Robert K. Merton Remembered

Robert K. Merton, one of the towering figures on whose shoulders contemporary sociology rests, died February 23, 2003. He was 92.

Merton was born July 4, 1910, and his extraordinary life story evolves both as a very American trajectory appropriate to the holiday birthday and the universalism of science. Merton’s parents were Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe, and indeed the future Robert King Merton (RKM) was born Meyer R. Schkolnick. The family lived above his father’s small dairy products shop in South Philadelphia until it burned down, without insurance, and his father became a carpenter’s assistant. Merton’s family lacked wealth, but he insisted his childhood did not lack opportunity— and had such institutions as a very decent public high school and the library donated by Andrew Carnegie in which he first read Tristram Shandy. Indeed, suggested Merton in 1994, that seemingly deprived South Philadelphia slum provided “a youngster with every sort of capital—social, cultural capital, human capital, and, above all, what we may call public capital—that is, with every sort of capital except the personal financial.”

The name Robert King Merton evolved out of a teenage career as an amateur magician. Merton took up conjuring and other magic partly through taking his sister’s boyfriend as a “role model” (to borrow a phrase literally his own). As his skill improved, he sought a stage name, initially “Mer-lin.” Advised that this was hackneyed, he changed it to Merton. Already

Bylaws Time-up

Periodically, ASA undertakes a systematic review of its governing documents (i.e., Bylaws and Constitution) in order to: (1) identify actual and potential conflicts among the various bylaw and bylaw directives, (2) locate vague guidelines, and (3) ferret out any outdated information. This activity is a natural consequence of the fact that these documents endure an evolution over the years through modifications by Council. As Council votes on and implements changes to the Association’s governance structure and activities, the resulting changes must be reflected in these documents. In addition, the communications technology revolution has changed the way organizations operate and there are consequences for our governing documents to catch up with this new context. So, this past year, at the request of the ASA Council and staff, the Association’s Legal Counsel undertook a thorough review of the ASA Constitution and Bylaws.

Counsel delivered a report with

2003 Annual Meeting . . . The Question of Culture

Multimedia Portrayals of a Communications Center: Race and Film in Atlanta

By Dana White and Alex Hicks, Emory University

From its establishment in 1857 as a regional railroad hub named “Terminus,” Atlanta has functioned as a center of transportation, communications, and distribution. The city re-emerged from its 1864 burning by the forces of General William T. Sherman, again as railroad nexus for the Southeast, hosting international expositions in 1881, 1887, and 1895. During this era, Atlanta promoted itself ceaselessly, shamefully, as the capital of a New—albeit segregated—South. Booker T. Washington’s apparent acceptance of this “separate but equal” doctrine in his address at the 1895 Cotton States Exposition came to be called the “Atlanta Compromise.” But slowly, with accelerating forces from the early 20th century, numerous Black Atlantans—from Washington’s contemporary W.E.B. Du Bois to the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.—would reject this politics of accommodation, challenged it in the courts and in the streets, eventually overturning racial segregation.

No Time for Hate

As the civil rights movement unfolded, Atlanta presented itself to the nation as “The City Too Busy to Hate.” Unlike other Southern cities, the African American leadership preached and practiced controlled change. Atlanta could embrace relatively progressive racial policies because, as political scientist Clarence N. Stone has demonstrated in Regime Politics: Governing Atlanta, 1946-1989 (1989), a cohesive coalition of business leaders and governmental officials assured civic leadership during the 1940s and 1950s. Late in the 20th century, Atlanta would become the trans-
In This Issue . . .

ASA Supports Academic Freedom
Council supports sociologist Lynn Weber’s academic freedom in a controversy about her classroom guidelines.

Recent Council Actions
From online journal subscriptions to the centennial activity budget, recent ASA Council actions are summarized.

Doing Policy Work in DC
ASA’s Congressional Fellow details the usefulness of a sociology PhD in the search for a policy position.

Spotlight on Departments
The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay’s Social Change and Development program emphasizes social science and critical history.

Candidates for ASA Offices
Candidate biographies for President, Vice President and Secretary give an early look at the spring ballot.

New Task Forces Need Member Participation
With Council’s approval of new task forces, ASA seeks nominations from members.

Sociologists Salute Robert K. Merton
Friends, colleagues, and former students remember the late Merton, former ASA President.

Our Regular Features

Public Affairs ............................................................... 3
Departments ............................................................... 12
Obituaries ............................................................... 13

The Executive Officer’s Column

Public Sociologies – An Agenda For Collaboration
At the close of the ASA Council meeting on February 2, several of us bid farewell saying, “See you next weekend in North Carolina.” We were eagerly anticipating the Sociologists for Women in Society (SWS) winter meeting, held in Wrightsville, NC, focusing on “how to be an effective feminist public intellectual.”

ASA Council member Barbara J. Riesman, North Carolina State University, is the SWS President. ASA Council member Jennifer Glass, Iowa State University, and ASA President-Elect Michael Burawoy would attend. I would be joined by ASA staff Carla Howery (a former SWS President), Jean Beauman, and Kerry Strand.

That weekend is now a mere memory but a stimulating one of a very energized gathering that drew twice the attendees as usual. If the SWS meeting theme has a familiar ring to it, that is because ASA President-Elect Michael Burawoy had independently chosen “Public Sociologies” as the theme for ASA’s 2004 Annual Meeting in San Francisco. Indeed, the weekend following the SWS gathering, the 2004 Program Committee met to continue planning for that ASA meeting. As Robert K. Merton, my teacher and long-time generous colleague to so many of us, would remind us, “Serendipity is powerful.” The ASA staff, self and committee, were inspired from ideas and names of colleagues coming from the SWS event, as the SWS event had benefited from our preliminary explorations of Burawoy’s chosen theme. The timing was obviously perfect. But when you add the convergence of similar intellectual and professional issues and ideas, then you know good things are going to happen.

Burawoy has done more than announce a theme and await session ideas. He has been personally writing and speaking about his ideas, and listening to the responses. Several exchanges have appeared in footnotes Public Forum (e.g., see December 2002, p. 6, and January, 2003, p. 8). He plans to participate in various state sociological society meetings (Pennsylvania and Georgia) and the Society for Applied Sociology.

