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Our Studies, Ourselves: Sociologists' Lives and Work

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What motivates a lifelong scholarly pursuit, and how do one's studies inform life outside the academy? Sociologists, who live in families but also study families, who go to work but also study work, who participate in communities but also try to understand communities, have an especially intimate relation to their research. Growing up poor, struggling as a woman in a male-dominated profession, participating in protests against the Vietnam War; facts of life influence research agendas, individual understandings of the world, and ultimately the shape of the discipline as a whole.

Barry Glassner and Rosanna Hertz asked twenty-two of America's most prominent sociologists to reflect upon how their personal lives influenced their research, and *vice versa*, how their research has influenced their lives. In this volume, the authors reveal with candor and discernment how world events, political commitments and unanticipated constraints influenced the course of their careers. They disclose how race, class, and gender proved to be pivotal elements in the course of their individual lives, and in how they carry out their research. Faced with academic institutions that did not hire or promote persons of their gender, race, sexual orientation, or physical disability, they invented new routes to success within their fields. Faced with disappointments in political organizations to which they were devoted, they found ways to integrate their disillusionment into their research agendas. While some of the contributors radically changed their political commitments, and others saw more stability, none stood still.

An intimate look at biography and craft, these snapshots provide a fascinating glimpse of the sociological life for colleagues, other academics, and aspiring young sociologists. The collection demonstrates how inequalities and injustices can be made into motors for scholarly research, which in turn have the power to change individual life courses and entire societies.

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