

Our greatness as a nation has depended on individual initiative, on a belief in the free market. But it has also depended on our sense of mutual regard for each other, of mutual responsibility. The idea that everybody has a stake in the country, that we're all in it together and everybody's got a shot at opportunity.

--President Barack Obama

North Central Sociologist

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2010 Aida Tomeh Distinguished Service Award



Robert Shelly with Jay Howard

The 2010 Aida Tomeh Distinguished Service Award was presented to Robert K. "Bob" Shelly, Professor of Sociology at Ohio University. This award recognizes an NCSA member who has provided service to the NCSA in many capacities and over a long period.

Over the years Bob has served as Editor of *Sociological Focus* (1998-2001). He has also served the association as President-elect (2006-07), President (2007-08), and Past-President (2008-09). Bob has been a member of, and in multiple cases chaired, multiple committees including Development, Program, Nominations, and Publications. Beginning in 1974 and continuing into the present, Bob has presented numerous papers, organized and chaired numerous sessions at NCSA annual meetings.

His nominator, Kent Schwirian, wrote: "Bob has always helped wherever and whenever that he was needed. He always did a great job with calm, confidence, good humor, and a serious concern for the contributions of others. I can think of no one more deserving of the award than Bob Shelly."

2010

NCSA/MSS JOINT ANNUAL MEETING IN CHICAGO

This year's annual NCSA meeting in Chicago, IL, was held from March 31-April 2, 2010.

The theme of the 2010 meeting was

COMMUNITIES IN AN AGE OF SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

Many individuals contributed to this successful meeting, but a special thanks goes to the Program Chair Debra Swanson and Vice President Elect Art Jipson for all their hard work putting together such a complex program with such a diversity of sessions.



2010 J. Milton Yinger Distinguished Lifetime Career Award



Jeanne Ballantine (middle) with NCSA President Kathy Rowell and Harry Potter

The 2010 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 winner is Jeanne H. Ballantine, Professor of Sociology at Wright State University. Jeanne has served in a number of positions within the NCSA including NCSA President (1994-1995). She also won the John Schnabel Distinguished Contribution to Teaching Award in 1991. Over the years, Jeanne has organized and presented at numerous sessions at the annual NCSA meeting.

The Committee's decision recognizes the breadth and depth of work in sociology and the teaching of sociology from her own campus at Wright State University, to NCSA, nationally and internationally. Jeanne H. Ballantine truly has had a distinguished career in sociology.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

By

Dr. Ann Swidler

University of California Berkeley

**“Visions of Community:
Chiefs, Churches, and Human
Rights in Contemporary Malawi”**

On Friday, April 2, the joint Keynote Address was given by Dr. Ann Swidler, professor of sociology at the University of California – Berkeley and a visiting scholar at the Russell Sage Foundation. Swidler’s talk, titled “Visions of Community: Chiefs, Churches, and Human Rights in Contemporary Malawi,” was based upon her field work in the area over many years.

Swidler began by identifying how the forms of Malawi community differ in “structure, imagination, and practice.” Swidler described the structure of Malawi chiefs as hierarchal, yet conductive and fixed by geographic location. Chiefs consult the community members regarding local issues. According to Swidler, the Malawi churches are flat in structure, unequal, and voluntarily chosen by individuals. Finally, human rights organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are universal in perspective, individual, and cosmopolitan.

Next Swidler describe the role of the chiefs, who serve as a resource for the people. The chief is responsible for organizing the production of collective goods, such as keeping paths repaired and providing resources for the school. The chief also encourages redistribution of goods and services by keeping an “account” of what individual contribute and rewarding contributions to the community, including dealing with any accusations of witchcraft. Finally, the chief can redistribute status among the people by enforcing obligations and rewarding leadership. This may occur by settling disputes between neighbors, encouraging people to help the sick, or to care for orphans.

The chief’s powers include the ability to distribute land and his rulings in the chief’s court. The chief also “constitutes the community” by giving it a name, an identity. Finally, the chief is responsible for

funerals and remembering ancestors. This last duty is closely tied to accusations of witchcraft for anyone guilty of witchcraft cannot be buried in sacred ground. Swidler noted, however, that the chief’s power is not unlimited and bad chiefs can be “deposed.”

Swidler described a funeral she attended in Botswana to illustrate a chief’s power. While the local pastor is the link to God, the chief supervises the community members’ behaviors. At the funeral, Swidler attended, the chef observed the service while sitting in his car. Whenever he believed the mourners were not grieving visibly enough, the chief would have a subordinate make announced through a loud-speaker on how the mourners should behave.



Swidler next discussed the role of religions in Malawi, including Christianity, Islam, and the African Independent Churches. Swidler say the churches are providing a ritual power in the cosmopolitan world. Because Christianity and Islam operate in a global environment, they provide access to spiritual and material resources on a global level. This global perspective acts as a counterweight to the local, independent African churches.

Lastly, Swidler discussed the role of the human rights organizations and NGOs in Malawi. For example, UNICEF has organized the “Stop Campaign” to address the issue of child abuse in Malawi. Such international organizations can reshape local issues.

For Swidler, Malawi communities have their own form of the sacred which draws upon these three areas of Malawian life, the local, the transcendent but particular, and the global and universal.



For those interested in learning more about Ann Swidler’s research in Malawi refer to her numerous publications including her most recent work:

2007 Ann Swidler and Susan Cotts Watkins: “Ties of Dependence: AIDS and Transactional Sex in Rural Malawi,” *Studies in Family Planning* 38, 3 (September):147-162.

