the movement of people between classes and occupations.

Socioeconomic status (SES)
an individual's place within the stratification system.

Sociological imagination
an awareness of the relationship between a person's behavior and experience and the wider culture that shaped the person's choices and perceptions.

Sociological perspective
a lens that allows you to view society and social structures through multiple perspectives simultaneously.

Sociology
the scientific and systematic study of groups and group interactions, societies and social interactions, from small and personal groups to very large groups and mass culture; also, the systematic study of human society and interactions.

Southern strategy
a Republican party political strategy to get White voter support through explicitly or implicity coded racism against Black Americans.

Status consistency
the consistency of an individual's rank across the factors that determine social stratification within a lifetime.

Status groups
communities based on living a specific lifestyle.

Status inconsistency
when an individual can have a lot of one type of resource, but not another.

Stereotype
oversimplified generalizations about groups of people. Stereotypes can be based on race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation—almost any characteristic. They may be positive (usually about one's own group) but are often negative (usually toward other groups, such as when members of a dominant racial group suggest that a subordinate racial group is stupid or lazy).

Strain theory
a theory that addresses the relationship between having socially acceptable goals and having socially acceptable means to reach those goals.

Strong ties
people in your network that you know and have regular contact with.

Structural functionalism
a macro-level theory that proposes society is made up of stable institutions and each institution has a function for the society.

Structure/social structure
the complex and stable framework of society that influences all individuals or groups through the relationship between institutions (e.g., economy, politics, religion) and social practices (e.g., behaviors, norms, and values). These patterned arrangements both limit and create opportunities for some individuals.

Subculture
a group within society that is differentiated by its distinctive values, norms, and lifestyle.

Surface acting
a change in body language, tone of voice, or facial expression but not a change in feeling.

Survey
a method of collecting data from subjects who respond to a series of questions about behaviors and opinions, often in the form of a questionnaire or an interview. Surveys are one of the most widely used scientific research methods.

Symbolic boundaries
conceptual distinctions made by people to categorize social things.

Symbolic culture
ways of thinking, beliefs, values, and assumptions, including language and gestures.

Symbolic interactionism
a micro-level theory that emphasizes the importance of meanings and interactions in social life.

Taboos
the most powerful type of norm.

Targets of socialization
the people that are being socialized.

Taste culture
areas of culture that share aesthetics and standards of beauty.

The New Jim Crow
the network of laws and practices that disproportionately funnel Black Americans into the criminal justice system, stripping them of their constitutional rights as a punishment for their offenses in the same way that Jim Crow laws did in previous eras.

Theory
a statement that proposes to describe and explain why facts or other social phenomena are related to each other based on observed patterns.

Thomas theorem
the theory that if people define something as real, it will have real consequences.

Traditional authority
power legitimized on the basis of long-standing customs.

Traditionalists
people who value the breadwinner/housewife model and believe men should be primarily responsible for earning income, while women are responsible for housework and childcare.

Transgender
a person whose sex assigned at birth and gender identity are not necessarily the same.

Triad
a three member group.

Utilitarian organizations
organizations we join based on seeking a material reward.

Validity
how well the study measures what it was designed to measure.

Value orientations
systems of linked values.

Values
shared beliefs about what a group considers worthwhile or desirable.

Weak ties
people in your network that you are not that close to.

Wealth
the net value of money and assets a person has. It is accumulated over time.

White privilege
an unearned set of social advantages available to White people; the societal privilege that benefits White people, or those perceived to be White, over non-White people in some societies, including the United States.

White-collar crime
a nonviolent crime of opportunity, often involving money.

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Self-Check Questions

Questions

Chapter 1: Introduction to Sociology

1. What does the term "society" primarily denote?
    1. A group of individuals with diverse interests
    2. People living in a specific geographic area, interacting and sharing culture
    3. An isolated community devoid of cultural exchange
    4. A collection of individuals who don't interact with one another
2. What makes social structures challenging to perceive?
    1. Their dependence on visible physical structures, such as churches or government buildings
    2. Their primary dependence on individual actions
    3. Their fleeting nature in daily interactions
    4. Their intangible nature and enduring presence in society
3. What does the sociological imagination require you to understand?
    1. The individual's detachment from societal influences
    2. The relationship between personal experiences and broader cultural forces
    3. The dominance of individual choice over societal norms
    4. The absence of cultural impact on personal behavior
4. Which of the following is NOT typically considered a social institution?
    1. Government
    2. Religious organizations
    3. Social media platforms
    4. Healthcare systems
5. Which elements are integral to the concept of oppression?
    1. Prejudice and individual power dynamics
    2. Institutional power and prejudice
    3. Personal beliefs and social hierarchies
    4. Random chance and social inequality

Chapter 2: The History of Sociology and Social Theory

1. What is the purpose of studying intersectionality?
    1. To underscore division in society
    2. To show how simple people are

3. To view identities as interconnected social situations
4. To help people understand that we are all the same

2. What does the term "social location" primarily refer to?
    1. Traits you share with others in your neighborhood
    2. Your position within society based on various factors
    3. Your status in your peer group
    4. Your measurable reach on social media platforms
3. What does postcolonial theory primarily focus on? Select all that apply.
    1. Documenting the achievements of colonial powers
    2. Analyzing the consequences of colonialism
    3. Promoting the development of postcolonial regions
    4. Examining the impact of colonialism on subjugated people
4. According to critical race theory, what is race?
    1. A biological trait with predictable characteristics
    2. A construct that changes over time
    3. A personal trait independent of social context
    4. A synonym for ethnic background
5. Which of the following statements is true of feminist theory? Select all that apply.
    1. Black feminist theory suggests that social change requires us to change the consciousness of individuals.
    2. Intersectionality studies have their origins with women of color in the United States.
    3. As a subordinated group in a patriarchal society, women can understand the world in ways that may challenge conventional beliefs.
    4. The social stigma surrounding feminism has ended.

Chapter 3: Sociological Research Methods: Studying Social Life

1. What does correlation imply about the relationship between two variables?
    1. There is a direct causal relationship between the variables.
    2. The variables are completely independent of each other.
    3. There is no relationship between the variables.
    4. A change in one variable is associated with a change in another variable, but causation is not necessarily implied.
2. Which research method is commonly associated with an interpretive framework?
    1. Ethnography
    2. Hypothesis testing
    3. Qualitative surveys
    4. Longitudinal studies
3. How do critical sociologists view theories, methods, and conclusions?
    1. As measurable representations of social reality

2. As tools that can legitimize and rationalize systems of social power and oppression
3. As independent of systems of power and oppression
4. As irrelevant to understanding social dynamics

4. Which of the following research studies is an example of qualitative research?
    1. A study examining the correlation between social media usage and depression levels among teenagers
    2. A randomized, controlled trial testing the efficacy of a new drug in treating hypertension
    3. An ethnographic study exploring the cultural practices and beliefs of a remote Indigenous tribe
    4. A longitudinal study tracking the academic performance of students over a five-year period
5. What is the role of a hypothesis in research?
    1. It serves as a conclusion drawn from data analysis.
    2. It outlines the ethical considerations of the research.
    3. It offers a summary of the literature review conducted prior to the study.
    4. It provides a tentative explanation that can be tested through experimentation.

Chapter 4: Socialization and Interaction

1. How does habitualization contribute to social constructionism?
    1. By emphasizing the importance of individual agency in shaping social reality
    2. By highlighting the role of social relationships in determining truth
    3. By enabling efficient decision-making through repetitive actions and routines
    4. By challenging the idea of objective reality and highlighting the influence of social processes
2. Which sociological perspective emphasizes the idea that individuals actively participate in their own socialization process?
    1. Conflict theory
    2. Structural functionalism
    3. Symbolic interactionism
    4. Social constructionism
3. Which of the following is not an agent of socialization?
    1. Television
    2. Genetic inheritance
    3. Peers, such as friends and classmates
    4. Your workplace
4. How does the looking-glass self concept contribute to the understanding of social interaction?
    1. By emphasizing the importance of individuality over social conformity
    2. By highlighting how to know with certainty what other people are thinking
    3. By demonstrating how individuals construct their self-concept through social feedback
    4. By suggesting that self-perception is based on genetic factors
5. What does the concept of identity salience refer to?
    1. The tendency for individuals to conceal their true identities in social interactions

2. The perception of one's identity as superior to others in a social setting
3. The subjective importance or value attached to various roles that individuals accept as self-defining
4. The process of rejecting societal norms and constructing a unique Identity

Chapter 5: Groups, Networks, and Organizations

1. Which of the following statements best describes the development of in-group favoritism in young children?
    1. In-group favoritism develops after the age of six and primarily affects social behaviors during adolescence.
    2. In-group favoritism begins to develop from a young age, rapidly increasing up to about six years old, and significantly influences behavior almost immediately.
    3. In-group favoritism is a trait that emerges in adulthood as a result of socialization and cultural norms.
    4. In-group favoritism is observed in children over the age of three and is not influenced by sex.
2. How do primary groups differ from secondary groups?
    1. Primary groups are limited in size to two people, while secondary groups have no size limit.
    2. Primary groups are larger and more task-focused, while secondary groups are small and emotionally intimate.
    3. Primary groups share face-to-face contact and emotional bonds, whereas secondary groups are impersonal and task-oriented.
    4. Primary groups consist of people who do not share an identity, while secondary groups consist of people who do.
3. Which of the following best exemplifies rational legal authority?
    1. A king ruling by divine right
    2. A charismatic leader who inspires followers through personal qualities
    3. A tribal chief chosen based on ancestral lineage
    4. A president elected according to constitutional rules and regulations
4. How can bridging gaps between different groups in social networks affect an individual's social capital?
    1. It increases their social capital by allowing them to serve as a bridge between groups.
    2. It decreases their social capital by spreading their connections too thin.
    3. It does not have a significant effect on their social capital.
    4. It reduces their influence within each individual group.

Chapter 6: Sociology of Culture

1. How does cultural capital help preserve and reproduce the class structure?
    1. By ensuring that everyone has equal access to education and high culture

2. By promoting mass or popular culture as the dominant form of cultural expression
3. By using familiarity with high culture as a criterion for access to important jobs and power
4. By encouraging diverse perspectives and a diverse workforce in elite institutions

2. What is the practice of assessing a culture by its own standards, rather than comparing it to another culture?
    1. Cultural elitism
    2. Ethnocentrism
    3. Cultural relativism
    4. Cultural preservationism
3. What is a key characteristic of dominant culture in contrast to subcultures?
    1. It fosters inclusivity and diversity within society.
    2. It is anchored by the institutions of youth.
    3. It refers to practices and symbols with little power.
    4. It is everywhere within society and largely taken for granted.
4. What are the consequences of ethnocentrism on the evaluation of cultural works? Select all that apply.
    1. It leads to a focus on preserving cultural objects in educational institutions.
    2. It results in the downplaying economic, political, and social dimensions of cultural objects.
    3. It fosters a sense of fragility and fear about the loss or destruction of culture.
    4. It promotes critical analysis of cultural objects and their significance.
5. How does Frantz Fanon's framework apply to the construction of a southern border wall? Select all that apply.
    1. It emphasizes the importance of physical barriers in maintaining social divisions.
    2. It highlights the symbolic and social boundaries tied to race and exclusion.
    3. It promotes the idea of a higher unity between different social sectors.
    4. It focuses on the complementary relationship between European and Indigenous sectors.

Chapter 7 Deviance, Crime, and Social Control

1. Which statement best explains the concept of social construction as it relates to deviance?
    1. Deviance is determined solely by an individual's personal beliefs about acceptable behavior.
    2. The definition of deviance depends on location, audience, and the individual committing the act.
    3. Deviance is a fixed concept that does not change over time or across cultures.
    4. Deviant behavior is labeled as such based on objective criteria established by legal authorities.
2. What term does Michelle Alexander use to describe the network of laws and practices that disproportionately affect Black Americans in the criminal justice system?
    1. The Racial Caste System
    2. Mass Incarceration
    3. The Southern Strategy
    4. The New Jim Crow

3. Which of the following best describes the nature of participating in restorative justice?
    1. Offenders are compelled to participate by court order.
    2. Victims are coerced into engaging with the offender.
    3. Both offenders and victims willingly agree to participate.
    4. Participation is determined by law enforcement agencies.
4. What role do negative social labels play in the context of secondary deviance?
    1. They discourage individuals from engaging in deviant behavior.
    2. They reinforce a sense of belonging within society.
    3. They may lead individuals to fulfill the role of a deviant.
    4. They promote conformity to societal norms.
5. What was the primary objective of the Southern strategy employed by the Republican party in the late 1970s and early 1980s?
    1. To gain White voter support through implicit racism
    2. To promote new policies bridging the gap between northern and southern states
    3. To address racial inequalities
    4. To advocate for criminal justice reform

Chapter 8: Social Stratification and Class

1. Which of the following best describes absolute poverty?
    1. An economic condition in which a family or individual cannot afford basic necessities like food and shelter
    2. An economic condition in which a family's income is less than 50 percent of the average median income
    3. The income level that is above the poverty line set by the government
    4. A measure established by the Social Security Administration to track changes in poverty rates
2. In a class system, wealth, income, education, family background, and occupation are typically used to determine a person's status.
    1. True
    2. False
3. Which of the following best illustrates how the dominant ideology makes socially constructed concepts seem natural and inevitable?
    1. The growing desire for a universal healthcare system
    2. The widespread acceptance of democratic political systems
    3. The increasing use of technology in everyday life
    4. The prevalence of wage labor as a means of exploitation by the rich
4. According to sociologists, what does the American belief in social mobility emphasize?
    1. Inherited wealth and institutional racism as primary determinants of social standing
    2. Individual choices, motivation, and self-effort as the main factors in controlling social standing
    3. The role of societal structures and patterns in determining social inequalities

4. The inevitable gains and losses of individuals over time based on societal support systems
5. What does a high degree of crystallization in a stratification system indicate?
    1. A system with high levels of status inconsistency and mobility
    2. A system where individuals have inconsistent ranks across different resources
    3. A system where there is a strong correlation between various resources, leading to status consistency
    4. A system characterized by open social mobility and flexible interactions between different strata

Chapter 9: Gender: Identities, Interactions, and Institutions

1. According to the concept of "doing gender," how are individuals held accountable for their gendered behaviors?
    1. Through legal enforcement of gender norms
    2. By their personal beliefs and values
    3. Through interactions with others who expect certain gender performances
    4. By their inherent biological traits
2. According to Patricia Hill Collins, how is hegemonic femininity interconnected with other social hierarchies?
    1. It solely focuses on gender-based power relations.
    2. It is race-based, class-based, and gender-based, contributing to a matrix of domination.
    3. It rejects the notions of race and class, focusing only on gender.
    4. It emphasizes the equality of all women regardless of their background.
3. What is the distinction between gender identity and gender expression?
    1. Gender identity is about external behaviors, while gender expression is about internal perceptions.
    2. Gender identity and gender expression are interchangeable terms with no significant differences.
    3. Gender identity is a person's deeply held internal perception of their gender, while gender expression is how they outwardly manifest their gender through behavior, mannerisms, interests, and appearance.
    4. Gender identity refers to the societal roles assigned to each gender, while gender expression is about biological sex characteristics.
4. What is the "feminine apologetic"?
    1. The phenomenon in which women apologize for engaging in traditionally masculine activities
    2. The societal expectation for women to balance masculine traits with feminine behavior to avoid negative responses
    3. The idea that femininity is more valued than masculinity in patriarchal societies
    4. The act of men adopting feminine traits without facing societal backlash
5. How does the social construction of gender contribute to gender inequality in a patriarchal society?
    1. By promoting gender equality and eliminating differences between men and women

2. By placing greater value on characteristics associated with men and masculinity than those associated with women and femininity
3. By ensuring that both men and women have equal rights and opportunities
4. By preventing the influence of mass media and education on gender roles

Chapter 10: Sexuality

1. Which are some outcomes of compulsory heterosexuality?
    1. Heterosexual relationships are commonly displayed in movies and television shows.
    2. Heterosexuality is assumed.
    3. Women are socialized to devalue and minimize their relationships with other women.
    4. The dominance of homosexuality in mainstream culture.
2. What contributes to the high rates of sexual assault and harrassment experienced by transgender individuals? Select all that apply.
    1. Lack of access to LGBTQIA+ friendly services
    2. Higher risk factors such as poverty, stigma, and marginalization
    3. Increased visibility and acceptance of LGBTQIA+ identities
    4. Lower rates of intimate partner violence within the LGBTQIA+ community
3. What is the male gaze, as described in feminist theory?
    1. The act of depicting men as sexual objects for the pleasure of the female viewer
    2. The perspective that presents and represents women as sexual objects for the pleasure of the male viewer
    3. The portrayal of individuals from a nonbinary, gender-fluid perspective
    4. The depiction of individuals in a way that challenges traditional gender roles
4. What is the definition of microaggressions?
    1. Intentional verbal, behavioral, or environmental slights toward stigmatized groups
    2. Unintentional negative attitudes toward marginalized groups in everyday interactions
    3. Hateful comments or harassment experienced only in specific settings, such as workplaces or schools
    4. Purposeful discrimination targeting individuals based on their race or sexuality
5. What does sexual identity refer to?
    1. The enduring patterns of romantic or sexual attraction to persons of another sex or gender
    2. The nonsexual feelings, thoughts, attractions, and behaviors individuals have toward other people
    3. The social identity ascribed to individuals based on their gender and the gender of the object of their sexual desire
    4. The acknowledgment of the expansiveness of the LGBTQIA+ community as a whole
6. How do bills restricting discussions of sexuality in schools impact sexual socialization?
    1. They encourage open discussions about diverse family forms and identities.
    2. They limit representation of diverse family forms and recognition of a range of identities.

3. They ensure sex education takes place at home.
4. They promote homosexuality in school curricula.

Chapter 11: Race and Ethnicity

1. Why does Ibram X. Kendi argue that being antiracist is in the self-interest of the vast majority of Americans? Select all that apply.
    1. Being antiracist leads to personal financial gain.
    2. Antiracist policies benefit all Americans, including White Americans.
    3. Antiracist beliefs align with the values of Western democracies.
    4. Being antiracist is a moral obligation; it benefits individual morality.
2. Which of the following are distinguishing characteristics of a minority group?
    1. Economic status and educational attainment
    2. Political affiliation and social status
    3. Unequal treatment and less power over their lives
    4. Cultural practices and religious beliefs
3. How is ethnicity defined and how does it differ from race?
    1. Ethnicity refers to physical characteristics, while race refers to cultural traditions.
    2. Ethnicity is organized around shared culture, while race is based on biological traits.
    3. Ethnicity is a modern concept, while race has been a part of human history for centuries.
    4. Ethnicity is determined by self-identification, while race is determined by societal categorization.
4. What is the primary argument against the validity of racial categories based on genetic research?
    1. Racial categories have been vigorously contested over time.
    2. There is far more genetic diversity within racial groups than between them.
    3. Formal classifications of racialized human differences are a much newer concept.
    4. Racial categories are unstable and constantly changing in response to social and historical contexts.
5. Which example best illustrates White privilege according to McIntosh's observations?
    1. White individuals are always assumed to be competent and capable in challenging situations.
    2. White individuals are often expected to speak on behalf of their entire racial group.
    3. White individuals are more likely to face racial profiling and harassment when shopping alone.
    4. White children are frequently provided with educational materials that acknowledge the existence and contributions of their race.

Answer Key

Chapter 1: Introduction to Sociology

1. What does the term "society" primarily denote?

    1. A group of individuals with diverse interests
    2. People living in a specific geographic area, interacting and sharing culture (correct)
    3. An isolated community devoid of cultural exchange
    4. A collection of individuals who don't interact with one another
    5. Answer feedback: Society refers to a group of people who live in a defined geographic area, interact with one another, and share a common culture. See "What Is Sociology" for more.
2. What makes social structures challenging to perceive?
    1. Their dependence on visible physical structures, such as churches or government buildings
    2. Their primary dependence on individual actions
    3. Their fleeting nature in daily interactions
    4. Their intangible nature and enduring presence in society (correct)
    5. Answer feedback: Social structures are a set of long-lasting social relationships, practices, and institutions that can be difficult to see in our daily lives. They are intangible social relations. See "Structure, Institutions, and Agency" for more.
3. What does the sociological imagination require you to understand?
    1. The individual's detachment from societal influences
    2. The relationship between personal experiences and broader cultural forces (correct)
    3. The dominance of individual choice over societal norms
    4. The absence of cultural impact on personal behavior
    5. Answer feedback: Sociological imagination is an awareness of the relationship between a person's behavior and experience and the wider culture that shaped the person's choices and perceptions. See "Sociological Perspective" for more.
4. Which of the following is NOT typically considered a social institution?
    1. Government
    2. Religious organizations
    3. Social media platforms (correct)
    4. Healthcare systems
    5. Answer feedback: Social institutions are mechanisms or patterns of social order focused on meeting social needs, such as government, the economy, education, family, healthcare, and religion. See "Structure, Institutions, and Agency" for more.
5. Which elements are integral to the concept of oppression?
    1. Prejudice and individual power dynamics
    2. Institutional power and prejudice (correct)
    3. Personal beliefs and social hierarchies
    4. Random chance and social inequality
    5. Answer feedback: Oppression refers to a combination of prejudice and institutional power that creates a system that regularly and severely discriminates against some groups and benefits other groups. See section "Examining Diversity " for more.

Chapter 2: The History of Sociology and Social Theory

1. What is the purpose of studying intersectionality?
    1. To underscore division in society
    2. To show how simple people are
    3. To view identities as interconnected social situations (correct)
    4. To help people understand that we are all the same
    5. Answer feedback: Intersectionality shows the interconnections of race, class, gender, age, and the multiplicative effect on victimization. We view these characteristics as interconnected social situations. See "Black Feminist Theory and Intersectionality" for more.
2. What does the term "social location" primarily refer to?
    1. Traits you share with others in your neighborhood
    2. Your position within society based on various factors (correct)
    3. Your status in your peer group
    4. Your measurable reach on social media platforms
    5. Answer feedback: Social location describes your position within society. This often includes your position in terms of race, class, gender, sexuality, age, ability, religion, and geography. See "Postmodern Theory" for more.
3. What does postcolonial theory primarily focus on? Select all that apply.
    1. Documenting the achievements of colonial powers
    2. Analyzing the consequences of colonialism (correct)
    3. Promoting the development of postcolonial regions (correct)
    4. Examining the impact of colonialism on subjugated people (correct)
    5. Answer feedback: Postcolonial theory is a theoretical framework that explores colonial relations and their aftermath. The framework tends to focus on subjugated people. See "Postcolonial Theory."
4. According to critical race theory, what is race?
    1. A biological trait with predictable characteristics
    2. A construct that changes over time (correct)
    3. A personal trait independent of social context
    4. A synonym for ethnic background
    5. Answer feedback: Critical race theory is a theoretical framework that examines how racism is embedded in American social life through its systems and institutions. See "Critical Theories of Race."
5. Which of the following statements is true of feminist theory? Select all that apply.
    1. Black feminist theory suggests that social change requires us to change the consciousness of individuals. (correct)
    2. Intersectionality studies have their origins with women of color in the United States. (correct)
    3. As a subordinated group in a patriarchal society, women can understand the world in ways that may challenge conventional beliefs. (correct)
    4. The social stigma surrounding feminism has ended.
    5. Answer feedback: Feminist theory is a theoretical framework that argues women suffer discrimi-

nation because they belong to a particular sex category (female) or gender (woman). The experiences of BIPOC need to be centered in feminist discussions. See "Feminist Theory."

Chapter 3: Sociological Research Methods: Studying Social Life

1. What does correlation imply about the relationship between two variables?
    1. There is a direct causal relationship between the variables.
    2. The variables are completely independent of each other.
    3. There is no relationship between the variables.
    4. A change in one variable is associated with a change in another variable, but causation is not necessarily implied. (correct)
    5. Answer feedback: Correlation is when a change in one variable coincides with a change in another variable, but does not necessarily indicate causation. See "Surveys."
2. Which research method is commonly associated with an interpretive framework?
    1. Ethnography (correct)
    2. Hypothesis testing
    3. Qualitative surveys
    4. Longitudinal studies
    5. Answer feedback: Researchers use an interpretive framework to describe how their own social position influences what they research. They in-depth understanding of a topic or subject through observation or interaction, not hypothesis testing. See "Interpretive Framework."
3. How do critical sociologists view theories, methods, and conclusions?
    1. As measurable representations of social reality
    2. As tools that can legitimize and rationalize systems of social power and oppression (correct)
    3. As independent of systems of power and oppression
    4. As irrelevant to understanding social dynamics
    5. Answer feedback: Critical sociology deconstructs existing sociological research and theory. In this view, theories can either legitimize systems of oppression or liberate humans from inequality and restriction on human freedom. See "Critical Sociology" for more.
4. Which of the following research studies is an example of qualitative research?
    1. A study examining the correlation between social media usage and depression levels among teenagers
    2. A randomized, controlled trial testing the efficacy of a new drug in treating hypertension
    3. An ethnographic study exploring the cultural practices and beliefs of a remote Indigenous tribe (correct)
    4. A longitudinal study tracking the academic performance of students over a five-year period
    5. Answer feedback: Qualitative researchers tend to work with non-numerical data. They study the experiences of individuals and groups from their own perspectives. They examine how groups participate in their own meaning-making. See "Qualitative Research Methods Part 1."
5. What is the role of a hypothesis in research?
    1. It serves as a conclusion drawn from data analysis.

