Discussions/Actions from the December 1, 2007
Meeting of the ASA Committee on Publications

Present: Michael Hout (Chair), Kathryn Edin, Arne Kalleberg (ASA President), Patricia Martin, Donald Tomaskovic-Devey, Amy Wharton, and Christine Williams. Howard Winant was not able to attend. Present from the Executive Office were Sally Hillsman (Executive Officer) and Karen Gray Edwards (Director of Publications and Membership).

Confidentiality of Committee Discussions/Sunshine Proposals. While the meetings of the Committee on Publications are closed, the Committee was strongly supportive of a number of new online initiatives that could be taken to keep members informed.

The Committee voted to:

- Post the agenda on the online Committee on Publications’ page and in the monthly e-newsletter “Member News and Notes.”
- Post a summary of actions following each Committee meeting.
- Have an open meeting at the Annual Meeting on Committee issues.
- Have the Committee chair write an article for Footnotes once a year on key discussions and actions.
- Establish a link on the journal home page with information on how to apply for an editorship, with examples of exemplary proposals.
- Begin earlier public discussion signaling when the Committee will be searching for new editors.
- Consider proposing a workshop on becoming an editor.
- Ask the ASA Secretary to consider opening the budget to more public scrutiny.

Proposal for a New Monograph Series. The Committee considered a proposal for a new monograph series that would provide an ASA outlet for manuscripts that were too large for journal articles but too small for a book. The Committee felt that a further discussion of such a monograph series would require a more complete analysis of the demand, supply, and costs, as well as a discussion of editorial expenses and procedures. It was not convinced that there was a missing outlet, but expressed its willingness to continue discussion at a future meeting if the monograph subcommittee wished to pursue the proposal further.

Contemporary Sociology Editorship. After review of the proposals submitted, the Committee voted to recommend Alan Sica as the next editor. This recommendation was subsequently formally approved by ASA Council.

Request for Proposals for ASA Journals. The ASA is working with a consultant to finalize the RFP for distribution to potential publishing partners. The Committee will review the RFP prior to distribution, anticipated to be in April 2008. At the August 2008 meeting of the Committee, the Executive Office, based on its review of the responses, hopes to present a recommendation to the Committee that it will support and forward to ASA Council for approval.
Editor Extensions. The Committee voted to invite the editors of the American Sociological Review, Social Psychology Quarterly, and Sociological Methodology to extend their initial three-year terms by up to an additional three years.

Proposal for a Book Series Co-Sponsored by the Sections on Mental Health and Medical Sociology. After review of the proposal, the Committee felt it did not address crucial issues such as editorial policy, governance structure, and periodic review—all of which are necessary for ASA or section sponsorship of such a series. It was also uncomfortable that the proposal was submitted by the series editors, not the sponsoring sections. The Committee encouraged resubmission of the proposal with more detail on the support of the enterprise and a clear demonstration of how the sections will provide oversight of the series to meet the standards of quality and peer review.

Proposal for Sponsorship of the Online Journal of World Systems Research by the ASA Section on Political Economy of the World System. The Committee discussed a revised proposal from the section responding to the issues ASA Council wanted after the Committee approved proposal at its last meeting. The revised proposal included a formal vote of the section approving both the sponsorship and a dues increase to contribute to future production or editorial office costs. The Committee voted to recommend to Council that the journal be approved as an official journal of the section.

Proposal from the Section on Mental Health to Establish a New Journal. After review of the proposal, the Committee appointed a subcommittee to work with the section to ensure the proposal met the requirements outlined in the Guidelines for the Publications Portfolio. The Committee will formally review the revised proposal in August 2008.