



"The challenge of modernity is to live without illusions and without becoming disillusioned."

-- Gramsci

North Central Sociologist

Official newsletter of the North Central Sociological Association

A Bi-annual Newsletter of the North Central Sociological Association

Spring 2013



Aida Tomeh Distinguished Service Award

Jay R. Howard

Butler University



Jay Howard receiving his award from NCSA Treasurer Anna Linder

The Aida Tomeh Distinguished Service 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.

Jay R. Howard, winner of the 2013 Aida Tomeh Distinguished Service Award, is currently Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Butler University, having been appointed there in June, 2010. Prior to his position at Butler, Jay was Interim Vice Chancellor and Dean and Professor of Sociology at

Indiana University–Purdue University, Columbus.

Along with distinguishing himself at his home universities, Jay has been a very significant contributor and force in the NCSA. In addition to serving as both President (in 2006-07) and Vice President (in 2003-04) of NCSA, Jay created and organized the NCSA's Future Faculty Program. Having recognized the importance of quality teaching in the university community and the potential for regional associations (such as the NCSA) to contribute to this, Jay was a driving force in creating this program. Its goal is to assist graduate students in developing the skills and techniques for effective teaching at the college level. In the seven years that Jay headed the program, 138 students from 47 institutions earned certificates for their participation in the program – a clear acknowledgement of the value of the program. In addition to the Future Faculty Program, Jay chaired NCSA's teaching committee and remains a member of that committee; further, he is a regular organizer of teaching sessions at the annual meeting. Importantly, Jay also chaired the committee to award small travel grants to graduate students who participate in the annual meeting by presenting their work on teaching and learning. Jay has also chaired the High School Sociology Teachers Workshop planning committee and has helped coordinate the workshop at annual meetings.

The Aida Tomeh Distinguished Service Award is given in recognition of Jay's overall leadership in the NCSA, as well as his distinctive contributions to NCSA's support for and enhancement of college and university teaching which has been especially valuable to the members of the organization.

2013

NCSA ANNUAL MEETING IN INDIANAPOLIS

This year's annual NCSA meeting in Indianapolis, IN, was held from April 4-7, 2013.

The theme of the meeting was
In Defense of Theory



Many individuals contributed to the success of this meeting, but special acknowledgment goes to the Vice President and Program Chair Todd Callais, Vice President Elect, Rachel Kraus, and the Conference Coordinator Joyce Lucke for all their hard work putting together the NCSA program with such a broad range of sessions.

FROM THE DESK OF NCSA PRESIDENT

Lissa Yogan

Valparaiso University



It is a great honor to serve the North Central Sociological Association as president! My hope is that our upcoming conference in

Cincinnati will highlight and emphasize the many positive developments in our association, our institutions, communities, country, and world.

If you have followed recent developments in the field of psychology, you too may have been intrigued by the concept of positive psychology. The theme of our 2014 conference "Doing Good: Positive Behavior, Promising Programs, Promoting Change" builds on this idea of examining our social world through a study of what works.

Our theme is also influenced by the development of the new American Sociological Association section - 'Altruism, Morality, and Social Solidarity'. This section which is co-led by Vincent Jeffries and our President-elect (Matthew T. Lee) has worked to highlight concepts in sociology that underlie much of the good that is found in society.

It is my belief that much of our training as sociologists has focused on identifying problems and issues that confront individuals or groups. This way of thinking has often led to a critique of society that frequently omitted the good or gave just a little attention to what was working well. I'd like to challenge us to take our well-honed, critical thinking abilities and use them to identify that which brings

more good than harm to society and develop models that can use these success stories to reframe common issues.

Changing behavior is difficult. Reimagining our work with an eye toward the good may be hard to conceptualize without concrete examples. Yet, I think we can all turn to micro examples that are illustrative. Most professionals I know, work hard on papers that others have encouraged them to finish or revise. The act of affirming someone's work and highlighting what is good and deserves to be further developed spurs people toward action. The act of criticizing someone's work and primarily pointing out the faults and areas that do not work can cause individuals to lose self-confidence and either slow down their work or stop it altogether.

On a more structural level, programs that produce successful outcomes give hope and bring a sense of pride to individuals in the organization as well as the community in which the organization is located. Success breeds success and helps cities and organizations bond. Conversely, programs that fail quickly bring a sense of failure and desperation to not just the participants but to the communities in which they are located. No one wants to be associated with failure and this can literally lead to the exodus of prominent businesses and individuals. People are the heart of our macro structures. When individuals feel good about the organizations and communities of which they are a part, those communities strengthen and this strength helps buffer them in times of stress.

This is true of our organization (the NCSA). The NCSA has long been known as a nurturing place for students and new professionals while simultaneously providing a supportive

and creative environment for longer-tenured professionals. I hope that our conference will capture that positive sense of community and the joy that comes with making new friends and greeting old friends. I hope we can recognize the good work of our colleagues and our students through the nomination process for awards, attendance at sessions, and time spent building our relationships. May we all take a little extra time to recognize the good!

NCSA Council for 2013-2014



The newly elected North Central Sociological Association officers for 2013-2014 began their term at the Business Meeting on April 7, 2013.

Congratulations to the newly elected officers: President-elect: Matthew Lee, University of Akron; Vice President-elect Annulla Linders, University of Cincinnati; Treasurer, Leslie Elrod, University of Cincinnati. Council Member-at-Large Stacy Nofzinger, University of Akron; Student Section Chair Alan Grigsby, University of Cincinnati.

The returning members of the NCSA Executive Council include: President Lissa Yogan, Vice-President Rachel Kraus, Secretary Barbara Denison, Council Member-at-Large Mary Scheuer Senter; Council Member for membership, Robert Carrothers; and Past President Steve Carlton-Ford, University of Cincinnati.