Riesman tapped Burawoy to speak at the SWS plenary session where he took issue with critics who lament the disappearance of public sociology, saying, “To be sure, the 1950s was an era of heroic public sociologists, of C. Wright Mills, David Riesman, and Daniel Bell, but they were few and far between. They were indeed heroic; it was after all the repressive era of McCarthyism!”

In particular, Burawoy challenged the views of Orlando Patterson’s New York Times obituary-tribute to David Riesman, titled “The Last Sociologist.” Calling Patterson’s vision an “elitist conception of public sociology,” Burawoy argued that “today we have to expand our horizons, and expand the meaning of public sociology to include a wide range of publics—not just the readership of national media, which is an amorphous, invisible, passive, public made up of strangers, but also the much thicker publics that must begin with our students, extending to local communities….” He reflected, “Indeed, the prototype of the public sociology of today is the feminist movement that first constituted its public, and then brought that public to self-awareness and mobilization. And in this view, SWS represents the archetypal mediator between professional and public sociology.”

This stirring call permeated two days of workshops on speaking to the media, sharing research with policymakers, and giving back to the participants in one’s studies.

While SWS has long been a part of my professional life, this was my first SWS meeting as ASA Executive Officer. How satisfying it was for me to be able to report on the actions of the ASA Council, of only a week before, to file a Supreme Court amicus brief in the University of Michigan case, bringing solid social science research on discrimination, diversity, and affirmative action to bear on an important legal case that may well be this generation’s equivalent of Brown v. Board of Education. How satisfying it was to see the ASA display table with a wide array of important scholarly and teaching materials, including, especially important in this context, sample copies of Contexts, our award-winning magazine that directly speaks to new publics.

SWS has been supportive of ASA’s initiatives. For years, SWS has made a donation to the ASA Minority Fellowship Program, and its members mentor a
Social Science Community Celebrates NIH Deputy Appointment

by Johanna Eber, Public Affairs/Information Office

National Institutes of Health (NIH) Director Elias A. Zerhouni announced the appointment of Robert J. Kington, M.D., Ph.D., as Deputy Director of the NIH. His appointment was effective on February 9, 2003. Kington's appointment follows NIH's recent announcement of the formal creation of the Social Science Community Advisory Committee (SSCAC), in which Kington's longstanding support for these sciences and promotion of social science research at the NIH has been especially effective and visible in his role as director of NIH's Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR), where he has served NIH's director's office since November 2000. He also served as Acting Director of the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) for a year starting in September 2002.

"I am delighted to have Dr. Kington at NIH," said Dr. Zerhouni. "As Deputy Director, he will play a strong, leadership role in supporting and furthering NIH's mission. I am looking forward to working with Dr. Kington and the NIH leadership to ensure that NIH continues to be the place where researchers from across disciplines come together to tackle the difficult questions that face the biomedical sciences."

Raymond Kington

"I am honored to be given this opportunity to work with many letters to the editor following the Carolina FIRE chapter. Weber's guidelines are well known to those who teach courses centering on the classroom infringed on their speech and stereotypes about our own groups….” The eight-point guidelines, which were published in the classroom, include:

1. Students who teach courses centering on the classroom
2. Students who teach courses centering on the classroom
3. Students who teach courses centering on the classroom
4. Students who teach courses centering on the classroom
5. Students who teach courses centering on the classroom
6. Students who teach courses centering on the classroom
7. Students who teach courses centering on the classroom
8. Students who teach courses centering on the classroom

ASA Council Supports Sociologist Weber

Sociologist Lynn Weber, director of the women's studies program at the University of South Carolina-Columbia, has been embroiled in a controversy that emerged in the spring of 2002 regarding a set of guidelines she uses to create open and civil dialogue in her classroom. Some students have complained that the guidelines as implemented in her classroom infringe on their free speech rights. The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, Inc. (FIRE) took up the cause and launched a writing campaign to protect Weber's approach to her teaching. There is a precedent for challenging a course syllabus or a course on the basis of a lawsuit being initiated by the South Carolina FIRE chapter. The Chronicle of Higher Education quoted groups that have been embroiled in the controversy in their September 27, 2002 issue, with letters to the editor following well into October. Weber's guidelines are well known to those who teach courses centering on the classroom, and they are the subject of much talk in academic circles. The guidelines, which were published in Women's Studies Quarterly (vol. 18, Spring-Summer 2001), ask students to "acknowledge that racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism, and other institutional forms of oppression exist, and to agree to combat actively the myths and stereotypes about our own groups and other groups...."

"What the eight-point guidelines aim to do is to establish civil and free speech, not limit it, according to Weber. She hopes that they create an atmosphere in which "race, class, gender..."
ASA Council in Action... Brief Summary of Recent ASA Council Actions

The ASA Council met on February 1-2, 2003, in Washington, DC, and one of the key items on the agenda was the ASA Executive Office permission to post Council minutes on the ASA’s website in place of publishing the text of the minutes in Footnotes. This keeps the minutes highly accessible while allowing interested members to access a brief summary of Council meetings in the published newsletter. The newsletter reserves space for Footnotes for other items of interest. Complete minutes of the Council meeting will be posted on the ASA website at www.asanet.org/governance/minutes.html after they have been approved by Council.

So, the following is not an exhaustive list of Council actions but simply a summary of the highlights of the February Council meeting.

• Provided an example of the amicus brief in the case of Grutter v. Bollinger, et al. Understanding the timing constraints of the case, the Washington, DC, Court, Council authorized the amicus subcommittee (Co-Chairs Susan Halebsky Dimock, President-Elect, Immediate Past President, and Secretary) to approve the final draft with the understanding that any editorial drafts will be sent to Council members.

• Affirmed appointment of liaisons to ongoing organizations: Stella Delgado to the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Economic/Political Section, Carl Meyer to the AAAS International Section, Barbara Schoch to the American Educational Research Association Education Section, Paul Roman to the Decade of Behavior, and Charles Hirshein to the Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics.

• Adopted on a one-year-trial basis a travel reimbursement policy for members attending ASA governance-related meetings to purchase their own tickets and seek reimbursement within prescribed cost guidelines. Maximum costs by region will be reviewed and adjusted periodically.

• Considered but declined a proposal to provide a web page for open access for all new student members.

