

THE NORTH CENTRAL SOCIOLOGIST

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2106 NCSA Presidential Address

“The Sociology of Inequality: Race, Space, and Place in Detroit” by Brendan Mullan, Michigan State University

In his 2015-16 NCSA presidential address, Dr. Brendan Mullan explored how sociologists’ conventional approaches to understanding inequality and poverty do not adequately capture the causes, content, and consequences of new forms of inequality that have emerged in the very late twentieth and very early twenty-first centuries. Following a critique of conventional sociological theorizing on inequality and stratification, a synthesis of new sociological/social psychological thinking on inequality, and an analysis of case study data from Detroit, Professor Mullan sought to coin a new term – “neo-inequality” – to theorize how neoliberal ideology, neo-liberal systems of governance, and neoliberal policies have exacerbated new forms of inequality.

From President Barack Obama down, there is agreement that inequality has become the “defining issue of our time” and we now live in an age of inequality that merits the same scholarship and research as did Eric Hobsbawm’s path breaking analysis of the sequential ages of “Revolution,” “Capital,” “Empire,” and “Extremes.” Following a visually visceral presentation of inequality in contemporary Detroit, and acknowledging his debt to contemporary scholars of inequality (especially to David Grusky and his colleagues at the Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality and to Douglas Massey, this year’s NCSA keynote plenary speaker) Mullan outlined the five major themes of his presidential presentation: despite some what economists claim, there is no such thing as “good inequality;” traditional sociological theories, while adequate mod-

els of the inequality that existed between 1945 and the early twenty-first century, do not adequately explain today’s inequality; new theorizing is needed to explore, describe, and explain contemporary “neo-inequality;” the Michigan cities of Detroit and Flint exemplify the ideological, governance, and policy implementation and consequences of “neo-inequality;” and policy responses to “neo-inequality” have so far been inadequate.

Sociologists have successfully monitored and measured trends in income inequality, segregation, occupational inequality, and gender inequality. This scrutiny has helped resolve debates surrounding the degree of discrimination, the centrality of social class, and the critical importance of understanding segregation and social mobility. Notably, sociologists failed to predict the “take-off” in income equality of the early 21st century, have been surprised by the resilience of segregation, did not foresee the very rapid recent acceptance of LGBT rights, have been shocked by very recent increases in white, working-class, middle-age mortality, and have not systematically included today’s increased politicization and political ideology in their explanations of inequality.

All in all it is hardly surprising that sociologists are not central contributors to the policy debates and the policy agenda surrounding the inordinate rise of contemporary inequality. Citing Orlando Patterson’s critiques that when President Obama initiated “My Brother’s Keeper” to understand and relieve the pressing crises experienced by black youth, sociologists were not part of the initiative and that in this age of inequality, sociologists have “become distant spectators rather than shapers of policy,” Mullan traced through how we mostly continue to define stratification and inequality as the allocation of people to social classes and roles on the basis of the distribution of assets and rewards.



Brendan Mullen and Douglas Massey, NCSA/MSS 2016

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Summary of the 2016 Presidential Address, Cont.

The Structuralist, Culturalist, and Post-modernist theoretical frameworks of the second half of the twentieth century are no longer adequate conceptualizations of today's inequality. New malevolent, deliberately designed forms of inequality have replaced the "benign," class-classified inequality that characterized the second half of the twentieth century.

As David Grusky accurately summarizes, "labor market institutions are riddled with inequality-creating corruption, bottlenecks, and sweetheart deals." Inequality has been commodified. Inequality is now rooted in one's ability to navigate new market mechanisms and pay for services, products, amenities, skills, and facilities only on the basis of price. Residential segregation and racial discrimination in labor markets are extreme; occupations are hyper-segregated by gender; global offshoring and outsourcing (now recast as the "Gig economy") have hollowed out traditional middle class occupations; African-Americans are harassed, slighted, over-incarcerated, and insulted in public; working-class, middle-class, and upper-class families live and raise their children in profoundly different ways; massive disparities in health access and service provision persist.

To explain how we got here Mullan draws upon the stereotype content model developed by Susan Fiske and applied to inequality by Douglas Massey. Stratification is rooted in our psychological creation of cognitive boundaries within which we classify people on achieved and/or ascribed characteristics. Individuals are classified into in-groups and out-groups and unequal access to human, social, financial, and cultural capital is generated through the establishment of institutional structures that enable exploitation and opportunity hoarding. In the latter years of the twentieth century, new institutional structures and a new stratification process has been driven by the ideology, governance structure, and policies and practices that constitute neoliberalism.

