Preface

As the title suggests, *Mapping the Social Landscape* is about exploration and discovery. It means taking a closer look at a complex, ever-changing social world in which locations, pathways, and boundaries are not fixed. Because sociology describes and explains our social surroundings, it enables us to understand this shifting landscape. Thus, sociology is about discovering society and discovering ourselves. This anthology introduces the discipline of sociology and conveys the excitement and challenge of the sociological enterprise.

Although a number of readers in introductory sociology are already available for students, I have yet to find one that exposes students to the broad diversity of scholarship, perspectives, and authorship that exists within the field of sociology. This diversity goes beyond recognizing gender, racial-ethnic, and social class differences to acknowledging a plurality of voices and views within the discipline. Like other anthologies, this one includes classic works by authors such as Karl Marx, Max Weber, C. Wright Mills, Kingsley Davis, Philip Zimbardo, and Wilbert Moore; in addition, however, I have drawn from a wide range of contemporary scholarship, some of which provides newer treatments of traditional concepts. This diversity of viewpoints and approaches should encourage students to evaluate and analyze the sociological ideas and research findings presented.

In addition, because I find it invaluable in my own teaching to use examples from personal experiences to enable students to see the connection between “private troubles and public issues,” as C. Wright Mills phrased it, I have included in this collection a few personal narratives to help students comprehend how social forces affect individual lives. Thus, this anthology includes classic as well as contemporary writings and the voices of other social scientists who render provocative sociological insights. The readings also exemplify functionalist, conflict, and symbolic interactionist perspectives and different types of research methodology. Each article is preceded by a brief headnote that sets the context within which the reader can seek to understand the sociological work. Thus, the selections communicate an enthusiasm for sociology while illustrating sociological concepts, theories, and methods.

During the past 30 years, sociology has benefited from a rich abundance of creative scholarship, but many of these original works have not been adequately presented in
textbooks or readers. I believe an introductory anthology needs to reflect the new questions concerning research and theory within the discipline. Moreover, I find that students enjoy reading the actual words and research of sociologists. This anthology, therefore, includes many cutting-edge pieces of sociological scholarship and some recent publications by recognized social analysts. Current issues are examined, including childhood school cliques, tourism in Hawaii, working at McDonald’s, the effects of globalization, racism in the United States, socialization in law school, race and home ownership, elite college admissions, health care, poverty, sexual assault on college campuses, working in a slaughterhouse, military boot camps, teen suicide, eating disorders, prison riots, and the media in Iraq. I have attempted not to break new ground but, rather, to compile a collection that provides a fresh, innovative look at the discipline of sociology.

Changes to the Eighth Edition

With this eighth edition, I have selected readings that invite students into the fascinating discipline of sociology. Most of the readings are by top scholars in the field of sociology, many of whom have high name recognition or are award-winning scholars. In fact, only 5 of the 58 readings are not authored by sociologists or social scientists but instead are written by investigative journalists, such as Barbara Ehrenreich and Charlie LeDuff. I also maintain a critical balance of classical (14 percent) and contemporary readings (86 percent). In this volume are eight classic pieces, insightful readings that lay the groundwork for enhanced sociological understanding. Other changes include a new reading in the Culture section on Muslim punk rock subculture by Amy McDowell and a new reading on extreme poverty in the United States by H. Luke Shaefer, Kathryn Edin, and Elizabeth Talbert. There is a new reading in the Gender section by Laurel Westbrook and Kristen Schilt offering timely research on transgender people and gender panics. I also have updated several other sections of the anthology, including sections on the media, health and medicine, and social change.

I have added several new selections to this edition of Mapping the Social Landscape to keep this collection cutting-edge with contemporary sociological research that illustrates timely analyses of social issues and the intersections among race, social class, and gender. The readings examine critical sociological issues that include gender socialization in children; the new global elites; poor women and motherhood; black male nurses and the glass escalator; health care failure during Katrina; military control of the media in Iraq; female sexual slavery in Thailand; admission policies of elite colleges; Muslims in America; gender and televised sports; and race, wealth, and home ownership. Among these readings are selections I consider to be contemporary classics in that they provide an overview of the discipline of sociology or a specific content area. These readings include the research of Matthew Desmond and Mustafa Emirbayer on racial domination, Debra Van Ausdale and Joe Feagin on preschool children’s understandings of race, and Evelyn Nakano Glenn on skin lighteners and the racialized beauty ideal, in addition
to an essay from Dalton Conley’s collection *Everywhere USA*, in which he discusses the changes in the relationships between individuals and groups in society. In this edition I also have added another timely work on social change by Jeff Goodwin and René Rojas on revolutions and regime change. Based on reviewers’ comments, I also have included seven readings with a global emphasis, and at least six readings in the anthology address sexuality.

From the seventh edition, I brought back the piece by Kathryn Edin and Maria Kefalas from *Promises I Can Keep: Why Poor Women Put Motherhood Before Marriage*. So many reviewers and faculty who have used this anthology wanted to see Edin and Kefalas’s research returned. I also added a reading from her new work with H. Luke Shaefer on extreme poverty, *$2.00 a Day: Living on Almost nothing in America*. Please know that every time I revise an edition, I have to cut some pieces that I think are excellent but do not review well with other teachers or because the permission costs have become prohibitive. I know these changes can be frustrating for some of you, but I think students will find the newer pieces in this edition to be more accessible and interesting.

Of course, for all the readings, I have tried to choose selections that are compelling to students but also demonstrate well the diversity within the discipline of sociology in terms of sociological theory, research methods, or area of research. I am still looking for excellent contemporary pieces that illustrate C. Wright Mills’s concept of the sociological imagination and appreciate any suggestions you may have for that or other potential readings for future editions. Please note that I welcome feedback from professors and students on this edition of *Mapping the Social Landscape*. You can e-mail me at Grinnell College at fergusos@grinnell.edu.

### Supplemental Learning Materials

An accompanying test bank contains multiple choice and essay questions for each reading. Instructors can access this password-protected test bank and lecture notes on the website that accompanies the eighth edition of *Mapping the Social Landscape* at [http://study.sagepub.com/fergusonmapping8e](http://study.sagepub.com/fergusonmapping8e).

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