

Sociology should... be thought of as a science of action—of the ultimate common value element in its relations to the other elements of action.

--Talcott Parsons
The Structure of Social Action (1937)

North Central Sociologist

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2011 Aida Tomeh Distinguished Service Award KATHY FELTEY



The North Central Sociological Association presented the 2011 Aida Tomeh Distinguished Service Award to Kathy Feltey, Associate Professor of Sociology, University of Akron.

The award recognizes a member who has provided outstanding service to the NCSA typically through a variety of activities and roles over an extended period of time throughout his or her professional career.

Dr. Feltey joined the NCSA during her first year as a graduate student. A fixture at NCSA meetings, Feltey has served in important leadership roles as an NCSA Council Member, Vice President, and President. She has also been a presenter, chair, organizer, or discussant at 17 NCSA meetings in the last 22 years. Kathy has chaired the Membership Committee, the Nominations Committee, and the Race, Gender, and Ethnicity Committee. She has been a member of the Student Awards Committee, the Schnabel Distinguished Contributions to Teaching Award Committee, and the Scholarly Achievement Award Committee. She is a past recipient of the Schnabel Distinguished Contributions to Teaching Award.

This year's recipient of the 2011 NCSA Aida Tomeh Distinguished Service Award is most deserving of this honor.

2011 NCSA ANNUAL MEETING IN CLEVELAND

This year's annual NCSA meeting in Cleveland, OH, was held from March 31-April 2, 2011.

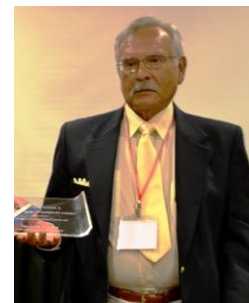
The theme of the 2011 meeting was
Pragmatism in Research and Education

Many individuals contributed to this successful meeting, but special thanks goes to the Program Chair Carrie Erlin and Conference Coordinator Joyce Lucke for all their hard work putting together the NCSA program with such a diversity of sessions.



2011 J. Milton Yinger Distinguished Lifetime Career Award LARRY T. REYNOLDS

The 2011 J. Milton Yinger Lifetime Distinguished Career Award in Sociology was named for Professor Yinger, the only president of NCSA to also be president of ASA. His career exemplified the three factors that are considered in selecting winners of the award: teaching, research and public sociology.



This year's recipient is the author of over ninety articles and book chapters, nine or eleven books depending on how you count editions, and an acquisitions editor for a significant publisher who is responsible for an uncounted number of books written by others. In addition, he has contributed significantly to the development of a large number of sociologists by serving on their thesis committees, mentoring them in the early parts of their careers, and serving as a midwife to their early publications by "helping them to organize and tailor their work for publication and to steer them to appropriate publication venues," to quote one of the persons who nominated him. In addition to this exemplary record of scholarship, our awardee has a long and distinguished record as a classroom teacher, having won his institution's Teaching Excellence Award.

The NCSA is pleased to present the 2011 J. Milton Yinger Award for Distinguished Career Achievement in Sociology to Larry T. Reynolds of Central Michigan University.

FROM THE DESK OF NCSA PRESIDENT

Larry Nichols

West Virginia University



Anyone who receives this newsletter probably already appreciates some of the benefits of a regional association. Conferences

are on a smaller scale, offer greater opportunities for participation than does the annual ASA national conference, and have a more personal feel. Presentations about teaching are highly valued and enjoy relative parity with research papers. Both undergraduate and graduate students are able to find places on the program and develop professionally in a nurturing climate. Accommodations are usually less expensive and closer to home.

All in all, regional associations offer a means of supporting one another's professional efforts and celebrating one another's achievements. Ideally, we would embrace the diversity of sociological paradigms and styles of work in a spirit of solidarity. Our interests vary, but we have the power to be good to one another within this organization.

As many histories of our field attest, sociology has often been on the defensive amid demands that it demonstrate its scientific quality, or prove that it is more than a vague reformism grounded in extreme political liberalism. Within higher education, sociology has largely succeeded in meeting these challenges, and is today an area of high demand throughout the

United States. College and university administrators have come to see its value in helping students understand and respond to urgent issues of the times, especially those dealing with social conflict and social justice.

There is no doubt that our field will remain intensely relevant, as we examine such well recognized issues as increasing economic inequality, violence within and across societies, and ever accelerating technological change.

Meanwhile, other issues such as population dynamics and threats to the natural environment will also demand greater attention. Cross-cultural interaction and inter-civilizational dialogue, the emotional aspects of group life, and the sociology of the body will likewise be central foci. The study of the life course will gain in prominence, as hundreds of millions of people around the world reach what has been considered "retirement age," violate stereotypes and seek new social roles—while also making unprecedented demands on societal resources and younger workers.

Sociologists will also explore other less familiar issues, such as altruism, morality, and social solidarity. Perhaps we will begin serious work on a sociology of love energy, generosity, forgiveness and reconciliation, as Pitirim A. Sorokin called for half a century ago.

Justice will always remain a primary value, but we may also inquire as to whether there are still higher values such as compassion and unconditional love that are implied by the very search for justice. It may even be that, as sociology develops, some shared concept of spirituality will become part of the field—not in the sense of religious dogma but in the sense of an overarching attitude and consciousness that is compatible with scientific work.

Indeed, we may expect that understandings of science will continue to change, along with the spread of such

recent paradigms as "mind-body medicine."

Addressing these many and varied challenges will require that sociology always be immersed in a creative process of renewal and reinvention that retains traditional values and insights while always striving for innovation and discovery. With this in mind, the NCSA Council has approved the theme of our 2012 conference be "Renewing Sociology: Living Traditions and Creative Beginnings." I believe this is one of the most inclusive possible themes, touching all of us in our various endeavors of teaching, research, service and activism. Together let us examine the myriad ways in which our field, along with its dozens of specialized subfields, is being revitalized and reinvigorated, while setting off in new directions.

