

# ***SOCIOLOGICAL PRACTICE NEWSLETTER***

**Prepared for the American Sociological Association**

**Section on Sociological Practice**

**Summer 2008**

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## *Editor's commentary*

### **New Name. New Mission. New Design**

Leora Lawton  
TechSociety Research

Changes happen. Our section is evolving with the greater consciousness of our role in sociology – reaching out to the public. Some of this change is with the awareness that complacency is not a viable option, and some with the help of the Internet. As you shall read in the Chair's Note, the membership voted to become the Section on Sociological Practice and Public Sociology, and we await the results of the procedural vote of the ASA Council on our proposed changes.

Another vote by the membership concerned the format of the newsletter: electronic versus paper? Here are the results from our newsletter survey:

#### **1. Which format for the newsletter do you prefer?**

- 48% e-newsletter by link or attachment (that can also be downloaded and read)
- 23% e-newsletter to be read online, with links for more detailed information
- 19% Paper newsletter mailed
- 8% No preference
- 3% Abstained

#### **2. How much of the newsletter do you typically read?**

- 35% Some of it
- 34% Most of it
- 24% All of it
- 6% Do not recall receiving newsletter
- 0% None of it
- 3% Abstained

**Therefore, after this newsletter we will be moving to electronic delivery only**, which frees section funds for other purposes, perhaps student stipends to attend the meeting. As has been the case, the newsletter will be sent out by email, with a link to the website. Newsletters are archived on the website (and get about 30-60 views per month!). A new design is in the works, too. Since I'm not artistic or particularly visual, I will be seeking help from more talented members.

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## **A Practical Vision for the Section**

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This is an auspicious moment as we shift the Section's identity to explicitly include colleagues whom we have always welcomed – the public sociologists. Once we have the approval of the ASA Council and become the Section on Sociological Practice and Public Sociology, we'll have a special occasion to celebrate what we do, as well as to consider what we contribute to the ASA and to society.

The September issue of Footnotes will have an article discussing the history of practice in the ASA. It gives a solid sense of our past. Now and at the national meeting, I invite all members of the section to reflect on the scope of what we already do and dream about what more we can do. Sometimes I imagine our section as being a metaphorical kitchen for practice and public sociology: it gives us a warm, friendly place to gather, test ideas, and nourish one another, so we continue to be generative in our work.

In my field of organization development, we often use the term practical vision in working with our clients. It has become relatively common for organizations to have a mission statement and even a vision, but how often do we have practical visions? This can be conceptualized as a cross between a vision and an action plan – something that induces us to look past our current horizons, yet to do so with concrete actionable steps that we feel drawn to take, rather than with lofty ideas that no one has any idea how to actualize. I want to plant a seed in the back of your mind, where it will germinate, grow roots, and flower into a lasting desire to repeatedly seek out small, new actions you wish to take to foster sociological thinking and action at whatever scale makes sense to you. You do this already, you say? I'll bet that many people with whom you work don't see this side of you or else discourage you in subtle or not-so-subtle ways from taking risks. Here is encouragement to push the envelope.

If I could, I would personally thank each of you for the many varied ways that you make a difference in this world. As sociologists, we are

well-known for supporting policy formulation and assessment, but in addition sociologists participate in varied types of direct services to clients. We assist the homeless and support family, community, organizational, and international development. We coach managers and executives. We train people in both public and private organizations so that they can train others. We assist leaders in developing volunteer programs so that a great many organizations of all sizes can deliver programs of larger scope than they otherwise could. And we raise questions about established ways of doing things, inviting people think in new ways and take action to create a world where all humans will have a right to learn, thrive, and live meaningful lives. Am I idealistic? Probably. Am I realistic? Definitely. We already make huge contributions at a global level – and we can do more. Sociology as a field can do more, and it will grow larger and thrive in doing so.

As a professional organization, the ASA can reach out to provide services and networking opportunities for practitioners and public sociologists, making it more worth their while to join the association and attend the annual meeting. There can be a Practice Theme at our annual national meeting that is easily tracked in searching for sessions, as there is at the national meetings of the Academy of Management. This can be supported by a Practice Theme Committee that helps to identify these sessions for the annual meeting program and works with the sections to help each meeting have a diverse set of such sessions. I'd like to see this happen over the next few years.

The ASA can reach out more than it does now to sociologists who teach in community colleges, for they reach a large segment of the population. In some ways, teaching sociology to community college students is doing public sociology: the classrooms contain such a wide cross-section of the public. By reaching these students, we plant seeds for community development, as well as for shifting people's sense of identity from the more typical psychological approach to the self to one that is

grounded in knowing ourselves as socially-constructed beings, who are part of many overlapping groups.

What else do you see the ASA doing? Margaret Vitullo, the Director of the ASA's Academic and Professional Affairs Program, has welcomed our suggestions and collaboration as a section. If you have ideas that you are willing to work on, let us and Margaret know! Her email address is <mvitullo@asanet.org>.

Beyond our ongoing collective work, what can we do as individuals? An easy step is to attend the practice-oriented and public sociology sessions at

the annual meeting. Introduce yourself to someone you don't know at every session, so we each become personally acquainted with a broader cross-section of practicing and public sociologists. Often this leads to unexpected opportunities for collaboration! Come to the section's Business and Council Meeting, so you can get actively involved in keeping all of us interconnected over the coming year. The Section can function as an incubator for new action ideas. You see mine here; bring and share yours with colleagues at the annual meeting. And finally, join us for a fabulous reception, at which we'll honor Bob Dentler, in addition to meeting next year's officers and hearing briefly from our two excellent award winners.