2. It outlines the ethical considerations of the research.
3. It offers a summary of the literature review conducted prior to the study.
4. It provides a tentative explanation that can be tested through experimentation. (correct)
5. Answer feedback: A hypothesis is an explanation for a phenomenon based on a conjecture about the relationship between the phenomenon and one or more causal factors. See section "Step 3: Formulate a Hypothesis" for more.

Chapter 4: Socialization and Interaction

1. How does habitualization contribute to social constructionism?
    1. By emphasizing the importance of individual agency in shaping social reality
    2. By highlighting the role of social relationships in determining truth
    3. By enabling efficient decision-making through repetitive actions and routines
    4. By challenging the idea of objective reality and highlighting the influence of social processes (correct)
    5. Answer feedback: Habitualization shows that repeated actions form a pattern, framing how we perceive ourselves and each other. Social constructionism explains how the meaning of something is dependent on our social relationships. See "Social Construction of Reality."
2. Which sociological perspective emphasizes the idea that individuals actively participate in their own socialization process?
    1. Conflict theory
    2. Structural functionalism
    3. Symbolic interactionism
    4. Social constructionism (correct)
    5. Answer feedback: Socialization is the process wherein people come to understand societal norms and expectations, to accept society's beliefs, and to be aware of societal values. See "Socialization" for more.
3. Which of the following is not an agent of socialization?
    1. Television
    2. Genetic inheritance (correct)
    3. Peers, such as friends and classmates
    4. Your workplace
    5. Answer feedback: Agents of socialization are individuals or institutions that socialize people. See "Agents of Socialization" for more.
4. How does the looking-glass self concept contribute to the understanding of social interaction?
    1. By emphasizing the importance of individuality over social conformity
    2. By highlighting how to know with certainty what other people are thinking
    3. By demonstrating how individuals construct their self-concept through social feedback (correct)
    4. By suggesting that self-perception is based on genetic factors
    5. Answer feedback: The looking-glass self is the theory that our self is developed based on what we think others think about us. See "Cooley and the Looking-Glass Self" for more.

5. What does the concept of identity salience refer to?
    1. The tendency for individuals to conceal their true identities in social interactions
    2. The perception of one's identity as superior to others in a social setting
    3. The subjective importance or value attached to various roles that individuals accept as self-defining (correct)
    4. The process of rejecting societal norms and constructing a unique Identity
    5. Answer feedback: Identity salience is the subjective importance of the various roles or identities we hold. See "Identity Theory" for more.

Chapter 5: Groups, Networks, and Organizations

1. Which of the following statements best describes the development of in-group favoritism in young children?
    1. In-group favoritism develops after the age of six and primarily affects social behaviors during adolescence.
    2. In-group favoritism begins to develop from a young age, rapidly increasing up to about six years old, and significantly influences behavior almost immediately. (correct)
    3. In-group favoritism is a trait that emerges in adulthood as a result of socialization and cultural norms.
    4. In-group favoritism is observed in children over the age of three and is not influenced by sex.
    5. Answer feedback: An in-group is a group we belong to and toward which we hold favorable opinions. See "In-Groups and Out-Groups" for more.
2. How do primary groups differ from secondary groups?
    1. Primary groups are limited in size to two people, while secondary groups have no size limit.
    2. Primary groups are larger and more task-focused, while secondary groups are small and emotionally intimate.
    3. Primary groups share face-to-face contact and emotional bonds, whereas secondary groups are impersonal and task-oriented. (correct)
    4. Primary groups consist of people who do not share an identity, while secondary groups consist of people who do.
    5. Answer feedback: Primary groups are small, informal groups of the people who are closest to us. See "Types of Groups" for more.
3. Which of the following best exemplifies rational legal authority?
    1. A king ruling by divine right
    2. A charismatic leader who inspires followers through personal qualities
    3. A tribal chief chosen based on ancestral lineage
    4. A president elected according to constitutional rules and regulations (correct)
    5. Answer feedback: Rational legal authority is power that is legitimized by rules, regulations, and laws. See "Authority and Group Leadership" for more.
4. How can bridging gaps between different groups in social networks affect an individual's social capital?

1. It increases their social capital by allowing them to serve as a bridge between groups. (correct)
2. It decreases their social capital by spreading their connections too thin.
3. It does not have a significant effect on their social capital.
4. It reduces their influence within each individual group.
5. Answer feedback: Social capital is using social connections and networks as a resource. See "Social Capital" for more.

Chapter 6: Sociology of Culture

1. How does cultural capital help preserve and reproduce the class structure?
    1. By ensuring that everyone has equal access to education and high culture
    2. By promoting mass or popular culture as the dominant form of cultural expression
    3. By using familiarity with high culture as a criterion for access to important jobs and power (correct)
    4. By encouraging diverse perspectives and a diverse workforce in elite institutions
    5. Answer feedback: Cultural capital is the resources and power derived from being familiar with high (or legitimated) culture. See "Cultural Capital" for more.
2. What is the practice of assessing a culture by its own standards, rather than comparing it to another culture?
    1. Cultural elitism
    2. Ethnocentrism
    3. Cultural relativism (correct)
    4. Cultural preservationism
    5. Answer feedback: Instead of engaging in elitism and ethnocentrism, the social sciences try to take a culturally relativistic perspective: assessing a culture by its own standards and not in comparison to another culture. See "Social Sciences" for more.
3. What is a key characteristic of dominant culture in contrast to subcultures?
    1. It fosters inclusivity and diversity within society.
    2. It is anchored by the institutions of youth.
    3. It refers to practices and symbols with little power.
    4. It is everywhere within society and largely taken for granted. (correct)
    5. Answer feedback: Dominant culture is the values, norms, meanings, and practices of the group within society that is the most powerful. See "Subcultures" for more.
4. What are the consequences of ethnocentrism on the evaluation of cultural works? Select all that apply.
    1. It leads to a focus on preserving cultural objects in educational institutions. (correct)
    2. It results in the downplaying economic, political, and social dimensions of cultural objects. (correct)
    3. It fosters a sense of fragility and fear about the loss or destruction of culture. (correct)
    4. It promotes critical analysis of cultural objects and their significance.
    5. Answer feedback: Ethnocentrism involves evaluating and judging another culture based on your

own cultural norms. It means believing your group is the correct measuring standard, and if other cultures do not measure up to it, they are wrong. See "Humanities" for more.

5. How does Frantz Fanon's framework apply to the construction of a southern border wall? Select all that apply.
    1. It emphasizes the importance of physical barriers in maintaining social divisions. (correct)
    2. It highlights the symbolic and social boundaries tied to race and exclusion. (correct)
    3. It promotes the idea of a higher unity between different social sectors.
    4. It focuses on the complementary relationship between European and Indigenous sectors.
    5. Answer feedback: Symbolic boundaries are conceptual distinctions made by people to categorize social things. See "Boundary Drawing" for more.

Chapter 7: Deviance, Crime, and Social Control

1. Which statement best explains the concept of social construction as it relates to deviance?
    1. Deviance is determined solely by an individual's personal beliefs about acceptable behavior.
    2. The definition of deviance depends on location, audience, and the individual committing the act. (correct)
    3. Deviance is a fixed concept that does not change over time or across cultures.
    4. Deviant behavior is labeled as such based on objective criteria established by legal authorities.
    5. Answer feedback: Deviance is a violation of established contextual, cultural, or social norms. See "Deviance and Social Control" for more.
2. What term does Michelle Alexander use to describe the network of laws and practices that disproportionately affect Black Americans in the criminal justice system?
    1. The Racial Caste System
    2. Mass Incarceration
    3. The Southern Strategy
    4. The New Jim Crow (correct)
    5. Answer feedback: Like Jim Crow laws in previous eras, current laws funnel Black Americans into the criminal justice system, stripping them of their constitutional rights as a punishment for their offenses. See "Mass Incarceration and the New Jim Crow."
3. Which of the following best describes the nature of participating in restorative justice?
    1. Offenders are compelled to participate by court order.
    2. Victims are coerced into engaging with the offender.
    3. Both offenders and victims willingly agree to participate. (correct)
    4. Participation is determined by law enforcement agencies.
    5. Answer feedback: In Restorative justice, the offender, those who were harmed by the action, and other stakeholders come together to identify how to heal the harm and stop it from occurring again. This is in place of punitive punishment. See "Roots of Restorative Justice."
4. What role do negative social labels play in the context of secondary deviance?
    1. They discourage individuals from engaging in deviant behavior.
    2. They reinforce a sense of belonging within society.

    3. They may lead individuals to fulfill the role of a deviant. (correct)
    4. They promote conformity to societal norms.
    5. Answer feedback: Secondary deviance is deviance that occurs when a person's self-concept and behavior begin to change after their actions are labeled as deviant by members of society. See "Lemert's Symbolic Interactionist Labeling Theory."
5. What was the primary objective of the Southern strategy employed by the Republican party in the late 1970s and early 1980s?
    1. To gain White voter support through implicit racism (correct)
    2. To promote new policies bridging the gap between northern and southern states
    3. To address racial inequalities
    4. To advocate for criminal justice reform
    5. Answer feedback: The Southern strategy was a Republican party political strategy to get White voter support through explicitly or implicitly coded racism against Black Americans. See "Robert Merton's Functionalist Strain Theory: Rethinking Durkheim."

Chapter 8: Social Stratification and Class

1. Which of the following best describes absolute poverty?
    1. An economic condition in which a family or individual cannot afford basic necessities like food and shelter (correct)
    2. An economic condition in which a family's income is less than 50 percent of the average median income
    3. The income level that is above the poverty line set by the government
    4. A measure established by the Social Security Administration to track changes in poverty rates
    5. Answer feedback: Absolute poverty is an economic condition in which a family or individual cannot afford basic necessities, such as food and shelter, so that day-to-day survival is in jeopardy. See "Poverty" for more.
2. In a class system, wealth, income, education, family background, and occupation are typically used to determine a person's status.
    1. True (correct)
    2. False
    3. Answer feedback: A class is a set of people who share similar status based on factors like wealth, income, education, family background, and occupation. See "Stratification Systems" for more.
3. Which of the following best illustrates how the dominant ideology makes socially constructed concepts seem natural and inevitable?
    1. The growing desire for a universal healthcare system
    2. The widespread acceptance of democratic political systems
    3. The increasing use of technology in everyday life
    4. The prevalence of wage labor as a means of exploitation by the rich (correct)
    5. Answer feedback: Dominant ideology comes from Marxist theory. It consists of the dominant

ideas of a time period and reflects the interests of the owners. It makes what is socially constructed seem natural. See "Class Matters: Marx and Neo-Marxists" for more.

4. According to sociologists, what does the American belief in social mobility emphasize?
    1. Inherited wealth and institutional racism as primary determinants of social standing
    2. Individual choices, motivation, and self-effort as the main factors in controlling social standing (correct)
    3. The role of societal structures and patterns in determining social inequalities
    4. The inevitable gains and losses of individuals over time based on societal support systems
    5. Answer feedback: Social mobility refers to the movement of people between classes and occupations. One's access to wealth, income, and education is influenced by social structures, although most Americans focus on individual choices. See "Defining Stratification."
5. What does a high degree of crystallization in a stratification system indicate?
    1. A system with high levels of status inconsistency and mobility
    2. A system where individuals have inconsistent ranks across different resources
    3. A system where there is a strong correlation between various resources, leading to status consistency (correct)
    4. A system characterized by open social mobility and flexible interactions between different strata
    5. Answer feedback: High crystallization means that status is consistent across multiple factors (for example, money, political power, and cultural capital), while low crystallization means that status is inconsistent. See "Stratification Systems."

Chapter 9: Gender: Identities, Interactions, and Institutions

1. According to the concept of "doing gender," how are individuals held accountable for their gendered behaviors?
    1. Through legal enforcement of gender norms
    2. By their personal beliefs and values
    3. Through interactions with others who expect certain gender performances (correct)
    4. By their inherent biological traits
    5. Answer feedback: Individuals perform gender based on the way that gender is socially constructed within their society. These gendered performances are expected and contribute to why we think about gendered behavior as "natural." See "Examining Interactions" for more.
2. According to Patricia Hill Collins, how is hegemonic femininity interconnected with other social hierarchies?
    1. It solely focuses on gender-based power relations.
    2. It is race-based, class-based, and gender-based, contributing to a matrix of domination. (correct)
    3. It rejects the notions of race and class, focusing only on gender.
    4. It emphasizes the equality of all women regardless of their background.
    5. Answer feedback: Emphasized femininity is the pattern of femininity that gets most cultural and ideological support. It involves compliance with subordination and is oriented to accommodating the interests and desires of men. See "Social Construction of Gender" for more.

3. What is the distinction between gender identity and gender expression?
    1. Gender identity is about external behaviors, while gender expression is about internal perceptions.
    2. Gender identity and gender expression are interchangeable terms with no significant differences.
    3. Gender identity is a person's deeply held internal perception of their gender, while gender expression is how they outwardly manifest their gender through behavior, mannerisms, interests, and appearance. (correct)
    4. Gender identity refers to the societal roles assigned to each gender, while gender expression is about biological sex characteristics.
    5. Answer feedback: Gender expression refers to behavior, mannerisms, interests, and appearance that are associated with gender, specifically with femininity or masculinity. Expression may also vary across individuals and cultures. See "Perception versus Expectation."
4. What is the "feminine apologetic"?
    1. The phenomenon in which women apologize for engaging in traditionally masculine activities
    2. The societal expectation for women to balance masculine traits with feminine behavior to avoid negative responses (correct)
    3. The idea that femininity is more valued than masculinity in patriarchal societies
    4. The act of men adopting feminine traits without facing societal backlash
    5. Answer feedback: Gender policing is the practice of judging people's gender practices and reminding others of the rules of "doing gender." This practice reinforces gender order and reproduces gender inequality. See "Femininity" for more.
5. How does the social construction of gender contribute to gender inequality in a patriarchal society?
    1. By promoting gender equality and eliminating differences between men and women
    2. By placing greater value on characteristics associated with men and masculinity than those associated with women and femininity (correct)
    3. By ensuring that both men and women have equal rights and opportunities
    4. By preventing the influence of mass media and education on gender roles
    5. Answer feedback: Patriarchy refers to an environment where characteristics associated with men and masculinity have more power and authority. See "Social Construction of Gender" for more.

Chapter 10: Sexuality

1. Which are some outcomes of compulsory heterosexuality?
    1. Heterosexual relationships are commonly displayed in movies and television shows. (correct)
    2. Heterosexuality is assumed. (correct)
    3. Women are socialized to devalue and minimize their relationships with other women. (correct)
    4. The dominance of homosexuality in mainstream culture.
    5. Answer feedback: Heteronormativity is an ideology that privileges heterosexuality over other sexual orientations. Most visual and textual representations of relationships center on heterosexuality. See "Heteronormativity/Compulsory Heterosexuality" for more.

2. What contributes to the high rates of sexual assault and harrassment experienced by transgender individuals? Select all that apply.
    1. Lack of access to LGBTQIA+ friendly services (correct)
    2. Higher risk factors such as poverty, stigma, and marginalization (correct)
    3. Increased visibility and acceptance of LGBTQIA+ identities
    4. Lower rates of intimate partner violence within the LGBTQIA+ community
    5. Answer feedback: Homophobia is an extreme or irrational aversion to gay, lesbian, bisexual, or other LGBTQIA+ people, which often manifests as prejudice and bias. See "Sexual Violence" for more.
3. What is the male gaze, as described in feminist theory?
    1. The act of depicting men as sexual objects for the pleasure of the female viewer
    2. The perspective that presents and represents women as sexual objects for the pleasure of the male viewer (correct)
    3. The portrayal of individuals from a nonbinary, gender-fluid perspective
    4. The depiction of individuals in a way that challenges traditional gender roles
    5. Answer feedback: The male gaze is the act of depicting women from a masculine, heterosexual perspective that presents and represents women as sexual objects for the pleasure of the male viewer. See "Sexualities: Perspectives and Sociological Research" for more.
4. What is the definition of microaggressions?
    1. Intentional verbal, behavioral, or environmental slights toward stigmatized groups
    2. Unintentional negative attitudes toward marginalized groups in everyday interactions (correct)
    3. Hateful comments or harassment experienced only in specific settings, such as workplaces or schools
    4. Purposeful discrimination targeting individuals based on their race or sexuality
    5. Answer feedback: Commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental slights, whether intentional or unintentional, can communicate hostile or negative attitudes toward stigmatized groups. See "Inequalities Experienced through Interactions" for more.
5. What does sexual identity refer to?
    1. The enduring patterns of romantic or sexual attraction to persons of another sex or gender
    2. The nonsexual feelings, thoughts, attractions, and behaviors individuals have toward other people
    3. The social identity ascribed to individuals based on their gender and the gender of the object of their sexual desire (correct)
    4. The acknowledgment of the expansiveness of the LGBTQIA+ community as a whole
    5. Answer feedback: Sexuality includes personal and interpersonal expression of sexual desire, behavior, and identity. Sexual identity refers to the social identity ascribed to someone based on their sexual desires. See "Sexuality and Sexual Orientation" for more.
6. How do bills restricting discussions of sexuality in schools impact sexual socialization?
    1. They encourage open discussions about diverse family forms and identities.
    2. They limit representation of diverse family forms and recognition of a range of identities. (correct)
    3. They ensure sex education takes place at home.

4. They promote homosexuality in school curricula.
5. Answer feedback: Sexual socialization is a process of social interaction and communication in which individuals learn and internalize the sexuality associated with their gender role and biological sex. See "Learning the 'Rules' of Sexuality" for more.

Chapter 11: Race and Ethnicity

1. Why does Ibram X. Kendi argue that being antiracist is in the self-interest of the vast majority of Americans? Select all that apply.
    1. Being antiracist leads to personal financial gain.
    2. Antiracist policies benefit all Americans, including White Americans. (correct)
    3. Antiracist beliefs align with the values of Western democracies. (correct)
    4. Being antiracist is a moral obligation; it benefits individual morality. (correct)
    5. Answer feedback: Antiracism is an active process of changing systems, organizational structures, policies, and practices and attitudes so that power is redistributed and shared equitably. See "Activity: Understanding Antiracism" for more.
2. Which of the following are distinguishing characteristics of a minority group?
    1. Economic status and educational attainment
    2. Political affiliation and social status
    3. Unequal treatment and less power over their lives (correct)
    4. Cultural practices and religious beliefs
    5. Answer feedback: A minority group is singled out from the others in the society in which they live for differential and unequal treatment, and who therefore regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination. See "What Are Minority Groups?" for more.
3. How is ethnicity defined and how does it differ from race?
    1. Ethnicity refers to physical characteristics, while race refers to cultural traditions.
    2. Ethnicity is organized around shared culture, while race is based on biological traits. (correct)
    3. Ethnicity is a modern concept, while race has been a part of human history for centuries.
    4. Ethnicity is determined by self-identification, while race is determined by societal categorization.
    5. Answer feedback: Ethnicity refers to categories of difference organized around a shared language, culture, and faith tradition. See "What Is Ethnicity?" for more.
4. What is the primary argument against the validity of racial categories based on genetic research?
    1. Racial categories have been vigorously contested over time.
    2. There is far more genetic diversity within racial groups than between them. (correct)
    3. Formal classifications of racialized human differences are a much newer concept.
    4. Racial categories are unstable and constantly changing in response to social and historical contexts.
    5. Answer feedback: Race is a category of identity that ascribes social, cultural, and political meaning and consequence to physical characteristics. See "What Is Race?" for more.
5. Which example best illustrates White privilege according to McIntosh's observations?

1. White individuals are always assumed to be competent and capable in challenging situations.
2. White individuals are often expected to speak on behalf of their entire racial group.
3. White individuals are more likely to face racial profiling and harassment when shopping alone.
4. White children are frequently provided with educational materials that acknowledge the existence and contributions of their race. (correct)
5. Answer feedback: White privilege is an unearned set of social advantages available to White people. White people, or those perceived to be White, are favored over non-White people in some societies, including the United States. See "White Privilege."

Image Descriptions

Image description for Figure 1.8: Wheel of Power and Privilege

Overview

A multicolored wheel that visualizes an individual's or group's relationship to power and privilege. From a center that says power, two intersecting lines with arrows at each end point outwards and are labeled *marginalization*. There are 16 slices or segments in the wheel. Each segment represents categories of identities or social locations. Social locations near the center of the wheel experience more power. Social locations near the edge of the wheel experience more oppression and are more marginalized. Gray words outside the circle indicate forms of oppression and discrimination directed at people with those social identities.

Please keep in mind that as we try to describe the relationships between socially constructed power and identity, the categories we use can be imprecise, overlapping, and unstable.

Category descriptions and social identities/locations

- Race/Ethnicity: Black and Indigenous People of Color are the most marginalized identities, white passing is in the middle, and white is closest to the center of power. Racism is a form of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.
- Skin color: Dark is the most marginalized identity, medium shades in the middle, and white closest to the center of power. Colorism is a form of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.
- Indigeneity: Indigenous is the most marginalized identity, and Settlers are closest to the center of power. Colonialism is a form of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.
- Citizenship: Undocumented is the most marginalized, documented non-citizen is in the middle, and citizen is closest to the center of power. Nativism is a form of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.
- Language: Non-English speaking is the most marginalized identity, English speaking is in the middle, and native English is closest to the center of power. Xenophobia is a form of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.
- Geography: Rural/inner city is the most marginalized identity, suburb is in the middle, and city is closest to the center of power. Classism is a form of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.
- Social class: Poor/working poor is the most marginalized identity, middle class is in the middle, and wealthy is closest to the center of power. Classism also affects people in this category.
- Housing status: Houseless is the most marginalized identity, sheltered/renting is in the middle, and property owner is closest to the center of power. Classism also affects people in this category.

- Education: Elementary education is the most marginalized identity, high school is in the middle, and college or university is closest to the center of power. Credentialism is a form of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.
- Neurodiversity: Significant neurodivergence is the most marginalized identity, some neurodivergence is in the middle, and neurotypical is closest to the center of power. Ableism is a form of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.
- Physical and mental health: Vulnerable is the most marginalized identity, mostly stable is in the middle, and robust is closest to the center of power. Ableism also affects people in this category.
- Ability: Severe disability is the most marginalized identity, mild disability is in the middle, and able-bodied is closest to the center of power. Ableism also affects people in this category.
- Body size: Overweight or obese is the most marginalized identity, average is in the middle, and slim is closest to the center of power. Sizeism is a form of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.
- Gender identity: Trans/intersex/nonbinary is the most marginalized, cisgender women are in the middle, and cisgender men are closest to the center of power. Sexism and cisgenderism are forms of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.
- Sexual orientation: Lesbian, bi, pan/asexual are the most marginalized identities, gay men are in the middle, and straight is closest to the center of power. Heterosexism is a form of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.
- Marital Status: Single/nonmonogamous are the most marginalized identities, engaged/partnered are in the middle, and married is closest to the center of power. Heterosexism is a form of oppression marginalized people in this category experience.

Attributions and license

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Image description for Figure 1.17

A colorful inverted triangle shows Society at the top, then Culture, then Social Institutions (including Economics, Politics, Education, Family, and Work), then Social Inequality (including Race, Gender, and Class), then Groups, then Roles, then Socialization, then Interaction, and at the very bottom, Self. Text and highlighting on the side of the pyramid indicates that Society, Culture, Social Institutions, and some aspects of Social Inequality are studied at the macro level of analysis. Self, Interaction, Socialization, Roles, Groups, and some aspects of Social Inequality are studied at the micro level of analysis.

Description for "Levels of Analysis: The Micro-Macro Continuum" by Jennifer Puentes and Michaela Willi Hooper, Open Oregon Educational Resources, is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

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Image description for Figure 3.2

"The Scientific Process"

A circle of arrows around the words Scientific Process. The top arrow says Identify a Social Issue or Find a Research Topic and Ask a Question. This points to the next arrow, which says review existing literature and sources. Build a broad understanding of work previously conducted, identify gaps in understanding of the topic, and position your own research to build on prior knowledge. The next arrow says Formulate a Hypothesis: What are the general causes of the phenomenon you're wondering about? The next arrow says Select a Research Method and Design a Study: Select a research method appropriate to answer your question. Typically, your research question influences the method you will use. The next arrow says Collect data: Collect information on the topic using the research design. The next arrow says Analyze data: Organize and analyze the data after it is collected. If the analysis does or does not support the hypothesis, discuss implications for theory or policy. From here there is an arrow that goes back to Select a Research Method that says Based on findings, what new questions do you have? How can these new questions help develop future projects? Another arrow from Analyze Data continues the circle and says Report Findings: Share results at conferences and in academic journals. Before the conclusions of a study are widely accepted, the studies are often repeated. New research questions may emerge to inspire more research projects. This arrow points back to the top arrow where we started. There is also an attribution statement saying this image is CC BY 4.0 and created by Jennifer Puentes and Michaela Willi Hooper.