2008. Malcolm Potts, Ann Swidler, et al., “Reassessing HIV Prevention.” *Science* 320 (5877): 749 - 750. 2008. Potts et al., Letters and response, “Tailoring AIDS Prevention,” *Science* 321(5896): 1631-33.

In press 2009. “Dialectics of Patronage: Logics of Accountability at the African AIDS-NGO Interface,” in *Philanthropic Projections: Sending Institutional Logics Abroad*, edited by Steven Heydemann and David Hammack, Indiana University Press.

In press 2009. Ann Swidler and Susan Cotts Watkins, “‘Teach a Man to Fish’: The Sustainability Doctrine and its Social Consequences.” *World Development* 36(4).

In press 2009. Iddo Tavory and Ann Swidler, “Condom Semiotics: Meaning and Condom Use in Rural Malawi.” *American Sociological Review* 74(2).

Forthcoming 2009. “Responding to AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa,” in Peter Hall and Michèle Lamont (eds.), *Successful Societies: Institutions, Cultural Repertoires and Population Health*. Cambridge University Press.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

By Kathy Rowell

“Possibilities and Pitfalls of Professional Sociological Associations: The Community College Conundrum”



On Friday, April 2010, NCSA President Kathy Rowell gave an address on the “Possibilities and Pitfalls of Professional Sociological Associations: The Community College Conundrum.” Rowell is the first President of the North Central Sociological Association from a community college.

In this powerful address, Rowell said she was “deeply troubled by the relative absence of community college involvement within our professional sociological associations.” In her address, Rowell examined the causes of a lack of participation by community college members in professional associations. She also made six recommendations “to reverse the negative consequences” of the “Community College Conundrum”.

Rowell noted that “educational expansion in the aftermath of World War II, and the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s, led to the growth of both the membership of the ASA as well as community colleges.” An article in *Social Forces* (1994) examining the discipline of sociology found that in the 1960s the call for greater power and participation by women and African Americans led to the formation of women and African American caucuses within ASA. “The caucuses of these members challenged the association to adapt their collective interests on the grounds of social justice. The association, composed as it is of persons whose predominant values are with underdogs and who champion social justice in the society, voted on new goals and charges for itself to become more open, to represent the

societal minorities among its members” (Simpson and Simpson 1994:263).

At the same time the ASA made strides toward greater racial/ethnic participation and gender, no such effort was made towards the expanding community college educators and students, many of whom were women and African Americans.

Rowell presented data showing that today an estimated 44% of all first time freshman students are enrolled in a community college. Additionally, “at the National level, there is increased interest in community colleges.” For example, in 2009, “President Obama announced a 12 billion community college initiative designed to boost graduation rates, improve facilities, and develop new technology.” Furthermore, in 2008 the National Science Foundation reported that “25% (one in five) doctoral recipients in 2008 attended a community college at some point in his or her educational career.” Community college students from traditionally underrepresented groups are more likely to begin their college careers at a community college; “39% of Native Americans doctoral recipients and 24% of Hispanic doctoral recipients had attended a community college.”

While many future faculty members begin their careers at a community college, the professional sociological associations have failed to recognize this trend by including community college faculty and students a meaningful way. Currently, only 4% of ASA members are community college educators.

Rowell stated, “Fundamentally, this suggests the discussion about lack of community college faculty participation in our associations is in part related to the larger discussion of diversity and inclusion of faculty of color. Thus, the role of community colleges in undergraduate and graduate education demands support and research within our discipline.”

Rowell presented data (see Table) from an examination of meeting programs from the ASA and select regional associations indicating that community college educators are participating in meetings by presenting papers including research, teaching, and professional activities. As the Table shows, between 2002-2008, there were 120 community college educa-

	ASA (2000-2008)	PSA (2000-2008)	NCSA (2002-2008)	MSS (2001-2002, 2007-2008)	TOTALS
Research	84	45	29	49	207
Teaching	75	63	33	32	203
Professional	64	96	58	35	253
TOTALS	223	204	120	116	663

tors participating in NCSA meetings.

To begin to resolve this “community college conundrum,” Rowell made six recommendations.

Recommendation 1: Notice and Care. The ASA needs to make a decision on whether or not they genuinely care about community college students and faculty.

Recommendation 2: Task Force and Research. If the ASA does care, then the ASA must call for a task force to examine the community college conundrum.

Recommendation 3: Examine Other Disciplinary Associations. Explore what other disciplines are doing to include and assist community college faculty.

Recommendation 4: Four-year/ Two-Year Partnerships. Sociologists at four year institutions must reach out to community college faculty and work together.

Recommendation 5: Professionalization of Master Degree Students. ASA must examine the professional development of sociology students in master level graduate programs.

Recommendation 6: Recognize the Community College Issue as a Social Justice Concern. Sociologists must recognize the “community college conundrum” as a social justice issue and worthy of analysis in research, and to recognize that much of this pretense and posturing is due to living in a society where the lack of educational capital, educational segregation, racism, sexism, and classism exist.

Rowell concluded by stating “it is time the discipline of sociology recognizes teaching as equally as important to our discipline as research.”

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

NCSA Distinguished Teaching Award Talk

“Letting Go: Overcoming Fear, Ego, and Other Barriers to Effective Teaching and Learning”

By Melinda Messineo
Ball State University



On Thursday, April 1, Melinda Messineo, Associate Professor of Sociology at Ball State University, gave the NCSA Keynote Teaching Address. Melinda was last year’s recipient of the John F. Schnabel Distinguished Contribution to Teaching Award.

Messineo recognized that that professors are often heard complaining about students – students don’t read the course materials, they don’t talk in class, they get distracted by technology. For Messineo, “the complaints and frustrations are often standing proxies for our fears, our frustrated expectations. Our responses are complicated, impeded, and facilitated by the fragility and impenetrability of our egos.”

