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ASA Executive Office  
1430 K Street NW, Suite 600  
Washington, DC 20005  
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Dear Committee on Publications,

In this document, I have revised my October (2015) proposal and application to be the next Editor of Sociology of Education (SOE). This revision now includes an addendum with potential deputy editors as well as a more explicit outline of the editorial office process I envision and expectations I would have of my editorial team. It would be an honor to serve the discipline and subfield by editing SOE. As I describe below, my vision for the journal is to call for scholars across specialty areas to collect pertinent data, generate new and synthetic theoretical frameworks, and embed the understanding of education and educational processes within broader institutional, organizational and political milieu. Finally, I outline why I am both qualified and ready to take on this important task and how my department and university are committed to this endeavor.

**Vision Statement**

Over the years of writing and reviewing for SOE, I have noticed (as have others such as Brint 2013) that the journal has dedicated many of its pages to social inequality and the organization of schooling. To be sure, these are important topics in the study of education. Indeed, I have written about them myself. However, my recent reflections, which have been informed and triggered by several other leading scholars, have convinced me that we have exhibited a tendency in our scholarship to highlight the sociology of schools rather than that of education. To be clear, I believe that *schools* are formal organizations worthy of study in their own right, yet *education* is also a more diffuse project that occurs in and across multiple social organizations. As a sub-discipline, we ought to continue to examine schooling and school outcomes in our published research, and such work should continue to find a home in our flagship sub-discipline journal. However, we can do much better sociologically speaking by highlighting the fundamental nature of education as a social institution—an institution embedded within a larger social, cultural and institutional complex.

Sociology of education is, beyond a doubt, an energetic subfield that is already remarkably diverse in method, content, and substance. Nevertheless, we can and should publish even more diverse work in the journal. Approaches that systematically link education to frameworks and strategies employed in political sociology, social stratification, social movements, family sociology, and organizations would be beneficial to our wider and more fundamental understanding of education as an institution. This is not to say that educational research always neglects alternative institutional domains. Literatures on social and cultural capital, which usually tap into familial dynamics, are rich and highly developed in the sociology of education; social class, education and reproduction have a long tradition within the field, often with explicit attention to intergenerational mobility and the economy; the interstate and international diffusion of educational policy continues to be on the minds of sociology of education researchers. I would hope that under my editorship, and following the lead of the prior two editors, we could continue thinking bigger in these very ways and others, and in a manner that will broaden the journal’s submissions and readership.

The benefits to broadening our emphases are already clear. In its last two editorial homes, SOE has been extended substantively and methodologically. In fact, in the 2014 volume, half of the manuscripts used qualitative methodology. This means past editors such as Rob Warren have helped change the reputation of SOE
from being a journal for quantitative scholars only. I want SOE to continue publishing work with these broader theoretical and substantive foci, and with methodological diversity.

My hope is to carry on and extend the work of Rob Warren and David Bills. Their work to expand and diversify the journal assuredly has implications for the sub-discipline more generally- work that I hope to continue. Good sociology of education should be interesting and important to a wide audience. Though already strong and one of the highest ranked sociology journals (17 of 142) with a 1.711 impact factor (2014 Journal Citation Reports® (Thomson Reuters, 2015)), SOE can do more. As the published work in SOE incorporates new methods, theories, and interconnections with other sub-disciplines, SOE’s appeal among sociologists and scholars outside our sub-discipline will be bolstered, as will our ability to garner media and policy attention. This will lead to a greater number of article citations, higher impact factors, more awards, etc. Good readership and increased citations will increase visibility and vitality as a subfield. Intellectually, we all benefit from a journal that has diverse theories and methods because we will be able to engage more broadly in the scholarship ourselves.

At the end of the day, rigor in research and quality based on the peer review process must prevail and will under my editorship. Indeed, like past editors, I am deeply committed to procedural justice so that no manuscript will be given an advantage or disadvantage based on method or substantive area. My objective is to have a diverse submission pool so SOE can publish the best manuscripts across area and method.

I see my role as journal editor as one of leadership. A good leader or administrator should help others achieve shared goals, and I believe the primary goal of SOE is to foster and disseminate good scholarship. To these ends, I would give reviewers and authors clear expectations to help them make contributions to the field, regardless of whether my ultimate decision is to reject or publish a piece. For those who successfully navigate the review process, I would further help them toward achieving the greatest potential in their papers, including ensuring that their conclusions are clear and robust, and that their work is digestible to the audiences to whom they are appealing. Indeed, a journal editor is or should not merely be a gatekeeper, but rather also a facilitator of good scholarship. I will achieve effective and efficient leadership by doing the following: count on the help of a respected reviewer pool and editorial team, take cautioned risks for innovative papers, maintain timely guidelines for the review process, and work closely with authors of accepted and conditionally accepted papers to deliver the most impressive, clear, concise and exciting article as possible.

