A Note from the Chair, Amy Binder

The Sociology of Education section newsletter has long been a welcome item in my email inbox—not something I ordinarily say about mass mailings! During his time as chair, my predecessor—once-removed, Bill Carbonaro, revived the “Five Questions” column in the newsletter, while my immediate predecessor, Doug Downey, orchestrated a fascinating series called “Room for Debate.” Both of these newsletter sections featured mostly established scholars weighing in on their research projects or policy developments. These columns made for great, thought-provoking reading—and probably a good number of passionate conversations around water coolers from coast to coast.

In this issue we maintain the tradition of “Five Questions” with an interview conducted by Jacob Hibel with his former graduate school professor David Baker, on the subject of David’s new book, *The Schooled Society*. Because the interview is *that good and that probing* (no softball questions for this old advisor!), we let Jacob’s five questions balloon to seven. Thanks to both interviewer and interviewee for a great piece. We also include a link to a TED talk that David delivered on the subject of his book. May we all consider taking a page from David’s book (figuratively) and reach beyond our discipline’s boundaries to reach a larger audience for our research.

I am also happy to introduce a new column titled “Playing the Field,” with this issue’s topic subtitled “Unanswered Questions in the Sociology of Education.” The Sociology of Education field is a large tent, but in this and future issues, we will explore how we might extend our purview still further. In this first issue, I have asked five junior scholars—the winners of the section’s David Lee Stevenson Award for Outstanding Graduate Student Paper—to share their thoughts on how we might expand our collective horizons.

I am very grateful to the members of the section’s Council, who have already been pressed into service on issues large and small. This year’s members are Ireen Beattie, Kim Goyette, Grace Kao, Jennie Brand, Hyunjoon Park, Jenny Stuber; our student member is Dan Rudel, Ruth López Turley steps boldly into the role of secretary/treasurer this year, succeeding Josipa Roksa, who served the section brilliantly for three years.

Soon you will be receiving a notice from ASA about submitting papers for the 2015 annual meetings, which will be held in Chicago August 22-25. The online submission system will open on December 5. The deadline for submissions to the 2015 Call for Papers is January 7, 2015. Organizing the section’s roundtables this year will be Anna Haskins and Oren Pizmony-Levy; organizing the section sessions will be Laura Hamilton and Kyle Dodson. I have not yet heard from ASA who will organize the regular sessions, but no doubt all will be revealed in due time. All of the section and roundtable sessions are open-submission (rather than pre-categorized), to be shaped into meaningful sessions by our talented organizers. Thanks in advance to the enormous task that Anna, Oren, Laura, and Kyle will be taking on behalf of the section in a couple of months.

There are many more people who will be doing the demanding/rewarding work of the section over the next several months. Among them are the members of the Nominating Committee, which will put together a slate of candidates for chair and council. This year’s Nominating Committee is composed of David Bills (chair), Lisa Nunn, Ireen Beattie, Jennie Brand, and Jal Mehta.

Please note that we have devoted a section of this newsletter to section awards information. Many thanks to all of those serving on our four committees, and to those of you who will nominate and/or be nominated for recognition by the section. Also note that this is the first year the section will be giving out the Doris Entwisle Early Career Award.

Finally, big thanks to Katie Condit who did such a terrific job editing the newsletter these past couple of years, and a hearty welcome to Dan Davis, our new editor. We here at the section newsletter are committed to publishing all the news that’s fit to print.
Dear fellow sociologists of education, I am excited to serve the section this year as your new editor/webmaster. Amy will be sending out regular calls for contributions to the newsletter in her listserv emails. But also feel free to send any ideas directly to me. If you have a new book out, were recently hired or promoted, or have any other news or announcements, let us know.

I’m currently a PhD student in Sociology at UC San Diego, focusing on the sociology of higher education. My inbox is always open!

[Email: dbdavis@ucsd.edu]
"What do you think are the most important unanswered questions in the field of Sociology of Education?"
This question was posed to former winners of the SOE David Lee Stevenson award for best graduate student paper. Their replies follow on the next three pages.

“Global schooling trends present a unique opportunity for sociology of education scholars to reframe key questions of the discipline in a global perspective.”

**Julia Andrea Berhman**, New York University
*David Lee Stevenson Award Winner 2014*

“Our subfield can benefit from 1) more cross-national research and 2) a stronger focus on early childhood education. Why not both?”