2013-2014 NCSA Committee Chairs

Past President

Steve Carlton-Ford
University of Cincinnati
steven.carlton-ford@uc.edu

Applied and Public

Natalie Haber-Barker
Children's Memorial Hospital
nhaberbarker@childrensmemorial.org

Finance

Kevin Christiano
University of Notre Dame
kevin.j.christiano.1@nd.edu

Nominations

Steve Carlton-Ford
University of Cincinnati
steven.carlton-ford@uc.edu

Profession, Freedom and Responsibility

Fayyaz Hussain
Michigan State University
Hussain3@msu.edu

Teaching Section

Jacqueline Bergdahl
Wright State University
jacqueline.bergdahl@wright.edu

Sociological Focus, editor

Gustavo Mesch
University of Haifa, Israel
gustavo@soc.haifa.ac.il

Community Colleges

Donna Giuliani
Delta College
donnagiuliani@delta.edu

Local Arrangements

Jen Carter
University of Cincinnati
carterja@mail.uc.edu

Publication Policy

Kent Schwirian
The Ohio State University
Schwirian.2@sociology.osu.edu

Scholarly Achievement Award

Lawrence T. (Larry) Nichols
West Virginia University
larry.nichols@mail.wvu.edu

STAFF: Conference Coordinator

Joyce Lucke
Paragon Meeting & Events
nlsa@paragonme.net

Aida Tomeh Distinguished Service Award

Paula Dubeck
University of Cincinnati
paula.dubeck@uc.edu

Equality and Inclusion

Dina Banerjee
Shippensburg University
DBanerjee@ship.edu

J. Milton Yinger Distinguished Career Award

Robert Shelly
Ohio University
shelly@ohio.edu

North Central Student Sociology Conference

Gail McGuire
Indiana University-South Bend
gmcguire@iusb.edu

Student Paper Awards

Todd Callais
University of Cincinnati – Blue Ash College
callaitd@ucmail.uc.edu

STAFF: Public Relations Coordinator

Susan Alexander
Saint Mary's College
salexand@saintmarys.edu



PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Steve Carlton-Ford

University of Cincinnati

*"I Didn't Build That:
Life Chances, Life Course,
and Dumb Luck—
a Life in Sociology"*

On Friday, April 5, 2013, NCSA President Steve Carlton-Ford gave his Presidential Address titled, "I Didn't Build That: Life Chances, Life Course, and Dumb Luck—a Life in Sociology." Carlton-Ford talk about life-chances, life courses, and habitus, which was linked to his personal biography. He illustrated the sociological imagination by examining how someone from the small town of Clayton, NY, came to have the honor of delivering the presidential address at the NCSA meeting.

After identifying several theoretical perspectives on the term "life chance," Carlton-Ford considered his own life chances, being born in 1952 and living in northern New York State, compared to children born in the same year in other nations. Next, Carlton-Ford discussed life course regimes, "broad groupings of historical periods with different life course

patterns," and how his family and community began to shape him into a sociologist though a shift in class position as a teen. Lastly, Carlton-Ford identified his habitus – the "non-conscious dispositions" or "ways of thinking, feeling, and acting" that he "acquired over the course of my life." Part of this habitus was watching his family face social and financial adversity calmly and "to carry on."

Upon graduate from high school, plans to become an Australia sheepherder were side-tracked by a compromise with parents to attend college to become a veterinarian, which was sidetracked by a low grade in chemistry, which led to a change in major to sociology. Completion of a bachelor's degree led to a series of jobs, including community organizing, before return to academia for a master's degree, then on to Minnesota for a PhD and a job as a research assistant and, ultimately, a job as a professor of sociology.

By weaving together sociological theory and a personal narrative, an autoethnography, Carlton-Ford demonstrated how to write a "sociological biography," in which an author explains how sociology informs the "dumb luck" in her/his life.

A full text of Steve Carlton-Ford's address will appear in an upcoming issue of *Sociological Focus*.

THE RUTH AND JOHN USEEM
PLENARY ADDRESS
SHELDON STRYKER

Indiana University

"Paradox: Sociological Theory Should Need No Defense, But Apparently Does, Why?"



On Friday, April 5, Sheldon Stryker, Indiana University, gave the John and Ruth Useem Plenary Address. The talk was titled, "Paradox: Sociological Theory Should Need No Defense, But Apparently Does, Why?"

Stryker began with a reference to Gabriel Abend's

essay in *Sociological Theory*, which he saw as a "paradox of my title." Abend observes that "theory" is taken as a good thing, but has many meanings; the latter underlies conceptual muddles, miscommunications and conflicts in sociological discourse. Stryker agrees. He suggests that Abend's long concern with the negative consequences of conceptual muddles reflects the failure of many sociologists to recognize or appreciate the differences between two meanings of theory, as sociological perspective or framework and as explanation of social behavior capable of empirical test.

According to Stryker, the consequences of this failure to recognize the two meanings of theory are discussed by Abend as an implication of understanding that no frame or theory can, as a practical manner, include all possible relevant concepts/variables. Stryker concludes that these two meanings of theory, however, can be evaluated in terms of their ability to "bridge" to alternative frames and theories in or outside sociology.

Stryker recognizes the concern that many sociologists have with research empty of theoretical guidance and implications. He suggests that apart from the already discussed theoretical schism, this concern focuses on the "isolation" of theory-qua-history and theory-qua-honored historical figures from work dealing with theory-as-testable-propositions as well as circumstances in the discipline, the profession, and the social world that may contribute to the non-use of sociological theory.



2013 Scholarly Achievement Award

Nancy J. Davis

DePauw University
and

Robert V. Roinson

Indiana University-Bloomington

Claiming Society for God: Religious Movements and Social Welfare (2012)

The North Central Sociological Association Scholarly Achievement Award is given annually in recognition of an outstanding work contributing to the discipline of sociology that has been published in the recent past. The award was first given in 1981 and has recognized outstanding scholars such as Patti and Peter Adler, Dwight Billings, Aldon Morris, Brian Powell, and Suzanne Staggenborg to name a few from its long list of outstanding winners.