## **Obituary**

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**Robert Dentler** It is difficult to be brief in summing up the life's successes for someone as accomplished as Robert Dentler. In his early career, he fought for desegregation and served as director of the New York Commission on Education, where he worked tirelessly to desegregate public schools and open up access for all students. That position led to a series of roles – advisor, analyst and expert witness – in desegregation efforts. He also deepened and shared his own scholarship, publishing 15 books, and a steady stream of dozens of articles and reports. Notable books include *Big City Dropouts and Illiterates* (1967), *Schools on Trial: An Inside Account of the Boston Desegregation Case* (1981).

Dr. Dentler was also dedicated to sociological practice in its organized form. He served as President of the Society for Applied Sociology, and Chair of our Section on Sociological Practice. His many and profound efforts earned him the Section on Sociological Practice's William Foote Whyte Award in 1991, as well as ASA Distinguished Career Award for the Practice of Sociology in 2007. It is a comforting thought to know that he was able to reap the joy of this award.

Robert Dentler passed away on March 20, 2008. He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Helen Hosmer Dentler, three children, and six grandchildren. Donations in his memory may be made to the Robert Dentler Memorial Fund (to support poetry writing at Northwestern University), 1125 East Broadway, Box 146, Glendale, CA 91205.

## **Welcoming Our New Section Officers**

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Congratulations to our new Section officers!

**Chair-elect**

Jeff Will; University of North Florida (jwill@unf.edu)

**Council:**

Phil Nyden; Loyola University Chicago (pnyden@luc.edu)

Kathy Stolley; Virginia Wesleyan College (kstolley@vwc.edu)

Lisa Frehill; Executive Director. Commission on Professionals in Science and Technology (lfrehill@cpst.org)

And of course, we thank those who generously ran and yet were not victorious.

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**We're going all electronic! The Winter 2009 Issue will not be printed on paper: It can be found in your email box or at [www.techsociety.com/asa/communications.html](http://www.techsociety.com/asa/communications.html), along with an archive of the last 5 years of newsletters.**

## **Symbiotic Partnering of Sociologists and Policy Officials Part II: An Example of Policy in Action**

**Mary Gatta,  
Center for Women and Work, Rutgers University**

In our last newsletter I noted that many of us in our section work as “policy entrepreneurs.” Building on Canadian and European models of policy entrepreneurs—persons who have sufficient research backgrounds and credentials to understand the culture and methods of university research organizations but who also understand the policy process and can communicate effectively with state policymakers—I suggest that sociologists are in the prime position to take on this role in public policy. As promised I wanted to share with everyone a tangible example of how sociologists are doing this.

In January 1993, the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission (NJSETC), created a gender equity task force with a primary purpose: to assure that ‘equity’ and ‘fairness’ are applied to women who choose to enhance their work related skills. The Gender Equity Task force quickly realized that gender equity was a systemic problem. The members of the Task Force were also aware that the problems of gender equity did not start in the workplace, but were also present within the New Jersey education system.

After a series of meetings and reports, a legislative remedy was sought to establish the New Jersey Council on Gender Parity in Labor and Education. The legislation gave a broad policy focus for the Council, and established its ability to interface with interested parties such as the Governor of New Jersey, the New Jersey State Legislature, related state departments and the private sector. The bill was passed and the Council on Gender Parity in Labor and Education met for the first time in June, 2000. The charge of the Council was to oversee the state’s efforts to provide gender equity in labor, education and training.

In order to accomplish the mission of the Council a partnership was established with the state university – Rutgers – to provide research and outreach support. The Center for Women and Work is the research arm of the Council helping to put the Council’s research agenda into practice. In this role, CWW sociologists organize summits of state stakeholders on key issues of gender and workforce equity; develop policy papers with recommendations for the state officials; speak on behalf of the Council’s work and programs; and ensure that gender is taken into consideration when implementing new policy and programs. Perhaps one of the most significant achievements of this partnership was the

establishment of the Nontraditional Career Resource Center (NCRC) at the Center for Women and Work to serve as a practice arm of the Council. Funded by a competitive state Department of Education grant, the NCRC: provides resources on gender equity and career development in nontraditional fields and bridges the education and workforce development communities to increase awareness and opportunities for 7th through 12th grade students interested in nontraditional careers. Among the goals of the NCRC is to build partnerships and collaborations among the New Jersey education and workforce development communities and to identify and publicize model programs. The NCRC works closely with teachers, school counselors, parents and employers to increase awareness of gender bias in education and to inform students of the opportunities for choosing a career that is nontraditional to their gender. These programs further the goals of the Gender Parity Council by helping those interested in the issues to better understand the relationship between educational socialization and future educational and occupational choices and by building their awareness of the career and educational paths that remain nontraditional as to gender.