Operations:
Effective and efficient practices are, of course, necessary to sustain the high quality of the journal as well as its well-earned reputation for rigor. I have learned a lot already about the operations of the journal from extensive discussions with prior Editors—i.e., David Bills and Rob Warren. Both established procedures that continue to help SOE function very well. I will follow the valuable precedents they have set in terms of procedure for a fair and timely review process and will continue to use them as a resource to ensure that the transition to a new editorial team is smooth.

Editorial Team
The team that works to review and make editorial decision is the first and last place where good scholarship gets disseminated. In this regard, I plan to work quite hard at the outset, before the journal arrives at University of Georgia, to create a strong and visible editorial team and board that are diverse in substantive and methodological strengths race, gender, and sexuality. The voices, opinions, and scholarship from a demographically diverse set of scholars is, in my view, one of the keys to ensuring good representation of scholarship. Moreover, a diverse board will likely encourage underrepresented authors to submit their work to the journal, something necessary for the field’s vibrancy. Currently the board consists of 25 women (53%), 22 men (46%), and 21 racial and ethnic minorities (45%). I am certainly committed to retaining this diversity. In addition to demographic diversity, the team and board must also have theoretical, substantive and methodological diversity. Such diversity will be a priority for my editorial board members.
I have thought deeply about what kind of scholars I would like as Deputy Editors. The team of scholars an editor puts together is important as a signal to potential authors and reviewers. It also ensures that fair and informed decisions are made.

Like Rob Warren, I believe that it is imperative to have a team of deputy editors who can fill in where my expertise is lacking. Ideally, I would rely on 3 or 4 deputies. For example, I have reached out to a scholar whose methodological expertise is qualitative in nature – ethnographies and interviews particularly. Karolyn Tyson, University of North Carolina, has shown interest in the position and is excited to consider taking the role of Deputy Editor if I were to be awarded SOE editorship. In addition, I am recruiting a scholar whose work is international and comparative to serve as a deputy editor. I have thus far contacted Katerina Bodovski, Penn State, to consider the role. Her position on the board would help encourage a less US focused set of manuscripts in the journal. Finally, a scholar whose expertise is quantitative beyond my own skills is necessary to ensure sophisticated methods are done properly and with care. Thurston Domina, of UNC School of Education has agreed to consider the position if I were to become editor. In the attached addendum, I have included more information about each. I also include a list of other potential scholars that I am considering but have yet to contact. Such a potential team, as you can see, is quite strong, certainly visible, and diverse in several important regards.

I intend to use the input of my deputy editors for all methodologies (quantitative, qualitative, and international work) where I lack expertise. As a team, we will be able to evaluate all reviewers’ suggestions and manuscripts in a fair and objective way. In the end, the team (along with a strong editorial board) will increase diverse submissions and ensure rigor. The day-to-day use of the editorial board will be important for the operations of the journal to work efficiently and effectively. At the end of the day, of course, the editor must make hard decisions and is responsible for those decisions. However, responsible decision making can and should be informed by expert editorial board and deputy feedback. My editorial team (deputy editors) will: help pick reviewers for manuscripts that require their knowledge and networks; help advise on decisions when reviewers are split, and; step in as the primary editorial decision maker in cases where a conflict of interest with the editor emerges (e.g., friends, coauthors, colleagues at my own institution, etc.). I will expect deputy editors to help with approximately 10 articles each a year, mostly in situations of split reviews.

Editorial board members will also play an important role in the function of the journal. I will capitalize on diverse specialty areas of each by seeking their reviews and advice as needed. Ideally each manuscript would have an editorial board member reviewer. My aim would be to limit each board member’s duties to reviewing about 6 manuscripts per year. In addition to reviewing efforts, I will convene one editorial board meeting per year, and I ask that board members make a good-faith effort to attend. At such meetings, the deputy editors and I will seek input about the function, effectiveness, efficiency and vision of the journal from the board members. These times to gather and discuss the journal are invaluable for creating community, consensus, and voice. Finally, should any special circumstance arise for which I seek quick input, I may email an editorial board member or members for advice or perspective.

