

as part of the global system of nations. In addition to having relatively permanent geographic and political boundaries, national societies also have one or more languages and a way of life. In most cases, national societies involve countries or large regions where the inhabitants share a common identity as members. In certain other instances, such as contemporary Great Britain, a single national society may include several groups of people who consider themselves distinct nationalities (Welsh, English, Scottish, and Irish within the United Kingdom). Such multicultural societies may or may not be harmonious.

## Thinking Sociologically

Think about how a major conflict or change in your family (micro level) might affect your education, economic situation, or health care. How might change in one national institution such as health care affect change in another institution (such as the family or the economy)?

## Social Processes

Picture **social processes** as the actions taken by people in social units. Processes keep the social world working, much as the beating heart keeps the body working. Consider the processes of socialization and stratification. The process of socialization teaches individuals how to become productive members of society. It takes place through actions of families, educational systems, religious organizations, and other social units. Socialization is essential for the continuation of any society. Similarly, our social positions in society are the result of stratification, the process of layering people into social strata based on such factors as birth, income, occupation, and education. Sociologists generally do not judge these social processes as good or bad. Rather, sociologists try to identify and explain processes that take place within social units. Picture these processes as overlying and penetrating our whole social world, from small groups to societies. Social units would be lifeless without the action brought about by social processes, just as body parts would be lifeless without the processes of electrical impulses shooting from the brain to each organ or the oxygen transmitted by blood coursing through our arteries to sustain each organ.

## The Environment

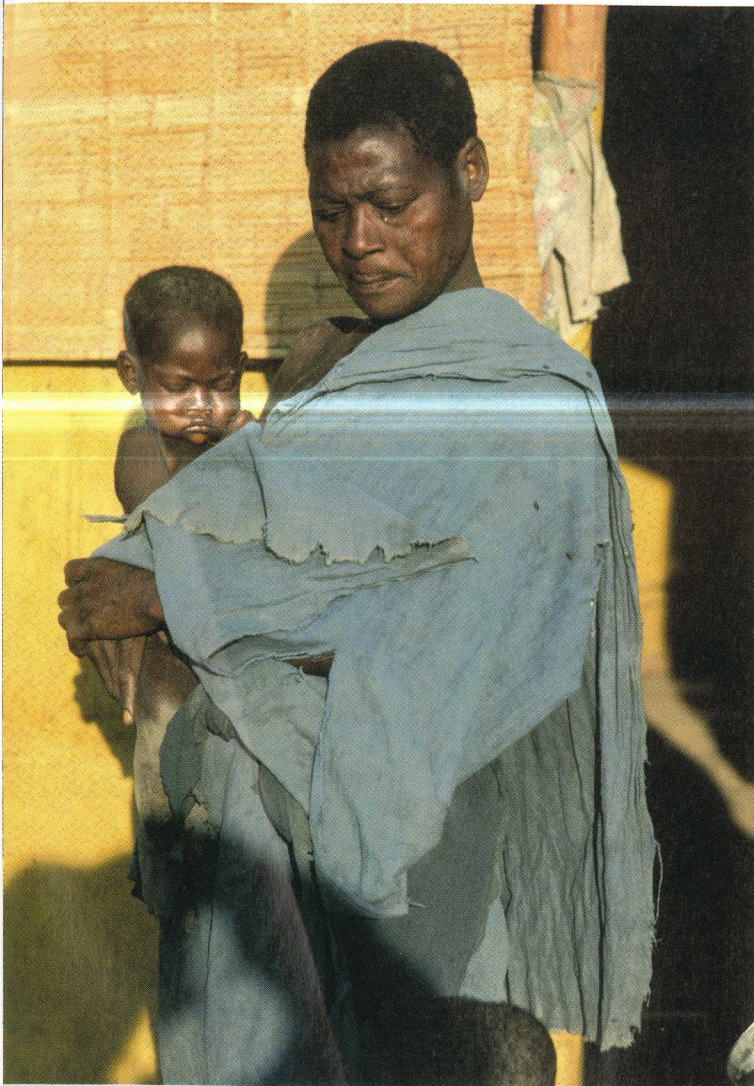
Surrounding each social unit is an **environment**. It includes everything that influences the social unit, such as its physical and organizational surroundings and technological

