Message from the Chair:

Dear LatSoc members:

The preliminary program schedule for the upcoming 2015 ASA Annual Meeting, *Sexualities in the Social World*, which will be held at the Hilton Chicago and Hilton Palmer House August 22-25, will be available on April 30, 2015.

Following a four year rotation, our section activities fall on the first day of the conference, August 22nd. With the help of the Chair-Elect, Julie Dowling, we have organized a great slate of panels. Our program includes three regular sessions and a roundtable session. The three sessions are: 1) Criminalization, Violence, and Social Harm Affecting Latino Communities; 2) Latinidades: Intersectional Identities in the 21st Century; and 3) Latina/o Civic and Political Participation. I’d like to thank Maria Aysa-Lastra and Juan Jose Bustamante for their help in organizing our section’s roundtables. Finally, we look forward to our joint reception with SREM. Plans for the reception are currently underway. If you would like to help with the planning of the reception or have ideas, please contact our local reception coordinator, Simon Weffer at sweffer@niu.edu.

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Another major event this year is our Norma Williams Workshop, organized by Leisy Abrego and Veronica Terriquez. It will take place on August 21, 2015, one day before the ASA meeting. Our organizers write:

**Save the Date!** The Norma Williams Mentoring Workshop will be held on Friday August 21, the day before the Latino Sociology Section meetings and first day of the ASA. The goal of this workshop is to provide graduate students, postdocs and assistant professors with professional development.

The workshop will be held at UIC, and will begin at 2:30 p.m. Panels will focus on topics such as succeeding in academia, writing and publishing strategies, navigating the job market, and what to expect as a new professor. We aim to provide a safe space for honest discussion among section members and students of color.

The workshop will follow with a networking reception at 5:30 that is open to all Latino Sociology Section members and interested students. To offset costs, we request a $5 optional donation from tenure-track faculty who attend the reception. More details will follow in the coming months.

If you are interested in volunteering for the Norma Williams Workshop, please contact Veronica Terriquez (vterriqu@usc.edu) or Leisy Abrego (abrego@ucla.edu).

To register for the Norma Williams workshop and/or reception, please select the following link:

https://usccollege.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_8tZ4Ari0TqrXKu1

Don’t miss out on what promises to be a stimulating and intellectually engaging event, and if you are local, please reach out to section activity organizers to join in on the planning.

I hope to see you this summer at the meetings!

Sincerely,

Zulema
Dr. Jessica Vasquez has had an eventful year. She was recently promoted to Associate Professor with tenure at University of Oregon. She also recently published “The Whitening Hypothesis Challenged: Biculturalism in Latino and Non-Hispanic White Intermarriage,” “Gender Across Family Generations: Change in Mexican American Masculinities and Femininities,” and has a forthcoming article “Race Cognizance and Color-Blindness: Effects of Latino/Non-Hispanic White Intermarriage.” Congratulations, Dr. Vasquez!

**Where were you born and raised?**

I was born and raised in Santa Barbara, California.

**What was your first job (in academia)?**

My first job in academia was at the University of Kansas. I was on faculty there for five years, in residence for four (the fifth was out of residence on fellowship). I currently am Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Oregon.

**Who was your most influential teacher or professor?**

Can I reach back to the fifth grade for this? I would have to say that Mr. Orr (my fifth grade teacher in Santa Barbara) was supremely influential because he first encouraged me to indulge my love of reading and interpretation. Given that I now work with qualitative data (life history interviews, mostly) I can see a thread connecting those foundational skills and my current practice of critically analyzing the stories that people tell me about how they experience and go about their social worlds. In college, I admired those faculty who were passionate about their areas of teaching and research and this helped me see an outlet for my own academic drives. In graduate school, I benefited from a number of faculty who guided me in honing the questions I was asking, the ways in which I built a research design to answer them, and my writing which translates all of this to an audience.

**Is there any aspect of your upbringing that most influences your research?**

The Preface to my book, Mexican Americans Across Generations: Immigrant Families, Racial Realities (NYU Press, 2011), discusses exactly this and I encourage anyone interested to read it. In short, the answer is that I grew up in a place where I was surrounded by people who
"looked like me" (the town has a large Mexican-origin, non-Hispanic white, and mixed community) but when I went to college at an elite institution on the East Coast, not only were the demographics and racial histories drastically different, but so too were people's ideas and assumptions around race and ethnicity. This jarred me into understanding—and being curious about—the operation and salience of race in social life and the many factors that contribute to this important social feature.