The key to the success of the New Jersey Gender Parity Council is the collaboration of state policy officials with researchers who view education and workforce policy through a gender lens and with community organizations, educational institutions, employers, and labor unions to craft training programs around the lives of people who participate in them. This Council demonstrates the potential of collaborative partnerships between sociologists and state policy officials. The uniqueness of this partnership was that researchers took an unaccustomed role in the policy arena and moved beyond simply supplying labor market information and/or conducting evaluations of workforce programs. The Council provides opportunities for researchers and policymakers to collaborate in order to move forward a new gender policy agenda, demonstrating that we must move beyond just considering that research can be used by policy officials to understand the different levels at which research can influence the policy process. As of right now, New Jersey is the only state with such a Council. Indeed it would be great if sociologists from other states can help mobilize their state or local governments to follow their lead!

## **Control and Undergraduate Internships: Less is More?**

**By Johanna P. Bishop, Wilmington University**

The box beneath my desk tells part of the story—filled with notebooks and binders telling the story of this Spring’s student interns’ experiences. Their stories are impressive, about half of them have received job offers from the places in which they interned, others received glowing recommendations from their site supervisors. I breathe a sigh of relief! I also feel a tinge of guilt that I didn’t do more for my students while they were navigating themselves through unfamiliar organizations, trying to fit in and learn the demands of the job. I tell myself that maybe next semester I’ll have more time to work with them. But, the next semester is as busy, if not busier, than the last. When I accepted this job two years ago I had intended to create more structure around the internship program, for after all, how could anyone really call this an internship program if the academic coordinator didn’t really know what the interns were experiencing during the course of their internships? However, my students’ portfolios, the summaries and detailed explanations of their experiences as interns tell a different story—one that says that a loosely structured internship may be just what students need to explore possible career paths and assess their own suitability for the various helping professions.

One of my students found out first hand that what he thought he wanted to do as a career, grief counseling, was not quite the job he had imagined. Because of the nature of his intended career path and his limitation as an undergraduate student, he was finally able to experience some of this by interning in a funeral home. At the end of his internship he requested permission to do a second internship, and this time he found his niche—as a hotline crisis intervention counselor for adults dealing with addictions.

Other students fall in love with the work they do in their internships and find their calling right away. Others gain valuable experiences that I encourage them to translate into a resume piece to help them be more marketable.

The students in my program have families, jobs, and other life commitments that they’re trying to balance along with going to school. They are Behavioral Science majors in a private, mid-sized, secular university. Many students transfer in from community colleges, some transfer in after they’ve been away at school and have now returned home to live with their parents and opted to attend a local university while working several part-time jobs. Others are mature adults who have made the commitment to going to school to shore up their job security. No matter what their situation, quite often my students opt for taking the internship as a three credit course because they’re trying to avoid taking Tests and Measurements. Not all of them are sure about what to do after they graduate—their focus is on the immediate goal—the bachelor’s degree.

The process of obtaining an internship is much like engaging in a real job search. Seen from this perspective, one could say that the internship experience prepares students for “real life.” After an initial inquiry and interview with me, our students have to find a place to do an internship on their own. They also have to arrange a meeting with the site supervisor, and make sure the site supervisor knows his/her responsibility in evaluating the student’s internship work. Once my students secure their internships I may not see or hear from them again until they submit their internship portfolios, or journals.

In reading the students’ internship journals, I see how much they grow and learn while navigating unfamiliar job terrain. Some are learning that they will need additional training beyond their college degree in order to be fully eligible for the job market. Others have learned more about themselves and their abilities to manage stress, deal with ambiguity, and establish boundaries.

Perhaps less control yields more after all—my students seem to be succeeding in their internships in spite of my lack of control. There may just be wisdom in letting things “be.”

Contact Johanna at [Johanna.p.bishop@wilmu.edu](mailto:Johanna.p.bishop@wilmu.edu).

### **Please join us at the annual SECTION ON SOCIOLOGICAL PRACTICE RECEPTION**

**Time: Sun, Aug 3 - 6:30pm - 8:10pm**

**Place: Hilton Boston Back Bay**

**In addition to the customary networking and the awards ceremony, we will also be honoring the memory of Dr. Robert Dentler.**

## ***Awards – 2008 Awardees***

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### **William Foote Whyte Distinguished Career Award: Steven Picou**

The Award Committee is pleased to announce Steven Picou as the 2008 William Foote Whyte Award. Dr. Picou is currently Professor and Chair of the Department of Sociology at the University of South Alabama, but the reason for this award is that for over thirty five years, Dr. Picou has conducted applied research and crossed disciplinary boundaries. His body of work ranges from educational interventions for inner city youth, to the Exxon Valdez man-made disaster, to the aftermath of hurricane Katrina and natural disaster. He has tirelessly employed sociology – whether through research, teaching or service—to improve quality of life.

Work on the Exxon *Valdez* oil spill recently resulted in his extensive involvement in preparing an amicus brief for the U.S. Supreme Court. Since the early 1990s, Dr. Picou has been traveling to Alaska and working with the local population as they recover from the spill. His efforts resulted in *The Exxon Valdez Disaster: Readings on a Modern Social Problem*, as well as numerous published papers that deal specifically with the environmental disaster. Additionally, Dr. Picou's contract research with the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens Advisory Council resulted in an award winning training module that includes a two volume handbook and a DVD. This training module is now being used by the Primary Mental Health Collaboration in Katrina recovery efforts along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Dr. Picou's extensive research on the Exxon *Valdez* spill was recognized with the Distinguished Contribution Award by the ASA Section on Environmental and Technology.