The social world model is made up of a number of **social units**, interconnected parts of the social world. These range from interaction in dyads and small groups to negotiating between warring societies. All these units combine into a system to form the **social structure** that holds societies together and brings order to our lives by regulating the way the units work in combination. Compare this to a picture of our body's skeleton, which governs how our limbs are attached to the torso and how they move. Sometimes the interconnections in the social structure conflict, however, due to divergent beliefs or self-interests of units. For example, a religion that teaches that it is wrong to have blood transfusions may conflict with the health care system regarding how to save the life of a child. Business executives want to produce products at the lowest possible cost, but this may mean paying workers low wages and causing damage to the environment. All levels of analysis are linked. Some links are supportive; others are in conflict. **Social institutions** are found in every society—family, education, religion, politics, economics, science, sports, and health care. They provide the rules, roles, and relationships to meet human needs and guide human behavior. They are the parts of the social structure in societies through which organized social activities take place, and they provide the setting for activities essential to human and societal survival. For example, we cannot survive without an economic institution to provide guidelines and a structure for meeting our basic needs of food, shelter, and clothing. Likewise, we would never make it to adulthood as functioning members of society without the family, the most basic of all institutions. Like the system of organs that make up our bodies—heart, lungs, kidneys, bladder—all social institutions are interrelated. Just as a change in one part of the body affects all others, a change in one institution affects the others. The **national society**, one of the largest social units in our model, includes a population of people, usually living within a specified geographic area, who are connected by common ideas and are subject to a particular political authority. It also features a social structure with groups and institutions. Although a national society is one of the largest social units, it is still a subsystem of the interdependent global system. France, Kenya, Brazil, and Laos are all national societies on separate continents, but they are linked

## Social Structures

This social world model will be used throughout our book to illustrate how each topic fits into the big picture, our social world. No social unit of our social world can stand alone. All units affect each other, either because they serve needs of other units in the system or because of intense conflict and tension affecting different units. The social world is organized into two parts—structures and processes. Now, let us take a trip through our social world.





*This refugee mother and child from Mozambique represent the smallest social unit, a dyad. In this case, they are trying to survive with help from larger groups such as the United Nations.*

innovations. Each unit has its own environment to which it must adjust, just as each individual has a unique social world, including family, friends, and other social units that make up the immediate environment. Some parts of the environment are more important to the social unit than others. Your local church, synagogue, or mosque is located in a community environment. That religious organization may seem autonomous and independent, but it depends on its national organization for guidelines and support, the local police force to protect the building from vandalism, and the local economy to provide jobs to members so that the members, in turn, can support the organization. If the religious education program is going to train children to understand the scriptures, the local schools are needed

to teach the children to read. A religious group may also be affected by other religious bodies, competing with one another for potential members from the community. These religious groups may work cooperatively—organizing a summer program for children or jointly sponsoring a holiday celebration—or they may define one another as evil, each trying to stigmatize the other. Moreover, one local religious group may be composed primarily of professional and business people, and another group mostly of laboring people. The religious groups may experience conflict in part because they each serve different socioeconomic constituencies.

The point is that to understand a social unit or the human body, we must consider the structure and processes within the unit, as well as the interaction with the surrounding environment. No matter what social unit the sociologist studies, the unit cannot be understood without considering the interaction of that unit with its unique environment.

Perfect relationships or complete harmony between the social units is unusual. Social units are often motivated by self-interests and self-preservation, with the result that they compete with other groups and units for resources (time, money, skills, energy of members). Therefore, social units within the society are often in conflict. Whether groups are in conflict or mutually supportive does not change their interrelatedness; units are interdependent. The nature of that interdependence is likely to change over time and can be studied using the scientific method.

