

CONTEMPORARY SOCIOLOGY PROPOSAL FOR EDITORSHIP

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Vision for the Journal

I love books: my favorite place at the annual meetings of the ASA is the book exhibit and I often spend hours perusing new books each year. For the rest of the year, getting the new issue of *Contemporary Sociology* captures the same excitement of reading about some of the most recent and cutting-edge research in sociology. Each issue of *Contemporary Sociology* transports me to the book exhibit at the ASA. I am an avid reader of the journal and if selected I will continue in the rich tradition of producing high-quality reviews in a timely fashion. I truly enjoy the journal and it is important for me to preserve and sustain its high caliber work. My vision for the journal also includes some strategies to publicize the high-quality work and celebrating diversity.

First, I propose starting a podcast project. Book reviews are instrumental in creating a conversation around the newest research in our field. The select podcasts with authors give the authors a chance to explain and respond to reviews and walk other researchers through the process of sociological research. Giving the authors a chance to talk about the process of writing a book including data collection, analysis and writing will be a valuable resource for both graduate students and more established scholars in our field. When I served as the Book Review Editor of *Gender & Society*, I introduced a podcast project which was very successful. These podcasts shed light onto the craft of sociology and helped many scholars publicize their work. In addition to the podcasts, I propose creating a stronger social media presence for the journal to popularize some of the high caliber work. Book reviews are instrumental in doing public sociology: with stronger social media presence, high quality sociological findings can be connected to media and policy makers.

I believe in public sociology and *Contemporary Sociology* can also be instrumental in creating public sociology. Book reviews are essential in connecting sociologists to journalists and policy makers. By creating podcasts and having a larger social media presence, we can strengthen the social visibility of sociological research in public. I propose having a stronger social media visibility with a *Contemporary Sociology* Twitter account and Instagram account. Social media presence help create new readers and reviewers especially among a younger sociology audience. Social media also helps sociologists connect some of their research to journalists and more popular accounts. It will be a chance to publicize the new and cutting-edge research sociologists do and have opportunities for public sociology.

Secondly, I will continue focusing on recruiting a diverse body of reviewers. I strongly believe that the editorial process is a strong team effort. If selected, I will focus on building a diverse editorial board as well as associate editors. It is important to have a diverse body of editorial board members on gender, race, age and sexual orientation, but also on seniority. I will also focus on creating an editorial team with diverse research interests. Having different interests and backgrounds is central in creating an effective editorial board. It is important for reviewers to reflect the diversity of our profession. Inclusivity in reviewers is vital in capturing the voices of a

wide range of reviewers. Especially as many ASA journals become available in other countries, it is important to include reviewers from these countries. As a first-generation immigrant and a non-native speaker, this is very important to me to create more inclusivity. I strongly believe in collaborating with the editorial board at every step. Having a strong editorial board and associate editors is extremely important for the health and well-being of a journal and I will seek many chances to keep connected to the editorial board and involve them in the process. I also believe that running a journal provides an important opportunity to mentor graduate students. As a graduate student, I had the opportunity work as the managing editor of *Men and Masculinities*, and this experience taught me so much about the editorial process. I believe this would be an excellent opportunity to mentor a student.

Third, in addition to the traditional reviews, I will continue in the tradition of incorporating longer essays. Longer essays allow creativity in discussing books. For this section, I will assign some new cutting-edge books which will create a discussion among multiple reviewers. One model would be to divide the different book chapters to different experts of the substantial chapters. Another option is to create joint reviews. Book reviews are an excellent way for students to learn to critique books. Joint reviews especially with a graduate student and professors allow for such discussions to take place. Joint reviews are not limited to graduate student- professor pairs, but can be done with scholars of two different specializations. These different formats allow the readers to engage more with the journal. Even traditional reviews can be grouped into themes to have thematic groups within an issue.

In addition to new books, landmark books can be reviewed to discuss their relevance to today's society. Especially on their anniversary years, discussing some influential books and their relevance to present day can be useful to many sociologists. Based on current trends, thematic arrangement of reviews and thematic essays can add a lot to the journal and its usage.

Book reviews are also essential for teaching undergraduate and graduate courses. Many professors use book reviews as pedagogical tools in classes. Book reviews have the potential to bridge the gap between research and teaching. For that purpose, I propose having a "For the Classroom" section of examples of good reviews online. This has been very effective in *Gender & Society* and often helps sociologists create their syllabi before the start of the academic year. This section also helps readers engage with the journal more in-depth.

Finally, I plan on organizing sessions on writing reviews and being a reviewer at the annual meetings of ASA and regional conferences such as the ESS and SWS. In previous years, I have participated in similar conferences and served on panels. At the annual conferences of ASA, ESS and SWS I have served on panels talking about book reviews and writing good book reviews. I believe this is an important tool in recruiting new reviewers and increasing the visibility of ASA journals and I would continue in this tradition.

