

Values without knowledge are blind.  
 Knowledge without values is empty.  
 Both without policies are futile

— J. Milton Yinger

# North Central Sociologist

Official newsletter of the North Central Sociological Association

A Bi-annual Newsletter of the North Central Sociological Association

Spring 2007

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## John F. Schnabel Distinguished Contribution to Teaching Award

This year's recipient of the North Central Sociological Association's John F. Schnabel Distinguished Contributions to Teaching Award is Jay Weinstein. Jay is a Professor in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminology at Eastern Michigan University.

The Teaching Award is based upon the sharing of pioneering innovations in curriculum design, creative classroom activities, and/or development of instructional methods, the development of especially creative instructional materials, a distinguished record of publication and/or research on or about the teaching of sociology, and a distinguished record of contributing to the teaching emphasis at the NCSA.



## 2007 NCSA ANNUAL MEETING IN CHICAGO

This year's annual meeting in Chicago was held jointly with the Midwest Sociological Society (MSS). Over 330 sessions and 5 different tours of Chicago sites of importance to sociologists (e.g. "Chicago School") were available for conference participants. The meeting ran from noon on Wednesday, April 4<sup>th</sup> through 2:00 on Saturday, April 7<sup>th</sup>.

Many individuals contributed to this successful meeting, but a special thanks goes to the two Program Chairs, Jay Weinstein (NCSA) and Helen Moore (MSS), and Tanya Gladney (MSS Student Director) for all their work putting together such a complex program with such a diversity of sessions. We can all look forward to the next Joint meeting!

The theme of the 2007 meeting was "Social Policy, Social Ideology, and Social Change"

## J. Milton Yinger Distinguished Lifetime Career Award

The first recipient of the NCSA Distinguished Lifelong Career Award is J. Milton Yinger. Yinger received a PhD from the University of Wisconsin. He taught at Oberlin College from 1947 to 1987.



Photo courtesy of American Sociological Association

Yinger was President of the NCSA. He is the only past President of NCAS to also be elected President of ASA, and he is the only person from any regional association to be elected President of ASA while being employed at a teaching-oriented liberal arts college. Yinger not only receives the first NCSA Distinguished Career Award, the Council has voted to henceforth name this award the J. Milton Yinger Lifetime Distinguished Career Award. At age 90, Yinger was unable to travel to receive the award, but Keith Roberts accepted the award on behalf of Yinger. Thank you Milton your wisdom, your warm humanity, and your distinguished legacy to sociology.

## NCSA Student Paper Competition Winners

Each year the NCSA sponsors a student paper competition for both graduate and undergraduate students. This year 25 papers from 14 colleges/universities were submitted. Dr. Fayyez Hussain, Chair of the Student

Awards Committee, announced the winners at the conclusion of the NCSA Business Meeting.

The graduate paper competition winners are: 1<sup>st</sup> place Yasmiyn Irizarry, Indiana

University, for her paper titled "When Teachers Lose Their Say: How No Child Left Behind Influences Teacher Efficacy." The 2<sup>nd</sup> place award was given to Suzanna Crage, Indiana University, for her paper titled "How Ideas Matter: The Case of Refugee Aid Policy in Munich." The 3<sup>rd</sup> place award went to Nicolas Somma, University of Notre Dame, for his paper "The Conditional Effectiveness of Strong Ties in Protest Recruitment Attempts."

The undergraduate paper competition winners are: 1<sup>st</sup> place, Alice Holohan, Saint Mary's College, for her paper titled "The Catholic Cross-Over: A Historical Analysis of St. Thomas More Parish, 1950-2006." The 2<sup>nd</sup> place award was given to Anazetta Hudson, University of Akron her paper "Child and Adolescent Antisocial Behavior: Race, Self-Worth, and Corporal Punishment." The 3<sup>rd</sup> place award was given to Maryann Erigha for her paper "Civil Rights Groups and Voter Turnout in the 2000 Presidential Election."



## Saskia Sassen NCSA Keynote Speaker

One of the highlights of this year's meeting was the Ruth and John Useem Plenary Address given by Dr. Saskia Sassen, Professor of Sociology at the University of Chicago and the London School of Economic.<sup>1</sup> Sassen's talk was titled, "The Incompleteness of Formal Systems: Implications for Social Change."



Drawing upon her earlier work on globalization, Sassen described how the "incompleteness of formal organization" such as globalization makes possible social change. As globalization developed, Sassen noted, epic social change occurred and this opened up possibilities for citizens to move beyond the nation to participate in global social movements. Citizens can "locate the self at the point of incompleteness" and this is a site of transformation.

Citizenship, Sassen described, as an incomplete formal institution. The incompleteness is revealed through changes in citizenship such as the Civil Rights Movement and welfare reform legislation that expanded citizen rights or the Patriot Act restricting citizen rights. Sassen stated that the loss of citizen rights under the Patriot Act was overlooked because of the mediated process in which the loss occurred. Because citizenship is incompletely theorized, social change can occur and citizen rights can be expanded. The development of Human Rights policies and legisla-

tion is an example. Human rights activists are using U.S. tort law to file lawsuits in Washington DC against multinational corporations regarding their offshore factories. Thus national laws are being used to make global policies.

As Sassen (2006)<sup>2</sup> notes, "State sovereignty is usually conceived of as a monopoly of authority in a particular territory. Today it is becoming evident that state sovereignty articulates both its own and external conditions and norms. Sovereignty remains a systemic property but its institutional insertion and its capacity to legitimate and absorb all legitimating power, to be the source of law, have become unstable. The politics of contemporary sovereignties are far more complex than notions of mutually exclusive territorialities can capture."