Messineo defines ego as “the self that we manage and negotiate in the social environment.” Each professor in a classroom seeks affirmation from the students while simultaneously struggling with insecurity regarding their abilities as a teacher. Messineo describes this as “a continuum of sorts. On one end, we are insecure, self doubting, and fragile. At the other end, we are on top of the world, invincible, masters of our domain.”

While the both ego and fear may

motivate teachers to make changes, the barrier impacting a teacher’s ability to make also the changes necessary to more effectively reach the students. Messineo suggests that “increased awareness, reflection, sensitivity, and empathy are the starting point to recognizing how fear and ego impact our teaching and learning.” To accomplish this, Messineo drew upon five areas from the Sociology of emotions

1. Dramaturgical analysis
2. Symbolic interactionism
3. Interaction Ritual
4. Power and Status
5. Exchange

Messineo described how these theories are related to a teacher’s fear. Dramaturgical theories examine how our actions as teachers in a classroom are informed by cultural scripts. Interaction Ritual theories explain the classroom environment as a place of ritual, “a point of encounter where individuals gather in proximate space, greet each other in stereotyped ritual way to raise the transient emotions, that in turn create a shared mood and focus of attention, synchronization of bodies and talk creating collective effervescence, followed by rising levels of positive emotional energy.” Power and status theories suggest that if an individual has power, or gains power, she will experience more confidence and security, but if she loses power, the result is increased anxiety, fear and a loss of confidence. Finally, Interaction ritual theory” helps us understand why it works when it is working.”

Messineo then asked, what do these theories tell us? In the classroom, symbols, power and expectations matter, and “the greater the power differentials, the greater the potential for problems.”

Once teachers recognize how these theories apply to the classroom dynamics, they can make changes. For example, through the dramaturgical approach, “we learn that there are scripts and when we deviate from those scripts, students do not know their roles. Take, for example, student resistant to interactive classroom strategies. Greater transparency about what we are doing and why we are doing it, basically removing the barrier between some of the

front and back stage behavior, will help students understanding their part.”

Similarly, interaction ritual theory and power and status theories suggest that teachers need to reduce classroom hierarchy and increase student power. To accomplish this, Messineo suggests that we “make them teachers, make them the experts.”

In conclusion, Messineo said, “We have these amazing jobs that give us a chance to interact with and shape the lives and be shaped by new people every semester. We can have richer and deeper experiences if we can let go of the fear and ego that keep barriers between us”

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



QUOTE

“Academics often suffer the pain of dismemberment. On the surface, this is the pain of people who thought they were joining a community of scholars but find themselves in distant, competitive, and uncaring relationships with colleagues and students. Deeper down, this pain is more spiritual than sociological: it comes from being disconnected from our own truth, from the passions that took us into teaching, from the heart that is the source of all good work. If we have lost the heart to teach, how can we take heart again? How can we re-member who we are, for our own sake and the sake of those we serve?” (p.20)

Parker Palmer
The Courage to Teach

**John F. Schnabel
Distinguished Contributions
to Teaching Award**



Brian Powell (L) with Lissa Yodan

The winners of the 2010 John F. Schnabel Distinguished Contributions to Teaching Award are Bernice Pescosolido and Brian Powell of Indiana University's Preparing Future Faculty Program.

Together Bernice, Distinguished Professor of Sociology at Indiana University and Brain, James H. Rudy Professor of Sociology at Indiana University, jointly designed and implemented the Preparing Future Faculty program in the Sociology Department. They wanted to ensure that all graduate students receive appropriate training in teaching and research, to offer advanced training and experience in teaching, and to provide experience in teaching and scholarship at a variety of settings including liberal arts colleges.

Their impact can be measured both by the frequency with which their students win Graduate Instructor teaching awards at IU and by the frequency with which Indiana University students have been recognized as graduate student NCSA Graduate Paper Competition Award winners. Additionally, both Brain and Bernice have written many manuscripts relating to the teaching of sociology and the preparation of sociology faculty. Through their work and the work of their many students, the impact on the North Central Region has been immense.

**NCSA
Scholarly Achievement Award**

The NCSA 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, first given in 1981, has recognized such outstanding scholars as Patti and Peter Adler, Dwight Billings, Aldon Morris, and Suzanne Staggenborg.

The 2010 NCSA Scholarly Achievement Award for a significant contribution to the discipline of sociology has been awarded to two outstanding co-recipients:

Professor Allison C. Carey for *On the Margins of Citizenship: Intellectual Disability and Civil Rights in Twentieth-Century America* (2009, Temple University Press)

Professor Nicole Rousseau for *Black Woman's Burden: Commodifying Black Reproduction* (2009, Palgrave Macmillan).



Professor Carey is an associate professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Shippensburg University with research interests in medical sociology, health and disability; social problems; inequality; qualitative research methods; and more specifically cultural beliefs and practices related to people defined as having mental retardation or intellectual disabilities.

From the book jacket: *On the Margins of Citizenship* provides a comprehensive, sociological history of the fight for civil rights for people with intellectual disabilities. Allison Carey, who has been active in disability advocacy and politics her entire life, draws upon a broad range of historical and legal documents as well as the literature of citizenship studies to develop a "relational-practice" approach to the issues of intellectual disability and civil rights. She examines how and why

parents, self-advocates, and professionals fought for different visions of rights for this population throughout the twentieth century and the changes that took place over that time.