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Image description for Figure 3.11

A diagram shows three people. Two are seated in the same room at desks with devices that have buttons. One is labeled as the experimenter, who is writing on a piece of paper. This person convinces a participant, called a teacher, to administer what they think are shocks to someone in the room next door, called a learner. A wire runs from the teacher's desk to the learner's desk in the next room. The teacher believes they are giving painful shocks to the learner, but the learners are actors who only pretend to be in pain.

Return to Figure 3.11

Image description for Figure 7.12

Four images of prison spaces are presented side-by-side. The first is a bedroom with natural light from a large window, a wall painted green, a single bed with a wood headboard, digital control panels on the wall. The second is a cell, that, while smaller than the first, contains 4 bunks, a toilet, a small desk, and a couple of stools. It is painted cinderblock with overhead lighting. The third picture is a commons area with large windows, white walls, and circular tables with four chairs. The fourth picture is an outdoor area with people talking and exercising amongst grass and tables.

Return to Figure 7.12

Image description for Figure 9.19: Median Annual Earnings of Black, Hispanic, and White, Non-Hispanic Women and Men, 1967–2021

Line chart shows earnings of Black, Hispanic, and White, Non-Hispanic women and men from 1967–2021. Data about all demographic groups were not collected for all years.

Data table

Year	Black Women's Median Earnings	Black Men's Median Earnings	Hispanic Women's Median Earnings	Hispanic Men's Median Earnings	White, Non-Hispanic Women's Earnings	White, Non-Hispanic Men's Earnings
1967	$22,717	$33,975				
1968	$23,865	$36,369				
1969	$26,266	$38,524				
1970	$27,768	$39,763				
1971	$29,994	$39,894				
1972	$29,893	$42,403				
1973	$29,991	$43,070				
1974	$32,611	$43,319	$29,441	$44,148		
1975	$33,229	$44,570	$29,528	$43,220		
1976	$33,214	$43,903	$30,296	$44,576		
1977	$33,068	$42,657	$30,695	$44,062		
1978	$33,712	$47,177	$30,861	$44,849		
1979	$32,897	$44,117	$29,473	$43,216		
1980	$33,502	$42,528	$30,385	$42,562		
1981	$32,124	$42,244	$30,775	$42,223		
1982	$32,818	$41,937	$30,059	$41,610		
1983	$32,921	$41,905	$30,260	$41,947		
1984	$34,172	$41,434	$31,245	$42,191		
1985	$34,453	$42,089	$31,462	$41,058		
1986	$34,869	$43,400	$32,744	$39,794		
1987	$36,036	$43,750	$33,231	$39,886	$39,488	$62,170
1988	$36,517	$44,981	$32,779	$39,416	$39,997	$62,394
1989	$36,788	$43,213	$33,134	$38,838	$40,706	$63,400
1990	$36,372	$42,569	$31,597	$38,581	$41,043	$60,753

Year	Black Women's Median Earnings	Black Men's Median Earnings	Hispanic Women's Median Earnings	Hispanic Men's Median Earnings	White, Non-Hispanic Women's Earnings	White, Non-Hispanic Men's Earnings
1991	$36,418	$42,945	$31,601	$38,462	$41,036	$60,399
1992	$37,516	$42,514	$32,433	$37,093	$41,559	$60,213
1993	$36,689	$42,620	$31,028	$37,306	$41,442	$59,195
1994	$36,110	$43,059	$31,864	$36,842	$42,069	$59,195
1995	$36,597	$43,261	$30,422	$36,091	$41,905	$60,925
1996	$37,042	$45,548	$32,198	$36,322	$42,936	$61,139
1997	$37,207	$44,631	$32,037	$36,498	$43,758	$61,795
1998	$37,731	$45,065	$32,022	$37,126	$44,780	$62,865
1999	$39,518	$48,511	$31,621	$36,569	$44,750	$65,977
2000	$39,583	$47,490	$32,594	$37,515	$47,074	$65,077
2001	$40,797	$48,093	$32,971	$38,478	$47,250	$63,940
2002	$40,598	$47,447	$33,089	$39,222	$47,424	$64,151
2003	$39,819	$47,610	$33,023	$38,516	$47,337	$66,092
2004	$39,877	$44,987	$33,753	$38,327	$46,767	$65,481
2005	$41,266	$46,001	$33,675	$37,228	$47,443	$64,581
2006	$40,886	$46,837	$33,943	$39,147	$48,136	$65,225
2007	$40,619	$47,246	$34,859	$39,557	$48,133	$65,928
2008	$39,722	$47,065	$33,865	$39,052	$47,165	$64,642
2009	$40,285	$47,465	$34,407	$39,739	$48,777	$65,072
2010	$40,228	$45,883	$35,096	$39,325	$50,170	$64,707
2011	$40,444	$47,666	$35,035	$38,443	$48,695	$63,162
2012	$40,060	$45,533	$33,603	$38,118	$48,367	$62,108
2013	$39,712	$47,603	$35,721	$37,653	$48,227	$62,312
2014	$38,414	$46,646	$34,703	$39,562	$47,910	$63,544

Year	Black Women's Median Earnings	Black Men's Median Earnings	Hispanic Women's Median Earnings	Hispanic Men's Median Earnings	White, Non-Hispanic Women's Earnings	White, Non-Hispanic Men's Earnings
2015	$41,402	$47,006	$35,576	$40,795	$49,247	$65,418
2016	$40,899	$46,621	$35,589	$42,174	$51,643	$65,399
2017	$40,602	$46,505	$35,371	$41,563	$51,409	$66,770
2018	$41,039	$47,891	$36,188	$43,167	$52,211	$66,438
2019	$43,544	$48,372	$38,268	$44,000	$54,391	$69,105
2020	$45,248	$52,854	$40,550	$47,151	$56,364	$70,584
2021	$46,543	$50,187	$39,551	$45,822	$55,330	$69,235

Notes

Earnings are based on median annual earnings of full-time, year-round workers.

Data source

U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplements, 1960–2022; U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau. Interactive version at **https://www.dol.gov/agencies/wb/data/earnings/median-annual-sex-race-hispanic-ethnicity**

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Image description for Figure 9.20

Columns are shown for the years 1982, 1992, 2002, 2012, and 2022. Each column shows the number of men versus women in Congress. In 1982, there were 23 women and 512 men in Congress. In 1992, there were 32 women and 503 men. In 2002, there were 72 women and 463 men. In 2012, there were 90 women and 445 men. In 2022, there were 147 women and 388 men.

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Image description for Figure 9.21

The categories are no restrictions, partial restrictions, and full bans. Alaska, Colorado, New Mexico, Oregon, New Jersey, and Vermont have no restrictions. Idaho, South Dakota, Oklahoma, Texas, Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, Kentucky, West Virginia, Tennessee, and Alabama have full bans. The other states have partial restrictions, including after 6, 15, 18, 20, 22, or 24 weeks; after viability; or after the 3rd trimester. Data sources are the **Guttmacher Institute** and **US News and World Reports**. The image is licensed CC BY 4.0 and created by Michaela Willi Hooper and Jennifer Puentes for Open Oregon Educational Resources.

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Image description for Figure 10.8

Graph demonstrating respondents reports of their own organism frequency. Heterosexual men report organisms at a significantly higher rate compared to heterosexual women. Bisexual men and women report similar experiences with orgasm experiences. Lesbian women and gay men report similar experiences with orgasm frequency.

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Image description for Figure 10.17

Map shows the 50 states and the percent in support of same-sex marriage by the following ranges:

80%–85% in support

- Connecticut
- Maine

- Massachusetts
- New Hampshire
- Rhode Island
- Washington

70%–79% in support

- Alaska
- Arizona
- Colorado
- Illinois
- Iowa
- Maryland
- Minnesota
- Montana
- Nevada
- New Jersey
- New Mexico
- New York
- Ohio
- Oregon
- Vermont
- Virginia
- Wisconsin

60%–69% in support

- Delaware
- Florida
- Georgia
- Hawaii
- Idaho
- Indiana
- Kansas
- Louisiana
- Michigan
- Missouri
- Nebraska
- North Carolina
- North Dakota
- Pennsylvania

- South Dakota
- Texas
- Utah
- Wyoming

50%–59% in support

- Alabama
- Arkansas
- Kentucky
- Oklahoma
- South Carolina
- Tennessee

49% in support

- Mississippi

Data: **PPRI American Values Survey**
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Image description for Figure 10.19

Image shows bar chart of how people responded to the question "Should sex education in middle and high school include the following topics?" for both Middle and High School
Should sex education in middle and high school include the following topics?" Percent in support:

Topic	Middle School	High School
STDs and HIV	96%	99%
Puberty	98%	97%
Consent	93%	96%
Healthy Relationships	89%	96%
Abstinence	90%	92%
Birth Control Methods	82%	94%
Sexual Orientation	69%	79%

Note: Percentages based on representative sample of U.S. population.

Data source: 2018 survey by Gfk for Planned Parenthood as reported by SIECUS in "Survey says (again): People overwhelmingly support sex ed" (https://siecus.org/survey-says-people-support-sex-ed/)

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Transcripts

Transcript for Figure 1.7, The Sociological Imagination and Social Structures: Understanding Personal Troubles and Public Issues

[Narrator]: We all have imagination; it lets us be creative and envision life in a new way. However, in sociology, there is a concept known as the sociological imagination, introduced by C. Wright Mills in 1959, which urges us to understand the intricate relationship between self and society. The sociological imagination allows us to grasp history and biography and the connections between the two within society. This concept helps us distinguish between personal troubles and public issues, shedding light on how individual behavior is influenced by social structures.

Exercise as a Microcosm

Take exercise, for example. While it brings individual benefits such as health improvements and social engagement, it also serves a larger purpose in the social world. The environment and community surrounding an individual significantly impact their inclination towards exercise. The sociological imagination encourages us to view personal behaviors, like exercise, from multiple perspectives, considering the interplay between the individual and society.

From Personal Troubles to Public Issues: Obesity in the United States

Applying the sociological imagination to the public issue of obesity in the United States, we confront a tough question: Is it a personal trouble or a public issue? On a personal level, what and how much we eat seems within our control. However, social structures, such as family dynamics and societal norms, influence our choices.

For instance, family gatherings often involve unhealthy food choices, and social acceptance can impact an individual's decision to conform. Taking it a step further, broader social structures like food deserts, government subsidies, and biological drives contribute to the prevalence of obesity as a social problem. The sociological imagination prompts us to recognize the complex web of factors influencing individual behavior and how personal troubles can transform into significant public issues.

Social Structures and Their Role in Shaping Behavior

Beyond obesity, numerous issues labeled as personal troubles also have underlying social factors. Government policies, economic conditions, educational systems, and religious influences all contribute to shaping human behavior and societal problems. The sociological imagination serves as a tool to explore

how these social structures influence and sometimes exacerbate personal troubles, transforming them into public issues.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the sociological imagination is a powerful lens through which we can examine the interplay between individual lives and the broader social context. By understanding the connections between personal troubles and public issues, we gain insights into how social structures shape human behavior and contribute to the emergence of societal problems. This perspective encourages a nuanced understanding that goes beyond attributing issues solely to personal choices, acknowledging the complex web of societal influences at play.

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Transcript for Figure 1.20, Profile: Dr. Peter L. Berger (Social Construction of Reality)

I think a good sociologist is the kind of person who looks through keyholes and reads other people's mail.

I discovered sociology by mistake. What mainly drew me in was the endless curiosity about what makes people tick and that evidently goes back to my early childhood. I must have been about five years old and I got a wonderful electric train. I never turned down the electricity – I lay on my belly and talked to imaginary people in the train. Well, I've done that ever since.

I've always been interested in religion, so focusing on the sociology of religion was a natural way to go. When I started out as a sociologist, most people believed that modernity leads to secularization. It doesn't. It creates many different options for world views, values – including religious values. Relativism and fundamentalism are seemingly opposite, but they're very similar. They are attempts to regain certainty. The relativist who says there is no truth, everything goes, is no longer full of anxiety. The fundamentalist thinks he knows what is true. That's not some mysterious development; it can be sociologically explained by the structures of modern society.

The book which I've become best known for is *The Social Construction of Reality* and that became our redefinition of sociology of knowledge. It's not just theoreticians who are interesting to analyze in terms of their social context, but everybody. Some said after that they read the book they saw the world differently, and I can understand that. I saw the world differently once these ideas became clear to me.

[Music.]

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Transcript for Figure 1.21, The Need for Long-acting HIV Prevention Methods – Trailer

The audio transcript highlights the challenges faced by women in rural areas, shedding light on issues like sexual assault, power dynamics, and the complexities surrounding healthcare, particularly HIV.

[Speaker 1]: In rural areas, young girls and women often find themselves vulnerable, with men exerting power over them. Sadly, many victims may not even recognize or acknowledge that they've been raped.

[Speaker 2]: [Inaudible] have a young husband in second room, and I signed it see a new table…

[Narrator]: The narrative touches on the complexities of relationships, emphasizing the difficulties faced by women in rural settings.

[Speaker 3]: [Inaudible] it is tough for a young girl. Women have power over girls, but young girls in the rural areas do not realize that they have been raped.

[Narrator]: The dialogue delves into the challenges of reporting such incidents, addressing the lack of awareness and acknowledgment in rural communities.

[Speaker 4]: They will always go for family planning, but they will not use a condom…

[Narrator]: The discussion shifts towards reproductive health and the choices made by young girls in these areas, highlighting the prevalence of unprotected sex.

[Speaker 5]: [Inaudible] they will not use condom.

[Narrator]: The conversation turns towards the harsh realities of HIV in these communities, discussing the preference for family planning over protecting against sexually transmitted infections.

[Speaker 6]: I don't trust him that much, but some of them are good…

[Narrator]: The narrative introduces skepticism towards private hospitals, expressing concerns about the motives behind certain medical practices.

[Speaker 7]: …some they want to finish their stock, so we'll just give you anything that they can get the money.

[Narrator]: The discussion extends to the challenges faced by families dealing with HIV, including issues of medication adherence and the strain on caregivers.

[Speaker 8]: …she drinks a lot and forgets about the pills…

[Narrator]: The narrative highlights the struggles of families, emphasizing the responsibility placed on caregivers in ensuring medication adherence.

[Speaker 9]: …we have to be behind her every day, reminding her to take her pills.

[Narrator]: The conversation concludes with a poignant reflection on the impact of HIV on families and communities, urging for awareness and support.

[Music.]

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Transcript for Figure 2.9, What is Marxism? (Karl Marx + Super Mario Bros.) – 8-Bit Philosophy

[Narrator]: Consider, my dear viewers, a world. A world without money, without class divisions, where everyone gives according to their abilities and takes according to their needs. Sounds pretty sweet, no? To German poet and philosopher Karl Marx, such a Communist utopia was not only possible, it was inevitable – or what he called "the march of history."

Though deeply influenced by Hegel, who proposed that history develops through the abstract concept of "World Spirit," Marx believed that it is not conflict of ideas that propels history, but rather, conflict of our relation to material goods, that will bring history to its end- specifically, our working conditions. Marx calls this historical process "Dialectical Materialism."

Initially, humanity was concerned only with the most basic acts of our species- producing for personal survival. But as the population multiplied, "economic systems" were established to address the needs of all. And with economics, an individual's relationship to the products they create changes – for one is no longer producing for their immediate needs. They are producing for others.

Fast forward to the industrial revolution where mankind created mechanisms to fulfill the needs of many with unprecedented efficiency. These mechanisms, or "capital," are owned by individuals leading to enormous concentrations of wealth. And for the tired worker who must operate these machines, there is no getting ahead. For in order for the capitalist to maximize profit, he must pay the workers little more than is necessary to survive.

To Marx, this economic system of capitalism thrives on exploitation and creates widespread unhappiness through what he calls "alienation." For starters, I am alienated from the fruits of my own labor. If I create a turnip, it will be sold to another, and in exchange I will be paid a wage and become as much of a commodity as the thing I produce. Thus, I am removed from my work. I do not see MYSELF in my labor.

Capitalism also alienates us from each other. For the workers to produce efficiently, the capitalist tells them they are in constant competition for their job, thereby turning our fellow man into an adversary, rather than an ally. Furthermore, capitalism alienates us from our very nature. Creating is a great source of satisfaction for our species. But because we are forced to make things that have no personal investment in, our lives become a burden.

As time goes on, and industrial powers become increasingly concentrated among a select elite, the gap between the working class and the capitalists will only become wider. To Marx, this gap will eventually become so pronounced that the workers, in their profound frustration, will rise up and overthrow the oppression of the few and usher in a new society – a society in which there is no private property, there

are no class divisions, where peoples' labor is held for the common good and where all work according to their ability. And that, my friends, is Communism.

Even today, Marxism is one of the most powerful ideologies in the world. And to some, the ushering in of the Marxist utopia still lies in the not-too-distant future.

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Transcript for Figure 2.13, How Does It Feel to Be a Problem?

An animated video featuring the writing of W.E.B. DeBois from his article, "Strivings of the Negro People," published in 1897.

[Narrator]: Between me and the other world, there is ever an unasked question: unasked by some through feelings of delicacy; by others, through the difficulty of rightly framing it. Instead of saying directly, "How does it feel to be a problem?" They say, "I know an excellent colored man in my town," or, "Do not these Southern outrages make your blood boil?" At these, I smile, or reduce the boiling to a simmer, as the occasion may require.

To the real question, "How does it feel to be a problem?" I answer seldom a word. And yet, being a problem is a strange experience—it dawned upon me with a certain suddenness that I was different from the others, shut out from their world by a vast veil, for the world I longed for, and all its dazzling opportunities, were theirs, not mine.

Why did God make me an outcast and a stranger in mine own house? It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others. One feels his two-ness—an American, a Negro. Two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.

The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife—this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self. In the days of bondage, they thought to see in one divine event the end of all doubt and disappointment. Slavery was, indeed, the sum of all villainies, the cause of all sorrow, the root of all prejudice. Emancipation was the key to a promised land of sweeter beauty than ever stretched before the eyes of wearied Israelites.

Years have passed away — ten, twenty, thirty. And yet the freedman has not yet found in freedom his promised land. Merely a stern concrete test of the underlying principles of the great republic is the Negro problem, and the spiritual striving of the freedmen's sons is the travail of souls whose burden is almost beyond the measure of their strength but who bear it in the name of an historic race, in the name of this, the land of their fathers' fathers, and in the name of human opportunity.

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Transcript for Figure 2.17, On Intersectionality in Feminism and Pizza | Akilah Obviously

[Akilah]: Hi YouTube, it's Akilah, obviously, and today I want to talk about an issue that has been neglected on YouTube and in pop culture, specifically when we talk about people like Patty Arquette and her Oscar speech and Nellie Andreeva at Deadline who thinks diversity is overtaking Hollywood and there's no roles for white people anywhere. So today, we're going to talk about intersectionality and feminism, and what better way to tackle an issue this big than to talk about pizza.

It's a little cheesy. Say you're born a cheese pizza, but the world is made for burgers, right? You can go anywhere and get a burger. Burgers are the go-to fast food; pretty much everything in the world is made to serve burgers. So you're trying to say, "Hey, pizza's just as good as burgers. It's just as satisfying as burgers. Pizza deserves the same rights as burgers," and that's all fine and good.

Then there's pizzas like me, deluxe pizzas, who happen to have different toppings and features than cheese pizzas and have their own problems to face because they're pizzas and have different toppings—and we're like, "What about us?" Cheese pizzas are by far the most celebrated pizzas in society, right? Like if you go anywhere on the menu, there's gonna be a cheese pizza in any facet of society, whether that's art, media, education, finance, history—cheese pizzas are the only pizzas that are ever mentioned. You know cheese pizza is so celebrated that there are snacks that celebrate that flavor, like Combos and Pringles and even bagel bites. Cheese pizza is highly visible, meanwhile, this is not the case for deluxe pizzas, alright? Our features are often seen by the untrained eye as extra weight and too much of a problem, and we're left to crumble because the crust does not support us. It is much more difficult to be a deluxe pizza in a burger world.

So when deluxe pizzas found out that cheese pizzas wanted to join forces and fight for the right to all pizzas, they were pumped until they found out that all the discussion about pizzas would be about cheese pizzas exclusively. In fact, cheese pizzas were like, "Deluxe pizza, we're gonna get to your rights, but only after we've achieved ours first."

And so now there are tons of videos and articles that talk about how cheese pizza is tired of being told by burgers to shave their crust and how cheese pizzas getting called all these slurs because of what they choose to put in their pie hole. Deluxe pizzas would love the privilege to care about being so menial.

Historically, when a deluxe pizza rises through the pop culture ranks and uses their platform to promote pizza rights, cheese pizzas will shame them and then turn around and say, "Look at this cheese pizza, she's got the right idea," even when she says the exact same thing that the deluxe pizza has been saying all along. Deluxe pizzas' unique features are often celebrated when they occur unnaturally on cheese pizzas; in fact, when they occur naturally on deluxe pizza, they're often shamed. "Look how big your sausages are. Why are your peppers so curly???"

And so deluxe pizzas are unfortunately a little jaded. They've fallen to room temperature waiting for us to fight for their rights when they've been fighting for cheese pizza rights all along. They've been too strong for too long. So how do we solve this problem? You know, I think it's called intersectionality. When we talk about pizza rights, we need to be talking about all pizzas, not just cheese pizzas that are deemed socially acceptable and worthy of saving and worthy of having a place in popular culture. We need to be talking about pizzas who are sexually attracted to other pizzas, pizzas who aren't sexually attractive, pizzas who identify as burgers, and pizzas with different toppings because as great as it is to uplift cheese pizzas, the world could use a lot more flavor. Thank you for watching. I'll see you soon with another video. Bye.

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Transcript for Figure 2.18, Critical race theory: Experts break down what it actually means

[Kendall Thomas, Co-Editor of "Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings That Formed the Movement"]: The whole purpose of Critical Race Theory is to provide Americans with a way to understand the legacy of racism, even though those stories sometimes hurt.

[Brian Kilmeade, *Fox & Friends* host]: It's anti-American training that vilifies White people and demands they apologize.

[Meghan Dougherty, Instructional Coach in Social Studies]: The best learning for students about social studies and our democracy and our country is the learning where students can really grapple with the issues and really come to a deeper understanding of how our past informed our present.

[Marsha Blackburn, Senator (R-Tennessee)]: All of this revisionist, woke curriculum, you are not going to do this to our children.

[Narrator]: Teachers across the country are caught in the middle of the latest flashpoint in America's culture war — Critical Race Theory. So what exactly is it and why is there a push to ban it in schools?

[Thomas]: Critical Race Theory is a body of ideas and a set of approaches to understanding the history and the present of American society that looks at the ways in which racial unfairness have been woven into the fabric of our institutions.

[Narrator]: In other words, Critical Race Theory, or CRT for short, is a legal academic framework centered on the idea that racism is systemic. It first started to coalesce in the 1970s when Black, Hispanic, and Asian legal scholars were researching the persistence of inequality, despite the landmark legal victories of the Civil Rights era.

[Thomas]: The legal scholars undertook a set of analyses and investigations that were aimed at trying to make sense of the puzzling persistence of racism in our legal system, in our political system, in our economy.

[Narrator]: CRT has been studied in fields like sociology, economics, and political science. It's been used to examine issues such as housing and educational segregation, unconscious bias, and criminal justice reform.

[Edmund Fong, Associate Professor of Ethnic Studies at the University of Utah]: Contrary to what often critics portray as sort of judging people intrinsically as being racist or not or holding people responsible for, you know, slavery in the past, it is actually to open up a conversation of how we all inherit and live in a society sort of beyond our choosing, right? We didn't choose where we were born or what racial group we were part of. And yet, we have this common history. How do we understand that history? What does it mean for us? Those are the sorts of questions that Critical Race Theorists were trying to grapple with.

[Crowd]: [Chanting] George Floyd!

[Narrator]: The racial reckoning spurred by the police killing of George Floyd brought the decades-old framework back into the spotlight as some schools sought to implement reforms that better address race in classrooms.

[Fong]: I think the thing that Critical Race Theory would add to that conversation is that we not sort of confine that horrific example to Derek Chauvin, but to think about how, well, there were other law-enforcement officers present, including officers of color, who stood idly by. And so that pushes us to think about, you know, this phenomenon as not simply one of, you know, racism by Whites against Blacks, right? I mean, it makes us think more critically, more engaged, more seriously around, "Well, why do these practices happen?"

[Narrator]: The push against CRT gained steam under former President Trump when he directed federal agencies to end any diversity trainings related to Critical Race Theory. Though ultimately blocked on First Amendment grounds and rescinded by President Biden, the fight over CRT at the state level is still in full effect.