2011-2012 NCSA Executive Council



The newly elected North Central Sociological Association officers for 2011-12 began their term at the Business Meeting on April 3, 2011.

The newly elected officers are: President-elect: Steve Carlton-Ford, University of Cincinnati; Vice President-elect Todd Callais, Ohio Dominican University; Council Member-at-Large Mary Scheuer Senter, Central Michigan University; Student Council Member Jennifer Carter, University of Cincinnati.

The returning members of the NCSA Executive Council include: President Larry Nichols, Vice-President Carrie Erlin, Secretary Barbara Denison, Treasurer Annuala Linders, Membership Chair Mellisa Holtzman, and Council Member-at-Large Elizabeth (Betsy) Ross.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

by

Jack A. Goldstone

George Mason University

“Pragmatism and Ideology in Revolutionary Leadership (A Structuralist Revisits the Self)”

On Friday, April 1, Jack A. Goldstone, Virginia E. and John T. Hazel Jr. Professor at the George Mason School of Public Policy, gave the John and Ruth Useem Plenary Address. The talk was titled “Pragmatism and Ideology in Revolutionary Leadership (A Structuralist Revisits the Self).”

Goldstone noted that, “*Revolutions are the arenas of ideology par excellence. Yet structuralists have drained much of the ideology out of revolutions, arguing that extremism is but a response to complex but decipherable social conditions. This should be welcome to pragmatists, who argue that commitment to ideologies, rather than to reason and self-examination, is responsible for much that is wrong in the world.*”

In his keynote, Goldstone addressed the questions, “*Can one have a pragmatic revolution? Are revolutions ever pragmatically necessary?*” He argued, “*There is a critical role for pragmatism in revolutionary leadership. Indeed, I claim that a pragmatic and reflexive leader is a requirement for revolutions to produce democracy, while the ideological self, in which*

leaders come to identify themselves with the revolution, leads to totalitarian or sultanist outcomes.”

Drawing upon the historical examples of V. I. Lenin in Russia and Lech Walensa in Poland, Goldstone found that “*in a few cases, a single revolutionary leader has been distinguished by both the ability to deliver an inspiring message, and a pragmatic sense of tactical flexibility and organizational skill.*” However, most of the leaders that Goldstone discussed were only able to draw upon one of these positions: the ideological self or pragmatic self (e.g. “*Thomas Jefferson and Thomas Paine as articulators of revolutionary ideology, while George Washington and Alexander Hamilton organized and financed the military effort that brought the revolution to victory*”).

Next Goldstone asked, “*if successful revolution requires a pairing, or coordination, or at least a fruitful alternation between ideological and pragmatic movements and leaders, why do some revolutions veer toward dictatorship (France, Russia, China, Cuba, Zimbabwe, Vietnam, Cambodia), while others manage to move toward democracy (United States, Philippines, South Africa, India, Eastern Europe)?*” He argues that, “*the critical moment in revolutions that turn toward democracy is when a revolutionary leader voluntarily steps down, leaving others to contest for his or her position.*” Goldstone then asks why do other leaders fight to remain in power? “*The answer lies in their concept of their self having become inseparably entwined with their concept of the revolution. They have come to believe in a narrative of the revolution as pivoting on their personal contribution, so that their survival in power is equivalent to the survival of the revolution, its ideals and its vision.*”

When a leader who began her career in a revolutionary regime

voluntarily steps down, she is establishing the new regime as a democracy that no longer rests on the power of the self. “*We should not be surprised if politicians adopt an inner narrative that identifies their self with their political position and power. Yet in a democracy, politicians seem particularly enabled to adopt a personal role separate from their political position.*”

Goldstone then applied these concepts to the current political arena in the United States. “*American politics is dominated by what I would call the ‘runaway self.’ Ideological leaders, particularly on the right, have placed their personal narrative above any sense of pragmatism and compromise to achieve results.*” Furthermore, “*The Tea Party ideology is in fact a call to treat any government taxation as inherently a sacrifice, and one that can no longer be tolerated. It is a narrow and self-centered (literally) ideology that extols individual goals and condemns the use of government power in pursuit of ideological goals.*”

In contrast to the Tea Party, Goldstone calls President Obama a “*supreme pragmatist, who has focused on finding practical compromises and basing his claims to support on the success of his policies.*”

In conclusion, Goldstone argued, “*If this dual backlash continues to dominate the political scene, we will look back in fifty years at the turn of the 21st century and say that this is where the decline of America began. Not just with a structural shift in the global economy, or a reconfiguration of global geopolitics. Rather, America’s national power ended when its leaders’ ability to combine a narrative of the self in pursuit of shared national goals with a pragmatic approach to achieving them was lost.*”

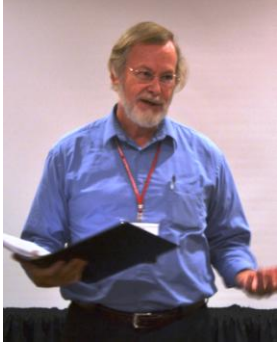
A full text of Goldstone’s Keynote Address will be available in a forthcoming issue of *Sociological*

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

by

Hans Bakker

*“Pragmatic Sociology:
Healing the Discipline”*



On Saturday, April 2, 2010, NCSA President Han Bakker, University of Guelph, gave his Presidential Address on “Pragmatic

Sociology: Healing the Discipline.”

The discipline of sociology is broken into many pieces and it requires some form of theoretical and methodological umbrella to make it clear to more sociologists that we have many commonalities. Some have seen the way forward as a “public sociology” with deep roots in Marxist and Marxian theories (Burawoy 1995).

What I am proposing is a “pragmatic sociology” that has its roots in the classical American Pragmatism of thinkers like Charles Peirce, William James, John Dewey, Jane Addams and George Mead. What they have in common is a view of the ways to truth which emphasize the practical usefulness of distinctions.