The incompleteness of the state sovereignty has allowed non-sovereign actors (someone beside the President) to make social policy and change. In this light, the Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi's recent trip to Syria can be seen as a global action for change.

Sassen asked, how can we begin an inquiry of the "interiority" of the nation state? One possibility is through an analysis of the power of the executive, which is increasing due to systemic conditions associated with globalization. The executive branch is associated with the global organization (e.g. IMF or World Bank) and, thus, he is a global actor. Starting with Reagan, presidents have been expanding their power, but G.W Bush illegally extended the executive power by eroding citizen right. The legislature By contrast, is associated with the local, the "domesticated" branch and their power has been shrinking.

This new "assemblage" of state power, however, also reveals the incompleteness of the state. It is here that we can create social change. Sassen called for us to "recover" our ability to engage in social change,



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

<sup>1</sup> Among Sassen's books are: *The Global City: New York London Tokyo* (Princeton University Press, 1991; 2nd edition 2001); *Cities in a World Economy* (Pine Forge/Sage, 1994; 2nd ed 2000; 3rd ed 2006); *Losing Control? Sovereignty in an Age of Globalization* (Columbia University Press 1996); *Globalization and its Discontents. Essays on the Mobility of People and Money* (New Press 1998); *Guests and Aliens* (New Press, 1999).

<sup>2</sup> *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (Princeton University Press, 2006), pp. 415-417.

**KEYNOTE:  
NCSA Distinguished  
Teachina Award Talk**

As the 2006 recipient of the NCSA Distinguished Contribution to Teaching Award, Leslie Wang, Saint Mary's College, gave a keynote talk titled "Reflections on Teaching and Learning: The Meanings of Diversity in Different Academic Cultures."



The focus of Leslie's talk was an examination of both commonalities and differences among academic

cultures rather than an independent analysis of each type of academic institution. Over his 14 year career in high education, Leslie has taught at three very different types of academic institutions of higher learning including a public community college, a large state university, and a small private liberal arts college. Leslie discovered that colleagues at each of these institutions have very little understanding of teaching in institutions outside their own.

*"These socially constructed perceptions and realities become tremendously relevant and somewhat bothersome to me as a sociologist because 'The Sociological Imagination' trains us to possess an awareness of the larger social world so that we do not become trapped in our own familiar world. We focus a lot of our energy in educating our students about the diverse society and the global world that we live in."*

Leslie notes, however, those academics,

*"Possess very little understanding about the academic cultures that are different from ours. Many of us are only informed by the academic world of where we teach. Similarly, as the responses by a few of my colleagues prove that they know little about other academic cultures, definitely based on their lack of experiences, their constructions of aca-*

*democratic cultures is comparable to a failure for some of us to reach beyond our own personal life experiences. And if some of my colleagues fail to possess a larger world view, it is not surprising that our students base their understandings of societal issues almost solely on their own life experiences."*

Leslie's philosophy of teaching and learning is based upon what he calls "culturally democratic education" (CDE). He described one of his courses, Inequalities in Education, where students contemplate the links among culture, democracy, and education (CDE) and how this plays out at the micro-level of their lives, the mezzo level of the socialization that occurs in academic environments, and at the macro level of national and international contexts.

Leslie stated, *"A culturally democratic education requires that students critically examine relationships among groups, acknowledge a history of power and oppression among groups, and understand the relationships between access and opportunities in society in relation to group memberships and identities."*

In the classroom, Leslie described the important role that diversity has in his classroom discussions. Since students themselves come from a variety of backgrounds, each has their own socially constructed meaning of "diversity."

Given the students' backgrounds and perspectives are varied, Leslie describes how diverse the responses to sociological topics can be in any classroom. For Leslie, each academic institution, with its own academic milieu, means the teachers must find a way to help their students develop a sociological imagination so that students have a way to analyze the social and cultural factors that shaped their lives.

The full text of Leslie Wang's Address will be available in an upcoming issue of *Sociological Focus*

**ICE CREAM SOCIAL**

Our thanks to the University of Illinois Chicago and Lynne Rienner Publishers for hosting the Ice Cream Social on Thursday of the annual meeting.



The Ice Cream Social took place in the Chicago Ballroom where the book display was simultaneously set-up.



Just outside the door was the "Teacher Poster Session." SO sociologists wander among the posters and book displays with their bowls of ice cream with chocolate sprinkles!



## NCSA RECEPTION FOR CARLA HOWERY

The NCSA held a reception in Chicago to thank Carla Howery for all her support of the regional associations. Soon to retire, Carla Howery is the Deputy Executive Officer of the American Sociological Association, where she directs its academic and professional affairs program. Carla is responsible for ASA's annual chair conference and resources for chairs and directors of graduate study.



Carla attended St. Olaf College and the University of Minnesota. She was a faculty member at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee before coming to ASA. During her 25 years at ASA, Carla has worked on such varied issues as the status of women in sociology, research on the profession, sociological practice, international sociology, graduate and undergraduate teaching, and membership concerns.

The January 2007 issue of *Footnotes* ran a tribute to Carla's 25 years at ASA. According to Sally Hillsman, ASA Executive Officer, "Carla's loyal, long-term contributions to the efficient functioning of ASA and the generation of useful teaching-related products and programs are eminently reassuring to the sociological community and a testament to the permanent relevance of the discipline. Her institutional knowledge and myriad of contacts have been essential to the functioning of the ASA." And Ted Wagenaar, Miami University, noted, Carla "has been a strong spokesperson for teaching and curriculum issues at professional meetings and at meetings connected with the ASA. She knows just about everyone engaged in promoting the teaching and learning of sociology."