[Fong]: The focus on CRT is a way to latch on to a concept that very few people sort of really understand, which sounds kind of scary perhaps to someone not, you know, trained in what it means, and latch on to that as a kind of football in this ongoing fight over, you know, the future of this country with regard to racism.

[Narrator]: As of mid-June 2021, 21 states have introduced bills attempting to restrict the teaching of Critical Race Theory and/or impose limits on how race is discussed inside the classroom. And those limits are often vague.

[Fong]: And the instructors, educators, especially at the K-12 level, will just not go there, will not run the risk of upsetting parents or, you know, being misunderstood or drawing the ire of, you know, lawmakers.

[Narrator]: In Texas, for instance, House Bill 3979 says teachers must explore current events from multiple positions without giving "deference to any one perspective."

[Dougherty]: There's language in this bill, like, "Teachers need to present a balanced perspective on current events," for instance. You know, they have to do their due diligence to present multiple viewpoints. But what happens if they're talking about an issue in the classroom and they try to present multiple viewpoints, but, you know, that student comes home and tells their parent about the lesson that day and the

parent thinks, "They didn't do a good-enough job of presenting this viewpoint." So who decides when the teacher has done an adequate job of presenting multiple perspectives on an issue?

It saddens me and disappoints me that instead of really embracing this opportunity to confront our nation's past and to tell authentic and more accurate narratives about experiences, you know, diverse people in this country, that we're looking to sweep it under the rug. We're looking to erase it even further from our memories.

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Transcript for Figure 3.1, Rosemary: A Life Disrupted

[Rosemary]: My name is Rosemary, and I was 14 when I was evicted from my home. I was in math class when a teacher comes into the classroom and tells me that my mom is here to pick me up. My mom looked really concerned, worried actually. She told me that the landlord came in and told her that she has to leave the apartment right now. I was really confused. I couldn't imagine not having somewhere to sleep at night. And… I felt… scared.

We took whatever we could take, that was necessary. Clothing, shoes, that was pretty much it, really. The rest we just took it to a storage unit, and seeing all my stuff just packed up in there, it was kind of like saying goodbye to part of me, in a way. We were waiting to be called for, but it was so late at night, and they couldn't attend to everyone. There were so many families. There were like babies, there were toddlers. And, I couldn't imagine that so many families were here.

When we were on our way to the shelter, I remember actually being on the bus and thinking how much my life is gonna change. Am I gonna still be able to go to school on time? Like, how's it gonna work? I had so many questions. And, I was just thinking, you know like, we're gonna get through this, we'll find an apartment soon, and we'll work it out. But… I was homeless for two years.

I didn't really tell anyone in my high school that I was homeless. I tried my very best to make it seem like I was normal, having a normal life. But, I just kind of slowly gave up on school. I remember just, uh, not really caring. I was just like, what's the point? But there was a guidance counselor at my school. She wanted to know what was wrong. I told her that I'd been hiding something from her. That was the reason why I was doing so bad in my classes. And, I told her that I was evicted from my home and that I was living in a shelter for the past year.

And she looked at me like she wanted to give me a hug. And when I told her, I felt like, I felt this relief. And that's how I slowly was able to get back on track.

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Transcript for Figure 3.4, How Ice Cream Kills! Correlation vs. Causation

[Narrator]: Like most people, I enjoy a tasty scoop of ice cream, especially Oreo blizzards. But what few people realize is how dangerous a treat ice cream has become. First, there's the issue of obesity. Second, there are higher crime rates. Third, there's the loss of life due to a rise in the number of drowning deaths. And finally, as more ice cream is sold, there's an increase in forest fires. Given these indisputable facts, I need you to support my vision of an ice cream-free world.

While banning ice cream trucks from entering your neighborhood may sound far-fetched, when it comes to problem-solving, a common issue is misunderstanding the difference between correlation and causation. This misunderstanding can influence our decisions, sometimes with serious consequences that ripple throughout a community.

Correlation is when two things are related but one does not cause the other. Usually, this means the two are in some way related to a third factor, but not always. If you have a big enough pile of data, you can find plenty of relationships that are purely coincidental, like the strong relationship between the sale of margarine and divorce rates in the state of Maine.

With the sale of ice cream, the third factor is whether when it is hot outside, people buy more ice cream. They are more likely to go for a swim, and there's a general increase in people out and about enjoying the weather, helping improve conditions for crime to take place, as well as the dry conditions associated with forest fires.

A note of caution: there is a growing trend in our digital world called data dredging. This is using analytics to sift through mountains of data, hoping to find useful relationships. Instead of a problem in search of a solution, dredging data is a solution looking to find a problem.

All of what I've just discussed about correlations does not mean that finding a correlation is without value. In fact, correlations are a vital part of helping us move to the next step: the discovery of causation.

Unlike correlation, causation is when you can claim that one thing causes another thing to happen. In order to make this claim, you need to be able to demonstrate an actual cause-and-effect relationship, preferably a strong relationship. An example most of us are familiar with is the pharmaceutical industry. In order to make the claim that a particular drug causes a certain effect, such as lowering your cholesterol or growing hair, the FDA requires companies to support those claims, putting the drug through a four-phase, twelve-step process that takes approximately 12 years.

This process uses control groups and clinical trials to test the drug, making sure that X causes Y and that the drug is safe. The acceptable error rate can go as high as 5% for some drugs, meaning that the clinical trials prove that there's a 95% chance the drug does what it claims. Drugs with serious health implications, such as those used to treat a heart condition, are held to an even stricter standard, requiring proof up to 99% effectiveness.

Back to ice cream. What about ice cream and obesity? While it may seem like common sense that it does cause obesity, the fact is that we don't yet know the true strength of the relationship. If we look at the sale of ice cream, there's actually an inverse relationship with weight. People gain weight in the winter when sales are low and lose weight in the warm summer months when more ice cream is being consumed. This might suggest ice cream is the new diet food.

Luckily, you now know to be cautious of drawing conclusions of causation from correlation. Instead, recent research on the subject has been looking at different types of sugars used in making a wide range of sweet foods. What scientists have discovered is that the hypothalamus, which is an area of the brain that regulates the human appetite, reacts differently when we consume food with fructose instead of glucose. This has researchers speculating that eating high fructose foods, such as ice cream, may result in people not feeling full, so they continue to eat.

This theory proves difficult, however, when we start considering apples and other natural fruits also contain fructose, not just ice cream and chocolate cake. As you can see, causation is quite a bit different than correlation. Finding correlations is easy; proving causation is hard. No wonder it takes 12 years just to prove that a pill causes hair to grow.

The bottom line is, in boardrooms and coffee shops everywhere you go, you will hear claims that X causes Y—from politics to the weather, from the stock market to personal relationships. It is human nature to try and explain things, to create stories that make sense. Just keep in mind, as you hear a claim of what causes what, that correlation is not causation.

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Transcript for Figure 3.7, Decolonizing Methodologies: Can relational research be a basis for renewed relationships?

[Dr. Shawn Wilson, Gnibi College Indigenous Australian Peoples, Southern Cross University]: There is a need to decolonize from, say, the processes and the systems that really attacked indigenous ways of knowing and did their best to not just have a physical genocide of Aboriginal people but really attempted to kill Aboriginal ways of thinking and Aboriginal ways of doing things, Aboriginal ways of being. So, we have to recover from that, but it's not just enough to recover from the sickness that was promoted by that; we have to go beyond so that we can flourish and become healthy and beautiful people again.

[Dr. Monica E. Mulrennan, Dept. of Geography, Planning, and Environment at Concordia University]: I think we need to understand that research is very much implicated in the colonial project, that it has been part of the marginalization, the oppression, the dispossession of indigenous people, and we need to come to terms with that. But at the same time, research is an opportunity for the renewal of relationships,

and in the context of the United Nations Declaration on Indigenous Peoples and more recently the Truth and Reconciliation Commission findings, there is this opportunity to really engage research as part of the reconciliation process.

How do we make research a space for meaningful encounters and engagements?

[Mulrennan]: It really comes down to three core principles: that the research be community defined, that the research process itself be collaborative, and that the outcomes of the research be meaningful to the community.

[Wilson]: I think if you're viewing research as a way of engaging with the community, as a way of promoting change in the community to make our lives beautiful, then we have to include everyone in that.

So, an analogy I often make is that I view myself as a feminist, even though I'm obviously not a woman. Being a feminist doesn't mean that I know the experience of what it means to be a woman, but I can align with the philosophy, align with some of the goals. So, I try to use the word "indigenous" now to describe the philosophy, the beliefs that I'm trying to promote in recognition that non-indigenous people have the Earth and have the same beliefs, often have the same goals.

[Mulrennan]: I love a quotation I came across a few years ago from an indigenous geographer, and she indicated that if we assume we're guests, we will be welcome, but if we assume we'll be welcome, we're no longer guests. And it seems to me that that captures really the core message that there is a space for non-indigenous scholars, but I think it has to be on the terms of the community and indigenous peoples more broadly.

How can we enhance the chain and distribution of research benefits?

[Wilson]: If we can take a strengths-based approach to the research that we're doing and start to think of our Aboriginality or indigeneity, darkness as a protective factor rather than something that is another risk factor, then it changes the whole focus of how we do research. And I think if we start to engage in community research that looks for community strengths and how do I engage these community strengths, how do we use these strengths to build even stronger communities, then it shifts the whole focus away from that these are the problems with communities, to these are our potential, this is how we can do things that are going to make our communities even better, work with those strengths.

[Mulrennan]: As a geographer who has training in Earth Sciences, I think what's really worked well for me has been the fact that my interests align with indigenous communities around a shared interest in the protection of their lands and seas. So, my training and my emphasis have not been in studying indigenous cultures and indigenous societies but in working with them to protect traditional lands and their institutions of stewardship, and knowledge, and tenure, and practice.

[Wilson]: If we want to promote real change, I think we need to recognize our own subjectivity and work with it. So, I always say that if research doesn't change you as a person, then you're not doing it right.

[Music.]

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Transcript for Figure 3.8, Participatory Action Research

[Shirah Hassan, Just Practice]: Participatory action research is really important for organizations to consider because it allows communities to build collectively with each other to simultaneously do healing and change work while they're also doing research and because it puts the power and control in the hands of the community so that they can identify what's important, when it's important, what we need to get at, how we want to get it, who we want at the table, and what we're going to do with the data afterwards. Participatory action research is important for communities because it changes our lives as opposed to academic research which may have a long-term effect, but it will have an effect that's far away from us. Participatory action research has an effect on us while we're doing it; you're holding the data and all of the results in the palm of your hands so if you have a finding you can make an immediate change – you can take an immediate step – and you don't have to wait years for the results to come in from an outside source. You can start seeing trends and start responding to those trends in real-time.

Participatory action research allows groups to reframe language, and it also allows groups to control language, so for example one thing that academic research does really well is name phenomenon. So they'll see data piling up in one direction and then they'll name that a certain way. When you're doing your own research and when a community is doing their own research, you do that so when you see a phenomenon you can begin to label something. That allows you to control the conversation and allows you to make change in your community. It allows you to change the tone of how entire conversations happen in your city or in your town or in your organization, because you can start to control how these ideas are talked about and thought about.

So one example of participatory action research that had just unbelievable impact was the research that Young Women's Empowerment Project did in 2009 and in 2012. Their 2009 report was called "Girls Do What We Have to Do to Survive" and their 2012 report was called "Bad Encounter Line," and they went back and did the second report as a way of deepening the first. Their findings, one of the findings of many, was that institutions were turning young people in the sex trade away and were denying them help and they wanted to understand more about why young people were being turned away and denied help and so they started a bad encounter line where young people could report experiences of being turned away and denied help. The culmination of those reports has fed so many other larger institutions' data that has never been had before, so we got to see the report submitted to the Universal Periodic Review of the United Nations and the United Nations found that the United States was negligent in its treatment of people in the sex trade and that was a result of the data that young people ages 12 to 24 in the city of Chicago with current or former experience in the sex trade did and sent it to the United Nations so that was a huge impact. Another impact from that report was that they were able to teach other people how to do participatory action research and start their own encounter lines so we know of one encounter line that's happening in Seattle where they're tracking young people turned away from help in Seattle, we know of another one in Chicago that got turned into the police encounter line that's being done by We Charge Genocide, so we were able to develop a tool that was transferable.

Another way that the study had impact was that it was presented to the Board of Amnesty International when they were in a long-term decision-making struggle about what their international policy on the sex trade was going to be, and this study really helped clarify a lot of key points for them and influenced their decision. We also saw it published in *The New York Times*, we saw it on national public radio and all of a sudden the voices of young people in the sex trade and street economy, who are between the ages of 12 and 24, who are all youth of color, who are queer and trans, were on National Public Radio and finding themselves in the *Sunday Times*, and it was this unbelievable experience that you can't get from an academic paper.

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Transcript for Figure 3.12, Principles and Guidelines for Ethical Research and Evaluation in Development

[Narrator]: Welcome to this short film about the principles for ethical research and evaluation in international development. These principles have been developed by ACFID, the Australian Centre for International Development, and the Research for Development Impact Network.

Shortly, you will learn about the four principles. Each principle outlines important ethical questions to think about before and while doing research and evaluation in the field.

Let's begin. Principle one is respect for human beings. In research terms, this means making sure each and every person involved in the research participates by choice and their rights and cultures are respected.

Principle two is beneficence. Beneficence means that everyone involved in the research gets something positive out of it, not just the researcher. The other important side of beneficence is that the research must not do harm or pose significant risk to anyone, including the researcher. Any risks of harm should be identified early and managed appropriately.

Principle three is research merit and integrity. Research merit and integrity mean that researchers need to be experienced and competent. Also, the research must be well designed, carefully planned, and the process outcomes and benefits of the research are clear to all involved.

Principle four is justice. In this context, justice refers to making sure that the research is fair and inclusive. It means making sure that no section of a community or population is deliberately left out. This includes children, people with disabilities, marginalized groups, and people who face language or literacy barriers.

Now you've learned a bit about the four principles for ethical research and evaluation in international development. These principles go hand in hand with guidelines. These guidelines offer some ideas and techniques you can use when planning research. They also help your organization to be ready, adaptable,

and flexible when doing research in the field so when the unexpected happens, you can stick to ethical practice at all times. For more information, **visit the website**.

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Transcript for Figure 4.4, Feminine Beauty: A social construct?

[Harry Shearer, Narrator]: The French existentialist writer Simone de Beauvoir famously declares in her book *The Second Sex* that a woman isn't born a woman; rather, she becomes one.

She means by this that there is no way women have to be, no given femininity, no ideal to which all women should conform. There's biology, of course, and as a result women's experiences tend to be very different from men's. But what it is to be a woman is, she believes, socially constructed and largely by males at that. It is through other people's expectations and assumptions that a woman becomes feminine.

Women, de Beauvoir argues, are expected to strive after beauty – a beauty that has been defined by men's view of what they would like women to be. A view that often denies their capacity for action and thought. There have been different ideals of feminine beauty at different times, in different places, but the constant throughout history is that women have been encouraged to be passive objects, their bodies emphasized and displayed. Women are supposed to use artifice to make themselves ornamental, or, as de Beauvoir saw it, disguise more animal aspects of their body which men found unacceptable. Women's clothes and shoes frequently constrain their movement. Their beauty regimes take over their lives and drain their finances. They're controlled by other people's visions of what they should look like and how they should live.

For young women in particular the pressure to become an object to the male gaze, to be conventionally beautiful, to diet, to worry about makeup and jewelry, is intense but it is still, according to de Beauvoir, resistible. True to her existentialism she believes that women are fundamentally free to reject male stereotypes of beauty and sexual attractiveness and to become more equal as a result.

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Transcript for Figure 5.6, Social Networks and Getting a Job: Mark Granovetter

[Mark Granovetter, Stanford University]: People think social networks are a new idea, a new thing to study. And in fact, anthropologists started talking about social networks probably in the 1930s, and mathematicians were talking about them in the 1950s, and sociologists started picking up on social networks in the 1960s. So I wanted to do a dissertation that showed how interesting and important social networks were. It seemed to me that one of the biggest sources of inequality in our society, in almost any modern industrial society, is differences in the rewards to different jobs people have. So if you could show that people found their jobs through social networks, then that would mean that social networks were a big part of where inequality is coming from.

Instead of studying, as I wanted to, men and women, and blue-collar and white-collar workers, I only studied male professional, technical, and managerial workers, because that was manageable, and it was already as many people as I could possibly handle. Professional, technical, and managerial workers are what we might call higher white-collar workers, doctors and lawyers and teachers and professors and managers and engineers and scientists and people who do technical work. So I found directories for the city of Newton, and from these directories, I chose a sample of people who had recently changed from one job to another. Almost every single person either let me into their house and was interviewed right on the spot or said, well, you know, we're in the middle of dinner or something, but come back on Saturday.

So I ended up with a hundred people who fit the sample criteria that they'd changed jobs recently. And then once I had interviewed those people and had some sense of what was going on, then I could write a survey instrument that I mailed out to another couple of hundred people, and I got 182 of those back. A lot of times when people would tell me that they found their job through someone they knew, I would say to them, oh, so you found the job through a friend. And over and over again, people would correct me and say, no, no, no, not a friend, just an acquaintance, just an acquaintance. When you hang around with your best friends, they tend to know each other, and you form a clique with them, and their best friends are kind of the same as your best friends.

So if you want new information, if you want to be clued in on the latest styles or trends or information, then you ought to go to your weak ties, your seventh and eighth best friends. They're in different circles from your circle, and they connect you to those other circles. In a sense, they are your windows on the world. Most of the people who changed jobs in my study were changing them voluntarily. So that almost never happens unless people think the new job is a better job. If they really wanted information about new jobs, about jobs they weren't going to hear about any other way, they were finding it through acquaintances and not through their close friends. The majority of these workers had found their jobs through personal contact. It was 56%.

And what was really interesting to me was that more than three quarters, just a bit more than 75%, of those in the highest income categories had found their jobs through personal contact. So this effect is much stronger among people who are at the top of the stratification hierarchy. So this meant to me that social networks were particularly important in channeling people into the best jobs that the economy had to offer. It turned out that people who had been in one job for a very long time, in a place where other people had been in a job for a very long time, had a lot of trouble changing jobs when they had to, because they just didn't know people in other companies.

People on the other hand, at the bottom end, who would change their job every few months, they weren't in those jobs long enough to really make contacts that mattered. The people whose average job tenures was two to five years were more likely to find new jobs through weak ties than people whose average job tenure was very long or very short. Employers prefer to hire through social networks. They trust the information better about people that they're going to hire, and that's why they go through current employees. People use the internet for job searches. We have LinkedIn. We have all kinds of services. And so people may wonder, how can any of this still be relevant? People will still continue to trust people they know better to find out about places they might work and about employees they might hire than they will some impersonal source that is online.

But one of the consequences of that is that if there is a group that has very poor representation in an occupation or in some sector of the labor market, then it's going to be hard for that group to break in. One way that social policy can be efficient as well as – not just effective but even efficient – is if it makes use of natural social network processes that people are going to engage in anyway. So, if white males can use social networks to bring more white males into their firms, into their industries, into their professions, then they have an unfair advantage. Because, if there are no such people who are black or Asian or some other ethnic or racial group who are already in the company then there is a disadvantage there that has nothing to do with qualifications. And that just has to do with the history of why those people aren't in there in the first place. Affirmative action can prime the pump by putting a small number, however many people into that segment of the labor market who are in this underrepresented group. And once those people are there, they can then do what comes naturally to them, which is to bring the people they know into the company in the way that everyone else does.

[Music.]

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Transcript for Figure 6.7, Cultural Capital

[Narrator]: Cultural capital is a theory developed by French theorist Pierre Bourdieu and is the cultural knowledge that serves as currency that helps us navigate culture and alters our experiences and the opportunities available to us. While cultural capital can be material objects such as clothing or what car you drive, Bourdieu also focused on the symbolic elements that embodied cultural capital, such as tastes, manners, skills, and credentials that one receives or earns. Cultural capital really isn't about economics or how much money you have, but it can be exchanged for money, and the crazy thing is this money can help you earn more cultural capital. According to Bourdieu, cultural capital can be a source of social

inequality, too. It's hard for those who are poor or who are part of the working class to gain the types of cultural capital that are valued in society.

For example, having an education and earning a degree is a very important piece of cultural capital. Let's say a student in poverty has difficulty finding time to study because he works evenings to help support his low-income family. This leads to poor performance due to his lack of studying, which results in lower test scores and then being placed in lower ability classes, which in turn affects his GPA and what college he is able to get into, if he goes to college at all. In the United States, if you are in a lower social class such as the student in our example, you tend to have less cultural capital. The upper middle social classes have more cultural capital. And therefore, their social class views tend to dominate in culture. Society also tends to give them more prestige.

Cultural capital takes on three forms: the embodied state, the objectified state, and the institutionalized state. The embodied state refers to capital in the form of knowledge that resides within us. While capital in the form of formal schooling is part of the embodied state, this type of capital also refers to knowledge that we seek out on our own. One of the earliest forms of capital in the embodied state is that which we acquire through language. When formal education and culture expect you to not only be able to know your ABCs, but to write or recognize words before entering kindergarten, it has become important to be exposed to such things as books at home and to be read to.

In our earlier example, the student who cannot study because he works to help support his low-income family may also not have had books in the home or was not read to early in life, and therefore lacked capital.

Next, cultural capital in the objectified state refers to material objects that we use to indicate our social class or how much capital we have. This might be the easiest state for us to recognize since we focus a great deal on acquiring things. And we often tend to assign social class based on a person possessing certain material items. For example, a person owning a Mercedes or a Lexus indicates greater capital than a person owning a Ford Focus.

In today's technological world, we can express our capital through buying only Apple products, as they tend to carry a certain amount of prestige and are an expression of our identity. Even the type of food, such as a person buying only expensive organic food because they have the means to afford it, or boxed dinners because they are inexpensive and they must do so out of necessity, indicates an abundance or lack of cultural capital in the objectified state.

Last, the institutionalized state refers to the way that society measures cultural capital. One of the best examples we have is the type of post-secondary degree that we have and how society tends to view or value us based on that degree. A doctorate degree has more social capital than a master's degree, and a master's degree has more capital than an undergraduate degree. We can say that each degree gives a person more prestige than the next. This capital and prestige can then be exchanged for actual economic capital, and it is evident that that is the case. The higher the degree, the more money you can expect to make in your lifetime. Unfortunately, the institutionalized state values formal education and rewards it accordingly, but often places a lesser emphasis on capital that is not considered prestigious, such as being streetwise.

Essentially, if you were born into a family with cultural capital, it is easier for you to acquire more because you are socialized to embody the values and behaviors society rewards. For example, if a student is part of a family where they were read to every night and they were taught manners such as being polite and to listen to adults, this will benefit them when they go to school.

A student who can read and write, and who is also respectful, may earn opportunities such as being placed in advanced classes or receive higher grades. This then gives them more opportunities later on, such as being accepted into a prestigious college, and then that college then connects them with a strong network of people and companies they can work for when they graduate. This is not the same with people who are either born into or grow up with less cultural capital.

So, what is one well-known public figure that you can think of that has significant cultural capital? How can you demonstrate that they have that capital? Other than education, what ways does society reward or punish people based on their having or lacking cultural capital? And how has cultural capital changed over time? What is one example of a type of capital that is no longer valued as it was in the past? And, what is one new type of cultural capital in our society?

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Transcript for Figure 7.11, The State of Private Immigration Detention in the U.S. Revealed | NowThis

[Detention Facility Official]: Can I help you?

[Congressional Staffer for Rep. Jason Crow]: We're here with the congressman.

[Official]: OK, you guys aren't allowed to film in here though.

[Congressional Staffer]: At all?

[Official]: At all.

[Congressional Staffer]: OK.

[Official]: No.

[Zinhle Essamuah, Correspondent]: Private corporations operate at least 55 immigration detention facilities in the US. This facility in Colorado is accused of lacking oversight and proper medical conditions.

[Rene Lima-Marin, detainee]: ICE detention isn't really a detention center. It's worse than prison, worse than the county jail – it's just worse.

[Rep. Jason Crow, Congressman (D-CO)]: What worries me right now is that I'm not getting the facts, right? And that's why we'd made the decision to show up this morning. Many of them have told us that when officials visit that they clean everything up, they put window dressing on, and the conditions look very different from what they normally look, which is pretty concerning to me.

[Detention Facility Official]: He's coming up.

[Rep. Crow]: Yeah I'm just here to visit the facility. I'm the congressman that represents this district and there have been concerns about some public health outbreaks and some recent disease outbreaks so they're from a public safety standpoint we wanted to do an inspection today.

[Detention Facility Official]: Everybody has to get clearance first.

[Rep. Crow]: When there's a private company that's running a detention center and I'm not even able to get further than the reception area, you know, that raises concerns for me.

[Essamuah]: So what just happened?

Well, we tried to conduct a visit of the facility and we were denied access to it, which I think underscores a larger concern about transparency and accountability of these private facilities.

[Essamuah]: The company at the center of civil suits by detainees and families of those being held is GEO Group, one of the nation's two largest private for-profit prison and attention operators. Rene is a former undocumented detainee held in one of the nearly 600 immigration detention facilities around the country.

