During the stimulating roundtable session at the ASA meetings in Chicago this summer, a group of about 25 of us engaged in a discussion about the interdisciplinary relationship between American sociology and Animals Studies.

We shared how our discipline's roots, partially founded in the tradition of humanism, are thus limited in its theoretical and conceptual capacities. Humanism is a vexing philosophy because it is both liberating – freeing us
from supernatural explanations over which we have little control – and
 damning – bogging us down in endless debates about who gets to count
 as the “human”. Humanism claims a human is the ultimate
 social/rational/political being: one that is able to perceive the world, think
 about it, and communicate it back to others. The doctrine of humanism
 affirms the existence of a thinking ego, a self, or an I—the fact that we all
 share the ability to conceptualize our own respective selves demonstrates a
 sort of harmonious connection among us, which in turn demonstrates our
 superiority over all other entities, living and non-living. Sociology has made
 its business at studying these (un)harmonious connections – social order,
 social problems, social organization, social control, conflict and
 cooperation. But as a result, sociologists have overwhelmingly privileged
 humans -- we are the only beings who are capable of giving anything
 meaning and of exerting our influence within the world.

For our section, our work shows how humanism and speciesism are closely
 allied, our own positionality (as humans) functions as the basis for social
 justice; what results are corrupted practices and beliefs that are highly
 anthropocentric. Engaging in critical interpretations of interspecies
 entanglements requires an appraisal of all non-human species as having
 inherent value. Animal studies demands a reframing of very notion of
 social justice asking social justice for whom and by what means.

Our section has much to offer the discipline of sociology as it works
 through these thorny issues of ontological, epistemological and
 methodological limitations of humanism. Our scholarship and pedagogy
in animal studies breaths new life into disciplinary questions of how social order is maintained, how social change occurs and who benefits. Though not always appreciated by the more established sociological perspectives, our projects, methods, and theories are a vitally important intervention.

I look forward to continuing to push sociology in these new and necessary directions with all of you.

But first we must offer our deepest thanks to Colter Ellis who has served faithfully and gracious as our section’s chair—but fret not, since he is demonstrating his dedication to the section as a member of our awards committee – with 2015 winners Richard York and Brandon Leap. Plus Colter is putting together a slate of candidates for this year’s election of our council. Please let him know if you’d be interested in running for a position.

We are also bidding farewell to Loredana Loy as our newsletter editor – much gratitude to her for this labor. She will continue on with the coordination of our Facebook presence. Ivy Collier and Corey Wrenn have stepped up to take over the newsletter with our great appreciation.

Dr. Lisa Jean Moore
Hi ASA section members,

We are excited and honored to write our first newsletter, we hope that you enjoy our compilation of stories and updates from our field. This issue contains a special interview with Dr. Christena Nippert-Eng, a Sociologist with two books that are coming out this year both focusing on non-human animals. We would like to thank Dr. Nippert-Eng for her time and contribution.

As always, if you would like to share or publicize your work via our social media platforms (Twitter and Facebook) please send the information to Loredana Joy at mll283@cornell.edu.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter edition, for any feedback or questions please feel free to email us at:

collier.ivy@gmail.com and/or corey.wrenn@gmail.com
Sociologists are making amazing strides in the field of animal studies, pioneering many fascinating theoretical and methodological developments. In this issue, we asked Dr. Nipper-Eng to discuss her ethnographic work with us. In this interview, she shares the importance of sociological training to her research as she delves into the world of gorilla communities. What do you think? Is a sociologist really just a type of primatologist?

Photo courtesy of John Dominski; from Watching Closely: A Guide to Ethnographic Observation
To do the exercises in this book, I recommend watching nonhumans. Here is Makari inspecting my notes, as I was attempting to do exactly that.
This year, I have two books coming out in which my interest in nonhuman animals is central. The first, *Watching Closely: A Guide for Ethnographic Observation* (Oxford University Press, October 2015), is based on a course I’ve been teaching since 1998 at Lincoln Park Zoo in Chicago. That course helps students envision, acquire, and communicate observation-based data by observing the western lowland gorillas who live in the Regenstein Center for African Apes. Most students are studying user-centered design and architecture, so they also use their data to produce design concepts to benefit the gorillas. The book takes years of insights from teaching this course and makes them available to a broader audience. I encourage readers to do these exercises by focusing on nonhuman animals, too.

