1998 Annual Meeting... California, Here We Come!

Expect more than 5,000 scholars from around the country, as well as international guests, to converge in San Francisco for the ASA's 49th Annual Meeting, August 21-25, 1998. Plenaries, thematic sessions, and hundreds of sessions will spotlight current sociological research. Join us from the opening bell: Mayor Willie Brown will speak at the Town Meeting on the first day of the meeting, followed by the Welcoming Reception.

San Francisco Mayor to Address ASA

Better than the keys to the city, Mayor Willie Brown will address the sociologists assembled for the Annual Meeting at 8:40 am on Friday, August 21. Mayor Brown is regularly described as one of the most powerful politicians in California, and as the first African American mayor of San Francisco. Brown was raised in a small, racially segregated town in Texas. After graduating from high school, he made his way to San Francisco, working his way through San Francisco State University and the Hastings College of Law. He was elected to the California Assembly in 1964, re-elected 16 times, and in 1980 was elected Speaker of the Assembly. His record of public service centers on social justice and affirmative action. In light of recent legislative changes in California, he will discuss affirmative action policies. Mayor Brown will give a lively kickoff to the first plenary session.

ASA Announces Award Winners

ASA proudly announces its 1998 Award winners who will be recognized at the Annual Meeting's 1998 Awards Ceremony on Saturday, August 22 at 8:45 p.m. ASA President-elect Tara B. Maretz, University of Massachusetts-Amherst, and Chair of the Committee on Awards, Robin Snyder, University of Iowa, will preside over this special event. The ASA Awards recognize outstanding accomplishments in the discovery, transmission, and application of sociological scholarship. The Award Ceremony will immediately precede the formal address of President-elect Jill Quadagno. All registrants are invited to an Honorary Reception immediately following the Address to congratulate President Quadagno and the award recipients. Our heartiest congratulations to the following honorees:

- 1998 Dissertation Award
  - Douglas G. Burns (Ph.D., California-Berkeley), New York University, for "Strategy and Structure in Chinese Firms: Organizational Action and Institutional Change in Industrial Shanghai"

- 1998 Jessie Bernard Award
  - Rachel Stansel, George Washington University

- 1998 Deedee-Johnson-Frazier Award
  - Howard Taylor, Princeton University

- 1998 Award for Public Understanding of Sociology
  - William Julius Wilson, Harvard University

- 1998 Distinguished Career Award for the Practice of Sociology
  - Leonard Parrish, University of Maryland

- 1998 Distinguished Contributions to Teaching Award
  - Sociology Major Program, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, Santa Clara University

- 1998 Distinguished Scholarly Publication Award
  - John M. Mack, University of Pittsburgh, for Aspects of Fraudulent: Peasants, Lords, and Legislators in the French Revolution (Honorable Mentions: Kathryn Edin, Rutgers University, and Lorna Linn, University of Texas-Austin, for Making End Meet; Sturm Haas, University of Virginia, for The Cultures of the North American Indian, and Erik Olin Wright, University of Wisconsin-Madison, for Class Counts)

- 1998 Career of Distinguished Scholarship Award
  - Howard S. Becker, University of Washington

component of efforts to end racial discrimination. During the 1980s, public opinion became increasingly divided on this issue (although opinions vary according to how survey questions are asked). In 1996, California approved Proposition 209, which barred state and local governments from using race and gender based preferences in education, contracting, and hiring. Similar measures are now on the ballot in other states.

This session assesses the impact of affirmative action on racial and gender equality and discusses the consequences of the movement toward its dismantling. Barbara E. Bobkin (Harvard University) will address the role of affirmative action in employment discrimination. Jerome B. Kandell (University of California, Berkeley) will discuss the effectiveness of affirmative action at the University of California. Tony Duster (University of California, Berkeley) will focus on attention to racialized politics and the politics of race in relation to the California vote on Proposition 209. And, William A. Camerson (Boston College) will consider the ambiguities of affirmative action.

This plenary session is structured as a town meeting. These speakers will respond to each other's comments, and the audience will have the opportunity to ask questions. ASA President Jill Quadagno (Florida State University) will preside. Don't miss this opening plenary session to be held on Friday, August 21, 8:40-10:00 p.m., at the San Francisco Hilton and Towers.

The Welfare State in the 21st Century

Over the past half-century, the social risks that the welfare state was designed to solve have changed. In response to these large-scale trends in globalization, population aging, the transition from an industrial to a service economy, and new family forms, many nations have begun rethinking the vast commitment of national resources to social welfare they made more than half a century ago.

The papers in this session explore the forces that are generating social change and analyze the implications of these trends for the welfare state in the twenty-first century. Carroll Estes (University of California, San Francisco) presented his paper on "Crisis, the Welfare State, and Aging: Capitalism and the Post-Industrial State" last year. He will open the discussion. Victor Marshall (University of Toronto) will focus on "Restructuring the Life Course: Linking Biography and Emerging Patterns of Work." This session, John S. Foster (Harvard University) will address "Working Families and the Future of American Social Policy."

This major plenary will be held on Sunday, August 23, 12:30-2:15 p.m., in the San Francisco Hilton and Towers. Bring your lunch and take advantage of the opportunity to discuss these issues with this internationally renowned panel of experts provided over by ASA President Jill Quadagno.

Joe R. Feagin Elected President; Nan Lin is Vice President

Joe R. Feagin, University of Florida, has been elected the 91st President of the ASA, and Nan Lin, Duke University, has been elected Vice President. Feagin and Lin will assume office in August of 1999, following a year of service as President-elect and Vice President-elect.

The four newly elected Council Members-at-Large are: Catherine White, Berkeley, Stanford College; William T. Beby, University of California-Santa Barbara; Carol C. Mark, University of Delaware; and Melvin L. Oliver, The Ford Foundation. Michael Burrows, University of California-Berkeley, and John R. Logan, University of New York-Albany, are the new members of the Committee on Publications. Also, eight persons (as listed below) were elected to the Committee on Nominations.

Of the 10,156 total members eligible to vote, 2,893 ballots were cast, constituting a 28.44% response. After the election, Secretary Teresa A. Sullivan and Executive Officer Felice J. Levine extended heartiest congratulations to the newly elected officers and committee members, and thanked all who have served the Association by running for office and by voting in this election.

Feagin and Levine also reported that, as part of the ASA Committee restructuring, the ASA members voted on nine By-Laws changes. (These changes are discussed on page 9.)

Joe R. Feagin
Nan Lin
The Executive Officer's Column

ASA as Publisher

Over recent years, the Association and its Executive Office have sought to strengthen the identity of the ASA as a publisher of quality products beyond (but inclusive of) the flagship journals that the Association sponsors. Like other learned societies, ASA has a long history of printing and otherwise producing materials that are of benefit to its members, scholars in the field, teachers, students, potential students, and other interested publics. The high recognition that ASA enjoys as an Association derives in some large measure from the importance of its published work, especially its valuable journals.

While the ASA is building on this past, we now aim to be much more intentional in our publishing ambitions. As a publisher, we are driven by a desire to enhance the visibility of sociology as a discipline. Two important premises underlie this ambition: first, that ASA should not only publish new and cutting-edge research but also foster excellence in the field, and second, that ASA must use the highest standards of review (appropriate to the products) in determining what to publish.

Developing the ASA Niche

The aspiration of ASA as a visible publisher has taken a variety of forms over the last several years. We have sought to examine what we are doing and should be doing in order to define what an integrated publication portfolio for ASA might look like. In reviewing our publications and considering new ones, we are actively assessing how ASA’s publishing role should link programmatically to the Association’s goals as well as to ASA’s unique niche as the national scientific society for sociology. Also, we do not assume that “publication” necessarily means “print.” Therefore, we are also asking what should be published in print and what might best be available through electronic access, either as a direct product (like the Employment Bulletin) or as an enhanced one (like electronic abstracts of journal articles that can be electronically searched).

Thinking intentionally about publishing and the unique niche of the Association has also affected the work of the Publications Committee. Within the past year, this Committee established a subcommittee on long-range planning to develop guidelines and offer recommendations on how the Publications Committee (and ultimately ASA Council) might best go about considering new journal ideas and assessing current journals. Avid ASA “watchers” and readers of ASA Council minutes may know that the Association is considering the possibility of a “general perspectives” journal that would synthesize and make accessible important areas of knowledge and stimulate fresh thinking across the discipline and aligned fields. Also, such “watchers” may know that the Association is seeking to work cooperatively with sections to assess when, whether, and the conditions under which the Association or its sections might publish specialty journals.