The 2013 NCSA Scholarly Achievement Award for a significant contribution to the discipline of sociology has been awarded to Professors Nancy J. Davis and Robert V. Roinson for their work *Claiming Society for God: Religious Movements and Social Welfare* published in 2012 by the Indiana University Press. The work is the product of more than a decade and a half of collaboration between the authors who have published numerous articles together examining the connections between religion and social change.

Professor Davis is the Martin Jones Professor of Sociology in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at DePauw University where she teaches courses on cultural conflict, human rights, sexuality, social movements, and theory. Her research focuses on the sociology of religion and religiously orthodox movements in particular. She has a Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Professor Roinson is the Class of 1964 Chancellor's Professor of Sociology at Indiana University, Bloomington where he in particular enjoys teaching large sections of introductory sociology and graduate courses focused on writing for publication. In addition to his work in the sociology of religion his research extends to questions pertinent to economic sociology, political sociology, and social stratification.



2012 John F. Schnabel
Distinguished
Contributions to Teaching
Award Keynote Address

Rebecca L. Bordt

DePauw University

*“On Teaching and
Aging”*



In her keynote Teaching Address, Rebecca Bordt, DePauw University, described the lessons she has learned over her career in academic that began in 1992. Below is a summary of the main points of her address.

Lesson 1: Learn from model teachers, but stay true to myself.

She notes that in *Born Digital: Understanding the First Generation of Digital Natives*, Palfrey and Gasser “remind me that my students are continually changing and encourage me, as an educator and parent, to overcome my fear of technology to at least understand it, if not board the train. Although I’m willing to keep an open mind, I am proud to be old school.”

Bordt said that remaining true to herself has gotten easier with age. “I no longer have to become someone else to gain authority in the classroom. These changes, however, did not just materialize when I turned 50.”

Lesson 2: Tinker, tinker, and tinker some more

Bordt explained that as a novice she didn’t use a lesson plan again if it didn’t work the first time, but now her opinion has changed. “I have since learned that sometimes things are not successful for idiosyncratic reasons and can be successful the next time around. Or something may simply work with practice.” Today, she better understands the value in tinkering—“diving in, seeing what happens, thinking about why it succeeded or failed, tweaking it incrementally, and trying it again.” Today, she is likely to purposely repeat something that didn’t work the first time because “students can get more out of talking about why it failed than if it was successful.”

Lesson 3: Don’t take myself so seriously. But, do take my students seriously.

“I’ve learned that I have a responsibility to see my students as multidimensional human beings with real lives, family baggage, civic responsibilities, spiritual selves, and ethical questions.” She explains the need to teach to all the possibilities. “Teaching to all the possibilities is my responsibility. But—and this is equally as important—when my students are out on a limb they have never been on before, I need to be there when they jump.”

Lesson 4: Take risks.

Taking risks is not something she was willing to do at the beginning of her career. “But taking risks is always a challenge, even though those I take today are less flashy and entertaining and more subtle and intellectual.”

A full text of Rebecca Bordt’s address will appear in an upcoming issue of *Sociological Focus*

Lesson 5: Mind the bridge between aging professor and a new generation of college students

“Periodically I find myself forgetting about the generational gap between my students and me until I mention the Ford Pinto criminal case in Criminology and get nothing but black stares in return. Now, more than ever, I have found that to be a good teacher I need to meet my students where they are. What I mean here is more than simply updating my examples by referencing Honey Boo Boo or showing the “most viewed” YouTube clip. The bridge I’m referring to is more important than that. According to Graff, many of our students come to us simply clueless—clueless especially of the academy and intellectual life. Rather than reinforce that cluelessness by heaping on the jargon of my discipline or expecting them to know what I mean by “make an argument and substantiate it with empirical evidence,” I need to meet them where they are and see what I am asking of them as they see it.”

Lesson 6: Realize that, more often than not, I’m exactly where I’m suppose to be

“I’ve worked hard for my gray hairs and wear them like merit badges. I have no desire to relive my childhood, my young adulthood, or the first half of my career. This sense of satisfaction is a little unsettling, though, because I am normally a ‘glass is half empty’ kind of person. I should be the one going through a midlife crisis, dreading what comes next, or at least lying about my age. Why, when it comes to teaching and aging, am I not insecure, anxious, or self-doubting like I am with most other things? The answer, I’m convinced, lies in the relationship between teaching and aging. Age has not only strengthened my teaching, but teaching has helped (and continues to help) me age.”

First Annual AKD Pre-Conference on Teaching and Learning

Thursday, April 4, 2013

Crowne Plaza, Indianapolis, IN

"From Initial Design to Final Assessment:
Increased Learning through
Intentional Pedagogy"



The Teaching and Learning Section was pleased to host the First Annual AKD Pre-Conference on Teaching and Learning at this year's annual meeting. There were 25 attendees from all over the NCSA region and as far away as California! AKD will be sponsoring additional regional pre-conferences so if you missed this one, stay tuned. Another will be coming to a regional meeting near you in 2013-14!

Through engagement with experienced colleagues and with each other, keynotes, panels, discussions, roundtables and networking are designed to provide an integrated learning experience grounded in the scholarship of teaching and learning that will help participants use intentional pedagogical choices to increase learning.