Accept our deepest gratitude for all your work on behalf of teaching issues.

Thank you, Carla!

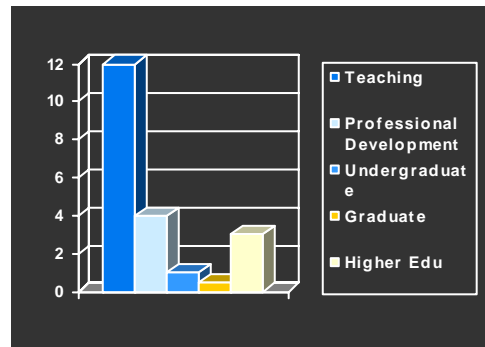
## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

NCSA President Jay Howard's talk was titled "Teaching & Learning and the Culture of the Regional Association in American Sociology." Jay examined the roles of regional associations in promoting effective teaching and learning in sociology. He also looked at the role of the regional associations in encouraging the professional development of sociologists.



Jay compared the preliminary programs of the 2007 annual meetings of the ESS, PCA, and the SSS along with the 2006 programs of the NCSA and MSS. Jay identified more than 40 teaching sessions on this year's NCSA/MSS program, accounting for roughly 12 percent of the total program. Jay said, "There are sessions on teaching particular topics (e.g., "Strategies for Teaching Politically Charged Topics"), on teaching particular skills (e.g., "Teaching Quantitative Literacy"), on teaching particular courses (e.g., "Rethinking the Introductory Sociology Course"), and on the use of particular pedagogical strategies (e.g., "The Use of Music in Sociology Classrooms")."

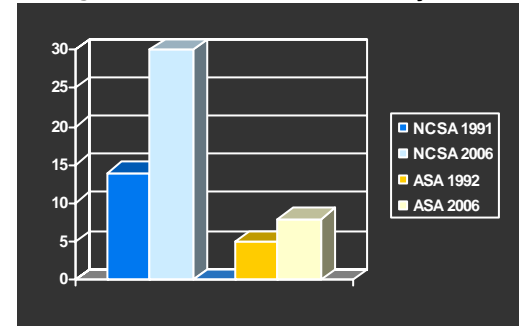
Jay also identified 14 professional development sessions on the program, accounting for 4 percent of the program sessions.



Such sessions covered topics on publishing (e.g., "A Conversation with Journal Editors"), funding sources ("NSF Funding Opportunities"), research skills (e.g., "Social Analysis Tools from the Census Bureau"), and mentoring (e.g., "Feminist Mentoring"). Overall, 69 of the total 338 sessions, on the 2007 NCSA/MSS program cover five topics related to teaching, professional development, undergraduate students, graduate students, or research on higher education.

Jay found that, on average, the five regional associations committed 12 percent of the total program to teaching-related sessions. The NCSA in 2006 "had the most teaching sessions both in terms of the number of sessions (30) and the percentage of the program focused on teaching (30%). The ESS (12 sessions, 4%) had the fewest teaching sessions and the lowest percentage of total sessions dedicated to teaching. The MSS (22 sessions, 11%), the PSA (20 sessions, 9%), and the SSS (14 sessions, 8%) were clustered between the extremes." This compares with 2006 ASA annual meeting in Montreal, there were a total of 608 sessions on the program. Of these, 48 sessions, or 8 percent, were focused on teaching.

Jay noted that while research sessions will likely continue to have a significant place in regional associations, there are some areas the regional associations lead the way. For



example, the NCSA offers a **High School Teachers Workshop** which helps to build bridges between sociologists in higher education and the people who teach sociology in high schools. Second, the NCSA has purposely become more graduate student friendly by organizing the teaching sessions on the program in such a way that graduate students can earn a NCSA **Future Faculty Program Certificate**. Finally, Jay stated that, "every regional association program could include the following sessions: "Surviving the First Years on the Job," "Balancing Work and Family in Higher Education," "Keys to Obtaining Promotion and Tenure," "Strategies for Effective Department Chairs," "Post-tenure Review," "Benefits and Challenges for Sociologists in Administration," "Strategies for Successful Departmental Reviews," "Publishing in Scholarly Journals," and "Writing Effective Book Proposals." Perhaps, these sessions could be organized in such a way as to allow faculty members to earn a **Professional Development Program Certificate** from the regional association."

Jay concluded his remarks noting that if the regional association is to survive, it must change and evolve and sociologists must be given reasons to participate.

## 2007-08 NCSA Executive Council

The newly elected North Central Sociological Association officers for 2007-08 began their term at the Business Meeting on April 7.



New NCSA Council:

From left to right Jay Howard, Shelly McGrath, Jay Weinstein, Sean Foster, Dean Purdy, Bob Shelly, Lissa Yogan, Leslie Wang, Lynn Ritchey.

The NCSA executive officers include: President Robert Shelly, Ohio University, Vice-President Lissa Yogan, Valparaiso University, President-Elect Jay Weinstein, Eastern Michigan University, Vice-president elect Lynn Ritchey, University of Cincinnati, Treasurer Anna Linders, University of Cincinnati, Secretary Leslie Wang, Saint Mary's College, Membership Chair Marty Jendrek, Miami University, Council members at large Kevin Christiano, University of Notre Dame, and Carlette Norwood, University of Cincinnati, and Student Section Chair Shelly McGrath, Southern Illinois University – Carbondale.

## FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT: Bob Shelly

Greetings,

As I write today, it is chilly in Athens, with most of the flowering plants "shivering" in the cold air. A sunny sky hints at warmer weather, but the week just past was cold and hence, good for our meetings. As I reflect on the success of our joint meeting with the Midwest Sociological Association, I am extremely pleased to report that we had over 1500 sociologists in Chicago, with about a quarter of them members of the NCSA. The weather probably kept many in the hotel who might otherwise have taken advantage of the lures of Chicago.



Over fifty high school teachers participated in our workshop on sociology in the secondary school, our largest group ever for this endeavor. My personal thanks for this success to Keith Roberts. The council meeting on Saturday morning agreed to post photographs online so members could purchase a record of their participation if they wished. Members of the Midwest governing board are informally inviting us back in 2010, the next time they will be in Chicago. If you have comments about this, please send them to Dean Purdy at [DeanAPurdy@yahoo.com](mailto:DeanAPurdy@yahoo.com). All-in-all, this was a most successful meeting.

The association is in good health and we are looking forward to a successful meeting next year in Cincinnati. Jonathan Turner of the University of California at Riverside is our Plenary Speaker for the meetings to be held at the Netherland Hotel. Lissa Yogan (email at [Lissa.Yogan@valpo.edu](mailto:Lissa.Yogan@valpo.edu)) is soliciting members to organize sessions for the meetings. I want to encourage everyone to come to Cincinnati for the meeting next year and consider organizing or presenting in a session. Our success as an organization depends on your participation. We expect to have a full program of research and teaching sessions as well as workshops and panels.

I am personally very excited about our return to the Queen City and look forward to seeing you there.

Best wishes for a good summer,  
Bob Shelly, President

## FACES FROM NCSA 2007



Session discussion



President elect Jay Weinstein and past President Kent Schwirian



At the NCSA registration desk



NCSA poster display

## 2007 Aida Tomeh Distinguished Service Award

This year the NCSA is pleased to present the Aida Tomeh Distinguished Service Award to **Barry V. Johnson**, Indiana University Northwest.

This annual award recognizes an NCSA member who has accomplished one of more of the following:

1. Service to the NCSA in a single truly outstanding activity, or
2. Service to the NCSA in many capacities and over a long period of time, or
3. Service to the NCSA throughout professional career.

**GRADUATE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE**



Shelly McGrath (left) with former Student Section Chair Natalie Haber-Barker

Shelly McGrath is the newly elected Student Section Chair for 2007-08. Shelly received a B.A. from Saint Mary's College in 2001, and M.A.s in sociology (2003) and political science (2004) from Ball State University.

She is currently a doctoral student and research assistant at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

Shelly has attended the North Central Sociological Association's meetings for the past four years. In 2006, Shelly won 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the NCSA Graduate Student Paper Competition.

Her research assistantship at SIU-C focuses on domestic violence in the Delta Region of Illinois, which led to her dissertation topic "A Spatial Analysis of Domestic Violence Orders of Protection and Program Services Availability." In addition to working on her dissertation and research assistantship, Shelly is actively involved in leadership positions in many campus organizations including Graduate and Professional Student Council, Graduate Council, and the Graduate Assistants' Union. She also spends many hours in the gym and has participated in the campus body building show for the last two years. In her spare time Shelly cares for about a dozen stray/feral cats.

*"As Student Section Chair, I would like to implement a professional workshop program for students at the annual NCSA meetings. These workshops would include sessions that are helpful and of interest to graduate students and undergraduate students, such as Going on the Job Market and Publishing as a Graduate Student. Most importantly, I intend to interact with student members to assess what our collective needs are, and to incorporate those into workshop planning and other aspects of service as your student chair. Please do not hesitate to contact me with ideas, comments, and concerns."*

Shelly can be contacted at [smcgrath@siu.edu](mailto:smcgrath@siu.edu)

**NCSA STUDENT SECTION UPDATE**

**BENEFITS OF JOINING THE NCSA FOR STUDENTS**

The NCSA can play an integral role in your sociological development and it can be just as valuable to your career. By joining the Student Committee, you open yourself to a myriad of opportunities to meet other students (graduate and undergraduate), actively promote the value of teaching sociology, advocate for social change, and yes, build your Curriculum Vitae.

As a member of the Student Committee, you have the opportunity to facilitate undergraduate round tables, make significant contributions to growing membership of NCSA and develop the leadership skills that are crucial to being a future faculty member. The opportunities are limitless. NCSA can make a difference in your sociological endeavors, so I make the same recommendation that others offered me. Take part in NCSA and join the Student Committee.

At the very least, make it a priority to attend next year's NCSA annual meeting in March, a rare and exciting collaborative event. I encourage you to go a step further and join the Student Committee by checking out the student section of the NCSA website an email to the NCSA listserv.

