From the President’s Pen

Plans are well underway for our 2008 annual meeting in New York. The call for papers went out and responses are coming in already. ESS Vice President Elizabeth Higginbotham and President-elect Kathleen Gerson have been working hard on an array of terrific author meets critics panels. Our colleagues at the Panel Study of Income Dynamics are assembling two special panels -- the 'greatest hits of the PSID' -- to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of this critical data resource.

The 75th anniversary of Roosevelt's New Deal coincides with our meeting and in collaboration with The Nation magazine, we will be asking some of our best known historical sociologists to reflect on the mother of all government interventions on behalf of the dispossessed.

Colleagues at the City University of New York are organizing a series of special sessions on ethnography for the meetings. We are planning a special look at the importance of public higher education for social mobility of first generation college goers (native born minorities, students from low income families, and immigrants).

Sociologists from around the world who participate in Princeton’s Global Network on Inequality will be joining us to contribute commentaries on how the issues we study in a US context are evolving in Europe, the Far East, South America, and South Asia.

These are just a few of the exciting things we are working on. In the meantime, we look forward to receiving your submissions. Best wishes for a good Fall semester from everyone at ESS.

Meet the Program Committee Co-Chairs

The Program Chairs for the upcoming annual meeting are Hillary Levey and Rebecca Casciano.

Hilary is a PhD candidate at Princeton and she is currently writing her dissertation on competitive children's activities for elementary school-age children in the metro NYC area, (specifically chess, dance, and soccer). Past research has been on child beauty pageants, Kumon after-school learning centers, and university commencements speakers. Her interests include childhood and family, culture, economic sociology, and qualitative methods.

Rebecca is a fifth-year graduate student in the Sociology Department and Office of Population Research at Princeton University. Her interests include urban sociology, inequality, family demography and social policy. She is currently working on her dissertation on machine politics and nonprofit social service provision in Newark, New Jersey.
Editor’s Corner

Hard as it may be to believe, it is once again time to gear up for the annual meeting. This year’s meeting, from what I can see looks like it is shaping up to be a truly great one. Not only because we are returning to the Big Apple, but also because President Newman has chosen a very exciting and timely topic.

I am particularly interested because with my graduate training from Iowa State University, I have always thought of Sociology as primarily global in focus. It will be exciting to explore this topic with you and to hear the extraordinary array of scholars presenting at the conference.

In this issue of ESSays, On the Profession features the sage advice of James Jasper, Editor of Context Magazine; while Musings on Pedagogy begins a three part series on easily accessed recourses for the classroom. You will also find summaries of several new books by society members and a new column for book reviews.

ESSays is also featuring a synopsis the research of Danielle Besset, winner of the Rose Laub Coser Award; and an introduction of Margaret Anderson, our Robin Williams Scholar.

As always I am indebted to my contributors for sending me material. I am looking forward to your future contributions.

From the Exec Office

Summer is such a tricky season— at the beginning it spreads out before one, full of time and options and opportunities. In this office, it is the blessed hiatus between meetings and offers the time to clean up databases, straighten out processes and begin in an organized and unhurried way the planning for the next cycle. And then its gone!!! So it is again time for all of us in ESS to get ourselves in full gear and begin thinking about: abstract submissions, for the 2008 meeting, nominations for awards (ESS Merit, Candace Rogers, Rose Laub Coser), the Robin M. Williams, Jr. Lectureship (nominations for the next lecturer, applications to host the current one…); ESS elections… And the list goes on. This edition of ESSays should help in the process. Here and on our website (http://essnet.org) are details about the 2008 Annual Meeting: details and deadlines for abstract submission, application and deadline information for the various awards, and a call for nominations for ESS officer elections. And as you go about the business of re-activating your ESS-self, please remember to keep us posted on where you are. With the close of summer comes new job positions, new housing, new campuses – make sure we can continue to reach you with announcements, journals and ballots. Hope your summer was a pleasant and productive one. Welcome back.

ESWS Hosts First Annual Intergenerational Dinner at ESS

Consistent with SWS’s mission of fostering networking opportunities for women professionals in sociology and related fields, the Eastern Chapter of Sociologists for Women in Society (ESWS) will be implementing the regional extension of the SWS Hand Program and organizing the first annual Intergenerational Networking Dinner at the 78th Annual Meeting of ESS in New York City.

The Hand Program will connect veteran SWS participants in the ESS meetings with SWS members new to the conference. The Intergenerational Dinner will bring together respected women scholars who have offered significant contributions to field of sociology and junior scholars whose work as sociologists has been facilitated by those who have come before.

Look for the SWS table at the 78th Annual Meetings in the Roosevelt Hotel, as well as an ESWS session cosponsored by the ESS Committee on the Status of Women. Anyone interested in joining the Eastern Region Chapter of SWS is welcome to attend the ESWS Chapter I Meeting.
New York City will host the 2008 meetings of the Eastern Sociological Society and as a premier “global metropolis,” it serves as an appropriate location for highlighting the increasing range of sociological research that places the US in a broader context, develops comparative paradigms, focuses on sociological studies of other societies and cultures, and recognizes the increasing interdependence and competition that defines the modern world.

The 2008 program committee will be inviting scholars from outside of the US to join us as special commentators on plenary panels, as spokespersons for new sociological paradigms developing beyond our borders.

The "global Easterns" will pay particular attention to the manifestations of inequality that drive immigration from the rest to the west and back again, that situate inside the urban villages of the 21st century, and have transformed regions previously untouched by immigration. It will focus on the role of globalization in labor, education, and the family -- institutions caught in the sway of worldwide integration that has undermined and rearranged, promoted and celebrated new roles for women and men as breadwinners and parents and for children as consumers and actors in the international race for human capital.

We will look anew at how studies of "other places and other spaces" enhance the sociological imagination.