If the distinction has no practical benefit then it may not be worth making; it is certainly not worth conflict.

The American Pragmatist tradition has spread throughout the world in philosophical circles and has merged with deep roots in Europe, including Immanuel Kant’s early work (which had influenced Peirce). Emile Durkheim (1983 [1913-1914]) criticized William James’ form of pragmatism because he wanted to develop a view of *sociologie* that emphasized collective consciousness and which

was intermediate between Comte’s positivism and British subjectivism and classical empiricism (Hirst 2011).

Today, however, such fine grained distinctions tend to not matter very much to most sociologists (Rawls 1997, Schmaus 2010).¹ Instead, many accept the differentiation between “pragmatism” and “ideology.” Pragmatism is viewed as practical, while ideology is viewed as one-sided and overly intellectualized. Pragmatism itself could be criticized as an individualistic ideology, of course, but that is not how most people view it today.



The key to a more global “Pragmatic Sociology” is to move beyond the still somewhat limited views of John Dewey and George Mead on “instrumentalism” and “the scientific method” in order to more fully incorporate the insight that Charles Peirce had concerning the dialogical (“semiotic”) nature of truth (Menand 2001). It is very important to note that there is not just one scientific method but that there are indeed several different versions of scientific methods. Moreover, we must also be very careful to remember that it is the work of many “communities of scientists” that eventually result in good scientific results, not just the contributions of a few key individual thinkers of genius.

The North Central region is strategically situated in the heartland of America and the members of the NCSA can help contribute to a

reunification and integration of sociology as a general discipline rather than just a hodgepodge of different interests.

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A full text of Hans Bakker’s talk will appear in an upcoming issue of *Sociological Focus*.



John F. Schnabel Distinguished
Contribution to Teaching
Award Presentation

Brian Powell

and

Bernice Pescosolido

*“Roller Coasters and
Revolutions: Themes in
Reflections of
First Year Teachers”*



On Friday, April 1, the 2010 recipients of the John F. Schnabel Distinguished Contribution to Teaching Award, Brian Powell, Indiana University, presented on *“Roller Coasters and Revolutions: Themes in Reflections of First Year Teachers.”*

Bernice Pescosolido and Brian Powell were honored to receive the John Schnabel Award last year. This award prompted Bernice and Brian to reflect on their teaching pasts and paths. In Brian Powell’s case, he entered graduate school with the goal of becoming a professor in a liberal arts setting. Instead, he ended up at a large research university in which he taught large lecture classes—sometimes exceeding 350 students. The challenge for him was to adapt his teaching style and techniques while still preserving what he considered to be the essence of a high quality education.

In Bernice’s case, she always wanted to be a professor at a large

research university, but she didn’t see any schism between this goal and her other goal of promoting teaching.

Our stories, although dissimilar, were complementary because they led to our efforts not only to make our own classes rewarding, but also to build a program within a traditional, research-oriented doctoral program that emphasized the importance of teaching training for our graduate students. We saw this as a moral imperative for our undergraduate students who were taking classes taught by our graduate students, for our graduate students, many of whom would be entering positions that value teaching, and for the discipline of sociology.

Our joint efforts resulted in an extensive teaching training program at Indiana University that included a course focused on the logistics of teaching, a course on pedagogical issues and higher education, and a course on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. Our program also benefited greatly from partnerships with DePauw University and Hanover College, which offered our graduate students a unique shadowing experience, and Butler University and Indiana University-Purdue University, Columbus, which provided additional teaching opportunities for our graduate students.

We have worked closely with over 300 graduate students as they transitioned from student to teacher to scholarly teacher. In this process, we have seen many of them deal with the high emotional highs and low emotional lows of teaching for the first time, and we have seen many of them become accomplished, award-winning instructors in their own right—many of them now teaching in the NCSA region.

In this lecture, we wanted to talk less about our own insights and instead focus on the insights of our

graduate student instructors. More specifically, we wanted to discuss one requirement in the first class of teaching: their written reflections regarding teaching. These reflection pieces allow the graduate students to simultaneously reflect on their teaching and offer advice to our future instructors.

We too learned a great deal from the instructors’ reflections. In our presentation, we discussed a salient theme in these reflections: the emotional rhythms of teaching for the first time.

The emotional trajectory, which apparently was experienced by most of the graduate students, parallels what is known as the assimilation curve that is experienced by initiates in other professions and organizations. It begins with the unnerving combination of anticipation, enthusiasm, and anxiety, then transitions to an emotional dip in which the reduced emotional turmoil in the classroom is accompanied by predictability, and finally moves to resurgence and reconciliation.

We relied on new instructors’ comments illustrate each stage of the trajectory, the variation in emotional responses in each stage, and the different mechanisms that instructors used to traverse this assimilation curve. We concluded by reflecting on these reflections and offering suggestions for training of current and future instructors.



The full text of Pescosolido and Powell’s address will be available in an upcoming issue of *Sociological Focus*.

Scholarly Achievement Award

**Brian Powell,
Catherine Bolzendal,
Claudia Geist, and
Lala Carr Steelman**

Indiana University



The North Central Sociological Association Scholarly Achievement Award is given annually in recognition of a

significant work in the discipline of sociology that has been published in the recent past. The award was first given in 1981 and since then has recognized such outstanding scholars as Patti and Peter Adler, Dwight Billings, Aldon Morris, and Suzanne Staggenborg to name a few.

The 2011 NCSA Scholarly Achievement Award for a significant contribution to the discipline of sociology has been awarded to:

Professors Brian Powell, Catherine Bolzendal, Claudia Geist, and Lala Carr Steelman for their work *Counted Out: Same-Sex Relations and Americans' Definition of Family* (2010, Russell Sage Foundation)

Professor Powell is Rudy Professor of Sociology at Indiana University.