Prior to 1997, ASA policy essentially restricted sections from publishing journals. The Association recognizes that, as a publisher, it is a “disseminator” of knowledge for and about sociology. We now include in our publishing domain reference volumes, teaching and academic resources, career products, work linking social research and social policy, and research briefs on the discipline itself. For the Association, the question is not whether we undertake this task, but how we ensure that we do this well. Our transformation in this regard is appropriately incremental and deliberative. The agreement with JSTOR on electronic archiving of ASA journals, the emphasis on publishing sociological issues of policy research (e.g., the collection on the Russell Sage Foundation on the Rose Series), and the production of references like the ASA Style Guide (to make ASA style the standard in “sociological” print) are all important components of ASA’s publishing mission.

This effort is very much in process. During this coming year we are examining our long-term role (since 1974) in publishing teaching materials and syllabi sets. We are asking what it means for now and the next decade to be a quality publisher of both products and services. What should our emphasis be? Are there publications that we need to add, eliminate, or reconceptualize in order to publish a portfolio of the highest value and use? We are already “widening” our call for potential new authors/editors of teaching products; requesting brief proposals on anticipated work; providing revised guidelines; introducing peer review; and clarifying the submission, review, and acceptance process.

Other changes are more immediately visible. We are looking forward, for example, to the full launching of our policy volumes during this summer. Thus far, only the monograph on the Social Causes of Violence (published in 1996) is available. The new Issues Series in Social Research and Social Policy is forthcoming later this summer. Also, by the Annual Meeting ASA will publish The Realities of Affirmative Action in Employment by Barbara F. Reskin. Like other products linking sociological knowledge to social policy, this monograph builds on a research workshop on Affirmative Action convened by ASA’s Spivack Program in Applied Social Research and Social Policy. Reskin was the team leader for this activity.

Disseminating ASA Publications

Key to ASA’s operating as an effective publisher is satisfying customers and bringing our products to market. In addition to developing quality products, we must be attentive to distribution and sales (to individuals, libraries, and relevant bookstores) and to providing timely and accurate customer service. Volume of sales is one important indicator of interest in our publications. For these reasons we will continue to monitor the recent interest in the 1991 book, We hope you are coming to the 1998 Annual Meeting in San Francisco. We also hope that you will come to our Bookstore and offer your comments, counsel, and, of course, your order—Felice J. Levine.

Our Regular Features
Public Affairs ........................................3
Departments ........................................11
Obituaries ...........................................15
ASA Holds Hill Briefing on Immigration

by Carla B. Hynum, Director, Sipavack Program on Applied Social Research and Social Policy

Four sociologists shared compelling data about immigrant families and children, school achievement, residential patterns, and U.S. immigration policy at an American Sociological Association briefing on Capitol Hill on June 4. About 65 staff from Congressional offices, executive branch agencies, and non-governmental organizations, as well as media, heard the presentations and asked questions. Lisandro Perez, Florida International University, moderated the panel comprised of Douglas S. Massey, University of Pennsylvania; Richard Alba, SUNY-Stony Brook; and Ruben Rumbaut, University of California, Irvine. The briefing was held by the ASA’s Sipavack Program in Applied Social Research and Social Policy, which is designed to bring sociological research to bear on timely policy issues.

Rumbaut led off with a discussion of the causes and consequences of immigration from Mexico to the U.S. He described a pattern which, in the past, was circular, with migrants coming to the U.S. and returning to Mexico in roughly equal numbers. He noted that, while NAFTA has encouraged free trade, the missing piece is open movement of labor. Reporting on data from the Mexican Migration Project (MMP), Rumbaut noted the extensive social ties between Mexicans and the U.S., including having friends and relatives in the U.S. His data show that current U.S. policies to prevent border crossings are ineffective. Further, those Mexicans who come into the U.S. are less likely to return to Mexico, which may be their preference, because of the difficulty getting back. Finally, legal Mexican immigrants are more likely to become U.S. citizens than they might if the border were more fluid; once they become citizens, they can sponsor other relatives, thus increasing the flow of immigration even more.

Where immigrants settle was the focus of Richard Alba’s remarks. Many immigrants settle in suburban ethnic enclaves. He noted that the evidence for assimilation often overstates the reality, although Asian and light-skinned Latinos with middle-class incomes show assimilation to the suburbs. Further, our society’s notion of racial and ethnic boundaries continue to shift and move, while the legal boundaries remain fixed. Research shows some of the narrowing of social distance, and Alba discussed the implications of that blurring of boundaries for American society, particularly for Asian-Americans.

Giving a picture of the immigrant stock in the U.S. was an attention-getting start to Ruben Rumbaut’s remarks. He noted that, if the immigrant stock of the U.S. formed a country, it would rank in the top 10 in world population size, or about 35 million people. Building on Alba’s discussion, he noted that immigrant families are heavily concentrated in several areas of the U.S., in major urban areas: California, Florida, Texas, New Jersey, New York, and Chicago, IL. Immigrant children and U.S.-born children of immigrants constitute the fastest growing segment of the U.S. child population.

See Immigration, page 10

PUBLIC AFFAIRS UPDATE

OSTP and NSF Pooled • Rita Colwell, incoming National Science Foundation Director, stands poised to assume her duties while she awaits formal confirmation of Neil Lane as the White House Science Advisor (and Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy). Colwell, already confirmed, has resisted “opening boxes” until successor Lane is approved for his new post. As Footnotes goes to press, this is expected to happen imminently.

Census Nominee Previtt Also Shows Pulse • President Clinton officially nominated Kenneth Prevett (political scientist and current President of the Social Science Research Council) as Director of the Census Bureau. Any confirmation process is likely to be embroiled in the sampling debate for Census 2000. At a news conference, Prevett showed his stance and savvy: “If the legal-political process allows a sampling design...the Bureau will bring to bear the most sophisticated and careful design within its power. If sampling is precluded...the Bureau will count to the best of its ability.”

Final Appropriations Due for NSF and NIH • Appropriations bills are on track for both the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health. For NSF, bills are out of committees with floor action imminent. An increase of better than 6 percent over FY 1998 is expected. For NIH, bills are still in committee in the House and Senate. The House subcommittee has already approved a 9 percent increase over 1998, which bodies well at a minimum.

HHS Releases Trends in the Well-Being of America’s Children and Youth • The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released the second edition of this report. It presents estimates of more than 80 indicators of well being. The report was produced under contract to Child Trends in Washington, DC. Sociologist Brett Brown served as project director. More information on the report is available at http://aspe.hhs.gov/.

Conference on Public Health in the 21st Century: Behavioral and Social Science Held in May...In collaboration with ASA and other national associations, the American Psychological Association and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) convened over 100 social and behavioral scientists to consider present and future directions in public health research. The emphasis was on the growing role and importance of the social and behavioral sciences in disease prevention. Havindan Rodriguez (ASA and University of Puerto Rico-Mayaguer) and Patricia White (ASA and NSF) were part of the planning committee.

Sociologists Profiled at Hill Exhibits

Sociologists’ work was on display at two important events on Capitol Hill. The May 20 event showcased NSF-supported research and on June 3, a scientific exhibition and reception celebrated 35 years of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD). The American Sociological Association was a major contributor to both events.

The Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF), which includes ASA, held its 4th Annual Exhibition and Reception on May 20. The event featured 30 exhibits demonstrating the breadth of NSF supported research and education projects. Nine members of Congress and close to 100 staff members attended, as well as NSF Director Neal Lane and Deputy Director J. Fred Rzepka.

The ASA-sponsored exhibit featured the International Social Survey Program (ISSP) and the General Social Survey Tom W. Smith, National Opinion Research Center (NORC), described the evolution of the NSF from a National collaborative with German social scientists to a consortium of 21 nations working on topical modules dealing with important areas of social science. NORC has conducted the National Data Program for the Social Sciences since 1972, to establish basic research on the structure and development of American society and to share these data with social scientists, policy makers, and students.