The online database for abstract submittal is now open. The system will close October 1 this year because of the early conference date. Should you have any questions or ideas that you wish to communicate before the abstract system is up and running, please contact the 2008 Program Chairs: Rebecca Casciano (Princeton) and Hilary Levey (Princeton) Email the co-chairs at easterns2008@gmail.com

Nominations for 2008 Mirra Komarovsky Book Award

Nominations for the 2008 Mirra Komarovsky Book Award are now being accepted. This award honors the memory of Mirra Komarovsky (1905–1999), a pioneer in the sociology of gender. Books on any sociological subject are eligible. To be eligible for consideration, a book must have been published during 2005-2007, and at least one of its authors must be an ESS member. Self-nominations will be accepted; however, nominations solely submitted by publishers will not be considered.

The award will be announced and presented at a special ceremony at the 2008 annual meetings, to be held in New York City, February 21-24.

Nominations should provide full publication information (including date of publication), along with a 1-2 paragraph rationale for the nomination, and should be sent by October 1, 2007, to David Grazian, chair of the award selection committee, at dgrazian@soc.upenn.edu.

In addition, nominators and/or authors are responsible for arranging review copies to be sent to each member of the award selection committee; a mailing list will be provided upon receipt of the nomination.
### Rose Laub Coser Winner: Danielle Bessett

Danielle Bessett won the Rose Laub Coser Award in 2007 for her dissertation proposal entitled: Defining the ‘normal’ Pregnancy: Knowledge, Emotion, and Embodied Experience of Women in Stratified Reproduction”. I asked Bessett, who is currently a Visiting Assistant Professor at Williams College and a PhD. Candidate at New York University to summarize her research: "Normality" is the unexamined but ever-present yardstick by which most decisions in and about contemporary reproduction are made. My dissertation investigates how, in the presence of a powerful normalizing discourse of obstetric medicine and highly gendered ideals of maternal sacrifice, the “normal” pregnancy comes to have multiple and sometimes contradictory meanings for women over time. While I utilize a multi-method approach in this project (including textual analysis of obstetric journals and popular self-help guides, ethnographic observations, and informant interviews with doctors, midwives, nurses and receptionists), my research focuses primarily on in-depth longitudinal interviews with a diverse group of sixty-four pregnant women in Manhattan, the Bronx, and suburban Connecticut.

All of the women in my study attempted to balance their desire to see their pregnancy as unique against the competing desire for reassurance of formulaic progress. I document how differences in social class and race/ethnicity help to construct the determinations women make of “normal” versus “abnormal,” or “exceptional,” fetuses. Such differences show themselves most clearly in the differing role medical experts played in this process: more economically-privileged, white women from the Manhattan and Connecticut sites relied more heavily on medical experts to elaborate their condition and confirm the well-being of their fetus, while less economically-privileged white women and women of color (primarily) from the Bronx site employed expert knowledge in combination with the practical knowledge of female relatives and friends and religious faith to make their determinations. However, women’s interpretations of their embodied symptoms, which are typically constructed as synonymous with fetal subjectivity, needs, and well-being, were more homogeneous across social classes. Expecting mothers were expected to adopt techniques of self-surveillance in order to learn to read their symptoms and to produce a discourse of embodied experience for experts, while at the same time “normalizing” non-life threatening pregnancy symptoms in ways consistent with a broader societal discourse of maternal sacrifice. Only a small number of women rejected this discourse of maternal sacrifice, finding it too limited to make sense of, or relieve, their symptoms or the conflicts between women’s family and paid employment roles. Women who challenged the discourse of maternal sacrifice did so by adopting the language of pathology to medicalize their pregnancy further and to bring about intervention by health care professionals. I document how these women experience and define their pregnancies and how their invocations of normality express understandings of individual well-being as well as the kind of family life they envision. Taken together, these methods allow me to examine critically the “dividing practices” that have taken place within obstetric medicine and the culture more broadly and, most importantly, the ways that women experience them amidst their own life conditions. The empirical findings provided in these chapters advance our understanding of how expert classifications and expert knowledge are negotiated within the context of everyday life, as people use the repertoire of cultural resources at their disposal to engage in this negotiation.

### Robin Williams Lecturer 2008-2009: Nominations Requested

The Robin M. Williams, Jr. Lectureship Committee invites the names of leading scholars to be considered for appointment as the 2007-2008 Robin M. Williams, Jr., lecturer. The Eastern Sociological Society established the Lectureship in 1992 to honor the many contributions of Robin M. Williams, Jr. (1914-2006) to the discipline and the Society, particularly as founding editor of its journal, Sociological Forum, now in its 21st year.

The original announcement states: As part of the Society’s attempt to enhance the sharing of ideas, one of our colleagues will be invited to spend time and give lectures on two campuses within the Society’s jurisdiction during his or her year as the Williams lecturer. The Executive Office will provide transportation and honoraria: the host institution will take care of local arrangements, including room and board. The individual chosen for the lectureship will receive an honorarium and will present two lectures on campuses in the ESS region during the terms of his or her appointment. (These campuses will be selected on a competitive basis.) The lecturer will attend the 2008 ESS Annual meeting to be named to the lectureship and will present his or her lecture at the 2009 ESS Annual Meeting.

In 2008, the annual meetings will be held in New York, February 21-24. Please send nominations in a letter detailing the reasons for the nomination along with supporting letters by October 1, 2007 to the Robin M. Williams, Jr., Lectureship Committee Chair: Professor Vincent N. Parrillo, Department of Sociology, William Paterson University, 300 Pompton Road, Wayne, NJ 07470, 973-720-2669, parrillov@wpunj.edu
Robin Williams Lecturer 2007-2008: Margaret Anderson

The ESS is pleased to announce that Margaret L. Andersen is the 2007-2008 Robin L. Williams, Jr. Lecturer. In her lecture Professor Margaret Andersen will discuss “Visualizing Sociology in Everyday Life.” This lecture is based on several of her published works, including her most recent book, On Land and On Sea: A Century of Women in the Rosenfeld Collection (published by Mystic Seaport Museum) and her forthcoming book, Living Art: The Life of Paul R. Jones, African American Art Collector. Margaret Andersen is best known for her work on the intersections of race, class, and gender in producing social inequality and she has recently used this background to work with visual materials, including the African American art held in the Paul Jones Collection at the University of Delaware and the Rosenfeld Collection of maritime photography held at Mystic Seaport Museum. Her Robin L. Williams lecture will use these works, as well as her interest in using visual materials to teach sociology, to engage her audience in thinking about the sociological imagination in everyday life—with a focus on race, class, and gender.