- 8:00 Welcome & Techniques for Assessing Prior Knowledge, Rebecca Erickson, University of Akron and Melinda Messineo, Ball State University, Coffee and tea.
- 8:30 "Begin At The End: Intentional Course Design" Melinda Messineo, Ball State University
- 9:15 Keynote: "Intentional Curriculum: The Importance of Teaching to the Cloud." Kathy Rowell, Sinclair Community College
- 10:00 Break
- 10:15 Concurrent Roundtables: Round One

- 11:15 "Constructing a Meaningful Classroom Culture" Leslie Wang, Saint Mary's College
- 12:00 Lunch: Interest Clusters
- 1:15 Reflection and Refocus, Rebecca Erickson, University of Akron
- 1:30 "The Curriculum: Where Does Your Course Fit In?" Kathy Felty, University of Akron
- 2:15 "Discuss Reading" Small Group Discussions
- 3:10 Meet and Thank-Our-Sponsors Afternoon Beverage Break Jeff Chin, Secretary-Treasurer AKD, Le Moyne College and a word from Margaret Vitullo, Academic and Professional Affairs Program, American Sociological Association
- 3:30 Second Round of Concurrent Roundtables**
- 4:30 Next Steps, More Resources, Parting, Rebecca Erickson, University of Akron and Melinda Messineo, Ball State University
- 5:00 Seminar Closing

Round Table Topics

- Table 1: Choosing Texts - Nancy Greenwood, Indiana University Kokomo
- Table 2: Grading and Assessment - Rebecca Erickson, University of Akron
- Table 3: Using Technology - Melinda Messineo, Ball State University
- Table 4: Teaching Portfolio Rebecca Bordt, DePauw University

Lunch Topics

- Table 1: "Work-Life Balance" Debra Swanson, Hope College
- Table 2: "Responding to Challenging Situations" Melinda Messineo, Ball State University
- Table 3: "Tips that Helped Me Survive" Rebecca Erickson, The University of Akron
- Table 4: "Mentoring Faculty of Color" Fayyaz Hussain, Michigan State University and Leslie Wang, Saint Mary's College
- Table 5: "Managing Appointments Across Numerous Institutions" Kim Hennessee Sherman, Ball State University

High School Teacher' Workshop

Friday, April 5

The North Central Sociological Association High School Workshop was a success again this year! We had 12 high school teachers representing 4 states, the farthest from North Carolina. The keynote speakers were Chris Salituro and Hayley Lostpeich, award-winning High school teachers from the Chicago area. They shared a variety of resources – such as websites, books and films – that the high school teachers could take back to their classrooms.

Hayley demonstrated techniques that have worked in her classroom, such as using music to teach about socialization and to specifically engage the 'music kids' and using sports examples to teach race & ethnicity while simultaneously engaging the athletes. Another interesting example was talking about bathroom etiquette as a way of "plunging into the sociological imagination." Hayley asks her students to look at a picture of urinals and asks the class which one they would choose and why. While the women don't usually know these urinal norms, the men understand the unwritten rules.

Chris Salituro shared ways in which he uses the sociological imagination as the common thread among all the topics he teaches. He demonstrated how to incorporate the sociological imagination and taking on the role of the other through humor that shows students how are thoughts might seem strange to outsiders (Louis CK



was an example). He talked about assessment of learning through an on-going class blog. Students reflect each day upon the main concepts being taught and post those thoughts to a class blog. Chris also made his blog sociologysal@blogspot.com available to the teachers. On his blogsite he highlights many of his teaching techniques.

The workshop also included a NCSA session organized by Jeanne Ballatine about the Sociological core. Many of the high school teachers are feeling pressure to defend the discipline and are anxious to create a national set of norms. This session led to a great conversation over lunch about this process. Our afternoon keynote was Lynette Hoelter from the University of Michigan. Lynette showed us several data sources that are available for free, and how to incorporate them into the classroom.

Overall it was a very successful workshop! We are all looking forward to another in 2014.

Presented a paper at the NCSA conference? Completed an interesting study?

Submit your manuscript to *Sociological Focus*

Sociological Focus is the official publication of the North Central Sociological Association (NCSA). Published continuously since 1968, the quarterly journal is international in scope, covering a full range of topics of current interest to sociology and related social science disciplines.

You can access the papers online at <http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/usfo20/current>. Consider submitting your most recent research for review to the journal editor, Gustavo S. Mesch, through the electronic submission system at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/usfo>.

Gustavo S. Mesch, Editor

Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Haifa, Israel
socialfocus@hevro.haifa.ac.il

Upcoming Issue: Table of Contents, *Sociological Focus*, Volume 46, Issue 2, 2013

"Immigration and the Wages of Native Workers: Spatial versus Occupational Approaches." ChangHwan Kim & Arthur Sakamoto, pages 85-105.

"Risk Aversion, Shortage Economy, and Gender Differences in Religious Activities in China." F. Carson Mencken & Jiexia Zhai Autry, pages 106-118.

"From Collective Bargaining to Social Justice Certification: Workers' Rights in the American Meatpacking Industry." Michael A. Haedicke, pages 119-137.

"Deterrence of Men from Using Aggression toward Female Partners." Zeev Winstok, pages 138-157.

2013 STUDENT PAPER COMPETITION WINNERS

Each year the NCSA sponsors a student paper competition for both graduate and undergraduate students. At the NCSA Awards Ceremony, the Student Awards Committee Chair, Carolette Norwood, University of Cincinnati, announced the undergraduate awards and the graduate awards.

Undergraduate Division



Left to right: Hilary Whitsett, Molly Harmon, and James Becker

1st place: **Molly Harmon**, Saint Mary's College. "Broadcasting Blackness: A Content Analysis of Movies Aired by Black Entertainment Television (BET) Before and After Viacom's Ownership"
Advisor: Dr. Leslie Wang

2nd place: **Hilary Whitsett**, Saint Mary's College. "Targeting Women: Direct to Consumer Advertising in Women's Magazines"
Advisor: Dr. Leslie Wang.

3rd place: **James Becker**, Central Michigan University. "The Effects of Socioeconomic Status, Gender, and Race on Emergency Preparedness for Disasters"
Advisor: Elbert P. Almazan

Graduate Division



Left to right: Amanda Nicole Draft, Scott Setchfield, and Natasha Yurk.

1st place: **Natasha Yurk**, "The Strategic Parent: How School Performance Affects Parental Investment", Indiana University-Bloomington.
Advisor: Brian Powell.

2nd place: **Amanda Nicole Draft** "Victimization as Mediator of Suicidal Ideation among Sexual Minority Youth," Wayne State University.
Advisor: David Merolla.