The NICHD event was hosted by Friends of NICHD, of which ASA is a member, as well as 20 Honorary Congressional Co-hosts.

From left, Felice J. Levine, University of Chicago graduate student Claire P. Greer, and NSF and NICHD staff thanks to contributors.

The event featured 15 exhibits that demonstrated the breadth and depth of NICHD-supported research, from biomedical research to the social and behavioral sciences. The American Sociological Association sponsored an exhibit on the Family and Child Well-being Network. In 1993, NICHD created the Network by supporting seven cooperative agreements for five years. The Network is structured to address the relationship of family and child well-being from a multi-disciplinary research point of view and to consider public policy concerns in a comprehensive and responsive manner. Three members of the Network—Neil Brown, Child Trends; Jeffrey Evans, NICHD; and Arland Thornton, University of Michigan—spoke with attendees about how this collaboration has strengthened theories, methodologies, and understandings about children and families.

In addition to the ASA-sponsored exhibit, sociologists Douglas Massey, University of Pennsylvania, and Kathleen Mullan Harris, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, represented their institutions with displays on the Mexican Migration Project and the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, respectively.

Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) noted that NICHD had “every reason to celebrate.” The three most important issues before Congress, she continued, are children, children, and children. It’s clear that the work at NICHD, concluded Pelosi, follows President Kennedy’s vision, which established NICHD by an act of Congress in 1962.
The Importance of MA-Only Departments in Graduate Education

by Roberta Spitzer-Roth, Director of Research, AISA Research Program on the Discipline and Profession

As part of AISA's ongoing effort to analyse the vitality of sociology as a field, we have discovered that the surge in sociology Ph.D.s in the last half of the 1980s has been due, at least in part, to increases in MA-Only departments, which are able to provide more opportunities for students who have completed their MA degrees. In this paper, we examine changes in the number of MA-Only departments and in the number of students who are enrolled in these departments.

Table 1: Applicants to Masters Programs in Sociology by Department Type, 1997-98 Academic Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department Type</th>
<th>1997-98 Academic Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number Applied</strong></td>
<td><strong>Number Accepted</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Departments</td>
<td>3126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA/MS Programs in PHD Departments</td>
<td>1780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA/MS Programs in MA/MS Departments</td>
<td>1346</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentage of applicants accepted by the reporting departments.
**Percentage of accepted applicants who registered.
***Percentage of registered students who received funding.

Note: Table is on all departments responding to the 1998 Survey of Graduate Departments of Sociology (N=118).

As of the academic year 1997-98, the number of MA-Only departments increased by 20 from 1995-96, bringing the total to 85. This increase is due to the rising interest in sociology as a discipline, particularly among students interested in MA programs.

Minority Fellows Meet for Grant Workshop

by Ed Margulis, Director, Minority Affairs Program

A grant proposal development workshop sponsored by the Minority Fellowship Program of the AISA was held in May 20-30 in Washington, DC. As part of the wider effort to increase racial and ethnic diversity in the discipline, the workshop focused on increasing grant writing skills among minority fellows attending the conference. The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) hosted the workshop. NIMH provides funding for the Minority Fellowship Program, which is housed at the National Science Foundation. The workshop was attended by 30 fellows, each of whom was provided the opportunity to present a grant proposal.

The workshop was organized by the National Institute of Mental Health, which provided the funding. The event was attended by 30 fellows, each of whom was provided the opportunity to present a grant proposal. The workshop was a great success, with many fellows expressing interest in pursuing new funding opportunities.

Source: American Sociological Association, Survey of Graduate Departments of Sociology

Note: Only departments responding to the 1980 and 1986 surveys are included in this figure (N=112).

Minority Fellows Meet for Grant Workshop

by Ed Margulis, Director, Minority Affairs Program

A grant proposal development workshop sponsored by the Minority Fellowship Program of the AISA was held in May 20-30 in Washington, DC. As part of the wider effort to increase racial and ethnic diversity in the discipline, the workshop focused on increasing grant writing skills among minority fellows attending the conference. The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) hosted the workshop. NIMH provides funding for the Minority Fellowship Program, which is housed at the National Science Foundation. The workshop was attended by 30 fellows, each of whom was provided the opportunity to present a grant proposal.

The workshop was organized by the National Institute of Mental Health, which provided the funding. The event was attended by 30 fellows, each of whom was provided the opportunity to present a grant proposal. The workshop was a great success, with many fellows expressing interest in pursuing new funding opportunities.

Source: American Sociological Association, Survey of Graduate Departments of Sociology

Note: Only departments responding to the 1980 and 1986 surveys are included in this figure (N=112).
Bringing Qualitative Sociology to a School of Education

by D.R. LaMagdeleine
University of St. Thomas

I am the lone sociologist in a respectable secondary-school of education, and have played that role for almost ten years. My department (Educational Leadership) prides itself on being responsive to its students. Our students' feelings are respected for their practical seriousness, rather than for their scholarship in the arts and sciences. Some of our students did only so-so in their undergraduate 'careers and many stuck strictly to an education major.'

This professional school context puts me in a funny sort of spot. Almost without exception, when I use specifically sociological terminology I become incomprehensible for most of those with whom I work and teach. This 'social fact' of my working life might be depressing, except that I find continuing interest and the interest I bring to faculty and class discussions. I am also considered a good guy to talk to when a student is trying to shape a dissertation topic. I am 'a man without a nation,' but one who usually enjoys his work and commands a certain amount of respect. I think there might be a lesson here for all disciplines.

I would like to discuss a couple of structural variables that significantly affect my work as a sociologist in a school of education. The first of these is the age (about 40 on average) and experience of my students. The second is my department's conscious violation of the standard premise that students cannot do research on their own sites, and its mostly positive results in an impressive body of insightful case studies.

Consider the issue of teaching adults. Much has been written on this topic, often under the heading of "Adult Education Pedagogy." To provide only the most starkly contrast- ing traits, academic motivations among these students range from rank consumerism to the purest quest for knowledge. All of my students are motivated; more so than the undergraduate majors I used to teach. They are also usually quite experienced in positions of responsibility across a wide array of educational settings. They work in the midst of, or are just recovering from, a full-blown organizational crisis that yearly for sociological analysis. However, they have virtually no background in sociology or any other social science; their research skills usually fit the same description.

This student profile poses an interesting challenge for the sociologist. In its strictest terms, it means choosing between trying to provide a crash course in lower and upper division, followed by graduate level, sociology or something "quick and dirty." I usually apply both approaches, mostly because my students are superintendents and nurse educators rather than sociologists. Nevertheless, they need to be able to think — even better, exercise their sociological imaginations — on their feet. But how can they develop this knack without a full course specialization in sociology?

This is the dilemma I began working on a decade ago. It brought me to my second topic. Virtually all of our dissertations qualify as case studies. My students analyze the case of a troubled school, or the latest in a series of "cooled" statewide task forces. It is administered quite a trick sometimes for a sociologist to provide assistance in a student's case without exploding some very deep bold convictions. This observation particularly applies to situations in which the student is heavily invested. It is precisely why many graduate sociology departments ban dissertations on the student's own site. Ours does not. It could not afford to; since virtually all of our students work full time. Instead, our faculty has taken the position that the professional education we provide is only worthwhile to the extent that it's immediate applicability remains apparent. So we must either come up with a quick way for students to learn how to defamiliarize themselves with their everyday settings or put up with a preponderance of self-serving dissertations. In "Dear Diary" — masquerading under the guise of research.

However, I honestly believe that most of the dissertations written by our students do not fit this bleak description. I have been publishing proof of the ones I have chaired for their honesty and often counter- intuitive findings. Why? I think it is because we have worked out a compromise in which the first hands-on research course disallows the very kind of student data I advocated above. The one course in which their own data is "Introduction to Qualitative Research". It brings them to my second topic. They write full- fledged ethnographic notes on specific local greasy spoon and other specific of restaurants. Since they figure they already know what little there is to know about such places, bells start to go off in their heads when they see the radical discontinuities that emerge when their notes are juxtaposed with another set on the same site. Moreover, since they know that no one is heavily invested in the sites, most students are able to gain a sense of perspective about the ready apparent weaknesses in their first attempts. They gradually see them get better (I require those sets of notes), and in the process the once great discrepancies across accounts of the same place diminish markedly. Then we read an ethnography of a restaurant like Greta Foss' "Pumpernickel Dishing It Out or Spindlly & Mimi's Coastal Cuisine. We explore how the authors organized their theme from their data, and how they use the various types of data in the text's presentation. My experience is that, once our students have undergone these epiphanies in "data humbling," they achieve a considerable degree of awareness for what defamiliarization feels like. Then, when in subsequent courses they are asked to analyze their own materials, they have some notion of what data-driven critique feels like. And the same applies for the dissertation. Perhaps even more important, I like to think that they stand less chance of being seduced by the collective illusions plaguing their organizations on a regular basis.

