

Education Reporting

- Singular news topic, because:
 - It's universal
 - Paid for by public money (mostly)
 - Sensitive issue – involves children
 - People's youth experiences vastly different
 - People's adult experiences vastly different
- Bigger issues relate to it
- Public perceptions have changed
- Become more politicized in recent years
- No longer a consensus issue

Socialization: Social Learning

- Definition: the lifelong process through which people learn the norms, values, beliefs, and behaviors of their society
 - Lifelong process: Begins in infancy and continues through childhood, adulthood, and old age as people adapt to new roles
 - Cultural transmission: The main way culture passes from one generation to the next
 - Identity formation: Helps individuals develop a sense of self and the social skills needed to function in groups
- Stages of socialization:
 - Primary Socialization: Early childhood – learn basic language, rules, and core values.
 - Secondary Socialization: Later in life – learn specific behavioral expectations for different occupational and social settings.
- Establishes and maintains social norms
 - Learn how to behave ‘properly’ in different places, cultures
 - Pass down to children, peers throughout life

Socialization: Social Learning

Agents of socialization:

- Parents/family – homogenizing influence
 - Get to us first, have most overall influence – early identity formation
 - Usually determine how we come into contact w/other agents
 - Foundational values – morals, ethics, customs, language, basic behavioral patterns, often religion
- Schools/education – heterogenizing influence
 - Structured learning – academic, cultural, career skills
 - Get out of the house – learn about other people, outside world
 - Broad notions of discipline, cooperation, right and wrong
- Peers/friends – homogenizing influence
 - Usually same age, social status, with common interests
 - Form separate relationships, test identities outside parental control
 - Can be source of group pressure, influence behavior & tastes
- Mass Media – heterogenizing influence
 - Media use is early, extensive – can become dependent on it
 - Impersonal – can reduce face-to-face contact, erode social skills
 - Can cause great change in attitudes, social expectations
 - Widespread concerns about increase of influence in digital age

Increased public anxiety about education

- D

Satisfaction With U.S. K-12 Education

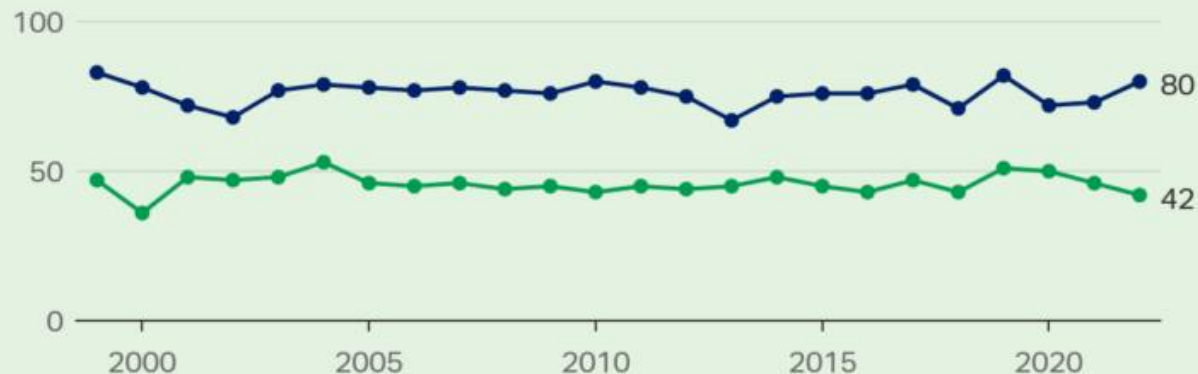
% Completely or somewhat satisfied

- P

— % U.S. adults satisfied with U.S. education

— % Parents satisfied with oldest child's education

- G



- C

Question asked of U.S. adults: Overall, how satisfied are you with the quality of education students receive in kindergarten through grade twelve in the U.S. today -- would you say you are completely satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or completely dissatisfied?

- S

Question asked of parents with children in grades kindergarten through 12: How satisfied are you with the quality of education your oldest child is receiving? Would you say you are completely satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or completely dissatisfied?