Catherine Bolzendahl is an assistant professor of sociology in the School of Social Sciences at the University of California, Irvine.

Claudia Geist is an assistant professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Utah.

Lala Carr Steelman is a professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of South Carolina.

Counted Out is a volume in the American Sociological Association's Rose Series in Sociology. The work has received extensive media attention including coverage in the following sources:

- ABC World News
- CNN
- *The Los Angeles Times*
- MSNBC
- *New York Times*
- *Newsweek*
- *The Washington Post*
- *USA Today*

According to the publishers website, "When state voters passed the California Marriage Protection Act (Proposition 8) in 2008, it restricted the definition of marriage to a legal union between a man and a woman. The act's passage further agitated an already roiling national debate about whether American notions of family could or should expand to include, for example, same-sex marriage, unmarried cohabitation, and gay adoption. But how do Americans really define family?"

"The first study to explore this largely overlooked question, *Counted Out* examines currents in public opinion to assess their policy implications and predict how Americans' definitions of family may change in the future."

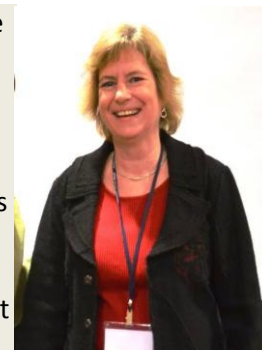


John F. Schnabel Distinguished Contributions to Teaching Award

Lynn Ritchey

Raymond Walters College
at the
University of Cincinnati

The winner of the 2011 John F. Schnabel Distinguished Contributions to Teaching Award is Lynn Ritchey of the Raymond Walters College at the University of Cincinnati.



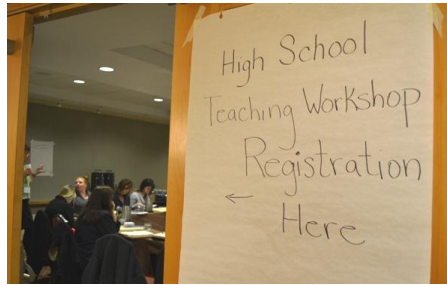
Not only is Dr. Ritchey an engaged teacher who puts her students and their learning first, but she is also an active mentor of instructors and a SOTL practitioner. Her nominator writes, "She continually seeks, and shares with others, ways to improve student interest and ability. Creating clarity for her students through the use of clear course goals, objectives, and student learning outcomes for her classes she was among the first faculty at the University of Cincinnati to make use of strategies like Primary Traits Analysis to assess student learning, and she now continually assesses student progress and outcomes, both in class and on-line.

Professor Ritchey seeks and creates innovative approaches to stimulate student interest, moving students toward course objectives as a part of her prevailing effort to further academic excellence." The NCSA is pleased to recognize the efforts of Dr. Lynn Ritchey.

**PRESENTATIONS
at NCSA**



HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER'S WORKSHOP



Twenty-one years ago—April 1991—the NCSA Teaching Committee (now the Teaching Section) conducted its first workshop for high school teachers in Dearborn Michigan with 32 participants. It was initiated at the time by Kathleen Piker-King and Keith Roberts.

This year the workshop was co-sponsored by the Ohio Council on the Social Studies and the ASA Section on Teaching and Learning. There were 16 high school teachers who attended this year, and they raved about how very helpful it had been for them. Attendance has ranged over the years from seven to fifty-two.



The agenda for this year's workshop include these topics:

- Introduction to the services of the ASA Teaching Resources Center
- Deep Learning in Sociology
- Teaching about Gender and Gender Stratification
- Teaching about Race, Ethnicity, and Class
- Using Simulations in Teaching Sociology
- Using the School and the Classroom to Develop a Sociological Perspective
- Lessons Learned from Teaching Like a Champion: Applying Pedagogical Strategies to Sociology

- Videos in the Sociology Course
- Sharing Favorite Lesson Plans (by the teachers).

This workshop for high school sociology instructors is the only thing like it in the country, at least as an annual event, and it brings the NCSA some national attention. Over the years we have had high school teachers attend from as far away as Maryland, Florida, and the Dakotas.



The American Sociological Association is now beginning to take cues from NCSA to provide supports for high school teachers. A new ASA ad hoc advisory group on high school sociology includes some of the leadership core from our workshops.

What began as a service to teachers and to the discipline has actually grown into a revenue source for the association. This year the workshop brought in more than \$1,000 in net profits, and over the past 21 years, these workshops have generated roughly \$15,000 for the NCSA. Many NCSA members have helped with this workshop over the years, but the leadership for the workshop is now being transferred to Lissa Yogan, Deb Swanson, and Kathy Rowell.



2011 STUDENT PAPER COMPETITION WINNERS

Each year the NCSA sponsors a student paper competition for both graduate and undergraduate students. At the NCSA Awards Ceremony, Todd Callais, Ohio Dominican University, announced the undergraduate awards and Carrie Erlin, Saint Mary's College announced the graduate awards.

Undergraduate Division



1st place Kelli Minor, Saint Mary's College, *"Culture of Thinness" An Examination of the Factors That Influence Body Image at an All-Women's*

College." Advisor: Carrie Erlin.



2nd place: Josephine Cohen, Saint Mary's College, *Under Oath: A Content Analysis of Controlled Images of Women in*

Elkhart, Indiana Courtrooms." Advisor: Carrie Erlin.



3rd place: Jessica Schrantz, Shippensburg University, *Maternal Influence and the power."* Advisor: Barbara Jones Denison.

Graduate Division



1st place: Long Doan, Indiana University Bloomington, *"When Emotions Endure: In Search of Conditions for Moods"*. Advisor: Brian Powell.



2nd place: Christy Erving, Indiana University Bloomington, *"Gender and Physical Health: A Study of African American and Caribbean Black Adults."* Advisors:

Pamela Jackson and Patricia McManus.