Starring these same great apes, *Gorillas Up Close* (Henry Holt, April 2016) is a kind of ethnography of these gorillas and my co-authors are students from that class. This is a gorgeous non-fiction book for middle grade readers and up. It’s loaded with scientific facts and stunning, full-page photos, focused on the gorillas’ daily lives.

Both books are responses to what I’ve thought of as missed opportunities for sociology. First, when I was working on my PhD, graduate students generally
received little hands-on training in how to do fieldwork, especially observation. This led me to develop the exercise-based approach found in Watching Closely, in order to strengthen the specific muscles necessary for top-notch, direct observation research in a very creative but systematic fashion. To maximize the pay-off, I asked my students to watch a species they eventually realize is surprisingly close to ours, but for which they have no preconceptions.

Bahati, an adult female, mother of the newest baby in Lincoln Park Zoo’s family troop.

Bella, Bahati’s daughter, born in March 2015.
Gorillas Up Close also addresses a long-felt concern. Too many people are already in college before they first hear about the scientific study of social structure and group membership, and certainly ethnographic and observation-based methods and user-centered design. A socially-driven narrative of gorillas was interesting to me in and of itself but also seemed like the perfect venue through which we could introduce much younger students to what we do. There is an “Author’s Note” in this book for this reason, where I let readers know about these careers – and the unexpected ways that a childhood love of animals can become a part of them.

Photo courtesy of Alia Fadel; from Gorillas Up Close, “Author’s Note” Makari’s son, Azizi, looking at photos of his mom, dad and sister contained in students’ final project reports from 5 years earlier.
These projects are a continuation of my lifelong love of learning about the behavior of many species. Humans were probably some of the later animals in which I became more consciously interested; for a long time, for instance, I was far more fascinated by monkeys and chimpanzees. In fact, these two projects have made me realize that a sociologist is actually just a type of primatologist – and that has just opened up some rather remarkable doors.

Dr. Christena Nippert-Eng is a Professor of Informatics and Sociology with Indiana University Bloomington. She can be reached at cnippert@indiana.edu.

Interview by Corey L. Wrenn

Section Announcements

Council member Corey Wrenn has been featured on Feminist Radio in an interview on her upcoming book and her sociological research on vegan

feminist topics and animal rights mobilization. Feminist Magazine on KPFK is the weekly Southern California radio show of news, views, politics and culture with an intersectional feminist perspective. The interview can be listened to [here](#).

Ms. Wrenn has also been hired as a fulltime Lecturer of Sociology with Monmouth University in New Jersey.

Dr. Lisa Jean Moore has been featured on the BSA Sociology Podcast series regarding her publication, "A Day at the Beach: Rising Sea Levels, Horseshoe Crabs, and Traffic Jams." Please see [http://soc.sagepub.com/site/Podcast/Podcast.xhtml](http://soc.sagepub.com/site/Podcast/Podcast.xhtml) Item #11

**Publications**


CALLS FOR PROPOSALS

Human Animal Bond Research Initiative Foundation

The vision of the Human Animal Bond Research Initiative Foundation is to demonstrate that our relationship with pets and animals makes the world a better place by significantly improving human health and quality of life. HABRI does this by advancing the growing body of evidence about the positive roles that companion animals play in the integrated health of individuals, families, and communities.

To that end, HABRI, in partnership with the Morris Animal Foundation, is calling for research proposals that investigate the health outcomes of pet ownership and/or animal-assisted activity or therapy, both for people and the animals involved. Priority will be given to projects that focus on novel approaches to studying the health effects of animals on humans within the broad categories of child health and development, healthy aging, and mental health and wellness. HABRI is interested in proposals that involve a variety of animals (e.g., dogs, cats, fish, horses, reptiles, and various small animals).

Approximately $200,000 will be available for multiple grants. It is expected that between five and ten grants will be awarded.
Dear Colleagues,

This Special Issue of *Societies* broadly explores the complex and contested relationship between gender and social change. Classic sociological questions are: How is social order maintained? How does social change occur? And who benefits? Gender is deeply interwoven into these questions. It is paradoxical that social order, cultural norms and values, and stratification are seemingly obdurate, timeless, and rigid, while massive and significant alterations affect technology, climate, medicine, and recreation, for example. This paradox is also relevant to studies of gender. At the same time that social theorists deconstruct foundational ideas about gender, sex, and sexuality, we inhabit a world that produces, reproduces, and relies on gender binaries. These binaries often fuel enormous gender inequality, with girls and women systematically disadvantaged across many social contexts.