**Joe Merry**, Ohio State University
*David Lee Stevenson Award Winner 2013*

“How do schools continue to have an enduring influence on social relationships (friendships and romantic relationships) long after students graduate?”

**Maggie Frye**, Harvard University
*David Lee Stevenson Award Winner 2012*

“Answering big questions about persistent inequalities—and taking (research) aim at middle-class privilege—is important for numerous reasons. For example, we can unravel the mechanisms of inequality and hopefully create a system where “what’s best for my kid” doesn’t jeopardize “what’s best for all.”

**Jessica McCrory Calarco**, Indiana University
*David Lee Stevenson Award Winner 2011*

“The most important unanswered question in the Sociology of Education is how policy and politics shape education (e.g. in other countries, in the unintended consequences, and in ‘on the ground’ movements).”

**Oren Pizmony-Levy**, Columbia University
*David Lee Stevenson Award Winner 2010*
Global Schooling Trends
By Julia Andrea Berhman

There has been a vast expansion in school enrollment and attainment throughout much of the Global South over the last three decades. Between 1999 and 2010 the Adjusted Net Enrollment Rate\(^1\) in primary school rose 20 percentage points in Sub-Saharan Africa, 15 percentage points in South and West Asia and 10 percentage points in Arab states.\(^1\) Globally, the adult literacy rate rose from 76% in 1990 to 84% in 2011 and the youth literacy rate rose from 83% in 1990 to 90% in 2011.\(^1\) Population based projections indicate that increases in schooling will continue at primary, secondary and tertiary levels in the coming decades.\(^1\) Schooling increases have been driven by a number of factors including rising incomes in low and middle-income countries and substantial government investment in education such as introduction of school incentive and subsidy programs and elimination of users fees. These global schooling trends present a unique opportunity for scholars of the sociology of education to reframe some of the key questions of the discipline in a global perspective.

A large body of research explores the impact of social protection programs in Latin America, South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa on school enrollment and attainment, with particular attention to how effects vary by gender, class and ethnicity. Expansions in school access/enrollment often came at the detriment of school quality, raising the important question: what are the long-term implications of this access-quality tradeoff for student learning outcomes? Also important is whether this access-quality tradeoff has implications for life-course outcomes related to fertility, migration and labor force participation. While increased schooling (even of poor quality) has been shown to delay pregnancy, lower total fertility and improve child health of the next generation, it is not widely understood why this is the case. More work is needed to understand the social and contextual mechanisms through which schooling affects life course transitions across contexts. Underlying all of this is the important methodological question: how do we measure school quality and student learning in heterogeneous resource poor contexts?

In the coming decades countries in the global South will be disproportionately affected by climate change. At present, there is little research on the effects of changing climate on global schooling outcomes. Yet severe climate shocks have the potential to substantially derail progress in global schooling by destroying schools or infrastructure necessary to access schools; increasing displacement and decreasing children’s school access; or damaging household livelihoods in a way that increases need for child labor and forces children to leave school prematurely. All of this leads to the pressing question: how will climate change affect schooling for current and future generations of children in the Global South?

We Need More Early Childhood and Cross-National Perspective
By Joe Merry

The October 2013 issue of Sociology of Education included a forum in which several of our section members commented on the state of the subfield. One takeaway is that sociology of education research tends to focus on domestic K-12 education. Given this emphasis, what unanswered questions remain?

The focus on formal schooling (K-12) provides too narrow a lens. It contributes to Brint's (2013) observation that scholars have a tendency to develop a 'sociology of schooling' rather than a sociology of education. Looking beyond the years of formal education provides greater opportunities to understand how exactly we can locate schools in the context of broader non-school conditions and how schools influence and are influenced by other institutions and social policies. On one end of this standard grade-level range, we are starting to see recent research ask important questions about tertiary education – time-use, debt, the shaping of ideologies, etc. But, we still have much less knowledge about the earliest years of children’s development and the skills (cognitive and social-emotional) with which they enter formal schooling. Gaining a better understanding of learning inequalities before the start of formal schooling can help us determine how schools are active in reproducing, exacerbating, or compensating for existing inequalities.

