

PRODUCED BY USA TODAY EDUCATION

Today's Theme

Culture & Trends

USA TODAY Snapshot®:
A jittery world

Activity: Responding to terrorist threats
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Introducing ... Inside USA TODAY

USA TODAY Education has redesigned its signature daily lesson plan to better meet the needs of educators and students. You'll find the same in-depth, cross-curricular activities in a more streamlined, sophisticated format. We hope you enjoy our new look!

News To Use

News

- Saint indeed: Bush helps revive city
- States attack property taxes

Money

- Ford Motor considers going private
- Apple recalls 1.8 million laptop batteries

Sports

- Agass's incredible journey nears end
- Overtime clock still ticking in college football

Life

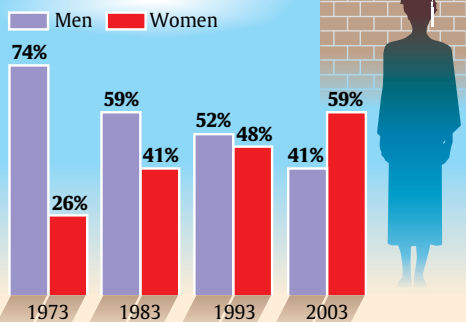
- French Quarter set to roll
- More hit road, fewer fly this Labor Day

Careers

USA TODAY Snapshots®

The experts on society

Percentage of doctorates awarded to men and women in sociology:



Note: Most recent available data.
Source: American Sociological Association

By David Stuckey and Frank Pompa, USA TODAY

Sociologists study the institutions and developments of human societies and human interactions. What specific issues do you think interest female sociologists? Why have their numbers swelled?

News

Astronomers dwarf Pluto's status in the solar system, 1A

APPLICATIONS: science, analysis, evaluation, summarizing

DISCUSSION: Why did the International Astronomical Union decide to revoke Pluto's status as a planet? How did astronomers arrive at their conclusion? What criteria must a celestial body now meet to be classified as a planet? How will Pluto's downgraded status affect science? Why does astronomer Sanjay Limaye believe the new set of planet criteria is "utter nonsense"?

ACTIVITY: Imagine that you are a science writer for a major encyclopedia publisher. Using information from the article and other sources, draft a paragraph that summarizes the new planet criteria, describes Pluto's status in our solar system and identifies the remaining eight planets. Finally, briefly explain whether you agree or disagree with the IAU's decision.

VOCABULARY
celestial
comet belt
editor in chief

Katrina insurance disputes drag on, 1-2B

Money

APPLICATIONS: business, social studies, knowledge, analysis

DISCUSSION: What effect are disputes over insurance coverage having on individuals and families who lost their homes during Hurricane Katrina? How are businesses being impacted? How have insurers responded to criticisms of their settlements? What are the "surf and turf" tactics used by insurance companies that attorney Richard Scuggs describes? Are they legal? Ethical?

ACTIVITY: An insurance policy is a contract between an insurer and insured that contains information regarding the risk, policyholder, contractual conditions and rate assessed. The insured pays a premium along with others who hold different policies with the same company.

VOCABULARY
expeditiously
inextricably
haunt

By doing so, policyholders share the risk of potential loss. Given this, explain the financial quagmire a major catastrophe presents to insurers and the insured.