

Sociology Restart

You have just blown up this sociology class. As a result we are changing everything about this class and we will now focus on how to do sociological research. Doing this kind of work is hard and takes many people years of schooling to do; we are going to do it this year. Since this can be a hard thing to do this list can help you get started.

Sociology is the study of groups of people and their cultures, customs, practices. Because this topic is so broad, and our culture is always changing, the possibilities for writing and research are endless. With sociology, you can research just about anything, from Beyonce to Scientology.

This list will also guide you to make your own, original topic based on theoretical sociology. The top ten sociological subjects are listed below with plenty of ideas for your research.

The list is organized around 10 umbrella topics, each with its own set of mini-topics. These umbrella topics include:

1. Race, Nationality, and Ethnicity
2. Mass Media
3. Sociology of Food
4. Youth Cultures
5. Sociology of Gender and Sexuality
6. Social Movements
7. Cults, Clans, and Communities
8. Class Conflict and Inequalities
9. Spirituality, Superstition, and Legends
10. Consumerism
11. The Family

Race Nationality and ethnicity

Race, nationality, and ethnicity are some of the most written about subjects in sociology. The classical sociologist Emile Durkheim discussed the effects of origin on a person and the solidarity that they feel with others from the same or similar origin. Sociologists like to study these bonds as well as the negative effects of difference.

The census data from your nation provides the raw materials for literally thousands of research papers. The following are some sociological topics on race, nationality, and ethnicity:

Race

- Racial Segregation in Cities
- The Correlation between Class and Race
- [insert race] and Education Levels
- Interracial Marriage Then and Now
- Racial Stereotypes and their Effects
- Culture and Race: Is Environment More Important than Race?
- Attitudes Toward Race and Police Brutality
- Race Riots: What's the Cause of Racial Unrest?
- Relationship Between Race and Class
- Relationship Between Race and Educational Levels

Ethnicity

- Ethnicity and Race: What is the Difference/What is the Correlation?
- How Ethnicity Affects Class
- Multi-Ethnic Individuals and their Position in Society
- Multicultural Society and the Dominant Culture
- How the Italians, and Irish Became "White"

Nationality

- Patriotism in [insert country]
- How [insert plural nationality] views [insert plural nationality]
- Nationality and Pride: What Makes a Patriot?
- Immigration and Assimilation
- America: Melting Pot or Salad Bowl?

The Sociology of Mass Media and Social Media

One of the most interesting topics of sociological research is the mass media. What we see on television, in magazines, and in theaters has an effect on us as members of society. There are endless topics to study in the media, but below is a list of topic ideas.

How _____ are Presented in the Media

- [insert a race]
- Young Women
- Women
- Men
- Young Men
- Children
- Disabled Individuals
- Celebrities [choose one]
- The Mentally Challenged

The Media's Target and Portrayal for Profit

- What Commercials Play at What Times During the Day? [Also, which channels do they play on?]
- Who Consumes the Most [insert genre] Music?
- Sexuality and Disney Movies
- Romantic Comedies and Women
- Gym, Tan, Laundry: A Study of *Jersey Shore* and its Viewers
- Children's Television
- Ratings and New Technologies: How Youth Watch Television

Social Media

- Youth and Social Media
- Social Media and Celebrity
- Harassment and Bullying on Social Media
- Social Networking in the New Millennium
- Twitter vs. Facebook vs. Instagram: Who Uses Each and Why?
- Does Social Media Make Us Lonely?
- Does Social Media Promote Narcissism?

Sociology of Food and Eating

Food culture is a very interesting topic to research not only in terms of how food is produced and distributed but also in terms of how it's consumed. Here are some possible research topics for those of you who want to learn more about how our food is grown, distributed, consumed.

How Food is Made:

- Where Does Food Come From? Meats, Vegetables, and More
- How Does [insert fast food place] Make their Food?
- Food Laws and Regulations
- Which Companies Supply Food to the US?
- The Use of Pesticides in Farms
- Monsanto Seeds
- The Seed Bank
- Farmers Markets and The "Slow Food" Movement
- The Rise of "Organic" Farming

How Food is Distributed:

- Import-Export Practices around the World
- Food Packaging Messages
- The Locations of Fast Food Chains in Relation to Low-Income Areas
- The Geographical Difference in Food Distribution: Class Inequality

How Food is Consumed:

- The Difference in Serving Sizes Over Time
- Do you Know What's In Your Food? A Study of Nutritional Facts and Food Education
- Where Do People Eat?
- Family Dinners and the Modern Day
- [Insert Country/State/City] Food Culture
- Are We What We Eat? A Study on Obesity
- Child Obesity
- Has Technology Changed the Way We Eat?
- Vegetarians, Vegans, and Others with Personal Food Regulations

- How the Media Advertises Food
- Attitudes Toward GMOs
- How Eating Habits Change Over Time

The Sociology of Youth Culture Today

Youth culture is another fascinating sociological topic. Young people belong to many subcultures, which they illustrate in their attitude, clothing, music, and more. Studying these cultures allows us to understand how our world works--particularly the media due to the fact that the majority of American media consumers are between the ages of 14 and 21.