Carey addresses the segregation of people with intellectual disabilities in schools and institutions, along with the controversies over forced sterilization, eugenics, marriage and procreation, and protection from the death penalty. She chronicles the rise of the parents' movement and the influence of the Kennedy family, as well as current debates that were generated by the impact of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act.



Professor Rousseau is an assistant professor in the Department of Sociology at Kent State University with research interests in structural and institutional roots of race, class, and gender inequalities, politics of reproduction/sexuality; reproductive health/rights of Black women; social rhetoric and identity formation; and Blacks in the Diaspora.

From the book jacket: *Black Woman's Burden* examines the historical endeavors to regulate Black female sexuality and reproduction in the United States through methods of exploitation, control, repression, and coercion. The myth of the "angry Black woman" has been built over generations through clever rhetoric and oppressive social policy. Here Rousseau explores the continued impact of labeling and stereotyping on the development of policies that lead to the construction of national, racial, and gender identities for Black women.

2010 STUDENT PAPER COMPETITION RECIPIENTS

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

Undergraduate Division



1st place: Sarah Rompola, Saint Mary's College. "ComMANDer in Chief: A Content Analysis of Masculinity in Candidates' Images." Advisor Carrie Erlin.

2nd place: Valerie Booner, Miami University, "Movement Case Study: Soulforce's Master Frame." Advisor Gina Petonito.



3rd place: Elizabeth Madrigal, Saint Mary's College. "Hegemonic Masculinity and the Phoenix Gay Male Subculture: The Transgression of Boundaries." Advisor Carrie Erlin

Graduate Division

1st place: Timothy L. O'Brien, Indiana University Bloomington. "Education and Public Attitudes about Scientific Leadership." Advisors Brian Powell and James H. Rudy.



2nd place: Oren Pizmony-Levy, Indiana University Bloomington, "A Multilevel Approach to The Study of Global Curricula Scripts: The Case of Environment Education." Advisor Brian Powell.



3rd place: Jason Rine, West Virginia University. "A Community with an Identity Crisis: The Life and Times of a Changing Steel Town." Advisor Larry Nichols.

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

NCSA and FACEBOOK

On Facebook?

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

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/North-Central-Sociological-Association-NCSA/111957288823879?ref=nf#/pages/North-Central-Sociological-Association-NCSA/111957288823879?v=wall&ref=nf>

ICE CREAM SOCIAL



North Central Student Sociology Conference

by Carrie Erlin
Saint Mary's College

The North Central Student Sociology Conference ("NCSSC") continued this year as an embedded conference of the NCSA annual conference. The NCSSC's goal is to provide a place for undergraduate students to present their work in a professional setting, where they can receive feedback on their work from other students, faculty and professors, and other sociological professionals. Students also have the opportunity to attend regular NCSA sessions where they can explore and learn more about different sub-fields of sociology and areas of research, and where they can learn more about the NCSA as an organization.



This year forty-two students from thirteen different colleges and universities submitted papers for presentation at the NCSSC. Fifteen of these submissions were selected for full presentation at a formal conference research session, while other submissions were invited to present their work at the NCSSC poster session. The fifteen students selected into formal research sessions were:

Session I

Grace Mooney-Melvin: *Hazing on Women's Sports Teams*

Sarah Rompola: *CoMANder in Chief: A Content Analysis of Masculinity in Candidates' Images.*

Michelle von Hirschberg: *An Examination of Social Capital and Participation in Local Foods: A Focus on Kenyon College and Knox County.*

Ashlyn Nielsen: *Does Sexual Victimization in Childhood Increase the Propensity of Juvenile and Adult Criminal Behavior?*

Jennifer Pace: *Home Ownership and Neighborhood Tenure: Affects on Positive Neighborhood Bonds*

Session II

Cristen Dalessandro: *IS She "Saint Mary's"?: Student Identity Construction Based on Institutional Stereotypes.*

Elizabeth Scannell: *Human Trafficking: A Macro comparative Study.*

Eric Fritz: *Macro and Micro-level Developments in the Trading Card Industry: 1999-present.*

Kiendra Cozzens and C. J. Potter: *Personality and Facebook: Personality's Influence on Social Networking.*

Kiley Porter: *Sanctuary: Trauma-Informed Care.*

Session III

Emily Eliot: *Slash Fanfiction: A Challenge to the Heteronormative Culture.*

Ellen Hine: *That's Not MY Name: How Society Effects the Choice of Women's Last Names.*

Amanda Henderson: *The Effects of Substance Abuse Counseling on Beliefs About Alcohol.*

Rong Fu: *Unequal Enhancement or Justified Improvement?: Comparison of American and Chinese College Students' Attitudes Toward Genetic Enhancement.*

Katherine Parker: *Views on the Separation of Church and State.*

The poster session included a variety of topics as well, ranging from sociology of sports to sociology of education to issues in social stratification. The number of students who participated, along with all conference attendees, made the second annual NCSSC a resounding success, with many faculty and students looking forward to next year's NCSSC in Cleveland.

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

or contact Gail McGuire at GMcGuire@iusb.edu

STUDENT POSTERS on DISPLAY



FROM THE DESK OF
NCSA PRESIDENT
HANS BAKKER
University of Guelph



It is an honor to be able to serve the NCSA as President for the 2010-2011 year. Although I have only been a member since the Windsor Meeting, I have come every year. As I said at the Business Meeting in Chicago, I feel the NCSA is a worthwhile organization and that the spirit of community is very much alive due to the dedication of a large number of hard working volunteers.

The 2010 Chicago Conference, which was held jointly with the Midwest Sociological Society, was very successful, due in large measure to Program Chair Debra Swanson's efficiency and her excellent liaison activities with the MSS Program Chair, Peter Kivisto. Conference papers dealt with virtual, elective and imagined communities as well as more traditional communities of place.