3rd place: **Scott Setchfield**, "'Crash Avoidance" Versus "Safer Crashing:" Constructing Meanings of Safety in a State Motorcyclists' Rights Organization" Indiana University-Bloomington.
Advisor: Brian Powell.

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



Join the [NCSA Facebook Group](#):
[North Central Sociological Association](#)

NETWORKING AT NCSA



NCSA Student Section

Thanks to all the students who made the 2013 NCSA Conference in Indianapolis a great success!

A special thanks to Routledge (Taylor and Francis Group) for sponsoring the Student Welcome Reception on Friday.



We are looking for students interested in joining in the Student Section. Please send an inquiry email to:

Student Section Chair

Alan Grigsby

University of Cincinnati

ncsastudentsectionchair@gmail.com



Alan Grigsby is currently a sociology PhD student and an Albert C. Yates Scholar at the University of Cincinnati. He previously completed a Master's degree in sociology at Ohio University.

His research interests include urban change, stratification, contemporary race relations, and sports.

North Central Student Sociology Conference

by Gail McGuire
Indiana University – South Bend

The North Central Sociology Student Conference offers many opportunities for professional socialization and networking for undergraduates. Student presenters receive feedback on their research from faculty and other students in small, thematic sessions. This experience allows them to engage in intellectual dialogue within a supportive environment.



Because students are able to attend the larger NCSA conference, they are exposed to new perspectives and areas of sociology, thus broadening their view of the discipline. Participating in the conference also encourages students to see themselves as intellectuals and to realize that their ideas can be taken seriously by an audience beyond their department.

This year, forty-one students from fifteen universities and colleges presented their research in Indianapolis. The conference had seven thematic sessions on topics such as education, family, and religion.



I want to give a special thanks to the twenty faculty mentors who made these student presentations possible:

Rosemary D'Apolito, Youngstown State University

Denise Baird, Franklin College

Mary Ellen Batiuk, Wilmington College

David Blouin, Indiana University South Bend

Keith Doubt, Wittenberg University

Steven Carlton-Ford, University of Cincinnati

Loren Lease, Youngstown State University

Annulla Linders, University of Cincinnati

Steve McGuire, Muskingum University

Kate Novak, Butler University

Liz Piatt, Hiram College

Matthew Ringenberg, Valparaiso University

Sandra Schroer, Muskingum University

Linda Silber, Union College

Debra Swanson, Hope College

Mary Tuominen, Denison University

Brooke Wagner, Wittenberg University

Suzan Waller, Franklin University

Rachael Woldoff, West Virginia University

Lissa Yogan, Valparaiso University

JOIN US NEXT YEAR

In Cincinnati

For more information,
contact Gail McGuire

Indiana University – South Bend

GMcGuire@iusb.edu

“Raising the Dead: Marx, Durkheim, and Weber in the 21st Century”

by

Michelle A. Smith

Lakeland Community College



Many sociologists, and I have been among them, have referred somewhat pejoratively to the ‘dead white males’ who helped build the theoretic foundations of our discipline. There was actually a moment in time when, with the purported fall of the grand narrative being imminent, some observers claimed theory was dead. Too, some faculty who teach introductory level courses have argued that theory is not what is critical to our discipline; students need an understanding of concepts and research methodologies much more so than a working understanding of theory, so the argument goes. I contend that theory is what makes our discipline unique and theory provides us, and our students, with a powerful analytic tool.

That being said, teaching theory in introductory courses can be trying. Obstacles to teaching theory abound: there is a great deal to cover in introductory courses; the learning curve is steep; as much as we hate to admit it, there are some students who don’t want to be in the class; and some students have a difficult time thinking in

the abstract terms often required by theory. Over the years, I have shifted how I approach teaching theory and have moved back to some of the techniques I used when I first began teaching.

Based on reflections on my own teaching, I provide an overview of each approach to teaching theory followed by a brief discussion of what I believe to be the most effective of those approaches.

The first approach goes something like this: “So much to cover, so little time. It is week one and already I am behind. I am going to nix coverage of the socio-historic context in which our classical theorists lived, throw their biographies out of the lecture material because I really don’t ask too many questions on that material anyway and ... is it even relevant to students?” This approach, allows me to move through lots of material but none of it in too much detail.

The second approach is where I take time and care in presenting the biographies of our classical theorists and the context in which they lived. (Admittedly, I privilege Marx, Durkheim, and Weber.) Using this second approach, I impress upon students C. Wright Mills’ notion of understanding the intersection of biography and history. One way of ‘walking the Mills’ walk’ is to present the life and times of Marx, Durkheim, and Weber. This sets the stage for students and introduces them to our theorists as human beings rather than merely names in a text; our theorists become living, breathing, vulnerable human beings not ‘dead white males’.

I have found the second approach to be more effective in that it introduces students to the powerful biographies of our classical theorists. The lives of Marx, Durkheim, and Weber resonate with students in ways that help them better understand the theories. The

extra time spent breathing life into the classical theorists is worthwhile in that students come to see real people, experiencing real life issues. Students quickly draw parallels to their own moment in history. Just as students today are dealing with large scale change so too were our classical theorists; thus taking time to explain and discuss the life and times of Marx, Durkheim, and Weber leads students to a more engaged experience in the Introductory course and a deeper understanding of our foundational theories.