**What is the most rewarding part of your job?**

Well, my least favorite part is grading. I feel rewarded by most other aspects of my profession, luckily. Reading expands what I know and teaches me new things about the world and those around me. Teaching translates and broadcasts what I know and stimulates students' critical engagement with society and social problems (that is the hope, anyway). Research answers what I want to know, a privilege to keep in mind during the long road of research. Publishing consolidates and disseminates emergent knowledge. And mentoring allows me to help others build a foundation of knowledge, find their paths, and answer their own questions about the world.

**What advice do you have for current graduate students in the field of Latino/a Sociology?**

A few pieces of advice are: find a supportive community, find an academic interest with some staying power, and be thoughtful about making the transition from a consumer of knowledge to a producer of knowledge. First, build a community within academia of mentors and peers who will help you succeed in graduate school with mind and heart intact. This means finding people with know-how about navigating the system as well as supportive folks who will nurture you, your ideas, and your pursuits. Second, sharpening a general research interest area to a more specific research question and study design that you can dedicate time and energy to for the years it will take to complete it is important. While ideas may develop over time, which is natural, designing a research agenda that you are interested in for a "long haul" is vital to committing to it and seeing it through, even when it is tough. Third, being a consumer of knowledge refers to most students' orientation in their undergraduate years whereas in graduate school the task is to do that first but then to build on those fundamentals and become a producer of knowledge. Thinking of one's evolution in this way will hopefully help the transition to writing and publishing, a key component of academic life.

**What research direction do you see Latino/a Sociology taking in the next 5-10 years?**

I am excited to see continuing research in the areas of skin color, phenotype more generally,
generation-since-immigration, legal status, gender, and sexuality. My own work touches on many of these elements and I think that there is a lot more to be teased out in terms of how nation-of-origin, generation in the U.S., role of the state, and historical moment frame life experiences and outcomes. It is difficult to predict the direction of growth of a field, but there is more to be explored and understood in these areas and I look forward to seeing what we collectively learn in the future.

Graduate Student Perspective

We contacted current graduate students in the Latina/o Section and asked them to share a bit about themselves and their research. This helps us keep track of the up and coming scholars in our field.

Meet Stephanie Canizales

I am a Sociology PhD Candidate at the University of Southern California where I conduct qualitative research focusing on the migration and settlement experiences of unaccompanied Latino youth who live and work in Los Angeles while their parents remain abroad. In recent years I have focused on the social incorporation of Guatemalan Maya youth garment workers in Downtown Los Angeles and neighboring communities. Moving forward, my dissertation aims to understand the patterns of incorporation and belonging of unaccompanied Guatemalan minor migrants, both indigenous and non-indigenous, who transition into young adulthood in the US without biological parents and a family unit.

The sociological literature on unaccompanied minor migrants in the US is relatively sparse. The rise of unaccompanied minor migrants coming to the US from Mexico and Central America in recent years has drawn and will continue to draw interest in the causes and consequences of migration and the various pathways of integration children will take in their host society. As I step into a new stage of dissertation research and writing, I am most excited about the potential to build and shape the direction of this research subfield.

As I continue to conduct in-depth ethnographic research, I feel a great sense of admiration and respect for, and responsibility to the communities that share their lives with me. What often seems most daunting in the dissertation completion process is writing something that adequately portrays the depths of life, triumphs and struggles, of the immigrant youth that participate in my research. So many advanced scholars in the Latina/o
Sociology section have mastered the art of balancing theoretical and methodological rigor, while conveying the humanity of the communities they study. This is one of my greatest academic aspirations.

Upon completion of my dissertation, I hope to enter into a tenure-track research professor position. I wouldn’t mind being somewhere with as much sunshine as Southern California; but, alas, I am open to any university where I can continue to flourish as a junior scholar and contribute to the growth of the department and student body. As with any freshly minted PhD Candidate, my hope is that my dissertation research will have scientific and policy impact. I greatly admire public sociologists who apply their scholarly knowledge to public work in order to see lives improved. This is ultimately the research agenda I see myself committed to for years to come.