For one, we need to understand why SES-based achievement gaps are mostly formed prior to kindergarten entry and why they change only modestly as children progress through school. What processes and mechanisms shape these early gaps and what can we do to ameliorate their effects? Cross-national comparative research provides an ideal testing ground for these types of questions. Fortunately, we will soon have high-quality data to answer some of these questions. The Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring (CEM) at Durham University is in the initial stages of preparing a new cross-national assessment of early childhood education – the International Performance Indicators in Primary Schools (iPIPS). With this forthcoming data we can begin to answer a number of important research questions. What does cross-national student performance look like at school-entry and the first year of formal schooling? Are the highest performing countries in iPIPS the same as those in the well-known secondary school assessments (PISA, TIMSS)? If this is the case, then there is strong reason to focus reform efforts at early childhood and pre-primary levels.

Furthermore, of the best performing nations at this young age, what are the possible (country-level) mechanisms that contribute to this level of performance?
What role does preschool or other child care provisions play? In sum, our subfield can benefit from 1) more cross-national research and 2) a stronger focus on early childhood education. Why not both? This approach can give us the analytic tools to better understand how schools matter within a broader context.

Schools Enduring Influence on Social Relationships (Friendships & Romantic)
By Maggie Frye

On my first day of college, I sat with my fellow freshmen on a row of folding chairs as we listened to remarks from various university officials welcoming us into the college community. The dean of student life proclaimed that a third of the students sitting before her would eventually marry a fellow graduate of that college. And—this was the kicker—most of us wouldn’t start dating that person while in school. This remark turned into a running joke among the students living on my floor; we would speculate on whether we “met our future husband” in line in the dining hall, or running next to each other on the treadmill, without exchanging words or even introducing ourselves.

I’m not sure what data (if any) this dean used to back up her assertions. But sociological research does confirm at least some of what she said, as preposterous as it seemed to me at the time. Numerous studies have provided evidence of “educational assortative mating”—people are more likely to date and marry those with similar educational status, and this is particularly true at the tails of the educational distribution. And a substantial proportion of college graduates do marry others who attended with the same institutional characteristics as their own (Arum, Roksa, and Budig 2008).

Beyond the romantic realm, adults are more likely to form friendships with others with similar educational experiences, and these friendships among graduates are central to classical sociological accounts of the processes through which educational institutions garner economic and social benefits for graduates (Baltzell 1989; Coleman 1988; Granovetter 1995; Sewell, Haller, and Portes 1969). Describing the process through which schools lead to friendships among classmates Bourdieu writes, “Better than any debutante party, ball, or other institution aimed at circumscribing the area of approved encounters, the algorithm of academic classification... fosters togetherness among likeminded people” (1998:183).

Almost 50 years ago, Blau and Duncan suggested that researchers interested in stratification should turn their focus to the social realm and investigate “how matches get made” (1967:346). I see this as an important—and as yet unanswered—question within the sociology of education. Put simply, how do schools continue to structure social relationships (in particular, friendships and romantic relationships) long after students graduate? Rather than focusing on how students are educated—how the knowledge or skills they learn in schools shape later opportunities and experiences—this question points researchers towards looking at how students are schooled—the processes through which repeated encounters with teachers, classroom environments, and campus configurations lead students to form preferences for being with others who went through the same (or similar) experiences.

Citations

Big Questions and Taking (Research) Aim at the Middle Class
By Jessica McCrory Calarco

Given sociology’s emphasis on stratification, it is not surprising that sociologists of education have focused heavily on identifying inequalities in students’ experiences and outcomes. What is surprising, however, is the lack of attention to a bigger and possibly more important question: Why do these inequalities persist?

(continued...)
This question is likely to have multiple answers. One, scholars might be reluctant to step into public debates about policy and practice. Or two, practitioners and policymakers might be unwilling to acknowledge what scholars have found. Both answers are plausible; yet, other possibilities are also ripe for consideration. My suspicion, based on my own research and on work by scholars like Maia Cucchiara, Erin Horvat, Michael Hout, Shamus Khan, Joshua Klugman, Michele Lamont, Annette Lareau, and others, is that lingering disparities reflect, at least in part, the fact that privileged groups in our society are unwilling to concede the advantages that inequality affords them. We know, for example, that while working-class families struggle to play catch-up, middle- and upper-middle-class families invest their financial and cultural resources to maximize their share of educational resources. The privileged classes then leverage those educational resources—including credentials, access to “good” schools, and even teachers’ time and attention—for additional gain.