“More Than Dead White Guys: Helping Students Apply Theory to Contemporary Issues”

by

Gregory Kordsmeier

Indiana University Southeast



Students in undergraduate sociological theory courses often have a hard time understanding how theory fits into the discipline and the larger social world around them. Research on teaching theory finds that many students find it to be irrelevant to their own lives and to contemporary social issues. (Pederson 2010, Pelton 2013) The literature also shows that writing about theory is one of the best ways to help students understand and relate to social theory. (Pelton 2013, Coker and Scarborough 1990)

In light of this research, I use a class assignment (adapted from an assignment used by my colleague Cameron

Macdonald) in which students apply theoretical ideas to a contemporary social phenomenon. Each semester I choose a recent social phenomenon and assign it to the class. In semesters past, I have used such phenomena as the outcome of the 2008 Presidential Election, the passage of the Affordable Care Act, the passage of SB1070, Arizona's immigration law, and the legalization of same sex marriage by courts and legislatures around the country. Students then choose two theorists and use primary sources to write a paper in which they reconstruct how those theorists might explain the social phenomenon I have assigned. Finally, students compare and contrast the two theoretical approaches in order to make a case for which one best explains the phenomenon in question. This paper is the final assignment in the class and serves as the students' final exam.

Typically, students come away from the assignment impressed with how well they understand the theoretical concepts and how those concepts apply to contemporary issues. There are two things I do in preparation for the final project that aid in this success. First, throughout the semester I have students discuss a series of questions that force them to apply theory to contemporary contexts, like: "Simmel describes the social type of the Stranger. How might undocumented workers fit this social type?" or "How is self-presentation online similar to self-presentation in face-to-face interaction that Goffman describes? How is self-presentation online different from self-presentation in face-to-face interaction?" Second, I have students work collaboratively to build a database of primary sources around particular theorists. Students work in small groups to find ten to fifteen newspaper and magazine articles that reflect the key theoretical concerns of a theorist and the topic at hand. They then use an online forum on the class site to share these articles with the entire class. This cuts down on the amount of time students

spend on research and allows them instead to concentrate on writing the paper. Preliminary data suggest that students find this assignment to be highly effective means of achieving course goals. If you are interested in learning more about this assignment, you can contact me at: gkordsme@ius.edu.

References

- Coker, Frances H. and Allen Scarborough. 1990. "Writing to Learn in Upper-Division Sociology Courses: Two Case Studies." *Teaching Sociology* 18:218-22
- Pedersen, Daphne E. 2010. "Active and Collaborative Learning in an Undergraduate Sociological Theory Course." *Teaching Sociology* 38:197-206
- Pelton, Julie A. 2013. "'Seeing the Theory Is Believing': Writing about Film to Reduce Theory Anxiety." *Teaching Sociology* 41:106-120

"Terrorism and Economic Strain: A Test of Agnew's General Strain Theory of Terrorism"

By Reinmar Freis-Beattie
West Virginia University



The morning of April 19th 1995 saw one of the most tragic events in US history when Timothy McVeigh detonated a truck bomb outside the Alfred P. Murrah Building in Oklahoma City. The attack killed 168 people and wounded over 300 more, and remains the deadliest act of domestic terrorism in US history. Tragic events such as this leave us with

many questions. Why do some people commit acts of violence which are politically or ideologically motivated? Furthermore, why does the United States see such great variation in the number of terrorist incidents from year to year? To help answer these questions, Robert Agnew's (2010) General Strain Theory of Terrorism (GST) lays out a foundational model to explain what might cause terrorism.

Strain can be defined as stress or pressure exerted on something from an outside force. This conceptualization helps us understand the principles behind this theory. Strain theories have a long history in Criminology, focusing on how structural factors can "push" individuals toward deviance. Based in Durkheim's tradition, Robert Merton's Anomie Theory (1938) first proposed that breakdowns in social control could lead to crime. Robert Agnew proposed an update to Anomie, General Strain Theory (1992), which focuses on the roles of social learning and the immediate social environment. More recently, Agnew has taken on the task of adapting General Strain Theory to specifically deal with terrorism.

In contrast to previous strain theories, GST argues that the strains most likely to result in terrorism are collective strains which are (a) high in magnitude, with civilians affected; (b) perceived as unjust; and (c) inflicted by more powerful 'others'. Collective strains affect groups or entire societies, rather than specific individuals. The link between collective strains and terrorism is not direct, but instead follows several 'paths' through which strain can result in terrorism. Collective strains increase negative emotions and attitudes, radicalize groups and individuals, contribute to a collective orientation and response, and facilitate the social learning of terrorism, while also reducing social control and access to legal coping means.

To test this theory, I argue that economic strains constitute collective strains. From this point I tested a portion of GST, focusing my analysis within the US, and examining the conduit from economic strain to increasing negative emotions to domestic terrorism using a path analysis of macro-level data collected from public sources.

The analysis showed moderate support for theoretical assumptions, specifically when looking at the unemployment rate. As unemployment in the US rises, so do negative emotions and attitudes, and through this, incidents of domestic terrorism. From this we can conclude that General Strain Theory of Terrorism may be a worthwhile avenue for future research. Of course, economic factors are only one possible source of strain, and negative emotions are only one mediator in Agnew's model.

With the recent attacks in Boston, it is clear that this is not a problem which will simply disappear. Research into terrorism and other forms of collective violence will continue to be a top priority of academics and policy makers.

References

- Agnew, Robert. 1992. "Foundation for a General Strain Theory of Crime and Delinquency." *Criminology* 30:47-87
- Agnew, Robert. 2010. "A General Strain Theory of Terrorism." *Theoretical Criminology*, Vol. 14 (2): 131-153
- Federal Bureau of Investigation. 2005. "Terrorism 2002-2005" *Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation*, <<http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/terrorism-2002-2005>>
- Merton, Robert K. (1938). "Social Structure and Anomie". *American Sociological Review* 3 (5): 672-682
- Piazza, James A. 2011. "Poverty, Minority Economic Discrimination, and Domestic Terrorism." *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 48 (3): 339-353

"In Defense of Social Movement Theory: Chicana and Chicano Activist Educators"

By Robyn Black



Indiana University South Bend

Is social movement theory still considered Sociology? Social movement theory was previously firmly grounded in Sociology but now increasingly takes theories from a variety of disciplines. Does the interdisciplinary aspect of social movement research remove it from the realm of sociological theory? I argue it does not. Social movements target the very social injustices social theory seeks to explain. Are social movement scholars still sociologists? I argue we are.