A power elite of corporate executives, lobbyists, commentators, public intellectuals, journalists, bureaucrats, and politicians have legitimized neoliberalism as creating an ideal consumer-oriented, free-market, individualist society. This legitimation has successfully framed a highly desired, individualized, new set of hierarchical roles within conventional human cognition. Governance bureaucracies and administrations have been reinvented into entrepreneurial, competitive, decentralized, metric-driven, outcomes-oriented, small localized units that have normalized 'rational choice' market oriented behavior. New institutions and policies have been successfully defined within our socio-economic, socio-occupational, and general social structures.

These institutions prioritize the primacy of individual accomplishment, downsizing government, economic deregulation, free trade, tax cuts, privatization, and the reduction of social services and



welfare programs. Neoliberalism has been reified, promulgated, and endorsed as a vehicle for social transformation that has generated neo-inequality through the creation of new in-groups and out-groups cognitively clustered

through the stereotype content model.

Mullan traces this social transformation back to the 1971 US Supreme Court associate justice Lewis Powell's memo to the US Chamber of Commerce road-mapping the defense of free-enterprise capitalism against the apparent strengthening of socialism, communism, and fascism in the United States. In the ensuing three decades a newly strengthened and revitalized corporate/political elite emerged resurgent over a weakened and fractured liberal/labor alliance. By the end of the twentieth and into the twenty-first century the elite successfully legislated the demise of many existing social democratic ideologies (e.g. the 1994 crime bill, the 1996 welfare reforms and defense of marriage act, the repeal of Glass-Steagall). Neoliberalism and the accompanying neo-inequality were in the ascendant and nowhere was neo-inequality more evident and devastating than in the city of Detroit.

Mullan explicated: 1) neo-inequality and race in Detroit using public schools, incarceration, and access to public water and electric utilities exemplars (with mention of the ongoing Flint, Michigan lead-contaminated water crisis which erupted under the watch of a legislatively mandated emergency manager); 2) neo-inequality and space in Detroit through the housing/mortgage/debt crisis; and 3) neo-inequality and place in Detroit through the development priority given by private foundations and local business elites (an unelected oligarchy) to regenerate a 7.2 square mile area (especially the 1 square mile central downtown business district) at the expense of the remaining 130+ square miles of Detroit city.

The 2016 NCSA presidential address concluded with a discussion of possible policy options to counter neo-inequality: including new tax policies (closing the "carried interest" loophole and expanding the earned income tax credit), continuing the current trend in increasing the minimum wage, promoting the creation and legislating of a Universal Basic Income policy, reforming housing policies through wider application of housing vouchers, public housing development, eradicating exclusionary zones, HUD enforcement, school reform, and mortgage reform.



Dr. Douglas S. Massey's "Segregation and Stratification"

Dr. Douglas S. Massey delivered the 2016 Ruth and John Useem Plenary Address in Chicago. Here, he highlights the key elements of the address, including his current work on the long awaited and highly anticipated update to American Apartheid.

The 2016 Ruth and John Useem Plenary Address

Before the civil rights era most white Americans were principled racists. In surveys taken during the early 1960s, 68% of whites agreed that blacks should go to separate schools and 60% said that they had a right to keep blacks out of their neighborhoods. Racial attitudes shifted during the Civil Rights Era, however, and by the 1980s only 4% of whites said that blacks should go to separate schools and just 13% said they had a right to exclude blacks from their neighborhoods. Although whites may have abandoned segregation in principle, however, they remained averse to interacting with many blacks in practice, leading us into a new era of aversive racism. In this era, metropolitan areas with small black populations have substantially desegregated whereas those with large black populations have not.

The Tucson metropolitan area, for example, is currently 4% black, meaning that under conditions of complete integration every neighborhood would be 4% black. This percentage is within the tolerance limits of most whites, and black-white dissimilarity in Tucson consequently dropped from 64 in 1970 to 34 in 2010. Milwaukee, meanwhile, is 17% black, meaning that complete integration would yield neighborhoods that were 17% black, which is well beyond white tolerance limits. As a result, black-white segregation has remained very high in Milwaukee, with a dissimilarity index of around 80 in 2010. In Tucson, whites can live up to the principle of integration and still not have to live with many black people, something that is not possible in Milwaukee and other metropolitan areas with a high percentage of African Americans.