[NCSA\\_Students@googlegroups.com](mailto:NCSA_Students@googlegroups.com)



Establish lifelong professional contacts

**UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE**



Jessica Hoover, a rising senior and sociology major at Hanover College, Hoover is the new 2007-2008 NCSA

undergraduate student representative. She is planning to pursue a Master's degree in Social Service Administration. Jessica has served on two Hanover faculty members' research teams and has completed several original research projects, including (but not limited to):

- Content analysis of multiracial families in early children's literature
- Participant-observation study of behavioral management in a special education preschool classroom
- Interview-based description of black Americans' experiences at a predominantly white college

Next year, Jessica plans to complete an independent study examining the public perception of domestic violence. This research relates to some of my internships experiences. I have been an intern at Turning Point in Jefferson County since August 2006. My job includes:

- Assist Community Service Director in office operations and community education events
- Provide case management, including legal and personal advocacy to domestic violence survivors

Jessica also serves as an intern at the Julian Center, since June 2006

- Create and implement professional development workshop for domestic violence survivors
- Assess and fill needs of outreach clients, including legal advocacy
- Manage crisis calls and facilitate shelter clients' initial in-takes

Jessica can be contacted at [hooverj@hanover.edu](mailto:hooverj@hanover.edu)

For more information on the student committee does, check out our section of the NCSA website <http://www.ncsanet.org/students/index.htm>

## FEATURED SESSIONS: POSTERS on DISPLAY

For the past several years, the NCSA has organized a "Teaching Poster Session." Added to this year's meeting was the "Undergraduate Research Poster Session" with 28 posters on display.



Yusef Abdul-Zahir, Wittenburg College

The posters covered a range of topics including: "Urban Legends Cookies," "Using Food to Teach," "Examples of Using Films in the Teaching of Sociology," and "Gender and Chick Flicks: *Mean Girls* and *Mona Lisa Smiles*." Sounds like food and films are definitely an effective way to reach the students!



"Creativity Required Tests No Will Do"



"Learning to Question:  
Writing Questionnaires and Using SPSS"

## NCSA Sponsors "Teaching Sociology: A Workshop for High School Social Studies Teachers"

By Keith Roberts  
Hanover College

Eighteen years ago, Keith Roberts and Kathleen Piker-King convinced the NCSA Teaching Committee to sponsor a workshop for high school teachers living in the region where the annual meeting was held. Although a number of people have had leadership in this workshop over the years, there has been a workshop every year (save two) since 1990. For the past three years, Diane Bryant, a high school teacher from Sandusky, Ohio, has joined the workshop team.

This year the NCSA workshop was co-sponsored by the American Sociological Association's Section on Teaching and Learning, the Indiana Council for the Social Studies, The Illinois Council for the Social Studies, the Education Department at Hanover College, Lake Forest College Continuing Education Office. (The latter two co-sponsorships allow teachers to receive continuing education units from the Departments of Education in Indiana and Illinois respectively.)



This year the workshop included discussions of deep learning and curriculum objectives; exploration of teaching the intersections of race, class, and gender; active-learning instructional strategies; video and field trip possibilities; simulations and games; the services of the Teaching Resources Center at the American Sociological Association, various publications and websites that are loaded with active learning instructional strategies, opportunities to network with other high school sociology teachers, and more. Teachers left the workshop with roughly 100 active-learning instructional strategies ("lesson plans"); some claimed that this was the most insightful and productive workshop on any discipline that they have ever attended.

The workshop organizers not only had help with publicity from the two state Councils for the Social Studies, but they also sent letters to 350 high schools within a 70 mile radius of Chicago. (The Hanover College admissions office paid for the mailings, so no expense was incurred for NCSA.) The result was a record attendance, with 51 high school teachers coming to our meeting to learn about how to teaching sociology more effectively and in ways that meet the expectations of college professors.



One of the co-organizers of the workshop has also organized a nation-wide listserv for high school sociology teachers. Perhaps because of that, and perhaps because this is virtually the only on-going program of its kind in the nation, we are now getting national attention for the workshop. One of this year's attendees flew in from Maryland; another arrived from North Dakota. Further, we also had inquiries from interested teachers in Nevada, California, and Arizona. The NCSA's outreach to high school teachers is considered a model program, and the Midwest Society had several people helping so they can consider sponsoring such a workshop in the future. The workshop had another benefit as well; it raised roughly \$2,800 in profits for the association.

The next workshop for high school teachers will be at the 2008 NCSA meeting in Cincinnati. Some of the Chicago area teachers say they plan to be there.



NCSA TEACHING SESSION

Books That Help Us Teach

by Lissa J. Yogan,  
Valparaiso University

This year at the joint NCSA/MSS meetings in Chicago a new type of session was presented. Two sessions combined five brief book reviews with presentations that focused on how the material in each book can better help us teach.



Each session highlighted different types of books. The reviewed books that might best inform a beginning teacher looking for very practical advice are: *The Art and Craft of Teaching* by Margaret Morganroth Gullette (Ed), *McKeachie's Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research and Theory for College and University Teachers* by Wilbert James McKeachie and Marilla Svinicki, and *Teaching At It's Best: A Research-Based Resource for College Instructors* by Linda Burzotta Nilson. Each of these books gives very practical advice and includes information about how to prepare to teach as well as how to handle problems that inevitably arise during the semester.

Books largely informed by either the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning or by Social-Psychological theory and research were also included in the sessions. These books are likely to benefit all teachers. They include: *What the Best College Teachers Do* by Ken Bain, *Learning and Motivation in the Post-Secondary Classroom* by Marilla Svinicki and *Discussion as a Way of Teaching: Tools and Techniques for Democratic Classrooms* by Stephen Brookfield. Each of these books was presented by an experienced teacher who felt the books both affirmed their current practices and helped them focus on-going improvement efforts.