Sociologists know that social injustice and inequalities do not happen in a vacuum without context. History, Economics, Political Science, Anthropology, and Peace Studies, among others, all provide context for the examination of social problems. How can we hope to understand context without using theories from other disciplines? This does not mean that social movement theory is not Sociology; Sociology provides the frame for understanding otherwise disparate theories.

Who uses social movement theory? Participants in social movements use social movement theory to advance their causes, maximize resources, solicit followers,

and affect social change. Where are they learning social movement theory? Social movement theory is taught in upper-level Sociology courses in universities. I offer the work of Chicana and Chicano activist educators in predominantly Spanish-speaking schools in California as proof that sociologists need to continue to teach, study, and apply social movement theory.

Chicano activist educators have a very specific identity: these are bilingual, Spanish and English speaking, college educated teachers and professors dedicated to serving their communities. These identities were developed through exposure in college to the idea that individuals could affect social change. Having been identified in elementary school as "bright" students, they were placed in college tracks without either students' or parents' knowledge or consent. Yet this gave them a realistic chance at higher education. There these individuals report discovering Sociology.

What does Sociology have to offer? Sociology gave students the language and skills to identify social injustice. Seeing race and ethnicity as social constructions was liberating. Discovering the educational system is a social structure set up for a white, English-speaking student population was infuriating. Louis Urrieta Jr. named this the "whitestream" school system. Now the problem is labeled, but what can be done?

Determined to make a difference, the newly identified Chicanos studied the history of the Chicano movement. But history offers no solution. Knowing race, class, and gender intersect is useful, but not enough to end inequality. It is through social movement theory that the student learns to be both activist and educator. Using social movement theories these educators play the game, but use the masters' tools in a

way Audre Lourde would not believe possible. Spanish speaking students are not failing in school; the schools are failing the students. Social movement theory gives educators the knowledge to use the tools. Social movement theory is Sociology.

References

Urrieta, Luis, Jr. 2009. Working from Within: Chicana and Chicano Activist Educators in Whitestream Schools. Tucson: University of Arizona.

“Women’s Place: Teaching Gender Inequality & Feminist Theories Through Film”

By **Kathy Feltey**
and **Jean-Anne Sutherland**
University of Akron



Those of us who teach gender and feminist theory often encounter resistance from students who express the belief that we are “past all of that.” Interestingly, many students have limited knowledge about the past and structured inequality, as well as the activism that wrought significant social change. To address these gaps in student knowledge, we use popular film to highlight key theoretical concepts in feminist theories and to highlight the ways that women’s activism has created social change.

Borrowing from Judith Lorber (2011), we use the categories of gender reform, resistance, and rebellion theories.

Below is a short outline of each of these, with recommended films for teaching about theories within these domains. There are many more films for each category or that cut across categories, but we just give a sampling here.

Gender Reform Theories

The focus of reform theories is on the unequal gendered division of labor in the home and workplace, the devaluation of women’s work, and the absence (or token presence) of women in the main institutions of society. Includes Liberal, Marxist, Socialist, and transnational feminist theories.

Films: *Iron-Jawed Angels* (2004) - for a historical exploration of the highly contested social movement activism of the National Woman’s Party (NWP) and the more conservative approach of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA).

I Don’t Know How She Does It (2011) – for a look at contemporary liberal feminism where economically successful professional women encounter workplace barriers to “having it all.”

Gender Resistance Theories

Resistance theories emerged in the 1980s with claims that the gender order cannot be made equal through gender balancing, because men’s dominance is so pervasive. Gender equality (reform-style) results in women becoming “like” men. Key concept: gender ideology (legitimation of gender arrangements through religion, science, law, mass media, and pornography). Most oppressive is the exploitation of women’s bodies, sexuality, and emotions. Focus is on patriarchy. Includes Radical, Lesbian, Psychoanalytic, and Standpoint.

Film: *Born in Flames* (1983) – a documentary-style film by Lizzie Borden that explores racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism in an alternative United

States. The two women’s groups and the Women’s Army represent different “solutions” to the problems plaguing society, especially widespread violence against women.

Water (2005) – for a historical view of widowhood in India (the film is set in 1938). The film features a 7 year-old widow (from an arranged marriage to an elderly man) who is sent to live out her life in a Hindu ashram for widows.

Gender Rebellion Theories

Rebellion theories developed in the 1990s explain gender as socially constructed and maintained through “doing” gender. Focus is on multiple sources of inequality (race, ethnicity, class) that are reproduced through individual actions and social interactions and maintained in the family, work organizations, and cultural and knowledge production. Key concept: the matrix of domination. Includes social construction, multiracial, masculinities, postmodern, and 3rd Wave.

Film: *North Country* (2005) – while this film could also work in the gender reform category, we include it here since it addresses conditions for working class women at home and work. Also, an important class action case that changed sexual harassment law.

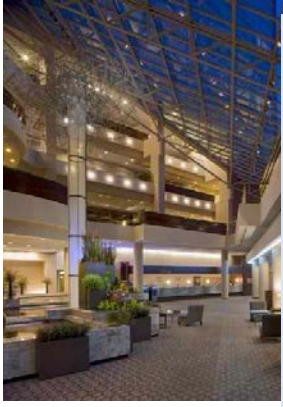
Daughters of the Dust (1992) – the first feature film by an African American woman, Julie Dash, distributed in theaters in the U.S. The film is the story of three generations of Gullah women in the early 20th century.

Reference

Lorber, Judith. 2011. *Gender Inequality: Feminist Theories & Politics*, 5th edition.

Social progress can be measured by the social position of the female sex.

