

As you begin studying sociology, you may be wondering what you can do with it, or what others who have studied it are doing now. What kind of role can a knowledge of sociology play in your life? What are some of the varied and interesting careers being pursued by people who have a B.A., an M.A., or a Ph.D. in sociology? To answer these questions, let's look at the lives and careers of some real people who credit sociology with having a major impact on what they do. These examples include men and women working in business, education, advertising, journalism, media, and law. What they say can show you how sociology can help you enrich your own career and personal life as well.

#### A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN SOCIOLOGY

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**Dorothy H. Roberts** is Chairman of the Board of The Echo Design Group, Inc., one of the best-known manufacturers of scarves in the United States. Her father, Edgar C. Hyman, founded the business in 1923, and even as a child she traveled to Europe with her parents on business trips. She attended Carleton College in Minnesota for two years before transferring to Connecticut College, where she earned her B.S. in sociology in 1950. She and her husband, Paul Roberts, joined Echo after college graduation. In 1953 they had a daughter, followed by a son in 1956. Mrs. Roberts worked part-time for a while when they were young, directing advertising, publicity, and special promotions. Her husband became company president, and as the children grew older, Mrs. Roberts became her husband's chief business associate. When he died at age 50 in 1978, Mrs. Roberts became Echo's chief executive.

This is how Mrs. Roberts see the benefits of her sociology major:

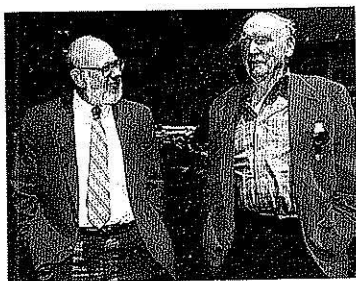
*I have always been interested in people—whether in groups or as individuals. This led me to major in sociology and minor in psychology. As I see it, sociology is the study of people in groups, and psychology is the study of people as individuals. My background in sociology has given me a foundation from which to communicate with people around me—whether it be employees, customers, or suppliers.*

*More than ever, through my experience in business, I've learned that to succeed one must care for and be interested in people. The interrelationships between people, and between groups of people as departments, are of primary importance in attaining any goal that an organization sets out to achieve.*

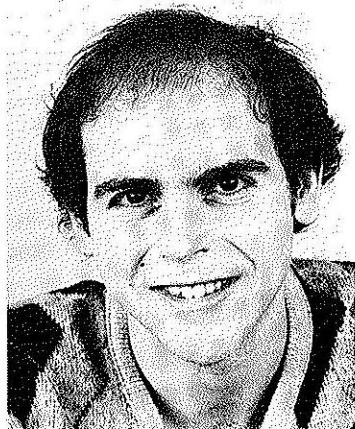


**Denise Richardson** majored in sociology as an undergraduate at Hunter College. She began her media career in 1972 as an employee in the corporate Personnel Department of RKO General Inc. She was the company's first Equal Employment Administrator responsible for the implementation of the company's Affirmative Action programs. While at RKO she had the opportunity to move into journalism by becoming a reporter and Public Affairs Coordinator at WXLO-FM (now KISS-FM), and was responsible for all weekend news and public affairs programming for two years at the RKO-FM radio station. In 1977 she joined the WOR-AM news staff, where she was a street reporter; she also anchored newsbroadcasts and coanchored a public affairs program called *Upfront*, which dealt with minority issues. She was responsible for conceiving, researching, and narrating "The Blue Minority," a 90-minute award-winning program on the day-to-day problems of the New York City street cop. In September 1981 she moved to WOR-TV, where she anchored *News 9: Updates*, served as a general assignment reporter for *News 9: Primetime* and *News 9: At Noon*, and then in 1985 she became the anchor woman for *Straight Talk*, an hour-long, issue-oriented program aired seven days a week. She now works on special projects at WOR-TV. Asked about the value of her major in sociology, Ms. Richardson said.