• Placed on the Spring 2003 ballot.

• Directed the Executive Office to use geographic notation as a first factor when selecting members to attend Council meetings.

• Congratulated Claude Fischer for the successful launch of Contexts magazine and for having received the Association of American Publishers’ Best Journal in the Social Sciences Award for 2002, and for having won recognition from within the discipline and without. Council appreciates the extraordinary vision, leadership, dedication, and sociological insight, and effort shown by Fischer.

• Expressed its appreciation to former Executive Officer Felice J. Levine for her vision and leadership in the successful launch of Contexts as an important vehicle to convey to the public the contributions of sociology within the discipline and beyond.

• Agreed to move forward with plans to make ASA journals available online as part of each print subscription, at no additional cost to members.

• Increased non-member individual subscription prices to cover the direct print publication and increased institutional subscription rates by $20 per subscription for 2004.

• Adjusted JSTOR from a five-year with a one-time fee to a three-year with a one-time fee.

• Allocated an additional 30 pages for Sociology in Education in 2003.

• Adopted the use of a three-year moving average calculation beginning with 2004 to determine ASA Sections’ financial allocation, with the provision that for the next three years this section will be discounted by the loss of sessions or budget allocations.

• Placed on the spring 2003 ballot changes in the bylaws (see article on page 1).

• Authorized the Executive Office to place a copy of the full, approved minutes of Council meetings on the ASA website, and to place a summary of selected actions and discussions in Footnotes.

• Adopted a budget for 2003 as proposed by the Executive Office and Budget Committee.

• Approved plans to disseminate the report on the Task Force on Articulation.

• Noted this task force’s commitment to quality instruction of the discipline. To that end, a Council-recommended that any faculty member teaching a college level course in sociology have at least MA-level (or equivalent) preparation in sociology.

• Created three new task forces (see article on page 7).

• Added mentoring and marginality in a regular feature in the ASA Department Chairs conference at the Annual Meeting.

• Encouraged the creation of a mentoring program to support sociologists who identify as lobster, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGCBT) or who want focus on LGCBT scholarship.

• Agreed to move with the editorial project proposed by the Centennial Publications Committee to provide a regular part of the agenda for the last 10 years of American sociology.

• Agreed to move ahead with planning for a possible centennial documentary to provide a regular part of the agenda for the last 10 years of American sociology.

• Created a subcommittee of Council to work on international activities in conjunction with the ASA centennial.

• Committed up to a total of $75,000 from American Sociological Fund for central activities of the Centennial (funds for the proposed documentary, $25,000 for the proposed volume on 100 years of American sociology, $30,000 for other centennial events).

• Violation of the academic freedom of Professor Lynn Weber and all faculty to develop strategies or guidelines to encourage open and civil debate, to support the discussion and dialogue of controversial issues that are inherent to the study of inequality and other core subjects, and to direct the ASA President to write a letter containing this motion to be sent to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and the Chair of the Sociology Department of the University of South Carolina as well as to the Chronicle of Higher Education (see article on page 3).

• Received and reviewed the report of the Task Force on Journal Divestment.

• Reviewed costs associated with annual meeting services, and asked that the Executive Office provide the membership with details on the high cost of selected audio visual and other services.

• Reviewed the allocation of institutional finances and investments at the end of 2002.

• Reviewed the costs associated with providing journals to members.

• Met in executive session to conduct editors for, American Sociological Review, Social Psychology Quarterly, and Teaching Sociology.

• Considered but declined a suggestion for adopting interest groups as an alternative to small sections.

• Authorized the Executive Office permission to post Council minutes on the ASA’s website in place of publishing the text of the minutes in Footnotes. This keeps the minutes highly accessible while allowing interested members to access a brief summary of Council meetings in the published newsletter. The newsletter reserves space for Footnotes for other items of interest. Complete minutes of the Council meeting will be posted on the ASA website at www.asanet.org/governance/minutes.html after they have been approved by Council.

• The February Council meeting...
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay's Social Change and Development (SCD) department prides itself on being an atypical sociology department. Its innovative and interdisciplinary program emphasizes social science and critical thinking, problem solving, citizenship, and democracy. The department consists of 11 faculty, including sociologists, anthropologists, historians, economists, and political scientists. Students are encouraged to develop critical perspectives in order to understand the world in which we live. Throughout its many courses, SCD focuses on "the problem of why and how societies and cultures around the world change and the ways in which these changes promote justice, equity, democracy, and development of human potential," explains Professor Andrew Austin.

According to Austin, the underlying logical structure of the SCD program is derived from sociological imagination, allowing students to place their life in the context of the society and world in which we live. "SCD stresses the central elements of 'good sociology': historical thinking, critical theoretical approaches, and democratic participation and community engagement." The department aims to produce graduates with "superior preparation in the social sciences," says Austin. SCD complements advanced study in sociology as it trains students in sociological analysis. Because the university offers two majors in sociology, many students major in SCD. There are currently more than 50 students in the department.

SCD offers four emphases: American Social Issues, which covers sociology and problems in American society; Global Studies, which focuses on the Third World and international cooperation and Justice Studies, for students interested in law school; and Women's Studies. Students may also choose a minor with specific emphasis. The department offers a range of courses including Freedom and Social Change and Development and Women's Studies.

Perspectives on Social Change (a required course); Power and Change in America; and Feminist Theory. Social Change and Development is not included in the admission requirements to the major and minor, the curriculum is very rigorous. Majors are required to take Portfolio in Social Change and Development, both at the beginning and end of their program. This requirement allows them to assess their progress and accomplishments in the major as preparation for life outside college. Courses in writing are also required. Students can also minor in Social Change and Development and often combine this with a major in a related discipline. In addition, the department funds the Center for History and Social Change, which promotes historical study through lectures and seminars.

SCD also emphasizes internships and research projects as a way for students to apply knowledge and get "hands-on" learning. "SCD is rooted in the idea that the modern university in a democratic society should play a role in preparing students to participate actively in shaping their communities," Austin, who serves as internship director. Austin has recently worked on a large-scale trauma assessment project, which involved students at every stage.