Our Past President Kathy Rowell gave an excellent Presidential address on the importance of education at the community college level, and during this past year her dedication to attending to all of the myriad details involved in fostering a large organization has really paid off. I hope that we will continue to encourage faculty from community colleges to feel that they have a professional home in the NCSA.

It is also remarkable how much energy has gone into fostering good teaching, at all levels. The North Central Student Sociology Conference remains an important part of our annual meeting. We are hopeful that the Cleveland Conference will still have some of the same excitement.

The theme for next year will concern "Pragmatism in Research and Education" and my Presidential Address will emphasize "Pragmatic Sociology." I believe that the American Pragmatist tradition exemplified by C. S. Peirce, G. H. Mead, Jane Addams and many others is a useful way to pull together some of the many strands of thought in contemporary sociology. Several issues of *Sociological Focus* carry articles with themes close to the general idea of Pragmatist theory and methodology (e.g. August 2007). The 2009 Plenary Address

by Irving Zeitlin is also directly relevant.

The NCSA Council has been dedicated toward keeping our organization running smoothly. I look forward to working with vice president Arthur ("Art") J. Jipson and all members of Council and other Committee chairs. Also, we are lucky to have Joyce Lucke of Paragon Meetings and Associates, join us again as our Conference Coordinator again for another year. Susan Alexander has agreed to continuing serving as our Public Relations Coordinator.

In the past few months I have learned that the NCSA is a far more complex organization that I had previously thought. Even as a member of Council I did not fully grasp all of the activities that members engage in. We are always looking for volunteers for our various committees so do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to be even more active than you already are! Please jot down the dates for the Cleveland Conference and contribute ideas for sessions. I hope that one type of session will be an "author meets critics" session. Also, do not hesitate to recommend books to the Scholarly Achievement Award Committee, headed by Stephen J. Scanlon.

2010-2011 NCSA
Executive Council



NCSA president—elect
Larry Nichols (center) with members of the
Publications Committee.

The newly elected North Central Sociological Association officers for 2010-11 began their term at the Business Meeting on April 2, 2010.

Newly elected are: President-elect Larry Nichols, Vice-President-elect Carrie Erlin, Membership Chair Mellisa Holtzman, Council Member at Large Elizabeth (Betsy) Ross, and Treasurer Annualla Linders.

The returning members of the NCSA Executive Council include: President Hans Bakker, Vice-President Art Jipson, Secretary Barbara Denison, Council Member at Large Jieli Ji, and student Representative Daysha Lawrence.

A Special Issue of
Sociological Focus

Call for Papers

Network Models
of
Economic Embeddedness

The deadline for submission of
completed papers is **June 31, 2010**.

Sociological Focus invites papers that directly contribute to the understanding of social networks and their role in the economy. Papers are particularly encouraged in the following topical areas:

- Network analysis of economic policy and regulation
- Social networks and financial markets
- Dynamic analysis of economic and business networks
- Co-evolution of business actors and relational patterns
- Social networks and venture capital investments
- Social networks and corporate governance
- Social networks and tacit knowledge creation, maintenance, and transfer
- Economic and sociological accounts of the network economy
- Interlocking directors and business elite networks
- Social capital and economic performance
- Network models of industrial and competitive analysis
- Virtual and online organizations

All manuscripts will be peer reviewed and in accordance to the journal style. For further information about this special issue, please contact the guest editor:

Ilan Talmud, PhD
Senior Lecturer

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University of Haifa
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Submit complete manuscripts to
Sociological Focus,
www.sociologicalfocus.net

RACE, ETHNICITY, AND NATIONALITY: USING A SOCIOLOGY PERSPECTIVE

Editor's Comment:

As I ventured out from the Marriot Hotel in the little free time I had at the annual meeting in Chicago, I encountered a group of protestors a block from the hotel who were angry at the federal government. While I have participated in a number of protests in my lifetime, I was struck by the overtly racist imagery used by these Chicago protestors – images of President Obama in “white face” with a “Hitler mustache.” And I wondered what sociologists might have to say about the topic.

After I returned to the hotel, I counted the number of sessions in the NCSA/MSS joint program that focused on topics of race and ethnicity; 26/382 (7%) of the sessions had some relevance to issues of race and ethnicity. Of course there were likely additional papers examining some aspect of race and ethnicity place in other sessions.

I would like to think that such expressions of racism that I witnessed on the street stand in stark contrast to the sociology meeting I was attending. However, the Presidential Address by NCSA president Kathy Rowell, spoke to what might be interpreted as another dimension to racism – universities and four-year colleges who fail to protest the underfunding and underrepresentation of our colleagues and their students at community colleges. As Kathy noted, these are the very educational institutions that are more likely to educate students from under-represented racial and ethnic groups.

For this edition of the *North Central Sociologist*, I solicited articles that might begin to speak to some of the issues of race and ethnicity in our community today.

Susan Alexander
NCSA Public Relations Coordinator

**The Impact of
the Negative Image of
the “Angry Black Woman”
on One’s Professional Career”**

By
Dr. Dawn Hinton
Saginaw Valley State University



Session participants left to right:
Miguel Ceballos, Shirley Hill, and Dawn Hinton.

At the 2010 conference in Chicago, I had the opportunity to share my experiences on a panel entitled “Teaching as a Scholar of Color.” Our charge was to consider our experiences as faculty members and to share some insights that may be beneficial to graduate students. My intent was to share some of the challenges and successes I faced. There are a number of things that were shared during this session. Here I discuss how the negative image of the “Angry Black Woman” has manifest in my professional experience and a method that would be helpful in dealing with the marginalization of the academy.