Margaret L. Andersen is the Edward F. and Elizabeth Goodman Rosenberg Professor of Sociology at the University of Delaware, where she also holds appointments in Black American Studies and Women's Studies. She is a Past President of the Eastern Sociological Society past and has recently been elected as Vice President of the American Sociological Association and will serve from 2008-2009. She has published numerous books, in addition to those above, including Thinking About Women: Sociological Perspectives on Sex and Gender, forthcoming in its eighth edition; Race, Class, and Gender: An Anthology (co-edited with Patricia Hill Collins, forthcoming in its seventh edition); Sociology: Understanding a Diverse Society (co-authored with Howard F. Taylor), forthcoming in its fifth edition; Sociology: The Essentials (co-authored with Howard F. Taylor), 5th edition; Race and Ethnicity in Society: The Changing Landscape (co-edited with Elizabeth Higginbotham) forthcoming in the second edition; and Understanding Society (co-edited with Kim Logio and Howard F. Taylor, third edition).

Professor Andersen is a frequent speaker on college and university campuses and has won two teaching awards at the University of Delaware, where she also served as Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Interim Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. She currently chairs the National Advisory Board of the Center for Comparative Studies of Race and Ethnicity at Stanford University, where she has also been a Visiting Professor. She has also been a Visiting Professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She is a member of the Visitor’s Board for the College of Arts and Sciences for Georgia State University, where she received her undergraduate degree in sociology. In 2006 she received the American Sociological Association’s Jessie Bernard Award, given for expanding the field of sociology to include the study of women.

Robin Williams Lecturer on Your Campus

All ESS colleges and universities are eligible to apply for a campus visit and lecture from Professor Andersen. The ESS will cover travel expenses, and the host institution will furnish food, lodging and hospitality expenses. Applicants to host the Robin M. Williams Lectureship should offer clear and thoughtful proposals, detailing a plan for the event (e.g., the extent to which the lecture is part of a larger academic project, the intended audience, and expected outcomes). As this is a competitive proposal, it is advisable to describe clearly the intended audience with specific levels and fields (e.g. undergraduate or graduate students from sociology or from a variety of disciplines, and/or the general public outside of the college/university communities). Colleges and universities with fewer resources and therefore less ability to afford to bring distinguished scholars to campus will be given preference. Applications must be submitted by October 1, 2007. They should be mailed to:
Professor Elizabeth Higginbotham
Department of Sociology
University of Delaware
322 Smith Hall
Newark, DE 19716
Fax: 302 831-2607
or sent via email with the proposal in an attached file: ehiggin@udel.edu
I’d like to discuss the craft of writing now, and to make two simple points.

1. Writing is not overwriting

When sociologists try to write for a broader audience, a lot of them go all literary. They tend to over-write, adding similes and descriptions they think are literary. They know that novelists observe details, and they think they should do the same thing, without really being able to distinguish a new trope from a hackneyed one.

So when they switch from talking about, say, “39% of the females in our sample” (a deadly construction), to talking about an actual woman, they can’t leave it at that. She becomes a “tall woman,” or a “tall, black woman.” (I won’t even touch the fact that sociologists, so critical of racial stereotypes, often add racial identifiers when they have no relevance.) Now being black, or being a woman may be an important demographic variable, but it is dull prose.

This is what we do NOT hear: “Her whole figure…gave an impression of perfection, fixity, completion and acceptance, as if there were no room in her for change, emendation or denial – like the days that are ended, like legends, like the liturgy of established religions, like the paintings from centuries past that no-one would dare to touch.” (That is from Javier Marias’ *The Man of Feeling*, page 6.) That’s how a novelist observes things. And in fact that IS what Marias had seen, a woman on a train, who inspired him to write *A Man of Feeling*.

If we could make up new images and metaphors like that, we’d probably be poets, not sociologists.

2. Eliminate extra words

I’ll share a few common examples of unnecessarily wordy construction, some of which I hope will sound familiar.

There is the obsessive use of logical connectors, like “however,” or “thus.” If the relationship between two successive sentences isn’t clear without these, from their internal substance, you’re already in trouble. (I could have said, “then you’re already in trouble,” or “thus you’re already in trouble.”)

There are also phrases that mean nothing at all, like “In this regard”…

Another example: “Religious people who longed to once again, or perhaps for the first time, experience participating in something like the civil rights movement…” There’s plenty to change here, but let me just point out one, the doubling of the verbs, “experience participating in.” It’s much better – in reality and writing -- to experience something, or to participate in something, than to experience participating in something.

There can also be a doubling of meaning by asking verbs and nouns to do the same work: “Religion and spirituality were not simply added on as an afterthought.” Well, an afterthought IS something added on, so we can just say, “Religion and spirituality were not simply an afterthought.”

Another way of complicating our prose it the creation of a clause where a participle would do: “Clergy and people of faith who are today actively working for immigrant rights believe…” need only be, “Clergy and people of faith actively working for immigrant rights.” A relatively smooth participle replaces a whole awkward clause. Those who were trained in high school to diagram sentences can appreciate or at least recognize how to simplify them.

On the other hand, there are verbs that can more simply do the work of nouns and prepositions.

“The principle in all these cases is the elimination of unnecessary words...”
Musings on Pedagogy

Resource Sharing for the Classroom: How to teach a diverse and multicultural curriculum without spending extra hours reinventing the wheel.

A three-part series on easily accessed resources for the classroom.