*A help it is. My understanding of the development of human society sensitizes me to reporting what people do that makes society work.*



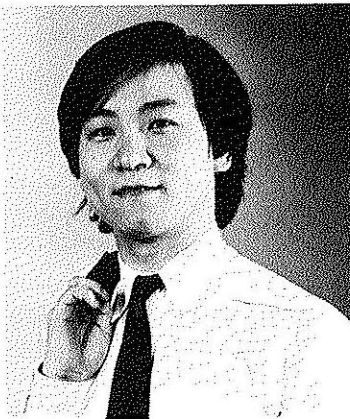
**Alvin P. Sanoff** is currently a Senior Editor at *U.S. News & World Report*, where he writes about the media, culture, social issues, and trends. Recent cover stories he has authored include "Who Will Control TV?" and "The New American Male." He also conducts the magazine's "Conversations" series of interviews with scholars, novelists, and social and cultural leaders. He is shown here interviewing Pulitzer prize-winning novelist and poet, Robert Penn Warren. He graduated with an A.B. in sociology from Harvard College in 1963. Asked how he uses sociology in his career, Mr. Sanoff said,



**James L. Castagna** received his B.A. and M.A. in sociology and his J.D. in law from New York University. He worked for five years as a field attorney for the National Labor Relations Board, investigating and litigating unfair labor practice charges. He has served as a media consultant to the Center for the Media Arts, and as an on-camera investigative reporter for two documentary videos dealing with runaway children and the homeless. He has practiced law privately, has taught labor relations, and he has also managed to enjoy a career as a playwright and actor.

Mr. Castagna says,

*Studying sociology increased my awareness of the inequalities in the society and the victimization of certain groups of its people. It has motivated me to investigate further the relationship between the legal system and the society which it attempts to order. As a sociologist, playwright, actor, and lawyer, I have attempted to raise the consciousness of other individuals regarding the society's unfair treatment of poor people and minorities. I believe these attempts have brought about a better protection of basic human rights.*



**Peter Kim** received his B.A., M.A., and M.Phil. in sociology at New York University. As a full-time graduate student he received a Minority Fellowship from the American Sociological Association. He joined J. Walter Thompson USA in 1984 and within a year was promoted to Vice President. He was the principal architect of that firm's "New American Consumer Study." The Consumer Information Department, which he founded, maintains an extensive in-house electronic data archive on consumers drawn from hundreds of different proprietary, syndicated, government, and academic sources. He also lectures on the specific marketing and advertising implications of the current changes in the consumer marketplace for many clients of the agency. He is now a Senior Vice President and Executive Director of the Consumer Behavior Department.

Mr. Kim sees his sociology background as invaluable for what he does. He says,

*Research methodology, survey design, multivariate statistics, and a general understanding of social research are essential tools for today's market researchers. However, the true competitive advantage comes not from tools but from the cultivation of a "sociological imagination" that dwells on ideas, concepts, philosophies, histories, and their interconnect-*



The Daily Pennsylvanian

**E. Digby Baltzell** studied sociology at the University of Pennsylvania and at Columbia University, where he completed his doctoral dissertation under the direction of Robert K. Merton. Professor Baltzell began teaching sociology at the University of Pennsylvania in 1947 and retired from there in 1986. During those 39 years he devoted himself fully to every aspect of the University's life and published nationally acclaimed studies of privilege, talent, class structure, and leadership, including *Philadelphia Gentlemen: The Making of a National Upper Class*, *The Protestant Establishment*, and *Puritan Boston and Quaker Philadelphia*.

In the classroom and beyond, Professor Baltzell has used his understanding of sociology to illuminate social relationships. Distinguishing between "organic relationships" and "mechanistic" ones, he remarks that "suing for damages when a child is killed is mechanistic. The point is that everyone is priceless." Speaking to the graduating class of 1986, he urged them "to be heroes—that's not saying too much," since most of them "have at least one grandparent who was not born in the United States and had to have heroic qualities to undertake a dangerous and uncertain passage to this land." And he urged them to be less afraid of failure. "You will learn from your failures not from your successes."



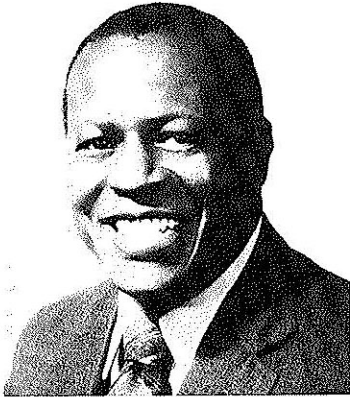
Sigrid Estrada

**Rosabeth Moss Kanter** received her B.A. from Bryn Mawr College in 1964 and her Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Michigan in 1967, and then served on the faculties of Brandeis, Harvard, and Yale Universities. In 1986 she was named the Class of 1960 Professor of Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the Harvard Business School, the first holder of this new, tenured, full professorship. She is the author of 10 books and more than 100 articles in books and scholarly journals. Her 1977 book, *Men and Women of the Corporation*, received the C. Wright Mills Award in 1978 for the best book of that year on social issues. *The Change Masters: Innovation and Entrepreneurship in the American Corporation* (1983) was a selection of several book clubs and was recently published in Japanese. Her newest book, *When Giants Learn to Dance: Mastering the Challenges of Strategy, Management, and Careers in the 1990s* (1989), is being translated into French, Swedish, Dutch, and Italian. She conceived and directed *A Tale of "O": On Being Different*, an audiovisual production about discrimination, which is used by thousands of organizations worldwide. She is also co-founder (in 1977) and Chairman of the Board of Good-