SCD is one of many interdisciplinary departments at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, a mid-size university with 5,000 students. The University's "Green Bay Idea" stresses interdisciplinary programs, critical thinking, problem solving skills, and citizenship. While all students complete a general education program, they synthesize knowledge from several subjects in their interdisciplinary programs. The Social Change and Development department is an example of such a program in that it firmly stresses that to understand the past, our own times, and our own history, one must understand the world.

Information on SCD, contact Andrew Austin, Social Change and Development, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, Green Bay, WI 54311, (920) 465-2359, austina@uwgb.edu.

A Supreme Court Challenge to Legal Aid
by Douglas Snyder, Prince George's Community College

Not Just Sociology at U. of Wisconsin-Green Bay

Sociology program produces additional data on issues such as enrollments and course offerings. Feel free to call ASA for other information and advice on the strongest possible case for your program.

ASK ASA . . .

Our sociology program is due for its once-a-decade review. We have a joint program with anthropological and social work. What are the standards? ASA sets a sociology major and how can our department be accredited by those standards?

The ASA offers a consulting service called the Department Resource Group (DRG) to assist departments with program reviews. The reviewers who serve on the DRG are nominated on the basis of their expertise in teaching, curriculum design, and expertise with specific teaching challenges (e.g., the introductory courses, teaching research methods). They attend the ASA meeting sessions at the Annual Meeting in Washington, DC.

When you call the Executive Office (202-383-9005 ext. 323), staff will make recommendations for committees to serve on the reviewing panel who come from similar types of institutions as yours, and who have particular expertise in areas on which you want to focus. There is no charge for ASA's service; the department pays the expenses of the visitor and a reasonable honorarium. There is no charge for ASA's service; the department pays the expenses of the visitor and a reasonable honorarium. The department funds the Center for History and Social Change, which promotes historical study through lectures and seminars.

The ASA does not accredit programs. There is a Commission on Applied and Clinical Programs that does accredit programs with applied and clinical emphases (See "Sociology profs: Can we all get along?" in the 1990 ASA Newsletter). The Commission's August 16 session at the ASA West Regional Meeting in Washington, DC, will soon produce additional data on issues such as enrollments and course offerings. Feel free to call ASA for other information and advice on the strongest possible case for your program.

soon thereafter IOLTA programs emerged in several Canadian provinces.

The first state to start using IOLTA was Florida. In 1981, the end of 1988, 45 states and the District of Columbia had adopted IOLTA programs. By the beginning of 1989, the remaining five states and the District had established both the American Bar Association and the legal aid bar associations were key to the growth in the spread and popularity of IOLTA. A major stimulus leading to the current widespread use of IOLTA was a 25 percent cut in federal funds for legal services during the first year of the Reagan administration. A further incentive for the development of strong state programs would be the voluntary use of federal funds for class-action suits, lobbying, and union organizing. In a number of states today, IOLTA are estimated at 85% of the total expenditures of $850 million. IOLTA programs cost taxpayers nothing.

Decision Impact

The Supreme Court must decide whether the WLFA rules that IOLTA constitute a “taking” of private property. If the case is decided in WLFAs favor, legal aid programs funded by IOLTA in at least 26 states with mandatory programs will be jeopardized. Responsible for granting representations, several justices, notably “swing voter” Sandra Day O Connor, seemed destined to support the majority, which now controlled the Court. In a 4-4 deadlock, the case would likely be remanded to lower courts for decision. Perhaps, the case can be decided in WLFAs favor, legal aid funds in at least the 26 states now with mandatory programs.

With either outcome, income from IOLTA to fund legal service programs would decrease sharply, dealing a severe setback to the drive for equal justice in this country. It is estimated that current funding of legal aid programs allocated through IOLTA is $500 million to $750 million. About 40 percent of those living in poverty who need legal advice and representation. The Supreme Court decides.”

Doug Snyder was appointed recently by the outgoing Maryland governor to the Board of Directors of the Maryland Legal Services Corporation (MLSC). MLSC distributes grants to agencies serving the poor in civil cases. He is presenting a roundtable panel entitled “Legal Aid in the United States: Past and Current Challenges,” at the Sociology of Law Section’s August 16 session at the ASA Annual Meeting in Atlanta. He can be reached at DougSnyder@hotmail.com.

Vantage Point, from page 2

As Durkheim noted, times of conflict bring us together. But there is more going on within sociology than a reactive stance. Sociologists are not waiting for the clock to strike, nor adopting a Rodney Dangerfield “no respect” attitude and merely sighing about it. In one of our overarching clichés, it is the case that 15 to 20 percent of those living in poverty who need legal advice and representation. The Supreme Court decides.”

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Candidates for ASA Offices in 2003

In accordance with election policies established by the ASA Council, biographical sketches for top candidates and footnotes. The biographical sketches appear below in alphabetical order by office. Biographical sketches for all candidates will be available when ballots are mailed to all current voting members in early April.

Richard Alba


Dr. Troy Duster


Dr. Caroline Hodges Persell

present position: Assistant to Full Professor, University of California—Los Angeles, (1976- present); Education: PhD, University of Michigan (1977), BA, Emory University (1968). Offices held: in other organizations: Executive Board, Social Science History Association; Editorial Board, American Journal of Sociology; Editorial Board, Research in Political Sociology; Publications Committee, Pacific Sociological Association. Offices held; committee or task force memberships, and editorial appointments in ASA: Rose Book Series Editorial Board (2002); Dissertation Award Committee (2000- present); Council on International Sociological Section (1999-2002); Committee on Teaching (1998-2001); Advisory Committee, Preparing Future Faculty (1999-2002); Chair, Ad Hoc Committee on Graduate Education (1994-1997). Publications. Making Society; The Historical Construction of the World We Live in: 2001, Fine Press Grove; Socializing Capital: The Rise of the Large Corporations in America, 1997, Princeton University Press. "Academic Identity, Race, and American Folk Music." Qualitative Sociology 25 (2002): 459-469. "How Many Logics of Collective Action?" with Rachel R. Parker-Gwin. Personal Statement: What I offer is a deep commitment to and past achievement in all three pillars of academic excellence: In scholarship, I have published two books in the last five years, along with papers in leading journals. I have won several the UCLA Distinguished Teaching Award and the ASA’s Distincted Contribution to Teaching Award. And I have served the ASA as officer in two sections, various standing committees, and teaching related activities. The vision of the ASA is that it first and foremost serve all the members—small college, research university, and non-academic sociologists; those whose professional lives accentuate teaching and those who focus on research; those solidly in the mainstream and those challenging comfortable assumptions; those in professional appointments and those struggling for their professional lives. In an era of shrinking material resources and a political context that subsumes open debate, it is important that the ASA step up its efforts, both internally and externally.