3rd place: Eric A. Grollman, Indiana University Bloomington, *"The Effects of Multiple Forms of Perceived Discrimination on*

Health Among Adolescents and Young Adults." Advisor Brian Powell.

SOCIALIZING AT NCSA



**Congratulations to all students who submitted papers
for the NCSA paper competition!**

**STUDENT POSTERS
on DISPLAY**



**NCSSC Chair Gail McGuire meets
with students**



**North Central
Student Sociology
Conference**

by Gail McGuire
Indiana University – South Bend

The North Central Student Sociology Conference (NCSSC) gives undergraduate students the opportunity to present their research and to receive feedback from other students, professors, and professional sociologists. Students also have the opportunity to attend the many research and teaching sessions that are part of the NCSA's annual conference. Students have the opportunity to present their research in a thematic session or poster session.

This year, we received 48 submissions from 54 students from 16 different universities and colleges. From these submissions, we formed eight thematic sessions, including sessions on Facebook, social movements and collective behavior, religion, and education. The eleven poster presentations covered a wide range of topics, such as sustainability, cemetery demography, and music.

Many thanks to the 18 faculty sponsors who mentored these students and encouraged them to present their research.

The faculty sponsors included: Betsy Lucal, William Tregea, Robyn White, Donna Eder, Josh Wells, Michelle Smith, Carrie Erlin, Bryce Merrill, Anita Waters, Sandra Schroer, Kristenne Robison, Pam Koch, Jerry Pankhurst, Brian Rich, Barbara Denison, Kraig Beyerlein, Todd Callais, Amoaba Gooden

Look for a call for papers for the 2012 NCSSC in the fall 2011 issue of the *North Central Sociologist*

or contact Gail McGuire at GMcGuire@iusb.edu for more information.

NCSA Student Section

Thanks to all the students who made the 2011 NCSA Conference in Cleveland a great success! In line with the theme of next year's conference, "Renewing Sociology: Living Traditions and Creative Beginnings," the Student Section will be reinventing its conference presence and rededicating itself to the creation of formal and informal networks among students.

To begin this renewal, four student volunteers are needed to round out the Student Council:

- Co-chairperson**
- Secretary**
- Graduate Student Representative**
- Undergraduate Student Representative**

Interested students should send an inquiry email to:

Student Section Chair
Jen Carter

University of Cincinnati
NCSAStudentSectionChair@gmail.com

Students may also join the NCSA Student Forum on Facebook at www.facebook.com/NCSAForum

Join the "Group:" North Central Sociological Association (NCSA)



GLOBALIZATION

Editor Comment

In the past few weeks, we have witnessed via the Internet and TV news a number of dramatic global political and environmental disruptions. From the protests for democracy in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and other Middle-Eastern nations to the fears of radiation exposure from Fukushima Daiichin nuclear power plant in Japan, the ubiquitous nature of mass media access results in an increasing aware of events occurring across the world.

May of these media events emphasize stories about death and rebirth, whether that death is a government, a local environment, a long-held human right, or even a religious tradition about death. In this issue of the *North Central Sociologist* the articles all offer a perspective on some aspect of global death.

Dimitrova's article addresses the death of state socialism and the birth of neoliberalism. Carlton-Ford discusses the death, especially of children, in nation's engaged in war. Budimir's article focuses on his interviews teachers faced with the "death" of collective bargaining rights. Yamada offers a view of internet *mizuko kuyo* – an on-line form of a Buddhist memorial services held to comfort the souls of unborn children. Scanlan's article proposes an interplay between global capitalism and the death of the environment.

Rethinking Capitalist Globalization as Postsocialism

By Svetla Dimitrova
Michigan State University



In the fall of 1989 a wave of 'revolutions' swept across the Eastern European Bloc leading to an end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union two years later. This ended more than half a century of politico-economic bifurcation of the global space where both capitalism and communism strived for world hegemony. We could finally have a "borderless" world where people, goods, ideas, and images are free to go according to the supply and demand rules of the global market. Such kind of global interconnectedness through free markets and trade is the essence of capitalist globalization. Accordingly, reformers in Eastern Europe attempted to discard the communist rubble to build a brand new democratic system and market economy; or in cases when the rubble was uncooperative, to shutter it into unrecognizable pieces through 'shock therapy' treatments (Klein, 2007). Thus, the post-1989 condition was one characterized by an absence of a credible alternative to the present order (Frazer, 1997).

The perceived impotence of socialism however proved to be short lived. In the latter regard, postsocialist studies were successful in pointing out that when the Soviet Union dissolved, it

did not put an end to socialism on its way to communism, but only state socialism. More importantly, they showed how neoliberal economic changes (shock-therapy in particular), had forced populations into subsistence, while pushing some postsocialist countries toward an underdeveloped status where the country is run by a small emergent elite. Here, Harvey (2005) notes that the countries of Eastern Europe have registered some of the largest increases in social inequality in the neoliberal world. These clarifications have helped a return to a form of socialist contestation of the neoliberal doctrine, as well as capitalist globalization after the initial delegitimation of socialism in its broader sense in the wake of the 1989 events.

Some of the most prominent examples of such contestations include the Brazilian Via Campesina in 1992 to fight against neoliberalism and in defense of sustainable agriculture and food sovereignty and the 1996 First Encounter for Humanity and Against Neoliberalism by the Zapatista movement in Mexico. In addition, we have seen a spike in anti-neoliberal globalization movements since the '1999 battle of Seattle', and especially since the first World Social Forum in 2001, around issues of social and economic justice, and sustainable development. These anti-neoliberal globalization movements are considered by el-Ojeili and Hayden (2006) as a form of 'post-modern socialism' because of the commonalities between them and socialism:

a common cosmopolitanism or at least internationalism; a common opposition to the prioritization and atomization of the economic; a common concern with the effects of spreading commodification; a common commitment to participation, justice, equality, and democracy; a common concern with imperialism and militarism; and, within sections of both

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movements, a common emphasis on notions of national or local autonomy and self-determination (199).