## Studying the Social World: Levels of Analysis

Picture for a moment your sociology class as a social unit in your social world. Students (individuals) make up the class, the class (a small group) is offered by the sociology department, the sociology department (a large group) is part of the college or university, the university (an organization) is located in a community and follows the practices approved by the social institution (education) of which it is a part, and education is an institution located within a nation. The practices the university follows are determined by a larger accrediting unit that provides guidelines and oversight for institutions. The national society, represented by the national government, is shaped by global events—technological and economic competition between nations, natural disasters, global warming, wars, and terrorist attacks. Such events influence national policies and goals, including policies for the educational system. Thus, global tensions and conflicts may shape the curriculum that the individual experiences in the sociology classroom.

Each of these social units—from the smallest (the individual student) to the largest (society and the global system)—is referred to as a level of analysis (see Table 1.4).



Table 1.4 The Structure of Society and Levels of Analysis

Level		Parts of Education	
Micro-level analysis	Interpersonal	Sociology class; study group cramming for an exam	Local organizations
Meso-level analysis	Organizations and institutions	University; sociology department	State boards of education; National Education Association
	Ethnic groups within a nation	Islamic madrasahs or Jewish yeshiva school systems	Policy and laws governing education
Macro-level analysis	Nations	World literacy programs	Global community

These levels are illustrated in the social world model at the beginning of each chapter, and relation to that chapter's content is shown through examples in the model.

## MICRO-LEVEL ANALYSIS

Sometimes, sociologists ask questions about face-to-face interactions in dyads or small groups. A focus on individual or small-group interaction entails **micro-level analysis**. Micro-level analysis is important because face-to-face interaction forms the basic foundation of all social groups and organizations to which we belong, from families to corporations to societies. We are members of many groups at the micro level.

To illustrate micro-level analysis, consider the problem of spousal abuse. Why does a person remain in an abusive relationship, knowing that each year thousands of people are killed by their lovers or mates and millions more are severely and repeatedly battered? To answer this, several possible micro-level explanations can be considered. One view is that the abusive partner has convinced this person that she is powerless in the relationship or that she “deserves” the abuse. Therefore, she gives up in despair of ever being able to alter the situation. The abuse is viewed as part of the interaction—of action and reaction—and the partners come to see abuse as what comprises “normal” interaction.

Another explanation for remaining in the abusive relationship is that the person may have been brought up in a family situation where battering was an everyday part of life. However unpleasant and unnatural this may seem to outsiders, it may be seen by the abuser or by the abused as a “normal” and acceptable part of intimate relationships. Another possibility is that an abused woman may fear that her children will be harmed or that she will be harshly judged by her family or church if she “abandons” her mate. She may have few resources to make leaving the abusive situation possible. To study each of these possible explanations involves analysis at the micro level because each focuses on interpersonal interaction factors rather than on society-wide trends or forces. Meso-level concerns lead to quite different explanations for abuse.



This photo depicts the damage following the catastrophic earthquake that hit Haiti on January 12, 2010. This event not only changed the lives of people in Haiti—one of the poorest countries in the world—but had ripple effects on economic exchange, relief efforts around the globe, and international trade. Those, in turn, can affect the cost of various products such as the foods you put on your table.

Analysis of intermediate-size social units, called **meso-level analysis**, involves looking at units smaller than the nation but larger than the local community or even the region. This level includes national institutions (e.g., the economy of a country, the national educational system, or the political system within a country); nationwide organizations (e.g., a political party, a soccer league, or a national women's rights organization); nationwide corporations (e.g., Ford Motor Company or IBM); and ethnic groups that have an identity as a group (e.g., Jews, Mexican Americans, or the Lakota Sioux in the United States). Organizations, institutions, and ethnic communities are smaller than the nation or global social forces, but they are still beyond the everyday personal

## MESO-LEVEL ANALYSIS



experience and control of individuals, unless those individuals organize to collectively change these structures. They are intermediate in the sense of being too large to know everyone in the group, but they are not nation-states at the macro level. Consider the fact that it is easier to bring about change in a state in the United States, a province in Canada, or a prefecture in Japan than the national bureaucracies of countries.