As a result, the nation's largest urban black communities continue to be racially segregated and a majority of black metropolitan residents still live under conditions of high segregation (a dissimilarity index above 60) and a third live under conditions of hypersegregation (high levels of segregation on multiple geographic dimensions). Although Hispanic segregation historically has been moderate (dissimilarity values between 30 and 60),

the rapid growth of the Latino population through mass immigration (much of it illegal) has produced rising levels of segregation and spatial isolation that, on average, are approaching those of blacks. By 2000, six metropolitan areas had emerged as hyper-segregated for Hispanics and around a quarter of metropolitan Latinos now live under conditions of high segregation.

Residential segregation not simply a holdover from the past, but is being *actively* produced across U.S. metropolitan areas today. In addition to larger shares of blacks and Hispanics, higher levels of segregation are associated with greater anti-black and anti-Latino sentiment, more restrictive density zoning in suburbs, lower levels of black and Latino socioeconomic status, older and less educated white populations, an older housing stock, and a lower presence of military personnel (the military is the most successfully integrated institution in the United States).

Persistent segregation and high rates of minority poverty combine to concentrate poverty and its deleterious sequela within black and Hispanic neighborhoods, producing uniquely disadvantaged environments that systematically undermine minority welfare across multiple dimensions, including cognition, education, health, employment, earnings, and wealth. For this reason segregation has been called the linchpin of racial-ethnic stratification by Thomas Pettigrew. Indeed, whereas in the 1960s Otis Dudley Duncan found that poverty was inherited across generations on the basis of race, the recent work of Patrick Sharkey indicates that increasingly it is inherited on the basis of place. Being born into and growing up in a poor, segregated neighborhood dramatically lowers the life chances for millions of blacks and Hispanics today.

Recent work I have done in collaboration with a variety of colleagues has sought to confirm and explicate the ecological mechanisms by which minority socioeconomic disadvantage is transmitted and reproduced.

2016 Ruth and John Useem Plenary Address, Cont.

A quasi-experimental study done in Mount Laurel, NJ, for example, demonstrated that moving from a segregated high poverty city neighborhood to affordable housing units in an affluent white suburban neighborhood dramatically reduced the exposure of adults to violence and disorder while increasing their mental health, employment rates, and earnings. The move also increased parental involvement in education and produced greater study effort among children as well as a sharp increase in the quality of schooling with no decline in grades.

In a series of studies, my colleagues and I have demonstrated how racial segregation led to the extraction of wealth from black neighborhoods during the housing boom and bust. Indeed, the level of black-white segregation is the strongest single predictor of the number and rate of home foreclosures across metropolitan areas. During the 1990s and 2000s, we proved that segregated black homeowners in black neighborhoods were deliberately targeted for predatory lending practices which channeled them into high cost, high risk loans. This discriminatory treatment not only increased their out-of-pocket costs in the short run, but significantly increased their exposure to foreclosure, repossession, and loss of home equity in the long run to bring about the serial displacement of capital from urban black communities.

Finally, a recently completed study demonstrates how segregation gets “under the skin” to compromise health and well-being through biosocial mechanisms. Specifically, Brandon Wagner and I show that the disadvantaged neighborhoods experienced by black Americans because of segregation produced significantly shorter telomeres, which are chromatids located at the end of chromosomes that protect cells during the process of division and replication. As people grow older, telomeres are naturally worn down and shortened to increase the risk of degenerative disease; but this process of chromosomal aging can be accelerated by stress. We found that exposure to high levels of neighborhood disadvantage generated significantly shorter telomeres among young black women surveyed in the Fragile Families Study, disproportionately laying the biological foundations for compromised health in later life.

I am currently at work with graduate student Jonathan Tannen on a new book that will update my earlier book *American Apartheid*, which I published in 1993 with Nancy Denton. In that book, we sought to redirect the ongoing “underclass debate” by demonstrating the central role played by racial segregation in the production and reproduction of black socioeconomic disadvantage. The new book will draw on research I and others have done since the 1990s to describe trends in segregation through 2010 and explain how residential segregation continues to function as the linchpin of racial stratification in the United States,

even in the Age of Obama.

Selected References

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Massey, Douglas S., Len Albright, Justin P. Steil, and Jacob S. Rugh. 2016. “Riding the Stagecoach to Hell: A Qualitative Analysis of Racial Discrimination in Mortgage Lending.” *City and Community*, forthcoming.

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Massey, Douglas S., Brandon Wagner, Louis Donnelly, Sara McLanahan, Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, Irwin Garfinkel, Colter Mitchell, and Daniel A. Notterman. 2016. “Neighborhood Disadvantage and Telomere Length: Results from the Fragile Families Study.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, March 31-April 2, Washington, DC.