This issue aims to showcase work that explores paradoxes of social change (both progressive and regressive) as change specifically relates to gender. Additionally, the issue is meant to highlight the possibilities for creating a decolonized feminist approach that takes account of gender and social change from the perspective of minority groups (LGBTQI) and non-Western
cultures, broadly defined as cultures beyond Western Europe and North America.

Potentially relevant questions include, but are not limited to:

- What are some examples of micro-sociological and/or macro-sociological social changes and how do these changes affect gender, identity performance, and/or structures?
- How do classic and contemporary social theories of social change integrate (or not) gender?
- What are some of the consequences of an engaged practice and theory of social change for gendered institutions, gendered people, and gendered representations?

Possible Topics:

- Interaction, Micro-aggressions and Gender
- Geopolitical Changes and Gender
- Financial Collapse and Gender
- Climate Change and Gender
- War and Gender
- Activism, Social Movements and Gender
- Performance Art and Gender
- Violence and Resistance and Gender

Societies welcomes papers from scholars and advanced doctoral candidates of history, political science, ethnic studies, science studies, media studies, animal studies, anthropology, philosophy, sociology, geography, women’s and gender studies, queer theory, criminology, psychology, and law. We are particularly interested in work that takes an interdisciplinary approach and
in work that considers gender and sexuality’s intersections with matters of race, ethnicity, disability, nation, gender identity, sexuality, region, class, and religion.

Prof. Dr. Lisa Jean Moore
Guest Editor

Manuscripts should be submitted online at www.mdpi.com by registering and logging in to this website. Once you are registered, click here to go to the submission form. Manuscripts can be submitted until the deadline. Papers will be published continuously (as soon as accepted) and will be listed together on the special issue website. Research articles, review articles as well as communications are invited. For planned papers, a title and short abstract (about 100 words) can be sent to the Editorial Office for announcement on this website.

Submitted manuscripts should not have been published previously, nor be under consideration for publication elsewhere (except conference proceedings papers). All manuscripts are refereed through a peer-review process. A guide for authors and other relevant information for submission of manuscripts is available on the Instructions for Authors page. Societies is an international peer-reviewed Open Access quarterly journal published by MDPI.

Please visit the Instructions for Authors page before submitting a manuscript. The Article Processing Charge (APC) for publication in this open access journal is 300 CHF (Swiss Francs). English correction and/or formatting fees of 250 CHF (Swiss Francs) will be charged in certain cases for those articles accepted for publication that require extensive additional formatting and/or English corrections.
Solving Social Problems

Series Editor: Bonnie Berry, Director of the Social Problems Research Group, USA

Solving Social Problems provides a forum for the description and measurement of social problems, with a keen focus on the concrete remedies proposed for their solution. The series takes an international perspective, exploring social problems in various parts of the world, with the central concern being always their possible remedy. As such, work is welcomed on subjects as diverse as environmental damage, terrorism, economic disparities and economic devastation, poverty, inequalities, domestic assaults and sexual abuse, health care, natural disasters, labour inequality, animal abuse, crime, and mental illness and its treatment. In addition to recommending solutions to social problems, the books in this series are theoretically sophisticated, exploring previous discussions of the issues in question, examining other attempts to resolve them, and adopting and discussing methodologies that are commonly used to measure social problems. Proposed solutions may be framed as changes in policy, practice, or more broadly, social change and social movement. Solutions may be reflective of ideology, but are always pragmatic and detailed, explaining the means by which the suggested solutions might be achieved.

For more information on this series please visit www.ashgate.com/SSP

Call for Proposals

Proposals should take the form of either:
1. a preliminary letter of inquiry, briefly describing the project; or
2. a formal prospectus including: abstract, broad statement of your critical methodology, table of contents, sample chapter, estimated word count, estimate of the number and type if illustrations to be included and so on.