These possibilities are interesting in their own right, but they also generate more questions. And good questions should drive research forward, keeping scholars interested not just to test a new variable or alternative model, but to dig deeper into the workings of society. If, for example, the privileged are driving persistent inequalities, then the first question leads to a second and a third: How do the privileged maintain their advantages? And what drives them to do so? Again, the potential answers are numerous. One particularly intriguing possibility is that the middle class is leveraging their privilege in a last-ditch effort to give their children a shot at success in the face of increasing economic uncertainty.

Answering big questions about persistent inequalities—and taking (research) aim at middle-class privilege—is important for numerous reasons. First, doing so offers sociologists of education the opportunity to make real contributions to society. They can unravel the mechanisms of inequality and hopefully create a system where “what’s best for my kid” doesn’t jeopardize “what’s best for all.” Second, research on privilege has the potential to contribute to the field as a whole. Processes of power play out not only in schools, but also in employment, healthcare, government, etc. Third, tackling questions of privilege will require education scholars to engage more deeply with theory. These questions are closely linked to dominant paradigms in the sociology of education—e.g., cultural capital, maximally and effectively maintained inequality, opportunity hoarding, and cumulative advantage. Yet, they also speak to broader sociological debates about status, power, social interactions, and institutions. Fourth, through their emphasis on process, questions about privilege and persistent inequalities compel scholars to examine what happens within the institutions they study—the actions and interactions of those on the ground—and not just the outcomes they produce.


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**Policy and Politics on Education**

By Oren Pizmony-Levy

From the vantage point of a sociologist who is interested in the intersections of policy, politics, and education, I believe that the most important unanswered question in the Sociology of Education is how policy and politics shape education. Here, I treat education as a broad field that includes both formal and non-formal aspects. This question is important for at least three reasons.

First, it leads us to assess the applicability of well-established theories, which are often developed in the US or in other Western countries, in different social contexts. For example, recent research in comparative education has shown how social context affects not only learning outcomes, but also the correlates between student’s background and learning outcomes (e.g., family status).

Second, it motivates us to further examine the intended and unintended consequences of policy. Here, I envision scholarship that interrogates the impact of accountability and assessment not only on teaching and learning, but also on health/mental health, public perceptions of schools, teachers, and educational policy. In many conferences and forums, we hear about the impact of international assessments (such as TIMSS, PIRLS, and PISA), but the evidence is still lacking.

Third, it enables us to further explore how institutionalized ideas are manifested “on the ground.” For example, research in transnational sociology has documented the expansion of global educational scripts (or movements), such as human rights education and environmental education. Nonetheless, we still know very little about the ways in which these ideas enter schools and classroom.
Interview with David Baker: “The Schooled Society”

David P. Baker (left) is Professor of Education and Sociology at Penn. State University, and author of recently published, The Schooled Society: The Educational Transformation of Global Culture (Stanford University Press, 2014).

Jacob Hibel, (right) is Assistant Professor of Sociology at UC Davis and conducted this interview.

DB: Thank you Jacob Hibel for these insightful and stimulating questions about my new book The Schooled Society, and thank you Amy Binder for this opportunity to reach out to the Section.

JH: Many of us think of schooling (and perhaps most of us teach our students to think of it) as a social institution that serves certain societal needs such as allocating individuals to occupations or maintaining elites’ intergenerational transmission of advantage. You take a different perspective on schooling’s relationship to society in your book, correct?

DB: Correct, just the opposite. The hypothesis is that with the education revolution, both demographically and ideologically, formal education has a wide impact on other institutions. Education certainly continues to allocate with ever more legitimation, but it also generates transformed actors that in turn transform other sectors of society. The education revolution also promotes an ideology about humans and society that shape post-industrial culture with new meanings about human capabilities, work, the self, political, religion, and much more. This is the central argument of the book, which I then address with as much empirical research as is available on the influence of education on other institutions. At the end of his life, Talcott Parsons, who coined the term, predicted that the education revolution had been, and would continue to be, as transforming to human society as the capitalist and democratic social revolutions. Mostly this prophetic insight was forgotten as the sociology of education generated a body of impressive research on allocation and social reproduction. My book returns to this original idea and examines historically the coming of the schooled society and its consequences for society, including social stratification.

JH: A follow-up to your answer, the idea that education both shapes and is shaped by society can be traced back to early neo-institutionalist work, such as Meyer’s observation that schooling creates new categories of experts with command of new types of legitimate knowledge. That body of 1970s and 80s neo-institutionalist thinking about education remains highly influential, but I wonder where you see neo-institutionalism heading in the near future? Is it more or less a fully developed theoretical perspective, or are there certain kinks that remain to be ironed out?

DB: More than kinks, NI still requires a full empirical testing of its core ideas. This has not really been undertaken. Mostly, past research has demonstrated the greater institutionalization of education in society,
but where this came from and what this will mean for new social forms is still open territory. My book is an attempt to define the arguments of neo-institutionalism and apply them to one social institution. In the future, this should be done across many institutions. In some ways, the growth of the world culture model from early work on NI, more or less lumping all specific institutions together, was premature and worked against a basic test of the theory. In writing this book I found many “surprises” that the theory does not account for very well, if at all, so I hope the book stimulates other sociological research on the broad issue of education and society.

JH: The dominant sociological perspective on educational credentialism predicts perpetually rising educational requirements for gaining access to desirable occupations, despite the fact that the knowledge and technical skills that these jobs require remain relatively stable. Could you explain why this hypothetical process, which you refer to as “content-less” or “skill-less” educational upgrading, offers an incomplete if not wholly inaccurate representation of the recent historical relationship between educational credentials and occupational stratification?

DB: Some past writings in the sociology of education did the field a major disservice by assuming a “myth of education;” namely, that what occurs in schooling is not very transforming of individuals and has little real connection to adult life, such as in jobs, beyond empty credentialing. This just flies in the face of so much evidence to the contrary; the myth is itself a myth. This is not to say that education operates on a narrow mechanical human capital model. Rather, and this is a central feature of a schooled society, the ideas, ideologies, psychological sensibilities, and yes, even skills-knowledge of ever more educated cohorts influence the social construction of jobs, profit seeking strategies of firms, the nature and organization of work, rising professionalism, consumer demands, and so forth. Therefore education credentials become heavily legitimated and dominant, but one does not need a myth of education or credentialism to explain this phenomenon. This myth has limited the range of sociology of education and it should be discarded.

JH: Rapidly increasing numbers of students are gaining access to higher education around the globe through the expansion of traditional postsecondary systems in countries like China as well as the emergence of new avenues to a college degree (e.g., online universities) in countries like the U.S.. Should we be alarmed at the prospect of an over-educated global society full of dissatisfied, under-employed college graduates and “dumbed-down” college curricula?

DB: As argued extensively in the book, over-education has not, and likely will not, happen for the simple reason stated above; education also changes society. The latter does not stay fixed while the former attempts to pour ever more educated individuals into overfilled ranks. Education, on a mass scale culturally, expands ranks in many ways. This was the central insight of John Meyer's influential 1977 (AJS) paper. This does not mean the there are not winners and losers in the schooling game, but an over-education crisis is not a fruitful model to think about educational expansion. Also when sociologists have empirically looked for evidence of adverse effects of educational expansion on populations, they have not been able to find much, if any. The same is true of the widely held assumption that mass education means “dumbing-down” of content. There is growing research, some of it covered in the book, indicating that in terms of the amount of content and cognitive demands in education, one could argue the opposite, particularly in the US over the past 50 years. Also, observers of education frequently misinterpret a historical change in education’s goals and context, such as the movement away from classicism to general cognitive development, as a weakening of curriculum, which is not necessarily true.

JH: You emphasize that the emergence of “academic intelligence” as a key schooling outcome is a primary component of the education revolution. What is academic intelligence, and how does it differ from other individual capacities that might be grouped under the umbrella of human capital?
DB: Academic intelligence is a distinctly different type of academic achievement from the past, and it has become valued as the central human capacity of the schooled society. It is metacognitive skills, or what psychologists refer to as “domain-general cognitive skills,” such as problem solving, higher-order thinking, abstraction, informed interpretative skills, reasoning, generating new ideas, and critique. The point here is that slowly over the course of the long history of the western form of the university and up through the education revolution, schooling has constructed these kinds of cognitive skills as the essential human capacity for all kinds of activities. This is a major change in thinking about human capabilities from earlier societies, included here too is the belief that social stratification is legitimately based on these skills, now nearly solely chartered through educational degrees.

JH: What are some of the most important differences between the world you foresee, in which nearly everyone experiences formal academic training, and the societies that currently exist around the globe?

DB: Good question. The social trends across institutions influenced by the education revolution will no doubt continue and expand with growing access to formal education worldwide. One example that the book just briefly describes but which I’m been doing a lot of research recently, are the demographic implications of the coming global schooled society: mass education is a main factor (even net of economic development) in leading the world towards depopulation or slow growth, and greyer populations. While this is crucially good news for nations in the southern hemisphere, we really don’t know what the economic, social, and political challenges will be for a sustainable schooled society, but they will be substantial. This is a particularly rich area for sociological inquiry in the near future.

JH: The newsletter’s readers might be interested to hear about your recent experience as a TEDx Talk speaker. What was the process like and what sort of responses have you received? Would you encourage other sociologists to pursue similar outlets for disseminating their research findings?

DB: Humbling…I was introduced as “Dave, the teacher.” It was a little nerve-racking to try to be at once entertaining (I was repeatedly told I must be) and not embarrass myself professionally (I repeatedly told myself)…all in 15 minutes, live, no notes, lights camera action! Go to this link and let me know how I did: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sv3CLr84UJU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sv3CLr84UJU)
Section Members’ Books Announcements

Aspiring Adults Adrift: Tentative Transitions of College Graduates
By Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa (University of Chicago Press, 2014)

The sequel to Academically Adrift, this text follows that same cohort as they face the job market. Built on interviews and detailed surveys of almost a thousand recent college graduates from a diverse range of colleges and universities, Aspiring Adults Adrift reveals a generation facing a difficult transition to adulthood. Recent graduates report trouble finding decent jobs and developing stable romantic relationships, as well as assuming civic and financial responsibility—yet at the same time, they remain surprisingly hopeful and upbeat about their prospects.

Richard Arum is Professor of Sociology and Education at New York University, Steinhardt
Josipa Roksa is Associate Professor of Sociology and Education at the University of Virginia

Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow: School Desegregation and Resegregation in Charlotte
Edited by Roslyn Arlin Mickelson, Stephen Samuel Smith, and Amy Hawn Nelson (Harvard Education Press, 2014)

This edited collection of new research about Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) examines the interplay between structure and agency in the desegregation and resegregation of the school system over a 40-year period. Between 1971 and 2002, when the district ceased operating under the Swann court order, CMS implemented a mandatory plan that desegregated the district's schools. However, during the years of the plan’s implementation, other organizational and instructional practices, notably ability grouping and tracking, generated within-school resegregation. While desegregation facilitated Charlotte’s economic growth, when it conflicted with development, the latter typically won. Widespread resegregation by race and class intensified when CMS returned to a neighborhood based-school assignment plan in 2002.

Roslyn Arlin Mickelson is Professor of Sociology at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte
Stephen Samuel Smith is Professor of Political Science at Winthrop University
Amy Hawn Nelson is Director of the Institute for Social Capital, at the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute

Social thought on Education, 2nd Ed.
By Edith W. King (Amazon Digital Services, 2014)

The text is divided into three sections. The first section contains sociological thought from the Pre-911 world. The theories of 20th century sociologists, Robert K. Merton, David Riesman, Erving Goffman, Elise Boulding and anthropologist, Margaret Mead are exemplified by anecdotes, stories, and accounts drawn from educational settings. The book continues with three of the classical social thinkers of the 19th century, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, and Karl Marx applying their theories to schools, classrooms and higher education settings. The final section presents material on contemporary social thought.

Edith W. King is an educational sociologist and lectured in educational sociology for over 45 years.
Asilomar Conference Center in Pacific Grove, California, February 20-22, 2015

Theme: “Trajectories of Educational Advantage and Disadvantage”

Keynote Speakers:

Karl Alexander, John Dewey Professor of Sociology, Johns Hopkins University

Lois Weis, SUNY Distinguished Professor, Educational Leadership and Policy, SUNY-Buffalo

Researchers increasingly view educational inequality as a process, where prior experiences, events, and outcomes are interconnected throughout students’ academic careers. New data sources and recent methodological innovations have allowed researchers to make significant progress in describing how cumulative exposure to constraints, opportunities, and resources has long-term consequences as students make transitions into post-secondary education and the labor market. We invite proposals that examine research questions related to this year's conference theme: “Trajectories of Educational Advantage and Disadvantage.” Do early experiences at home and in school have long term consequences for students' achievement and attainment outcomes? Are there distinct educational trajectories and pathways that we can identify? How frequently are students deflected from one educational trajectory to another? Which students are most likely to experience deflections, and when and why do such deflections typically occur? Are there policy interventions that can affect students’ long-term educational trajectories? We seek a diverse array of papers (both methodologically and theoretically) that address questions such as these, as well as papers that address other aspects of educational inequality.