I can never talk about my graduate school trajectory or my aspirations for the future without acknowledging the great impact my advisors, Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo and Jody Agius Vallejo, have had on my experience as a sociologist-in-training. Their commitment to my graduate school and professional career and my well-being throughout the years has convinced me that graduate school is made infinitely better with mentors and advisors that give the direction you very uniquely require. My advice for other graduate students, especially future students, is the same advice I received as I applied for graduate school: find a mentor that fits you.

I’ve also been fortunate enough to have the mentorship of graduate students and faculty from other universities, many of which I met through ASA. My second bit of advice is to get connected. There will always be speed bumps and potholes in grad school (and life), but there is also always someone out there who has gone through a similar, if not, the exact same situation. Their knowledge is invaluable.

I think if we can find the people dissertation acknowledgements are made of then maybe finishing graduate school and the dissertation won’t be too bad. I look forward to many more years of learning, building community, and changing our world for the better.

Meet Irene Vega

Greetings Latino/a Sociology Section Members!

My name is Irene I. Vega and I am a doctoral candidate in Sociology at UCLA. I am from a small border town in Arizona but have been enjoying the spoils of Southern California for quite some time. I am seeking the position of Student Representative in the Latino/a
Sociology section because I want to do my part to ensure that this intellectual and social resource continues to grow and thrive for those of us working on Latino/a issues in Sociology. Below I’ll tell you a little about my research specialization and personal interests—I look forward to seeing you all in Chicago!

My dissertation examines how state laws and bureaucratic discretion shape how federal immigration laws are enforced at the local level. Interviews with federal immigration agents (i.e. Border Patrol and I.C.E. deportation agents) in Arizona and California are my primary source of data, but I also draw heavily on document analysis and observations. The most immediate goal of the dissertation is to reveal the occupational and bureaucratic norms that guide the decision-making processes of those who are on the “front lines” of enforcement. I argue that agents are critical actors in immigration control—their actions (and inactions) affect the federal government’s enforcement capacity and their treatment of immigrants determines how noncitizens experience the state’s coercive power. The study’s comparative design also allows me to contribute to a larger debate about how state laws inhibit, facilitate, and otherwise shape the federal government’s immigration enforcement approach and capacity.

In addition to my dissertation research (which is situated at the intersection of immigration federalism, enforcement, and bureaucratic politics) I also have a broader interest in immigration politics, racial/ethnic boundary making, and Latina/o sociology. My first sole-authored publication, “Conservative Rationales, Racial Boundaries: A Case Study of Restrictionist Mexican Americans” (American Behavioral Scientist, 2014) brings those interests together in a study of Latinos who are members of anti-“illegal” immigration organizations. My main argument is that to gain a more complete understanding of how ethnic solidarity is forged in the political sphere, we must study deviant cases—Latinos who do not conform to the broader patterns of solidarity epitomized by the 2006 immigration marches. I draw on interviews to document the boundary making strategies that my respondents deploy as they distinguish themselves from Mexican immigrants with whom they share ethno-racial markers, but not an American national identity.

Overall, I really enjoy research, writing, and teaching and I’m very much looking forward to transitioning into a tenure track position. However, I’m also trying my best to enjoy this stage of my academic career because I appreciate (read: relish!) the time I can dedicate to reading, writing, and thinking about the issues that I care so deeply about—I hear faculty life is more...“busy”. The challenge I have for myself and other graduate students is to search for the “sweet spot” where we’re making progress toward finishing the Ph.D./getting a J.O.B. while also enjoying the process. In short, stop and smell the roses, but make sure you don’t lose sight of the reason you’re in graduate school. Sometimes this means buying some roses and putting them on your desk so you can smell them while you write; sometimes it means putting
the laptop away and going out into the world. The key is finding what works for you and being flexible because sometimes things stop working.

Members’ News

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Silvia Pedraza, professor at the University of Michigan, was interviewed on December 21, 2014, in a televised debate regarding the U. S. restoring ties with Cuba. The program aired on Fox News Detroit’s program Let it Rip. Dr. Pedraza argued that the restoration of ties was positive for both countries.