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Service Sociology and Academic Engagement in Social Problems

Edited by A. Janice Travison, Wheaton College, USA and
Karen M. McGinnick-Walsh, Wheaton College, USA

This provocative, critical analysis of sociology’s original purpose—that of solving social problems, not just analyzing them—thoughtful, theoretically rigorous and passionate, the book presents a compelling case for returning to that mission, even within the dominant trends of sociology’s academy. This work offers both Sociology and Social Work a philosophical examination of the importance of our mutual responsibility as members of the human community.

Kathleen McKee-Dillworth,
Boston College Graduate School of Social Work, USA

With both contemporary and historical analyses, the book traces the legacy, characteristics, contours, and goals of the sociology of service, shedding light on its roots in early American sociology and its deep connections to activism, before examining the social context that underlies the call for voluntarism, community involvement and nonprofit organisations, as well as the strategies that have promise in remediating contemporary social problems.

February 2016
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donline www.ashgate.com/doi/10.1558/9781482715651

Women, Incarceration, and Human Rights Violations: Feminist Criminology and Corrections

Alana Van Gundy, Miami University, USA and Amy Debnam-Gray, University of Cincinnati, USA

Women, Incarceration, and Human Rights Violations is a must-read for those who are concerned with the imprisonment of women. Using extensive case studies, Alana Van Gundy and Amy Debnam-Gray have scrutinised their work closely in the international human rights arena. They make the disturbing case against the neglect and exploitation of women prisoners around the globe, both tangible and real.

Susan D. Sharp, University of Oklahoma, USA

"Drawing on wide-ranging evidence to illustrate both the abuse of women and lack of attention to their gender-specific needs in USA prisons, the authors utilise United Nations’ Human Rights Treaties and Conventions in order to emphasise precisely how far there still is to go to ensure appropriate responses. This is a challenging and important study!"

Lorain Geisbush, Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge, UK

A rich examination of the neglect and abuse occurring in women in correctional facilities, Women, Incarceration, and Human Rights Violations draws upon a wealth of case studies from around the world and class action law suits to shed light on ‘correct’ abuse such as sexual or physical abuse, as well as ‘incorrect’ abuse such as the denial of medical treatment. Calling attention to the necessity of addressing the gender-specific needs of women who are incarcerated, this book offers a review of current policy, issues and regulation bearing on the issue, whilst providing concrete recommendations and policy changes to address abuses.

November 2015
10 essays
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This is a publication of the American Sociological Association, Animals & Society Section.

We are seeking section members who can assist Michelle Proctor and Jennifer Sinski in coordinating our off site reception. In particular we are seeking members who have a sense of the area (Seattle) and can make recommendations for a close by vegan location for our fete. If you would like to join in the planning fun, click on either Michelle or Jennifer’s name above and email them directly.
Metropolitics publishes short, engaging, relevant work on the city, architecture, planning and urban space. With new articles daily, dedicated to enriching public debates with research on social, technical, and political analyses of urban issues by academics, professionals and political officials, and shift the lines of public debate.

Metropolitics was established by Metropolitiques, a French- and English-language peer-reviewed online journal and web site in France. With a network of corresponding editors around the world, Metropolitics reaches for an international audience. It provides a space for debate and reflection on the transformation of cities around the world.

**What do we publish?**

- **Debates** (1,500 words) Relating to current social, professional or political developments. This format is intended for the expression of documented perspectives on current issues, as well as concise presentations of the state of scientific knowledge or specific actions or questions with a bearing on current public debate. Allusive or implied criticisms and ad hominem or ex officio attacks are, of course, proscribed.

- **Essays** (1,500 words) In which researchers can develop arguments, based on the results of studies relating to wider societal and political debate, that provide a new perspective on key urban issues and challenges. Authors must meet the requirements (in terms of argumentation and demonstration) of their respective disciplines.

- **From the field** (1,500 words) Reports informing our readership, via case studies, of experiments or remarkable situations that shed a new light on urban events, phenomena and developments.

- **Reviews** (1,000 words) Of books, exhibitions or other events. The aim is to present the general thesis of the work under review and situate it within contemporary scientific and political debate. We wish to avoid summaries or descriptions of the table of contents. The goal of a review is to evaluate the intellectual contribution that the work makes with respect to a wide audience.

- **“Interviews”:** presented in audio or video format, or in the form of transcriptions.

Access to Metropolitics content is free. The texts can be downloaded as PDF files and the videos as podcasts.