Diversity of Submissions and Visibility

I would expand previous Editors’ efforts to reach out to colleagues across ASA sections. Education as an institution is relevant to several subfields – family, stratification, organizations, social psychology, political sociology, and social movements to name a few. My twist on outreach would be to encourage scholarship from all subareas that traverse and touch upon the sociology of education. Such work may appear in print in journals other than SOE, and authors of such work may not even be considering SOE a home for their work at the current time. I would also systematically reach out to authors presenting papers at national and regional conferences that feature sociological research on education, even outside the sociology of education section. More importantly, I will craft general statements about the mission and vision of Sociology of Education for the ASA sections to post on listservers and other venues of communication. Such communication is important in my view, serving as a reminder that the journal can be home to many scholars across ASA. In addition, related societies and associations would be good outlets to communicate the mission and vision of the journal. Statements to regional
sociological societies, for instance, and substantive societies (e.g., PAA, SSSP, ACS, NCFR, etc.) may help increase the diversity of submissions across sub-fields and, indeed, the visibility of SOE.

In this technological age, I would be remiss to ignore what needs to be done to publicize the work of the journal. I know that ASA has resources for these purposes and that a committee was formed under Past-President Annette Lareau. I would like to use those resources and energies to help publicize the SOE. Since the ASA has a media relations group, I would, of course, work in collaboration with them in a manner ensuring articles in SOE receive maximal public and media exposure. Given limited resources, I believe we should also enlist our authors and their university media relations offices to help with this effort. I will create and maintain a list of media contacts and templates for contacting journalists and university and PR offices and for posting on Facebook and Twitter. I will also encourage authors to use them once papers are released. With a little encouragement and templates to guide them, authors who publish in SOE can help the journal increase the visibility of their own work and the journal.

**Reviewing Operations**

Although every effort will be taken to ensure quick turnaround times and effective reviews, it is also important to allow for some risk taking and creativity in the publication process. That is, I recognize that a given manuscript may be a diamond in the rough that will take some time to shine. This is not to say that I am willing to sit on papers and give every author multiple opportunities to revise and resubmit. Rather, in cases where the reviewers indicate great potential, I will allow for the author to revise. I would be especially excited to do so with particularly innovative papers.

The role of reviewers will be fundamental in both the efficiency and innovation of the journal. A culture already created by Rob Warren in SOE is that authors can anticipate a quick turnaround each time they submit (or resubmit) a manuscript. This is due to the 3 weeks given to reviewers to respond and the efficiency with which the editorial team asks for reviews and responds. Working closely with Rob Warren, I will sustain that turnaround time. This has been good for the number and diversity of submissions, for graduate students and junior faculty, and the discipline’s timely publishing of core issues. In addition, with the diverse and responsible reviewer pool already established, I will count on qualified reviewers to provide authors with constructive feedback and help identify those papers that are high quality and those that are diamonds in the rough.

Working with Sage will be a large part of the job as editor. I hope to establish ways to get more of the best papers published in SOE. The reports over the last several years show that SOE has increased its submissions from 164 in 2010 to 211 in 2014 (only new submissions). The hope is that a greater number of quality papers will reach the editorial desk at SOE. Given that, it may be fruitful to balance the costs of print journals with the cost of rejecting good scholarship. I hope to work with SAGE, the ASA Publications Committee, and the ASA Executive office to work on innovative ways to have more research disseminated.

In addition, Rob Warren worked with authors to help stream-line their work and reduce jargon. This strategy allowed him to publish more articles – 5 in an issue instead of 4 -with the same number of pages. I believe this is a successful approach for some manuscripts and one that we should continue. On-line supplemental tables and other resources can augment shorter articles.

**Editor Background Information**

I am qualified to be the next SOE editor because I have published and have been funded extensively in the sub-discipline, my focus is sufficiently broad, and I have editorial experience. Educational research has been my focus for near two decades. I have published in SOE five times in the last 10 years as sole author, first author, and with graduate students across a range of former editors including Alexander, Schneider, Bills, and Warren. According to Web of Knowledge, only one other scholar has published 5 times in SOE since 2005. Thus my record with the journal makes me well-qualified for editing it. Second, I have published another dozen articles in the field in Social Forces, Social Problems, Educational Administrative Quarterly, and other general sociology journals. I have also been funded by AERA (twice) and NSF to study educational issues. All three funded projects have resulted in manuscripts that appear in SOE.
My research program examines the organizational causes and consequences of charter schools from the legislative level to the effects of segregation on their creation. I have also examined IRT scores, dropout rates, the diffusion of educational legislation, and school innovation. This breadth make me qualified to oversee the scope I hope the journal will embrace. In addition, though most of my work is quantitative using large scale national data sets, I have collected my own data from publically available sources to create comprehensive datasets and have used interviews with informants to explain quantitative findings qualitatively. Thus, my own work spans different educational areas and shows how I value diverse approaches to understanding the educational institution. I have served on numerous dissertation committees that stretch my methodical expertise, as well. I not only recognize that there are many ways to study education, I also use those varied ways to inform my own work, and I am excited about the field finding space for diverse perspectives.