Rugh, Jacob S., and Douglas S. Massey. 2014. “Segregation in Post-Civil Rights America: Stalled Integration or End of the Segregated Century?” *The DuBois Review: Social Science Research on Race* 11(2): 202-232.

Rugh, Jacob S., Len Albright, and Douglas S. Massey. 2015. “Race, Space, and Cumulative Disadvantage: A Case Study of the Subprime Lending Collapse.” *Social Problems* 62:186-218.



Conference Attendees at the NCSA Plenary Address

2016 NCSA Student Award Winners

Seidler Graduate Paper Awards

1st Place

William McConnell (Indiana University) "Cultural Guides, Cultural Critics: Distrust of Doctors and Social Support during Mental Health Treatment."

Advisor: Brea Perry

2nd Place

Landon Schnabel (Indiana University) "The Gender Pay Gap: Wage Labor and the Religiosity of High Earning Woman and Men."

Advisor: Brian Powell

3rd Place

Orla Stapleton (Indiana University) "From Myths to Means: Place and Organizational Processes in the Gowanus Canal Superfund, New York."

Advisor: Brian Powell

President's Undergraduate Paper Awards

1st Place

Christa Hegenauer (Central Michigan University) "Are We Covered?: Health Insurance Disparities in the Affordable Health Care Act Era."

Advisor: Elbert Almazan

2nd Place

Katie Woods (Saint Mary's College) "Printed in Black and White: The New York Times' Construction of Black Men and White Police Officers during Escalated Encounters. "

Advisor: Susan Alexander

3rd Place

Clay Driscoll (University of Cincinnati, Blue Ash) "Race, Violence and Policing: Frames Regarding Police Practice in Reality Television."

Advisor: Todd Callais



2016 NCSA Award Winners

Scholarly Achievement Award (Book):

Akiko Hashimoto (University of Pittsburgh). 2015. *The Long Defeat: Cultural Trauma, Memory, and Identity in Japan*. Oxford University Press.

Scholarly Achievement (Article):

Josh Woods (West Virginia University), Jason Manning (West Virginia University) and Jacob Matz (West Virginia University) for their article "The Impression Management Tactics of an Immigrant Think Tank," published in *Sociological Focus*, vol 48, no 4 (2015): 354-372.

John F. Schnabel Distinguished Contributions to Teaching Award:

Fayyaz Hussain (Michigan State University)

J. Milton Yinger Lifetime Achievement Award:

Thomas Calhoun (Jackson State University)

Aida Tomeh Distinguished Service Award:

Annulla Linders (University of Cincinnati) &
Steve Carlton-Ford (University of Cincinnati)





The 2017 Annual Meeting Will Be Held in Indianapolis March 31st—April 1st

2017 NCSA Conference

The 2017 NCSA conference will be held in Indianapolis from March 31st through April 1st. The official conference hotel is the Crowne Plaza at the Historic Union Station, located at 123 West Louisiana Street. Room styles range from train car period decor to upscale rooms featuring modern amenities, with a location in downtown Indianapolis just adjacent to Lucas Oil Stadium and the Indianapolis Convention Center.

Do You Have An Idea for a Unique Conference Session?

The theme of the conference, “Peace in a Time of Polarization,” will implore us to examine how it is that we can be at peace and work toward peace when the world seems so divided. NCSA is committed to a diverse, creative, and innovative program related to the theme. Do you have an idea for a workshop? A conversation? A session? A screening? An event? An experience? We want to hear from you! If you would like feedback or to brainstorm an idea before submitting it, please contact Melinda Messineo at mmessineo@bsu.edu. We are looking forward to a transformative conference experience! Join us!

SAVE THE DATE for the Mid-Career Preconference Retreat

Did you recently receive tenure and wonder...now what? Are you wanting to revise elements of your classes and would like some structure and motivation to get you started? Would you like to connect with faculty to share ideas and insights about the next phase of your academic career? Join us for the NCSA Preconference Retreat – Friday March 31st – 12– 5pm.

Graduate Student/Early Career Professional Development Conference

This year, in partnership with Indiana University and Ball State University, NCSA presents in the Future Faculty (FF) or Professional Development (PD) Certificate Programs within conference experience. Participants who sign up in advance are also eligible for mentoring feedback on resumes, cover letters, and teaching statements. Look for more information in the Fall newsletter!

