Looking Forward to the 2009 Annual Meeting in San Francisco

Bringing Communities Back In? Setting a New Policy Agenda

by Patricia Hill Collins, University of Maryland-College Park

The Obama administration has signaled its desire to make science more central to its public policy decision-making process. And, in March, the nearly $800 billion American Recovery and Reinvestment Act signed by Obama infused the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Science Foundation (NSF) with about $13 billion over a two-year period to fund basic research. Since then, ASA has provided ongoing updates (at www.asanet.org/cs/root/learn/advocacy/research_funding_available_from_nih) for researchers interested in applying for this funding.

Independent of the stimulus investment in science, NSF’s Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences is enhancing research capacity to examine the effects of the economic stimulus support of science. Through its Science of Science & Innovation Policy Program (see p. 2 of the January 2009 Footnotes), NSF will use its Rapid Response Research five-year funding mechanism to support short proposals (see the NSF article on p. 5) that address questions on the impact of this jumpstart science investment on science, technology, the economy, and the scientific workforce. In anticipation of this research capital, ASA Executive Officer Sally Hillsman explored social science’s potential in the national recovery in her February 2009 (p. 2) Vantage Point Footnotes column.

Kathleen S. Lowney to Edit Teaching Sociology

by Maxine P. Atkinson, North Carolina State University

The incoming editor of Teaching Sociology, Kathleen S. Lowney, will continue the journal’s strong leadership in the scholarship of teaching and learning—for our profession and for the larger academy. Lowney believes that good teaching comes from engaged teachers/facilitators who encourage students to be actively involved with material, ideas, and each other. A great class is created in part with much self-reflection by the teacher and thoughtfully calibrated cultivation of technology, supportive learning materials, and assignments that captivate students’ interest. What happens in a classroom can sometimes seem like alchemy, but it needs to be alchemy informed by the latest in the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Lowney loves to teach—it truly is her passion; those moments when a student who has been struggling suddenly “gets it” are more worth than her hours of grading and course preparation. It is in a classroom with students practicing their collective sociological imaginations that Katie finds her most comfortable. It is this passion for teaching that makes her an excellent editor of Teaching Sociology.

As good teachers are wont to do, Kathe recognizes and acknowledges the contributions of her own mentors. As an undergraduate at the University of Washington, subsequently, NIH solidified its plan, identifying 15 Challenge Areas, with three of particular interest to social scientists (Health, Disparities, Behavior, Behavioral Change, and Prevention), and Models for National Mentoring Networks for Individuals from Diverse Backgrounds in Mental Health Research. In addition, each NIH Institute and Center has issued RFAs (Request for Applications) tailored to their specific missions, many of which are relevant to social science. This favorable shift toward science creates new opportunities for social scientists generally, and sociologists in particular, to highlight how social structural analyses might profitably address macro policies (e.g., social aspects of the economy), as well as tackle longstanding social issues within health, criminal justice, education, housing, and other key areas of public policy. But this one-shot research funding surge for NSF and NIH will have a time-limited impact even as the agencies attempt to stretch the financial impact. The long term has to remain in our focus as we aim to identify the most suitable social science paradigms to satisfy policy needs.

Social Science Paradigms and Policy

Long-term solutions require social scientists to revisit two prevailing paradigms that frame public policy. One paradigm contends that, because causes of social problems as well as their solutions reflect an accumulation of individual choices, the individual should be the basic unit of public policy. Yet, the recent global financial crisis suggests that market-based solutions that focus on individual decision-making as the foundation for public policy come with serious limitations. In contrast, the other paradigm posits that social structures should be the basic unit of public policy and that changing social institutions eventually changes the behavior of the people within them. However, this approach has been criticized for its seeming era- sure of individual choice and personal responsibility.

There are signs among federal agency leadership that the Bush administration’s tendency to overemphasize individual factors and underemphasize social structural factors

Carla Howery 1950-2009

On March 31, 2009, Carla B. Howery, retired ASA Deputy Executive Officer and recipient of the 2009 ASA Distinguished Contributions to Teaching Award, passed away at her home in Takoma Park, MD. Her obituary will appear in the May/June issue of Footnotes.
Tempered excitement is quickly energizing the scientific community in the government and academia following recent moves by the Obama administration. Enhancing federally supported basic science research through such two-year funding boost—courtesy of the economic stimulus—has helped rekindle the serious downturn in federal support of basic science. This supports the seriousness of the president and his initiatives. The idea that we might now see a sustained recovery in federal science funding after a long period of declines is welcomed by the scientific community.

The promise of science's offerings being discussed openly and enthusiastically in policy circles offered by the new administration suggest a new day is possible. The science community's enthusiasm at being listened to and appreciated can only feed the creative juices of scientists who have felt legitimate anxiety about their work in recent years. It is welcome news for the government as well as for its scientists.

Key players in the Obama administration are using their positions to push for the re-establishment of federal science spending. The new director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), Holdren confirmed as Obama science policy advisor, is orchestrating a workflow aimed at relaunching the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA). His initiatives have been previewed at an informal White House meeting involving the President and top science advisors. It has been reported that Holdren has been in frequent contact with the President, the science community, and Congress.”

Who’s Congress Gonna Call ...