[Lima-Marin]: The best way to explain it to you would be to give you my experience personally – what happened to me.

I slipped and I hit my face on a toilet, so you can probably tell that I have an indentation in my face right here – that's from breaking all of these bones. They literally have me sitting in this chair for over an hour waiting to be transported to a hospital because this is that serious. She said, you need surgery, we're going to have you back within a week.

[Essamuah]: Rene finally went in for surgery nearly two months after being injured. His bones had already healed back broken so doctors had to rebreak them in order to operate.

And is your story unique?

[Lima-Marin]: It's not unique in the sense of, you know, them not taking care of people. They didn't take care of a lot of people.

[Essamuah]: I spoke with immigration attorneys Danielle [Jefferis] and Bryce [Downer] about the facilities' conditions. They represent detainees at the Aurora GEO detention centers.

[Bryce Downer, Attorney and Founder of Novo Legal Group]: There are stories of people that are detained there that are only released when their health deteriorates so badly that they would rather not be responsible for what happens after that.

[Danielle Jefferis, Civil Rights Attorney and Teaching Fellow]: What I will say is that it's an unconstitutionized space and what I mean by that is that while these people are being housed in the custody of and under the authority of the federal government, GEO itself is not really subject to the provisions in the Constitution that we normally think that they are. These people are not in their care – they're jailing them, and people are dying and people are sick and people are losing lives and losing family members inside.

[Essamuah]: If these allegations prove to be true, it wouldn't be the first time GEO Group has been guilty of unconstitutional practices. In 2012, GEO Group lost its contract in Mississippi. The US Department of Justice found detainees at the Walnut Grove Youth Correctional Facility were not receiving constitutionally adequate care and the facility later closed after additional corruption findings.

I met with two detainees inside this facility. I wasn't allowed in with any electronic devices or my recorder, so here I have pages of notes. But I was able to speak with one of them over the phone.

[Sergio]: It's been two weeks since we've been in quarantine, and not one doctor has been sent to this pod to offer medical treatment for the chicken pox.

[Essamuah]: Sergio was picked up by ICE in April of 2018. He's been held at GEO Group's Aurora facility since then. Fed up by the influx of disease outbreaks and quarantines inside the facility, he and several other detainees held a hunger strike. They wrote letters and pleas about the conditions there.

[Sergio]: We have no visits, no deportations, our courts [dates] are all being delayed. We are being exposed to greater medical conditions living like this, including depression and anxiety. We are all in desperate need for help.

[Downer]: Individuals that have legitimate complaints as to the treatment of their family members at the detention center fear reprisals to their loved ones at the detention center if they speak up and they are too loud about it.

[Essamuah]: Despite calls for oversight, this private facility has existed mostly unmonitored. The use of private prisons is part of a larger trend in the U.S. The U.S. government awards them contracts to house detainees. The government pays a stipend based on the size of the facility or the number of detainees being housed there. In the case of GEO Group it makes nearly 2 billion dollars a year and employs more than 20,000 people. GEO Group has donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to political candidates and conservative groups through its PAC, including President Trump's campaign – even hosting its annual Leadership Conference at Trump's golf resort. A reported 60 plus senators and representatives still receive financial support from GEO Group.

But some would call geo group's track record dismal. The company has faced over 30 lawsuits facing penalties over five million dollars since 2000. Geo group declined our request for an interview and referred us to ICE. ICE did not reply.

Private prisons and detention facilities are under increased scrutiny as the harsh conditions within many of these facilities come to light.

[Lima-Marin]: In the immigration detention center they didn't understand what was really taking place. They were being treated like criminals when all they had done is tried to escape being murdered or raped or whatever their situation was in their country. All they were doing was leaving their country to try to make a better life for themselves and now they're being imprisoned. Not, not detention. Not you know, not put in the detention center – imprisoned for that.

[Essamuah]: Were there any big life moments you missed while detained?

[Lima-Marin]: Oh of course. My kids were three and seven you know, I mean so I missed everything all because they want a paycheck.

[Essamuah]: And you mean that in the sense of because they're private facilities?

[Lima-Marin]: Yeah. I know that they get a check for me, right? They get a check for me every year. Do they use all of that money on me? Absolutely not.

[Jefferis]: There are facilities in metro areas like Denver and Aurora all over the country and I think that those facilities are not getting covered as much as the facilities along the border. What's troubling to me is that we are not hearing the stories of the people who are detained in facilities away from the border.

[Essamuah]: What do you say to people who might watch this and wonder what do I even do? What needs to happen? What do you say to them?

Sergio, you there?

[Sergio]: Yeah, sorry. Um….

[Essamuah]: You thinking?

[Sergio]: Yeah. I'm thinking.

[Essamuah]: How are you feeling?

[Sergio]: I've been – I've been… for a year now, I've been working and trying to find solutions. No one's less them anybody. Just because I'm not – I'm undocumented, there's people in here that are undocumented, that doesn't mean that they don't deserve their human rights.

[*Sergio does not know when his case will be heard. He has been in detention since April 2018.*

Rene is out of detention as a lawful Permanent Resident. He lives with his wife and two kids in Colorado. In May 2019, Rep. Crow introduced legislation that would prevent Homeland Security from blocking members of Congress from visiting detention facilities. GEO's shareholders are demanding the company better report human rights abuses. Companies like J.P. Morgan have begun divesting from private prisons. Facing constituent pressure, some politicians are returning GEO donations. Others maintain their stance with GEO Group PAC.]

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Transcript for Figure 9.3, Gender identity: 'How colonialism killed my culture's gender fluidity' – BBC World Service

[Megha Mohan, BBC Gender and Identity Correspondent]: Gender identity might be one of the most polarizing conversations that's happening on social media right now.

In most countries, sex is defined as what we are physically born as – male or female.

But gender identity can be much more fluid. A person can be born female and feel more comfortable or identify as male, or vice versa.

I've been seeing a lot of young people all over the world from gender-fluid societies talking about their traditions online.

This is Geronimo from the Native American Navajo community in New Mexico.

[Geronimo]: I'm Francis Geronimo, I am Chiricahua Apache Diné. I identify as a two-spirit individual.

This is my backyard. There's a lot of trees. Lots of cactus. Some mountains over there.

[Mohan]: Geronimo identifies as one of four sacred and ancient gender identities from his culture.

[Geronimo]: We have masculine-masculine, masculine-feminine, feminine-feminine, feminine-masculine.

Masculine-feminine is something I gravitate towards both spiritually, mentally, physically and emotionally. The word for masculine-feminine is Nádleehí: someone who is male-bodied, who has a feminine nature, or who also takes on the roles of women and men.

I take it quite literally sometimes. I can dress as a female, I can dress as a male.

Traditionally you are supposed to tie up your hair in a Tsiiyéél. So men's traditionally would be right here and women's traditionally would be somewhere up here. We wear bandanas.

I know that I'm a male and that I can take on the gender roles of a female. I weave, I cook, I clean.

[Mohan]: Eight thousand miles away in India's capital, Delhi, gender has been more than just male and female for centuries.

[Leher]: Hi, namaste. I am Leher. I am 23 and I was not born in a female body.

[Mohan]: In 2014, the Supreme Court recognized a "third gender."

[Leher]: I was assigned sex "male" at birth and I changed my gender medically. However, I am not what, in the Western terminologies, you would call a trans woman or transgender. In India we are considered the "third gender" or the "sacred gender" that has the power to bless or to curse. We are regarded as highly sacred and respectable.

Gender has never been binary in India. It has always been very, very fluid. Especially in Indian mythologies. We have scripture that describes more than 20 to 28 genders. We have the story of Shikandhi. Shikandhi was assigned female at birth, however the person transformed themselves into a man to fight the battle of Mahabharatha.

[Mohan]: Over in Australia, transgender people have had different names amongst Aboriginal communities. Kai identifies as a Brotherboy.

[Kai]: So a Brotherboy is a person that's been born female, but has a male spirit or masculine spirit. Our understanding of being is so much more than a scientific definition of what is XX chromosome or XY chromosome. We can co-exist but it doesn't mean that you should perpetuate hate and violence onto people that don't necessarily believe in the way that you believe.

[Mohan]: However Kai's journey hasn't been easy – as he still faces discrimination in his own community.

[Kai]: As someone that was born a women and done women's stuff and then transitioning into a man, it's quite difficult at times to find your place as a person within my culture.

And I think, yeah, I'm still on that journey.

[Mohan]: And, for many communities, the history of gender fluidity was lost with colonialism.

[Kai]: Sistergirls and Brotherboys history is difficult to document because of the effect of colonization. There's been a lot of shame and stigma.

[Geronimo]: Precolonialism time, gender roles were actually widely accepted amongst my people and our tribe. These individuals who were called two-spirit were widely respected. When colonialism started to happen, a lot of our people died and were murdered, and so a lot of the teachings and understandings of these people were lost. Forced assimilation [and] religious conversion all contributed to that idea that two-spirited individuals were bad people and they needed to go away.

I face a lot of discrimination. It hurts my feelings.

[Mohan]: Leher also believes that colonization has meant there's less acceptance for gender diversity in India.

[Leher]: Colonization is what has corrupted the mindset of Indian folks, that today may be transphobic or homophobic.

[Mohan]: Increasingly the question of gender identity is becoming about much more than how you choose to self-identify. It can decide whether or not you can access biologically divided spaces like toilets and aid shelters – and some sports. The question of who should have access to those spaces is one of the reasons why questions over gender have become so polarized in Western society.

Yet some people question the idea of gender – and believe stereotyped ideas around masculinity and femininity are limiting. And in some other parts of the world, the idea of just male and female have been seen as an oversimplification.

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Transcript for Figure 9.15, The Urgency of Intersectionality

[Kimberlé Crenshaw]: I'd like to try something new. Those of you who are able, please stand up. Okay, so I'm going to name some names. When you hear a name that you don't recognize, you can't tell me anything about them, I'd like you to take a seat and stay seated. The last person standing, we're going to see what they know. Okay? All right.

Eric Garner. Mike Brown. Tamir Rice. Freddie Gray.

So those of you who are still standing, I'd like you to turn around and take a look. I'd say half to most of the people are still standing, so let's continue.

Michelle Cusseaux. Tanisha Anderson. Ara Rosser. Meagan Hockaday.

So if we look around again, there are about four people still standing, and actually, I'm not going to put you on the spot, I just say that to encourage transparency, so you can be seated.

So those of you who recognize the first group of names know that these were African Americans who've been killed by the police over the last two and a half years. What you may not know is that the other list is also African Americans who have been killed within the last two years. Only one thing distinguishes the names that you know from the names that you don't know. Gender. So let me first let you know that there's nothing at all distinct about this audience that explains the pattern of recognition that we've just seen.

I've done this exercise dozens of times around the country. I've done it to women's rights organizations, I've done it with civil rights groups, I've done it with professors, I've done it with students, I've done it with psychologists, I've done it with sociologists, I've done it even with progressive members of Congress. And everywhere, the awareness of the level of police violence that black women experience is exceedingly low. Now, it is surprising, isn't it, that this would be the case? I mean, there are two issues involved here. There's police violence against African Americans and there's violence against women, two issues that have been talked about a lot lately. But when we think about who is implicated by these problems, when we think about who's victimized by these problems, the names of these black women never come to mind.

Now, communications experts tell us that when facts do not fit with the available frames, people have a difficult time incorporating them into their way of thinking about a problem. These women's names have slipped through our consciousness because there are no frames for us to see them, no frames for us to remember them, no frames for us to hold them. As a consequence, reporters don't lead with them, policymakers don't think about them, and politicians aren't encouraged or demanded that they speak to them. Now, you might ask, well, why does a frame matter? I mean, after all, an issue that affects black

people and an issue that affects women, wouldn't that necessarily include black people who are women and women who are black people?

Well, the simple answer is that this is a trickle-down approach to social justice, and many times, it just doesn't work. Without frames that allow us to see how social problems impact all the members of a targeted group, many will fall through the cracks of our movements, left to suffer in virtual isolation. But it doesn't have to be this way. Many years ago, I began to use the term intersectionality to deal with the fact that many of our social justice problems, like racism and sexism, are often overlapping, creating multiple levels of social injustice. Now, the experience that gave rise to intersectionality was my chance encounter with a woman named Emma de Graffenried.

Emma de Graffenried was an African-American woman, a working wife, and a mother. I actually read about Emma's story from the pages of a legal opinion written by a judge who had dismissed Emma's claim of race and gender discrimination against a local car manufacturing plant. Emma, like so many African-American women, sought better employment for her family and for others. She wanted to create a better life for her children and for her family. But she applied for a job, and she was not hired. And she believed that she was not hired because she was a black woman. Now, the judge in question dismissed Emma's suit. And the argument for dismissing the suit was that the employer did hire African-Americans, and the employer hired women. The real problem, though, that the judge was not willing to acknowledge was what Emma was actually trying to say, that the African-Americans that were hired usually for industrial jobs, maintenance jobs, were all men.

And the women that were hired, usually for secretarial or front office work, were all white. Only if the court was able to see how these policies came together would he be able to see the double discrimination that Emma de Graffenried was facing. But the court refused to allow Emma to put two causes of action together to tell her story, because he believed that by allowing her to do that, she would be able to have preferential treatment. She'd have an advantage by being able to have two swings at the bat when African-American men and white women only had one swing at the bat. But, of course, neither African-American men nor white women needed to combine a race and gender discrimination claim to tell the story of the discrimination they were experiencing.

Why wasn't the real unfairness law's refusal to protect African-American women simply because their experiences weren't exactly the same as white women and African-American men? Rather than broadening the frame to include African-American women, the court simply tossed their case completely out of court. Now, as a student of anti-discrimination law, as a feminist, as an anti-racist, I was struck by this case. It felt to me like injustice squared. So, first of all, black women weren't allowed to work at the plant.

Second of all, the court doubled down on this exclusion by making it legally inconsequential. And to boot, there was no name for this problem. And we all know that where there's no name for a problem, you can't see a problem. And when you can't see a problem, you pretty much can't solve it.

Many years later, I'd come to recognize that the problem that Emma was facing was a framing problem. The frame that the court was using to see gender discrimination or to see race discrimination was partial, and it was distorting. For me, the challenge that I faced was trying to figure out whether there was an alternative narrative, a prism that would allow us to see Emma's dilemma, a prism that would allow us to rescue her from the cracks in the law that would allow judges to see her story. So it occurred to me, maybe a simple analogy to an intersection might allow judges to better see Emma's dilemma. So if we think about this intersection, the roads to the intersection would be the way that the workforce was structured by race and by gender.

And then the traffic in those roads would be the hiring policies and the other practices that ran through those roads. Now, because Emma was both black and female, she was positioned precisely where those roads overlapped, experiencing the simultaneous impact of the company's gender and race traffic. The law, the law was like that ambulance that shows up and is ready to treat Emma only if it can be shown that she was harmed on the race road or on the gender road, but not where those roads intersected. So what do you call being impacted by multiple forces and then abandoned to fend for yourself? Intersectionality seemed to do it for me.

I would go on to learn that African American women, like other women of color, like other socially marginalized people all over the world, were facing all kinds of dilemmas and challenges as a consequence of intersectionality, intersections of race, and gender, of heterosexism, transphobia, xenophobia, ableism. All of these social dynamics come together and create challenges that are sometimes quite unique. But in the same way that intersectionality raised our awareness to the way that black women live their lives, it also exposes the tragic circumstances under which African American women die. Police violence against black women is very real. The level of violence that black women face is such that it's not surprising that some of them do not survive their encounters with police. Black girls as young as seven, great grandmothers as old as 95, have been killed by the police.

They've been killed in their living rooms, in their bedrooms, they've been killed in their cars, they've been killed on the street, they've been killed in front of their parents, and they've been killed in front of their children. They have been shot to death. They have been stomped to death. They have been suffocated to death. They have been manhandled to death. They have been tasered to death. They've been killed when they've called for help. They've been killed when they were alone, and they've been killed when they were with others. They have been killed shopping while black, driving while black, having a mental disability while black, having a domestic disturbance while black. They've even been killed being homeless while black.

They've been killed talking on the cell phone, laughing with friends, sitting in a car reported as stolen, and making a U-turn in front of the White House with an infant strapped in the back seat of the car. Why don't we know these stories? Why is it that their lost lives don't generate the same amount of media attention and communal outcry as the lost lives of their fallen brothers? It's time for a change.

So what can we do? In 2014, the African-American Policy Forum began to demand that we say her name at rallies, at protests, at conferences, at meetings, anywhere and everywhere that state violence against black bodies is being discussed. But saying her name is not enough. We have to be willing to do more.

We have to be willing to bear witness, to bear witness to the often painful realities that we would just rather not confront, the everyday violence and humiliation that many black women have had to face, black women across color, age, gender expression, sexuality, and ability. So we have the opportunity, right now, bearing in mind that some of the images that I'm about to share with you may be triggering for some, to collectively bear witness to some of this violence. We're going to hear the voice of the phenomenal Abby Dobson. And as we sit with these women, some who've experienced violence and some who have not survived them, we have an opportunity to reverse what happened at the beginning of this talk, when we could not stand for these women because we did not know their names. So at the end of this clip, there's going to be a roll call. Several black women's names will come up. I'd like those of you who are able to join us in saying these names as loud as you can, randomly, disorderedly. Let's create a

cacophony of sound to represent our intention to hold these women up, to sit with them, to bear witness to them, to bring them into the light.

[Singer]: Say, say her name. Say, say her name.

[Crowd calls out names.]

[Crenshaw]: As I said at the beginning, if we can't see a problem, we can't fix a problem. Together, we've come together to bear witness to these women's lost lives. But the time now is to move from mourning and grief to action and transformation. This is something that we can do. It's up to us. Thank you for joining us. Thank you.

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Transcript for Figure 9.17, Kimberlé Crenshaw Discusses 'Intersectional Feminism'

[Sarah Hayet, Host]: I'm Sarah Hayet, and Lafayette College would like to welcome Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw. She is a professor of law at UCLA and Columbia University and an expert in the fields of civil rights, black feminist legal theory and race, racism and the law. On top of that she is also the director of the Center of Intersectionality and Social Policy at Columbia University which she co-founded in 2011 and also the co-founder of the African American Policy Forum. On top of that, she is the creator of intersectionality theory. We're so glad to have you.

[Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw]: It's a pleasure to be here, thank you.

[Hayet]: And speaking of intersectionality that actually leads us right into our first question. For the students who may not know what is intersectionality, can you define that for us.

[Crenshaw]: Well I have to practice my elevator version of it but intersectionality is basically the idea that we experience life, sometimes discriminations, sometimes benefits based on a number of different identities that we have. So the basic term came out of a case where I was looking at black women who were being discriminated against not just as black people, not just as women, but as black women. So intersectionality was basically a metaphor to say they've got race discrimination that they're facing coming from one direction, they've got gender discrimination coming from another direction, and they're colliding in their lives in ways that we don't really anticipate and understand. So intersectionality is basically meant to help people think about the fact that discrimination can happen on the basis of several different factors at the same time, and we need to have a language and an ability to see it in order to address it.

[Hayet]: I know my journey to women's and gender studies was based a lot on intersectional factors like I'm Jewish and I'm a woman and being raised in a Reform Jewish family with a female rabbi was huge. It

really informed my feminism. And I was wondering what was your journey to women's and gender studies.

[Crenshaw]: That's a wonderful question. So I was raised by a mother and father who were deeply involved in the civil rights movement. We talked about social justice at the dinner table every day when I came home. My friends used to tease me because I had to, like, study for dinner like my parents wanted me to talk about. What did you learn today, what did you observe today, how do you defend what you think.

[Hayet]: No pressure.

[Crenshaw]: No pressure, exactly! So that's the household that I grew up in and my mother is what, I guess, in the last century we used to call race women. They're women who were deeply committed to the idea of racial justice and they were committed to fighting for the rights of people of color, including and especially women, so she would talk about some of the ways that racism gets experienced by black people who are women not just black people who are men and basically gave me tools to see when it was coming at me. So you know different ways that you might be spoken to as a black woman as opposed to being a white woman, having to keep your eye out for harassing behavior at work as sexual harassment actually came from black women's employment experience. The first plaintiffs were black women because these were the kind of things that would happen to black women in the workforce. So just a general way in which you're a woman but not quite the kind of woman that you're supposed to be. These are the kinds of things that my mom taught me about. So I had sort of a race lens from the family as a whole and then my mother would talk more specifically about "now as a woman, these are the things that you have to look out for." So I was kinda naturally drawn by the time I got to college, both to Africana Studies which was one of my majors, and the other major was government and then I did a minor in Women's Studies.

[Hayet]: To go back to what you said about your parents, that they were involved in the civil rights movement and nowadays this kind of resurgence of Black Lives Matter. But the names that stand out in the Black Lives Matter movement get the most attention are Eric Garner and Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown but we don't see the Eva Smiths or the Renisha McBrides and why do you think that is, that black women who are also suffering from systemic violence are getting kind of pushed under the rug, not getting that national attention.

[Crenshaw]: Yes it's an issue that I've been very much concerned with and it was one of the reasons we started "Say Her Name": to draw attention to the names that people don't have. They don't roll off the lips, you know we don't know the names of Tanisha Anderson and Michelle Cusseaux. And, you know, I've thought a little bit about why this is the case and you know I can share that we have been participating in some of the marches. We were participating for example in the Eric Garner march when we came out with "Say Her Name" because you know part of the march is you're marching and you're lifting up the names. And so then we started saying some of the women's names and people were looking at us like, what are you talking about? That's why we just say well just say her name, alright, just say it because saying it brings attention to the fact that there are women who are also and killed by the police.

We eventually created a big banner that had the names and the photos of 20 black women who were killed by the police and for a while we were marching in the march with it but we realized that actually the poster needed to be seen by people in the march so we came out of the marching, stood on the side of the road and held up the banners of people walking by would see it. And we noticed that some people gave us the thumbs up, a lot of people were just – it didn't compute, you know, the idea of women being killed by the police was just something they never imagined. And so they would come over and they took

pictures and wanted to know about the stories and then there were a few people who you know were like this this is not about women killed by the police this is about black men killed by the police. And that goes somewhat to your question, I think that there is a framing of the problem of police violence that's largely influenced by an idea that this is about competing masculinities, this is about you know the state or basically some men clothed with the power of the state trying to constrain you know individuals that are seen as hyper masculine, out of control and therefore in need of a course of punishment. And there is an element of police violence that is informed by that, but, you know, that's not the only you know aspect of police killings that we have to worry about. So you know, in the same way that lynching, for example, was often framed as an assault on black male sexuality, which many times it was, it was also the cover for many other things that other people were subject to including black women who were also lynched.

So we've been trying to broaden the frame so people can see how state violence is rationalized by a lot of different stereotypes, but the most important one that black women share is that is black people more of a threat to the police, more likely to engage in conduct that puts police officer's lives at risk, and more in need of harsh disciplinary kind of coercive physical punishment and we see this in cases that black women have experienced in their homes, in their bedrooms, around the corner from where they live, in their cars, everywhere.

[Hayet]: You kind of hinted at this but one of the biggest critiques of "Black Lives Matter" is "all lives should matter." What would be your response?

[Crenshaw]: Yeah well that's you know the "Black Lives Matter" popular version of colorblindness, right? We can't speak with any particularity about the risks that certain things will happen to people who are embodied in a particular way because to do that is to exclude all the other people. So you know one of the most tremendously troubling things that happened after the civil rights movement is the way that some of the victories of the civil rights movement had been turned on their heads. So you know Brown v. Board of Education now has been twisted into an idea that it is discriminatory to take into account race at all in school assignments even if race is being taken into account to continue the process of desegregation, right. So the idea is everybody is similarly situated with respect to race. That's part of the idea behind all lives matters – like everybody is similarly situated with respect to the likelihood that they'll be driving down the street one day and a police officer will, you know, interrupt their day and they might end up in handcuffs or worse. It just is not the case that everyone is similarly situated with respect to this and if it were to happen to people at the same rates that it's happening to black people – if it were to happen to white people – the responses I think we have plenty of reason to believe will be different. So this is, this is all of the background that makes "Black Lives Matter" something to say, it's being said because the evidence suggests that they don't. So it's aspirational black lives should matter, the same as everybody else, so just erasing what is being said by saying they all do is just denying exactly what the circumstance is, which is their hugely different risk and circumstances of being encountered by the police and that's what "Black Lives Matter" is trying to politicize.

[Hayet]: Thank you so much and thank you for taking the time to join us today.

[Crenshaw]: Well, thank you for the wonderful questions.

[Hayet]: It was my pleasure. I was so excited to get to meet you.

[Crenshaw]: Thank you, thank you.