For more information on the Sociology of Education Association, please visit our web page: http://isber.ucsb.edu/sea/
ASA Sociology of Education Section Awards - 2014

Congratulations award winners!

The David Lee Stevenson Award for Outstanding Graduate Student Paper

Julia Andrea Behrman

“Is Schooling a ‘Social Vaccine’ Against HIV for Adolescent Girls? Evidence from Malawi and Uganda”

~

The James Coleman Award for Outstanding Article

Julia Burdick Will

"School Violent Crime and Academic Achievement in Chicago"

~

The Pierre Bourdieu Award for Outstanding Book

Maia Bloomfield Cucchiara

“Marketing Schools, Marketing Cities: Who Wins and Who Loses When Schools Become Urban Amenities.”


Author synopses of each piece are on the following page.
Julia Behrman, Outstanding Graduate Student Paper

Is schooling a “social vaccine” against HIV for adolescent girls? Evidence from Malawi and Uganda

Schooling has been proposed to be a “social vaccine” against HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa, especially for adolescent girls who are particularly at risk for new infection. While the literature indicates a strong association between schooling and HIV, it has been unable to control for additional factors, such as socio-economic status, that predict both schooling and likelihood of HIV infection. In this paper I deal with the endogeneity of schooling by taking advantage of a natural experiment, the implementation of Universal Primary Education policies in Malawi and Uganda in the mid 1990s. I use data from the most recent Demographic Health Surveys in Malawi (2010) and Uganda (2011) and model the relationship between primary schooling and adult HIV status using an instrumented regression discontinuity approach. Results indicate that a one-year increase in schooling decreases the probability of an adult woman testing positive for HIV by 0.06 (p < 0.01) in Malawi and by 0.03 (p < 0.05) in Uganda. These results are robust to a variety of model specifications. In a series of supplementary analyses a number of potential pathways through which such effects may occur are explored. Findings indicate increased primary schooling positively affects women's literacy and spousal schooling attainment in Malawi and age of marriage and current household wealth in Uganda. However primary schooling has no effect on recent (adult) sexual behavior.

Julia Burdick Will, Outstanding Article

School Violent Crime and Academic Achievement in Chicago

Educational outcomes vary dramatically across schools in the United States. Many underperforming schools, especially in Chicago, also deal with high levels of violent crime on school grounds. Exposure to this type of frequent violence may be an important factor shaping already disadvantaged students’ educational experiences. However, estimating the effect of school violence on learning is difficult due to potential selection bias and the confounding of other school-level problems. Using detailed crime data from the Chicago Police Department, complete administrative records from the Chicago Public Schools, and school climate surveys conducted by the Consortium on Chicago School Research (2002-2010), this study, published in Sociology of Education 86(4), exploits variation in violent crime rates within schools over time to estimate its effect on academic achievement. School and neighborhood fixed-effects models show that violent crime rates have a negative effect on test scores, but not on grades. This effect is more likely related to direct reductions in learning, through cognitive stress and classroom disruptions, than changes in perceived safety, general school climate, or discipline practices.

Maia Bloomfield Cucchiara, Outstanding Book


Marketing Schools, Marketing Cities: Who Wins and Who Loses When Schools Become Urban Amenities is a study of one city’s effort to market public schools to the middle and upper-middle classes, thereby slowing flight to the suburbs and promoting urban revitalization. I focus on Philadelphia and uses ethnographic methods to examine the consequences of such policies for schools, families, and students. Marketing Schools, Marketing Cities balances the successes of such policies in strengthening individual public schools against the inherent social injustices they propagate. In particular, it illuminates the ways in which a marketing campaign that links the presence of more affluent families in the public schools with the city’s revitalization undermines the democratic purposes of schooling and creates greater stratification by race, class, and geography.
Call for Nominations: SOE Section Awards - 2015

Please note that all nominees must be registered members of the ASA to be considered for section awards. Deadline for all award nominations is February 1, 2015.