--Karl Marx



CALL FOR PAPERS

North Central Sociological Association
2014 Annual Conference
April 10-13, 2014

CINCINNATI, OHIO
LOCATION: Hyatt Regency



THEME

Doing Good: Positive Behavior, Promising Programs, Promoting Change

Much of Sociology examines the negative side of the human experience, such as poverty, inequality, conflict, and crime. This year's NCSA theme highlights the beneficial, pleasurable, and good aspects of life, such as healthy relationships, strong communities, altruism, and the joy of engagement. We invite papers, panels, workshops, and roundtables that illuminate the positive aspects of humanity through sociological theory and research, teaching, and practice. This conference highlights, but is not limited to, answering such questions as:

- Is there a theory of positive sociology?
- What social factors contribute to life satisfaction?
- How do people develop strong social ties?
- How does social solidarity enhance communities and individuals?
- How can policies and programs enhance our well-being?
- How do people define and develop morality?
- How and when do people help each other?
- How is social health defined, managed, and maintained?
- How do social institutions such as work, family, religion, & media enrich people's lives?
- How do people and organizations resolve conflict and work toward peace?
- What factors increase and promote understanding among different groups?
- How can social and civic engagement reduce social problems?

As always, we welcome presentations addressing this year's theme and a broad range of substantive, theoretical, and applied sociological issues. We look forward to stimulating conversations and an exciting conference in Cincinnati.



CINCINNATI HISTORY

Cincinnati, just across the Ohio River from Kentucky, is a dynamic commercial metropolis with a definite European flavor and a sense of the South. The city center, rich in architecture and culture, lies within a few minutes' walk of the artsy Mount Adams district, the attractive riverfront, and the lively Over-the-Rhine area, in the north end of downtown.

The city was founded in 1788 at the point where a Native American trading route crossed the river. Its name comes from a group of Revolutionary War admirers of the Roman general Cincinnatus, who saved Rome in 458 BC and then returned to his small farm, refusing to accept any reward. Cincinnati quickly became an important supply point for pioneers heading west on flatboats and rafts, and its population skyrocketed with the establishment of a major steamboat river port in 1811.

S U B M I S S I O N G U I D E L I N E S

1. You must be a NCSA member and register for the conference to be on the program.
2. The NCSA requests that individuals limit their participation to no more than **three** appearances on the program to accommodate as many participants as possible.
3. For research or teaching papers, roundtables, or posters, submit the information online at <http://tinyurl.com/2014IndyNCSA> . Please enter the author's first and last name, institutional affiliation, most frequently checked email, and abstract up to 150 words. Please note the topic that best fits your paper. If you do not feel your paper fits any of the general research or teaching topics, please note the "other research" or "other teaching" option on the form. We do not collect finished papers, so papers or posters in progress may be submitted.
4. For workshops and panels, please submit the information online at <http://tinyurl.com/2014IndyNCSA> . Please include a brief description of the workshop or panel. For all members of your workshop or panel, please enter participants' first and last names, institutional affiliations, and most frequently checked emails.
5. To organize a **closed** research or teaching session, recruit between three and five papers before November 1, 2013. For closed research sessions, email Anna Linders at annulla.linders@uc.edu. For closed teaching sessions, email Jacqueline Bergdahl at jacqueline.bergdahl@wright.edu.

Note: In the email, provide the name of the session, names of presenters, titles of presenters' papers, abstracts for all papers up to 150 words each and institutional affiliations and email addresses for all presenters.
6. For undergraduate papers, please email your name, title of paper, school affiliation, abstract up to 150 words, and email address to Gail McGuire, the Chair of the undergraduate student conference, at gmcguire@iusb.edu. Please see the North Central Sociology Student Conference Call for Papers for additional information.
7. Please consult the following resources for questions or concerns:
 - General program issues: Rachel Kraus, rmkraus@bsu.edu
 - All research sessions: Anna Linders, annulla.linders@uc.edu.
 - All teaching sessions: Jacqueline Bergdahl, jacqueline.bergdahl@wright.edu
 - All undergraduate papers: Gail McGuire, gmcguire@iusb.edu
 - Hotel and conference arrangements: Joyce Lucke, ncsa@paragonme.net
 - For detailed conference information: www.ncsanet.org
8. NCSA will send meeting reminders and updates to everyone submitting a paper, session, workshop, panel, or poster via email. PLEASE ADD THE FOLLOWING EMAIL ADDRESSES TO YOUR SAFE SENDERS LIST TO ENSURE YOU RECEIVE IMPORTANT EMAILS: ncsa@paragonme.net, salexand@saintmarys.edu, and rmkraus@bsu.edu

General Topics for Research and Teaching Papers NCSA 2014 in Cincinnati

Research Topics	Teaching Topics
Altruism and Helping	Active Learning/Student Centered Learning
Community Based/Participatory Research	Assessment of Learning Outcomes
Courts, Prisons, and the Legal System	Choosing Textbooks
Crime, Deviance, and Delinquency	Community College Instruction
Economy, Class, and Social Inequality	Community Engagement and the Classroom
Education	Ethics and the Classroom
Environmental Sustainability and Food	Mentoring, Running Clubs, and AKD
Family	Retention Strategies
Gender	Service and Project-based Learning
Happiness Studies	Solving Teaching Problems
Health and Medical Sociology	Student Writing
History of Sociology	Swapping Teaching Ideas
Immigration	Teaching Difficult Topics
International and Global Development	Teaching with Diverse Populations
Intersection of Race, Class, and Gender	Teaching Large Classes
Leisure and Sports	Teaching Online Classes
LGBTQ Studies	Teaching Poster Session
Media Cultures	Teaching Research Methods and/or Statistics
Masculinities	Teaching Sociology Through Film/Media/News
Political Sociology	Teaching Theory
Popular Culture	Technology in the Classroom
Population Issues	Undergraduate Research
Poverty and Privilege	
Qualitative Methods	
Quantitative Methods	
Race and Ethnicity	
Religion	
Research Poster Session	
Rural Sociology	
Scholarship of Teaching & Learning	
Sexualities	
Social Movements	
Social Problems	
Theory	
Urban Sociology	
Work and Occupation	

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 publication of this newsletter, especially my assistant Alex Vizard.

Sociologists at NCSA 2013