Paradoxically, these same movements have been nurtured and undermined by capitalist globalization to the extent that neoliberalism has allowed the emergence of civil society (Foucault and Sennelart, 2008). Therefore, the process of neoliberal globalization does not merely constrain but also bring opportunities for ‘reinventing the social’ in a neoliberal world (Cerny, 2008).

Similarly, the newly-gained freedoms in Eastern Europe allowed people to craft micro responses to the macro neoliberal policies of privatization, stabilization, and liberalization by absorbing, manipulating or, in some cases, by rejecting these policies. The latter speaks to a key feature of the postsocialist (global) condition that exhibits ‘regressive’ and ‘progressive’ dynamics simultaneously (Burawoy and Verdery, 1999).

These dynamics does not allow the adoption of revolutionary or evolutionary perspectives, both of which presume progressive development. Instead, the study of globalization requires that we develop new ways of capturing and portraying the complexity and inherent conflictedness of the global context, as well as our acceptance of ambivalence as a category of analysis.

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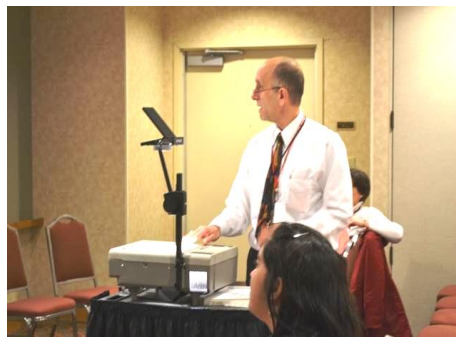
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“War, Militarization, and Corruption: 'Bad for Children and other Living Things”

**By Steve Carlton- Ford
University of Cincinnati**



“War is Not Healthy for Children and Other Living Things” was a popular slogan of the anti-war movement in the 1960s. The slogan, of course, was right: war destroys economies and creates a cascade of adverse outcomes that ultimately result in higher infant and child mortality rates—key indicators of social and economic development. Children die not as a direct result of combat, but because war, especially civil war, degrades the basic social and economic conditions that underpin and sustain life.

From the war in the Vendee during the French Revolution to the Russian revolution, civil wars—wars between national governments and one or more opposition groups—have had devastating consequences for civilian populations. Since WWII, civil wars—whose numbers peaked in the early 1990s with about 15 countries and then dropped to about 5 per year in 2008—share the same pattern: national militaries vie with insurgent forces to control the supply of food and water, a primary tactic in influencing and controlling civilian populations. In addition, wars target electrical generators, water pumping plants, and sewage treatment facilities leading to higher rates of disease such as cholera. Educated members of the population—doctors, teachers—flee if they are able; hospitals and schools are attacked; children die at higher rates than during peace-time. In short, civil war devastates society.

War also changes a nation’s military. From the 1600s on, countries have consolidated their hold on power by increasing taxes to pay for war efforts, with militaries becoming increasingly large. The recent pattern is similar; in response to armed conflict, nations typically devote more economic resources to their military, also presumably increasing the size of armies. On its own military spending has little consistent effect on the well-being of the general population—for example child mortality. In contrast, maintaining larger armies has typically been found to lower infant and child mortality. Many researchers have argued that armies need a relatively well-educated citizenry to recruit or draft, an agricultural base in order to feed troops, enough basic industry to provide housing and other amenities of daily life, and a good transportation system to move them around one's country. In short, in order to maintain an army a country has to

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have a relatively well developed economy and such development spills over to benefit the general population.

Recent research calls these general conclusions into question, revealing complex patterns in the way war and militarization affect national development, particularly the life chances of children. First, it is not entirely clear that armies involve a large enough proportion of the population to argue that the army provides spill-over benefits for society at large. In fact, some recent research suggests that increasing the size of armies, especially during of complex conflicts, actually increases child mortality. Second, because the standard measures of militarization—the proportion of the national wealth devoted to the military and the proportion of the population in the military—combine with armed conflict so that they tend to offset each other, countries with very little military and countries with highly developed militaries tend to have somewhat higher levels of child mortality than countries with medium levels of militarization. Third, praetorian militarization—excessive military control over the government—appears to increase child mortality. In these countries the military exerts so much influence that expenditures for basics like health and education are lower than they should be and child mortality is higher. Fourth, in addition to all of the effects of armed conflict and militarization, government and business corruption appears to push child mortality rates higher.

Recent events in Libya and the Ivory Coast show us that civil (and other) wars are not likely to be eradicated any time soon. Despite recent moves toward democratization in countries such as Indonesia and the Philippines, few countries are likely to eliminate their militaries. Government and business

corruption appear to be endemic in many countries. So, as sociologists contemplate and examine the forces that influence the social well-being of the civilian populations of the world's countries, they will need to carefully consider the influence of armed conflict, militarization, and corruption.

**“Mean Economy,
Lean Teachers:
Teachers Work and Labor
in the Great Recession”**

**By Nicholas Budimir
Western Michigan University**



Analyzing the lived experience of schoolteachers in the current educational crisis, I report upon a case study. Charter schools and reformers currently seek to commoditize education, subjecting it to “choice” rather than treating it as a public good. Highly visible attacks upon unions and worker’s rights highlight the deregulation of the teaching labor market, opening up fierce competition and inequalities. The erosion of teachers’ autonomy at work and over curriculum increases the control by administrators and the state.

Can teachers and other workers revive the beleaguered labor movement? How are changes in work affecting both students and teachers? Will teachers be able to move beyond business unionism,

bargaining over wages and benefits, to a more expansive vision that includes workplace control, a curriculum for democracy, and the elimination of pervasive educational inequalities?