The Sociology of Education Doris Entwisle Early Career Award
This award will be given every other year (beginning in 2015) to a member of the Sociology of Education section who is no more than five years since PhD at the time of nomination, and who has made outstanding scholarly contributions to the sociology of education field. Nomination packets should include a letter of nomination, the nominee's CV, and sample writings (either sent as attachments or with links to online sources). Please send the nomination packet to the Award Committee Chair Claudia Buchmann, buchmann.4@sociology.osu.edu.

(Please note that the Early Career Award alternates every other year with the Willard Waller award for Lifetime Achievement. The Waller Award will be given again in 2016.)

The Sociology of Education David Lee Stevenson Award for Outstanding Graduate Student Paper
This award is for the outstanding graduate student paper in the field of sociology of education in 2013 or 2014. The author (or first author) must be a graduate student at the time of submission for the award, and all authors must have been graduate students when the paper was written. The paper may be unpublished, under review, accepted, forthcoming, or published (in 2013 or 2014). Please send a letter of nomination and an electronic copy of the nominated paper to the Award Committee Chair John Diamond, john.b.diamond@gmail.com.

The Sociology of Education James Coleman Award for Outstanding Article
This award is for the outstanding article in the field of sociology of education published in 2013 or 2014. Please send a letter of nomination and an electronic copy of the nominated article to Award Committee Chair Grace Kao, grace2@pop.upenn.edu.

The Sociology of Education Pierre Bourdieu Award for Outstanding Book
This award is for the best book in the Sociology of Education published in 2013 or 2014. Please send a letter of nomination and copies of the book (either print version or PDF) to all committee members at the addresses listed below. Any questions regarding the award should be directed to the Award Committee Chair Pamela Barnhouse Walters, Walters@indiana.edu.

The Pierre Bourdieu Award Committee is comprised of five members:

- Pamela Barnhouse Walters (chair)
  Ballantine Hall 744
  1020 E. Kirkwood Ave.
  Bloomington, IN, 47405
  Walters@indiana.edu

- Jennifer Jennings
  New York University
  295 Lafayette Street, 4th Floor
  NY, NY 10003
  jj73@nyu.edu

- Maggie Frye
  34 Ash St. Apt. 203
  Cambridge, MA 02138
  Mfrye@fas.harvard.edu

- Maia Cucchiara
  College of Education, Temple University
  1301 C. B. Moore Ave, Ritter Hall 446
  Philadelphia, PA 19122
  Maia.cucchiara@temple.edu

- Mitchell Stevens
  Stanford Graduate School of Education
  485 Lasuen Mall
  Stanford, CA 94305-3096
  Mitchell.stevens@stanford.edu
New Reports from the National Academies

**The National Children’s Study 2014: An Assessment:** This report from the Committee on National Statistics assesses a revised study design for the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development’s National Children’s Study and makes recommendations about the overall study framework, sample design, timing, content, and need for scientific expertise and oversight. Sponsor: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

http://sites.nationalacademies.org/DBASSE/CNSTAT/National_Childrens_Study_2014/index.htm

**Investing in the Health and Well-Being of Young Adults:** This report from the Board on Children, Youth, and Families is built on a workshop held in May 2013 and the resulting workshop summary, *Improving the Health, Safety, and Well-Being of Young Adults: Workshop Summary*. The report examines the available evidence on the health, safety, and wellbeing of young adults; on systems and institutions that provide pathways from adolescence into adulthood; and on policies that impact young adult well-being. Sponsor: U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

http://www.iom.edu/Activities/Children/ImprovingYoungAdultHealth.aspx

New Projects in the Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education (DBASSE)

Roundtable on the Application of Social and Behavioral Science Research. This Roundtable is focused on the need for better public understanding of the usefulness of social and behavioral sciences (SBS) research and the commensurate need for researchers to improve their understanding of how, when, and what types of SBS research are used by industry and by the education, military, public health, and policy communities.

The Roundtable will hold its initial meeting in fall 2014 and during its first year will include a public seminar on challenges and opportunities related to integrating SBS into K-12 education. Founding Sponsors include: American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, Institute for Social Research, National Academies Presidents Committee, The Spencer Foundation, and SAGE Publications. http://sites.nationalacademies.org/DBASSE/CurrentProjects/DBASSE_088495

Association for Institutional Research (AIR) Annual Conference, Denver, CO. May 25-29, 2015

AIR is committed to better “data and decisions for higher education.” Register for the 2015 “Forum” or purchase a digital pass from the 2014 Forum. Digital pass holders receive 75+ hours of the best talks and workshops. More Information: www.airweb.org