Council Approves New Task Forces, Seeks Member Involvement

On February 2, the ASA Council voted to establish three new task forces to undertake work of priority importance to the Association and its membership. The new task forces are (1) the Task Force on the Assessment of the Undergraduate Major, (2) Task Force to Revise the ASA Areas of Specialty, and (3) the Task Force on Bridges to the Real World. The task force structure was adopted by Council to allow the organization to be flexible and respond in a focused manner to important needs of the discipline. By Council action, task forces have up to two years in which to complete their assigned task.

The task force members, nominations, and selecting the members. Nominations should include a statement of interest and a brief biographical sketch on relevant background and expertise. Send nominations and supporting materials to American Sociological Association, 1935 Silver Hill Road, Silver Spring, MD 20901. These task forces will be seated in June, commence their work immediately, and meet for the first time at the Annual Meeting in August. The deadline for submission of nominations is May 1, 2003. The ASA Council will review the nominations and select the members. Appointments will be made in early June. In establishing these task forces, Council underscored its commitment to the broad participation of the ASA membership in the Association’s work. Council urges members with relevant interests to volunteer to serve on these task forces.

New ASA Task Forces & Charges

Task Force on the Assessment of the Undergraduate Major... will undertake research, deliberation, and writing to produce a report to
- Describe the "landscape" of undergraduate assessment as it pertains to sociology.
- Identify promising practices in sociology departments, including exams, portfolios, assessment imbedded in courses.
- Explore the possibility of and pluses and minuses of a standardized exam and any role ASA might play in its preparation and in keeping norms information,
- Suggest ways to help departments consider these options and learn more about them, including events at the Annual Meeting, and
- Create model materials that departments could use to undertake useful assessments.

The report will be presented to Council by January 2005.

Task Force to Revise the ASA Areas of Specialty... will examine and update the categories of areas of interest in use throughout the profession. The purpose of this task force is to attend to an era of shrinking material resources and the jobs of many sociologists provide the tools or paths to use their sociological expertise to further community-service goals. The task force members, nominations, and selecting the members. Nominations should include a statement of interest and a brief biographical sketch on relevant background and expertise. Send nominations and supporting materials to American Sociological Association, 1935 Silver Hill Road, Silver Spring, MD 20901. These task forces will be seated in June, commence their work immediately, and meet for the first time at the Annual Meeting in August. The deadline for submission of nominations is May 1, 2003. The ASA Council will review the nominations and select the members. Appointments will be made in early June. In establishing these task forces, Council underscored its commitment to the broad participation of the ASA membership in the Association’s work. Council urges members with relevant interests to volunteer to serve on these task forces.

Task Force on Bridges to the Real World... will build upon the work of the “Blue Ribbon Task Force” from the early 1990s. Many persons are drawn to sociology in the hope that they can use their skills to advance social justice at home or abroad. However, neither the training nor the jobs of many of today’s sociologists provide the tools or paths to use their sociological expertise to enhance the status of individuals and their communities. This task force will seek to provide opportunities for more sociologists to develop the skills and create mechanisms to bring those skills to bear in which they can make a difference. It will consider the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Task Force, but will not be limited to those possibilities. The work of the task force will include development of ties between academic sociologists and the public, especially community- and social-change organizations and the media.
devoted to tracing origins, he chose a first name after Robert Houdini, the French magician whose name Harry Houdini (himself originally Erich Weiss) had adapted. And when he won a scholarship to Temple University he was content to let himself be transformed into a permanent Talcott Parsons. 

Merton attended Temple College—a school founded for “the poor boys and girls of Philadelphia” and not yet fully accredited—he met Norman Angell (who later did his famous work on the coming war), and working through the ideas that Houdini (himself originally Erich Weiss) and “Science and Military Technique.”

Merton insisted. The sociologist George 24x1142

MARCH 2003 FOOTNOTES

His first articles, written as a graduate student and published in 1934—

Indeed it is easy to imagine the young Merton, turning in the wrong directions. His first articles, written as a graduate student and published in 1934—

Perhaps nothing could better serve to remind us of the counterpoint of Merton’s long life than the odd fact that he happened to receive the Nobel Prize in Economics in 1998, the year before his death, a prize he never regarded as finished and one sus-

Meanwhile, his research was still not done, or because an empirical or theoretical test wasn’t identified. The role of chance connections—serendipity—in explanations of disparate phenomena reproduces important phenomena as for example the recent vogue for

Merton’s early work was that science is misunderstood as the product of individual geniuses able to break free from conventions and norms. Instead, he stressed the “ethos of science,” the normative structure specific to the field that makes possible its cumulative, critical thinking, and pursuit of continu-

A crucial argument of Merton’s early work was that science is misunderstood as the product of individual geniuses able to break free from conventions and norms. Instead, he stressed the “ethos of science,” the normative structure specific to the field that makes possible its cumulative, critical thinking, and pursuit of continu-

“focused group interview” that gave rise to focus groups, the data collection method in social science that is the accepted replacement for surveys based on

E. Simpson took him on as a research assistant in 1934, and working through the ideas that Houdini (himself originally Erich Weiss) and “Science and Military Technique.”

Merton insisted. The sociologist George 24x1142

The Structure of Social Action (1938), and

And—serendipity again (perhaps)—March 2003

The Structure of Social Action (1938), and

science remained the

Indeed it is easy to imagine the young Merton, turning in the wrong directions. His first articles, written as a graduate student and published in 1934—

Merton insisted. The sociologist George 24x1142

24x136

March 2003

23x1094
that influence will not diminish quickly now that he has gone.

Many of us miss him personally.

It is indeed a loss. As one of his distinguished students, Cynthia Epstein, wrote to me, I am an academic I would have admired, and early on. In addition, scholars in our own and in many other fields actually used the tools and ideas he created.