To conclude, I note two observations discipline. The discipline itself is a potpourri that follow from the practice of sociologists like me. First, the teacher-student relationship looks different in a professional school. The students are not only as old as the instructor, but many of them have rich sets of experiences. I have never taught in an inner-city school, but some of my students run them. This makes for a certain leveling of power relationships, a pedagogical negotiation that some of my own graduate school instructors would have benefited from. I should note that, if this approach had been the norm, my cohort of future sociologists would have been invited much more often to look over the shoulders of their professors. Our doctoral studies would have felt more like an apprenticeship rather than a series of lectures.

Second, I find less guidance from the discipline in how to look about and conduct case research than I would like. The messy organizational dilemmas my students write about are somewhat like others that have appeared in the research literature, but I have yet to encounter even a close match. I think we need methodological theory that better finesse the vast gulf between incremental science and postmodern pastiche. My students take their stand somewhere in that space every day.

Contact: D.R. LaMagdeleine, School of Education, University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, MN 55105; e-mail drmagdel@stthomas.edu.

Eight of Nine By-Law Changes Approved

As part of the 1998 ASA elections, nine changes to the ASA By-Laws were recommended by Council for approval by the members. Eight of the changes were approved; only Amendment 7 regarding the appointment of members of the Committee on Publications was not approved.

There are some implications for ASA members and the Association that result from the approved changes. Two committees were removed from the By-Laws — the Membership Committee and the Committee on Committees. The Membership Committee has not been active for a number of years, so the change reflected the current practice. The removal of the Committee on Committees reflects the changes in the ASA's committee structure approved by Council during its January 1998 meeting. Currently, the only ASA committees are the status committees and the constitutional committees. The ASA Council will appoint members of these committees, so the Committee on Committees is no longer needed.

The members approved a change to Committee on Nominations that will reduce its size from 16 to 11 members and elections will no longer be held by districts. This change reflects Council's belief that a smaller committee could be more thoughtful about nominations and that at-large elections allow the members more voting choices. There is one change regarding the Committee on Publications. The ASA journal editors will no longer be members of the Committee. This change was brought about by a concern that the number of journal editors was much larger than the number of elected members which appeared to limit the Committee's oversight function of the ASA journals. Overall, Council believed that the changes in the committee structure and the By-Laws changes would allow ASA to have a more dynamic, effective, and efficient governance structure.

Amendment 1: (approved) To amend Article V of the ASA By-Laws to add the Committee on Sections.

Amendment 2: (approved) To amend Article V of the ASA By-Laws to add the Committee on Awards.

Amendment 3: (approved) To amend Article V, Section 7(c) of the ASA By-Laws so that the ASA President recommends members to serve on the Committee on Professional Ethics.

Amendment 4: (approved) To amend Article II and Article V of the ASA By-Laws to remove the Committee on Committees.
Pedraza's Cuba: Past but Never Present

by Carla R. Honary, Deputy Executive Officer

C. Wright Mills’ link between personal biography and social context is poignantly illustrated by Silvia Pedraza’s visit to Cuba last January. This University of Miami PhD candidate, and member of ASAS’s Council, traveled to Cuba for the historic visit of Pope John Paul II, and to maintain contact with her family. In the 30 years since her family left Cuba, she has commented on the effects of war on her aunts, uncles, and cousins who remained. In recent years, as her own understanding of the Cuban reality matured, her efforts have also turned to promoting peaceful, democratic change in Cuba. Pedraza, long a U.S. citizen, has made eight trips to Cuba since 1979, the first year that Cubans were allowed to return to the island to see relatives. Her visits are among the most thrilling—showing the most change—in her homeland.

Research Builds on Biography

Getting a visa to visit Cuba is never easy, but it is possible for U.S. citizens who can present a case for family reunification or for professional associates. Silvia Pedraza has woven together personal commitment to her family and sociological curiosity about social change in Cuba.

A specialist in stratification—immigration, race, and ethnicity in America—Pedraza has two major research projects under way, stimulated by the Cuban experience. The first examines ethnic enterprise and self-employment among African Americans and Asian immigrants in Chicago, and is funded by the National Science Foundation and the MacArthur Foundation. The second project examines Cuba’s revolution and exodus, focusing on ethnic groups and political dissonance that prompted so many to choose the path to exile. The project was initially funded by the ASA/NSF Fund for the Advancement of the Discipline small grants program (see page 6 of this issue). Thereafter, it was funded by the University of Michigan’s Honors 11th Rackham School of Graduate Studies Travel Grant and Fellowship. As part of her research on political dissonance, Silvia traveled widely within Cuba and participated in all of the events surrounding the Pope’s visit.

A visit to Cuba left the island since 1960, in four major waves of the exodus. “Each wave left under different circumstances, for different reasons, and was constituted by different social groups,” says Pedraza. As a result, the United States has inherited a large and diverse portion of the Cuban population. Her nuclear family left during the first wave, but other relatives left during the second wave. About half of her extended family remained in Cuba, most of whom became very integrated to the revolution. Divided families—across the divide of separate countries and different political convictions—is a focus of her research. In this most recent trip, Silvia was able to serve as a mediator for her own divided family to achieve some measure of reconciliation, based on love that was never extinguished, as well as to meet cousins and their children for the first time.

Back in 1972, Nellie Conover and Alma Zócalo were the first to document the motivations for the exodus of Cubans in the early years as changing from “those who wish” (the upper and middle classes, who waited for the Americans to come and solve the problem), to the “people who remained” (the lower-middle class, political order that had become consolidated after the fall of the Bay of Pigs fiasco in 1961) and finally to “the people who pushed” (the lower-middle class from 1960 to 1974, to “those who search” better economic and social opportunities) Cubans provided for themselves. In 1968, Silvia Pedraza added new categories to update the analysis, “those who hope” (those who have no political role) and “those who struggle” (the buyers and sellers who now control the economy). The "new economy" dominates and Silvia notes that many Cubans invest considerable energy in developing ingenious schemes that will earn them dollars so they can feed their families. The tourist industry is thriving, with many Canadian, European, and Spanish visitors. However, the touristic afforded to tourists—good accommodations, meals, and medicines—are not available for average Cuban citizens, who are also often times not even allowed to enter the hotels. Side by side with the tourist industry have grown other social problems, such as domestic violence and the increase of prostitution that promote a sexual tourism.

The State of Sociology

As in other countries with tightly-fisted regimes, few sociologists use that label to describe their training and work. The sociology department at the University of Havana has been closed and reopened several times. Silvia collaborates with students in Cuba. "They tend to have a very focused social problems approach to society," she says. "There is less attention to the broad understanding of society. To find sociologists at the Universities, look in the philosophy and history departments.”

The Pope’s Visit

In the early years of the revolution, the church and the government collided with each other, and many of the institutions created after the Revolution by the Catholic church—schools, universities, seminaries, hospitals—were taken over by the government. Most priests and nuns were also expelled from the island. Nevertheless, the churches were nowhere empty, except for a few old ladies. Religious affiliation and participation entailed very serious social costs. "If you went to church, you might not get a promotion at work, or a seat in the University, or even a refrigerator. But now the churches are full. And the priests are a new generation of young Cuban priests, rather than priests from Spain and other countries. The Pope’s visit affirmed and strengthened this new church.”