In addition to his work on human-made environmental disasters, Dr. Picou also applied sociology to issues that concern his local area. Most notable is his analysis of the natural disaster Katrina and the on-going recovery. His work in this area led to the recent

publication of *The Sociology of Katrina: Perspectives on a Modern Catastrophe*. Dr. Picou also directs his efforts to less well-known concerns, including working with the maritime communities in coastal Alabama. For example, he has examined the impact of turtle exclusion devices on local fisherfolk; assessed the environmental knowledge of coastal communities and proposed appropriate educational interventions; and analyzed the patterns of seafood consumption across the sport fishing and general populations, paying attention to consumption of seafood high in mercury. In his earlier days at Ohio State University, he directed a series of interdisciplinary research projects designed to enhance the interpersonal networks that increased the career learning skills of African American and Native American inner-city youth. Dr. Picou's application of the sociological perspective, its theory, and its methods, has resulted in over 65 articles, 21 book chapters, four books and numerous research monographs. He has received over \$1,967,098 in extramural funding during the course of his career. [Adapted from Professor Nicole Carr's letter of nomination.]

### **Student Practitioner Award: Rebecca Hsu**

Rebecca Hsu, a doctoral candidate at Princeton University, is this year's Student Practitioner Awardee. She conducted research on microcredit programs in China, comparing two programs regarding repayment. She found that "the villagers experience the microcredit program stipulations as demands upon the configuration of carefully ordered and ranked social relationships. The social organization and basis of relationships within the villages is crucial to whether the members of the group repay the loans. Sociological theory on the role of ideas on how people make economic decisions is extremely useful for shedding light on how the villagers respond to the microcredit programs." As a result of this work, she was then asked by an NGO to perform a program evaluation of their urban microcredit program. She looks forward to doing more work of this kind in the future.

## ***Notes from the U.S. Field***

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### **Blogging for Sociology**

Terry Nichols Clark, Professor of Sociology at the University of Chicago, has entered the world of bloggers with colleagues Dan Silver and Lawrence Rothfield. Their blog, <http://www.tnc-newsletter.blogspot.com/>, shares insights, videos, working papers and related links about the Cultural Amenities Project, launched over five and a half years ago. Dr. Clark was interviewed on MuniNet, a website for municipal related research. As introduced in this interview: "The goal was to determine how cultural amenities – movie theaters, beaches, shopping centers, restaurants, museums, etc. – contribute to a community's growth and vitality. But as the project evolved, it developed into a more sophisticated means of classifying residential locations. The team has now developed a quantitative rubric containing over 700 indicators by which to judge a neighborhood or city in order to compare it to other communities."

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## News from the Association of Applied and Clinical Sociology

The Third Annual Meeting of The Association for Applied and Clinical Sociology will be held in Jacksonville, FL, October 16-18, 2008, at the Crown Plaza Riverfront Hotel. For more information, please visit <http://www.aacsnet.org>.

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### Making Sociology More Public Ignites Sociologists in St. Louis!

The Midwest Sociological Society (MSS) hosted this year's conference in St. Louis with a theme of "Make Sociology More Public." Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive from many at the conference and from our post-conference survey of session organizers. MSS premiered the new *Midwestern Contexts* editors and staff in a Town Hall Meeting where we together explored the potential of this magazine to make sociology more accessible. For the first time we had not just one, but two theatre opportunities. The Chicago-based About Face Theatre emotionally moved all those in attendance with their reality-based scenarios of the plight and the resiliency of LGBT youth, Kathleen Slobin skillfully directed seven MSS member-actors in her play--*Six Sociologists in Search of Society*. Both performances provoked divergent, but thoughtful discussions.

Three keynote speakers creatively addressed the conference theme. David Altheide provided evidence of how the propaganda of terror is all about fear, and how the media have been key contributors to shaping this "terrorism discourse." Mario Small examined the role that economists currently take in researching and publicly discussing what traditionally have been sociological arenas of study. Finally, President Helen Moore's incisive presentation on the split labor market in teaching courses with a diversity focus was a reminder that sociologists have an opportunity to do public sociology within higher education by raising questions, gathering and sharing data, and engaging in discussion with colleagues, administrators, and students about patterns in the distribution of work in higher education.

Next year's meeting is in Des Moines.

--Susan Stall, MSS President, [s-stall1@neu.edu](mailto:s-stall1@neu.edu)

--Oana Panaite, Student Director

## MEMBER NEWS

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**Judith Little**, Professor and Chair in the Department of Sociology at Humboldt State University, celebrated retirement in May with colleagues, students, alumni and family members. Judith will continue as Director of HSU assessment programs during her early retirement program service. **Joshua Meisel** accepted an assistant professor position in the Department where he will be responsible for developing a criminology program. **Mary Virnoche** will assume Chair responsibilities for the Department in August.

**Paul Lachelier** completed his Ph.D. in sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in December 2007. Starting this fall, he will be an assistant professor in the Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology at Stetson University in Deland, Florida.

**Kathleen Korgen** of William Patterson University is pleased to announce that *The Engaged Sociologist: Connecting the Classroom to the Community, Second Edition* (Pine Forge), to be available this August. This publication brings the "public sociology" movement into the classroom, teaching students to use the tools of sociology to become effective participants in our democratic society. Through exercises and projects, authors Kathleen Korgen and Jonathan M. White encourage students to practice the application of these tools in order to get both hands-on training in sociology and experience with civic engagement in their communities. Contact Dr. Korgen at [KorgenK@wpunj.edu](mailto:KorgenK@wpunj.edu) for more information.