The push for responsible spending that accompanies this massive distribution of taxpayer money directly confronts the federal government employees with the need to prove their ability to calculate societal benefits and judge the implications of specific scientific and technological undertakings. The science policy

U.S. teen fertility tops that of other developed nations

Compared with other developed countries, the United States has higher fertility rates among teenage girls. Nonetheless, the fertility rate of girls ages 15 to 19 declined consecutively from 1991 to 2005, according to recent Population Reference Bureau (PRB) data. However, the latest data for 2006 may show a reversal of this trend, with the fertility rate inching upward. This trend is a concern because of the negative effects associated with adolescent pregnancy, including lower educational achievement, unemployment, poverty, repeated pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, infant mortality, and high risk pregnancy. The PRB article was written by sociologist Rogelio Soto, Texas A&M University, and Engegia Conde, a senior research associate at Texas A&M University. For more on this topic, see <www.prb.org/Articles/2009/ teenagefertility.aspx>
News from ASA’s Research Department

This column keeps you informed about the latest activities from the Research and Development Department to help you stay current with changes in the profession and the discipline.

Employment Prospects

As the current economic recession affects faculty hiring in higher education, disciplinary associations such as the American Sociological Association and Modern Language Association (MLA) have been reporting declining numbers of jobs for PhDs advertised at their meetings or on the websites. As a result of what they refer to as “turmoil in financial markets” and “what appears to be a non-economic downtown,” the American Economics Association has asked employers who have listed positions in the Job Opportunities for Economists to announce any suspension or cancellation of listed jobs. Between August and December 2008, more than 50 jobs were cancelled, according to the list of announcements.

The American Sociological Association (ASA) is joining its sister organizations in announcing job losses for sociology PhDs at all levels. The table below compares the number of unduplicated job listings advertised in the American Economic Association’s website in 2006 (a particularly good year for job listings in sociology) and 2008 (what appears to be a particularly bad year for jobs in listing sociology). (The 2006 findings were originally discussed in Too Many or Too Few PhDs? Employment Opportunities in Academic Sociology, which can be accessed at the “Research and Stats” webpage at www.asanet.org). The table shows a decline of 22.8 percent overall between the two years. This is not as bad as it might appear. For example, the dip did not occur at all once. When accounting for the overall number of jobs advertised (including duplicate entries), there was a 36-percent decline in listings between 2006 and 2007, and another 17-percent decline between 2007 and 2008. Jobs for assistant professors, the largest category of listings, declined by almost 40 percent between 2006 and 2008.

The largest decreases in listings were for full and associate professor positions. These positions have been reduced to a handful, although most jobs are still likely to be handled through more formal networks. The smallest declines are for fellowships and positions in applied, research, and policy settings.

The story of decline may be overly pessimistic, however. The American Sociological Association notes that small increase in the number of academic positions for deans, department heads, visiting professors, or soft-money research. Most significant, according to the ASC, was the increase in the number of positions with faculty rank open or having more than one rank listed. Jobs open to all ranks more than tripled over the two-year period. In addition, an unknown number of jobs not advertised in the ASA Job Bank (i.e., paid ads) are listed on ASA sections’ listings and by regional sociological societies and aligned association websites (i.e., non-paid ads). The number of jobs not listed through paid outlets such as the ASA Job Bank may grow with the increasing economic uncertainty.

Alternatively, the picture of losses may be more glass-half-empty, especially for job seekers. As with the economists, job may have been cancelled. In order to present a more accurate picture of the job market for PhD-level sociologists, Jerry Jacobs (University of Pennsylvania) will work with the ASA Research and Development Department to find out how many of the 2008 jobs listed in the Job Bank were filled and how many were cancelled. Chairs and department administrators of sociology departments should expect a shorter timeline for this spring. Preliminary findings are available at 2009 ASA Annual Meeting in San Francisco.

Who’s Teaching and How Much?

Higher education organizations, coalitions, professional associations, and disciplinary societies have decried the increasing use of adjunct faculty and its negative impact on the quality of student learning. It is generally assumed that the heavy use of adjunct faculty is limited to the humanities, but reports in 2008 by the American Federation of Teachers and the MLA show that this type of employment is widespread across disciplines, estimating that between 38 and 41 percent of courses are taught by adjunct faculty at four-year institutions. However, results from the 2001 and 2007 ASA Department Surveys reveal an opposite trend in sociology. Full-time and supplementary faculty numbers have remained stable in the six years between surveys, while teaching loads have increased for full-time professors. These findings are consistent with the latest report from the American Economic Association that “The Average Professor is Teaching More Than Ever.”

ASA Council Supports Independence of Federal Statistical and Research Agencies

By Lee Herring, ASA Public Affairs and Public Information Officer

As February 2009 meeting, ASA Council considered a long-brewing concern that has been affecting the credibility of federal statistical and research agencies in recent years. This latest story begins with the criminology research community in November 2008. Through an open letter from Jeremy Travis, the President of the John Jay College of Criminal Justice at the City University of New York, to the American Sociological Association (ASC), Travis urged the ASC to examine “the federal role in promoting research on crime, society’s responses to crime, and the administration of justice.” Travis and the request at the time because of the “unprecedented opportunity” presented by the election of a new U.S. Congress and President, and we wrote.

Travis also executed a far-reaching appeal to the broader research community, including sociology, through professional associations’ leadership that he serves as a former director of the U.S. Department of Justice’s (DOJ) National Institute of Justice from 1994-2000, the nation’s primary source of extramural research funding on crime and justice, Travis brought unique insights about the value of federal criminal justice research and statistical enterprises in relation to the efficiency and function of the organizational structure in which they operate within DOJ’s Office of Justice Programs.

In particular, the research community long has entertained the notion that a new structure and operation of DOJ’s justice research and the Bureau of Justice Statistics to create a scientific branch of government that operates under scientific principles comparable to the National Institutes of Health or the National Institute of Health. According to the ASA Executive Officer, Ron Pipkin, the LSA plans now to work cooperatively in designing a final recommendation to Congress and the White House. The goal is to establish a new Office of Justice Research and Statistics, headed by an Assistant Attorney General who has a background and expertise suitable for running a statistics and research agency, bringing this domain of federal research on crime and drug abuse, education, and health and disease.

Officers of ASA’s Section on Crime and Deviance approached the ASA leadership in December 2008 with a request for endorsement of the proposed new structure. The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) urge support of the initiative in a meeting with President Barack Obama transition team for the DOJ. COSSA maintained that “an office will give higher status and greater visibility to justice research and place the justice research agenda on sounder footing.”

ASA Council Statement on Federal Statistical and Research Agencies

The Council of the American Sociological Association (ASA) unanioumsly affirms its long-standing commitment to the independence, transparency and scientific leadership of federal agencies that conduct and support research and collect statistical data that are vital to the well-being of American society. The range, rigor and openness of research and statistics on the nation’s many social institutions, processes and policies are key to understanding the quality of life and its effects on the health and well-being of all Americans. As a scientific society, the ASA carefully monitors the performance of federal research and statistical agencies that are essential to the conduct of high quality social science research. The ASA also monitors the development of proposals about the structure and operation of these agencies that may impact the extent to which the principles Council has affirmed (i.e., independence, transparency and scientific leadership of these federal agencies) are likely to be handled.

The ASA Council endorses the goals of recent proposals regarding the future of the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the National Institute of Justice, both agencies within the U.S. Department of Justice that are important national scientific investments. One proposal endorsed by the Executive Board of the American Sociological Association, the Consortium of Social Science Associations, and similar organizations calls for moving these statistical and research agencies into a new independent office within the Justice Department.

The Council of the American Sociological Association encourages Congress to evaluate these proposals in light of their commitment to the independence, transparency and scientific leadership of these important federal social science and statistical agencies.
UCSF Doctoral Sociology Program Celebrates Its 40th

The University of California-San Francisco (UCSF) Doctoral Program in Sociology recently celebrated its 40th birthday and almost 50 years of sociology at the university. The first sociologist on the faculty was Anselm Strauss, hired in 1960, who was soon joined by Virginia Olsen, Fred Davis, Barbara Glaser, Howard Schatzman, and Egon Bittner. Focused on medical sociology, UCSF pioneered in research on chronic illness, medical care institutions, women's health, gender, qualitative methods, and health policy. Those traditions continue along with newer emphases in science, technology and medicine studies and race, health disparities, and globalization.

The 40th birthday brought together alumni, other former students whose training and careers were shaped by the sociology program, current students, and long-time friends from the School of Nursing and across UCSF. The UCSF Doctoral Program in Sociology is the only one in the world structurally located in a School of Nursing.

The birthday event, held at the campus, was dedicated to the memory of Pauline Carroll Estes, Charlene Harrington, Ginnie Olsen, Robert Staples, Lenny Schatzman (deceased), and Anselm Strauss (deceased). The celebration began with a hilarious and sophisticated assessment, by Stefan Timmermans (UCLA), of the “Contributions of UCSF Sociology to Nursing Scholarship.” This documented the sustained impact of Strauss and Glaser’s grounded theory and discussed Adele Clarke’s situational analysis.

Specialty Areas

Six panels then focused on the specialty areas the faculty have generated over the past 40 years. The first panel was classic medical sociology, discussed by alumni Carolyn Winzer (UCSF) and Kathy Charmaz (Sonoma State), including research on the technologized hospital, lived experiences of chronic illness, and informed consent in medical research. The second spoke on more recent work on violence as a health issue framed by Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences Chair Howard Pinderhughes, along with projects on electronic health records, a genetics of phan tom limb, and HIV disclosure. Research on drugs and needle exchange was detailed by student Peter Davidson. Women’s health/gender and health was the second specialty emphasis, initiated in 1973 by Ginnie Olsen and Sherry Buri Ruzek (Temple University). They organized the first social science conference on women’s health in 1975 with federal support. Early research examined breast cancer, informed consent, domestic violence, and donor insemination in Sweden. Alum Monica Casper (Arizona State University) and student Amin Martin discussed recent and future directions including research on fetal surgery, abortion, safer sex, brokering of Philippine domestic workers, lesbians’ use of assisted reproduction, cosmetic surgery, and gender and the sociology of food in transnational migration.

Today, UCSF sociology is internationally known for its research in the sociology of aging, including its Institute on Health and Aging founded in 1979 by Carroll Estes, now led by alumn Patrick Fox and Wendy Max. A talk by Estes framed the faculty’s theoretical contributions to critical gerontology, including biomedication of aging. Alum Steve Wallace (UCLA) provided an ambitious overview of UCSF research on Alzheimer’s, hospice, caregiving, and disability studies. Future directions were discussed by Brooke Hollister including home care, Social Security reform and social isolation of elders.

Deeply linked to aging research is the emphasis on health policy spearheaded by faculty Charlene Harrington and Bob Newcomer and exemplified in their studies of long-term care and nursing homes. Alum Dick Culbertson traveled from Tulane University to discuss his and other alumni’s work on physician autonomy under managed care, nursing home staffing and safety, and academic health centers. Alum Alexis Martinez (San Francisco State University) framed recent research directions including hopi villageness, health labor market issues, dental care delivery, community benefits of local hospitals, smoking and mental illness, and Guardskill immunization as policy issues. Science, technology, and medicine studies have been led by faculty Adele Clarke since 1989. At the event, early accomplishments in this area were framed by alumn Leigh Star (Santa Clara/Pittsburg) including historical sociologies of brain localization and reproductive sciences as well as sex pre selection. More recent work on the molecularization of environmental sciences, stem cell research, chemoprevention, Viagra, and cloning of endangered species was framed by alum Sara Shostak (Brandeis University). Future directions were elucidated by student Jia-shun Chen, including projects on scientific expertise and harm reduction policy, autism genetics, biomonitoring, and pubertal “windows of vulnerability” in breast cancer risk.

The most recent area of emphasis—race, health disparities, and globalization—harks back to early work. Alum David Hayes-Bautista (UCLA), a founder of the non-profit health care facility La Clinica de la Raza, detailed his career-long documenta tion of Latino/a health issues, including the Latino paradox. Other early work focused on the HinTong, Lakota Sioux, and the Port Chicago disaster. Alum and faculty lanet Shum discussed her sociology of epidemiology, its use of racial categories, and others’ projects on mixed-race identification, and Chinese and Vietnamese immigrant community health. Last, the most recent direction was added by the faculty. Shari Dworkin, discussed her work on gender relations, economic empowerment programs, and HIV/AIDS prevention in Africa. As Stefan Timmermans concluded, for a quite small program, UCSF sociology has created some very large footprints in the discipline. For further information, see <www.ucsf.edu/medsoc/> and <www.ucsf.edu/anselmstrauss/>.

Task Force on Teaching Ethics Continues Its Work

For professors who have been searching multiple websites for resources to teach an ethics course or class, ASA now offers a website to be used by sociology courses, and a special section for department chairs. The ethics-related cases are linked directly to the ASA Code of Ethics, making faculty able to use the cases with ease.

The website contains ethics-related cases for consideration, discussion questions, an annotated bibliography, and other resources for use in the classroom.

In addition to Babbie, the other Task Force members were Thomas Van Valey, Western Michigan University (emeritus), and Lisa Anne Zuley, Montclair State University. The ASA staff liaison to the project was Minority Affairs Program Director Jean K. Myers.

In 2006, under the advice of former ASA Deputy Executive Officer Carla B. Howery, the Task Force’s mission was to work with members of COPE to “develop curriculum materials to teach students about professional ethics from early in their undergraduate careers through graduate school.” According to Babbie, the “aim was to create and make available resources to help teachers bring ethical issues alive in all areas of sociology curriculum.” The Task Force members agreed that developing a website containing a collection of ethics-oriented modules would be the most effective way to do this, as they could be quickly downloaded and easily updated.

Because COPE had begun compiling cases in a separate collection-related project in 1997 (a project that had substantial work done on it but was not completed), there was a base of materials already in place. With the assistance of then-COPE members Lisa Brush, Virginia O’Connell, Douglas Anderton, and Christopher Hill, the Task Force was able to edit many of the existing cases and also find new materials to add to the collection. In addition, calls for case submissions were published in issues of Footnotes in spring and early summer 2008, and further solicitations were made through ASA ChairLink and to the ASA sections’ listservs.

Website Offerings

For Van Valey, the website is aimed at two main populations: teaching faculty and department chairs. He said that “teaching faculty should be able to use the cases in their classes to help students become sensitive to ethical issues, and department chairs can use them to help their faculty do the same.” The website contains separate case sections by ethics-related topic, by a selection of sociology courses, and a special section for department chairs. The ethics-related case topics include authorship credit, competence, confidentiality, conflicts of interest, harm, plagiarism, public communication, and numerous others. There are 15 different sociology courses for which cases were created especially appropriate by the Task Force and 23 cases that are specifically geared for use by department chairs. For each case, there are also discussion questions to pose as well as some commentary to help start a discussion. Importantly, a full annotated bibliography of articles and books is available to help both teachers and students do research on ethics issues.

Because the cases are linked directly to the ASA Code of Ethics, the website should help make more sociologists aware of the Code and its place in the profession.

After seeing a presentation on the website at its February 2009 meeting, ASA Council members unanimously approved it as the final report of the Task Force and encouraged its use by teachers throughout the sociology curriculum.

The website and its contents will be featured in various places this summer at the 2009 Annual Meeting in San Francisco.
Beyond the Regular and Dissertation Competitions: Funding Opportunities at NSF

When sociologists seek funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF), they typically submit proposals to the Sociology Program. There are more options. In addition to the Sociology Program, sociological research is appropriate for consideration in all foundation-wide funding competitions and is actively sought by interdisciplinary programs. In this article, the Sociology Program directors discuss the range of funding opportunities for sociological research and training at NSF. Sociologists directing two interdisciplinary programs in the Division of Social and Economic Sciences: Science, Technology, and Society (STS) and Methods, Measurement, and Statistics (MMS) discuss types of funding available through these programs. Additional information is available on the NSF website (www.nsf.gov).

Support for Sociological Research and Training
Program Directors: Jan E. Stets, University of California-Riverside, and Patricia White, National Science Foundation

The Sociology Program supports investigator-initiated basic research that is theoretically focused empirical work. The Program is open to research in the substantive areas represented in the American Sociological Association, with appropriate consideration of projects determined by the clarity of theoretical aims and potential contributions. NSF recognizes that research infrastructure and data resources are necessary for funding for sociological research is appropriate for consideration in non-competitive and qualitative approaches. The majority of proposals the Program receives is in response to the regular proposal and dissertation competitions (see a future issue for a listing of funded proposals). However, there is an array of funding for sociologists beyond these, including two new mechanisms that became available in January 2009: the Rapid Proposal and Research (RAPID) and Early-Concept Grants for Exploratory Research (EAGER). RAPID supports studies for which there are urgent reasons for quick decision and analysis of data. It would include quick-response research on natural disasters and similar unanticipated events. EAGERs support work in its early stages on untested but potentially transformative ideas and approaches. The research may be considered "high risk-high payoff," perhaps involving radically different approaches, applying new expertise, or engaging in novel disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives.