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Transcript for Figure 9.18, Gender Stratification: Crash Course Sociology #32

Why do some people think that drinking black coffee is manly, while ordering a pumpkin spice latte is "girly"? Don't let them fool you. Pumpkin spice has no gender. Pumpkin spice is for everyone. The gendering of inanimate objects is a super-common practice, and it's a good example of how societies create markers of gender that have nothing to do with anything biological. Gender, as you'll recall, refers to the personal and social characteristics – but not the biological traits – that we associate with different sexes. That's why sociologists say that gender is a social construct, something that we as a society create and enforce. Now, those social constructs may be totally made up, but their effects on how we interact with each other are very real. Indeed, gender influences how we organize all of society, and how we distribute power.

Trust me: the identity-politics of your morning coffee are only the beginning.

[Theme Music.]

When I say that gender affects the organization of society and the distribution of power, what I mean is that our society is largely stratified by gender. Gender stratification refers to the unequal distribution of wealth, power, and privilege across genders. Take, for example, the right to vote. Denying women the vote has been one way that many societies have kept political power in the hands of men. It was less than a century ago, in 1920, that women in the United States gained the right to vote. Saudi Arabia didn't allow women to vote until the 2015 election. This kind of disenfranchisement is an example of patriarchy at work. Patriarchy is a form of social organization in which men have more power and dominate other genders. Matriarchal, or female dominated, societies exist, too. But most societies throughout human history have been patriarchies. And patriarchal societies are maintained through a careful cultivation of attitudes, behaviors, and systems that favor men and encourage society to believe that one gender is innately better than others. Also known as sexism.

For example, little girls may sometimes be encouraged to be tomboys. But young boys are often shamed for liking toys that are considered stereotypically feminine, or even, say, the color pink. Societies often define, and celebrate, certain sets of characteristics as being masculine. Sociologist Raewyn Connell describes this process as "hegemonic masculinity." Think of the type of guy who's the lead of every action movie – tall, broad shouldered, strong, able-bodied, heterosexual, usually wealthy… probably named Chris – that's hegemonic masculinity. But it goes beyond mere appearance. Hegemonic masculinities are linked to power within society, too. Fitting into the archetype of masculinity pays off in the form of societal approval. But ultimately, in a patriarchal society, all men share in patriarchal dividends. This is a fancy way of saying that there are benefits that accrue to men simply because they are men. But before we

get too deep into what those benefits are, let's take a step back and look at how different gender expectations are taught in our society.

As you might remember from our episode on socialization, the first people who teach us about gender are our parents. If daughters are given dolls to play with and sons are given toy hammers, kids learn that caring behaviors are feminine and building things is masculine. This type of anticipatory socialization is reinforced by the societal assumption that men are the breadwinners in families and women will take care of the home and children. Even as more women have become equal earners outside the home, they still tend to do more work in the household as well. Sociologist Arlie Hochschild called this phenomenon the "second shift," in which women come home from work to more work – cooking, laundry, childcare – whereas men are more likely to spend their time in leisure after work. According to a survey on time use from the Bureau of Labor Statistics in 2015, full time working moms spend about 9 more hours per week on household chores and caring for family members than full time working dads.

These gender dynamics are helped along by corporate and governmental policies that set aside parental leave only for women. And by less formal influences, too, like commercials or TV shows that depict fathers who can't do the laundry or take care of their own kids for a weekend. The media play a big part in teaching kids about gendered ideals. Unfortunately, their depictions of what the typical woman or man looks like tend to be a bit skewed. Women in particular are exposed to messages that encourage them to value youth, beauty, and thinness. These media messages – which encourage women to be desirable to men – contribute to what Raewyn Connell has referred to as emphasized femininities. This is the flip side of the hegemonic masculinities. Emphasized femininities are forms of femininity that conform to what the ideal female is in men's eyes.

The social reality is that femininities come in many different forms and may or may not be constructed in ways that emphasize stereotypical notions of gender. But media are only one source of gender socialization. The gender constructions that kids see outside of the home also tend to reinforce the dynamic of women in caring roles and men in leadership roles. Take school, for example. While three-quarters of K through 12 teachers are women, about half of school principals and only 14% of school superintendents are women. Female principals are more likely to work in elementary schools, which is less likely to lead to promotions to higher positions in the district. And who you see at the front of the classroom isn't the only way that schools influence gender socialization.

Let's go to the Thought Bubble to talk about how sports ended up as part of the landmark United States law about gender discrimination in schools: Title IX. Passed in 1972, Title IX is a law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in public schools. It was originally developed in response to discrimination in higher education, such as enrollment quotas, or refusing to hire female academics with children. But the law became most well-known for its effects on sports. Prior to 1970, most schools only had official teams for boys – and if a girl wanted to join the team, she could be turned away without question. As a result, only about 4% of girls played sports. By tying schools' funding to equal opportunities for boys and girls, Title IX required that schools offer girls just as many opportunities to play sports as boys. This increased the number of high school girls playing sports from 295,000 in 1970 to over 3 million nowadays. But more importantly, it also forced colleges to increase their funding for female sports scholarships, which was one of the factors in the increase in women pursuing higher education.

One person for whom it made a difference? Sally Ride. Thanks to Title IX, she was able to get a tennis scholarship to college – which led to her studying physics and eventually becoming America's first female astronaut. Thanks Thought Bubble. Since the 1970s, the number of women pursuing higher education

has skyrocketed, with women now making up the majority of all college graduates. But different majors attract different genders, with men being heavily represented in fields like computer science, economics, and engineering, while women are more likely to cluster in biology, psychology, or sociology.

Moving past education, the jobs that women work tend to be in service or care positions, such as food service, education, health care, and administrative roles. Sometimes known as "pink collar jobs," these jobs with the highest concentrations of women tend to come with both lower prestige and lower pay.

You've probably also heard of the glass ceiling: a term used by sociologists to describe the invisible barrier that stops women's advancement to the top levels of an organization. Women are particularly underrepresented in leadership positions across all major institutions.

Of the Fortune 500 companies, only 32 CEOs are women. In politics, only 19% of the US House of Representatives and 21% of the US Senate are female. The US has never had a female president or vice president and did not have its first female supreme court justice until 1981.

Why does the glass ceiling persist? While the US and many other countries have laws in place to prevent explicit discrimination on the basis of sex and gender, women are often held back through less explicit kinds of sexism. For example, men who are assertive in salary negotiations are more successful in getting a higher salary, but women who do the same tend to be seen negatively. Which is a Catch 22 for women – do you negotiate and get labeled as too aggressive or do you settle for lower pay?

One of the results of gender stratification is gender wage gap. According to a survey done in 2016 by the Pew Research Center, white women earn about 80 cents for every dollar that white men make. This gap is wider for non-white women, with Black women earning 65 cents and Hispanic women earning 58 cents for every dollar that white men make. Now, there's a lot to unpack from the gender pay gap. That 20 cent gap isn't all due to gender discrimination. Much of it can be explained by differences in education, choices of careers, differences in the hours worked, and differences in experience. But those last two factors – hours worked and career experience – are often related to the decision to leave the workforce to care for children, which is way more normative for women than for men. So, some people argue that, if we can explain the gender gap by looking at people's choices, then it must be the people alone who are responsible for the gap being there. But the fact is, society has a tremendous influence on what choices people make, as well as what type of person is considered the right "fit" for a given job.

Yes, the gender gap is smaller if you compare female CEOs with 30 years of work experience to male CEOS with 30 years of work experience. But, there are fewer women who are offered those positions.

Gender socialization is also part of why women might choose to opt out of the workforce, to care for children. And society also informs the educational choices that women and men make that contribute to the gap. For example, until the 1980s, the number of women who majored in computer science was increasing at a pace similar to other fields, like medicine. But around 1985, that rate began to drop, roughly around the time that personal computers and video games came on the market and were marketed as gadgets for boys and men. Gendered marketing strikes again! And patriarchal norms about masculinities can affect men as well as women. For example, men have higher rates of suicide than women. Studies of suicide among men have found that it's often linked to financial troubles or divorce, two crises of masculinity that may be related to men's identity as a breadwinner. Men are also more likely to be incarcerated. They're more likely to engage in criminal behavior, yes, but holding all else equal,

men are more likely to be tried for a crime and more likely to be found guilty. This stems from the stereotype that women are more moral and innocent, an example of benevolent sexism that makes

women less likely to be seen as criminal types. But benevolent or not, sexism and the patriarchy have real impacts that make it harder for all genders to be on even footing in our society.

Today we learned about some of those impacts, starting with discussing patriarchy and sexism and Raewyn Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinities and emphasized femininities. Then, we discussed gender socialization in the home, media, and schools. Finally, we talked about how gender stratification results in different outcomes by gender in education, occupations, earnings, and criminal activity.

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Transcript for Figure 9.26, Founder of "Me Too" movement speaks out

[CBS News Reporter]: The sexual harassment allegations against Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein sparked an online movement in which women wrote "Me Too" on social media platforms, highlighting just how pervasive the issue of harassment is. It was inspired by actress Alyssa Milano's call to action. And celebrities from Reese Witherspoon to Olympian McKayla Maroney all shared their personal stories of their own experiences with sexual harassment. But what many people don't know about the #MeToo movement is it was actually started over a decade ago by an activist, Tarana Burke. And Tarana joins us now to discuss her work.

Tarana, thank you for joining us, first of all. You started this hashtag movement in 2006, and you focused on what you called empowerment through empathy. What do you mean by that?

[Tarana Burke]: Well, the #MeToo movement started not as a hashtag, but as a campaign of an organization that I founded called "Just Be Inc." Empowerment through empathy was the thing I felt that helped me. Other survivors who empathized with my situation helped me to feel like I wasn't alone and gave me an entry into my healing journey.

[Reporter]: At first, your work focused on women of color, and it's now expanded. Tell me about how it's changed.

[Tarana Burke]: Well, my focus in all the work that I do is for the most marginalized people. And so I worked with young women of color in the South. And then when we moved our work into like we had like a MySpace page and women started coming forward and talking to us and saying, thank you for this. And we needed it. And we realized it had to expand to more than young people. And so we worked with

young women, mostly black and brown women across, you know, through our MySpace page, but also throughout the South and then later in Philadelphia and New York.

[Reporter]: You know, we're hearing critics of this campaign say that if this had been an issue that was just pervasive in the black community or for people of color, that this would not have gotten the traction that it did with the Hollywood celebrities. What do you make of that sentiment?

[Tarana Burke]: I mean, it's true. I think we've seen that before. We've seen it in other cases. I mean, like Leslie Jones was targeted online on Twitter and there was not a groundswell of support for her and across Hollywood. And so I think that's the case, not just in Hollywood, that people of color are usually the last to be supported around a variety of issues.

[Reporter]: Why?

[Tarana Burke]: Because of racism, because of oppression, because of the way the systems work in this country. The least of these are the least of these. And so we have to speak up ourselves and we have to create movements ourselves and we have to insert ourselves in larger movements.

[Reporter]: Lupita Nyong'o came out yesterday on Thursday with an op-ed in the New York Times. What did you make of her story?

[Tarana Burke]: You know, it's so sad and it's so, all of the stories are sad. But just in relation to what you were just saying, it's like this is evidence that this happens across the board. So we've had all of these other actresses that have come forward that haven't been people of color. It made it seem like it might be just white women, but it's not. It's these people who are predators, prey on everybody.

[Reporter]: You started this movement, Me Too. Alyssa Milano helped get this hashtag up and running. Are you in touch with her?

[Tarana Burke]: Yes, yes. She, a lot of people, once the Me Too hashtag started gaining popularity, people who are familiar with my work, I started getting like bombarded with messages and like, why don't I see your name attached to this? And so people were saying, you know, Tarana Burke has a Me Too that she already does. And why isn't she being talked about? And so Alyssa reached out to me early, like Tuesday, and said, "You know, I want to meet you. I think that your work is amazing." And we've been in contact. I was on Good Morning America the other day. It's okay. It's all right. And yes, and we've talked about collaborating to both. You know, she says that she's very committed to making sure the goals of our, the work that I do are met. And that's what I put forward.

[Reporter]: You know, one of the things I struggle with, we do these stories, and it takes up a huge chunk of our airtime. Then it goes away.

[Tarana Burke]: Yep.

[Reporter]: We don't hear about the issues anymore.

[Tarana Burke]: Yep.

[Reporter]: How do you ensure that that doesn't happen with this?

[Tarana Burke]: You know, I think that the moment we're in, and just in the world is made like that. Hashtags are here and they're gone tomorrow.

[Reporter]: Yeah, so true.

[Tarana Burke]: These issues are here and gone tomorrow. But I think people – I'm an organizer by training. And so I have been, these kinds of moments are like small victories, and we ride the momentum. And then we get on the ground and we do the work. And so where I come in, I think, is that like Alyssa and I are a perfect pairing because she can elevate the story and carry it forward through media, through Hollywood, and keep the conversation going. And I can organize on the ground and talk to everyday peo-

ple, the people who I connect with and work with, about how we keep elevating this conversation and what work has to happen.

[Reporter]: It's one of the things that I loved about your story, because you figured out a way to make it work and to reach out across the platform.

[Tarana Burke]: Yeah.

[Reporter]: For these people who are disadvantaged, who don't have the Hollywood megaphone, how do you reach out to them? How do you get them the support? And how do you do that, as you mentioned, on a social media platform where it's all about hashtags and then you move on?

[Tarana Burke]: This is not a hashtag. This is a hashtag. Hashtags and social media are important, right? They're important for elevating the conversation, for getting the word out. But the work of it is that people, survivors like myself, who are in a position to elevate, you know, to have our voices heard. Or in a position to do work, because everybody who is a survivor can't insert themselves and start doing work. They're not ready.

But for those of us who are ready, and we are, there are many of us, we are the ones who carry the conversation on. We are the ones who touch other survivors, right? Me Too, the work that I was doing, is really about survivors talking to each other. And so, how we continue this after this moment is gone is that we continue those conversations and we start talking about, like, what does community healing look like? And I think survivors will be, survivors, will be at the forefront of that.

[Reporter]: You know, one of the wonderful things that has actually come out of the Trump administration has been that people, I know, hear me out here, people who care about issues, whether it's a travel ban or something grassroots-related, if you want to see action, you've got to make it happen.

[Tarana Burke]: Absolutely.

[Reporter]: And we've seen that repeatedly, weekend after weekend, from this platform. It's been incredible to watch. What's your message to people who want to get involved in an organization like Me Too or a travel ban or whatever it is? How do you organize from a grassroots, grassroots level and turn that action plan into something tangible?

[Tarana Burke]: Well, there's nothing new under the sun, right? If people are in their communities trying to figure out what do I do next, right? And people like to send donations and stuff, and that's great. I'm not, I would never turn down donations. But I think one is looking for the people around you who are doing this work, because inevitably, there's somebody else who has an organization or a campaign going that you can join.

And if not, connect with people in other places. The wonderful thing about social media is that we can instantly connect with people in other places and find out what they're doing. People contact me like, how can I be active? And I say, well, we can talk and let me help you figure out some tools that you can use in your community, whether it's people going into schools and talking about consent to children or having circles of survivors who get together and talk about what healing looks like for them or what policies have to change in their community and how they can do that. There are tons of ways to organize. And what we hope to do as a follow-up to this movement is put out that information through our website. So people have resources for how to be active in their community.

[Reporter]: And you said you're going to be putting out some webinars and things online to help women?

[Tarana Burke]: Absolutely. So the other thing is, the hashtag has been beautiful to watch grow, but it's also been concerning about people who have suddenly disclosed this information and then don't have a

container to process it in. So we want to do a series of webinars to help people talk about processing. Now that you have disclosed, what do you do now? We also want to talk about things like empathy and the role it plays in helping hear people's feelings, and, you know, we want to talk about policy. So we want to do a series of webinars that's a follow-up with concrete information for people.

[Reporter]: Tarana Burke, your story is incredible and it's great to see a grassroots movement, how it has formed and taken off.

[Tarana Burke]: Thank you so much.

[Reporter]: Tarana, thank you for joining us.

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Transcript for Figure 10.2, Sex & Sexuality: Crash Course Sociology #31

Let's talk about sex. It's totally okay if that makes you want to cringe. After all, most people will tell you that sex is private, not something that people generally talk about – at least not in class. Besides, sex is usually thought of as a deep, primeval part of ourselves. It's a matter of drives and instincts, of biology and psychology. And if sex and sexuality are both primeval and private, can a social science tell us anything about them? Of course it can! Because no matter how natural and private you think they are, sex and sexuality are still a part of every society. And like I've been saying since this course started, society gets in everywhere.

In order to talk about sex, we need to get a handle on some terms, starting with sex. Not sex the act, but sex the category. Sex is a biological category, and it distinguishes between females and males. And biologically speaking, the root cause of sex is a pair of chromosomes, XX for females and XY for males. These chromosomes result in two kinds of visible differences. There are primary sex characteristics, which show up as the sex organs involved with the reproductive processes and which develop in utero. And then there are secondary sex characteristics, which develop at puberty and are not directly involved in reproduction – things like pubic hair, enlarged breasts, or facial hair. Now, we tend to think of sex as a simple, fixed binary – you're either male or female.

But that's not the case. A significant portion of the population is intersex – that is, people who are born with sex characteristics that do not fit typical binary notions of male or female bodies. This can mean a lot of different things. Like, it can mean having different combinations of sex chromosomes, as in Klinefelter syndrome, which creates chromosomes XX and Y, or in XXX syndrome, which results in XXX. An intersex condition can also mean that the body responds differently to hormones, or that the genitals aren't fully developed. This wide variety of intersex conditions makes population figures hard to pin down. If intersex is defined strictly in terms of having atypical genitalia at birth, then one in every 1,500 to 2,000 births fits that description.

If defined more broadly, however, to include all of the conditions I just mentioned, intersex conditions appear in as much as 2% of the population. And, of course, different societies respond to intersex people differently. In some societies, they're accepted as just a natural variation. But Western society and medicine have long understood sex as an immutable binary, so intersex people were not seen as an acceptable variation, but rather as a deviation in need of correction. Some intersex conditions do require medical intervention for the sake of the patient's health, but many don't. And for years, doctors performed unnecessary operations to prevent intersex from happening. So, society plays a role in the biological category of sex.

But when it comes to gender, those distinctions are all about society. Gender is the set of social and psychological characteristics that a society considers proper for its males and females. The sets of characteristics assigned to men are masculinities, and those assigned to women are femininities. A lot of people have a hard time understanding the difference between sex and gender. But hopefully this definition makes it clear. Gender is its own thing, separate from sex. Some people don't even want to accept that gender is anything but biological, but sociology is here to tell you that it really isn't. Instead, it's a matter of social construction.

To explore this idea some more, let's go to the Thought Bubble. Let's start with how we dress. A business suit is considered masculine, a skirt is feminine. And it should be obvious and uncontroversial that this is a purely social convention. Because, for example, you'd be pretty hard-pressed to explain the objective difference between a skirt and a kilt. Except to say that wearing one is feminine, and wearing the other is masculine. And this is also true of things that might seem to be more biologically determined. For example, physical labor, like construction, has typically been understood as masculine. And there might seem to be an underlying biological explanation for that, because, on average, men do tend to be bigger and have more muscle mass than women. But even with an average difference between the sexes, there's a great deal of overlap, too. Plenty of women are bigger and stronger than plenty of men. And minor differences in average size and strength can't explain why some occupations have been stratified by gender. The reality is that minor, average biological differences are used as the justification for widespread gender stratification, funneling males and females into different jobs, hobbies, and identity constructions. And society then points to this resulting stratification as proof of an underlying difference in biological reality, even though that reality doesn't actually exist. Thanks, Thought Bubble.

So, one way of thinking about gender is that it's a matter of self-presentation, a performance, that must be worked at constantly. What we wear, how we walk and talk, even our personal characteristics like aggression or empathy, are all ways of doing gender. They're ways of making claims to masculinity or femininity that people will see and, hopefully, respect.

And we can be sanctioned if we don't do gender right or well enough. This is precisely what's happening when a man is called a sissy, or a woman is told that she really ought to smile more. The idea of gender as a performance is known as gender expression. But gender is more than that. It's also a matter of identity. Gender identity refers to a person's internal, deeply held sense of their gender. Nobody really perfectly fits the cultural ideal of masculinity or femininity, and lots of people construct their gender differently from these conventional ideas. In particular, transgender people are those whose gender identity doesn't match the biological sex they were assigned at birth. By contrast, cisgender people's gender identity matches their biological sex. Still, both trans and cis people can express their identity in a variety of ways, conventional or otherwise.

And this should make it clear that gender, like sex, is not binary. There are many ways of doing femininities, and many ways in which a person can be masculine. Now that we've got a basic understanding of sex and gender, we can finally get to sexuality. Sexuality is basically a shorthand for everything related to sexual behavior. Sexual acts, desire, arousal, the entire experience that is deemed sexual. One part of sexuality is sexual orientation, or who you're sexually attracted to or not. Most people identify as heterosexual. Meaning that they're attracted to people of the other gender. While this is the most common orientation, significant numbers of people are homosexual, attracted to people of their own gender. But these are really only poles on a continuum, with plenty of people being attracted to both their own and other genders, as in bisexual or pansexual. And some people are asexual, and don't experience sexual attraction at all.

Now, these definitions can vary from person to person, just as they vary from society to society. This, and the fact that social norms may make people wish to keep their orientation private, makes estimates of the number of homosexual and asexual people that are attracted to people necessarily imprecise. That said, based on the surveys we do have, around 4% of the American population identifies as gay, lesbian, or bisexual. However, this increases to around 10% if we ask instead whether a person has ever experienced same-sex attraction or engaged in homosexual activity. So, what can each of the three sociological paradigms tell us about sexuality? We'll start with symbolic interactionism, because its insight is the most fundamental.

And that is that sexuality, this intensely private and supposedly primeval thing, is socially constructed. You might think that this is a claim too far, because sexuality is a matter of inbuilt urges. Some things just are sexual. But if we actually start asking, what is sexual, then the constructed nature of sexuality gets pretty obvious pretty fast. We might think, for instance, that oral sex is just sexual. But that's not necessarily true in all societies. For example, among the Sambia of the eastern highlands of Papua New Guinea, young boys perform oral sex on and ingest the semen of older men as part of a rite of passage to adulthood. Oral sex is definitely happening, but it's not clear that this should be thought of as sexual in the way we understand it.

And we might also be inclined to label this ritual as homosexual behavior, but it's still not quite the same thing as homosexuality as we understand it in the US. So physically identical acts can have radically different social and subjective meanings. We can explain this, in part, with the concept of sexual scripts. These are cultural prescriptions that dictate the when, where, how, and with whom of sex, and what that sex means when it happens. The idea that sex happens at home is not necessarily true. Sex at home, between two willing partners, for example, is part of a generic sexual script in our society. Likewise, sex that happens between two people who met at a bar might come with a different script and, therefore, different shared expectations than sex between two people who've known each other for a long time.

This brings us to the structural functionalist perspective. Since sexual reproduction is necessary for the reproduction of society, this view says that sex has to be organized in some way in order for society to function. And society organizes sexuality by using sexual scripts. Before contraception was widespread, it was these norms that controlled how many people were born by determining when and how often people had sex. And by controlling who had sex with whom, they also, generally, made sure that those kids were born into families that could support them. This is one function of the universal incest taboo, the prohibition of sex between close relatives. Reproduction between family members would ultimately break down kinship relations. It would be impossible to maintain a clear set of familial obligations if, for instance, your brother could also be your father.

But, as seen from the perspective of the social conflict theory, regulating sexuality is also a matter of creating and reinforcing inequalities. In particular, our society is traditionally built around heteronormativity. This is the idea that there are only two genders, that gender corresponds to biological sex, and that the only natural and acceptable sexual attraction is between these two genders. Heteronormativity makes heterosexuality seem like it's directly linked to biological sex, but heterosexuality is just as much a social construction as any other sexuality. It's defined by dominant sexual scripts. It's privileged by law, and normalized by social practices like religious teachings, so it comes to be understood as natural in a way that other sexualities are not.

Queer theory challenges this naturalness, and especially shows how gender and heterosexuality are tied together. Heteronormativity is based on the idea of two opposite sexes that naturally fit together, like poles of a magnet. So by this logic, men pursue, women are pursued. Men are dominant, women are submissive. But all this is socially constructed. The sexes aren't opposites. There are just two of them at both ends of a spectrum, along with a whole array of variations between them. But the idea of opposite sexes helps make heterosexuality seem natural to us. And so you can see how sex, gender, and sexuality are all linked and all socially constructed. And you can see how society gets in everywhere, even among these apparently private and primeval things.

And in turn, these things help structure society, creating and sustaining inequalities, and giving them the veneer of the natural. But sociology can help us pick them apart. Today we learned about what sociology can tell us about sex and sexuality. We talked about the biological classification of sex and how it's more complicated than we tend to think. And we discussed the social construct of gender, and a little bit about how it works. Finally, we talked about sexuality and sexual orientations, and what the three paradigms of sociology can tell us about them.

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Transcript for Figure 10.4, Why Some Black LGBTQIA+ Folks Are Done 'Coming Out'

[David Johns, Executive Director of the National Black Justice Coalition]: I would be okay with the idea of coming out if it meant that everyone was expected to come out. But that's not how it works in practice. I've never seen a heterosexual person have to tell their coming out story.