Important Dates

August 10, 2016

Online submission form opens

September 1, 2016

Online conference registration opens/hotel reservation line opens

December, 2016

Proposal information due to program organizers

Early January, 2017

Undergraduate paper submissions due

Late January, 2017

Notification of acceptance into conference program sent to primary author

March 1, 2017

Hotel registration line closes

March 20, 2017

Online conference pre-registration closes

March 30, 2017

Pre-conference workshops held

March 31, 2017

NCSA conference begins



From the Desk of the New NCSA President...



It is my honor to serve as president of the North Central Sociological Association (NCSA). I think my first NCSA meeting was in 1996. We were in Cincinnati and my daughter was less than 3 months old. The next year I brought her with me to Indianapolis where I remember pushing her around the hotel hallways in her stroller, trying to get her to sleep at 2:00 in the morning.

Sociology and sociologist are uniquely qualified to look at both the impact of polarization and peace. I hope you will join me as we continue to explore the sociological connections between these ideas. My wish is that our discussion will lead to less polarization and more peace! I am looking forward to seeing you March 31 and April 1, 2017, in Indianapolis.

~Deb Swanson, NCSA President

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Afzaal, Ahmed. 2012. "The Violence Triangle."

Bobichand, R. 2012. "Understanding Violence Triangle and Structural Violence." Imphal Free Press. Available at: <http://kanglaonline.com/2012/07/understanding-violence-triangle-and-structural-violence-by-rajkumar-bobichand/>

Blankenhorn, D. 2015. Why polarization matters. The American Interest. Available at: <http://americanvalues.org/catalog/pdfs/why-polarization-matters-the-american-interest.pdf>

Castells, Manuel. 2013. "Interpersonal and Structural Violence."

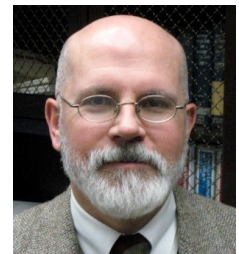
The theme for the 2017 NCSA meetings is ***Peace in a Time of Polarization***. While the theme was suggested to me by my colleague and friend, Pam Koch -- and it seemed especially timely given our polarized political climate this campaign cycle -- it is inspired by my now 20 year-old activist daughter and her commitment to peace and social justice.

Polarization means more than politicians behaving badly or strong disagreement. Instead David Blankenhorn (2015), of the Institute for American Values, defines polarization as "an intense commitment to a candidate, culture or ideology" that divides people into rival groups. A 2014 Pew Report found that Americans are experiencing more "affective polarization" -- emotionally, charged negative feelings about those in the other political camp. These polarizing negative feelings have become so intense that they are changing where we choose to live and who we choose to be in relation with! And polarization thwarts empathy.

I might argue that peace is the opposite of violence. Research in the 1960's by John Galtung looked at ways to classify violence. Personal violence is the most obvious -- rape, murder and war -- because the perpetrators are other people. But, structural violence is less visible and is often overlooked because it is systemic and ordinary. Apartheid is an obvious example of structural violence.

"To identify structural violence, it is imperative to focus on consequences rather than intentions" (Afzaal, 2012). Structural violence, unlike personal violence, is not the direct action of a particular person, but the systematic unequal distribution of resources (Bobichand, 2012). It treats violence not as individual or moral failings, but as a policy matter (Castells, 2013). (Thanks to my friend Kathy Rowell for sharing this model with me.)

2017 Ruth and John Useem Plenary Address



Bruce Keith, PhD

Director of Academic Engagement and Global Partnerships, Professor of Sociology, U.S. Military Academy, West Point

Bruce Keith is Professor of Sociology in the Department of Systems Engineering and Director of Academic Enrichment and Global Partnerships in the Center for Nation Reconstruction and Capacity Development at the United States Military Academy. His primary focus is on the design and implementation of developmental models capable of building sustainable capacity in individuals, organizations, and countries.

NCSA Welcomes

The NCSA is honored to welcome new council and committee members:

- ✕ President Elect: Annulla Linders, University of Cincinnati
- ✕ Vice President Elect: Rachel Stein, West Virginia University
- ✕ Treasurer: Lisa Hickman, Grand Valley State University
- ✕ Council at Large: Monique Gregg, University of St. Francis
- ✕ Publications Policy Co-Chair: Robyn White, Cuyahoga Community College
- ✕ Publications Policy Co-Chair: Kent Schwirian, Ohio State University

If you are interested in becoming more involved in NCSA and serving as an elected or appointed committee member, please contact the Past President and Nominations Chair, Brendan Mullan, at mullan@msu.edu

Contact Us

Visit us on **Facebook** or our website at ncsanet.org for conference information.

If you have items you would like sent to the distribution list, posted to Facebook, or included in any upcoming correspondence, please send materials to:

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