At least two of the books (*Courage to Teach* by Parker Palmer and *The Five People You Meet in Heaven* by Mitch Albom) were more philosophical in nature and ask us

to look at the human and spiritual elements in the teacher-student interaction. These books generated discussion focused on thinking about how we handle students who academically, emotionally and even politically challenge us. Both books provide ways of reframing our notion of the traditional classroom and helping us see it as an extension of our lives.

One book *This Fine Place So Far From Home* Ed(s) C. I. Barney Dews and Carolyn Leste Law is a collection of autobiographies of working-class academics. It can best be used to get to know the often silent working class student and/or colleague and to understand that our socio-economic class of origin continues to impact both students and faculty when they enter a predominantly middle to upper-middle class institution.

The last book, *The Missing Professor* by Thomas B. Jones is a B-grade mystery in which faculty encounter a variety of scenarios common to most departments. While the mystery was considered great fiction, the value of the book lies in the supplemental guides that can be used to help structure departmental discussion on issues faculty encounter in their academic departments and/or classrooms.

If you would like to read the presenter's comments and learn more about these books you can go to:

<http://edithosb.googlepages.com/booksthathelpusteach>

Thank you very much to Sister Edith Bogue of Saint Scholastica College for creating the website and presenting one of the books. Recognition should also be given to the other presenters: Karen Monique Gregg of The University of Notre Dame, Kathy Miller



of Concordia University (Nebraska), Kathleen Piker-King of Mount Union College, Kathleen McKinney of Illinois State University, Timothy Clark of Southern Illinois University, J.I. Hans Bakker of the University of Guelph, Teresa Elston of University of San Diego, Matthew Lee and Kathy Feltey of University of Akron, Nancy Greenwood of Indiana University – Kokomo.

AGING BEAUTY: RESEARCH SESSION

by Sheila E. Bluhm  
Calvin College



At the joint meeting of the NCSA and MSS there were quite a number of thought provoking research sessions, including multiple sessions

addressing gender-related issues including female body image and aging that were presented at the AGING BEAUTY session. Sheila E. Bluhm, of Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan organized and chaired the session.

In the session, Denise Reiling, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Sociology at Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, Michigan, displayed a traditional Amish dress as part of her presentation on "Aging Old Order Amish Women's Perception Of Body Size And It's Reflection On Their Daughters and Granddaughters." She explained that in an intriguing cultural twist, the body images of middle-aged and older women are important marketing tools for the marriages of their daughters. Because divorce is not allowed in Amish communities, young men tend to look at the mothers of their love interests as predictors of their brides' future appearances. As the pool of available Amish men decreases, competition among females for husbands increases. Older women, not younger ones, are more body conscious, experience more pressure to diet, and are experiencing increasing eating disorders in an attempt to make their daughters more "marketable." Qualitative interviews, participant observation, and a weight-management survey were collected from female



members of one enclave of the Old Order Amish, an ethno-religious group living within rural areas.

Marisol Ybarra, student at Wayne State University reported on "A Qualitative Examination of Latinas' Body Images during Menopause." She found that existing research on middle-aged women focuses on the biological



experiences of menopause, with little research on how women feel about their bodies as they change shape and size during the menopausal transition. She reported that recent research found menopause to be positive in meaning, especially for certain racial-ethnic minorities. Because there is still little research on Latinas' experiences, she conducted three, in-depth, qualitative interviews with Latinas from Southeast Michigan.

Sheila E. Bluhm, Ph.D., concluded the session with her research entitled "The Invisibility of Aging Beauty." A Content Analysis of over 37,000 poses (avatars) was conducted of women's retail clothing shown at forty online stores. The goal was to ascertain the presence (or invisibility) of natural aging in women as represented by gray-haired models. Baby Boomer women currently comprise the largest (and highest average income) consumer segment of the female population. Even though they buy ever-increasing amounts of clothing online and express a desire to see clothing shown on women their own ages, results found that gray-haired women are portrayed as emulative models of beauty in only two-tenths of one percent of all cases. The Gerontological and Social Gerontological perspectives were examined in terms of the significance of gray hair as a social marker and the visible protestation against the combined impact of ageism and sexism. The need for *female-defined* conceptualizations of beauty was also presented.

research. The number of students involved each term has varied; I prefer to work with small URT's, somewhere between 3-6 students. Each URT has included sociology majors and minors as well students from other disciplines, and the students ranged from sophomores to seniors. The variety of students I work with gives the URT different perspectives and viewpoints, promoting and increasing students' critical thinking skills through discussion and teamwork activities.

With regard to specific sociological research skills, students generally join the research team without concrete knowledge of how to use research or data analysis skills. If



they are sociology majors, URT members may have an abstract idea of some concepts, but their understanding of the complexities of sociological research is more theoretical than applied. At the beginning of each semester I list the educational goals I have for the current URT, and then determine how these goals fit into my own research needs. Past goals have included compiling a literature review and setting up our overall research design, while students from last semester's URT ended the semester with:

1. An overall understanding of the process of sociological research;
2. The ability to create and test different hypotheses;
3. Knowledge of how to use SPSS and an understanding of basic statistical concepts such as mean, mode, median, trends, and the concepts of missing data and outliers and their effect on data interpretation;
4. An understanding of the concept of control variables and the difference between interval, categorical, nominal, numerical, and string variables;
5. The ability to manage a data set and to code raw data, recode variables, and create new variables;
6. The ability to create graphs and charts for presentation purposes and to create professional presentations; and
7. A basic understanding of other quanti-

tative research methodologies such as multiple regression, logistic regression, event history analysis and structure equation modeling.