Observations on the Special Period

Pedraza notes the important changes that have taken place in Cuba from 1961 to the present, the period which Castro euphemistically called "the special period." With the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, the heavy subsidies which Cuba received from these countries came to an end. New Cuba had to rely on itself, and the result was a steep decline in economic conditions and a scarcity that was devastating. The real impact of the U.S. trade embargo was felt early when Cuba’s import specialists evaporated. Silvia notes that many people in Cuba go hungry and are severely malnourished. The talents of the well-educated Cubans are also going to waste. For example, Cuba has many well-trained doctors, and due to its advances in public health during the early years of the revolution, Cuba’s medicine was once a model for other Third World countries. But in recent years, the medical infrastructure has decayed to the point where doctors work without medicine, not even over the counter drugs. Doctors, for example, can detect cancer, but they cannot cure it. The Cuban economy has maintained stagnant, even with some foreign investment. Canada, Spain, and France, for example, have invested in assembly industries (mechaanica-type), where goods are manufactured elsewhere and the labor costs are extremely low.

Professionals not only find employment in their fields, but take other jobs that are more likely to be paid in Cuba such as bus drivers. The "economy" dominates and Silvia notes that many Cubans invest considerable energy in developing ingenious schemes that will earn them dollars so they can feed their families. The tourist industry is thriving, with many Canadian, European, and Spanish visitors. However, the touristic afforded to tourists—good accommodations, meals, and medicines—are not available for average Cuban citizens, who are also often times not even allowed to enter the hotels. Side by side with the tourist industry have grown other social problems, such as domestic violence and the increase of prostitution that promote a sexual tourism.

The Pope’s first Mass held in Santa Clara, Las Villas. All four masses were attended by thousands of people.

In this period of scarcity, today the church is also a source for tangible help. While the religious-based social services are not fully developed, informal help is available. Through the International Caritas, the church is able to offer food, medicine, which in some places is scarce. Another key attraction of the church is its ability to work in communities and provide social services, which are not readily available elsewhere. The Pope highlighted, it is that present an alternative vision of society, one where social classes and races are not divided against one another, but where the social message is about justice and mercy—helping others through compassion. The "special period" is not only an economic crisis, stressed Silvia. "For many Cubans, it is a crisis of legitimacy, of disbelief."

The Pope offered four masses while in Cuba. Silvia was able to attend two of them—the first one in Santa Clara, in the middle of the country (where her family is from), and the last one at the Plaza of the Revolution in Havana. The other two—one in the Eastern part of the country, Camagüey and Oriente—she watched on television, along with millions of Cubans on the island. "People really came out. People wore pictures of the Pope, which is something I wouldn’t have been allowed to do." By contrast, when the Pope returned to Europe, there was a large protest against the regime’s policies, even with the Pope’s visit. "There are a lot of people who felt that the Pope went everywhere. At the masses, people had the Vatican and Cuba flags attached together, and they waved them with enormous joy, a sight she never thought she would see. "In Cuba, there is a culture of mobilization—what people come out on the streets and pray and express themselves in songs and choruses. Like much else in Cuban culture, it has both Spanish and African origins. It is the culture of people who for centuries would go out on the streets, armymano—singing and dancing in uniform—during Carnival, as a form of protest." During the revolution, Castro used this same culture of mobilization to express himself, and the crowds chanted, rhythmically, their support for the Pope and his message. And what about this visit? As for the Pope’s visit, Cuba used this same culture of mobilization to express themselves, and the crowds chanted, rhythmically, their support for the Pope and his message. And what about this visit? As for the Pope’s visit, Castro used this same culture of mobilization to express themselves, and the crowds chanted, rhythmically, their support for the Pope and his message. And what about this visit? As for the Pope’s visit, Castro used this same culture of mobilization to express themselves, and the crowds chanted, rhythmically, their support for the Pope and his message.

Although the Monica Lewinsky story usurped the press coverage of the Pope’s visit and message, Pedraza feels the fleeting piano notes mimed the profound of the two stories. In this “special period” in Cuba’s history, something very powerful and special happened. Indeed, the Cuban government relents to engage in any real democratic reforms, such as a plebiscite and elections, or even in a dialogue among the major political parties in the state (the government, the church, the dissident movement, and the exile community) for which the dissident movement and the church have called. Yet the Pope’s visit did hold the personal messages of many Cubans, and the context in which they live. Pedraza underscores, this visit holds various meanings for Cubans. One is that which John Paul II himself intended: to strengthen the Cuban church, and with it, “the return of civil society—a process that is already underway in Cuba and which the experience of other countries tells us constitutes the sine qua non of successful democratic transitions.” Second, since the Pope himself called “for Cuba to open itself to the world, and for the world to open itself to Cuba,” within the U.S. it has reopened the debate and controversy on whether to continue the U.S. embargo of Cuba. Third, Cubans in the Island came out clearly and many in the context of the alternative values the Pope articulated regarding the central importance of the family, the church, schools to social institutions that need to play leading roles in society not totally so nearly by government, and, in so doing, provides the call for change. And, as if that were not all, Silvia said, “for me, there are so many other Cubans, his visit prompted a resolution and reconciliation.” A month after she returned, the reporter asked her cousin in Cuba that said, "The best thing about the Pope’s visit was that he brought your family together."
Improving Research by Assuring Access

This is the fifth in a series of articles written by members of the Committee on Society and Persons with Disabilities

by Corinne Kirkcher, American Foundation for the Blind

Preventing research participation: Few social scientists step to consider that they regularly, though unintentionally, disenfranchise some designated sample members from participating in their research. How does that happen? Because virtually any data collection technique the researcher has chosen may present an obstacle for people with certain impairments. Fortunately, there are ways to adapt conventional techniques so that they become accessible to all. This article gives a brief overview of the problem and points to solutions. (Note: Clearly the discussion also applies to the issue of access to using all techniques of data collection by researchers with such impairments.)

Examples of the Problem

Telephone interviews pose a barrier for sample members or researchers who have hearing impairments or speech impairment. Self-administered print questionnaires are hinders for people with impairments that affect reading print or writing. The variety of specific impairments that may have those effects is wider than one might at first consider—it includes visual impairments of course, but also certain learning disabilities, non-articulate, paralysis or absence of fingers or hands, among others. Some such effects are not at all understood by researchers who have not been exposed to particular impairments. A prime example pertains to print questionnaires for deaf persons and American Sign Language (ASL), although they can see to read the print, the format may be confusing. The ASL is essentially a different language from English. Furthermore, pain, weakness or fatigue from a wide range of causes may limit a potential participant's participation in any data collection technique. Cognitive impairments are particularly challenging for survey-based techniques, but are amenable to various solutions. When researchers do recognize the problem of barriers posed by their data collection techniques, they generally do not know what to do about it. They settle for proxy respondents or a higher nonresponse rate, or both. Using proxies is questionable at best for most topics, and might prove more distracting than would a nonresponse. Until recently there was little that researchers could do about ensuring access, and few resources to turn to for solutions. That is changing.

Growing Attention to Access

Many factors explain why research participation by people with disabilities is gaining attention. Certainly, the need has been growing. Greater representation of people with disabilities in general samples results partly from an increase in impairments, in turn associated with aging of the population, but also with more younger persons living with disabilities who previously would not have survived high risk births or serious injuries later in life. Two social movements have contributed as well—deinstitutionalization and disability activism. Then there is the fact that technologies are proliferating to facilitate participation in social activities by people with impairments; research is one arena that benefits.

Why Access Matters

Making up response rates is just one of several motivations for assuring access. Closely related is concern about adequate inclusion of varied perspectives. Depending on the research topic, excluding people with disabilities, or including them only by proxy, could alter relevant conclusions. This is especially likely in health-related research or studies on any topic that focuses on the elderly population. But it is important for researchers to realize that this issue extends beyond health topics. There is an emerging awareness in political polling and market research that people with disabilities make some decisions as an interest group or market segment. Not to be minimized is an ethical aspect: disability access is part of a broader obligation of social scientists to assure participation by all people who are part of their defined samples. Finally, a few funding agencies are beginning to evaluate grant proposals in terms of whether their research designs adequately deal with barriers to participation. Understandably, this is emerging in those settings that focus on disability research (notably, the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research). However, it is clear from the recently issued monograph, "Reorienting Disability Research" (National Council on Disability, 1995), that steps are in motion to spread awareness of these issues throughout the vast federal research complex.

Finding Solutions

The first step is awareness. Researchers should build into their protocols an opportunity for interviewees or self-respondents, as applies, not only to indicate in what way their data collection technique poses a barrier (that is generally done in explaining nonresponse or proxy response), but also what alternative would work. The array of possible solutions is wide and continually expanding. Telephones or relay phone services exist to conduct for interviews with people who cannot hear or speak. Questionnaires can be created in large print, braille or recorded versions. Simple accommodations like allowing multiple sessions for interviewing can be effective. Space constraints limit going into more detail here. In general, computer-based solutions are making research approaches much easier than previously (notably, braille translation software). Furthermore, as researchers gain growing experience with adaptations, there is corresponding emergence of guidelines for their optimum use. In just the past year, social researchers have made presentations about adaptive data collection techniques at the annual conferences of ASA, the American Public Health Association, and the American Association for Public Opinion Research, sharing the specific benefits, pitfalls and resource requirements they have encountered in their efforts to assure full access to survey participation. Systematic methodological research on adapting survey techniques is under way at the National Center for Health Statistics. If you are interested in receiving details about any of the techniques or presentations, please write to the contact ASA's Committee on Society and Persons with Disabilities. Members can make suggestions in their areas of expertise and can refer you to resource centers. Conversely, we urge readers who have dealt with access issues in their research to share their ideas and experiences.

Letters to the Editor

The Wrong Basis for Endorsement?

Dear fellow members,

I am boycotting this election as in violation of the ASA's principles (and potentially its ethics code).

There are no statements about what candidates will do, only information about their gender, age, ethnicity, and status—which is exactly what the survey is about in the primary basis of any kind of endorsement or recruitment decision.

There are no pro and con statements about the candidates. How can we allow something like this when we condemn it by others?

David Lempert
superemp@alumni.stanford.edu

Integrating Faith and Sociology

Should Christian sociologists integrate faith and sociology in their teaching? Lee Martin says no. I say, if they want to, definitely! Lee Martin opposes teaching sociology from a Christian perspective on two grounds: (1) that religion and sociology are epistemologically incompatible, and (2) that to teach religious beliefs is unethical. I thank Martin for acknowledging that many sociologists are religious and respecting their academic freedom. I also share his concern that their seminar topics or course titles may reflect their religious beliefs. But I reject his admonition to basically "keep religion private.

His first claim of incompatibility misunderstands both ways of knowing. Religion is not formal theory, but a set of methods that empower us to analyze our world; it cannot prove or disprove. A religious sociologist may oppose inequality because he believes God opposes it, but even if she cannot empirically prove her belief, it may still help her ask useful empirical questions. Religion and sociology do represent two different ways of knowing.

But his claim that they are incompatible is unconvincing. He criticizes religion for "superstitious," "supernatural," individualistic explanations of social problems. Indeed, religions may distinguish right from wrong, but his conservative view is liposuction. As evidence of pervasive religion I need only point to Martin Luther King Jr. or to feminist or liberation theology, critical religious perspectives which do not mix nicely with conflict explanations of social problems.

Religion and empirical sociology can thus be quite complementary. There is only incompatibility to atheistic sociologists who find religion unassailable. Martin betrays such anathemaic sentiment in his second claim about the ethicality of teaching religious beliefs. From a position of strict value neutrality, he is right. We have opposed academics advocating certain values because it unfairly excludes other values. But if academic freedom allows academics to let their values guide their selection and presentation of course material, then it is an ethical to advocate one value system as another.

Defining inequalities as social problems presumes a socialist perspectice that values equality of entitlement or opportunity. Is it more ethical to make students consider this value over a capitalist value of private property? In this way, it should be no more ethical to make students consider this value over a capitalist value of private property? But: Catholic Church and mainline Protestant denominations have a well-developed social understanding of human relationships. Many church-related social publications take sophisticated, progressive approaches towards the important social issues of the day.

Jack B. Mangus-Taylor, University of Connecticut, jat97093@ucconn.edu

More on ACTS

Lee Martin objects to the Association of Christian Teachers of Sociology (ACTS) because Christian epistemology is at odds with the way that sociology views knowledge (May issue). If ACTS were saying that all sociologists should share their interpretations, and that non-Christians could not properly understand sociology, the concern would be well-founded.

But it is my understanding that members of ACTS simply wish to apply their Christian insights to the field for whatever it may be worth to them. Obviously, those of other religious persuasions (or no religion at all) are free to have a different application of the findings of sociology.

There are Christian theologians, such as Reinhold Niebuhr, whose ideas about society are often stimulating. To be sure, these ideas may not be in the form of measurable hypotheses lending to theory, but they should not be dismissed because of a presumption that the two fields are incompatible.

Further, Martin seems to assure a very crude, fundamentalist view of modern Christianity. Yes, the highly-publicized Christian right may hold individualistic positions, but both the Catholic Church and mainline Protestant denominations have a well-developed social understanding of human relationships. Many church-related social publications take sophisticated, progressive approaches towards the important social issues of the day.

C. Emery Burton, csb6031@necs.elux.net

JULY/AUGUST 1998 FOOTNOTES

7
Sociologists Driving on the Technological Highway

by Tracie Danforth, ASA Meetings Assistant

Even a decade ago, before e-mail dominated communications, and before the Net supplanted library work, sociologists have been interested in technology and its impact. Sociologists have clung to the new methodologies of research and information technology with vigor, questioning how they will enhance work productivity, wondering what changes will occur in group processes and interpersonal relationships, and what can go wrong if we do not maintain a critical eye.

There is a small, yet growing number of sociologists who have begun to integrate their sociological imaginations to high technological industries, bringing the knowledge and insights gained from sociology to more applied settings. Although the group of technologically inclined academicians may not be large, the global world must not overlook the ever increasing need for social scientists to be trained and ready to conquer the world of high technology.

Melinda Cuthbert, Chips Rosher, and David Hong each have sociology degrees, but work in technological settings—new product development and market strategies, astrophysics and space crew training, and software analysis, respectively. All agree that sociologists are not only helped with their individual, daily tasks, but also has added an extra quality and unique perspective to each of their fields.

Melinda Cuthbert, working in Silicone Valley in California, is a manager of strategic planning for Mitsubishi Electric. One of her main tasks is to develop coherent strategies for targeting new products, from television to semi-conductors, at specific areas of the global market. Cuthbert’s background lies in both organizational and theoretical sociology. She notes that “because this is a complex environment for interactive technology, the training and theory background from sociology helps me to develop new ideas, gives me more confidence behind recommendations, and I feel that my analysis is more complete and coherent.” Cuthbert finds that she is constantly changing technological field as well as building global products for a global marketplace intellectually exciting and seems motivated by a genuine curiosity, a characteristic well-known throughout sociologist doing fieldwork or teaching.

Chips Rosher finds time to continue teaching sociology at a local college while working for Teledyne Brown Engineering in the Space Program Department. The company has worked closely with NASA for almost 20 years at the Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama. Dr. Rosher provides training for astronauts and space crews in areas such as leading, training seminars and lectures, helping to put together a payload of experiments, building and operating equipment, and coping with the transition to the space station. Computers are done with the astronauts in order to ensure safety when they are on a mission. Rosher, with a PhD in sociology, acknowledges that his analytical background from sociology has helped with experiments and data analysis that need to be performed during the training process. He explains that while teaching the astronauts experimental techniques using computer simulations, he would “walk through certain data, and then the astronauts would have to react to certain data when a problem happens. When they’re up in orbit, they want to have already done it on the ground.” Rosher came to Huntsville to teach Sociology of the Family and other sociology classes at the University of Alabama. Although he indicates that he has studied all of the theories of the family in his daily work, he reports that he “does use principles of analytical processes and university training to help in the course training.” His teaching and interpersonal skills are a necessity for the job.

High tech industries are using work groups to accomplish projects and tasks. David Hong is now working at TRW as a software test engineer. He is a recent graduate from Syracuse University with a BA in Sociology and emphasis the necessity of work groups in far fields that are in a constant state of change. “Everyone knows different things about software; it is not really a hierarchy because the technology is changing so rapidly that only one person can know so much. So, we work in teams.”

Teamwork and interpersonal skills seem to be the key that bind a social science education and a career in the technical fields. Cuthbert admits that she loves “observing the emergence of new markets and working collaboratively.”

Each of these sociologists cites examples in which sociology has benefited their education, including understanding, recognizing, and learning how to work with people of different cultural backgrounds as Rosher points out. He uses an example of a particular international mission in which 200 out of a team of 300 were Japanese. He contends that his sociological training provided him with the ability to understand the different cultures and the ways in which they interacted.

There are countless examples in which a social science background can benefit from and give benefits to industries that are more “hands on” such as technical fields. That is not to say that a degree in sociology will or can easily lead to a job in a technologically field. Hong and Rosher use terms such as “lucky” and “occurrent” when referring to how a sociologist ended up in such a technological job. Cuthbert came from other non-academic settings, including Time Warner and Pacific Bell, aware that she “had to be strong and conscious about building a track record.” Knowing that a technical career may not be the easiest path to choose for an emerging sociologist, there are some questions that beg attention. What steps should be taken to give more awareness to the multitude of technological career choices that are out there? Is there anything that can be done to change or redirect the system in order to create more opportunities in these growing fields?

Bringing Sociology and Technology Together

There are steps that are being taken to try to bring together the worlds of the more hands on technological fields and the more hands off social sciences. In a joint program between the University of Missouri, St. Louis and Washington University St. Louis, a unique undergraduate program began in the fall of 1993 in which students receive a bachelor of science in civil engineering and a bachelor of science in sociology.

The course requirements include approximately 90 hours of pre-engineering requirements, 21 hours of sociology requirements, 21 hours of core engineering requirements, and 48 hours of civil engineering requirements. Each dual major graduated this May.

Nancy Shields, Assistant Professor of Sociology and Associate Dean of the Joint Undergraduate Engineering Program, explains that for many students, it is “a natural progression to do a dual major.” Because engineering is one of the few careers in which a bachelor’s degree is a professional degree, many students go on to become managers early in their careers. Shields explains that “engineers are going to have to manage, be aware of policy issues, have people skills, leadership skills; this is all developed within the social science.” Students who come out with dual degrees will also have a greater awareness for the social aspects of an engineering profession such as urban planning and environmental issues. Shields also points out that “[the joint degree] program has a heavy methodological and statistical component, and engineering majors do not get much exposure to how to analyze data.”

As the technology continues to develop and change, it has become more necessary to arm future graduates with the knowledge and capability to add to the "hands on" world. In addition to the life lessons and unique perspectives that a sociological background provides, “students need to get a grasp of computer science and get a grasp of the technological sphere,” comments Rosher. This will inevitably increase the opportunities for graduates in sociology to pursue non-academic, applied jobs. As we look to the future, more interdisciplinary educational programs between sociology and technology are likely to emerge.

From the careers and work roles of Cuthbert, Rosher, and Hong, it is clear that sociological analysis and theories are being practiced and applied to the ever changing world of technology, and each has affirmed the importance of their sociological background in the technological world. The marriage of the social science background and technical fields is one that is being practiced now and begs for more attention for future graduates of sociology.

Light Directs National Health Service Project

The national committee representing the physicians, nurses and managers of Britain’s National Health Service (NHS) has selected Donald Light as director of the project on the future of the NHS for the 50th anniversary celebrations this summer in London. The project team will consider how the NHS will examine the challenges that face all managed care systems and the ethos of hard choices, as populations age and technology makes care more elaborate. It will consider the epidemiological implications for the organization of services and the changing cultural boundaries of health care. The project team will consider how the organization of services and the ethos of hard choices, as populations age and technology makes care more elaborate. It will consider the epidemiological implications for the organization of services and the changing cultural boundaries of health care. Light was born in Las Vegas, Nevada, and received his medical degree from the University of California, San Francisco. He is currently an Associate Professor of Medicine at the University of California, San Francisco, and is a member of the editorial board of the Journal of the American Medical Association.

The NHS is the world’s largest managed care system and one of the most efficient, it provides comprehensive health care for over 50 million enrollees with a staff of one million and a budget of about $60 billion, or about $1200 a person. The NHS combines managed care with public health through universal coverage and specific prevention programs. Care ranges from providing health educators for every young mother to home care for post-operative patients and the terminally ill. Nearly all care is free at the point of service. Waiting lists are used to ration and regulate the volume of elective procedures, most being done within three months. Eleven percent of the population has supplementary private insurance, which pays for quick access to a limited number of acute procedures.

Light has been doing applied research on the organization of health care systems and the NHS for years. He published reports on key turning points as the NHS converted to manage competition after 1990 under Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. "By 1995," Light said, "directors of services and purchasing had concluded on their own that managed competition was increasing costs, doubling the number of managers, creating dislocations, fragmenting care, and creating new inefficiencies." They moved towards cooperative arrangements which were strongly reinforced by the policies of the new Labour government. "Our experiences hold important lessons for the U.S. and other countries," Light continued, "about what happens if managed competition is applied to everyone on a level playing field, rather than selectively as it is in the United States."
Demographics and Sacred Ground

The third in a series of reports from ASA Congressional Fellow Leib Mentzov about her experiences as a staff member on the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Mentzov was awarded the status of Fellow at Brown University through June.

by Leib Mentzov
1986 ASA Congressional Fellow

The House Veterans' Affairs Committee recently voted on a bill (H.R. 3211), The Arlington National Cemetery Burial Eligibility Act, to clarify and tighten eligibility requirements for burial in Arlington Cemetery. The House overwhelmingly approved the bill without debate by a vote of 412 to 0. The factors leading to this strongly supported bill include demographic changes in the veteran population, political factors, social mores regarding burial practices, national sacred symbols, and tension as to the social meaning of Arlington as a national or a military cemetery.

Arlington Cemetery was created at the end of the Civil War when the Union Army had numerous war dead in the Washington area that needed to be buried. While Arlington is now a prestigious, sought-after place for burial, interestingly, the cemetery originated not as a place of honor but as a place for mass burial for those who had no means for burial elsewhere. A piece of farmland near Washington, belonging to Robert Custis, was taken over and designated as a burial ground. Later in a lawsuit against the government Lee's nephew was paid a fair price for the land. The cemetery became prominent in the country's awareness following the 1963 funeral of President John Kennedy, and his grave is an important tourist attraction. In addition to gravestones, Arlington serves as a location for various memorials to particular military and non-military events such as major losses in Korea or the Pan Am airplane bombing.

Eligibility for in-ground burial has been open to any honorably discharged veterans who have been awarded a military honor such as the Purple Heart or Distinguished Service Cross, or to any members of the Armed forces who die on active duty, to former prisoners of war, retired Armed Forces members, and the President or former President. Any honorably discharged veteran can have cremated remains placed in a repository at Arlington. Burial waivers presently, and until the Senate acts and the new eligibility becomes law, are also automatically allowed for distinguished national figures such as the Vice-president, members of Congress, Supreme Court justices, Cabinet secretaries, and high ranking government officials who were veteran but who did not meet the distinguished service criteria. The spouse and children of burial veterans can be buried in the same grave as the veteran.

The House action to tighten the Arlington criteria to eliminate the burial eligibility of high government officials and members of Congress, and to limit service eligibility to those honoring military service, reinforced Arlington's status as a military cemetery. During the House Veterans' Affairs Committee discussions on the proposed bill, questions arose about the meaning of Arlington. Is it a national shrine for America's heroes or is it a military shrine for only military heroes? Should they be eligible if they also have some high military honor? Should national tragedies, like Lockerbie, that are not military tragedies be commemorated? Arlington at present has the attributes of a national shrine, and those who visit Kennedy's grave do so because of his national service not his military service. Yet the final House bill passed last month with the strong support of veterans lobbying groups asserts that Arlington is a national cemetery eligible for the burial of all other persons who have made significant contributions to the country but do not have the military standing necessary for Arlington.

Arlington is to be a military not a national shrine. The Committee members who voted, many of whom are veterans of Korea or Vietnam, effectively denied themselves burial in Arlington with their vote.

Demographic Pressures

Major demographic changes that are occurring in the WWII generation are an important factor leading to the decision to make eligibility more stringent. As veterans of that war reach old age the requests for burial with military honors are increasing. There were 16.5 million persons who served in World War II. Sending one half million of them all alive but those veterans are dying at the rate of about 500,000 each year or 40,000 per month. Unlike more recent wars, most of the veterans of World War II took great pride in their military service and many are seeking burial in the veterans cemetery system. In a 1992 survey of veterans conducted by the Veterans Administration, 7.7 percent of those surveyed said that they intended to be buried in a veterans national cemetery, and 3.7 percent intended to be buried in a state veterans cemetery.

There are state veterans' cemeteries and 115 National Veteran Cemeteries distributed around the country in which 73,000 veterans are buried each year, but more than the aura of Arlington. In mid-September 25 burials take place daily at Arlington Cemetery, and there is concern that the cemetery will be filled early in the next century. There may be some opportunity for additional adjoining land to be acquired to enlarge the 260-acre cemetery but that is uncertain. The pressure on the cemetery bolsters the argument of those who argue the issue is that it should be reserved for those veterans who "belong them," America's military heroes.

The Political Context

But in addition to demographics, politics also enters into the picture, as it is often the case with legislation. National awareness of the Arlington issue came one year later when it was alleged that a former ambassador, who also was a large campaign contributor, who received a waiver for Arlington burial as a high ranking government official has enabled his military background and was improperly buried in Arlington. His remains were later removed from the cemetery. A review by the General Accounting Office of the waiver process found no evidence of improper or unethical behavior related to political contributions, but recommended that rules be reviewed. The publicity about the waivers raised the ire of the many veterans service organizations e.g., American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars. These organizations made their concerns known to members of the Veterans Affairs Committee.

After a hearing on the subject in January, the committee quickly moved to eliminate the waiver process except for spouses and dependent children being buried in the same grave.

Veterans Groups: Declining Numbers, Declining Volunteer Labor

The decrease in numbers of living WWII veterans is also resulting in a decline in membership of veterans' organizations. Viet Nam era veterans have not participated in veterans organizations to the same extent as veterans of earlier wars, although there is one organization, The Viet Nam Veterans of America, that is specifically for them, and that has been particularly active on Agent Orange and MIA issues.

The decline in numbers and aging of members of the other veterans' organizations has led to a shortage of honor guards at military burials. Such honor guards are not provided by veterans' cemeteries. Rather, the cemeteries rely on nearby military units if there are any, or on local veteran groups to have to retired members volunteer to serve at funerals. A recent newspaper article about the San Antonio, New York, National Veterans Cemetery quoted the local American Legion Post Commander, "too many of the former honor guard members were WWII veterans who have passed away or are getting too old for the job." The army too has cut back on providing honor guards for burials because of increased demand for guards combined with reductions in the size of the military force these cemeteries are downsizing.

In mid-March Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) introduced a bill in the Senate, The Veterans Burial Rights Act, and Lane Evans of Illinois introduced a similar bill in the House. The Senate bill would require the armed services to provide an honor guard at least five people, including a bugler to play taps, but the legislation does not provide additional money to the Defense Department budget for this perhaps burdensome service. According to a Washington Post story the ceremonial guard at Fort Myer near Arlington "participated in more than 4,400 funerals last year, nearly 900 more than a similar period a decade earlier. One last impact of the deaths of WWII veterans is a shortage of the blank envelopes used by honor guards to fire a salute at the burial. The Department of Veterans Affairs procures the blank envelopes from the army. Stockpiles of the blanks are running low and the army, which does not use blanks for any other purpose, will not resume manufacturing them until later. In the meantime some American Legion Posts have had to later borrow blanks from other posts according to the Legion's National Headquarters.

The combination of military pride, the demographic effect of increasing age of veterans, the large number of deaths in the WWII veteran population, a shortage of veterans to serve in formal ways at funeral services, and the reluctance of the current military to participate in burial activity leads to a perceived threat to the sacredness of the World War II veterans as a powerful force. When a group's identity is threatened the response is often a conservative retreatment, a closing of ranks to use a military metaphor, and an appeal to powerful outside groups for support. Retirement is seen in the veterans' insistence that Arlington should be for decorated military only. Regarding the advocacy of powerful others, the veteran lobbying groups are still consulted on matters such as the House and Senate reviews of the yearly budget for Veterans Affairs, and each of the major veterans service organizations provides testimony on the proposed budget. While the tourists to Arlington might not notice the difference in military emphasis, the House through its vote on the Arlington bill and the Senate through the Burial Act have reassessed the importance of the veterans groups and shown evidence of Congress' support for these groups as a continuing political force despite the reduction of their membership.

The Senate Veterans Committee and the Senate Armed Services Committee are still discussing the issue.

Follow Up...

Silvio Dobey of Hostos Community College (CUNY) in the Bronx commented on the story about teaching sociology in Spanish, "We have been doing this for quite some time and would like to share with others our experiences in this area. Teaching American Sociology to Spanish speaking students, most of them recent immigrants to the States, gives the discipline a unique opportunity to help in acculturating students to their new environment." Contact Dobey at 574 Bergen Street, Brooklyn, NY 11238-5401.

Benh Berhangnoo, University of Nevada-Reno wrote as a follow up to the article by Carla B. Howery titled "Richardson Devotes His Energy to Faculty Governance" in the March 1996 issue of Footnotes, "I would like to report that Dr. Jim Richardson, Professor of Sociology and Judicial Studies at the University of Nevada, Reno has just been elected as next president of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). This may perhaps be the first time that a sociologist is elected to this highest office as President of AAUP since its founding in 1915. Moreover, there have only been two other presidents elected from west coast institutions in AAUP history (as some 76% of AAUP members are located in the east), and the last president from the west (California) was elected 25 years ago. Indeed, this means a great victory for Jim, as well as all of us in the Nevada Faculty Alliance and the profession of sociology in general. Congratulations, Jim!"
Annual Meeting, from page 1

Presidential Address

A full house was expected for President-elect’s address on President-elect’s (see page 31) making the program’s major new addition to the 1998 meeting. The address was expected to be well-attended by attendees and attract both new and returning attendees. The event was scheduled for 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, August 22, in the Grand Ballroom. The program included a panel discussion on the role of the ASA in the current political climate. The panelists were expected to address issues such as the importance of research and the need for funding. The event was also expected to be well-attended by students and young scholars.

Research Support Forum

The 1998 Annual Meeting marks the tenth year of the Research Support Forum. This year’s forum will feature several presentations that are expected to attract a large audience. The forum will cover a wide range of topics, including funding opportunities, research methodologies, and the importance of collaboration. The event is scheduled for 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, August 22, in the Ballroom. Attendees are encouraged to attend to learn more about the latest research and funding opportunities available to social scientists.

New Section on Consumers and Consumption

The time is right, since the rise of consumer culture has been an important topic for many years. The section is expected to attract a large audience, with presentations on a variety of topics related to consumption. The presentations will cover a range of topics, including the impact of consumption on society and the role of consumers in shaping social trends. The event is scheduled for 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, August 22, in the Ballroom. Attendees are encouraged to attend to learn more about the latest research and trends in the field of consumption.

Election, from page 1

President-elect

Joe R. Feagin, University of Florida

Vice President-elect

Nan Lin, Duke University

Secretary

Catherine E. Lee, Harvard University

President-elect

William T. Meier, University of California-Santa Barbara

Executive Board

Kathleen M. O’Hara, University of Delaware

The election results are expected to be announced at the Annual Meeting, which is scheduled for Saturday, August 22, at 8:30 a.m. in the Grand Ballroom. Attendees are encouraged to attend to learn more about the candidates and their platforms.
Sociology Takes a Poetic Turn

Of the many techniques sociology faculty employ to engage students' sociological imagination, writing original poetry may not be the first that comes to mind, nor the easiest to create. We can take a cue from Aikid Kabagarama, Witchita State University. Dr. Kabagarama, a native of Uganda, has written several books of poetry and turns to verse to illustrate sociological ideas. Poetry and teaching come together in The Tree Branches: Poetry for Self-Improvement and Community Building, which she published herself. Imagine an introductory course where poetry is used to convey the idea of culturally defined standards of beauty.

Eye of the Beholder

As the old saying goes
Beauty is in the eye of the beholder
I walk, shaking my good size hips
In tune with the rhythm of life
Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

I laugh and show my dark gums
While rolling my big brown eyes
Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

My skin glows in the dark
Like a brand new clay pot
Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

My curly hair, enriched with equatorial oils
Covers my head like a crown
Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

My arms, adorned with jewelry
Are a symbol of my pride
Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

My neck, up-right and long
Portrays my royal inheritance
Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

My breasts, streaming with rivers of life
Fill my bosom to the brim
Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

Reprinted with permission from Tree Branches