measure, Inc., a consulting firm that has advised such blue chip corporations as Procter & Gamble, BellSouth, Honeywell, General Electric, Apple Computer, International Harvester (now Navistar), Simon & Schuster, Xerox, and Pacific Telesis. She also serves on the Board of the College Retirement Equities Fund (CREF), the largest private pension fund in America; the American Productivity and Quality Center in Houston; the Saatchi & Saatchi Consulting Group; and the Boston Children's Museum.

Dr. Kanter clearly uses her sociological insights on a daily basis. She says,

*Sociological reasoning—a structural, institutional, systemic approach to understanding behavior patterns—is the principal tool I use in helping organizations learn to be more effective. My work focuses on how to organize human effort to create economic and social value. Stimulating innovation, improving productivity, ensuring the success of minorities and women, increasing worker participation and quality of work life—all require knowing how to diagnose organizational problems (data collection and analysis) and solve them.*



**Charles V. Willie** is Professor of Education and Urban Studies, Graduate School of Education, Harvard University. He received his B.A. in sociology from Morehouse College in 1948, his M.A. in sociology from Atlanta University in 1949, and his Ph.D. in sociology from Syracuse University in 1957. He taught at Syracuse University from 1952 to 1974, and since 1974 has been teaching at Harvard. He is the author, coauthor, or editor of 19 books, four research monographs, and of nearly 100 journal articles and chapters in books. His most recent books include *A New Look at Black and White Families*, *Effective Education*, and *The Caste and Class Controversy in Race and Poverty*. He has been involved since 1974 in the integration of the Boston schools and is the coauthor of the most recent court-approved plan for controlled choice in the Boston school system.

Professor Willie says,

*At work and in the community, I use sociological concepts every day. The major sociological ideas that give direction to my actions are inclusiveness, diversity, and complementarity.*

*As an applied sociologist, I implement these concepts in my daily activities by following five principles. I try (1) to be a person for others, (2) to accept myself as someone significant, (3) to respect the autonomy and integrity of every person, (4) to be generous and magnanimous, and (5) to follow the way of humility. I have invoked these principles in my work as a researcher and teacher of sociology. I have invoked them when serving as a consultant to local and state boards of education on school desegregation planning and to federal agencies such as the President's Commission on Mental Health and the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime. I have also followed these principles as a participant in international conferences on church and society.*



Of course sociological degrees are useful for teaching in colleges and universities. But as these examples show, they are also highly useful in an almost unlimited assortment of occupations. Persons with B.A. degrees in sociology often work as social workers, counselors, researchers, teachers, nurses, business managers, sales persons, parole officers, police officers, child care workers, or in other occupations.<sup>1</sup> Even among Ph.D. holders, about one out of five sociologists works outside the academy as a researcher, statistician, analyst, writer, vice president, president, manager, director in federal, state, and local governments, and in corporations and nonprofit organizations.<sup>2</sup>

This book will introduce you to sociology and to some of the many interesting issues that sociologists study. It will help you develop your own sociological insights both by covering important theories and by considering current data and concerns such as the “divorce revolution,” the electronic church, and growing poverty among the young.

The text includes numerous features to help you master the material. Chapter outlines and summaries will help you review the main points of each chapter. The boxes are designed to develop or apply the ideas you are learning, and captions illustrate how to interpret the graphs. We have also prepared a student review manual, called *Encountering Society*, that includes a summary of each chapter, review questions, exercises to help you apply the concepts you have learned, and a section of self-test questions to help you identify areas where you may need further study and review.

We hope that your sociology course, and this text, will interest you in the discipline of sociology and show you how sociology can play a role in your life. Like the people described here, you may find the study of sociology fascinating and beneficial, whether you become a sociologist or use its insights in a different career.

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<sup>1</sup> Bettina J. Huber, “Career Possibilities for Sociology Graduates,” American Sociological Association, 1722 N Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Single copies available free on request.

<sup>2</sup> Bettina J. Huber, “Employment Patterns in Sociology: Recent Trends and Future Prospects.” 1985. Washington, D.C.: American Sociological Association.