One particularly positive impact of involving students in my research is that students see sociology as a profession, not just as an academic discipline. My students have had their research accepted for presentation at local and regional conferences, where they engaged in professional socialization. The act of creating a research presentation is in itself a valuable skill, and the URT students received valuable feedback from other sociologists on the work they had done and directions for future research (which in turn lead students to want to continue on the research team in future semesters).

The benefits that accrue to students do not come without a cost to the instructor. Although students may receive college credit for independent study, there are generally no financial incentives for professors to organize URT's, and the process is, at the very least, time consuming. Research teams also pose a scheduling nightmare, as it is difficult to find free time for everyone to meet. However, there are benefits that accrue to me as well. The excitement and energy students bring to my research often infuses what has become a tedious project with new life, and students' comments and our discussions leads me in directions I would not otherwise have followed. Best of all, students are actually *doing* sociology, and the "aha" moment when they connect the abstract concept they heard in a classroom with the concrete demonstration of that concept in their analysis makes organizing the URT worthwhile.

*If the student-written text is to go beyond the stories about generals and millionaires and queens and kings, teachers have to help their students, in one way or other, to discover and record the voices of the common men and women who reflect the real life out of which all history is made. This is especially the case in writing about minorities, as well as about women.*

*Jonathon Kozol  
On Being a Teacher (1994)*

## Experiential Learning: Involving Undergraduate Students in Faculty Research

By Carrie Erlin  
University of Notre Dame

As sociologists at teaching centered institutions we often compartmentalize our professional lives into two categories: teaching and research. Generally, there is no "blending" of the two areas, with the result that our undergraduates students rarely have hands-on experience with actual research unless and until they complete a senior project or thesis. While not all students want to be involved in real-life research, many do. To fail to offer sociology students this opportunity strips them of experiences that promote critical thinking, robs them of valuable research skills, and lessens their ability to view sociology as a profession rather than just a discipline.

Over the past several years I have created undergraduate research teams (URT's) each semester to involve students in my own

## Students and Soldiers – Some are Both But All Aren't Happy About it

By Barbara J. Denison  
Shippensburg University

Writing about “the military presence on campus and in the classroom” at the joint NCSA/MSS meetings in Chicago came about for several reasons. First, all of us raised in the era of Vietnam may recognize the allusion to the POW/MIA phrase “All gave Some and Some gave All.” Perhaps it is my destiny to end up doing research on the military as I once was a teaching assistant for Charles Moskos, the Northwestern University sociologist who went to war, consulted to the Pentagon, and wrote about every conflict involving American GIs from Vietnam through Bosnia and the Balkans before recently retiring.



But the real reason I began examining the social environment experienced by members of the military on campus is even more personal. A Shippensburg University student, Nathaniel DeTample, only completed five months of his freshman year in early spring 2005 before being shipped to Iraq with his National Guard Unit where he was killed in August that year. The university did nothing – there was no memorial service, no plaque in Old Main, and no honor. I asked students on campus ever since if they remember Nathaniel DeTample and no one ever has.

Roof (1993) speaks of story-telling as a research method in the *verstehen* tradition. I wanted to tell the story of DeTample. But I also have students in the National Guard and ROTC as well as former military, such as Army Rangers or Navy sailors back from the war. I have current and former officers and enlisted personnel in my graduate classes. All of them have stories to share. I began to frame the issues mentioned by these students in several ways; first within the ideological focus on the war itself. I also examined the economic and social forces these students indicated were at work that directly affected their differing roles as students and soldiers.

This, then, became my way of allowing Nathaniel's story to be told.

Student soldiers and veterans report experiencing a level of inattention on campus to their military service and the consequent consideration of their status. Much is being written in military-focused literature right now about the levels of support or lack thereof veterans are receiving back from the war and on campuses. Student veterans relate how faculty who were once protestors comprise a “small cadre of professional students who have been at the university since the time of the Vietnam War” and who act as ideologues promoting protest and unrest among current students (Heller, 2006). Unlike their Vietnam counterparts veterans on campus report being welcomed and accepted back home and on campuses (Sheehy, 2006), however some report being accused of loving war (*The Daily Bruin*). In response these student veterans report perceiving themselves as “more patriotic” for their willingness to join and make sacrifices, including the ultimate sacrifice if necessary. “I told them nobody loves war . . . [T]hey join to make sacrifices for their country” (Heller, 2006).

Economic and other structural problems exist. The GI Bill increased only 15% in the last five years, falling behind the pace of escalating tuition costs. Most college veterans' offices and policies are outdated since the last large group of student veterans enrolled three decades ago. Student financial offices have closed or been destaffed since the hey-day of the GI Bill forty years ago and vets report being removed from their courses when their GI funding is delayed in processing.

Campuses are more often than not the scene of anti-war activity and anti-military sentiment when, in fact, any attention is paid at all. Recruiters are harassed and even driven from campuses under security escort, as at the University of California-Santa Cruz last spring. Proposed war monuments on campuses honoring the dead and the heroes of this and previous conflict, such as the controversial memorial to WWII Medal of Honor winner Gregory “Pappy” Boyington at the University of Washington (Keating, 2006) are victims of student demonstration and rejection. Much of the campus sentiment however, is more apathy than protest.

This paper is my starting place for research expanding on how labels of student, veteran and soldier within the campus context interact to create tension, protests, harassment, and integration at varying levels of social structure. I want to look at the possible relationship between low levels of public tuition funding and military enlistment. I plan interviews with armed forces members and

veterans on campus about their experiences. I want to collect the stories of those students who have been and will go off to war to and examine how their education connects to their experiences. I want to embrace their narratives so they can be told to future students. Most importantly, I do not want another one of our own to die with no one to remember his or her story.