Silvia Pedraza was quoted in a LatinPost.com article by Michael Oleaga on December 22, 2014. The article examined demographic divides in attitudes regarding U.S.-Cuba relations within the Cuban American community.

MIGRATIONS AND TRANSITIONS

Angela S. Garcia (currently ABD at the University of California, San Diego) will begin a tenure track position this fall at the University of Chicago’s School for Social Service Administration.

Juan R. Martinez will enter a tenure track position in sociology at Harold Washington College in Chicago, IL. He previously served as a Visiting Assistant Professor at North Central College in Naperville, IL.

Michael Rodríguez-Muñiz will join Northwestern University as an Assistant Professor of Sociology and Latina/o Studies in fall 2016.

AWARDS

Jessica Correa received a prestigious award from the University of Wisconsin System in 2014. Dr. Correa received the Outstanding Women of Color in Education Award in recognition of her impactful community outreach, rigorous research, teaching excellence, and active pursuit of inclusion.

José Muñoz is a distinguished 2014–2015 fellow for American Evaluation Association’s Minority-Serving Institution Initiative. The goal of this program is to broaden evaluation theory and applied methodology, and to expand professional networks and development opportunities.
Michael Rodríguez-Muñiz received the University of Chicago Provost’s Career Enhancement Postdoctoral Scholarship. Award recipients are selected based on their academic strength, active scholarly engagement, and their potential to make continued, impactful contributions to the academic community.

**DISSERTATIONS**


**RECENT PUBLICATIONS**


CALL FOR PAPERS

The Midwest Association for Latin American Studies (MALAS) will hold its 65th annual conference at Millersville University of Pennsylvania from October 8-10, 2015. The conference theme is “From Latin America to Latino-American: Building Bridges Across Cultures.” MALAS welcomes the participation of social and natural scientists, artists, and humanists from all disciplines. MALAS also presents several awards each year to recognize outstanding student and faculty research papers presented at the annual MALAS conference. The deadline for submission is August 1, 2015. Please forward your questions to Orlando Perez (orlando.perez@millersville.edu) or Kimberly Mahaffy (Kimberly.Mahaffy@millersville.edu). Further information can be found at the organization’s website (http://www.malasnet.org).

New Books


In Obesity Interventions in Underserved Communities, a diverse group of researchers explores effective models for treating and preventing obesity in such communities. The volume provides overviews of the literature at specific junctures of society and health (e.g., the effectiveness of preschool obesity prevention programs), as well as commentaries that shape our understanding of particular parts of the obesity epidemic and field reports on innovative approaches to combating obesity in racial/ethnic minority and other medically underserved populations in the United States.


The Bilingual Advantage draws together researchers from education, economics, sociology, anthropology and linguistics to examine the economic and employment benefits of bilingualism in the US labor market, countering past research that shows no such benefits exist. Collectively, the authors draw on novel methodological approaches and new data to examine the economics of bilingualism for the new generation of bilinguals entering a digital-age globalized workforce. The authors also pay considerable attention to how to best capture measures of bilingualism and biliteracy, given the constraints of most existing datasets.

¡Tequila! Distilling the Spirit of Mexico traces how and why tequila became and remains Mexico’s national drink and symbol. Starting in Mexico’s colonial era and tracing the drink’s rise through the present day, Marie Sarita Gaytán reveals the formative roles played by some unlikely characters. Although the notorious Pancho Villa was a teetotaller, his image is now plastered across the labels of all manner of tequila producers—he’s even the namesake of a popular brand. Mexican films from the 1940s and 50s, especially Western melodramas, buoyed tequila’s popularity at home while World War II caused a spike in sales within the whisky-starved United States.


In Paradise Transplanted, Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo reveals how successive conquests and diverse migrations have made Southern California gardens, and in turn how gardens influence social inequality, work, leisure, status, and our experiences of nature and community. Drawing on historical archival research, ethnography, and over one hundred interviews with a wide range of people including suburban homeowners, paid Mexican immigrant gardeners, professionals at the most elite botanical garden in the West, and immigrant community gardeners in the poorest neighborhoods of inner-city Los Angeles, this book offers insights into the ways that diverse global migrations and garden landscapes shape our social world.