The image of the “Angry Black Woman” characterizes the Black woman as one who is perpetually angry, confrontational and uncooperative. The problem with this image is that to counter it requires that you embrace a more passive and submissive role in your interactions with others. To deviate from this submissiveness

inevitably earns you the title of “Angry Black Woman.” As one of the few Black faculty members on campus I have been invited to serve on a number of committees. There have been a number of instances when I have made recommendations only to have them ignored and others to make the same recommendation and be applauded for their great insight. As a tenured faculty member, I am less willing to allow this behavior to continue. I have rejected the silencing that these incursions generate and I have accepted the role of the Angry Black Woman and allowed myself to speak my truth during these meetings.

This image along with other negative images can make your faculty experience exhausting.

How do you maintain collegiality, become involved in meaningful service activities and stay sane?

The most important thing you can do as a junior faculty member of color is to identify a mentor.

If one was not assigned to you when you hired in as a faculty member, then it becomes your responsibility to develop relationships with people who will be able to protect you and your time. These should be people who know the culture of the university, who are familiar with the ‘movers and shakers,’ and who know the unspoken rules of advancement. If no one is available in your department, identify someone outside of your department. The key is to develop a community, on campus, that will facilitate your successful transition to tenure and promotion.

RACE, ETHNICITY, AND NATIONALITY: USING A SOCIOLOGY PERSPECTIVE

TEACHING TIP

Afghan Star
and Social Change

by
Thomas Brignall
Lewis College



In my classes, I try to engage the students and encourage them to talk about the abstract textbook concepts by providing examples from current events. I incorporate various media formats to help spark conversations and provide concrete examples of sociological concepts. One of the points I teach students in my Social Change class is that social transformation sometimes comes from atypical events.

Afghan Star is a documentary film about the Afghanistan version of American Idol entitled Afghan Star. The events in this documentary help illustrate the point that pushing the boundaries of some taboos may help provide a fertile ground for other positive social changes.

Afghan Star introduces viewers to the background of Taliban repression, and the very dangerous realities of participating in the previously banned activities of singing and dancing. By openly rebelling against previous taboos the contestants were risking public scorn and their lives.

The film's interviews with Afghan producers and citizens made it evident that the women who entered the contest were taking a huge risk con-

sidering for the previous ten years women weren't allowed out in public without a male relative. Two of the female participants Lima Sahar and Setara Hussainzada received hate mail and death threats from those who regarded their participation in Afghan Star as blasphemous. Much to their surprise Setara and Lima became heroes for many women who followed the show and created a national debate about life and the conditions women must endure living in Afghanistan.

After showing the film, I ask the students to break down various themes, scenes, and people using an assortment of sociological concepts. I ask the students to critically analyze the pros and the cons of the Afghan Star television show, identify the types of social change, and to provide theoretical critiques of the film. In the class a few students expressed skepticism that the show itself was a step towards introducing Democracy to Afghanistan, but they did think it was a powerful moment when thousands of fans eagerly awaited the show and the opportunity to vote for their favorite star via mobile phone.

The students believed the show was an excellent catalyst for Afghans to discuss current issues and to slowly push the social structure in order to gain greater freedoms. Students were very impressed with how daring the women were and how their strength provided inspiration for many Afghan women to question many of the current cultural taboos. In the end, the students clearly could articulate how pop culture could be used as a political wedge become a platform to discuss important issues

For more information about
Afghan Star,
visit the website:
www.afghanstardocumentary.com
(87minutes)

TEACHING TIP

Teaching Race and Ethnicity:

The Impact of
Instructor Social Location

by
Kathleen J. Fitzgerald
Loyola University New Orleans



As a white professor teaching sociology of race courses, I am concerned with how my social location influences my teaching of this subject matter. To what extent are instructor concerns with white student reactions dictating how we approach the content? To what extent is our approach to the teaching of race and ethnic relations guided by our own discomfort with discussions of race, power, and privilege? Do we cling to claims of scientific objectivity as a way to avoid disrupting current status hierarchies? As white instructors, do we feel we lack the "authority" to teach this subject matter? In order to claim some kind of authority to teach race, do we rely on the objective authority embedded in the scientific discipline of sociology? If so, we have to recognize that this position is comforting because it avoids implicating us, as white people, in the inequalities of race. We remain objective, detached, and distant as we teach the "sociology" and overlook the privileges associated with the U.S. racial hierarchy. Power is always present in given disciplinary practices and I would point to this kind of a classroom strategy as one of those academic practices of power. While the study of race and ethnicity within the discipline of sociology has shifted from an almost exclusive focus on racial inequalities to a focus on

RACE, ETHNICITY, AND NATIONALITY: USING A SOCIOLOGY PERSPECTIVE

race privilege, I think it is important that we ask, to what extent has our teaching mirrored this shift? Conversations with white colleagues teaching race, and reflecting on my teaching over the years, leads me to believe that we white instructors too often fall into this trap of believing race is not “our” territory. Such a position reinforces white privilege.