Introduction

As educators at all levels continue to understand the growing importance of global and multicultural curriculums, we frequently have difficulty keeping up with these trends because of time constraints: it’s hard to find the time to search for the new resources necessary to update our course content. As a teacher with over a decade of experience focusing on global culture within and outside of the United States, I have been invited to begin a series of discussions in this year’s Newsletter in the format of a brief column in each issue that will cover one type of quickly accessed resource that can easily bring a global and/or multicultural slant into any sociological classroom. The first column will present a brief overview of the world of news podcasts, the second will cover pedagogical values of commercial travel videos, and the third will examine the use of popular music as an avenue towards increasing multicultural and global awareness. [I invite all readers to submit short resource suggestions from their own teaching experiences, as well].

Part I: PODCASTS

A Podcast is a digital audio file distributed over the internet that can be downloaded and played on either a computer or an mp3 device. Several public radio news programs produce free current-events podcasts with specific multicultural and/or global content perfect for classrooms. While some of these are as long as an hour, some are only 3-5 minutes in length. Additionally, most public radio websites also archive their articles and make them available to hear over the internet; both podcasts and archived news programs are easily accessed by subject in quick index searches. The two cites that I have found the most productive to use are www.theworld.org and www.npr.org.

The World is a one-hour daily news show co-produced by PRI and BBC. While the entire broadcast is available for a small fee from audible.com, many of the individual daily features, as well as specific articles are freely available in shorter, regular, podcasts. At the end of July 2007, special podcasts available to download include “US and Iran series”, “Liberia Series”, “ Rwanda Series”, “Cities of the Poor Series”, and “Cuba Stories” (http://theworld.org/?q=taxonomy/term/90). Regular features include ‘Global Hit’ ‘Technology’ and ‘Geo-Quiz’ podcast, which always have an international and/or multicultural focus to them. While the latter may not seem connected to the sociology classroom, the stories they cover almost always focus on one specific social problem, and many of them have imbedded in them race, class, and/or gender issues; at three to five minutes long, the global hits and the geocasts are especially useful in the classroom or as homework.

The Geo quiz for July 24, for example, asked listeners to name the location of the building that was finished, will be the world’s tallest building. The article about this building in the city of Dubai, discussed the reasons for the construction of this building in terms of urbanization and stratification. Many of the discussions of world music in the Global Hits series can be used as fodder for discussing issues of racial and/or ethnic identity, such as the discussion of the multiracial rap group “Tumi and the Volume” from South Africa. The Mp3 application (free from http://get-itunes-now.com) indexes these programs in a searchable database. The website itself also has keyword search available as well, for these podcasts and their archived programs.

National Public Radio (http://www.npr.org) produces and archives many audio articles with multicultural and global foci. The keyword search facility can pull up articles on any country and topic, and the podcast list is inclusive. Several shows with multicultural content, are podcasted completely, and while too lengthy for regular classroom inclusion, have proven effective as homework content that produces excellent follow-up discussions in class. News and Notes as well as The Tavis Smiley Show take a specifically African-American point of view; Latino USA carries an Hispanic outlook.

In addition to providing an excellent source of global and multicultural information for the classroom, these audio articles also provide excellent models for oral presentations, with informational and analytical content will integrated together. The first time I used the short podcasts as part of regular homework for my students, my class produced the best group presentations I’d heard in any of my classrooms.

Robin Armstrong

“...Podcast is a digital audio file that can be downloaded and played...”

“...many of them have embedded in them race, class, and/or gender issues...”
Robert Max Jackson: Editor of Sociological Forum 2002-2006

A Thank You to Robert Max Jackson, Editor of Sociological Forum, 2002-2006

Submitted to ESS Newsletter on September 4, 2007

Danielle Bessett
Mount Holyoke College

As we celebrate the new look, new editor, and new publisher for Sociological Forum, it is my pleasure to thank Robert Max Jackson for his service as the journal’s editor at New York University from 2002-2006 on behalf of the ESS. As the former Managing Editor of Sociological Forum, I’d like to take this opportunity to share with ESS colleagues a perspective on his work. Among his many accomplishments during his tenure at Sociological Forum, Jackson strengthened its commitment to the mentorship of young authors while raising both the profile and the ISI impact factor of the journal. He achieved this by emphasizing the iterative aspects of the review process and by stressing the importance of clarity in writing.

Time and again, authors and reviewers spoke of Jackson’s commitment to provide authors with the opportunity to improve their work through the review process, something unique in a sphere that too often emphasizes “rejection rates” as a measure of selectivity. Jackson measured the success of Sociological Forum by the quality of the work produced through it. While demanding that authors meet his high standards, Jackson also enabled them to take advantage of multiple review and revision cycles and his strong editorial analysis of external reviews. As one author remarked to me, “He thought the idea had a fighting chance, and he was clear it would take a lot of work. But he put the ball in my court, and now it is a much better piece.” Similarly, it was not uncommon for pleasantly-surprised reviewers to recommend publication of a submission they had previously consigned to rejection. For Jackson, the review process was as much a medium for improvement through constructive criticism as it was a gatekeeping function.

Another of Jackson’s significant contributions to Sociological Forum was to convert all of the journal’s processes to electronic format. This conversion allowed the journal to seek and include more international reviewers than was previously the case, which no doubt contributed to the rising impact factor of the journal. By providing extended time for overcommitted, but well-matched, external reviewers to communicate with the editorial office, electronic communications added to the quality of the review process and hence to the journal as well.

Early on in my tenure as Managing Editor, Jackson made a comment that would define my experience of our work together. I complained to Jackson about an older, distinguished author who repeatedly faxed small stylistic changes to his book review long after the journal’s internal deadline for corrections had passed. Jackson was not sympathetic to my frustration. Instead, he said that we should model our work on this author’s example: what could be better inspiration for our editorial work than to be at the twilight of an illustrious career and still care so much about the phrasing in a short review piece rather than just getting it into print? Jackson may not even recall this specific conversation; nevertheless, his work was guided by this sentiment. As a result, Robert Max Jackson’s five years as editor of Sociological Forum provide a legacy equal to his inspiration.