Seamlessly blending multiple sociological perspectives, this book addresses the experiences of both Maya and ladino Guatemalan migrants, incorporating gendered as well as ethnic and class dimensions of migration. It spans the most violent years of the civil war and the postwar years in Guatemala, hence including both refugees and labor migrants. The demographic chapter delineates five phases of Guatemalan migration to the United States since the late 1970s, with immigrants experiencing both inclusion and exclusion very dramatically during the most recent phase, in the early twenty-first century. This book also features an innovative study of Guatemalan migrant rights organizing in the United States and transregionally in Guatemala, Central America, and Mexico. The two contrasting in-depth case studies of Guatemalan communities in Houston and San Francisco elaborate in vibrant detail the everyday experiences and evolving stories of the immigrants’ lives.

Joseph interviewed residents of Governador Valadares, Brazil's largest immigrant-sending city to the U.S., to ask how their immigrant experiences have transformed local racial understandings. Joseph identifies and examines a phenomenon—the transnational racial optic—through which migrants develop and ascribe social meaning to race in one country, incorporating conceptions of race from another. Analyzing the bi-directional exchange of racial ideals through the experiences of migrants, *Race on the Move* offers an innovative framework for understanding how race can be remade in immigrant-sending communities.


The link between residential segregation and racial inequality is well established, so it would seem that greater equality would prevail in integrated neighborhoods. But as Sarah Mayorga-Gallo argues, multiethnic and mixed-income neighborhoods still harbor the signs of continued, systemic racial inequalities. Drawing on deep ethnographic and other innovative research from "Creekridge Park," a pseudonymous urban community in Durham, North Carolina, Mayorga-Gallo demonstrates that the proximity of white, African American, and Latino neighbors does not ensure equity; rather, proximity and equity are in fact subject to structural-level processes of stratification.


Focusing on the shifting and contradictory meaning of race, *The Nation and Its Peoples* underscores the persistence of structural discrimination, and the ways in which "race" has formally disappeared in the law and yet remains one of the most powerful, underlying, unacknowledged, and often unspoken aspects of debates about citizenship, about membership and national belonging, within immigration politics and policy. This collection of original essays also emphasizes the need for race scholars to be more attentive to the processes and consequences of migration across multiple boundaries, as surely there is no place that can stay fixed—racially or otherwise—when so many people have been moving.

Updated with the latest available data, *Immigrant America* explores the economic, political, spatial, and linguistic aspects of immigration; the role of religion in the acculturation and social integration of foreign minorities; and the adaptation process for the second generation. This revised edition includes new chapters on theories of migration and on the history of U.S.-bound migration from the late nineteenth century to the present, offering an updated and expanded concluding chapter on immigration and public policy.


This landmark study, the most comprehensive to date, probes all aspects of the new immigrant second generation’s lives, exploring their immense potential to transform American society for better or worse. Whether this new generation reinvigorates the nation or deepens its social problems depends on the social and economic trajectories of this still young population. In *Legacies*, Alejandro Portes and Rubén G. Rumbaut—two of the leading figures in the field—provide a close look at this rising second generation, including their patterns of acculturation, family and school life, language, identity, experiences of discrimination, self-esteem, ambition, and achievement.


Women who migrate into domestic labor and care work are the single largest female occupational group migrating globally at present. Their participation in global migration systems has been acknowledged but remains under-theorized. Specifically, the impacts of women migrating into care work in the receiving as well as the sending societies are profound, altering gendered aspects of both societies. We know that migration systems link the women who migrate and the households and organizations that employ domestic and care workers, but how do these migration systems work, and more importantly, what are their impacts on the sending as well as the receiving societies?

*The Last Best Place?* asks us to consider the multiple racial and class-related barriers that Mexican migrants must negotiate in the unique context of Montana's rural gentrification. These daily life struggles and inter-group power dynamics are deftly examined through extensive interviews and ethnography, as are the ways gender structures inequalities within migrant families and communities. But Leah Schmalzbauer's research extends even farther to highlight the power of place and demonstrate how Montana's geography and rurality intersect with race, class, gender, family, illegality, and transnationalism to affect migrants' well-being and aspirations.

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