

Sociological research on topics about social processes and institutions such as social networks, markets, communities, state building, education, crime, health, race, and volunteering informs the public, the media, educators, officials, and policy makers. Articles in the major media and in *Contexts*, a sociology magazine for understanding people in their social worlds (www.contextsmagazine.org), raise public awareness of social issues and also inform and instruct the public on the meaning and importance of sociology. Many study findings are counter-intuitive and they provide new knowledge in the face of bias, prejudice, or taken-for-granted assumptions. Much of this research comes from ASA's scholarly journals and is featured at Capitol Hill briefings, at Government Workshops, and on Expert Panels and Commissions. Some examples of this research follow.

Sociological Research Informs Many Publics

Buying Congress

Contrary to popular belief, big campaign contributions do not necessarily determine votes in the U.S. Congress. Congressional action is more likely to be a function of public opinion, ideology, and party affiliation (Burstein).

Counter Insurgency

Counter insurgency is a form of contentious struggle to gain the "hearts and minds of populations" in order to gain control of the state (Roxborough).

Education and Values

Despite widespread beliefs that U.S. schools no longer teach values, values permeate the primary school classrooms and school life (Brint).

Family Matters

Getting married can help alleviate depression (Frech and Williams).

Day Care Centers are the safest childcare option because they afford multiple forms of protection (Wrigley).

Mothers today spend more hours per week with their children than mothers of previous generations (Bianchi, Robinson, and Milkie).

How Markets Work

In the reproductive market place sperm donors are less valued than egg donors, contravening laws of supply and demand because donor eggs are more available than suitable sperm donors. This study is part of a growing set of studies about donations of blood and organs (Almeling).

Racial Composition

The sense of injustice abates for black and minority students who attend racially integrated high schools (Hagan).

Importance of Networks

Social network models help identify the transmission of infectious diseases (Watts).

Knowing many kinds of people in different social contexts improves chances of getting jobs, feeling in control of life and feeling healthy (Faust). Yet American's circle of close confidants has shrunk dramatically over the past two decades (McPherson).

Strengthening Communities

Living in wired neighborhoods with access to high speed local networks encourages greater community involvement. Members of these neighborhoods recognize and talk with 3 times as many neighbors and those in communities without wiring (Hampton).