The reviewer is Laura Wildman-Hanlon (Cherry Hill Seminary) is the author of “Generational Retention in the New Religious Movement of Neo-Paganism,” in Studies in Paganism, B. Davy editor. (Routledge 2008)

Helen Berger and Douglas Ezzy have provided a much needed and fascinating international study into the lives of teenage Witches. Using interviews from a total of 90 young people from Australia, the United States and England who self-identify as Witches, Berger and Ezzy have given us unique view into their minds, beliefs and practices. Teenage Witches explores the important question of how young people became involved with the new religious movement as well as challenge the stereotypical views of the teen Witch.

Mistaken perceptions are often associated with teen Witches. They have been seen as living in a make-believe fancy world or as misguided and troubled youth. Berger and Ezzy’s research show that they are neither. In Teenage Witches the reader is introduced to a number of practitioners through vignettes, a sampling of conversations from their in depth interviews. We find these young people are very serious about their religion; one which they believe provides them a strong ethical worldview from which can interact with the world.

Modern Witchcraft is a product of modernity and as such is deeply influenced by the media, magazines and books. Berger and Ezzy explore how the Internet holds unique importance in the development of this movement, both in disseminating information about the religion and as a source of community. They look at personal practices, magical and spiritual, of young Witches then expand the views to the youths involvement within the Witchcraft community and finally outside to political and environmental issues.

Teenage Witches: Magical Youth and the Search for the Self is by Helen A. Berger and Douglas Ezzy (Rutgers University Press, 2007).
SUMMER RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR UNDERGRADUATES

The Disaster Research Center at the University of Delaware is offering its fourth annual Summer Research Institute program to provide undergraduate students with hands-on research training and mentoring in the social science aspects of disasters.

Each summer, ten students from a variety of social science disciplines are selected to participate in the nine-week program. Students receive a generous summer stipend and all transportation and lodging expenses are covered. Students entering their junior or senior year in Fall 2008 are invited to apply.

Students underrepresented in graduate schools—minority students, women, students from poorer regions of the country and students from institutions with limited graduate programs—are especially encouraged to apply. The application deadline is February 1.

Students will be notified of their acceptance into the program by March 1. Further information, guidelines and application materials can be accessed online at: http://www.udel.edu/DRC/REU.

The program is sponsored by the National Science Foundation’s Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) program, the U.S. Department of Defense and the University of Delaware.

Setsuko Matsunaga Nishi: Lifetime Achievement Award from AAAS

Professor Emerita Setsuko Matsunaga Nishi receives 2007 Lifetime Achievement Award from Association of Asian American Studies

Setsuko Matsunaga Nishi, Professor Emerita of Sociology at Brooklyn College and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, is a beacon of community, professional, and family achievement.

Born in Los Angeles, she studied music at University of Southern California before being incarcerated at Santa Anita Assembly Center. She was able to leave incarceration and enroll at Washington University, St. Louis, where she reported on local “resettlement” for the Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement Study.

Following graduation in 1944, she moved to Chicago, where she was hired at Parkway Community House, organizing community forums and began her long association with famed African American sociologist Horace Cayton. With his guidance, she played a key role in the establishment of the Chicago Resettlers Committee, now known as the Japanese American Service Committee.

For the American Council on Race Relations, she wrote the classic pamphlet “Facts About Japanese Americans” (1946), and, with support from the Julius Rosenwald Fund, she and anthropologist William Caudill launched the interdisciplinary Japanese American Personality and Acculturation Study. Meanwhile, she was enrolled in sociology at University of Chicago, where she would ultimately receive her doctorate in 1963.

Her dissertation, “Japanese American Achievement in Chicago: A Cultural Response to Degradation,” is a notable contribution to the literature. In New York, Nishi was re-joined with Horace Cayton to produce The Changing Scene (1955), a study of churches and social welfare.

From 1965 until her retirement in 1999, Nishi was a professor of sociology at Brooklyn College and The Graduate Center, CUNY. Nishi taught the first courses on Asian American Studies there and served as a mentor to a generation of scholars.

During the postwar era, Nishi also worked on projects with her husband, the artist Ken Nishi, and raised five children. Nishi has been notable for her devotion to merging scholarly engagement with community involvement.

As a senior fellow at the Metropolitan Applied Research Center, the noted think tank of the civil rights movement led by Drs. Kenneth B. Clark and Hylan Lewis, she collaborated in many studies, including methods and strategies for achieving school integration, minority drug use and abuse, institutionalized discrimination in foster care, and inequities in performance evaluation in corporate employment.

She served for three decades on the New York State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, during which time she has championed the rights of all minorities against discrimination. More recently, she joined the delegation of Japanese Americans in New York, who met with Jewish community leaders to discuss the use of the term "concentration camps" at the museum’s Ellis Island exhibition.

She remains intensely active even after over 60 years of work, and she is currently principal investigator of the Japanese American Life Course Study, a large-scale investigation into the long-term effects on Japanese Americans of their wartime incarceration. Her community involvement in New York has also been exemplary. She was the founding president of the Asian American Federation of New York. She has won awards from the American Association of University Women and the Asian Pacific American Women’s Leadership Institute, among others.
Disasters: Recipes and Remedies Conference at New School

November 1 and 2, 2007

This conference is convened at a time at which we are seriously threatened by an increasing number of disasters of all kinds: those conventionally considered “natural,” like hurricanes and tsunamis, and those normally considered man-made, like pandemics and large-scale bioterrorist attacks. This increasing threat is not only due to urbanization, globalization, coastal development, inadequate infrastructure design, and international hostilities, among other things, but is also a consequence of global warming. The need for serious reflection on how we can best think about, prepare for, respond to and prevent disaster is urgent. At this conference, leading experts will explore the commonalities of all disasters. They will examine the unequal protection and treatment of populations made vulnerable by their location and socioeconomic status; the impact of disasters on the economy and overall human development; how hazards develop into disasters; and how design factors either mitigate or amplify their effects.

To view the agenda, schedule, speaker bios and to register, please visit www.newschool.edu/disasters. We are pleased to announce that the ACLU is cosponsoring the conference and the Metropolitan Museum of Art will offer a guided tour of its collection focused on artistic representations of disasters in collaboration with the conference on Saturday, November 3rd. For additional information and to view past conferences, please visit our website: www.socres.org.

