

Identifying a Textbook

- Title/jacket copy/blurbs
 - “Introduction to...”
 - Generic title (e.g., “Social Psychology,” “Ecology”)
 - “Readings in...”
 - “Critical Readings in...”
 - “... in Context”
 - “...a Global Perspective”
 - Indication of many editions; if it’s the 9th edition, say, there’s a good chance it’s a textbook. Search for earlier editions to see how frequently revisions have been made. The more frequent, the more likely it’s a textbook.
- Introduction/preface: Skim for mention of concepts like:
 - the book’s purpose, especially the word “textbook”
 - specific courses or academic subjects
 - general history of the topic or broad, basic explanation of its importance
 - changes made for the edition in hand
 - studying the topic
 - an introduction to or a general overview of a topic
 - filling a gap in knowledge or in books available
 - new edition to account for recent developments
 - new member(s) of author team or honoring of a previous/original member
 - frequent use of “I” or “we” in describing approach to topic

PREFACE

This eighth edition of *Sociology: A Global Perspective* retains its distinctive integrative approach. Each chapter pairs a sociological topic with a country or global-scale issue that becomes the focus of sociological analysis. The chosen pairings give the concepts and theories presented in each chapter a purpose. That purpose is to:

1. showcase sociology as offering the conceptual tools for understanding global-scale issues and changes and their impact on daily lives; and
2. strengthen the way sociology is presented so that readers, inundated by information explosion, will come away with a sense of satisfaction in taking the time to read, of all things, a textbook.

Major Changes to This Edition



These goals are especially evident in the descriptions of changes to the five most heavily revised chapters that follow:

- The first chapter—The Sociological Imagination—now features the mobile phone as the object of sociological analysis. The chapter opens with this question: Have you ever tried to imagine going one day without your phone? How would your life change? The sociological perspective takes readers beyond their personal dependency on mobile phones to think about how that innovation has revolutionized relationships. As one measure of the mobile phone’s importance, consider that at this time there are an estimated 5.3 billion mobile phones in a world of 7 billion people. I imagine what six classic theorists—Comte, Marx, Weber, Durkheim, DuBois, and Addams—would say about the mobile phone if each were alive today. My hope is that opening the book with a focus on something deeply personal will build readers’ confidence in sociology as a discipline that is worth their time to learn.
- Chapter 6, Formal Organizations with emphasis on McDonald’s, now places that well-known global corporation in the context of the industrial food system. Keep in mind that McDonald’s does not produce, or even cook the food it sells to customers. Like other fast food corporations, it relies on suppliers from around the United States and the world to process menu items. The rise of the industrial food system has spawned a variety of slow food movements and organizations, each aiming to address some related issue, ranging from animal rights/welfare to school lunch reform.
- In the previous edition, Chapter 9—Race and Ethnicity—emphasized the global story behind the peopling of the United States. This edition shifts that emphasis to Brazil because that country’s ideas of race and ethnicity offer an interesting contrast to the United States. Brazilian racial identity is built around the idea that everyone is multiracial and no racial group is distinct from another. This is in sharp contrast to the United States, where the races are still viewed as distinct categories. We use sociological concepts and theories to think about how ideas of race are constructed and the effects race has on life chances, race relations, and identity. With regard to ethnicity, the United States government recognizes only two ethnic groups: Hispanic and non-Hispanic. In contrast, the Brazilian government only recognizes the ethnic identities of the indigenous peoples.
- Chapter 11—Economics and Politics—has shifted its emphasis from Iraq to India. India is one of two rising powers (the other is China) expected to challenge the global power and influence of the United States. India is best known in the United States as an outsourcing destination, most notably of customer service and IT jobs. For all its publicity, however, only about 2.5 million of its 450 million-strong labor force works in high-tech and service industries. We apply the sociological concepts to compare and contrast the Indian and American economic and political systems and, in the process, gain insights about the major forces shaping employment opportunities in the two countries.
- Chapter 15 changes title from “Population and Urbanization with Emphasis on India:” to “Birth, Death, and Migration with Emphasis on Extreme Cases.” The title change more accurately reflects the three key human experiences that determine population size, growth and other dynamics. In this chapter, we compare extreme cases or those countries that experience the highest and the lowest birth rates, including the teen birth rate; death rates including infant and maternal, and in- and out-migration rates.

We emphasize extreme cases because doing so allows us to frame the end points on the continuum of human experience. For example, if we know the teen birth rate in

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- Table of contents
 - Glossary
 - Short names or nouns as chapter titles
 - Chapters/sections moving progressively or breaking down parts of a section
 - Instruction, lab, answer, or other special sections
 - Exercises or discussion questions
 - Chapter summaries

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