**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**Chapter 1**

* Think about Mills’s concept of the sociological imagination and its ambition to draw together what Mills called *private troubles* and *public issues.* Think of a private trouble that sociologists might classify as also being a public issue. Share your example with your classmates.
* What is critical thinking? What does it mean to be a critical thinker in our approach to understanding society and social issues or problems?
* In the chapter, we asked why there were so few “founding mothers” in sociology. What factors explain the dearth of women’s voices? What about the lack of minority voices? What effects do you think these factors may have had on the development of the discipline?
* What is theory? What is its function in the discipline of sociology?
* Recall the three key theoretical paradigms discussed in this chapter—structural functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism. Discuss the ways these diverse “glasses” analyze deviance, its labeling, and its punishment in society. Try applying a similar analysis to another social phenomenon, such as class inequality or traditional gender roles.