One of my informants “Sandy” teaches at a school labeled a “dropout factory” by a 2004 study (Belfanz and Legters). The retention rate is 37% with a 92% minority population. Working this school as a substitute, I can confirm that it is segregated along racial lines with African-Americans the vast majority of students. My assessment of the building was of a near windowless prison.

Sandy teaches math, with a new work plan called “blended online learning”. She has 11 different distinct groups of children, seen on a 3 to 4 day rotation, with 30 to 40 students in each class. Several different math classes are taught including pre-calculus. Class time combines lecture, online instruction, and testing. Sandy, the core teacher, lectures, while non-math instructors conduct online learning. She says this schedule was grueling with “no breaks and no planning time” adding, “I feel like a factory worker.” The math curriculum is entirely determined by a district planner, without a math degree, and handed to departments two days before it is to be taught.

Sandy said publicly, “I can’t deal with the stress of this many failing kids...we need to change this” referring to the new organization. Administrators reprimanded her for this and suggested she resign if the stress was too much. Her math department has a 30% pass rate, the highest in the district, compared to an 8% pass rate at another school. Connected with students on a personal and emotional level, Sandy feels this connection being broken with the rapid turnover of classes, the faster pace, and the reduced face-to-face time. She also clearly feels the students are suffering.

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Far from incompetent, it appears she is entirely overworked, overburdened, and misdirected by management's decisions.

Originally interviewed a year ago, this teacher is significantly worn down by the new teaching, organizational, and technological demands made upon her including a recent illness that she partially attributes to over work. In a recent conversation she brought up the topic of leaving the profession because of the stress. We discussed the statistic that one half of new teachers leave the profession after five years and that she was beginning to understand how this happens.

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internet has been a popular means originally for gaining and exchanging information but also has generated a new space, i.e., a virtual reality, in which individuals communicate with each other and create a community for them. Among the on-line sites such as "virtual worship" and "internet worship," the internet mizuko kuyo is one of the virtual spaces created by those users. On the websites, prayers are able to visit and worship to Buddhist temples and/or Shinto shrines without physically visiting their religious affiliations. Concomitantly, the World Wide Web not only allows individuals to consume information and follow it as indicated, but it also enables them to actively participate in that on-line space and even create a new community in which interactions take place.

Originally, mizuko kuyo stems from the Buddhist concept and has been practiced since the Edo period (1600-1867). Mizuko literally refers to "water child" in Japanese, indicating babies who die in miscarriage, stillbirth, and abortion, while the term, kuyo, means "memorial services." Thus, mizuko kuyo, a type of memorial services, is held to comfort the souls of unborn children. Besides Buddhist sutra recitation, the most common style of the mizuko kuyo service is called jizo hono or offering Jizo-Buddha. Although those memorial services are traditionally held at Buddhist temples, the use of the internet has diversified its style and allowed individual prayers to hold the memorial service without their presence.

Weber's rationality anticipates the disenchantment or secularization of culture, in which the symbolic and institutional influence of religion progressively becomes reduced and religion itself becomes bureaucratized, privatized, and commodified (Partridge 2004). The possible ways in which the centuries-old mizuko kuyo may have adapted to modern evolving culture has remained virtually ignored except at the direct face-to-face level.

In advanced industrial societies, such as Japan, with the advent of religio-cultural pluralism, the fragmentation of traditional community life, modernization accompanies by the globalization of media and education, the growth of bureaucracies in virtually every institution, and particularly the availability of the personal computer and the anonymity of the internet, it would be surprising if religious options did not adopt to this context. The opportunities for worship, veneration, and memorializing would become not simply privatized but rationally made available as optional commodities in a marketplace on a contractual or fee-for-service basis in same way that one can order DVDs or books on e-Bay or Amazon.com.

What does the emergence of the internet mizuko kuyo mean? Since the internet promotes individuals to anonymously communicate with other members of virtual society, they are able to construct new or different identities in cyber space. For example, a woman who lost her child from miscarriage would be able to virtually create her mizuko, give it its own identity, and regain her motherhood. In a sense, death means separation, disconnection, and disintegration, while life may refer to integrity, continuity, and connection. Thus, the practice of mizuko kuyo in contemporary Japan can be explained as parents' desire for the mizuko soul to exit

The Internet Use and Japan's Religious Practice of Mizuko Kuyo in a Global Era

By Mieko Yamada
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Due to the expansion of communications and the development of new technologies, the number of the internet users has increased around the world, and Japan is no exception. The

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in the same world where people live. While individuals experience “broken connections” in their lives, life equivalents can be promoted and provided through human community. This cyber-based community has become a reality or a part of each individual lives, and therefore, the soul of mizuko may continuously exist in their realities.

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Globalization and the Environment: It's Not Easy Being Green!

By Stephen J. Scanlan
Ohio University



Just over four decades ago Senator Gaylord Nelson launched the concept of Earth Day as a means to inspire and educate U.S. citizens on issues pertaining to the environment. Earth Day was a central component in the modern environmental movement which has given voice to tens of

millions who speak on behalf of protecting the planet and its resources. Since then Earth Day has grown, and according to the Earth Day Network has spread to all corners of the world with more than 1 billion people in 192 countries taking part in activities and making it the largest civic observance of any kind (<http://www.earthday.org/>).

Earth Day itself and the movement it has inspired have thus become *globalized*. In fact, Earth Day and environmentalism have expanded in tandem with the increasing interconnectedness on economic, political and social fronts that some consider globalization. Marked by the expansion of global capital and the quest for new markets, greater efficiencies, and higher profits made possible by a technology-driven, post-industrial revolution, globalization has transformed the world. Change has occurred in many ways, from the way we communicate and the ideologies we share to the creation of a global labor force and commodity chains that produce the cars we drive, the food we consume, and the cell phones and computers we depend on. From the time we shut off our alarm clocks in the morning to when we turn down our bed covers at night we are confronted by globalization.