In discussing micro-level analysis, we used the example of domestic violence. We must be careful not to “blame the victim”—in this case, the abused person—for getting into an abusive relationship and for failing to act in ways that stop the abuse. To avoid blaming victims for their own suffering, many social scientists look for broader explanations of spousal abuse, such as the social conditions at the meso level of society that cause the problem (Straus and Gelles 1990). When a pattern of behavior in society occurs with increasing frequency, it cannot be understood solely from the point of view of individual cases or micro-level causes. For instance, sociological findings show that fluctuations in spousal or child abuse are related to levels of unemployment. Frustration resulting in abuse erupts within families when poor economic conditions make it nearly impossible for people to find stable and reliable means of supporting themselves and their families. Economic issues must be addressed if violence in the home is to be lessened.

### MACRO-LEVEL ANALYSIS

Studying the largest social units in the social world, called **macro-level analysis**, involves looking at entire nations, global forces, and international social trends. Macro-level analysis is essential to our understanding of how larger social forces, such as global events, shape our everyday lives. A natural disaster such as the 2005 tsunami in Indonesia, the heat waves of summer 2006 in Europe, the floods in the United States in the summer of 2008 and winter of 2009, or frequent earthquakes around the world may change the foods we are able to put on our family dinner table because much of our cuisine is now imported from other parts of the world. Map 1.1 shows some of the most deadly natural disasters of the past few years. Likewise, a political conflict on the other side of the planet can lead to war, which means that a member of your family may be called up to active duty and sent into harm's way more than 7,000 miles from your home. Each member of the family may experience individual stress, have trouble concentrating, and feel ill with worry. The entire globe has become an interdependent social unit. If we are to prosper and thrive in the twenty-first century, we need to understand connections that go beyond our local communities.

Even patterns such as domestic violence, considered as micro- and meso-level issues above, can be examined at the macro level. A study of 95 societies around the world

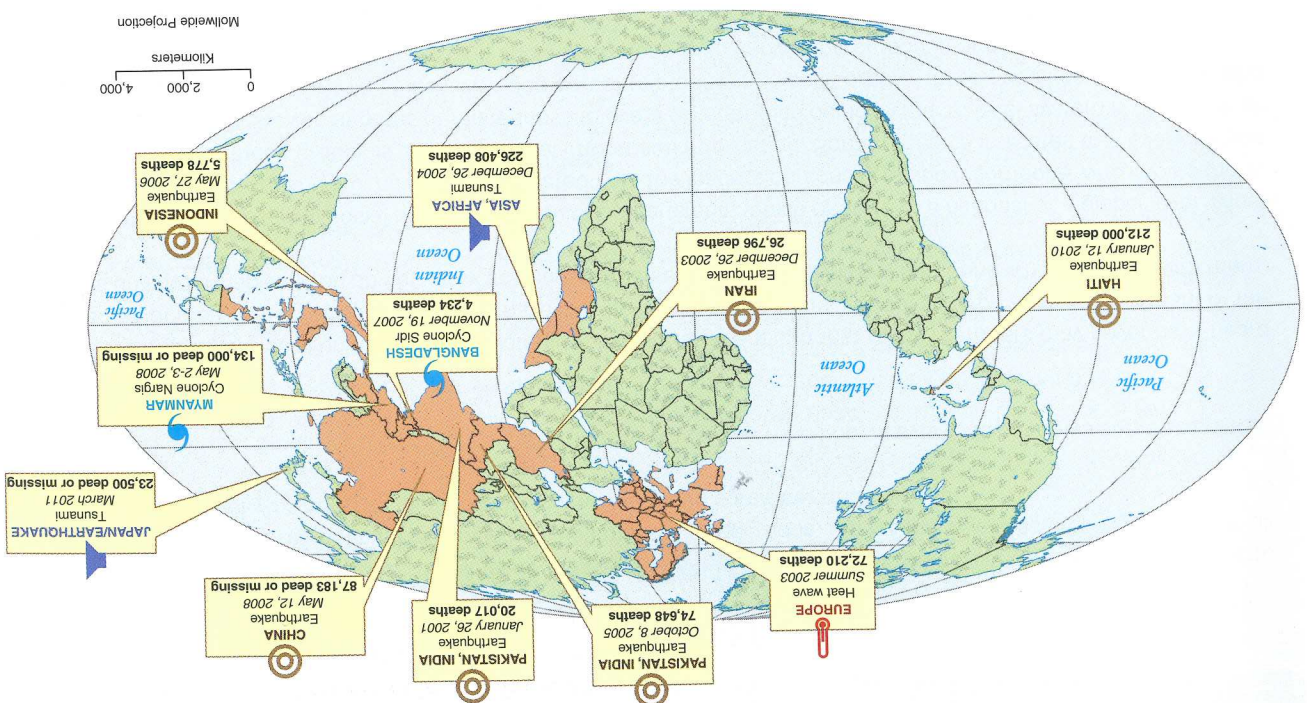
found that violence against women (especially rape) occurs at very different rates in different societies, with some societies being completely free of rape (Benderly 1982) and others having a “culture of rape.” The most consistent predictor of violence against women was a macho conception of masculine roles and personality. Societies that did not define masculinity in terms of dominance and control were virtually free of rape. Some sociologists believe that the same pattern holds for domestic violence: A society or subgroup within society that teaches males that the finest expression of their masculinity is physical strength and domination is very likely to have battered women (Burn 2005). The point is that understanding individual human behavior often requires investigation of larger societal beliefs that support that behavior. Worldwide patterns may tell us something about a social problem and offer new lenses for understanding variables that contribute to a problem. Try the “Engaging Sociology” activity on page 24 to test your understanding of levels of analysis and the sociological imagination.