My name is David Johns. I'm the Executive Director of the National Black Justice Coalition, and this is a word about inviting in. Inviting in is a way to complicate what is normally thought about as coming out. For many, coming out is the process by which people sit down with their families, have an awkward conversation about them being LGBTQIA+, and then they're celebrated for it. Often for white people who come out, this also then involves them moving to a gayborhood, a place like Chelsea, New York, or Hollywood, California, or Boys Town, Chicago, where they then get to join communities and sports teams and show up in gay community centers where they draw power from that part of their identity.

For those of us who are Black and LGBTQIA+, the idea of coming out is sometimes simply not an option. Most Black LGBTQIA+-plus people live with other Black people. We are disproportionately concentrated in the South. We live in the states where it is legal to discriminate against us based on actual or perceived sexual identity, gender orientation, or gender expression. We use the term "inviting" in to highlight the importance of people doing the work to show up as both allies and accomplices by adopting the language that we need to be able to talk about people in asset-based, stigma-free, positive ways to otherwise engage in conversations about things that are important to people. And so for us, the idea of inviting in people means that once you do the work required to demonstrate that you are competent and compassionate, I can share with you or we can share with you parts of who we are, including who we love or other things that you might need to know about our identities.

An example of inviting in is my brother Lil Nas X. Many people felt that it was important to talk about Lil Nas X having come out as if there was this singular moment in time in which he had this unique realization about his sexual identity and then decided to stand atop a mountain and declare it to the world for everyone to know. And what I appreciate most is that Lil Nas X says, actually, that's not true. He made clear for anyone who had questions who he is and how he shows up in the world as a black man who happens to be same-gender loving. Words matter, right? Inviting in as a construct is important because it highlights the importance of a bilateral relationship and the need for two people to be engaged in this process of having conversations and making space for each other.

I don't owe you an explanation of who I love; however, if you do the work required to learn some language, to leverage our friend Google. Um. If you think about diverse experiences, then we might be able to engage in this conversation where I will invite you in. And the hope is that if I invite you, and you will invite me in as well, and we can have conversations about things that are important to you, but might otherwise be difficult for you to think about discussing.

I have two hopes, dreams, goals with shifting from coming out to inviting in. And one is that we get to a point in time in which it's not necessary for anyone to have to explain or announce or defend their sexual identity, gender orientation or expression.

And more than anything, I hold this dream for our babies. Right now, high school kids are identifying more often as anything other than strictly heterosexual. To be clear, there is no "gay agenda." If there is and you've seen it, send it to me. But it is, I think their way of saying to us that the boxes, the narrowly constructed categories that have existed for far too long, boy, girl, black, white, things that don't allow for these intersections to exist don't work for them. And so my hope is that we listen to the fact that our babies are screaming for us to do differently, to celebrate humanity, to otherwise find ways to strengthen cohesion so that we can be better communities and a better country. I believe that inviting in will hopefully will be a tool to help us get there.

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Transcript for Figure 10.5, Fighting for LGBT rights in Uganda – BBC World Service, Witness History

[Victor Mukasa]: Uganda already has a law that could be used against homosexuality, but the new back-bench bill goes much further. The penalty for gay sex could be death. I got death threats. My children got death threats. The story of LGBT activism was lonely sometimes. But I felt that we are not just going to be buried like this. In a country where biblical values are deeply ingrained, homosexuality is generally deplored.

My family was a very conservative family, a staunch Catholic family. Me being the first-born "girl" then, I had issues with gender identity. I transgressed gender unintentionally from the time I started being aware of my existence. They bought me a very nice yellow dress, and I went and changed. I put on football shorts, I felt more comfortable that way. Then when I came out, my father was in the hallway and he gave me a slap. He said, "Go back and dress appropriately." And then I put on that yellow dress, and I curled up inside. I felt different now, I wasn't proud anymore, I wasn't happy anymore. I fought against my sexual orientation for so many years. I was on my own because my family didn't want anything to do with me at that point. And eventually, I was homeless. So, I felt that I needed to heal from this thing that was causing me suffering. So I took myself to churches.

Reject sodomy! Reject perversion! They were praying for me, and then as they were praying, they started stripping me, it was my clothes "making me a man," so they stripped me naked. They started to lay their hands on me, and these are boys and their pastor. They laid hands in particular on my genital area because they said that was the center of it all. That is when I felt that it is torture. But I said, this is who I am. Inside me, I felt it was ok to be the way that I was and that God was not mad at me.

Seeing as homosexuality here is illegal, the gay scene is pretty much underground. I went to that bar and I just started smiling. Life had come. I didn't want to go back home when I went there because I met lesbians, proud ones! People dressed like me. People expressing themselves like me. People in love with other women they had their partners there, and it was like I had reached heaven.

Last year under the headline "hang them" a tabloid magazine published the names and addresses of 100 gay men and lesbians. The effects of that publication were major. They were horrible. A lot of people during that period lost jobs, were evicted from homes, killed. Lawyers and activists had challenged the anti-homosexuality act on the grounds that it violated human rights.

My children know me as Daddy, and they call me Daddy. They don't say "hey trans Daddy, hey former lesbian trans Daddy," they call me Daddy. It shouldn't matter, but it matters now that I identify as a transgender man because that is the beginning of a conversation about what transgender is. Not for me

because I have survived, but there are people who are still struggling to come out or to even ask for what they need. So then it matters.

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Transcript for Figure 10.13, Video 1: Connecting the Dots

[Music.]

Why do Advocates in the Anti-Violence Movement Need to be Doing Anti-Racism Work?

[Vanessa Timmons, Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence]: What guides my anti-violence work as anti-oppression work is this: a deep understanding that oppression is one of the root causes of violence, and the understanding that we can't end one form of violence without ending all forms of violence. And so, as advocates, especially for me as an African-American advocate, it was not separable to me – I could not separate one thing from the other. I've always seen anti-oppression work, anti-racism work, as primary anti-violence work.

[Virginia Duplessis, Futures Without Violence]: Anti-racism is a vital component of anti-violence work. These videos were created by and for advocates to encourage dialogue and collective action in centering anti-racism work in the movement to end intimate violence.

[Amita Swadhin, Mirror Memoirs]: I think, for me as a queer woman of color who's the daughter of immigrants from India, who's non-binary in terms of my gender identity, I think about anti-violence work as anti-oppression work because that's what my life is. I was raped as a child and in a house in which my dad was also beating my mom. So, a commitment to anti-violence work is part of my own healing trajectory. But if I didn't also fight homophobia and racism and xenophobia, I still wouldn't be fighting for my own liberation.

[Vanessa Timmons]: It's critical for advocates to be doing this anti-racism work because it's important for us to do prevention. I mean, prevention to me is the core of what we do.

[Kelly Miller, Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence]: The anti-violence field has created a service delivery model that works for disproportionately white, heterosexual, able-bodied, temporarily poor women. And we think of anyone outside of those categories, they are not being served adequately. They're not having access to resources.

What is Racism and What is the Context in the U.S.?

[Vanessa Timmons]: I see racism as part of this constellation of oppression. Each interacting with the other, influencing the other, compounding the other. I see racism as part of a, of an intersectional relationship with power. And so for me that is the core of racism, this intersectional relationship with power based on white supremacy. And you'll see it in all forms of oppression.

[Amita Swadhin]: Racism looks different in terms of different countries in the world. In the United States, racism is specifically when somebody's prejudice is backed up by the way the state is set up, by the laws and the institutions and the policies of that government actually sanctioning or supporting someone's personal prejudice. And so in the United States, this is a country that was founded on the genocide and enslavement of indigenous people here and then later the kidnapping and enslavement of people from Africa. And when you look back at the founding laws, we see that people were not considered human beings, they were considered property. Native people in the United States were not even given the right to vote until the 1920s and so there's a long legacy of the prejudice of the white people who founded the United States. We need to acknowledge that when people were enslaved, they were also raped systematically. This has been well documented. If you look at the Whitney Plantation Museum down in Louisiana, we now have memorials and testimonies of slaves, particularly slave girls, talking about how the slave master would come in and take them to be raped at night. Sexual violence was actually part of slavery. It was part of colonization. If we want to end intimate violence, if we want to end child sexual abuse, if we want to end sexual violence in the United States, we have to grapple with the history of racism and colonization and slavery in this country. It's actually part of the work together.

What is the Connection Between Intimate Violence and Racism?

[Amita Swadhin]: One thing that we know for sure is the DSM now names racism as a cause of post-traumatic stress disorder. We know that people of color in the United States are experiencing PTSD at higher rates. We also know that when a parent, for example, is living with PTSD, their judgment may be impaired if they get triggered. They may not be able to act with love in a moment of being triggered and may be more likely to yell at their child, for example. There's part of the cycle of violence there. For people of color, particularly poor people of color who are being heavily policed, who are being over-incarcerated, we know that oftentimes in interactions with police, people's lives are on the line. People are being raped by the police, particularly for transgender and queer people of color, for black people, for indigenous people.

When you're absorbing that level of violence, violence is a learned behavior. That lesson comes back into your homes, back into your communities. I think it's a very difficult burden that we have as people of color who have survived violence to name the rates at which we experience it from the people that we love. And if we really want to end intimate violence, ultimately we have to end white supremacy. And that burden is also on our white allies to help us undo this very violent system that we're all living within and in which people of color are suffering the most.

[María Limón, University of Colorado, Denver]: It's not our fault that we ended up in the situation where racism and white supremacy are as prevalent as they are. It is not our fault. And it is totally possible for us to take this on in our lives. I know that as advocates, we all want to leave the world in a better place than when we came into the world. And by being deliberate about ending racism, by approaching the work with joy and delight in ourselves and in the humanity that we see in others, it's a win-win situation. There's no way we can lose.

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Transcript for Figure 10.16, Challenging normalization of sexual violence against women | Susana Pavlou | TEDxUniversityofNicosia

[Susana Pavlou]: Well, I hope you are sitting comfortably because I am here to make you feel uncomfortable. I am going to start with a story of a young woman, about 17 years old, who had just come out of a traumatic breakup with her boyfriend, and decided that she wanted to go out, and have a really good time with her friends. So that is what she does. They get ready, they look good. They go to a club, and they have a few drinks, and they are dancing. They are having a really good time. As the night goes on, they are joined by a couple of male friends, who they have known for quite a while; not too well. They continue to drink, they continue to dance, they are having a really good time. But at some point, she has had a little bit too much to drink. Her friends decide it is time to go home. They say, "Come on, let's go home." But she does not want to, and she insists that she stays behind. Her friends leave, and she stays behind with her male friends, who also wanted her to stay behind because they were having a really good time. By the end of the night, she is completely inebriated. She gets up to leave, and her male friend says to her, "Do not go home, come over to my place. I will make you coffee, you can sober up." That is exactly what she does. He takes her home, to his place. He makes her a coffee, but she is completely wiped out. She falls asleep.

Rape

During the course of that night, he rapes her twice. I will not get into details. In the morning, she wakes up to banging on the door. It is her friend who had left her the night before who had located her, and come to pick her up. She was humiliated, shamed, and it took her 25 years to share her experience.

Now I know what some of you may be thinking; that she put herself at risk, she drank too much, she made a conscious decision to stay behind, although she could have gone home with her friends. She had also agreed to go back to her male friend's apartment, even though she could have taken a taxi home. This rape was, in fact, the result of a series of decisions. Obviously stupid decisions on her part.

Others may be thinking, "Well, did she resist? Did she say, 'no'?" Because if she did not explicitly do so, then obviously her actions and behavior spoke for themselves, and we cannot possibly hold him accountable for misinterpreting them. Others may be asking, "Well did she report it to the police? Did she visit the health services? Did she tell a trusted adult?"

Rape culture

Regardless of your diversity in the different understandings and interpretations of the incidents I have just described, it is almost without exception, conditioned by a social and cultural reality. By the common beliefs, behaviors, desires, and emotional reactions that society cultivates in us. Today I am going to talk to you, precisely, about how our understanding of sexual violence against women is molded. Known in feminist circles as "rape culture." Rape culture is often dismissed as just a phrase that is made up by fanatical feminists that want to make men look bad. Or make it look as if rape happens far more often than it actually does. Perhaps we do not truly understand what "rape culture" is. Besides, if you are hearing the phrase for the first time, it could be really confusing.

We understand "culture" or "cultural practices" from a sociological or anthropological point of view. as customs and social behavior that a society engages in together. We find it difficult to link the word "rape" in that context. We know that at its core, our society does not outwardly promote rape.

Sexual objectification

We do not outwardly promote rape, but "rape culture" is something more implicit than that. It is about social practices that society do engage in as a society, that excuses, or otherwise tolerates, sexual violence against women. It is about how we collectively think about rape. The sexual objectification of women in mainstream media is one important factor that plays a role in rape culture. In a culture with widespread sexual objectification, women especially tend to view themselves as objects of desire for others. Sexually objectified women are dehumanized by others, and seen as less competent and less worthy of empathy by both women and men.

Everywhere we look, we are assailed by images of women as sexual objects, and vilified if we fail to meet the increasingly extreme beauty standard. That is not to say that men are not objectified in mainstream media, because they increasingly are, and although such objectification is always harmful, it is never harmful in the same way. Why? Because women and girls live in a world defined by the threat of sexual violence and rape, whereas men simply do not. I am not saying that such images cause sexual violence, but they do contribute to the normalization of dangerous attitudes towards women and girls.

Yes, it is true that sex is used, and probably will always be used, to sell products in advertising, but they have become more graphic and more pornographic than ever before. Such images normalize battering, sexual assault, and even murder.

Popular culture

It is not only in advertising rape culture is promoted and perpetuated. It has also infiltrated almost all aspects of popular culture. Think about songs that glorify sexual assault that are topping the billboard charts. Think Robin Thicke's, "Blurred Lines." Blurred lines, indeed. Or movies that feature rape and sexual assault as their main theme. They are Oscar award winners. Think "The Accused," or more recently, "Twelve Years A Slave." Rape and abuse are also used as a useful plot twist in some of the most highly rated shows on television. Think "Game of Thrones." Pornography that has become more mainstream than ever before, a multi-million dollar industry where sex and violence have become one and the same.

What about language? Any linguist will tell you that language shapes the way we view our world. Let us take a moment and think about how our everyday language promotes rape culture. Think about how we refer to women when engaging in verbal warfare: "slut," "whore," "bitch," "cunt." Or how using sexually threatening language against one's sister or mother is pretty much the norm.

Normalization

We all use this kind of language, every day; men and women. In fact, this kind of language has become so normalized, we do not even realize what we are actually saying. We even tolerate rape jokes as acceptable forms of humor. When we call people out on it, we are told to "Lighten up"; that we cannot take an innocent joke. We have to stop normalizing this kind of language in our everyday lives. We need to call ourselves and others out when we use it. The only way we can change things is if we hold ourselves and others accountable.

Not legitimate rape

Rape culture infiltrates our society with a series of myths. I do not mean that in the fantastical sense; but in the sense of promoting false beliefs, ideas, and expectations. I am going to talk about five of those myths, the ones that particularly piss me off.

Myth number one: It was not "legitimate rape." Now we are treading in murky waters. Apparently, some would have us believe that there are "degrees of rape." This is an updated version of a once medically supported notion that it was virtually impossible to rape a resisting woman because her pelvic and thigh muscles were considered powerful enough to fend off unwanted penetration. The updated version of this logic is that rape is mostly random and takes place in extreme conditions. According to the "legitimate rape" logic, rape is committed by strangers, unknown to the victim. It takes place in conditions without substance abuse, with threat of force or use of force, and with evidence of physical or verbal resistance on the part of the victim. Well, I hate to break it to you, but it is not as simple as that. It is estimated that over 90% of sexual assaults are committed by someone known to the victim. That's their brother, their friend, their ex-boyfriend, their neighbor, their teacher. They are not "other." They are you. They are me.

Rape myth number two: It is not rape if she did not say, "No." The absence of objection does not, in itself, constitute consent. Lack of consent may result from either the use of force or threat of force, or incapacity to consent on the part of the victim, such as when asleep or intoxicated. The responsibility is on the party who is advancing the sexual act to get that consent. And when I say, "consent," I mean affirmative consent. That is affirmative, conscious, voluntary agreement, to engage in sexual activity every step of the way. If they do not get that consent, then they are guilty of sexual assault, and/or rape.

Myth number three: It was her fault. I challenge you to read any news article or report on an alleged incident of rape that does not reek of victim-blaming. Language, stories, and images that support or trivialize rape are so pervasive, we have become numb to them. At best, we have become completely desensitized to the victim. At worst, we actively hang them out to dry. There is no other crime in which so much effort is expended to make the victim appear responsible. When you know you will not be believed, you are far less likely to share your experience, even with the loved ones. When you will be shamed and questioned, you are far less likely to speak openly about your experience of sexual violence. When you know you will be treated as if you are the one who is at fault, you are far less likely to report to the police. Your culture, my culture, made her feel responsible.

Myth number four: She was drunk. This is obviously related to victim-blaming, but I wanted to address it separately. I am not condoning high-risk behavior. I am not promoting high-risk behavior. But let us be clear; no amount of alcohol can make one person become a rape victim in the absence of another doing the raping. Rape is not a chemical reaction. Being drunk or otherwise incapacitated is a situation in which full, informed, and free consent cannot truly be given. Despite this, it is shocking how much effort and money is put into telling girls and women to prevent their own rape, instead of addressing the root causes of sexual violence and shaking the foundations of rape culture. Here are some examples of such well-meaning, but totally misplaced campaigns. The message is that women willingly and stupidly put themselves in the path of danger. "You can prevent your rape by not being that woman at that bar, being drunk, not staying out until that time, and not accepting that lift." Isn't the message also that that rapist will probably rape someone else? Maybe that is OK? Because it was not you, and it was not me. Rather than asking why she became a victim of rape, we could ask, "What makes one person rape another." But we do not ask those questions.

Which brings me to myth number five: Rapists are monsters. Rapists are not monsters. Studies have indicated that as few as 5% of men are psychotic at the time of their crimes. Few convicted rapists are referred for psychiatric treatment. I understand that people want clear categories for the type of person that would do something so horrible, and that category to be clearly different and separate from mainstream society. From you, from me, from us. But the idea that rapists are monsters and "other" is actually

silencing the victim. Because that monster might be someone she loved. If we are ever going to prevent rape, we need to go beyond "the rape is wrong and done by bad people," because that makes us feel more comfortable, it makes us feel safer.

We need to start having an honest conversation about how violence has become sex, and sex has become violence. I know that this requires cultural change, but I think that it is eminently doable. Culture, after all, is not something that is static, it is not fixed. It is fluid, it can change over time and space. There have been some really encouraging signs.

All over the world, anti-rape campaigns and organizations are naming and shaming "rape culture" and debunking the myths that sustain it. Men are increasingly recognizing their role in addressing sexual violence, and doing some incredible work to raise awareness and encourage communities to take action. In the United States, colleges are rethinking how they legally define consent on their campuses. "No" means "No" is out. "Yes" means "Yes" is in. The White House has just launched a major campaign called, "It's On Us" to prevent sexual assault on campuses across the U.S. It is possible to change the culture that sustains the situation that has such a devastating impact on our society. On women, on men, on girls, and boys. Everyone who is here gets the message, talks to a few people. Everyone of those people talks to a few people. Everyone here in this room can be the circuit-breaker. The first step is to go back to that story about a young woman raped on a drunken night out, and look deeper.

[Applause.]

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Transcript for Figure 10.18, Obergefell v. Hodges Explained

On June 26, 2015, the Supreme Court, in a landmark five-to-four decision, granted the right to marry to same-sex couples, both men and women. Although this is great news for equality throughout the United States, many people still protest that the Supreme Court doesn't have this ability or that their state can just ignore the ruling. To that, my response is: that's not true. And thus begins our explanation of Obergefell v. Hodges, in a CGP Grey style.

So it all begins with James Obergefell and his partner John Arthur, who had been together for 21 years. They started dating when South Africa had their first presidential election. In 2011, John Arthur was diagnosed with ALS, yes, the one they made the bucket challenge out of, and was soon confined to his bed. After the Defense of Marriage Act was struck down in 2013, John Arthur and James Obergefell wanted to quickly get married before John died. So they flew from Cincinnati, Ohio, a state that doesn't recognize same-sex marriage, to Baltimore-Washington International Airport in Maryland, a state that does recog-

nize same-sex marriage. John and James said "I do" on the plane, signed the paperwork, and flew back, where John Arthur died three months later. Pretty sad stuff, huh?

So, under Ohio state law, Ohio didn't recognize the marriage in Maryland and refused to put James Obergefell's name on John's death certificate. This pretty much means that James doesn't have much of a say in the stuff that John and he had owned for 21 years, mind you. And thus begins the battle between James Obergefell and Ohio. Side note: John Arthur was still alive when James Obergefell started to sue the state, but he died very early on in the process.

So, James Obergefell sued the state under the claim that the state's actions violated the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution, and more importantly, the equal protection clause. The equal protection clause pretty much means that the government can't pass laws with the idea to discriminate against a certain group of people and prohibit one's ability to have life, liberty, and property. James Obergefell felt like the law banning his ability to get married to another man felt like it was specifically made to discriminate against LGBT couples. The local registry agreed and said that the ban was unconstitutional. So then it was appealed, and then the district court agreed. And so then it was appealed again. But then the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals said that the ban was constitutional. So James Obergefell appealed to the Supreme Court.

Side note: during this process, this case was often mixed with a lot of other cases, but these all had the same goal of having Ohio and other states recognize same-sex marriage. Anyways, when James Obergefell sent his appeal to the Supreme Court, it was really shocking that the Supreme Court accepted his case because the Supreme Court's acceptance rate is only around 2.8 percent, which is half than Harvard's acceptance rate for applicants. After I listened to the entire two-and-a-half-hour oral defense, it really came down to these three things:

1. Should a marriage be defined between a man and a woman because it's the only bonding that can produce a child?

2. Should a marriage be defined between a man and a woman because that has always been the tradition?

3. Is it in the Supreme Court's jurisdiction to define marriage, or should it be determined by the states through a popular vote or legislation?

This point was the hardest to defend without being rude to the judges, but it mostly came off as, "You don't want to have another Roe versus Wade," which gave women the right to have an abortion. And although Roe vs. Wade is viewed by many as a right step for women's rights, many people view it as the Supreme Court overstepping their boundaries to make a decision on something that wasn't theirs to make in the first place.

In the end, it was a five-to-four decision to allow same-sex marriages in all states, with Justice Ginsburg, Justice Kagan, Justice Sotomayor, Justice Breyer, and Justice Kennedy in the majority opinion. Justice Kennedy was a huge swing vote for this case, as he often is for many controversial cases. The minority or dissenting opinions for this case were from Justice Scalia, Justice Thomas, Justice Alito, and Justice Roberts.

So, to answer the questions previously stated:

1. Should a marriage be defined between a man and a woman because it's the only bonding that can produce a child? No, many justices laughed this off during the oral defense, saying that old and infertile people can still get married. And many of the majority opinion said that it should be more about love and commitment than anything else.

2. Should a marriage be defined between a man and a woman because that has always been the tradition? No, this was Justice Scalia's main point as an originalist, interpreting the Constitution as the founding fathers intended it to be read. Although I tend to think that we live in a more advanced society than in 1787.

3. Is it in the Supreme Court's jurisdiction to define marriage, or should it be determined by the states through a popular vote or legislation? Guess not. This is why all the dissenting opinions voted no, not because they hated the LGBTQ community, but because they would rather have the states hold a popular vote to decide on the matter.

In his dissenting opinion statement, Justice Scalia holds that he has no personal opinion on the matter, but an unelected committee of nine should not be making this decision. So why did the Supreme Court rule in favor of James Obergefell? Well, it really comes down to the Fourteenth Amendment and the Equal Protection Clause, because he really isn't viewed as an equal in the eyes of the law, saying that homosexual couples should not have the benefits of heterosexual couples. Justice Kennedy, in his majority opinion statement, notes, "No union is more profound than marriage, for it embodies the highest ideals of love, fidelity, devotion, sacrifice, and family. In forming a marital union, two people become something greater than they once were. As some of the petitioners in these cases demonstrate, marriage embodies a love that may endure even past death. It would misunderstand these men and women to say they disrespect the idea of marriage. Their plea is that they do respect it, respect it so deeply that they seek to find its fulfillment for themselves. Their hope is not to be condemned to live in loneliness, excluded from one of civilization's oldest institutions. They ask for equal dignity in the eyes of the law. The Constitution grants them this right."

Whew, that took about 20 hours to make, but thank you so much for watching. And I'd like to thank CGP Grey and his wonderful community for giving me the idea to make this video. And I might make a part 2 about the misconceptions about this case if this gets enough traction. But thank you so much for watching, bye.

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Transcript for Figure 11.1, Multiracial American Voices: Identity – Pew Research Center

[Mycal]: My name is Mycal, and my father is full black, and my mother is half black and half white.

[Amy]: My name is Amy, and my mother is American Indian, and my father is first generation American-German-Jewish.

[Roo]: My name is Roo, my father is white, and my mother is Catawba Indian.