**Janet Mancini Billson**, Director of Group Dimensions International in Woolwich, Maine, recently contributed a chapter, "Focus Group Research in the Context of International Development Evaluation and Impact Assessment," to Jan Fritz's edited volume, *Sociological Practice in International Development* (Springer 2008). Her article, "Conducting Focus Group Research across Cultures: Consistency and Comparability," was published as Working Paper No. 27 by the Well-Being in Developing Countries Research Group at the University of Bath, England (2007).

Dr. Billson also has two new books out, both of which were decade-long projects that came fruition in the last couple of years. The first is *Inuit Women: Their Powerful Spirit in a Century of Change*, with Kyra Mancini (Rowman & Littlefield

2007), is the result of focus groups and key informant interviews with Inuit women who live in the Canadian Eastern Arctic. A study of the impact of rapid social change and Canadian resettlement policy on Inuit culture and women's status and roles in Baffin Island, Nunavut, it carries implications for social policy and legislation. The second book is *Female Well-Being: Towards a Global Theory of Social Change*, with Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban (ZED Books 2005), includes chapters by teams of women who wrote about changes from 1900 to 2000 in their own countries (Sudan, South Africa, Bangladesh, Thailand, Japan, Colombia, Canada, United States, Iceland, Croatia, and United Kingdom). The book concludes with implications for social change and policy issues to be considered by activists and international development organizations during the early 21st century.

Finally, Dr. Billson gave two public lectures in April of this year for The Martindale Center at Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania: "The HIV/AIDS Pandemic: A Gender Analysis" and "The Millennium Development Goals-- Progress and Challenges in Achieving the Gender Targets by 2015. She gave the 2006 Fredrika Wild Schweers Lecture on Women and Health, University of Rhode Island, on "Female Well Being-Challenges and Power in a New Century," focusing on health and education as pivotal factors in achieving female well-being in spite of persistent challenges and on the Millennium Development Goals as a vehicle for improving female well-being.

**Marilyn Dudley Flores**, CEO of OPS-Alaska, has been selected for the Human Terrain System program <http://humanterrainsystem.army.mil/> and will complete four months of training at Fort Leavenworth and then will be deployed to Afghanistan or Iraq to be embedded with Army or Marine troops. For more details, she can be reached at [md-r@ops-alaska.com](mailto:md-r@ops-alaska.com).

## ***Doing Sociology***

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### **Lessons from the Front Line: Program Evaluation of the Weed and Seed Program**

By Michael Hirsch, Huston-Tillotson University and Tina Quartaroli, Future Age Consulting

#### *Program Evaluation – Year One*

In the fall of 2005 Michael Hirsch, Chair of Social and Behavioral Studies at Huston-Tillotson University in Austin, Texas, was approached by his administration to be its representative at the meetings of the Weed and Seed Steering Committee in East Austin. Weed and Seed is a federally-funded program designed to turn around high crime neighborhoods (weed out crime / seed in productive social institutions). In February of 2006 Hirsch met with Austin Police Department (APD) representatives to discuss strategies for evaluating program effectiveness. In March he made a presentation to the Steering Committee. Unbeknownst to him, Hirsch was being interviewed for the job of lead evaluator, and in August he received a contract to oversee a comprehensive review of the entire program. Shortly thereafter, Hirsch, joined by Dr. Tina Quartaroli, commenced electronic work sessions, including the collection and review of agendas and minutes from meetings of the Steering Committee and related subcommittees. The fact that our team was based in two states – Hirsch in Texas and Quartaroli in Florida – was a concern in terms of logistics.

Deliverables included an assessment of the role of both government agencies (e.g., APD, the Code Enforcement Division of the Solid Waste District) and not-for-profit groups (e.g., churches) in the reclamation effort. We reported successes and failures for the first year of operation.

#### *Lessons Drawn from the Evaluation for Year One*

- Casual conversations with potential clients may be more than they appear. Hirsch didn't even realize he was being "interviewed" during the initial conversation that resulted in the first of three yearly contracts.
- Check a program's record-keeping history before accepting a contract to evaluate it. We spent an inordinate amount of time collecting information from members of the initiative. As ours was a flat-fee contract, every hour spent tracking down records resulted in a lower per-hour realized fee.
- Draw students into the research process. Not only does it help prepare them for employment in the field, it also makes your contract work more palatable to your university administration.
- Like Simmel's stranger, the program evaluator is perceived as a neutral party who can bridge the gap between what might otherwise be seen as opposing forces. In our review of the activities of the various agencies associated with Weed and Seed, we noted that a representative from law enforcement and a member of a church-related group had forced a needle exchange program out of the target area. They had perceived the program as a "weed." Our report pointed out the significant seeding role played by such programs and Hirsch was able to

facilitate a meeting between APD representatives and the health outreach workers.

### *Program Evaluation – Year Two*

Our second-year Weed and Seed contract with APD put us in active partnership with the agency overseeing a program for at-risk youth. Both the Steering Committee and the program agency were overly optimistic about enrollment. Recruitment efforts were hampered for various reasons and, in the end only a handful of adolescents and their parents completed a program designed for ten times as many participants.

