Discussions/Actions from the December 14-15, 2013, Committee on Publications Meeting

Elected members present were Jennifer Barber James Jasper, Erin Kelly (Chair), Annette Lareau (ASA President), Mary Romero (ASA Secretary), Vincent Roscigno, Steven Vallas, and Amy Wharton. Past President Cecilia Ridgeway also attended as an observer.

Editors present for the open session were Lee Clarke, Karen Hegtvedt, Larry Isaac, Kathleen Lowney, Jodi O’Brien, Alan Sica, Arlene Stein, and Rob Warren.

Present from the Executive Office were Sally T. Hillsman (Executive Officer), Karen Gray Edwards (Director of Publications and Membership), and Janine Chiappa McKenna (Journals and Publications Manager). Thomas Mankowski and Eric Moran (both from SAGE) and Suzanne Nichols (Russell Sage Foundation) were also present.

The Committee voted to:

• Approve the meeting agenda. Carried unanimously.
• Recommend to Council new editors of Contemporary Sociology, Contexts, Social Psychology Quarterly, and Teaching Sociology.
• Endorse consideration of a full-time managing editor for Contexts who could continue over editorial transitions, but the final staffing decision is up to the new editors. The Committee also recognizes the issues Contexts faces and will work with new editors to implement some of these in a financially responsible way. Carried unanimously.
• Recommend to ASA Council to reduce editorial terms to three years with possible extensions for fourth and fifth years, eliminating a possibility of a sixth year. The Committee noted it will proceed cautiously in offering the fifth year to any American Sociological Review editor, noting that it is different in regard to professional development and therefore the term should regularly not exceed four years. Carried unanimously.
• Prepare a response to ASA Council regarding editorial office funding that states the Committee supports the core model of FTE for the future with the current commitment to copyediting, and that decisions for future editors will be made on the quality of the editorship, even in high-cost areas. Carried unanimously.
• Recommend to ASA Council a change to the ASA bylaws that the immediate past ASA President will serve as a voting member of the Committee, rather than the President. Carried unanimously.
• Send the Ethics Subcommittee’s report on dual submissions, including proposed edits to the Code of Ethics, to the Committee on Professional Ethics. Carried unanimously.
• Recommend to ASA Council a 200-page permanent increase to American Sociological Review beginning in 2014. Carried unanimously.
• Approve the state of the journal report for Society and Mental Health. Carried unanimously.
• Approve nominations for new editorial board members. Carried unanimously.
• Approve the August meeting minutes. Carried unanimously.
The Committee also:

- Requested edits to the memo regarding ASA’s new open access journal before submitting it to ASA Council.
- Merged the Blog Subcommittee with ASA President Annette Lareau’s social media taskforce.
- Form a subcommittee to update annual editors’ reports to include rounds of revise and resubmits.

**Editor Candidate Discussion:** The Committee discussed editor applications for *Contemporary Sociology*, *Contexts*, *Social Psychology Quarterly*, and *Teaching Sociology* and ranked the candidates for Council’s consideration. ASA Council subsequently appointed the following editors:

- *Contemporary Sociology*: Michael Sauder (University of Iowa)
- *Contexts*: Syed Ali (Long Island University) and Philip Cohen (University of Maryland)
- *Social Psychology Quarterly*: Richard Serpe (Kent State University) and Jan Stets (University of California-Riverside)
- *Teaching Sociology*: Stephen Sweet (Ithaca College)

**Contexts Report:** The editors discussed with the Committee ways to improve and expand *Contexts*, including keeping the same managing editor when the journal changes editor, enhancing the magazine’s web presence, and offering writing skills workshops to potential authors. As a result of the discussion, the Executive Office will work with SAGE to implement a new policy that each issue of *Contexts* is open online for the first 30 days after publication.

**Editor Term Limit Changes:** The Committee discussed at its August meeting changing the term limit only for the *American Sociological Review* but ASA Council asked the Committee to look at the term limits for all journals. The implications for more frequent transitions were discussed, such as increased expenses. The previous editor terms were reviewed and it was noted that many editors did not opt for a six-year term, instead choosing one or two years beyond the initial three years.

**Editorial Office Funding:** The Committee reviewed its August discussion, where concerns were raised over the proposal and these concerns were passed along to ASA Council. Council, in turn, asked the Committee to provide additional feedback. The Committee wanted to be sure that the staffing limits are more focused on the number of staff rather than the dollar amounts listed and that the best editor will be selected, regardless of location (high cost vs low cost).

**ASA Bylaws Change:** The Committee discussed changing the Committee structure to include the immediate past President as a voting member, rather than the President. The rationale is that the President is unable to attend the August Committee meeting due to Annual Meeting obligations. This proposal would go on the ballot for the ASA election in the spring.

**Ethics Subcommittee Report:** The Committee discussed why the subcommittee was created (cases of plagiarism and double submissions) and the subcommittee’s proposal to make changes to the ASA Code
of Ethics regarding publication. The Committee was in favor of the proposal and only suggested a few line edits before passing it along to the ASA Committee on Professional Ethics (COPE).

**American Sociological Review Page Increase Request:** The *American Sociological Review* editors requested a permanent page increase of an additional 200 pages (bringing the total to 1,298 pages/year). The increase is necessary as a result of a surge in new submissions during editors’ term (possibly because of the transition to online submissions); they are currently rejecting more than they’d like.

**Society and Mental Health Report:** The Committee reviewed the state of the journal report for *Society and Mental Health* and said that the inaugural editor did a great job with the journal.

**Open Access Journal:** The Committee requested edits to the memo regarding ASA’s new open access journal before submitting it to ASA Council. The Committee had four concerns that needed to be expanded: the journal should provide a quality peer review, it should keep costs to authors as low as possible low with tiered publication fees and an easy way to request a waiver, the ASA needs to preserve the content permanently, and it needs to establish the right type of copyright approach.

**Blog Subcommittee:** The members of the Blog Subcommittee requested merging with ASA President Annette Lareau’s social media taskforce, noting that fixating solely on blogs would be a mistake, there are other media that would be ignored. Jointly they would be able to set up workshops on using social media and ask for participation by section chairs. Wharton and Vallas volunteered to be the liaisons to the taskforce.

**Reporting and Guidelines on Resubmitted Manuscripts:** The Committee discussed providing more information on rounds of revise and resubmits in the published editors’ reports and wondered if the current policies on revise and resubmits need to be updated in the Publications Manual. The Committee decided to create a subcommittee to revise published tables to include R&Rs (Jennifer Barber, Larry Isaac, Rob Warren [Chair]).