### Thinking Sociologically

What factors influenced you to take this sociology class? Micro-level factors might include your advisor, your schedule, and a previous interest in sociology. At the meso and macro levels, what other factors influenced you?

Distinctions between each level of analysis are not sharply delineated. The micro level shades into the meso level, and the lines between the meso level and the macro level are blurry. Still, it is clear that in some micro-level social units, you know everyone, or at least every member of the social unit is only two degrees of relatedness away. Every person in the social unit knows someone whom you also know. We also all participate in meso-level social units that are smaller than the nation but can be huge. Millions of people may belong to the same religious denomination or the same political party. We have connections with those people, and our lives are affected by people we do not even know. Consider political activities in the United States and other countries that take place on the Internet. In political campaigns, millions of individuals join organizations such as MoveOn.org and TrueMajority, participate in dialogues online, and contribute money to political organizations. People living thousands of miles from one another united financially and in spirit to support Obama-Biden or McCain-Palin in the 2008 U.S. election. Thus, the meso level is different from the micro level, but both influence us. The macro





**Map 1.1** The Deadliest Natural Disasters From January 2001 to June 2011  
Source: Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters 2011. Map by Anna Versluis.

## Thinking Sociologically

Place the groups to which you belong in a hierarchy from micro to meso to macro levels. Note how each social unit and its subunits exist within a larger unit until you reach the level of the entire global community.

level is even more removed from the individual, but its impact can change our lives. The social world model presented in the chapter opening illustrates the interplay of micro-, meso-, and macro-level forces, and Figure 1.2 illustrates that this micro-to-macro model should be seen as a continuum. In "Sociology Around the World" on page 25 we examine a village in Tunisia to see how macro-level forces influence a meso-level local community and individual micro-level lives.

## Micro social units      Meso social units      Macro social units

**Figure 1.2** The Micro-to-Macro Continuum



## Engaging Sociology

### Micro-Meso-Macro

Look at the list of various groups and other social units below. Identify which group would belong in each level—(1) micro, (2) meso, or (3) macro. The definitions should help you make your decisions, but keep in mind that not all social units fall clearly into one level. Answers are found online at [www.sagepub.com/oswcondensed2e](http://www.sagepub.com/oswcondensed2e).