As most creators of analytic tools learn to their peril, for them is not high

Sociology, most academics agree, has

merely that his intellectual work was

true that he was even glamorous. I witnessed his tricks, for he entertained his

audience for an extended period of time. We were sociologists, after all, and we

are not impressed with such things.

When Professor Merton’s assistant,
called me at home in May 1998, I was

studying for my final exam in Contemporary

Sociological Theory. Annoyed by

the interruption (as any first-year

graduate student would be), I

politely instructed her to tell this

professor to call me later. I could

not see that the call would begin a

five-year relationship with Bob, my

teacher, my coworkers, and my friend.

I choose my giants well. (So

Professor Merton was Merton himself.

I observed the ‘giant’ who was

so dominated sociology

and politics of two such brilliant and accom-

plished colleagues.

In his final months, he opened his

study and his famous files to re-

searchers from across disciplines. And

in his responsibility for getting it

proved his discovery of the notion of

bureaucracy—perhaps the most

substantive complex work that

he did. I thought I would not feel

crushed by his presence. He has

stayed with me, and I am

empowered by his legacy. While

sociologists themselves typically

demat his cultural erudition. He always

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Merton, from page 9

and sound, initiated research traditions in mass communication and mass persuasion, deviance, medical sociology, bureaucratic structure, reference group theory, the sociology of knowledge—developed into something more that was never wholly understood, and above all the sociology of science. And above all the sociology of science, and above all the sociology of science.

Through his students and through those whose work he influenced, all these traditions persist in good health to the present. Many of his words inform our understanding of the modern world, and serve as cornerstones of contemporary research.

The history of changing race relations, political empowerment. However, the center of Afro-American prosperity and influence, sociological theory, applied bureaucracy and organization, reference communities with sophisticated drive for power. Merton was able to call the shots in much of sociology.

As a critic he was always selective, never wholesale, and ever deserved. As a critic he was always selective, never wholesale, and ever deserved. He took two forms: individual and collective. Collectively, Merton complemented individual and collective mentorship, conversed, for whom Merton had made many a younger scholar, gently but firmly, that an ostensibly new idea bore little resemblance to one that Merton had laid out with characteristic clarity years before or (worse yet) that the vigorous and principled Mertonian argument. We miss our mentor. He was more than a mentor. He was my mentor.

In 1965, Robert Merton advised us to stand on the shoulders of giants. He was already one of the giants of our time. From a Chain Gang, tied to the wall, and the Great Society, a major boss during the 1960s.
amici, from page 1

Bylaws, from page 1

nearly two-dozen recommended amendments to the current Bylaws, and after reviewing the recommendations the Amicus Council approved all but three of these changes to the voting membership. Members will vote on these proposed changes in light of the precise word changes will be presented in the final draft.

This article provides a brief overview of the proposed changes, but feel free to still the ASA website, www.asanet.org/governance/amendments.html to see more details as well as a copy of the Bylaws with the proposed changes incorporated into the existing text.

Proposed Changes

The proposed changes include a modification to the ASA Constitution to address a conflict with Bylaws regarding how Council can take formal actions (i.e., with regard to a quorum) between physical/in-person meetings. In addition, the change excludes disputes with the District of Columbia laws, to determine whether ASA is bound as a corporation. The current Bylaws permit distribution of this material only to voting members of the Association.

Members' Resolutions may be submitted in writing, and the Bylaws provide that the ASA Council may submit the final version of the document to the ASA membership for vote at the Annual Meeting. Members will also have access to the proposal directly from the ASA website, while having a brief summary in Footnotes referencing the website. Specific recommendations for ballot amendments are presented in the Footnotes on page 3.

Weber, from page 3

and other power dynamics do not inhibit learning,” she explained in the September 27, 2002, Chronicle of Higher Education. Among her critics is FIRE Executive Director Thor Halvorson, who countered in the Chronicle article that Weber’s guidelines “are a threat to freedom of both speech and conscience” and that it is not appropriate for “requests to hold certain arguments or unanswerable facts to be imposed in a class without penalty.”

The ASA recommends changing the “then” to “then and” and adding the word “publicly.”

Weber has used these guidelines for almost two decades and often leads workshops on teaching controversial issues. She and her colleagues have published more than a dozen times in journals that encourage open and civil classroom debate, and (2) support the lines to encourage open and civil classroom debate, and (2) support the lines for classroom discussion.

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Corrections

The February issue (“Call for Papers”) incorrectly reported the correct date of the presentation on Medicalized Masculinities (edited by David F. Springer). The correct date was May 22-25, 2003, at the Hyatt Regency Atlanta. Theme: “Front-Loading Socially Constructed Dis- monymy and Black Superiority in U.S. Society: The Creation, Reproduction, and Transformation of the Black American Male.” The presentation will include a debate on race-related topics, and will be followed by a panel discussion. The panel will be moderated by Bonnie J. McCay (by the end of 2003). The editors invite contributions from scholars interested in this theme, including theoretical papers, case studies, and empirical studies. For submission of paper proposals (200-250 words), July 15, 2003. Contact: Dr. Bonnie J. McCay, Department of Sociology, Northeastern University, 360 Huntington Ave., Boston, MA 02115. Submission deadline: September 15, 2003, for submission of the final paper and conference program. Contact: Galen Drake, Department of Criminology, Sam Houston State University, P.O. Box 12000, Huntsville, TX 77343-1200. For details e-mail: gmdrake@shsu.edu.

CONFERENCE

Association of Black Sociologists (ABS) invites papers to its 32nd Annual Confer- ence on August 13-16, 2003, in Atlanta, GA, at the Hyatt Regency Atlanta. Theme: “Front-Loading Socially Constructed Dis- monymy and Black Superiority in U.S. Society: The Creation, Reproduction, and Transformation of the Black American Male.” The presentation will include a debate on race-related topics, and will be followed by a panel discussion. The panel will be moderated by Bonnie J. McCay (by the end of 2003). The editors invite contributions from scholars interested in this theme, including theoretical papers, case studies, and empirical studies. For submission of paper proposals (200-250 words), July 15, 2003. Contact: Dr. Bonnie J. McCay, Department of Sociology, Northeastern University, 360 Huntington Ave., Boston, MA 02115. Submission deadline: September 15, 2003, for submission of the final paper and conference program. Contact: Galen Drake, Department of Criminology, Sam Houston State University, P.O. Box 12000, Huntsville, TX 77343-1200. For details e-mail: gmdrake@shsu.edu.

el Palm, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Berks, PA 19504; (717) 948-7100; e-mail: dipalm@iup.edu.