In the NSF Directorate for Behavioral and Economic Sciences issued a Dear Colleague Letter in December 2008 that encourages the submission of research proposals for consideration in three areas: (1) research on infrastructure development including, but not limited to, machines, shared databases, repositories, connective technologies, etc.; (2) interdisciplinary projects that advance our understanding of the dynamics of human action and development and organizational, cultural, and societal adaptation and change, and (3) complexity science including the dynamics of complex systems such as "tipping points" where many things change at once and "emergent phenomena." A second Dear Colleague Letter was issued in January to announce funding for interdisciplinary work in Environment, Society, and the Economy (ESE). Topics of interest include decision-making strategies related to environmental change and environmental change and its impact on the evolution of human behavior. The Sociology Program continues to fund workshops on specific topics that hold the potential for opening up areas of new research. Past workshops have been highly successful and have directed scholars to neglected and/or emerging areas within the discipline including qualitative sociology, global climate change, and most recently, survey research in the Middle East. A forthcoming workshop is scheduled on the moral dimension of social life.

NSF considers graduate student training an important part of its mission, and it has two ongoing graduate traineeship programs: Integrative Graduate Education and Research Training (IGERT) and Partners for International Research and Training (PIRE). IGERT supports interdisciplinary graduate research training, while PIRE promotes international research collaborations to advance social scientific knowledge and discoveries. Sociologists are encouraged to develop sociologically based IGERTs and PIREs or integrate sociology as a component of interdisciplinary graduate training. Funding opportunities for sociologists are also available in the Polar Social Sciences Program that supports sociological research in polar regions, and the Science of Science Innovation Policy (ScSIP) Program. ScSIP supports work on the ways in which the contexts, structures, and processes of science are affected by policy decisions and the collection, analysis, and visualization of new data for the scientific enterprise.

In addition to the Sociology Program, sociological research is appropriate for consideration in all major foundation-wide funding competitions and is actively sought by interdisciplinary programs.

Program Directors: Jan E. Stets, University of California-Riverside, and Patricia White, National Science Foundation

“In addition to the Sociology Program, sociological research is appropriate for consideration in all major foundation-wide funding competitions and is actively sought by interdisciplinary programs.”

Science, Technology and Society (STS) Program
Program Directors: Laurell Smith-Doerr, Boston University, and Stephen Zehr, University of Southern Indiana

Sociology is a key part of STS. The STS program funds research in four areas of social aspects of science, engineering, and technology: ethics and values, history and philosophy, social studies, and studies of policy. STS supports funding through standard awards, interdisciplinary IGERTs and PIREs, doctoral dissertation grants, professional development fellowships, small grants for training and research, and workshop/conference grants. Because of the centrality of sociology in STS, the involvement of sociologists is incredibly important for future research directions in the program. The following examples of research transgenic crops as spatially rooted in places where crops are developed, tested, and grown.

* Doug McAdam, Stanford University, “A Comparative Study of Community Response to Infrastructure Siting Decisions” focuses on responses to sitting decisions rather than move- ments (including cases with little to extensive public opposition) allowing for more robust understanding of links between movement mobilization and technical factors.

* Amit Prasad, University of Missouri-Columbia, “Scanning the Globe: Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) Research and Development in the United Kingdom, India and the United States” notes that even though the relationship between the United Kingdom, India, and the United States is asymmetrical, technico-scientific research among these nations can- not be understood through simple conceptual dichotomies of center/ periphery, west/non-west, dominant/ dominated, or globalism/localism.

Methodology, Measurement, and Statistics (MMS) Program
Program Director: R. Saylor Breckenridge, University of Kentucky

Sociology plays a central role as well in the Methodology, Measurement, and Statistics (MMS) Program, an interdiscipli- nary program. MMS funds research revolving around the development, applica- tion, and extension of formal models and methodology for social and behavioral research including data collection, organiza- tional infrastructure, and educational efforts. The MMS program supports a vari- ety of awards including regular research awards, doctoral dissertation grants, and mid-career research fellowships where, in part, investigators are expected to spend their fellowship in a location immersing themselves in an area of study outside their current areas of expertise. MMS also supports Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) Supplements to enhance undergraduate education and training in the development of methods for the social, behavioral, and economic sciences and to broaden the participation of underrepresented students in high-quality research projects.

MMS supports a wide range of socio- logical research, often in conjunction with the Sociology Program through co- reviews. Recent examples of MMS funding to sociologists include:

* Jason Kaufman, Harvard University, Social Networks and Online Spaces: A Cohort Study of American College Students” collects large and complete network data from Facebook.com to study network relationships, cultural tastes, and the formation of friendship groups.

* Stefan Timmermans, University of California-Los Angeles, “Collecting Qualitative Research through Methodological Innovation and Integration: An Integration of Comparative Analysis and Ethnography” links methodologies to understand social context and the mechanisms of social change through research on citizen-participation communications during new- borns’ health screening.

* Devah Pager, Princeton University, “CAREER: Toward Improving the Conceptualization and Measurement of Discrimination” improves empirical measurement of discrimination via a mix of methods that are then used to better understand the economic exclu- sion of young disadvantaged men.

* Katherine Stovel, University of Wisconsin-Madison, “CAREER: Strengthening Qualitative Research through Methodological Innovation and Integration: An Integration of Comparative Analysis and Ethnography” links methodologies to understand social context and the mechanisms of social change through research on citizen-participation communications during new-borns’ health screening.

* Kazuo Yamaguchi, National Opinion Research Center, “Multi-level Risk-interdependence Models for Competing Events and their Applications to Social and Demographic Research” develops improved hazard rate models for the occurrence of multiple events.