**Micro-level groups:** Small, local community social units in which everyone knows everyone or knows someone whom you also know.

**Meso-level groups:** Social units of intermediate size, usually large enough that many members may never have heard the names of many other members and may have little access to the leaders, yet not so large as to seem distant or the leaders unapproachable. If you do not know the leaders yourself, you probably know someone who is friends with them.

**Macro-level groups:** Large social units, usually quite bureaucratic, which operate at a national or a global level. Most members are unlikely to know or have communicated with the leaders personally or know someone who knows them. The “business” of these groups is of international import and implication. Some research indicates that every person on the planet is within seven degrees of relatedness to every other human being. A macro-level system is one in which *most* of the members are within at least five degrees of relatedness to each other—that is, you know someone who knows someone who knows someone who knows the person in question.

#### 1. Micro social units

- \_\_\_\_\_ Your nuclear family
- \_\_\_\_\_ The United Nations
- \_\_\_\_\_ A local chapter of the Lions Club or the Rotary Club
- \_\_\_\_\_ Your high school baseball team
- \_\_\_\_\_ India
- \_\_\_\_\_ NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization)
- \_\_\_\_\_ The First Baptist Church in Muncie, Indiana
- \_\_\_\_\_ World Bank
- \_\_\_\_\_ A family reunion
- \_\_\_\_\_ Google, Inc. (international)
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Department of Education for the Commonwealth of Kentucky
- \_\_\_\_\_ The show choir in your local high school
- \_\_\_\_\_ African Canadians

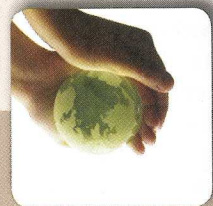
#### 2. Meso social units

- \_\_\_\_\_ The Dineh (Navajo) people
- \_\_\_\_\_ Canada
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Republican Party in the United States
- \_\_\_\_\_ The World Court
- \_\_\_\_\_ A fraternity at your college
- \_\_\_\_\_ International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Ministry of Education for Spain
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Roman Catholic Church (with its headquarters at the Vatican in Rome)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Australia
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Chi Omega National Sorority
- \_\_\_\_\_ Boy Scout Troop #3 in Marion, Ohio
- \_\_\_\_\_ Al-Qaeda (an international alliance of terrorist organizations)
- \_\_\_\_\_ The provincial government for the Canadian province of Ontario
- \_\_\_\_\_ The United States of America

#### 3. Macro social units

Most of these fall into clear categories, but some are “on the line,” and one could legitimately place them in more than one group. See how your authors rate these at [www.sagepub.com/oswcondensed2e](http://www.sagepub.com/oswcondensed2e). There is a second exercise online that asks you to apply these categories to identify some connections.





**T**his is a story of change as macro-level innovations enter a small traditional village. It illustrates how the social units of the social world model and the three levels of analysis enter into sociological analysis. As you read, try to identify both the units and levels of analysis being discussed and the impact of globalization on a community that cannot know what these changes will bring.

The workday began at dawn as usual in the small fishing village on the coast of Tunisia, North Africa. Men prepared their nets and boats for the day, while women prepared breakfast and dressed the young children for school. About 10 a.m., it began—the event that would change this picturesque village forever. Bulldozers arrived first, followed by trench diggers and cement mixers, to begin their overhaul of the village.

Villagers had suspected something was afoot when important-looking officials arrived two months earlier with foreign businessmen, followed by two teams of surveyors. Without their approval, the government had sold land that the village had held communally for generations to the foreigners so they could build a multimillion-dollar hotel and casino. When concerned citizens asked what was happening in their village, they were assured that their way of life would not change. The contractor from the capital city of Tunis said they would still have access to the beach and ocean for fishing. He also promised them many benefits from the hotel project—jobs, help from the government to improve roads and housing, and a higher standard of living.