Here the dilemma was fashioning a report that accurately portrayed the agency's gross failure in reaching program goals without endangering the wider initiative's ability to receive third year funding. A particular challenge for Hirsch was delivering a highly critical assessment of the program to people with whom he had developed strong collegial relations. The role of distance played an important role as Quartaroli, whose work had been entirely off-site, challenged all attempts by Hirsch to soften the assessment regarding the paucity of the program. Ultimately we delivered an accurate assessment of program failures softened by positive statements regarding program potential.

### *Lessons Drawn from the Evaluation for Year Two*

- Had pointed questions been asked about enrollment estimates, we might have foreseen some of the resultant problems of recruitment. The role of evaluator could have been expanded to assess the program's plan prior to implementation.
- Applaud the successes of those being reviewed before reporting the shortfalls. It makes the latter more palatable to those being reviewed. If they like you, you're more likely to get a job extension as we did in the form of the second-year contract, in a separate contract from the second-year program agency, and in a new, third-year APD contract.
- Lastly, distance can be an unexpected strength in program evaluation. Distance can pose challenges to research teams and slow the creative process. Distance can also be an unexpected strength when conducting evaluation research.
- Having one team member off-site and one on allowed us to deliver an accurate, necessarily-harsh assessment through the familiar face of a trusted advisor.

For more information, contact Michael Hirsch, [mlhirsch@htu.edu](mailto:mlhirsch@htu.edu)

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## Annual Meeting

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### **SECTION ON SOCIOLOGICAL PRACTICE BUSINESS MEETING**

Sun, Aug 3 - 11:30am - 12:10pm Place: Hilton Boston Back Bay  
Chair: Kathryn Goldman Schuyler

### **SECTION ON SOCIOLOGICAL PRACTICE RECEPTION**

Time: Sun, Aug 3 - 6:30pm - 8:10pm Place: Hilton Boston Back Bay

### **MEETINGS**

#### **Spivack Program in Applied Social Research**

Fri, Aug 1 - 2:30pm - 4:10pm Building: Boston Marriott Copley Place

Participants: Gregory D. Squires (George Washington Univ.), Paul Luebke (UNC at Greensboro), Bess Rothenberg (Ctr. for the Study of Human Rights), Margaret L. Usdansky (Syracuse University)

Anne Boyle Cross (Metropolitan State University), Lee Clarke (Rutgers University), Judith D. Auerbach (San Francisco AIDS Foundation), Roberta M. Spalter-Roth (American Sociological Association), Lee Herring (American Sociological Association)

#### **Commission on Applied and Clinical Sociology (CACS)**

Fri, Aug 1 - 6:30pm - 10:30pm Building: Boston Marriott Copley Place

Chair: Melodye Gaye Lehnerer (Community College of Southern Nevada)

#### **Orientation for New Section Officers**

Scheduled Time: Sun, Aug 3 - 8:30am - 10:10am Building: Sheraton Boston

Session Participants: Michael R. Murphy and Diego de los Rios (American Sociological Association)

## **Association for Applied and Clinical Sociology (AACS)**

Sat, Aug 2 - 8:00pm - 10:00pm Building: Boston Marriott Copley Place

Chair: Jeffry A. Will (University of North Florida)

### **SOCIOLOGICAL PRACTICE SECTION SESSIONS**

#### **1. Section on Sociological Practice Paper Session**

##### **Worlds of Work to Practice the Art and Science of Sociology: Effectives Uses of Sociology**

Sun, Aug 3 - 8:30am - 10:10am Building: Hilton Boston Back Bay

Session Organizer: Augusto Diana (Dept. Health & Human Services)

Presider: Augusto Diana (Dept. Health & Human Services)

Gender Parity and Policy: NJ Gender Parity Council; \*Dianne Mills McKay (Rutgers University), \*Heather McKay (Rutgers, State Univ. of New Jersey), Mary Gatta (Rutgers University)

Moving California Forward: Championing Governance Reform in the Golden State; \*Toby J. Ewing

Toward Teaching A Liberating Sociological Practicality; \*Marv S Finkelstein (Southern Illinois Univ Edwardsville)

Time: Sun, Aug 3 - 8:30am - 10:10am Place: Hilton Boston Back Bay

#### **2. Section on Sociological Practice Invited Panel: Practice of Sociology in Diverse Work Environments**

Time: Sun, Aug 3 - 10:30am - 11:30am Place: Hilton Boston Back Bay

Session Organizer: Augusto Diana (Dept. Health & Human Services)

Panelists: Yonette F. Thomas (NIH/NIDA), "Being a sociologist in a world of genetics and neuroscience."

Ragnvald Kalleberg "Sociological practice and public sociology in Norway."

### **OTHER SESSIONS OF INTEREST**

#### **Applied Social Research/Evaluation**

Sun, Aug 3 - 2:30pm - 4:10pm Building: Hilton Boston Back Bay

Session Organizer and Presider: Rita J. Kirshstein (American Institutes for Research)

Creating a Recidivism Prediction Model for Florida's DJJ Program Evaluation Model; \*Karla Rivera Blaginin (Georgia State University)

Designing for Diversity: Recruitment and Retention Theory in the Scientific Leadership Scholars Project; \*Mary E. Virnoche (Humboldt State University)

Politicized Ethnicity in New York: Narratives and Candidates' Self-Presentations of Ethnicity, Immigration, and Political Clout; \*Andrew G. Kourvetaris

Qualitative needs assessment of HIV Prevention Programs for gay API men; \*Chong-suk Han (Temple University)

#### **American Sociological Association Chairs Conference**

Thursday July 31st, 9:00am-5:30pm

"Assessing Our Work in Terms of Student Learning and Department Effectiveness."