A Vivid History of the Nation’s Oldest Folk Parade

“The Mummers at last have their definitive study. Through deep research and patient ethnography, Patricia Anne Masters demonstrates the Mummers Parade’s tangled roots in working-class Philadelphia, past and present.”—Eric Lott, author of Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class

In The Philadelphia Mummers: Building Community through Play (Publication Date: August 15, 2007), Patricia Anne Masters explores the community created and annually reaffirmed by the Philadelphia Mummers. Every New Year’s Day since 1901, the Philadelphia Mummers have presented a spectacular show of shows that raucously snakes and shimmies its way through city streets. The Mummers Parade features music, dance, comedy, and mime, along with dazzling costumes and floats. Although the lavish event is now televised to a wide audience, it is still rooted in the same neighborhoods where it began.

Masters spent more than five years with the Mummers, observing their lives and rituals as she took part in their preparations and parades. Writing with the fascination of a sociologist and the excitement of a participant, Masters examines the Mummers from their beginnings. Through the prism of their century-long history, we can see how communities retain their identities and how they are affected by larger cultural trends.

Patricia Anne Masters is a Term Assistant Professor of Sociology and Director of the Undergraduate Program in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, George Mason University. The book is published by Temple University Press.

Understanding American Teens after High School

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Call for Papers

A Special Issue of Sociological Focus

on

Racial and Ethnic Inequality in Health and Healthcare

Edited by Professor Jennifer Malat

Sociological Focus solicits papers for a special issue titled “Racial and Ethnic Inequality in Health and Healthcare.” Papers that address processes and mechanisms affecting health status and/or healthcare quality, understudied populations, or understudied issues are of particular interest. Papers from a variety of methodological approaches are welcome. For further information about the special issue, please contact Professor Malat at the Department of Sociology, 1009 Crosley Tower, Box 210378, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH 45221-0378 or email her at Jennifer.Malat@uc.edu.

Send complete submissions to Sociological Focus, Department of Sociology, Box 210378, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH 45221-0378, no later than December 7, 2007. Submissions should contain 2 printed copies of your paper (in ASA format), an electronic copy of the paper, and a $15 fee. Sociological Focus will forward manuscripts to the special issue editor. All manuscripts will be peer reviewed. Submission requirements may be found in a current (August 2006 or later) issue of the journal or at the journal’s web site: http://www.ncsanet.org/sociological_focus/
Schutt Receives Distinguished Service Award at UMass

Committed to making the world a better place through his research, Russell K. Schutt, Professor of Sociology, received the 2007 Chancellor’s Distinguished Service Award at the University of Massachusetts Boston.

A member of the Sociology Department within the College of Liberal Arts since 1979 and its former chair, Schutt is recognized for his service on and off campus that has helped shape the Sociology Department, the university and the community. The Lexington resident has offered his time and expertise in numerous ways, including sitting on an accreditation steering committee, helping students plan an alumni dinner, and conducting research that aims to improve housing for the homeless.

“Through his commitment to excellence, UMass Boston and service, he inspires in others that it is possible to work harder to do more,” one nominator wrote. “He embodies what it means to be a professor, but more importantly a professor at UMass Boston – a place steeped in the community and public service.”

Thrilled to be chosen because “it’s a great honor and recognition for the work I’ve been engaged in at UMass,” Schutt said it’s natural for him to give of his time and experience.

“I am myself a graduate of a public urban university, the University of Illinois at Chicago, and I feel students at a school like ours deserve the best from their faculty and can achieve at the highest levels with the appropriate opportunities,” Schutt said. “I have been very committed to providing opportunities for our students to engage in the types of research projects that both allow them to develop their skills and interests and also provide meaningful service in the urban community.”

Schutt aims to make a difference by focusing on, among others, issues of housing and employment for the mentally ill and homeless. “All of his research is ‘applied,’ or service-oriented, guided by his background in organizational sociology, methodology and his commitment to making the world a better place,” one colleague said.

Acting on the advice of a panel directed by Schutt, the state Department of Public Health is working to improve the Women’s Health Network program that provides screening and referral services to low-income, underinsured and uninsured women at risk for breast and cervical cancer as well as cardiovascular disease.

Schutt is currently working with the Dana Farber/Harvard Cancer Center on a project funded by the National Cancer Institute that focuses on the disparate rate of participation between ethnic groups in cancer clinical trials. He is also continuing to analyze and publish data from a research project funded by the National Institute of Mental Health on homelessness and housing in Boston that began in 1990 at the Massachusetts Mental Health Center.

Schutt has a passion for sociology because it can provide decision makers with information about the impact of and need for particular programs and policies. “In my belief, sociology provides a way of understanding and improving the world around us,” Schutt said.

As graduate program director, Schutt is credited with developing the Graduate Program in Applied Sociology into what “may well be the best program in applied sociology in the United States,” according to one academic reviewer. As chair of the Department of Sociology, Schutt helped create the Criminal Justice major, recruit new faculty, mentor existing faculty and lead a major academic review.

Schutt’s memberships on campus include chair of the Majors, Honors, and Special Programs committee; Search Committee for the Dean of Liberal Arts; co-chair of the Admissions and Financial Aid Subcommittee of the Chancellor’s Strategic Planning Task Force, member of Faculty Council, and of the Faculty Development Grant Review Committee.

Off campus, Schutt has served as secretary to the Eastern Sociological Society, chair of the American Sociological Association’s MA-Level Certification Committee and as Associate Editor of the Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal. He is also a lecturer on sociology in the Department of Psychiatry, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center at Harvard Medical School.

The author of Investigating the Social World: The Practice and Process of Research and of Organization in a Changing Environment, co-author of Responding to the Homeless: Policy and Practice, and co-editor of The Organizational Response to Social Problems, Schutt has authored or co-authored more than 50 articles and book chapters on topics including homelessness, mental illness, law, substance abuse and sociology.