The contractor had set up camp in a trailer on the beach, and word soon got around that he would be hiring some men for higher hourly wages than they could make in a day or even month of fishing. Rivalries soon developed between friends over who should apply for the limited number of jobs. As the bulldozers moved in, residents had mixed opinions about the changes taking place in their village and their lives. Some saw the changes as exciting opportunities for new jobs and recognition of their

beautiful village; others viewed the changes as destroying a lifestyle that was all they and generations before them had known.

Today, the village is dwarfed by the huge hotel, and the locals are looked on as quaint curiosities by the European tourists. Fishing has become a secondary source of employment to working in the hotel and casino or selling local crafts and trinkets to souvenir-seeking visitors. Many women are now employed outside the home by the hotel, creating new family structures as grandparents, unemployed men, and other relations take over child-rearing responsibilities.

To understand the changes in this one small village and other communities facing similar change, a sociologist uses the sociological imagination. This involves understanding the global, political, and economic trends that are affecting this village and its inhabitants (macro-level analysis). It requires comprehension of transformation of social institutions within the nation (meso-level analysis). Finally, sociological investigation explores how change impacts the individual Tunisian villagers (micro-level analysis).

To sociologically analyze the process of change, it is important to understand what is going on in this situation. The government officials and the international business representatives negotiated a lucrative deal to benefit both Tunisia and the business corporation. The community and its powerless residents presented few obstacles to the project from the point of view of the government, and in fact, government officials reasoned that villagers could benefit from new jobs. However, economic and family roles of the villagers—how they earned a living and how they raised their children—changed dramatically with the disruption to their traditional ways. The process of change began with the demand of people far from Tunisia for vacation spots in the sun. Ultimately, this process reached the village and local environment, profoundly affecting the village and everyone in it. For this Tunisian village, the old ways are gone forever.



## The Social World Model and This Book

Throughout this book, the social world model will be used as the framework for understanding the social units, social processes, and surrounding environment. Each social unit and process is taken out, examined, and returned to its place in the interconnected social world model so that you can comprehend the whole social world and its parts, like putting a puzzle together. Look for the model at the beginning of every chapter. You can also expect the micro-, meso-, and macro-level dimensions of issues to be explored throughout the text.

The social world engulfs each of us from the moment of our birth until we die. Throughout our lives, each of us is part of a set of social relationships that provide guidelines for how we interact with others and how we see ourselves. This does not mean that human behavior is strictly determined by our links to the social world. Humans are more than mere puppets whose behavior is programmed by social structure. It does mean, however, that influence between the individual and the larger social world is reciprocal. We are influenced by and we have influence on our social environment. The social world is a human creation, and we can and

do change that which we create. It acts on us, and we act on it. In this sense, social units are not static but are constantly emerging and changing in the course of human interaction.

The difficulty for most of us is that we are so caught up in our daily concerns that we fail to see and understand the social forces that are at work in our personal environments. What we need are the conceptual and methodological tools to help us gain a more complete and accurate perspective on the social world. The concepts, theories, methods, and levels of analysis employed by sociologists are the very tools that will help give us that perspective. To use an analogy, each different lens of a camera gives the photographer a unique view of the world. Wide-angle lenses, close-up lenses, telephoto lenses, and special filters each serve a purpose in creating a distinctive picture or frame of the world. No one lens will provide the complete picture. Yet, the combination of images produced by various lenses allows us to examine in detail aspects of the world we might ordinarily overlook. That is what the sociological perspective gives us: a unique set of tools to see the social world with more penetrating clarity. In seeing the social world from a sociological perspective, we are better able to use that knowledge constructively, and we are better able to understand who we are as social beings. Practice the levels of analysis in the following “Engaging Sociology.”



*Building and staffing of this resort in Tunisia—which is patronized by affluent people from other continents (global)—changed the economy, the culture, the social structure (meso level), and individual lives (micro level) in the local community.*



## Engaging Sociology

### Micro-Meso-Macro: An Application Exercise

Imagine that there has been a major economic downturn (recession) in your local community. Identify four possible events at each level (micro, meso, and macro) that could contribute to the economic troubles in your town.