Panelists: Margaret Weigers Vitullo, Director of Academic and Professional Affairs, ASA

Sally Hillsman, Executive Officer, ASA; Barbara Hetrick, Senior Vice-President, Council of Independent Colleges

Judith K. Little, Humboldt State University; Jay Howard, Interim Vice Chancellor and Dean, Indiana University-Purdue

University Columbus; Kathryn Goldman Schuyler, Alliant International University, San Francisco, CA; Robert Spalter-

Roth, Director of Research, ASA; Barbara Brittingham; Director, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education

New England Association of Schools and Colleges

Abstract: Covering issues around assessment – of departmental effectiveness, of student learning, and of its relationship to accreditation.

### **PROFESSIONAL and CAREER WORKSHOPS**

#### **Networking with Sociologists in Applied and Research Settings: Sociologists in Research Careers**

Scheduled Time: Fri, Aug 1 - 2:30pm - 4:10pm Building: Sheraton Boston

Session Organizer and Leader: Rita J. Kirshstein (American Institutes for Research)

Panelists: Berkeley Miller (San Jose State University), Sara Beck Fein (Food and Drug Administration), Elham-Eid Alldredge, Panelist: Sarah E. Jones (American Institutes for Research)

Abstract: This workshop will focus on the research and career experiences of sociologists working outside the academy. The panelists in this workshop represent a number of different research settings, both currently and over the course of their careers. These settings include colleges and universities, both as faculty and researchers; government; private, not-for-profit and for-profit research firms; and foundations, to name a few. Panelists will describe the range of jobs in which they have

worked, discuss similarities and differences in doing research in academic and non-academic settings, and address the advantages and disadvantages of different types of employment for sociologists. Attendees will be encouraged to raise questions and share their experiences doing research in different sectors and settings.

### **Career Advice for Sociologists Committed to Public Sociology**

Scheduled Time: Sat, Aug 2 - 10:30am - 12:10pm Building: Boston Marriott Copley Place

Session Organizer: Leslie H. Hossfeld (Univ. North Carolina Wilmington)

Leader: Leslie H. Hossfeld (Univ. North Carolina Wilmington). Co-Leaders: Philip Nyden (Loyola University Chicago); : Susan H. Ambler (Maryville College); Roberta M. Spalter-Roth (American Sociological Association)

Abstract: This workshop maps the resources available to public sociologists and the politics of becoming and thriving as a public sociologist both inside and outside the academy. In addition to providing models of successful public sociologists, the workshop will provide a detailed overview of how to manage a public sociology career and where to find resources to support this career. Public Sociologists from varying institutional and career vantage points will share their experiences. Time will be provided for questions/answers, exchange and sharing of ideas on navigating a career as a public sociologist.

### **Careers in Medical Sociology (co-sponsored by the ASA Section on Medical Sociology)**

Scheduled Time: Sat, Aug 2 - 12:30pm - 2:10pm Building: Sheraton Boston

Session Organizer: Carol A. Caronna (Towson University)

Leader: Carol A. Caronna (Towson University); Co-Leader: Deborah Glik (UCLA School of Public Health)

Abstract: Panel discussion of non-university careers for medical sociologists, including careers at nonprofit organizations, think tanks, research centers, and government agencies. Topics will include what kinds of job and career opportunities are available in these settings for medical sociologists; strategies for searching for these opportunities; the similarities and differences between medical sociology careers inside and outside universities; and tips for transitioning from one sector to another. Medical sociologists and other interested sociologists at all career stages are welcome.

### **Public Sociology from the Bottom-up: Teaching for Social Justice and Social Change**

Scheduled Time: Sun, Aug 3 - 8:30am - 10:10am Building: Sheraton Boston

Session Participants:

Session Organizer: Walda Katz-Fishman (Howard University)

Leader: Walda Katz-Fishman (Howard University); Co-Leader: Rose Brewer (University of Minnesota)

Abstract: The context of this interactive workshop is today's historic moment of deepening social, economic, political, and ecological crises, renewed activism and social movements, and the emergence of public sociology as a framework for discussion about the world and social transformation. Public sociology from the bottom-up involves the unity of theory and practice (praxis), i.e., liberatory scholarship and pedagogy, putting teaching, learning and participation in movement building at the center. This workshop critically examines the assumptions of public sociology (in relation to professional, critical, and policy sociology) as an analytical and action framework connected to critical pedagogy that links analysis and vision with bottom-up struggles in the early 21st century, e.g., growing grassroots struggles and the U.S. Social Forum process for global social justice. We will offer teaching strategies and teaching and learning tools for classroom and community that re-center around these assumptions. These include: popular education as a pedagogical strategy for creating a community of learners with a vision of social justice and social transformation; and two teaching and learning tools we have developed as activists and educators in Project South – the social history timeline, and the CVS (consciousness, vision and strategy) model of the movement building process – focusing on social history, social movements and lessons learned for building today's bottom-up social justice movement.