Overall, I really enjoy the overall vision for *Contemporary Sociology* and I respect this rich tradition of producing high quality reviews in a timely fashion. If selected I will travel to the current editorial office to shadow the editor to better understand the current practices.

Qualifications

I have extensive editorial experience. I have served as the Book Review Editor of *Gender & Society* for four years (2014-2018). Even though the terms are for three years, the publications board asked me to stay for an extra year based on the exemplary work I had done at the journal. During my time at the journal, I have expanded and diversified the reviewer pool, making it more international. As the research of the readership has become more global and intersectional, I thought it was important for the reviewer base to reflect this diversity. With a data driven approach, I have added more international reviewers to the reviewer pool to reflect the diverse readership. As the journal was read in many countries and published the works of international authors, it is important to incorporate the voices of international reviews especially non-English speaking reviewers. Diversity of reviewers is very important to me: not just in terms of gender, race, class, sexual orientation and nationality, but also in terms of the rich diversity within our field. When I started at *Gender and Society*, one of the first things I did was to generate reports on the current status of the reviewers. I noticed that the reviewer base consisted of mid-career faculty who were asked to review multiple times, which resulted in a higher number of rejections and longer turnaround times. I noticed many more established faculty, or retired emeritus/emerita faculty have not been asked to review even though they would have liked to participate in the process. I have created a more balanced reviewer base including graduate students as well as retired faculty. It is also important to create inclusion in our field with many scholars working in non-R1 university settings. For example, a book on women in administration was reviewed by a sociologist who is an expert on gender and recently serving as an associate dean. Similarly, a book on community colleges was reviewed by a scholar of education working at a community college.

I have also significantly cut down the backlog and the review delays to keep the books new and timely. The timeliness of the book reviews shows the quality of the journal and keeps the books relevant for research and classroom use.

Finally, I have been very active in publicizing academic work. For that purpose, I started a podcast project, where select authors discuss their books and respond to the reviews, creating active discussions and academic debate. For me, book reviews are not static: they should be an ongoing conversation between the author, reviewer and the academic community. In these podcasts, the authors were interviewed about their books and talked about the process of research so the authors have a chance to discuss the craft of sociology. This is also a pedagogical tool for students and an opportunity to mentor graduate students. I also utilized the *Gender & Society* blog as well as Twitter to publicize the reviews. These podcasts, along with the social media presence, have helped publicize the journal and have received academic and popular attention.

I have also done alternative formats of co-authored reviews with multiple scholars of different specializations. In addition to the traditional reviews, co-authored reviews or comparative reviews of multiple reviews and longer essays gave more freedom to the reviewers to expand on some important issues. In many cases, I paired professors with graduate students: book reviews are important pedagogical tools in mentoring graduate students and many have expressed their enthusiasm for the project. In some cases, I have paired experts of different fields to review interdisciplinary research.

My work as the Book Review Editor also taught me the workflow of a journal, which is a very important in running a journal. This experience gave me a sense of the flow of the workload and pacing of a journal.

Before my work at *Gender and Society*, I served as the managing editor of *Men and Masculinities*. In this role I was responsible for the day-to-day management of the journal, including regularly soliciting reviewers for articles and books, as well as corresponding with a wide range of publishers and scholars in the field. At the time, I was also responsible for the day to day management of the book reviews: communicating with reviewers, sending our books, communicating with publishers and publicity departments and coordinating the publication process.

Since both journals are Sage journals, I have extensive experience with Manuscript Central and Sage journal management. In addition to my editorial experience, I have served as a guest editor for the youth special issue of the *Journal of Men, Masculinities, and Spirituality* and recently edited the ASA Children and Youth section's volume on *Education and Youth Today* as a guest editor. For both these projects, I coordinated the publication process, worked closely with the series editors and editorial board members, solicited peer-reviews, worked with authors in getting their manuscripts ready for publication.

I also have experience serving on editorial boards. Currently, I am serving on the editorial board of *Contexts*, and my term is ending this year.

My editorial experience has not only given me the tools to run a journal effectively, but also the social networks among academic and non-academic circles necessary to recruit potential writers and reviewers from a wide variety of areas. I have written many academic books, so both as a result of my academic work and my previous editorial experience, I have the necessary contacts with book publicist and publishers. I am a full professor, in terms of where I am in my career, I can easily devote the necessary time to the effective running of the journal.

Institutional Support

My department chair and dean are very supportive. My institution is excited about the prospect of housing a journal. There is a culture and infrastructure of supporting journals in my department and college. There is a designated journal room allocated, equipped with a computer, telephone and printing facilities. The room has wall-to-wall bookcases to keep the review copies of the books. The dean's office is providing me with a reduced course load to focus on editorial duties. The college will be providing technical assistance as well as mailing supplies. We also have an active undergraduate and graduate population, therefore there is a large pool of potential assistants.

Previously, when we housed *Gender and Society*, my university has been very supportive and demonstrated they had the infrastructure and support services to house a journal. I had the chance to work with very high-quality students and the mail room staff, IT support as well as the administrative units have worked very smoothly together.