The micro (local community) level:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

The meso (intermediate—state, organizational, or ethnic subculture) level:

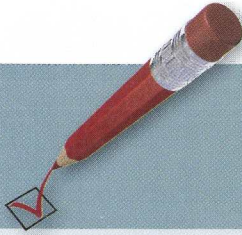
1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

The macro (national/global) level:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

**T**he next issue, then, is how we gather data that inform how we understand and influence the social world. When we say we know something about society, how is it that we know? What is considered evidence in sociology, and what lens (theory) do we use to interpret the data? These are the central issues of the next chapter.





## What Have We Learned?

We live in a complex social world with many layers of interaction. If we really want to understand our own lives, we need to comprehend the various levels of analysis that affect our lives and the dynamic connections between those levels. Moreover, as citizens of democracies, we need to understand how to influence our social environments, from city councils, school boards, and state legislatures to congressional, presidential, and other organizations with major policy makers. To do so wisely, we need both objective lenses for viewing this complex social world and accurate, valid information (facts) about the society. As the science of society, sociology can provide both tested empirical data and a broad, analytical perspective.

### Key Points:

- Humans are, at their very core, social animals—more akin to pack or herd animals than to individualistic cats. (See pp. 5–7.)
- A core concept in sociology is the sociological imagination. It requires that we see how our individual lives and personal troubles are shaped by historical and structural events outside of our everyday lives. It also prods us to see how we can influence our society. (See pp. 9–10.)
- Sociology is a social science and, therefore, uses the tools of the sciences to establish credible evidence to understand our social world. As a science, sociology is scientific and objective rather than value laden. (See pp. 10–13.)
- Sociology has pragmatic applications, including those that are essential for the job market. (See pp. 13–17.)
- Sociology focuses on social units or groups, on social structures such as institutions, on social processes that give a social unit its dynamic character, and on their environments. (See pp. 17–20.)
- The social world model is the organizing theme of this book. Using the sociological imagination, we can understand our social world best by clarifying the interconnections between micro, meso, and macro levels of the social system. Each chapter of this book will examine society at these three levels of analysis. (See pp. 20–27.)



## Contributing to Our Social World: What Can We Do?

At the end of this and all subsequent chapters, you will find suggestions for work, service learning, internships, and volunteering that encourage you to apply the concepts, principles, and ideas discussed in the chapter in practical contexts.

### At the Local Level:

- *Sociology departments' student organizations or clubs.* You can meet other students interested in sociology, get to know faculty members, and attend presentations by guest speakers. Visit a meeting and consider joining whether you are a sociology major or not. If no such organization exists, consider forming one with the help of a faculty member.

- *Undergraduate honors society, Alpha Kappa Delta (AKD).* Visit the AKD website at <http://sites.google.com/site/alphakappadeltainternational> and learn more about it and what it takes to join or form a chapter.

- *Volunteer opportunities.* This sociology course will give you ideas of many volunteer opportunities in which you may want to become involved. This is rewarding and good experience for future jobs.

### At the Regional and National Levels:

- *The American Sociological Association (ASA)* is the leading professional organization of sociologists in the United States. It has several programs and initiatives of special interest to students. Visit the ASA website at [www.asanet.org](http://www.asanet.org) and click on the "Teaching & Learning/Students: Undergraduate" link at the top of the page. Read the items and follow the links to additional material on the advantages of studying sociology. Most sociologists also participate in a major state or regional association. These groups are especially student friendly and feature publications and sessions at their annual meetings specifically for undergraduates. The organizations and website addresses are listed by the ASA, with direct links to their home pages at <http://www2.asanet.org/governance/aligned.html>.

Visit [www.sagepub.com/oswcondensed2](http://www.sagepub.com/oswcondensed2) for online activities, sample tests, and other helpful information. Select "Chapter 1: Sociology" for chapter-specific activities.