So conversations about race with people can get uncomfortable when we're talking about my own identity because I feel like I always have to prove it to people. Because I don't look like what they've seen in Hollywood movies or what they've seen on television shows or in comic books or whatever. Most of the time I give this prepared speech that kind of proves my Indian-ness to people, and I say yes my grandfather was the assistant chief for twenty years and my mom was on the Executive Council, my aunt runs the cultural center and I grew up going there every day after school and during summers. Just to prove to people that I do have this connection even though their preconceived notions about what that looks like on a person aren't met when they see me.

[Mycal]: There was, in fact, a time when I didn't just identify as black, in fact, growing up I really hung onto this idea that I was biracial, I hung into his idea that I had some sort white identity. I remember wanting to dress a certain way because I wanted to embrace what I thought was, sort of what could be sort of tied to being white identity and it wasn't until college really that I had made that switch from identifying as biracial to being black.

[Amy]: Sometimes I identify as white because it's easy. It's easier to identify as white to just explain myself because I just sometimes I just get tired of explaining like who I am, and like you know sometimes I just don't care to.

[Mycal]: Being able to stand confidently in your identity, as a single race person I think it's much easier, and it's much more difficult for a mixed-race person to be confident in their identity because you're consistently either being pushed away or pulled in and your questioning yourself and do I really fit in here, don't I if I don't what does that mean are there people like me?

[Roo]: So I don't think it's possible to separate one part of your identity from anything else. You know I'm a man, but I'm not just a man, I'm a Native American man, but I'm also a white man. I'm also gay, so I'm Native American and gay, but also white and gay, it's not like a Lego set where you can just put pieces of identity on top of each other, but it's much more fluid and complicated like if you put some dye into a river or something it becomes something entirely different than just a, you know, kind of building block pieces.

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Transcript for Figure 11.10, Dr. Ibram X. Kendi: Creating A More Equitable Society Is In White Americans' Self Interest

[Stephen Colbert]: Welcome back. My first guest is an historian and the bestselling author of "How to Be an Antiracist" and "Stamped from the Beginning." Please welcome Ibram X. Kendi! Professor Kendi, thanks for being here.

[Dr. Ibram X. Kendi]: Oh, it's a pleasure to be on the show.

[Colbert]: You're America's leading scholar on antiracism, and in your 2019 book "How to Be an Antiracist" is currently a number one nonfiction best seller. What's the difference between being not racist and being antiracist?

[Kendi]: Well, historically, whenever people are challenged for saying and doing something that's racist, typically, their response is I'm not racist, no matter what they just said, no matter what they just did. By contrast, someone who is striving to be antiracist is actually willing to admit the times in which they express racist ideas. They're willing to admit the times in which they sort of support racist policies because they're in a process of changing. They're changing themselves, they're seeking to change society. They're not necessarily in denial, like many Americans who claim they're not racist.

[Colbert]: Well, I like that framing of the conversation because I, like I'm sure many Americans, have examined their conscience especially over the last four weeks and said I am a white American, I've benefited from our systemic racism in our society and I can't say honestly that I don't have any racism, but the refrain that you put it allows a hope for change.

[Kendi]: Well, I mean, and humans have the capacity to change, and I think we have to allow for that. And the question is always, and I think with anything, when someone diagnoses us, when somebody explains that we have some sort of problem, the question, I think, for all of us is are we going to deny that problem? Are we going to deny that addiction even, or are we going to admit it and then begin the process of changing ourselves, healing ourselves so that we can change and heal this country?

[Colbert]: Another thing I like the way you've done this is while not a racist and antiracist both might be described as an identity, antiracist implies action.

[Kendi]: Oh, it does. And, really, I'm not racist is an identity because, typically, a person believes that's who they are. For somebody who's being antiracist, it's more so what they're being based on what they're saying and doing. Antiracist know if they're expressing racial groups are equal, they're being antiracist, if they're challenging racist policies they're being antiracist. So you have to do and be something in order to be antiracist.

[Colbert]: Can you be both racist and antiracist at the same time? I'll give you an example — We hold these truths to be self-evident, all men are created equal. That is baldly an antiracist statement written by a racist man.

[Kendi]: And even in that statement you had some people at the time believed we were all created equal, which was an antiracist idea, but then they also believed, let's say, black and even Native people became inferior on Earth, in other words, their cultures are inferior, they're inferior because of their environment. So we were all equal to begin with, but as a result of the cultures of black or even Native people, they're inferior right now.

[Colbert]: I have a question about the history of racism. Is what we think of as racism a modern — and I mean 500 years old — a modern European colonial idea that is merely a subset of inequality, or has there always been some form of racial discrimination?

[Kendi]: So, for a very long time, you can look into antiquity and see sexism and ethnocentrism and see obvious religious persecution, but racism is a modern phenomenon. The concept of race — black, African, Native American, even white European — is a phenomenon that largely comes out of colonialism and slavery.

[Colbert]: So if there have been always been, like, man's inhumanity to man, did the sort of economic desire to exploit Africans — to exploit Africans lead to the justification of racism?

[Kendi]: Exactly. The core to have racism is self-interest. In other words, I want to slave trade or enslave African people or even Native people and, therefore, I'm going to create policies that make all these different ethnic groups one people, worthy of enslavement, and then I'm going to argue these people are inferior, they're savage, and should be driven from their land that I'm supposedly civilizing. So the self-interest led to the racist policies, and the racist policies have led to the racist ideas, and people believe these people's were barbaric and savages which made them ignorant and hateful.

[Colbert]: Well, we may not have always had racism as we perceive it, but humans have always had self-interest. How can you — how can we make it so that being antiracist is in your self-interest?

[Kendi]: One thing for the vast majority of Americans, being antiracist or creating a more equitable society is actually in their self-interests, and I think that, for instance, white Americans are constantly thinking about what they would lose with a radical sort of renovation of this country, of this country's policies, as opposed to what they'd gain. So they're too quick to compare themselves to people of color as opposed to comparing themselves to what people in other Western democracies have. And then the question is why don't we have paid family leave in the United States? Why don't everyone have access to free healthcare? Why is there so much income inequality? And one of the reasons you can point to is racism and people being constantly manipulated to supporting policies and policy-makers against their own self-interests by racist ideas.

[Colbert]: And the cudgel of the welfare queen being used to destroy the idea of any sort of safety net that I saw growing up in the 180s.

[Kendi]: Exactly, and it was a social safety net that wasn't just helping black women or black people, it was helping all Americans, all Americans who, of course, at times, are going to fall and need a safety net to catch them, to lift them back up. There's nothing wrong with that.

[Colbert]: Now, you say that racist and antiracist are not fixed identities. You've got an amazing example of someone who's clearly steeped in racism, who has become an active antiracist. Tell the story of the David Duke's godson.

[Kendi]: Oh, yeah, three years ago, I had the pleasure of meeting Derek Black. Derek Black is the son of Don Black. Don Black created the website Storm Front, one of the major progenitors of the white nationalist movement and groomed his son Derek to become one of the leaders of the white nationalist movement, to really become like a Richard Spencer. But when Derek Black went to college, he started — some of his friends took him to the side and started challenging some of his ideas and, ultimately, he began changing. I understand he read one of my books along the way and many other books on racism and now he's someone who's striving to be antiracist. So someone who was raised to lead the white nationalist movement Stonewall Jackson School is now striving to be antiracist.

[Colbert]: One of the changes going on now, one to have the cultural changes like monuments being pulled down, perhaps changing names of army bails named after Confederate generals, I have found out your high school, you went to Stonewall Jackson High School? Virginia, and there is a petition, over 30,000 signatures, to rename it the Ibram X. Kendi High School. I know this doesn't come from you, but this is happening. How did this come about and how do you feel about that?

[Kendi]: Well, I think, obviously, I'm happy they're finally changing the name of my high school, since it was named after a Confederate general, but I understand people are pushing for this, and one of the people who are pushing for it, I understand, is the great, great-grandson of Stonewall Jackson who I think is a class act, Warren Christian, and he's showing that we are likely not bound by our ancestors, just like

we're not bound by the past history of this country's racism. We can create a different kind of country that will respect and value black lives and the lives of people of color.

[Colbert]: You've released another book called "Antiracist Baby." Why did you decide to write a book about antiracism for babies?

[Kendi]: I first and foremost have a very young daughter, and I wanted to have a tool for her. I mean, I know that, at six months, babies are already seeing race. I know at two years old, some children are already consuming or believing in racist ideas and discerning who to play with based on a kid's skin color, and I also know that many parents believe their kids are color blind, but their kids are anything but, according to the studies. And we should be teaching our kids about racism and being antiracist even before they can fully understand what that means. Just like we teach them what it means to be kind, what it means to love, these are sophisticated concepts. Kindness and love are what we teach our kids early because we value being kind and loving, and we should value being antiracist, and the earlier we teach our kids to be antiracist, the better.

[Colbert]: As I said, your leading voice against racism in the United States. Your wife is an E.R. doctor at a chirps hospital in D.C. She's fighting COVID on the front lines. What gives the two of you hope? Because you're both part of a present vital struggle.

[Kendi]: Well, I think, for us, I think what gives us hope is that you have to believe change is possible in order to bring it about. So when she diagnoses a young child who has a serious illness, she believes that that kid, that that child can be healed. She has to believe that. Doctors have to believe that. Just like when I diagnose America as racist, when I say that even America is stage four metastatic racism, I still believe that America can fight against the odds and still heal itself.

[Colbert]: Well, thank you so much for being here. Thanks for the message and thanks for the hope and thanks for the example.

[Kendi]: Of course, yes. Thank you so much.

[Colbert]: "Antiracist Baby" and "Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You" are both available now. Ibram X. Kendi, everybody. We'll be right back with comedian Patton Oswalt. Thanks again, sir.

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Transcript for Figure 11.13, Racial/Ethnic Prejudice & Discrimination: Crash Course Sociology #35

I think you'll all agree with me that racism is a loaded topic. What is or isn't racist, or who is or isn't racist, is one of the most hotly debated issues in American society. Is racism about what you believe, or is it about how you behave toward other races? What is prejudice, and why does it exist? Sociology can't make racism go away, and it can't make it any less disturbing. It probably can't even make the issue of race and racism less loaded than it already is. But it can help us understand racism, and understanding is an important start.

As always, let's start by defining our terms. For one thing, what's the difference between racism, discrimination, and prejudice? Prejudice is a rigid and unfair generalization about an entire category of people. So what exactly do I mean by unfair? Well, a prejudice assumes that something you think to be true for a whole group applies to every individual member of a group too, with little or no evidence. Prejudice often takes the form of stereotypes, or exaggerated and simplified descriptions that are applied to every person in a category. Negative stereotypes are often directed at people who are different from yourself, which means that people who are a minority in a population are more likely to be negatively stereotyped. For example, two common stereotypes of people who use government assistance are that they're a) African American, and b) gaming the system.

But both of these ideas are demonstrably false. The majority of people on welfare are white. And people who use social services like welfare are also likely to need the extra help. But these stereotypes lead people to claim that black Americans, particularly single mothers, are lazy or untrustworthy. This example is a specific type of prejudice – racial prejudice.

Racism includes beliefs, thoughts, and actions based on the idea that one race is innately superior to another race. Some take this definition further and argue that racism is inherently tied up in structures of power, meaning that racism specifically refers to the belief that a race with less societal power is inferior to other races. And of course, racism can be explicit or implicit.

Explicit bias refers to the attitudes or beliefs that we have about a group that we're consciously aware of. But implicit biases are a little bit more insidious. These are the unconscious biases that we have about other groups. While we might easily recognize an explicit act of racism, like calling someone a racial slur, we often don't consciously recognize how implicit biases affect how we interact with each other. For example, a 2007 study by University of Colorado social psychologist Joshua Correa and colleagues found that people's implicit bias comes into play when making judgments about how likely it is that a person is holding a gun. Participants in the study played a video game, in which the goal was to shoot people who had a gun, but not shoot unarmed people. Participants were more likely to mistakenly shoot an unarmed black man than an unarmed white man.

This was true whether the participants in the study were white or black, and it didn't change regardless of what explicit biases the subjects said they had. What did seem to matter was if the subject said he or she was aware of stigmatizing about black men and gun violence – even if the subjects adamantly disagreed with those stereotypes. That said, it does seem like training can make a difference. The sample for this study contained both a sample of adult community members from Denver and a sample of police officers. The study found that police officers, who are trained to recognize when someone has a gun or not, were less susceptible to racial bias in who they shot than a community member was. Also, we should note

that like many studies in psychology, this is a small sample design. About 130 members of the community and 230 police officers participated in the study.

So, prejudice is about what people believe, but discrimination is a matter of action. Discrimination is simply described as any unequal treatment of different groups of people. Most of us think about discrimination in terms of specific actions, like calling someone a racial slur or refusing to do business with a certain type of person. But racism can be bigger than one individual.

Let's go to the Thought Bubble to talk about institutional racism. Institutional prejudice and discrimination are the biases that are built into the operation of society's institutions. Like schools. Banking systems. And the labor force. The concept of institutional racism was highlighted by civil rights activists Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton in the 1960s, who argued that institutional racism is harder to identify and therefore less often condemned by society. Carmichael and Hamilton compared society's response to the suffering caused by white terrorists bombing black churches to the lack of attention given to thousands of black children who suffered for different reasons, like from the lack of access to quality housing, food, health care, or schooling. Bombing black churches is an overt act of racism, motivated by racial hatred, so it's easy to understand as racism. By contrast, elevated rates of sickness and death, which stem from structural disadvantages, aren't the fault of any one individual's racial animus, but it still results in discrimination on the basis of race. And it's much more likely to go unnoticed, because there's no single person to blame.

Together, prejudice and discrimination form a vicious cycle that entrenches social disadvantages. The cycle starts with prejudice taking hold in a society, often as a strategy for consumption, or consolidating economic or social power for a certain group. This prejudice then motivates discrimination against the minority group, both at an individual and institutional level, which forces the group into a lower position in society. Then this social disadvantage means that the minority group is seen as less successful and therefore inferior to the majority group, seemingly justifying the original prejudice, and the cycle continues. Thanks, Thought Bubble.

So that's what racism is. Now, why does it exist? One theory of prejudice is known as racism. The scapegoat theory, also known as frustration-aggression theory.

Scapegoat theory frames prejudice as a defense mechanism on the part of frustrated people who blame another, more disadvantaged group for the troubles that they face, even when those troubles stem from structural changes. Economic anxiety is seen as a common trigger for scapegoating. Fear of losing jobs leads to blaming immigrants for taking jobs, rather than looking at how globalization and automation have changed the economy.

A second theory was proposed in the 1950s by German sociologist Theodor Adorno and his colleagues. They were trying to understand how fascism and antisemitism took hold in Germany before and during World War II. The authoritarian personality theory sees prejudice as the outgrowth of a certain personality profile, one that's associated with authoritarianism, or the desire for order, tradition, and strong leaders who will maintain the status quo.

People with authoritarian personalities tend to see society as hierarchical, with people who are naturally superior having the right to power over others. So, according to this theory, racial prejudice is heightened when an authoritarian personality feels there's some moral or physical threat to their way of life. Both this theory and the scapegoat theory see prejudice as a reaction that certain types of people have – people who are frustrated, or people who have a certain personality type. A third theory of prejudice takes a different tack. Culture theory claims some prejudice can be found in everyone, because people are

products of the culture they live in, and we live in a prejudiced culture. This is what some people mean when they say everyone's a little bit racist – that, or they just like quoting Avenue Q.

We learn racial prejudice and stereotypes through a kind of cultural osmosis. For example, American history textbooks tend to be written from a Euro-Caucasian perspective and focus mainly on the contributions of white people rather than other cultures. And this relates to yet another approach, which measures prejudice in terms of social distance. In the 1920s, American sociologist Emory Bogardus developed the social distance scale, which measures how closely people are willing to interact with people from different races and ethnicities. Social distance is a kind of proxy for how much of an other you see members of another race. Just like how geographic distance makes you more likely to generalize about a group of people who are different from yourself, social distance increases the likelihood that you might hold stereotypical or prejudiced views about another racial group.

And the final theory of prejudice is one we've talked about before – conflict theory. Race conflict theory focuses on how social inequality develops as the result of power conflicts between different racial and ethnic groups. Under this theory, prejudice is a tool for maintaining the power of the majority. For example, the argument that whites are a superior race was used as a justification for slavery, and the racial discrimination that continued long after. So, people may think about and treat each other differently based on their race or ethnicity in many different ways. But the ways in which racial groups interact within a society are often described by sociologists in terms of four broad patterns – pluralism, assimilation, segregation, and genocide. Pluralism is a state in which all races and ethnicities are distinct, but have equal social standing.

This isn't a society that's colorblind, per se, because people still have different racial heritages that are recognized in society, but in terms of how social and economic resources are distributed, the color of one's skin plays no role. So, is the US pluralistic? Nah, not exactly. The United States is pluralistic by the letter of the law, but in a practical sense, there's still a lot of racial and ethnic stratification, and despite having equal legal standing, all races do not have equal social standing. Now, in contrast to pluralism, in which different races remain distinct, assimilation describes the process by which minorities gradually adopt patterns of the dominant culture. By adopting the modes of dress, values, religion, language, and lifestyles of the majority culture, minorities are sometimes able to avoid prejudice or discrimination. But assimilation is much easier for some groups than others, and it's easier if you look and sound like the group that you're trying to assimilate to.

A third pattern of racial interaction is to just not interact. Segregation is the physical and social separation of categories of people. Racial segregation has a long history in the United States, with racial minorities historically being segregated into lower-quality neighborhoods, occupations, and schools. In the United States, racial segregation is considered to be one of the most important; Segregation under the law, also known as de jure segregation, has since been prohibited through court cases and laws, such as Brown v. Board of Education. But de facto segregation, or segregation due to traditions and norms, still remains. People live in neighborhoods, attend schools, and work mostly with people like themselves.

This self-segregation has led to high levels of racial stratification. About one quarter of black students attend public schools that have more than 90% students of color, and those schools tend to have less resources available to them. De jure school segregation may be over. But de facto segregation has all but ensured that the public school system remains separate and unequal for many Americans. Sometimes, however, racial prejudice has consequences beyond segregation and inequality. Racism can lead to genocide, or the systematic killing of one group of people by another. Whether we're talking about the

attacks on indigenous populations by colonizers starting in the 16th century, the Armenian Genocide by the Ottoman Empire during World War I, the Holocaust during World War II, or modern examples in Rwanda and Darfur, genocide represents some of the worst of humanity.

And it is usually motivated by racism. We can't talk about race without talking about how people have used racist attitudes as an excuse for violence and subjugation. But hopefully, what we've talked about today will give you some context for thinking about how race plays out on a societal scale. Today we discussed prejudice, stereotypes, racism, and five theories for why prejudice exists. We talked about discrimination and the legacies of institutional racism, and we ended with an overview of four types of racial interaction: Pluralism, Assimilation, Segregation, and Genocide.

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Return to video

Acknowledgments

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Publisher's Message to Instructors

This book is published by Open Oregon Educational Resources. It is part of our Targeted Pathways project, which used statewide data to target disciplines and courses in which to develop high-quality, openly licensed materials with an equity lens.

Targeted Pathways textbooks were developed in partnership with **Chemeketa Press**, which offers training in textbook development best practices and coaching to faculty authors. Chemeketa Press is the academic publishing arm of Chemeketa Community College in Salem, Oregon.

The contents of this book were partially developed under a grant from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief fund and a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, U.S. Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the federal government. It is also supported by funding from Oregon's Higher Education Coordinating Commission.

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Instructor Resources

Author Message to Future Instructors

Thank you for considering the adoption of our text. We designed *Introduction to the Sociology of Everyday Life* to offer an innovative approach to understanding contemporary sociology, while still aligning to the objectives of many introductory sociology courses in the state of Oregon. In this text, we use a multilevel intersectional feminist approach, among a variety of approaches, to frame students' understanding of the discipline. This book serves as a resource for examining the foundations and principles of sociology, power and social interaction, and inequalities between social groups. The text covers key concepts, real-world application activities, and discussions and data relevant to students. Substantively, we embed a variety of contemporary theories throughout the text to reflect current trends in sociology.

We open each chapter with an example that we return to as a framing device throughout the chapter to help students understand the complexity of a social issue or even how broadly we can use sociological perspectives to understand our social world. We return to the chapter opening examples at different points in the text, in activity boxes, through video links, and with discussion questions. These chapter openers draw on local, regional, and national examples, which we think will appeal to not only students in the Pacific Northwest but also those across the United States. The boxes titled "Activity" and "A Closer Look" provide you with additional information to share with your students and can be used as in-class activities or assignments. Some of these activities bring the focus back to the chapter opener, while others offer greater depth for students to learn more about a chapter section. We offer discussion questions at the end of each chapter as another way to engage students in course material and to help them start applying what they learn in your course to the world around them.

We organized *Introduction to the Sociology of Everyday Life* into 11 chapters. The first three chapters serve as a foundation for the discipline. We introduce key concepts, methods, and theories, while highlighting the voices of social theorists and methodological approaches that are not always discussed in introductory textbooks. We aim to show students the diversity of human experiences that contribute to our field and knowledge. For students, the foundation chapters may be useful to return to as they progress through the text and learn more about sociology. Next, we focus on the process of socialization, social interaction, group dynamics, and organizations, then we explore culture and deviance and social control. For the remainder of the text, we focus on elements of identity that often intersect with experiences of inequity. These chapters encourage students to think about their personal connection to social class, gender, sexuality, and race and how they relate to larger social structures. We highlight how our experiences with these identities occur within the context of larger social forces.

This book will address the majority of the content one would expect in Sociology 204, which introduces the central concepts, theories, and methods that define the sociological approach to investigating the social forces that shape our lives. For a closer examination of social institutions, you can continue your learning journey by reading *Social Change in Societies* and *Social Problems*, texts written by our colleagues on this project.

We designed this book to embrace an equity-minded approach in structure, scope, sequence of chapters, and chapter content. We sought to honor the needs and experiences of students who are often underserved in higher education in Oregon. We considered the methodologies of Transparency in Teaching and Learning, Universal Design for Learning, and Culturally Responsive Teaching to design meaningful learning pathways for you. You will find rich images and multimedia in addition to written content.

We attempt to incorporate inclusive language, while also reflecting the complexities of social life and academic research. You will see the terms Latino/Latina, Latinx, and Hispanic used within different contexts. We sought to honor the way group identities are experienced as well as identified in research. Latinx offers an inclusive and gender-neutral way to refer to people; however, research shows that only a 4 percent of Hispanic and Latino communities identify as Latinx (Newport 2022). We use the umbrella term LGBTQIA+ as a way to acknowledge the expansiveness of the community and refer to the community as a whole. Any mentions that do not use the umbrella term are designed to accurately represent the data used in research discussed. LGBTQIA+ is an abbreviation for "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual." The additional "+" stands for all of the other identities not encompassed in the short acronym.

If what we have described sounds appealing to you and your pedagogical approach to introductory sociology, we encourage you to explore the text. The nice thing about an openly licensed text is that you can customize the text as you see fit, allowing you to adopt some parts and not others while adjusting it to the needs and interests of your students.

Best wishes,
Jennifer Puentes, Lead Co-Author
Matt Gougherty, Lead Co-Author

Integrated Openly Licensed Course Materials

This book includes openly licensed course materials that fully integrate with the open textbook. Anyone can retain, revise, remix, reuse, and redistribute them. Best of all, future instructors can build on existing learning pathways that are aligned with textbook and chapter learning outcomes.

You can access openly licensed course materials in two ways:

- **Sociology in Everyday Life Instructor Course Packs**: A collection of aligned and accessible course materials shared by pilot instructors teaching at multiple Oregon institutions. Instructors designed each course pack with an equity lens in consultation with an instructional designer. In most cases, each course pack was revised with feedback from Oregon students and an advisory board of workforce members. Each course pack includes a complete course map, an instructor guide, and ancillary materials including weekly assignment prompts, rubrics, and suggested activities.
- **Sociology in Everyday Life OER Commons Group**: An ongoing repository of instructor-created course materials that integrate with the open textbook. Materials may include syllabi, assessments and assignments, lesson plans, activities, and entire course shells. Please note: not all OERC resources are reviewed for digital accessibility.

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Manuscript Development Process

This book went through an extensive pre-production process before it was launched in order to be accountable to the project's equity lens; revise drafts for quality; and incorporate feedback from scholars, practitioners, and students in the discipline.

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Additional Resources

Google Doc Version of This Book

Link to view-only Google Doc version of this book – make a copy to start editing! **Sociology in Everyday Life**

Note: minor post-production changes might not be reflected in the Google Doc. Check the web book for the most current version of this textbook.

Detailed Outline

The following detailed outline lists the sequence of topics and subtopics covered in each chapter. We hope that reviewing this sequence will help future educators who may wish to adapt parts of the textbook for a specific course or project. Please note that the Pressbooks Table of Contents offers a high-level outline of this sequence, whereas this detailed outline shows each subtopic. Content can also be located by keyword by searching this book (upper right).

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