Schutt earned a PhD from the University of Illinois, Chicago and was a Postdoctoral Fellow at Yale University.
Social Control in a Lesbian Community

The Web: Social Control in a Lesbian Community is a new book by Christine M. Robinson, Assistant Professor of Sociology and Interdisciplinary Liberal Studies at James Madison University. The manuscript was awarded the Joan Heller-Diane Bernard Fellowship from the Center of Lesbian and Gay Studies in New York.

Experts: As members of social groups, including communities, we routinely exert subtle forms of social control on others, and we are also profoundly affected by them. Typically, we don’t recognize much of our daily interaction as social control, nor are we fully aware of its influence on our identities, beliefs, and actions. This is a sociological study examining the effects of social control in everyday life. The context of this study is a lesbian community in the heartland of the United States. Although much of what is represented is unique to this community, the forms and functions of social control analyzed here can be found in any human community. By social control, I mean the organized ways in which members of a community “respond to behavior and people [they] regard as deviant, problematic, worrying, threatening, troublesome, or undesirable in some way or other” (Cohen 1985, pg. 1). By definition, human communities are both inclusive and exclusive; the socially constructed boundaries that define them are continually negotiated and redefined. This process is accomplished through the most taken-for-granted informal practices of social control... Every community, consciously or not, uses social control to establish the boundaries of identity, space, and convention. This fact is not provocative, but the habit that sociologists make of rendering our social choices visible often offends our sensibilities and burdens us with a new awareness of how what we do matters — materializes — affects others in ways we had not seen before. Defining “us” always also has implications for “them.” Delineating what is acceptable inherently marks what is not. The profound, but basic sociological insight that as members of communities, small and large, we are responsible for all of this implicates us as moral actors. Acknowledging and understanding that how we participate in and organize social life in the most subtle, taken-for-granted ways has real consequences, both intended and unintended, for the lives of others is onerous. This awareness, however, can also be liberating. Paying attention to the subtleties of social control in our everyday lives can teach us much about how and why we organize society as we do, and how we are implicated, as individuals and as members of groups, in the lives of others.

Gender, Class, and Race in the Construction Industry

Kris Paap worked for nearly three years as a carpenter’s apprentice on a variety of jobsites, closely observing her colleagues’ habits, expressions, and attitudes. As a woman in an overwhelmingly male—and stereotypically “macho”—profession, Paap uses her experiences to reveal the ways that gender, class, and race interact in the construction industry. She shows how the stereotypes of construction workers and their overt displays of sexism, racism, physical strength, and homophobia are not “just how they are,” but rather culturally and structurally mandated enactments of what it means to be a man—and a worker—in America.

The significance of these worker performances is particularly clear in relation to occupational safety: when the pressures for demonstrating physical masculinity are combined with a lack of protection from firing, workers are forced to ignore safety procedures in order to prove—whether male or female—that they are “man enough” to do the job. Thus these mandated performances have real, and sometimes deadly, consequences for individuals, the entire working class, and the strength of the union movement.

Paap concludes that machismo separates the white male construction workers from their natural political allies, increases their risks on the job, plays to management’s interests, lowers their overall social status, and undercuts the effectiveness of their union.

Kris Paap is a Senior Research Fellow at the Center for Women and Work, Rutgers. The book is published by Cornell University Press/ILR.

“...the habit that sociologists make of rendering our social choices visible often offends our sensibilities and burdens us with a new awareness of how what we do matters....”

“...these mandated performances have real and sometimes deadly consequences....”
Noteworthy

Albert N. Greco, Clara E. Rodriguez (Fordham), and Robert M. Wharton announce the publication of their book on the world of publishing. The Culture and Commerce of Publishing in the 21st Century utilizes both sociological and economic theories to analyze extensive data sets. They provide the definitive look into the culture and economics of the book publishing industry. The book is published by Stanford University Press.

The Kaleidoscope of Gender: Prisms, Patterns, and Possibilities will be available in its second edition in mid-December. This volume is published by Sage and edited by Joan Z. Spade (SUNY Brockport) and Catherine G. Valentine (Nazareth College).

David Schleifer (NYU) has an article in cyber-space based on his dissertation research. “Fear of Frying: A Brief History of Trans Fats” can be accessed on line at http://www.nplusonemag.com/transfats.html. Schleifer was awarded a travel grant from the Chemical Heritage Foundation in Philadelphia where he will be continuing his research.

Penn State University-Harrisburg has a new tenured associate. Kamini Maraj Grahame joins the ranks in the Department of Sociology.

Rutgers University Press announces a new book by Helen A. Berger (West Chester University) and Douglas Ezy (University of Tasmania). Teenage Witches: Magical Youth and the Search for the Self. The book was released in June 2007.

Beth A. Rubin (UNC-Charlotte) is the editor of Volume 17 - Research in the Sociology of Work: Workplace Temporalities. This volume is published by Elsevier. This volume explores the global, 24/7 economy and the organizational changes it has generated as well as the enormous implications for the organization, experience and use of time in (and out of) the workplace. In addition to eroding the boundary between home and work, creating time pressures both within and outside of the workplace, the need for businesses to compete in a 24/7 global economy has re-problematized time in the workplace. Drawing on sociology, labor economics, organizational behavior and social history, the papers in this volume examine either empirically or theoretically, a variety of aspects of time in the workplace.

Four members of the CUNY Graduate Center faculty were Honored by the ASA: Professor Andrew Beveridge, Queens College and Graduate Center, the winner of the ASA Award for the Public Understanding of Sociology; Professor Sharon Zuckin, Brooklyn College and Graduate Center, the winner of the Lynd Award for Career Contributions in Community and Urban Sociology; Professor Robert Smith, Baruch College and Graduate Center, the winner of the Community and Urban Sociology Section’s Robert Park Book Award and Professor Mitchell Duneier, Graduate Center, the winner of the Leo Goodman award from the ASA section on methodology.

William Paterson University Adjunct Professor Sarah Murray has published an entry on Blended Families in The Sage Encyclopedia of Social Problems as well as in Thomson Wadsworth’s publication Lecture Ideas for Courses on the Family.