Concluding Thoughts
All of us at the Foundation encourage sociologists to become involved in the activities of NSF. Serve as a reviewer. Once you have your PhD in hand, send your curriculum vitae to relevant program direc- tors and offer to review grant proposals in your specialty areas. Submit a proposal as a principal investigator or co-principal investigator on a dissertation or interdisciplinary grant. Serve on an NSF review panel, if invited. Finally, think about apply- ing for openings at the NSF as a program director, division director, or even assistant director to the directorate. The experience will enrich your future endeavors.
Some knowledge of the actual people within them. Bringing multifaceted ideas about community that view individual choice in the context of social structure, some might develop more robust social science paradigms for long-term policy needs.

Plenary Panel
The 2009 ASA Annual Meeting program theme, The New Politics of Community, contains many opportunities to investigate new avenues for social science and public policy. Yet one important and exciting plenary session, “Bringing Communities Back into Setting Public Policy” should not be missed. Four prominent sociologists have been invited to grapple with the question of how making ideas about community more central to sociological thinking might catalyze new avenues of investigation for public policy. All of our panelists are renowned scholars with significant accomplishments within their respective public policy venues, and all work with communities and social networks broadly defined.

Panelists who are scheduled to join us for the plenary session include Robert J. Sampson, Henry Ford II Professor of the Social Sciences and Professor of Urban Planning and Policy, Harvard University. Sampson’s recent publications have focused on race/ethnicity and social mechanisms of concentrated inequal-
ity, collective efficacy and crime, immigration, the social meanings and stigma of “disorder,” poverty traps, the spatial dynam-
ic of social life, comparative macro social processes, and policy issues related to national and world policy. His work has focused on how public policy making is shaped by social structural and social network phenomena that connect local areas to their communities and diverse social environments.

Loweney from page 1

Loweney is the Chair of the Society of Social Problem’s Teaching Social Problems Division. She is currently serving a term on the ASA Council for the Section on Teaching and Learning and, earlier, she was co-editor of its newsletter. In addition, for the past few years she served on the ASA Distinguished Contributions to Teaching Award Committee.

Loweney has been a reviewer for many journals, including Teaching Sociology, and has been on the editorial boards of Sociological Perspectives and Sociological Spectrum. Her current research interests include constructionist studies of social problems and the media, adolescent Satanic style, collaborative-community-university-service-learning projects, and productivity websites and images of the self.

Loweney as an Editor
Loweney knows quality scholarship when she sees it. She recognizes good research and teaching as one form of good scholarship. Her contributions will include organization, management, and a creative vision of what Teaching Sociology can do for the discipline and the teacher-scholar who practice it. Kathe has a keen eye for recognizing not only the great work we as sociologists do but also the underlying potential that is often more difficult to see. She will be a constructive, supportive, and honest editor who will help both the journal and the individual author take steps toward creating an even more exciting scholarship of teaching and learning. Her leadership will combine an understanding and appreciation of both broader assessment movement in higher education and the application of sociological methods and theory to what happens in classrooms.

Kathe’s personal skills and habits will also contribute to her success as an editor. She is comfortable working with an unfappable calmness, a capacity for hard work, and a strong sense of fairness. She and her deputy editor, Glen Muschert, Miami University (Ohio), will continue to build Teaching Sociology into one of the premier publications in the scholarship of teaching and learning. One sign of our confidence is that such capable scholars have chosen to do this most important work.

Teaching Sociology publishes articles, notes, and reviews intended to be helpful to the discipline’s teachers. Articles range from experimental studies of teaching and learning to broad, synthetic essays on pedagogical issues. Notes focus on specific teaching issues or techniques. The general intent is to share theoretically stimulating and useful information and advice with teachers. For more information, see <www.asanet.org/cjournals/ta>. 

Footnotes

The 2009 election is underway as of mid-April. All members with valid e-mail addresses will receive instructions on how to access candidate statements and how to cast their votes online, or you can visit <www.asanet.org> to cast your vote. The election will be open for voting through June 1.
for public policy and debate
Public Sociology Is Not Community Organizing

Some quixotic members of our profession have fostered an image of the public sociologist as a Romantic troubadour—the sociologist as community organizer or public policy guru. In an article appearing in Academic Matters and Josée High Ed, a Canadian sociologist suggests a more realistic alternative to these charades. Robert Brym’s “Why I Teach Intro” is an elegant endorsement of teaching as a genre of public sociology.

The truth is that most sociologists who promote this activist fantasies are wannabes. Self-delusion, however, is not limited to this discipline; these reveries are perhaps even more widespread in department meetings and literature committees. Only those who have spent their entire adult lives in academic monasteries are naïve enough to see community organizing and public policy advocacy as leisure-time activities. Last week I spent two days meeting with Minnesota legislative leaders. Recently, I exchanged e-mails about legislative strategy with the Speaker of the House. Last evening I testified at a state town hall meeting in Woodbury. Yet, I harbored no illusion that I was practicing a profession. I was merely being a good citizen, by the way, for the public sociologist encourages sociologists to engage in citizenship whenever and wherever the opportunity presents itself. However, do not delude yourself by confusing citizenship with what Max Weber called “politics as a vocation.” Before becoming an academic, I spent 20 years mastering the craft of community organizing. I spent those years learning to mentor leaders, build organizations, and organize. I spent those years learning as a vocation. “Before becoming an academic, I spent 20 years mastering the craft of community organizing. I spent those years learning to mentor leaders, build organizations, and organize. I spent those years learning as a vocation.”

Robert Brym’s “Why I Teach Intro” is an elegant endorsement of teaching as a genre of public sociology.