Finally, I have editorial experience. I am currently Deputy Editor of *Social Currents*, in this position I garnered insights and have helped guide the journal to success. I help adjudicate decisions with editors, have in-depth discussions about reviews and manuscripts, pick reviewers, and work closely with Vinnie Roscigno and Toni Calasanti to craft decision letters. I have been on the editorial board for *SOE* (2012-2015) and *American Sociological Review* (2008-2011). Currently, I am on the editorial board for *Sociological Forum* (2016-2018). In addition, I have received the R&R award of recognition by Rob Warren for outstanding reviewing and was noted in the 2014 Reviewer Thank You (pages 221-222). I review for various journals at least once a month and have since 2001 yielding over 150 reviews. Despite my expertise in quantitative data analysis, I have fairly reviewed several qualitatively focused pieces including many education related manuscripts that are submitted to *Qualitative Sociology* under the editorship of David Smilde. These qualifications make me suitable to be the next editor of *SOE*.

**Institutional Support**

The Franklin College of Liberal Arts at the University of Georgia and the Department of Sociology are eager to support my application to edit *SOE* and to house this prestigious journal. As documented in the attached letter of support, I will have the resources to efficiently administer the journal. First, the department has agreed to provide ample office space and office equipment for me and my managerial team. Second, the college has agreed to reduce my teaching load by one course a year over the three year term. I will teach three courses per year instead of four. In addition, during the Fall 2016-Spring 2017, I already have a reduced teaching load so that during my first year as editor I will teach 2 courses. This should ensure a smooth transition. Third, the funds provided by ASA will cover an advanced graduate student as my Managing Editor (while my university will pay for her tuition and benefits). In addition, for the 2016-2017 academic year, I can use the time allocated to my RA to assist with the journal (8-10 hours a week) paid for by the University of Georgia. Fourth, if needed, I have faculty allocations that I can dedicate to hire an undergraduate assistant in subsequent years. This student would work with the Managing Editor on record-keeping and administrative tasks. Finally, the college will provide $500 as an expense account to use for administrative costs I might incur. Costs associated with going to ASA meetings are those of annual professional expectations for which I will be responsible.

The opportunity to edit *SOE* would be a great honor. I will not take this honor lightly as I see it as an important role for our discipline, the creation of knowledge, and the guardian of scholarship. Thank you for considering my application to edit *SOE*.

Sincerely,

*Signature*

Linda Renzulli
Professor
Addendum. 2/3/16
Renzulli: Sociology of Education Editor Application

Potential Deputy Editors for the Editorial Team:
(Contacted and showed interest in the position)

Karolyn Tyson, Professor
UNC Chapel Hill
Department of Sociology

Area of Interest:
Education, Social Psychology, Qualitative methods

Education: Ph.D, University of California at Berkeley, 1999

Selected Publication:


Jennifer Lee, Associate Professor
Indiana University, Bloomington
Department of Sociology

Area of Interest:
Sociology of Education, Immigration, Asian American Studies

Education: Ph.D, University of Minnesota in 2007;

Selected Publication:


Jennie Brand, Associate Professor
UCLA
Department of Sociology

Area of Interest:
Higher Education, Disruptive Events, and Quantitative Methods

Education: Ph.D., University of Wisconsin - Madison

Selected Publication:


Thurston Domina
UNC Chapel Hill
School of Education

Area of Interest: Empirical methods, Sociological theory, Educational Inequality

Education: PhD, Graduate School and University Center, CUNY, Sociology 2006

Selected Publication:


**Katerina Bodovski, Associate Professor**  
**Professor-in-Charge, Comparative International Education**  
**Department of Education Policy Studies**  
**The Pennsylvania State University**

*Area of Interest:* Comparative and International Education, Education of Immigrant Children, and Stratification and Inequality

*Education:* PhD, The Pennsylvania State University, Sociology, 2007

*Selected Publication:*  


**Other potential Deputy Editors:**  
David Baker, Penn State, College of Education  
Fabian Pfeiffer, University of Michigan, Institute for Social Research  
Douglas Downey, The Ohio State, Sociology  
Amanda Lewis, University of Illinois at Chicago, African American Studies and Sociology  
Elizabeth Armstrong, University of Michigan, Sociology