### **Professional Workshop. Sociology in the High-Technology Workplace**

Scheduled Time: Sun, Aug 3 - 2:30pm - 4:10pm Building: Sheraton Boston

Session Organizer and Leader: Kathy Shepherd Stolley (Virginia Wesleyan College)

Panelists: Esther Brainin (Ruppin Academic Center Israel), Ross Koppel (University of Pennsylvania & Social Research Corporation), Kathryn Goldman Schuyler (Alliant International University & Coherent Change Consulting), Marc A. Smith (Microsoft Research), Jack Whalen (Palo Alto Research Center), S. T. A. Wilkens (Univ of North Carolina-Chapel Hill)

Abstract: High-technology industries offer unique and potentially high-paying venues for applying sociology. However, the high-tech work world can seem difficult (or even to some extent "mysterious") for sociologists to break into for various reasons. In this interactive workshop, panelists will focus on "practical" issues for those interested in learning more about high-tech opportunities: How can a sociologist prepare for, and obtain, such positions? What can a sociologist expect in a high-tech organization? What can the organization expect of the sociologist? How does the work and experience of "doing" sociology and being a sociologist fit into the high-tech workplace? Does sociological practice change, and itself become changed by, the high-tech workplace? To address these questions, panelists will draw from their own experiences that include: working with high-tech medical studies; providing consulting services to high-techs; conducting strategic and applied research projects including online communities, artificial intelligence, and system engineering work practice in

Japan; working with information and communication technology design and implementation for the Israeli Defense Forces; and applying and teaching product and service design. Participants will also have an opportunity to ask questions of the panelists during this workshop.

### **Career Workshop. Officially Retired, Hardly Retiring**

Scheduled Time: Sun, Aug 3 - 2:30pm - 4:10pm Building: Sheraton Boston

Session Organizer and Leader: Thomas L. Van Valey (Western Michigan University)

Abstract: The title of the workshop suggests that some academics retire but do not cease their professional/intellectual activities. The three panelists have all recently retired from their respective university positions and have emeritus status. However, all three continue to be actively involved in a variety of professional/intellectual pursuits including: research, both funded and unfunded; teaching; writing/publishing; and/or service to professional organizations. Each of the panelists will briefly describe the kinds of academic/professional activities s/he is engaged in, and point out some of the advantages and disadvantages to doing so as a retiree. Then the conversation will be opened to the participants for related topics that are likely to include consulting and other work.

### **Creating a Public Sociology Oriented Department**

Scheduled Time: Mon, Aug 4 - 8:30am - 10:10am Building: Sheraton Boston

Session Organizer and Leader: Philip Nyden (Loyola University Chicago)

Co-Leader: Maureen Kelleher

### **Networking with Clinical and Applied Sociologists**

Scheduled Time: Mon, Aug 4 - 10:30am - 12:10pm Building: Hilton Boston Back Bay

Leader and Organizer: Jan Marie Fritz (University of Cincinnati)

Abstract: Clinical and applied sociologists - as well as those who are interested in these fields - are invited to attend this workshop. Practitioners will give advice to those interested in the fields about initiating or transitioning in the field. Among the topics to be covered: preparation for careers in clinical and applied sociology, mentoring, the range of career possibilities and relevant national and international professional organizations.

## **POLICY WORKSHOPS**

### **Sociological Research and Military Policy**

Scheduled Time: Fri, Aug 1 - 4:30pm - 6:10pm Building: Sheraton Boston

Session Organizer and Leader: David R. Segal (University of Maryland)

Panelists: Bradford Booth, Rachel Noble Lipari (University of Maryland); Mady Wechsler Segal (University of Maryland); Jacqueline Randolph (Army Research Institute)

Abstract: This panel, representing the academic, industrial, and in-house research communities, will address the impact of sociological research on military policy and subsequent research traditions, starting with the American Soldier studies in World War II and Project CLEAR (the racial integration of the Army during the Korean War), through sociological contributions to the end of military conscription in 1973, and ongoing work on topics such as gender integration, sexual orientation integration, sexual harassment, military families, and the demography of the force. Panelists will discuss exemplars of this research, and their own experiences with how research has been used (or not used) in the research and policy process in a variety of roles.

### **Policy and Research Workshop. Disability Policies/Programs and Research Opportunities**

Scheduled Time: Sat, Aug 2 - 2:30pm - 4:10pm Building: Sheraton Boston

Session Organizer and Leader: Sharon N. Barnartt (Gallaudet University)

Panelists: Barbara M. Altman (Disability Statistics Consultant), Susan Foster, Mitchell Loeb (NCHS)

This workshop discusses a wide variety of disability policies and programs, including those that specifically focus on disability and those that do not but which have a latent impact on people with disabilities. We will review selected policies/programs briefly but use most of the time to discuss research opportunities that they suggest or imply. Policies/programs whose explicit focus is disability are rather well known; examples include the ADA, IDEA, Social Security, Medicare and Vocational Rehabilitation. Examples of those that do not focus explicitly on disability include the Human Genome Project, equal housing laws, transportation policies, and abortion laws. Additionally, there are a number of federal level surveys whose data might be considered for use in disability evaluating policies/programs. We will discuss issues of the definition and measurement of disability and the advantages and limitations of using those data.

### **Policy and Research Workshop. Immigration Policy and the Implications for Research**

Scheduled Time: Sun, Aug 3 - 4:30pm - 6:10pm Building: Sheraton Boston

Session Organizer and Leader: Douglas S. Massey (Princeton University)