Most notably our connection comes in the form of threats to the environment. Deforestation, energy demands, biodiversity loss, pollution in many forms, resource extraction, urban sprawl and unprecedented climate change has brought the ecological well-being of the planet to the brink—and all for the sake of the consumption demand of a global citizenry that succumbs to what environmental sociologists refer to as the “treadmill of production “. We should not be surprised, then, that Earth Day has expanded alongside globalization. If anything globalization has necessitated it.

This dynamic plays out in a number of ways, and in the remainder of this essay I briefly discuss challenges presented by the interplay of globalization and the environment in what is likely the most significant case of our times: China.

At the recent NCSA meetings I had the good fortune of presenting a paper developed as an undergraduate honors thesis by one of my former students, Carly Mercer

(Carly was unfortunately unable to be in Cleveland because of new employment with U.S. PIRG fighting to raise awareness of environmental issues). In the paper we examine the detrimental impacts of economic development that emphasizes profit over people and the environment. As a central player in the globalization, China has experienced enormous economic growth over the last few decades, becoming the second largest economy on the planet behind the United States. However, as proclaimed by the *New York Times*, the “Chinese Success Story Chokes on its Own Growth” (<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/19/world/asia/19shenzhen.html>). Thus, one must ask at what cost can such growth be tolerated, ultimately demanding analysis of the numerous impacts of exploiting the environment for the sake of expanding capital.

Focusing on air and water pollution in the provinces of inland China and their inability to manage such problems our research questions the sustainability of such development. We highlight the environmental injustice experienced by the poorer, predominantly rural and ethnic minority population of China who disproportionately suffer the consequences. News stories about pollution in Beijing or other cities may make one shutter but our findings reveal that the environmental problems in the Chinese “hinterlands” are worse as environmental degradation is “outsourced” to the region.

Globalization has come to mean that what happens elsewhere affects us all in some way or other. We are all intimately connected to the ecological problems that expanding global capital has wrought and thus implicated as well. It is not just the impact of a factory in China producing the goods we consume but also the problems from an oil field in the Niger Delta, a soy plantation in Brazil, or a shrimp farm in Viet Nam. Not only Earth Day but every day we need to reflect upon and share with others the meaning of cost regarding expanding global capital and what is priceless when it comes to the natural world.



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A submission must include an electronic copy of the manuscript in word, including title page, abstract, text, notes (if absolutely necessary), references, tables, figures, and illustrations with captions. Manuscripts should be prepared following the American Sociological Association "Style Guide." Manuscripts should be electronically submitted at <http://www.sociologicalfocus.net>

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Bokek, Ya'arit. Marital Power Revisited: The Importance of Distinguishing between "Objective" and "Subjective" Marital Power.

CALL FOR ORGANIZERS

North Central Sociological Association

2012 Annual Conference

Pittsburgh, PA April 12-15, 2012

On-line submission link: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/S73ZRT7>

RENEWING SOCIOLOGY: LIVING TRADITIONS AND CREATIVE BEGINNINGS

Sociology, like other fields of learning, must continually reinvent itself in order to remain viable and relevant in ever changing social, intellectual and professional contexts. Through this ongoing process of renewal, the discipline is able to attract new generations of educators, scholars, activists and practitioners, while contributing to the quality of life in society. This dynamic has been evident in recent decades in many forms, including the emergence of new theoretical paradigms (e.g., postmodernism, the narrative turn) and methodological approaches (e.g., mapping, visual sociology), new sections in professional associations (e.g., sociology of emotions, cultural sociology), and the wide-ranging debate over “public sociology” and applications of sociological knowledge.

Such change, however, does not mean the wholesale abandonment of longstanding concerns in the field. To the contrary, contemporary sociologists, like their earlier counterparts in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, address the issues of social power, solidarity, social justice, and social change as well as the most appropriate methods of social scientific research and the best pedagogical techniques. As long as sociology endures as a distinctive field of learning, such traditional themes will remain crucial.

The North Central Sociological Association invites its members and guests to examine the issue of renewal of our field at the 2012 conference in Pittsburgh. This broad and inclusive theme can be addressed from a multitude of directions that combine constructive critique with innovative proposals for the creative development. Within each specialty area, we can examine efforts to revitalize historical ideas, issues or methodologies, as well as efforts to launch innovative paradigms and practices. In the manner of Norbert Wiley’s “semiotic self,” we can dialogue with our past selves for the sake of creating a future identity. We hope you will find this an exciting prospect.

If you are interested in organizing a session, send a title and a very brief description of your session to the appropriate conference organizers by **September 1, 2012**

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If you have any questions about whether your session would be appropriate or would like to organize a session directly related to the conference theme of Pragmatism in Research and Education, please contact Carrie Erlin, Program Chair and 2012 Annual Conference Organizer, Saint Mary’s College,
cerlin@saintmarys.edu

2012 CALL FOR ORGANIZERS

North Central Sociological Association Conference
 April 12-1, 2012
 Pittsburgh, PA

NCSA 2012 Conference Deadlines

- May 1, 2011** Call for Organizers circulated
- September 1, 2011** Session Organizers have session information to Conference Organizer
- October 1, 2011** Call for Papers circulated
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- January 5, 2012** Organizer approval of papers due to Program Chair
- January 15, 2012** Notification of Acceptance of Papers, Panels, and Workshops
- March 15, 2012** Hotel Registration Deadline
- April 12-15, 2012** 2012 NCSA Conference

NCSA Public Relations Coordinator

If you have ideas for articles in future issues of the *North Central Sociologist*, or suggestions on how to improve the NCSA web site, please contact Susan Alexander at salexand@saintmarys.edu



Many thanks to all the people who contribute to the publications of this newsletter.

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