Reading 3

Careers in Sociology

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Step #1: "Why am I in Sociology Anyway?"

If you are like most students, sociology is a new and somewhat strange discipline to be studying. It is new in that few students entering college have even heard of it, and even fewer intend to major in it. It is strange in that there is virtually no topic which sociology does not touch and therefore it is difficult to see where the discipline is distinct from others. It is probably also the case that you are reading this book, and therefore taking this course because the degree you are interested in requires it. Or, it is part of the general education requirements for all students at your college. In other words, you have to take this course. Have you wondered why?

The answer lies in the fact that sociology is such a topically broad discipline. If there is a central focus it is the issues, problems, trials, and triumphs of people trying to get along with each other; in other words, human relationships. So, the discipline has something to say to people trying to get along in a structure called a family, or members of a team, or neighbors, or employees trying to figure out work relations. The point is, sociology is relevant wherever human relations are at work. It follows then, that an improved understanding of human relations should translate into better conduct of those relations. There are exceptions, of course, such as the manipulation of those relations for the benefit of some while at the expense of others. But the general point remains, sociology provides insights which are applicable to a wide array of human circumstances.

Over the course of a semester most students will have one or both of the following experiences.

The first experience is that you will identify personally with one or more of the topics explored. You will see clearly what the discipline has to say about some aspect of human relations because you have actually experienced the phenomenon in question. For example, Emile Durkheim used the term anomie to describe the effects of radical social change on people. He was writing about the effects of mass migration from the countryside to the city in early 20th century France. On the surface such
A暑期 camp program in sociology.

Step #2: "OK, I'm Interested, But Is There A

Please note: This is an introductory page.

In the case of instructors, nearly all concepts are taught in class. Given that the concepts are challenging, students are expected to engage actively in class discussions and participate in group activities.

For graduate students, the focus is on applying sociological theories to real-world situations. It is expected that students will demonstrate an understanding of sociological concepts and apply them to specific situations.
Where Sociological Interests Meet

The Sociological Practice Section of the American Sociological Association
The American Sociological Association

The Chicago Sociological Association
The Society for Applied Sociology
The Society for Social Research & the Chicago Sociological Association

By now, you should have a clear understanding of the various career opportunities available to sociologists and the different fields of study that sociologists work in. This knowledge will help you make informed career decisions. 

For more information or to explore opportunities in sociological practice, visit the American Sociological Association’s website or contact local sociological organizations in your area.
The point is, sociology is a discipline that can help you see the world in a different way. By studying the social sciences, you can learn to think critically about the world around you and develop a deeper understanding of the forces that shape society. This can lead to a greater appreciation of the complexity of social issues.

In the world of work, a degree in sociology can open doors to a variety of careers. From social workers to market researchers, sociologists have found success in a wide range of fields. By developing a strong foundation in the social sciences, you can position yourself for success in any number of industries.

Step 3: "What Will I Achieve?"

There are several benefits to pursuing a degree in sociology. For one, it can provide a solid foundation for further study or a career in a related field. Additionally, the skills you develop in college, such as critical thinking and research abilities, can be applied to a variety of situations.

Conclusion

In conclusion, sociology is a valuable field of study that can provide both personal and professional benefits. Whether you are interested in a career in social work, research, or another area, the skills you develop in college can help you succeed in any number of endeavors.
which promotes continuation of the learning process, both in perspective and practice.

The third element in common is what I call opportunism. Because sociologists combine both an anticipation of change with an orientation and an ability to learn, then opportunism is produced. For many of us, an opportunity is something which simply happens. However, an appropriate orientation can produce opportunities. There are three important steps to producing opportunities. These are, 1) actively looking for opportunities, 2) recognizing opportunities when they appear, and 3) taking advantage of opportunities once they are recognized. For example, networking is one way in which opportunities are produced. We all have networks but the question is whether the network is actively operated. If you understand the concept you can employ it, if not then opportunities are limited.

The three elements in common among the CP’s, understanding change, pursuing education, and being opportunistic, are only part of the story. Other characteristics possessed by those with successful careers include personal traits such as perseverance and a willingness to work hard.

The reason for reviewing these characteristics is to emphasize that your career is the result of a set of conscious choices and actions. The better your insights and information about the circumstances you are in, the better your choices and subsequent actions will serve your interests. But this is likely only when you begin the process of taking responsibility for your own future. If you recall, I told you about a parent who was concerned about the career prospects of their son’s $60,000 college education. The problem is, dollars invested and career development do not smoothly correlate; that is, one does not automatically translate into the other. You must put yourself in a position where you can exercise opportunism. But how is this done?

Step #5: The Objective is Relevance

... It has not been my intent to talk you into making sociology your academic major or your career. I do believe, however, that sociology can significantly enhance any career you choose. ... But more than this, take what you learn from the classroom ... to your life outside the classroom. Be aggressive about it. Ask questions. See what others who have gone before you have experienced. Ask your professor to bring alumni to class. Write to the ASA and begin researching the careers of other sociologists. Ask the questions you have written in the margins. Challenge the common assumptions. Expect change. Learn about your world. Be opportunistic. Your future is not a simple statistical function of chance. It is a function of conscious choice and intentional action. Therefore, look for the opportunities, see the opportunities, and seize the opportunities.

Ultimately the objective is relevance. You want yourself, your life, your work and career to be meaningful, to make a difference. ... And that is the beauty of the discipline. It can be relevant regardless of the circumstance. However, you must be prepared, you must be responsible, you must articulate some values around which your future can be focused. Mere activity is meaningless. A job for a job’s sake will not take you far. But through this course ... you have begun a process of consciously choosing and producing a life characterized by relevance and meaning.

Study Questions

1. What are some of the typical jobs sociologists do with their degree?
2. What are the prospects for “income” and for “meaning” with a career in sociology, according to Stephens?

References

Sociology students pursue careers in a variety of fields: business, child welfare, computer industry, criminal justice, education (teaching, evaluation research, consultation, research), gerontology, health care, international relations, law, law enforcement, leisure/recreation/sport, military/military intelligence, social work, and urban planning or management, and more. To learn more about career opportunities for sociology students