Many white instructors struggle with feeling uncomfortable teaching race, particularly to students of color, but this has less to do with black student perceptions than with our own sense of discomfort. After all, most black students have sat in classrooms with white teachers and professors throughout much of their educational careers. In fact, if we look closely at our classroom dynamics, are we concerned with black student reactions or with white student reactions to the sociology of race? In the United States, 79.8% of college students are non-Hispanic whites. Does the overwhelming presence of white students dictate how we approach this subject matter? I encourage us, as white instructors, to constantly interrogate our own teaching practices and scholarly work for evidence of privilege

Strategies African American Mothers Use to Strengthen the Racial Identity of their Elementary-age Daughters Attending a Predominantly White School

By
Chasity Bailey-Fakhoury
Wayne State University

Studies of racial socialization and racial identity development have tended to focus on urban, lower-income African American parents and their adolescent or early adulthood children. Findings emanating from these studies are then extrapolated to *all* African Americans. The pilot-study presented at this year's MSS-NCSA Joint Conference pushes the research further by examining the racial identity development and parental racial socialization practices of middle-class,

suburban African American mothers and their elementary-age daughters. Concentrating on middle-class, suburban mothers is especially relevant when one considers the demographic shifts occurring in some metropolitan areas.



Metropolitan Detroit provides a unique milieu for undertaking this study. The 2005 American Community Survey reports that for the first time in fifty years, Detroit's African American population fell. Between 2000 and 2005, Detroit lost 90,000 of its black residents while during the same time period, the surrounding suburbs increased their African American populations. In a region such as metro Detroit where 115 of its 185 cities and townships are 95% white and where 75% of metro Detroit blacks reside in one city—it is fascinating to discover what suburban African American mothers do to strengthen the racial identity of their young daughters against such a starkly segregated background. Such a social reality occurring in the context of Metro Detroit's history of contentious race relations in its neighborhoods and school districts makes issues of racial socialization and racial identity development all the more relevant.

Hughes et al. (2006) tell us that mothers/parents transmit four basic racial socialization messages: racial pride/cultural heritage; preparing for bias as a numerical minority; promoting mistrust of out-group members; and egalitarianism. Mothers/parents transmit these messages via modeling, exposure, role-playing, and verbal communication. Preliminary results from this pilot-study indicate that daughters sometime exhibit behavior that is incongruent with the mother's conception of the daughter's racial identity. One mother expressed this belief as she explained how the family's

move from Detroit to their predominately white suburban community has been a *double-edged sword*: leaving the city to give her child better educational opportunities, yet encountering situations where race and her child's racial identity take on a salience that heretofore she had not fathomed. In particular, she told of the family's purchase of a Wii gaming system and how her daughter created an avatar with Caucasian phenotypic features to represent herself. Another mother provided a similar example when telling of the back-to-school shopping trip to purchase a book bag. Her young daughter wanted a Hannah Montana book bag but the mother used imaging to persuade her daughter to pick a book bag which more closely reflected her phenotypic features. Results also suggest that when mothers experience these episodes of incongruity, they respond by deliberately intensifying the racial socialization of their daughters in both nuanced and palpable ways.

Given that African American students attending predominantly white schools can encounter racial situations which may negatively impact their academic and social success (Ford and Whiting 2009; Tatum 1997), understanding how parental racial socialization and how having a positive racial identity can buffer against such negative outcomes is important information for parents and educators to have. Unlocking this phenomenon and studying it from various angles may well assist in the academic and social success of not only African American students but all students—ultimately helping to lessen the social distance between those of varying racial/ethnic backgrounds.

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RACE, ETHNICITY, AND NATIONALITY: USING A SOCIOLOGY PERSPECTIVE

The Presidency of Barack Obama and the New Faces of America's White Nationalism

by Robert Newby
Central Michigan University

The presidency of African American Barack Obama after one year has been a case of celebration by his supporters, but one of resentment for many among America's white majority. His



election was epochal in that for over 200 years, all forty-three of his predecessors were white. Beginning in 1790, citizenship was restricted to whites. Until the *Brown* decision in 1954, the citizenship status of blacks was dubious. Now, a half century later, a person of color, a black man, its 44th President, the nation's First Citizen.

From the moment of his election, the question became what does his election say about race in America today, a nation that has historically reserved its lowest regard for blacks? Early on the question was asked: "Is America ready for a black president?" In translation, that question meant: "Will whites vote for a black man to be president?" Barack Obama answered that question by saying to his confidants when he decided to run: "America *is* ready to have a black President." The Obama campaign was historic for its overwhelming grassroots support, specifically its successful use of the Internet. Essentially his victory in 97% white Iowa paved the way for his Democratic nomination. With a coalition of minorities, 97% of the black vote, 67% of the Latino vote, 62% Asian vote and 43% of the white vote, Obama's victory over McCain for the presidency was resounding. He was right, "America was ready for a black president."

The election may have proved him to have been right about the American electorate, but it is now clear that he was not

right when it comes to much of white America. A majority of white Americans, fifty-five per cent, voted for McCain. Ninety percent of McCain's votes were whites. For the first the time in America's history, the Presidency is in the hands of a man who is not white. Obama's election represents a major threat to the white nationalist core that has been central to U.S. politics from before its inception as a nation. Until the accommodations made by the white nation as a result of World War II, the *Brown* decision, the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements, with few exceptions, citizenship was restricted to being white. As stated at SNCC's (Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee) 50th anniversary celebration recently, "...African Americans are not in these positions today because a sudden change of heart occurred in this nation." He went on to say, "There was pressure" mounted against a resistant white nationalist regimes. The 1964 Civil Rights and the 1965 Voting Rights Acts, based upon the principles of *Brown*, altered the citizenship status of blacks during this period. These advances notwithstanding, it was Reagan who re-legitimized national the white nationalist discourse for the nation. Even so, the failures of the Bush administration and the election of Obama brought the "Reagan revolution" to its end.

It is this defeated "Reagan Revolution" that is resisting acceptance of the democratic outcome of the election that serves as the core of the T-Parties. It was Reagan who popularized the saying that the scariest eleven words in the English language are: "I am from the government and am here to help." This anti-government sentiment is exacerbated now that the head of government is an African American. A black president is not legitimate in the eyes of the white nationalists.