Elder 4th, Easton, Pennsylvania 18042; (610) 297-9700; ext. 1410; e-mail: cmarciel@tjsl.edu.

Grynp Loe Yearly Meeting Annual Assembly, May 30-31, 2003, Ann Arbor. M.P. papers are welcome on topics related to the Amish and Anabaptist social, cultural, and religious communities. Contact: Camille Z. Charles PhD, Department of Sociology, 77 Massachusetts Avenue, #9-521, Cambridge, MA 02138; e-mail: camille@montclair.edu.

Meetings

March 27-29, 2003, North Central Sociolog- ical Association Annual Meeting, Hilton Netherland Plaza Hotel, Cincinnati, Ohio. Contact: Diana. A. Pardue, Executive Officer, North Central Sociological Association, Department of Sociology, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH 43403; e-mail: npardue@bgnet.bgsu.edu.

April 11-13, 2003, ASA/Networ, a con- ference of 125 North American college and university sociology departments and student groups. The conference includes sessions, workshops, and an annual spring conference, Furman Univer- sity, Greenville, SC. See www.asanetwork.org.


April 25, 2003, Thomas Jefferson School of Law Third Annual Women and Law Conference, The third annual Women & Law Conference will include a Women’s Rights Law Symposium, “Diversity: The Maternal Wall as a Barrier to Women’s Advancement,” where experts will present on Whiteness and Sexism, Theor- etical and ethical issues, diversity in the law, and women in the law. Contact: Dr. Carol K. Sklar, Dean, Thomas Jefferson School of Law, 5150 Broadway, San Diego, CA 92110. For more information e-mail SKLAR@TJS.aspx.

April 27-29, 2003, Justice Studies Association 5th Annual Conference, Albany, NY. Theme: “Empirical Research, Public Policy, and Social Inequalities and Restorative Justice in the 21st Century.” Contact: Dan O’Keefe, Wayne State University, Department of Criminal Justice, Michigan 820 Franklin Street, Detroit, MI 48202; e-mail: dcko@wayne.edu.

May 29-31, 2003, Seventh Annual Conference of the National Coalition for the Arts, Public Display, Bowling Green University, Bowling Green, OH 43403; e-mail: jackson Atatürk@hotmail.com; www.nca-coa.org.

May 6-8, 2003, Canadian Association for the Study of Ethnicity, Nationalism and Immigration (CANETI), Macdonald Hotel, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Hosted by the SNDT Women’s University (Mumbai) and Centre for Nationalism and Ethnic Studies (JNU). Theme: “Empowering Women to Overcome Adversity.” Contact: Dr. Unnikrishnan Janardhanan, National Centre for Traditional and Cultural Information, Sahastra Seema Samsthana, LJN Women’s University, J. Nabhakochu, Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu, India. Hosted by the SNDT Women’s University (Mumbai) and Centre for Nationalism and Ethnic Studies (JNU). Theme: “Empowering Women to Overcome Adversity.” Contact: Dr. Unnikrishnan Janardhanan, National Centre for Traditional and Cultural Information, Sahastra Seema Samsthana, LJN Women’s University, J. Nabhakochu, Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu, India.

Ne-Continued on next page
In the News, continued

5 Daily Press on overdevelopment in Williamsburg, Virginia.
Richard Sennett, New York, was featured in an article in the January 10 Chronicle of Higher Education, regarding his new book about and studying soci-
al classes.
Gregory D. Squires, George Washington University, was quoted in the January 5 edition of The Record, as reported on by Colin Aiken, who wrote an article with William Ladner on the issue of race and high school graduation rates. Martin Levine, on the persistence of inequality and segregation in Milwaukee that was featured in an article in the January 19 issue of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel.

Stark, Rodney
University of Washington, was quoted in the January 5 Perth-Swan Times (Australia) on the link between gender and religiosity.

Arlene Stein, Rutgers University, wrote an editorial in the January 5 Pittsburgh Post-Gazette on the politics of George W. Bush’s support for religious organizations to provide

Steve Koscenski, University of California-San Diego, was interviewed on the Public Broadcasting Service’s The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer, in an article that appeared in the January 19 issue of the Auckland Star.

Levine, Gary

Richard Sennett
was featured in an article in the January

Sennett, Richard
City, received the Wilbert Hites

Barry Wellman, University of Toronto, and Caroline Haythornthwaite, eds., The Internet in Everyday Life (Blackwell, 2002).

Other Organizations

The Political Sociology section of the American Sociological Association and the American Society for Political and Legal Sociology for its 30th year of uninter-

ated scholarship, on problems, a research and public education project of the American Sociological Association, was seeking people who can help analyze self-es-

sions. Contact: I.T. Motkin, or korin, or michael at ttzio22@ureach.com.

Other Organizations’ seat grants as well as room and board. Students were also invited to participate in the Internship

2003 FOOTNOTES

Joseph A. Kataria, University of Houston, was featured in the January 5 edition of The Source.

Springer-Verlag, and Philadelphia Sociological Society. (ASA)

Barbara J. Bergner, Washington State University, was quoted in the January 5 edition of The Record, as featured in an article by John W. Meyer, on the for its 30th year of unin-

mentalism and the most promising

MARCH 2003

Joseph P. Agyei, University of Georgia, was quoted in the January 5 edition of The Source.

contact the Source at joe.agy@uga.edu.

Contact us for more information about our Quality Research Summer Intensive and other services we offer.

Contact

Contact us for more information about our Quality Research Summer Intensive and other services we offer.

summer programs

The Impact of the Internet on Society, June 2-3, 2003, University of Delaware College

Park. The Department of Sociology at the University of Maryland is hosting the 2004 annual Graduate Student Workshop at the University of Maryland. The workshop will bring together leading scholars and experts who study the behav-

ioral aspects of information technology will be available at <www.uno.edu/prague/SummerSeminars>. The seminar on “Women, Work, and Family—

id, in Wheaton—he re-

Jr.

