

Annual Report of the ASA Section on Economic Sociology

Submitted by Mark S. Mizruchi, Section Chair, 2008-2009

November 6, 2008

The Council of the Economic Sociology section met on Friday, August 1, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. in the Boston Back Bay Hilton. Present at the meeting were:

Lisa Keister (current president)
Mark Mizruchi (incoming president)
Mary Blair- Loy (council)
Ezra Zuckerman (council)
Kieran Healy (council)
Frank Dobbin (president elect)
Damon Phillips (council member)
Marc Schneiberg (secretary treasurer)

As the meeting began, we discussed and clarified the prizes and student council membership. The general faculty book and article prizes alternate each year. The winner of the student prize serves on council for two years, with overlapping terms. This was decided last year.

President Keister then presented on the *state of the section*. We have 750 members. This represented a slight decline from last year, after a continued prior increase. With 50 more members we get another session, and student members are included in the count. Student members pay only \$5, so we were each urged to try to enroll students prior to September 30th, when the census is taken.

Budget: We currently have \$5,500 in the budget, which is made of up a \$2,552 allocation from ASA based on membership and a carryover of \$2,948 from previous years. We will spend about \$1,500 on the reception, and will receive another \$2,500 (approximately) in the next allocation, which will leave us with about \$6,500 in next year's budget. Having the reception offsite was a big money saver.

There was a brief discussion of what to do with the surplus, with the option (suggested by Mary Blair-Loy) of putting some money into a student prize of \$200 receiving support. But the general consensus was that we should wait and see what expenses we have with the reception next year, and retain the surplus for another year.

We then discussed ideas for next year's sessions. We have four sessions in 2009. One of these will be co-sponsored with the Gender and Sexuality section (the second year of our two-year agreement with them). Because they were charged with the session this year, we will have to take the charge against our allocation for next year.

There was then a discussion of whether we relied on invited sessions too heavily this year. Mark Mizruchi mentioned that he had received some complaints, and that we had to consider the potential legitimacy problems associated with closed sessions. He

recommended that all of our sessions for 2009 be open-submission. Mary Blair-Loy requested a breakdown of section sessions this year. They were as follows: gender and economic sociology (open), sociology of credit (open), networks and institutions (invited), economic sociology in Boston (invited), and law firms (invited). Ezra Zuckerman noted that Alya Guseva handled the regular economic sociology sessions and received a heavy load of papers. Mark Mizruchi noted that he had already received two proposals for sessions for next year. Mary Blair-Loy and Lisa Keister suggested that we have one invited session and that perhaps we should solicit proposals for panels. She also noted that we tried to help location partly determine our panel organization, with Boston lending itself to something more international.

Ideas for sessions next year included panels on history, immigration or ethnic enclaves, technology, and transition economies (which we have not seen for a while). Mary Blair-Loy expressed concerns about moving away from the core areas of markets and organizations. Frank Dobbin raised the possibility of our moving the council meeting to breakfast and adding a one-hour author meets critic session to our business meeting, an idea that would add a session to our roster and which received general support. It was noted that the OOW sometimes does this. Ezra Zuckerman also noted that we did not have roundtables this year.

Lisa Keister then discussed the reception. She first expressed thanks to Frank Dobbin and Ezra Zuckerman for organizing this year's reception. She noted that the ASA program has information about location of the offsite reception, although the online version simply says off site. Marc Schneiberg noted that ASA needs to know by March 15 if and where an off-site reception is going to be held.

Ezra and Frank provided some tips on how to handle next year's reception if we choose to have it off-site. First, we should have a local person organize it. Heather Haveman and Neil Fligstein were suggested. It is also necessary to shop around because prices vary greatly; one in Boston wanted \$9,000. The one we ultimately settled on costed \$1,500, including food, tax, room, and gratuity (and a cash bar). The bar (Lir) was told to expect 100 people, although 200 generally show.

Lisa then discussed committees. She introduced the new members on council, and thanked the award committee chairs and members for doing good work. She mentioned that we need three committee chairs: For the Zelizer Award (Marc Schneiberg agreed to chair it). This award next year will be for the best paper published in the previous two years. Damon Phillips agreed to chair the Burt Award for best graduate student paper. Mark suggested that Nina Bandelj (not present) chair the nominations committee.