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Changes in Perceptions & Coverage of Education

- ‘Shooting the messenger’
- ‘Noble beat’ has become divisive
- Routine coverage can miss important issues
- Reporters’ educational experience often differs greatly from what they’re now covering
- Fall 2018 – nonwhite students outnumber whites
- Question traditional teachings? At what age?
- Education writers need to know politics
- Divisions on basic facts
- Politicians using education as wedge issue – opposite of consensus

Education Coverage: Current Issues

- School choice – access to the best schools vs. making all public schools better
- Critical race theory – how early, or at all?
- Social class issues – rich vs. poor schooling
- Gender and sexuality issues – accommodating students vs. ‘warping’ them?
- Freedom of speech, academic freedom
- School safety – arming teachers?
- In-person vs. remote instruction?
- Value of higher education
- ‘Education vs. Indoctrination’

Types of News Story Audiences

- General (everyone)
- Geographical (neighborhood, region)
- Cultural (ethnic, religious, lifestyle)
- Gender-Based (traditional or non-traditional roles)
- General Subject-Based (sports, A&E, outdoors)
- Specific Subject-Based (baseball, hip-hop, kayaking)
- Age-Based (generational)
- Event-Based (deep coverage of major event)
- Niche (extremely specific)

Trolling and News

- Trolling: Anonymously insulting someone online to annoy or intimidate them
- Gyges Effect: A phenomenon whereby internet users experience a loss of inhibition that they would otherwise not experience face to face
- With little personal interaction, in computer world with no filters or contrition, users lose empathy
- On the early Web, news sites' comment sections became ideal venue for pointless vicious attacks
- This normalized trolling and set stage for even more widespread occurrence in social media
- Insulting can escalate into harassment, stalking and/or violence – criminal activity
- Can have serious real-world effects

Trolling and News

- Journalists have long been popular trolling targets
- Trolling largely began on news and blog sites
- Journalism is meant to draw readers/viewers, and often involves publishing unpopular or controversial facts
- Culture of media bashing in recent decades has emboldened many to blame media for their problems
- Women, minorities, LGBTQ writers often targeted
- Has led to some violence against journalists
- Comments originally meant to be positive feature of online news – now frequently disabled
- Downside of completely unfettered free speech

‘Need to Know’ vs. ‘Want to Know’

News audiences need to know:

- Anything paid for with taxpayer money
 - Government/elections (city, county, state, federal)
 - Schools (elementary, secondary, colleges/universities)
 - Law enforcement & corrections
 - Public institutions (utilities, parks/rec, etc.)
 - Health care/hospitals
 - Transportation (roads/highways, buses/trains, etc.)
- Organizations/institutions that affect public
- Weather/environmental/quality of life issues
- Consumer-related issues
- Anything with direct effects on their lives

‘Need to Know’ vs. ‘Want to Know’

News audiences want to read (statistically popular):

- Anything with direct effects on their lives
(neighborhood, regional)
- How tax money is being used
- Stories containing people with whom they identify
- Things they can share with family/friends
- Profiles of interesting people
- Entertainment/celebrity news
- Sports news
- Shocking/unusual stories
- “The real story” – let in on a (so-called) secret
- News that validates how they feel (confirmation bias)

Elements of Newsworthiness

- **Timeliness:** News is what's new; it just happened and people need/want to know
- **Proximity:** Things that happen nearby or will have effects in your area are newsworthy
- **Prominence:** Audiences are interested in things that happen to celebrities, politicians or other well-known people
- **Impact:** Something that had, has, or will have long-reaching or significant effect is newsworthy
- **Conflict:** Can be physical or emotional; open or unseen conflict; people vs. people; people vs. nature
- **Oddity:** People are always interested in the unusual – the person, place, time, event, or context involved is out of the ordinary
- **Human Interest:** Audiences identify with others' achievements, struggles and quirks – usually entertaining or amusing
- **Shock Value:** Stories involving death, scandal, and other lurid or bizarre elements