Ivan J. Fahs, professor emeritus of sociology at Wheaton College, IL, died on January 3, 2003, in his home from end-

stage multiple myeloma, a complication of a transplant eight years earlier. Survivors include his wife Joyce, his mother Elsie, his

and his family.

Ruth C. Schaller died on January 28.

Fabio Rojas,...
The 2003 Annual Meeting will be an occasion to critically and comprehensively assess how the concept of culture is used during the mid- to late-1980s. He sparked by sociological research, all of which is there some way to avoid the recurring petition of bona fide ASA members. As part of the theme of the 2003 Annual Meeting, “The Question of Culture,” is an invitation to critically assess how the concept of culture is used during the full range of social inequality and social justice. This is an opportunity for an in-depth theoretical and methodological development outside the field of sociology. The panel was well received by the audience. In summary, it was a particularly excellent meeting for lively debate on these and related issues, for the benefits of all who participated in the search, and for experiencing first-hand the cultural turn of Atlanta, one of the world’s most vibrant and progressive cities. In summary, it was a particularly excellent meeting for lively debate on these and related issues, for the benefits of all who participated in the search, and for experiencing first-hand the cultural turn of Atlanta, one of the world’s most vibrant and progressive cities.

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Minutes, continued

Research Program on the Discipline and the
Council continued the discussion of the re-
search program on the discipline and the fo-
novations, including a departmental survey, a
member-satisfaction study, and a continuing
membership. Plans for the renewal of 2012
conference at the ASA Annual Meeting.

Spruance Program on Applied Social Research
and Social Policy

The Spruance Program on Applied Social
Research and Social Policy is directed to advanc-
ing knowledge about the role of social policy
in social activities. During 2012, several re-
novations are expected, including (1) a new
fellowship; (2) a banquet in April 2013; (3)
Congressional Seminars, professional
activities, and associations within the community ac-
tion research program.

Public Information Function

Council was asked to consider proposals that
the ASA Public Information Office has handled
press releases, Fort-

Fund for the Advancement of the Discipline

Council was asked to consider proposals that
the Fund for the Advancement of the Discipline
is designed to nurture the development of social
researchers following groundbreaking research initiatives and other
important scientific initiatives. Nine
grants were made in the winter of 2012, and the Program was orga-
nized for this annual meeting.

II. Committee Appointments

A key activity of the Annual Meeting of the
ASA is to make nominations to the ASA Council to appoint committees. These recomm-
 endations are then considered by the ASA Council.

Nominations from the President

President Bielby presented recommenda-
tions for several office holders and committee
members to be reappointed as of the ASA
Council. Council approved recommendations
from President Bielby for the following:
- Chairman of the Committee on Committees;
- Chair of the Committee on Sections.

Nominations from the Secretary

Secretary Kalbreg reported that the Execu-
tive Office reviewed the Bylaws and the award
selection committees. Members of Council received the ranked
recommendations from the various advisory committees and ac-
cepted them.

It was noted that while several different committees or individuals are preparing lists of
people for possible committees on committees, it is important to remember that specific names do not move multiple
times on different committees. The most frequently nominated
members of Council are asked to be consider-
ed for the most appropriate committees.

Nominations for the Committee on Committees

In addition to the nominations provided by the
Executive Office, Council members were requested
to consider nominations for appointments to these committees.

Nominations for Council Members

Council voted unanimously to approve the
Nominations for Council Members. Council
members were requested to consider additional
names for appointment to the Executive Office and Budget
Committee.

State activity reports were presented to
Council, with updates on recent activities for each
area of the organization.

The Research Program on the Discipline and the
committee’s action on the various initiatives and sub-
committee reports were also considered.

The Research Program on the Discipline and the
Council discussed the progress of the various

Bielby, Burawoy, Kalleberg, Hillsman,

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Recent Volumes in the ASA Rose Series in Sociology

Beyond College for All: Career Paths for the Forgotten Half
By James E. Rosenbaum
$29.95 cloth
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Making Hate a Crime: From Social Movement to Law Enforcement
By Valerie Jenness and Ryken Grattet
$29.95 cloth
ISBN 0-87154-409-1
238 pp., August 2001

Published by the Russell Sage Foundation

ASR to Remain at Wisconsin Through 2003

The ASA Committee on Publications is pleased to announce that Charles Camic and Franklin Wilson have agreed to extend their service as editors of the American Sociological Review for one additional year through 2003. The appointment of a new editor (or editorial team) for 2004 and beyond is scheduled to occur in early 2003; the transition to new editorial offices is expected to take place in summer 2003. Until then, all manuscripts and other editorial correspondence should be directed to:

American Sociological Review
Department of Sociology
University of Wisconsin-Madison
1180 Observatory Drive
Madison, WI 53706
(608) 262-7458
asr@ssc.wisc.edu

Time to Renew... if you haven’t already done so!

Your membership renewal must be received by March 31, 2003 in order to vote in the upcoming ASA election and be listed in the 2003 Directory of Members. The ASA “Member Only” area on the homepage continues to feature more and more useful resources for your use. Only current members, using their member ID number, have access to these directories and information, so please send in your renewal today. Be sure to update the information in your member record (e.g., position/employer, areas of interest, education) to ensure an accurate listing in the Directory.

American Sociological Association
1307 New York Avenue NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20005-4701

Footnotes
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Staff Writers: Johanna Ebner, Carla B. Howery
Secretary: Arne L. Kalleberg

Article submissions are limited to 1,000 words and must have journalistic value (e.g., timeliness, significant impact, general interest) rather than be research-oriented or scholarly in nature. Submissions will be reviewed by the editorial board for possible publication.

“Public Forum” contributions are limited to 800 words; “Obituaries,” 500 words; “Letters to the Editor,” 400 words; “Department” announcements, 200 words. All submissions should include a contact name and, if possible, an e-mail address. ASA reserves the right to edit for style and length all material published. The deadline for all material is the first of the month preceding publication (e.g., February 1 for March issue).

Send communications on material, subscriptions, and advertising to: American Sociological Association, 1307 New York Avenue NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20005-4701; (202) 383-9005; Fax (202) 638-0882; e-mail footnotes@asanet.org; http://www.asanet.org

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