Lisa raised two additional pieces of business: We've had an inquiry about whether the section might take a political stand. Marc noted that ASA Council takes up such issues. We agreed that the ASA Council, not our section, was the proper forum for such issues. Lisa and Mark agreed to continue to forward job announcements to the section with the subject tag in all caps to make filtering easy for those who'd rather not see them.

Final matters: Damon raised the question of whether we have a policy about notes for those who pass away. According to Lisa, we have handled this in an informal ad hoc way. She was not aware of any precedent. Mary wanted to bring to our attention a special issue of *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* she and colleagues at UCSD edited, on *Cultural Sociology and its Diversity*. There is online access.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

Minutes, Economic Sociology Business Meeting

Friday, August 1, 2008; Convened: 11:30 a.m.

Council members present: Lisa Keister, Frank Dobbin, Mark Mizruchi, Marc Schneiberg, Kieran Healy, Ezra Zuckerman, and Damon Phillips

Lisa Keister presided. She introduced new council members, Nina Bandelj, Robert Freeland, and Damon Phillips. She also thanked Mary Blair-Loy and Ezra Zuckerman for chairing the nominations committee, and section members Mauro Guillen and Monica Prasad.

Thanks were also extended to the following people: Marion Fourcade for chairing the Zelizer committee, and to the other committee members, Leslie Salzinger and Josh Whitford; Kieran Healy for chairing the Burt award committee, and to committee members Jason Owen Smith and Feliz Garip; and the newsletter editors at Duke: Ryan Denniston, Lane Destro, Nathan Martin, and Lijun Song. The newsletter will be moving to Michigan for 2008-2009.

Leslie Salzinger presented the Zelizer award. She noted that ten books were nominated, and noted that the quality of these books made it extremely difficult to identify a winner. As a result, the committee selected one book as a winner and two others as honorable mentions. The winner was Donald MacKenzie, for his book *An Engine, Not a Camera: How Financial Models Shape Markets*. Professor MacKenzie was not in attendance. First honorable mention went to Kieran Healy, for *Last Best Gift: Altruism and the Market for Human Blood and Organs*. Second honorable mention went to Bruce Western, for *Punishment and Inequality in America*. Professor Western was also not in attendance.

Kieran Healy presented the Burt Award for best student paper. The winner was Daniel Lainer-Vos, Columbia University, for his paper "Manufacturing National Bonds: Gift Giving, Market Exchange and the Construction of Transatlantic National Networks."

Mark Mizruchi then made two announcements: The section reception will be at the Lir, 903 Boylston, at 6:30. We will consider doing it offsite again next year. Mark also noted

that *Administrative Science Quarterly* is a journal of interest to section members. It is a flagship journal in the field of organizations. Although the journal publishes a considerable amount of sociological work, Mark noted that there has tended to be an absence of work in the field of economic sociology. New editor Hayagreeva (Huggy) Rao, and associate editor Jerry Davis, have encouraged economic sociologists to contribute. Ezra Zuckerman asked whether the journal will actually publish work that is not explicitly “organizational.” Mark responded that the journal defines organizations broadly enough to encompass much of what we in economic sociology do.

Lisa reported on the state of the section. She noted that we are in excellent shape, with 750 members. She urged those in attendance to invite others to join, so that we could get our membership to 800, which would give us another session. She pointed out that we are also in excellent financial shape. We have \$5,500 in the budget, including \$2,500 from ASA, and \$3,000 carried over. The offsite reception cost approximately \$1,500. Lisa thanked Ezra and Frank for organizing the reception.

Bruce Carruthers, a former section chair, noted that we’ve had a carryover surplus for some time. It is great to have money, he suggested, but better to spend it. Lisa noted that we are considering some money for a student prize, but that we’ve decided to wait and see how our finances hold up. She asked audience for ideas for how to spend the funds. One idea was to fly in a distinguished person to speak at a session, to hold an essay contest, or to hold a one-day pre-ASA mini conference, an idea that generated considerable interest.

Mark (the incoming chair) then asked those in attendance to give Lisa (the outgoing chair) a hand for the great job she did.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Head count at business meeting

Twenty-seven people were in attendance.