Before becoming an academic, I spent 20 years mastering the craft of community organizing. I spent those years learning to mentor leaders, build organizations, and organize. I spent those years learning as a vocation.
Plaintiff in a discrimination case where an insurance company was accused of refusing to provide service to a community in part because of the ethnic composition of the residents of that community. Attorneys for the insurer asked me if I was an advocate. I acknowledged that I am in favor of strong enforcement of fair housing rules and responded that I assumed this makes no more of an advocate than anyone else in the room.

I then pointed out that I was receiving an hourly fee for my work on this case that would not be affected at all by the outcome. On the other hand, I reminded my questioners that the insurer they represented had a major financial self-interest in the outcome and observed that, consequently, their client was the most subjective participant in these proceedings and the one whose objectivity should in fact be in question. They were representing the advocate. They then changed the line of questioning.

Litigation is an adversarial procedure. It is to be expected that defendants and plaintiffs in a lawsuit will strive to represent their interests. But the credibility of those who are incentivized primarily to pursue objective social science research and who favor effective enforcement of fair housing rules should not be discounted or discredited in favor of whose financial self-interest is tied directly to the outcome of a particular case.

Gregory D. Squires is a professor of sociology and public policy and director of the Social Science Research Center at George Washington University. 

Vantage Point
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There was lots of “snake oil” for solving our nation’s problems. Since 1995, during the peak of our nation’s needs for thoughtful science and technology policy, Congress has been starving for accessible, thoughtful, nonpartisan analyses to pursue objective social science research and who favor effective enforcement of fair housing rules should not be discounted or discredited in favor of whose financial self-interest is tied directly to the outcome of a particular case.

Gregory D. Squires is a professor of sociology and public policy and administration at George Washington University. 

Call for Papers
Publications International Feminist Journal of Politics seeks manuscripts for a special issue on new directions in feminism and human rights. We invite manuscripts that capture the innovation of human rights strategies and discussions by feminist advocates, activists, and grassroots movements for political radical ends as well as manuscripts that offer new critiques and challenges of human rights practices in struggles for justice. We are especially interested in manuscripts that engage with both new and longstanding conceptions of human rights as individual, imperial, and state-centric by foregrounding transnational feminist mobilizations of human rights. Deadline: August 1, 2009. For more information, visit <www.indiologue.org/submissions>. The Journal of Inter-Religious Dialogue call for submissions on "Engaging the Taboo: Gender, the Body, and Sexuality in our Religious Traditions." Conceptualizing gender, sexuality, and the body has challenged theologians and religious leaders for millennia. The Journal of Inter-Religious Dialogue hopes to broaden the scope of discourse on these topics, which all too often are left out of interreligious dialogue and work for the common good. Deadline: May 31, 2009. Contact: submissions@indiologue.org. For more information, visit <www.indiologue.org/submissions>. Social Action Fact Sheets 2010. The Social Action Committee of the Sociologists for Women in Society (SWS) is issuing a call for proposals from persons interested in compiling Fact Sheets for the calendar year 2010 on the following topics: Women and Criminal Justice, Women and Nutrition, Gender and Medicalization, Oppression without Bigots, Women and Work in Hard Times, and an open category. Fact sheets will be distributed to SWS members quarterly via the Network News in 2010 and will be made available on the SWS website. The purpose of fact sheets is to aid people in the trenches of our communities educating and working for social justice. Fact sheets are intended to be useful sources of information for teaching, social action, and other areas where succinct, accessible information is needed. Fact sheets be concise (2-4 pages), readable, and manageable. Proposals are due June 1, 2009. Contact: Jodie M. Lawston at jlawston@csusm.edu.

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Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology (FCSM) Research Conference, November 2-4, 2009, Washington Convention Center, Washington, DC. The conference will feature mostly contributed papers with formal disclosure and software demonstrations on topics related to a variety of statistical research issues. Papers and demonstrations should address methodology, empirical studies, relevant issues, or needs for statistical research. Papers must be original and not previously published or disseminated. Submit the abstract online by April 15, 2009. Contact: Anna Holoss at (301) 763-2308, fcsm@census.gov or Dawn E. Haines at (301) 763-4881; dawen.haines@census.gov. For more information, visit <www.fcsm.gov/events>.

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Theme: “Using the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Survey to Address Marriage and Family” The workshop will provide an overview of the research design, results, and methods and then provide insights into the uses for the data by statisticians and sociologists to address family and marriage issues. 

Funding
The Anthony Marshonne Foundation announces its 2009 small grants competition. This competition seeks work on single-life and pilot work on health-behavior connections. Projects must be for the basis of a major grant proposal to be made, with the agency or large foundation. For more information, visit <www.uw.edu/~voschp/anthonymarshonne_foundation.html>

The Directorate for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBES), National Science Foundation (NSF) is seeking to increase collaboration between the geosciences and the social and behavioral sciences by augmenting funding for interdisciplinary research related to environment, society, and the economy, and NSF will consider proposals that describe new research efforts related to the interaction of environment, society, and economics. Interdisciplinary teams of researchers are strongly encouraged. Projects are expected to involve researchers in the geosciences and social and behavioral sciences, but they may also include other disciplines. Investigations are strongly encouraged on the use of Geographic Information System (GIS) and GIS visualization tools to conduct research on intervention programs. For more information, visit: www.sbe.sagency.org/stem

In the News
Alcohol and Drugs
Sarah Bowen, North Carolina State University, had her research on tequila farms in Mexico discussed in the PNAR. She is the author of a February 7 article published in the Revista Mexicana de Sociologia about how to crack down on prostitution.