It was this "he is not one of us" sentiment that gave rise to the demands for the President's birth certificate, or the "birther" movement. The Republican legislature of Arizona has passed legislation requiring the President to produce a birth certificate in order to be on the ballot in 2012. Not only is his American citizenship questioned, among the T-Partiers, the President is portrayed as a socialist, a communist, a fascist, a Muslim, even a witch doctor with a bone in his nose. In their eyes he is not "American." It is this sentiment that leads to call that they "want their country back."



Armed demonstrators at T-Party rallies, accompanied by an inflammatory rhetoric, symbolic of armed revolutionary struggle makes today's context one that is unsettling. Gun sales have escalated to record levels. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, the anti-government militias have grown by 250%.

The developments are ominous. As reminded by President Clinton in reference to the 15th anniversary of Oklahoma City bombing, a similar anti-government sentiment was extant. The anti-government white nationalists who declare "he's not one of us" are at war with the changing demographics of America not just an election outcome. Threatened by this "new majority," the T-Party, "birther," and militia movements find themselves in association with some very dangerous currents in today's racial politics that may not bode well for our society's future.

The salient question is to what extent will these forces go in their efforts to maintain white dominance in the face of a changed demography in America?

CALL FOR ORGANIZERS

North Central Sociological Association
2011 Annual Conference
March 31 – April 2, 2011

The Hyatt at the Arcade in Cleveland, Ohio

The conference theme this year is **Pragmatism in Research and Education**

What is the purpose of scientific inquiry? The characteristic idea of philosophical pragmatism is that ideas and practices should be judged in terms of their usefulness, workability, and practicality and that these are the criteria of their truth, rightness and value. Both classical Pragmatism and contemporary Neo-Pragmatism have had a deep impact on social science. It is a perspective that stresses the priority of action over vague principles. In deciding how to deal with any complex social problem a useful question to ask is what practical difference any specific theoretical distinction might make. As sociologists and social scientists, are we involved in a search for truth? Are we seeking consensus or agreement on the patterns and nature of human experience? What is it that we wish to discover about human interaction in research, practice, education, service, and involvement in both communities of scholarship and the real lived experience of human society? How important are “interpretive networks”? These questions suggest that a further exploration of our philosophy and practice might be useful. Better theorizing in the discipline will help us as we work to develop teaching and research as a complement and alternative to the dominant models of ‘disinterested’ social science, and to reframe research activities and address a broader range of concerns than traditional questions of scientific validity. Research, teaching, and other sessions might address the theoretical involvement in social amelioration. Or these sessions might investigate how political action, various social events, military engagements, civil society, criminality, religious rituals and faith traditions, community spaces, popular culture, artistic endeavors, and social media and the Internet further a pragmatic concern in the discipline of sociology. We welcome all proposals for papers and panels that bring scholarly and theoretical interests in pragmatism to bear on relevant concepts in the contemporary age. But we also welcome papers which authors may not necessarily feel fall into the main theme of the conference.

Keynote speaker: Jack A. Goldstone is the Virginia E. and John T. Hazel Jr. Professor at the George Mason School of Public Policy and an eminent scholar. His work on issues such as social movements, revolutions, and international politics has won him global acclaim. The author or co-author of nine books, Professor Goldstone is a leading authority on regional conflicts, has served on a U.S. Vice-Presidential Task Force on State Failure, and is a consultant to the U.S. State Department, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the U.S. Agency for International Development.

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 August 15, 2010:

Research Paper Sessions Organizer:

Carrie Erlin, Saint Mary’s College cerlin@saintmarys.edu

Teaching Sessions Organizer:

Melinda Messineo, Ball State University mmessineo@bsu.edu

Thematic Panels and Workshops Organizer:

Art Jipson, University of Dayton jipsonaj@udayton.edu

Non-thematic Panels and Workshops Organizers:

Art Jipson, University of Dayton jipsonaj@udayton.edu

And/Or

Melissa Holtzman, Ball State University mkholtzman@bsu.edu

High School Workshop Organizer:

Keith Roberts, Hanover College robertsk@hanover.edu

Local Arrangements and Presentations:

Elizabeth Ross, Cleveland State University

E.A.ROSS@csuohio.edu

Preparing Future Faculty Panels:

Jay Howard, Butler University jhoward@butler.edu

North Central Student Sociology Conference (NCSSC):

Gail McGuire, Indiana University–South Bend gmc-guire@iusb.edu

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: Art Jipson, Program Chair and 2011 Annual Conference Organizer, University of Dayton jipsonaj@udayton.edu

2011 CALL FOR ORGANIZERS

North Central Sociological Association Conference

March 31 to April 3, 2011
 Cleveland, Ohio
 Hyatt Regency at the Arcade

NCSA 2011 Conference Deadlines

- April 21, 2010** Call for Organizers circulated
- August 15, 2010** Session Organizers have session information to Conference Organizer
- August 30, 2010** Call for Papers circulated
- December 15, 2010** Paper and Presenter information Due to Session Organizers
- January 1, 2011** All session information Due to 2011 Annual Conference Organizer
- January 15, 2011** Notification of Acceptance of Papers, Panels, and Workshops
- February 15, 2011** Hotel Registration Deadline
- March 31 – April 2, 2011** 2011 NCSA Conference

NCSA Public Relations

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, but special thanks to Lauren Hall, the Assistant Public Relations Coordinator, for her excellent work this year and her extraordinary ability to make every project she touches look great!

FACES FROM THE ANNUAL MEETING