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## NCSA 2007 Annual Meeting



## An Editor's View of the *Sociological Focus* Publication Process

By Steve Carlton Ford

*Sociological Focus* wants high quality work—whether qualitative, quantitative, or conceptual—that will appeal to a broad range of sociologists. *SF* welcomes research from all theoretical perspectives. We also wish to publish integrative syntheses that further specific theoretical or substantive areas within sociology.

### SUBMITTING YOUR MANUSCRIPT

- 1) Look over recent issues of the journal to make sure that your manuscript falls within our interest areas. Also, make sure your manuscript conforms to generally accepted disciplinary standards for theory and methodology and is clearly written and laid out appropriately. We return manuscripts, without sending them out for review, if they do not meet basic standards;
- 2) Keep your manuscript within the journal's page limits. As with most journals, we have a maximum number of pages we may print per issue;
- 3) If you submit your manuscript to *Sociological Focus* you are committing the manuscript solely to us for the duration of the review process. Simultaneous submission of a manuscript to two or more outlets violates accepted academic standards;
- 4) Format your manuscript (especially the references) according to *SF's* style manual—prior to submitting it. This signals that you are serious about publishing with us;
- 5) Suggest a few individuals who could provide unbiased reviews of your manuscript. Indicate individuals who might not provide a fair review. We will consider your suggestions, but are not bound by them;
- 6) Follow all of the journal's submission criteria. *SF* will not send a manuscript out for review until you send us paper copies, an electronic copy, and the submission fee.

### THE REVIEW PROCESS

Reviewers provide their expertise for free, recommending whether the journal should:

- a) publish a manuscript as is;
- b) request a

revision and resubmission (R&R); or c) reject it. Reviewers provide useful feedback to authors primarily when suggesting a revision and resubmission.

- 1) We read each manuscript, compile a list of potential reviewers, and then contact people on the list, requesting they review the manuscript. Once a reviewer accepts the task, we specify a time frame for returning the review, and stay in contact, urging the reviewer to stick to the schedule;
- 2) Typically, we solicit three reviews of a manuscript. If we obtain only two reviews and they reach different conclusions, we may prolong the review period in order to obtain a third review;
- 3) We consider the reviews, along with our evaluation of the manuscript, and make a decision. When reviews agree, the decision is usually straightforward. When the reviews are mixed or provide contradictory advice, the editor decides;
- 4) We rarely accept a manuscript without any revision; the best outcome is almost always a "Revise & Resubmit."

### IF YOU RECEIVE AN R&R: RESPONDING TO REVIEWER'S COMMENTS

If you receive an R&R, we send you copies of the reviewer's comments, along with a letter from the editor that provides direction about the revision process.

- 1) Often the reviews present a consistent analysis of the changes necessary to improve the manuscript. The revision must address the identified issues and make appropriate changes.
- 2) Sometimes, however, the set of reviews will provide contradictory advice about what changes are necessary. The editors will typically provide an overview of the reviews, attempt to identify situations where they provide divergent advice, and suggest a reasonable course of action;
- 3) Reviewers locate problems and often propose excellent solutions to those problems. These suggested solutions do not, however, always seem to "work." You may need to find alternative solutions that the reviewers did not identify. Regardless, the letter accompanying your revised and resubmitted manuscript must describe in some detail how you responded to each of the suggestions made by the reviewers;



Sociological Focus Editor Steve Carlton-Ford (left) with Marty Jendreck, NCSA Membership Co-chair

- 4) When we receive your revised manuscript, we typically obtain re-evaluations from the original reviewers. So, you must address their concerns.

### PUBLICATION

Once we have obtained the second round of reviews of a manuscript, we decide whether it still has problems and should be rejected, needs some additional revisions, or is ready for publication.

- 1) Once we accept a manuscript, our assistant editor works to ensure the overall clarity and coherence of its argument, as well as consistency in punctuation, grammar, diction, and style. If the changes are not straightforward, the assistant editor may contact the author for clarification;
- 2) We send the edited electronic version of your manuscript to the publisher. A proof-reader then corrects any remaining deviations from the journal's style;
- 3) The manuscript goes to a production assistant who formats it for publication; proofs are examined by the assistant editor. Once the proofs are corrected, the manuscript is printed as part of a journal issue.

### CLOSING COMMENTS

- 1) Please take an offer of an R&R seriously. We want to publish the best work we can; we want to bring out the best in your work;
- 2) Take extra time before submitting or resubmitting your manuscript; the better it is—conceptually, methodologically, stylistically, and mechanically—the more likely we will publish it;
- 3) You have good ideas, do good research, and write well. Send *SF* your best work.

## CONSIDER JOINING A NCSA COMMITTEE

The committees listed below are looking for new members. Contact the Chair for more information

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## FACES FROM THE ANNUAL MEETING



## COMMENTS?

Got an idea for newsletter items?



Contact the NCSA newsletter Editor Susan Alexander or Assistant Editor Amanda Shropshire

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## CALL FOR ORGANIZERS

2008  
 NORTH CENTRAL  
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THEME: *"Common Situations: Complex Realities"*

**March 27-29, 2008**  
 Hilton Netherland Hotel  
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If you are interested in organizing a session, send your proposal to the appropriate person listed above. Include the name of the panel, your name, institutional affiliation, mailing address, email, and telephone number.

Proposal must be received by **August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2007**

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