The Department Resources Group

Here to Help with Program Review, Assessment, and Curriculum Development
Now offering off-site consulting and a mentors program for new department chairs, directors of graduate studies programs, assessors coordinators, and others with key roles in the department.

ASA Research Briefs Online—Available Free
Decreasing the Leak from the Sociological Pipeline: Social Capital to Enhance the Post-baccalaureate Sociologies

This research brief explores how outside-the-classroom activities that focus on job readiness—help lead BA sociology graduates to careers they perceive as closely related to their degree.


This is the first in a series of reports that will provide peer comparison statistics on structure, enrollment and degrees, faculty salaries, and resources.

For free access to these research briefs and others, see the following page at <www.asanet.org>.
New Programs

PhD in Sociology, University of South Florida

The PhD program emphasizes multi-disciplinary research, teaching, and scholarship related specifically to the field of Sociology. Our faculty are currently engaged in research and teaching that focuses on the intersection of media and learning.

Institute for Technology and Education

The Institute for Technology and Education is a center for the study of technology and education, with a focus on the intersection of media and learning. Our faculty are currently engaged in research and teaching that focuses on the intersection of media and learning.

New Publications

The International Journal of Learning and Media, MIT Press and the Montgomery College for Technology and Education

This is the first issue of The International Journal of Learning and Media. The new journal is devoted to the examination of learning and media in all its forms. The editorial board, led by William J. Wilson, has been working to develop a journal that will be a major resource for researchers in the field. The journal is published quarterly and is available online.

Obituary

Bruce L. Berg 1954-2009

Bruce L. Berg died suddenly on February 25, 2009. At the time of his death, he was an active and highly productive member of the Criminal Justice Faculty at California State University-Long Beach (CSULB). His funeral service on February 26, 2009 at the age of 55. He suffered from cardiac arrest.

Patrick G. Feeney 1952-2008

Patrick G. Feeney, a professor of sociology at Montgomery College, died on December 3, 2008. He was 56 years old.

Mohamed Dayee Turay 1950-2007

Mohamed Dayee Turay, who spent the past 17 years of his professional life at Savannah State University, passed away suddenly on April 9, 2007, at his home in Savannah. Turay was a dedicated scholar, a respected social scientist, and a beloved educator. He was known for his commitment to teaching and research, and his passion for education and social justice. Turay leaves behind a legacy of achievement and dedication that will continue to inspire those he taught and mentored.
The American Sociological Association (ASA) invites submissions for the Fund for the Advancement of the Discipline (FAD) awards. FAD is supported by a grant from the National Science Foundation with matching monies from ASA. The goal of this award is to nurture the development of scientific knowledge by funding small, groundbreaking research initiatives that will advance the discipline. FAD awards provide scholars with “seed money” for innovative research that provides opportunities for substantive and methodological breakthroughs, broadens the dissemination of scientific knowledge, and provides leverage for acquisition of additional research funds.

Selection Criteria and Funding Requirements

Proposals are reviewed for scientific merit and the importance of the proposed research project or a conference for sociology as a discipline. Specific evaluation criteria include the following:

- Innovativeness and promise of the research idea;
- Originality and significance of research goals;
- The potential of the study as a building block in the development of future research;
- Appropriateness and significance of the research hypothesis;
- Feasibility and adequacy of project design;
- Plans for dissemination of results; and
- Appropriateness of requested budget.

Principal investigators (PI) and co-PI(s) must have a PhD or equivalent. Preference is given to applicants who have not previously received a FAD award. Awards shall not exceed $7,000. Payment can go directly to the PI and is not taxed. Checks will be sent to the PI's institution, but PIs should be aware that no overhead can be charged. Award money may not be used for convention expenses, honoraria, or PI's salary. Awardees must agree to meet the reporting requirements of the award and must be ASA members when they receive the award.

New! Online Application Process

Proposals may be submitted online at <asanet.org/cs/funding/FAD>. Applications must include title of project, name of lead author and additional author(s), 100-200-word abstract, maximum of five (5) single spaced pages describing the project (excluding appendices), detailed budget and time schedule, statement of pending support, bibliography, and vita for all authors.

Contact Information

For more information and to submit proposals, see the “Funding” page at <www.asanet.org>. For questions prior to submitting proposals, contact project director Roberta Spalter-Roth, (202) 383-9005 x317, spalter-roth@asanet.org or Nicole Van Voren, (202) 383-9005 x313, vanvoren@asanet.org. For examples of recent FAD awards see the May/June 2008 issue of Footnotes.

For Members Only . . .

Travel Discounts for ASA Members

Car Rental Discounts: Members save up to 20% by using special ASA discount codes at the following companies:

- Hertz  
  www.hertz.com (ASA Discount Code: 453806)  
  Toll-Free Reservation Number: (800) 654-2210

- Alamo  
  www.alamo.com (ASA Discount Code: AMSOCIO)  
  Toll-Free Phone Number: (800) 354-2322

- National  
  www.nationalcar.com (ASA Discount Code: AMSOCIO)  
  Toll-Free Phone Number: (800) 227-7368

Hotel Discounts:

Save 15% on lodging at ChoiceHotels, including Comfort Inn and Suites, Clarion, EconoLodge, Quality Inn, Sleep Inn, and Rodeway. Visit the Choice Hotels website at www.choicehotels.com and enter ID #00803219.

Vacation Discounts:

Visit www.membersonvacation.com for great discounts on cruises, tour packages on international trips and airline reservations. You may also call (800) 434-2235 and please note that you are a current ASA member when you make travel reservations.

For complete information on these and other ASA member benefits, visit www.asanet.org/benefits.

Membership in ASA benefits you!