Steven E. Barkan (University of Maine) has been elected president of the Society for the Study of Social Problems for 2008-2009. Professor Barkan will serve as president-elect during 2007-2008.

Wadsworth announces the 9th edition of Choices in Relationships: Introduction to Marriage and the Family by David Knox and Caroline Schacht (East Carolina). The text is a theme-based marriage and family textbook that emphasizes applying research and theory to student’s lives.

The extensively revised second edition of Gender Violence: Interdisciplinary Perspectives was released in August. Published by New York University Press the book is co-edited by Laura L. O’Toole, Professor of Sociology at Roanoke College, Jessica R. Schifman, Assistant Director of Women’s Studies at the University of Delaware, and Margie L. Kiter Edwards, Assistant Professor of Sociology at Shepherd University.

Charis E. Kubrin (George Washington University) has several new publications: a published article with Tim Wadsworth in American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 112 titled “Hispanic Suicide in U.S. Metropolitan Areas: Examining the Effects of Immigration, Assimilation, Affluence, and Disadvantage”; a forthcoming article (2008) with Avery M. Guest and Jane K. Cover entitled “Heterogeneity and Harmony: Neighboring Relationships in Ethnically-Diverse Neighborhoods” to be published in Urban Studies; and a forthcoming book from Oxford University Press with Thomas D. Stucky (Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis) and Marvin D. Krohn (U Albany) titled Researching Theories of Crime and Deviance.

Joseph W. Ruane (University of the Sciences in Philadelphia) was awarded the 2006 Distinguished Service Award by the Pennsylvania Sociological Society at their 56th annual meeting in Edinboro University.

The recipient of the Lifetime Lindback Distinguished Teaching Award for 2007 is Robert E. Wood (Rutgers-Camden).

Judith Lorber, Professor Emerita, Brooklyn College and the Graduate Center, CUNY, gave a
keynote address entitled "Sport: The Playing Ground of Gender," at the World Congress of the International Society for the History of Physical Education and Sport (ISHPES) and the International Sociology of Sport Association (ISSA) in Copenhagen, Denmark on August 4, 2007.  

William V. D’Antonio (Catholic University) is the co-author of two new books. The first is American Catholics Today: New Realities of their Faith and their Church, March 2007, a Sheed and Ward book from Rowman and Littlefield Publishers. This book is co-authored with Dean Hoge, (Villanova) James D. Davidson (Purdue), and Mary Gautier (CARA, Georgetown University). The second is Voices of the Faithful: Loyal Catholics Speaking Out, September, 2007, a Herder and Herder book from Crossroad Publishing Company. It is co-authored with Anthony J. Pogorelc (Catholic University).

Robert Manning (Rochester Institute of Technology), featured in In Debt We Trust, a documentary on consumer credit/debt by Danny Schechter was awarded the Frank J. Battisti Award, for Outstanding Contributions to Law and Public Policy by Case Western Reserve School of Law in 2007. Manning also testified before the U.S. Senate, Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: “Examining the Billing, Marketing, and Disclosure Practices of the Credit Card Industry and Their Impact on Consumers.” He was interviewed on Consumer Debt and Subprime Mortgages by CNN’s Lou Dobbs and Paula Zahn, CBS Evening News with Katie Couric, and CSPAN’s Washington Journal. Manning was recently appointed the Founding Director for the Center for Consumer Financial Services at Rochester Institute of Technology.

Call for Papers: Children/Adolescents’ Voices

David A. Kinney and Katherine Brown Rosier, Series Co-editors of Sociological Studies of Children and Youth (Elsevier, Oxford, England), are pleased to announce that Heather Beth Johnson will be the Guest Editor of Volume 13 to be published Summer 2008. The theme of this volume is an outgrowth of one of the Section sponsored sessions at the 2006 ASA meetings in Montreal; "Children and Youth Speak for Themselves." The editors are interested in receiving manuscripts from authors who pay particular attention to children and/or adolescents’ voices, interpretations, perspectives, and experiences within specific social and cultural contexts. Contributions from all methodological and theoretical orientations are encouraged. Authors should direct inquiries or submit drafts of potential chapters to: Heather Beth Johnson, Department of Sociology & Anthropology, Lehigh University, Price Hall, 681 Taylor Street, Bethlehem, PA 18015. Tel: (610) 758-3816. E-mail: hbj2@lehigh.edu. The deadline for paper submissions is October 1, 2007. Volume website: http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/bookdescription.cws_home/706901/description#description

Call of Nominations: ESS Officers

The Nominations Committee welcomes suggestions for nominees for the following offices to be voted on this fall: President-Elect, Vice-President-Elect, and two members of the Executive Committee (both of whom will serve three-year terms beginning in 2008). When suggesting a candidate, please provide your name and contact information as well as that of the person you are recommending and please indicate the office for which the person would be a good candidate. Self-nominations are also welcome. Please remember that submitting a name does not guarantee that your suggested person will actually be chosen as a nominee as we receive more nominations than needed. Suggestions should be sent by September 20, 2007, to the committee chair: Kathleen Gerson, Professor of Sociology, New York University, The Puck Building, 295 Lafayette Street, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10012; kathleen.gerson@nyu.edu

Future Annual Meetings

New York, NY  
Roosevelt Hotel  
February 21-24, 2008

Baltimore, MD  
Sheraton Inner Harbor  
March 12-15, 2009
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ESSay Submissions

ESSays is an open submission publication. Send submissions to the Editor, Debra Lemke
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 Submission Deadlines for upcoming issues:

Winter Issue       December 15, 2007
Spring Issue       April 1, 2008
Fall Issue         August 15, 2008
The *Eastern Sociological Society* is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting excellence in sociological scholarship and instruction. It has approximately 1000 members, most of whom live and work in the Northeastern United States. The ESS sponsors a professional journal (Sociological Forum), a four-day Annual Meeting in the spring, a newsletter, numerous award competitions, an employment service, and a listserv.

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