- Hip Hop Culture in the 80's, 90's and 2000s
- Punk: Anarchy, Rebellion, and Revolution
- Extreme Sports Culture: Surf, Skate, and Snow
- How Adolescents are Affected by the Media
- "Emo" Culture: The Self-Destructive Teen
- Mean Girls: A Study of Competition between Young Women
- Jock Culture
- At-Risk Youth and Deviant Behavior
- Messages Promoted in [insert genre here] Music
- Masculinity and Femininity in High School
- Cliques and Outcasts: A Study of a High School Social Structure
- Bullying
- Cyber Bullying
- Maturity and the Media: Are Teens Pressured to Mature as Fast as their Favorite Stars?
- Sex and Adolescents

The Sociology of Gender and Sexuality

The gender divide has been one of the most important subjects that sociologists study because it exists in every culture around the world. Men and women have always been opposites in society, which has contributed to numerous inequalities. The following is a list of sociological research topics on gender.

- Gender Inequality on the Job
- Gendered Occupations: Nurses and Contractors
- Women in the Workplace
- Transgendered Individuals
- Homosexuality and How it is Portrayed in the Media
- "Coming Out": Feared or Loved
- The Gender Bias: How Men and Women are Treated Differently in Law, Media, and Social Interactions
- Anorexia and Women
- Gender Stereotypes in [media/workplace/region]
- The Feminist Revolution
- Women's Rights and Movements
- The White (Man's) House

The Sociology of Social Movements

Studying social movements and revolutions can illuminate how communities that share the same beliefs and goals form. Social movements are always happening, which makes them current as well as historical, so choosing a topic is easy!

To study a movement, just choose a movement or a group of people that are being oppressed. In addition to studying the movement itself, you can also choose to research its oppression, formation, accomplishments (or downfall), or its impact on larger society. Here are some movements to get you started:

- The Civil Rights
- Feminism (Suffragettes)
- Occupy Wall Street
- Animal Rights
- The French Revolution

- Nazism
- Prohibition
- The Tea Party
- Disability Rights
- Gay Rights (Gay Marriage)
- Fair Trade
- Human Rights
- Anti-Nuclear Movement
- American Indian Movement
- #BlackLivesMatter
- Anti-Psychiatry
- Anti-Vaccination

The Sociology of Cults, Clans, and Communities

People in society want to be a part of a group that shares their same beliefs. Sometimes these groups become so united that they are destructive, whereas some of the groups create solidarity, community, and fellowship. The following is a list of religions, cults, and other groups that share similar beliefs and can be studied.

- Moonies
- Christians
- Catholics
- Ku Klux Klan
- Nazis
- Hindu
- Buddhist
- Charles Manson
- Judaism
- Antoinism
- Scientologists
- Montana Doomsday Religious Cult - "Church Universal and Triumphant"
- Scientology
- Heaven's Gate

- Branch Davidians
- The People's Temple (Jim Jones)
- Aum Shinrikyo (Japanese cult responsible for 1995 sarin gas attack on Tokyo subway)

The Sociology of Class Conflict and Inequality

Classes are treated differently in every society. Because the inequalities are so deeply embedded in our society, it is difficult to eliminate them. Geographically, classes are segregated, which further complicates the pursuit for equality. Here are some topics to study:

- Class and Geographical Segregation
- Ghettos and Gated Communities
- Food in Rich and Poor Areas
- Schools in Low-Income Neighborhoods
- Taxes and Wages
- The Effects of the Ghetto on Youth
- The "Ghetto" Cycle: A Study of Recidivism and No Opportunities
- Wealth and Race
- City Funding and District Zones
- The Geography of Upward Mobility
- The "Culture of Poverty"
- The Relationship Between Poverty and Education
- Class and Parenting Styles
- The Welfare State
- Class and Contentment: Does Money Buy Happiness?

The Sociology of Spirituality, Superstition, and Folklore

One of my favorite topics to write about is ancient Hawaiian culture. The ancient Hawaiians had many myths and legends as do numerous other cultures. Sociological studies about myths and legends illustrate the purposes of these legends. Below are some interesting cultures and legends to get you started.

- Leprechauns
- Dolphins and the Amazon

- Pele, the Hawaiian Fire Goddess
- Viking Legends
- Egyptian Legends (Tombs, Afterlife, and Tut)
- Biblical Events
- Pandora's Box
- Mayan Culture
- Lochness Monster
- The Legend of the Three Sisters
- Big Foot
- Alien Abductions

The Sociology of Consumerism

Research about commodities can be done with little field work and mostly with available data online and in books. You could choose a number fo things to write about including the following:

- Vinyl Records or Music in other forms
- Currency/Gold/Rare Gems and Minerals (Inflation, Deflation)
- Art
- Artifacts (Rare or Other)
- Antiquities
- Technology
- Oil
- Food
- Entertainment
- Celebrity
- Fashion Accessories
- Toys
- Services/Wages

Sociology of the Family

The family is another fascinating topic for sociologists. Not only does everyone have a family, but one's family is often an incredibly important influence on one's life, for better or worse! Since our view of what a family is and should be is constantly changing, there's always something new to research. Here are a few topics to get you started:

- Unconventional Family Structures
- Influence of Parents on Child Behavior
- Long-Term Effects of Child Abuse
- Cross-Racial Adoption
- Effects of Divorce on the Family
- Single Parenting
- Family Differences Across Race and Ethnic Groups
- Teenage Mothers

Research Topic Proposal

Name: _____

Date: _____

Topic Umbrella:

Specific Topic: _____

Justification:

What you plan to study: