Newsletter of the Peace and War Section of the American Sociological Association

February 1998

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Report from the Chair:

Greetings from soggy California. The major work of organizing the sessions for the August meetings in San Francisco is done and our next newsletter will include session titles and participants. The Peace and War section day is the last day of the ASA meetings, Tuesday, August 25th. Our reception will be the night before, Monday, August 24. I hope all section members can plan to be with us for our section sessions, round tables, and vital business meeting.

Our section membership as of mid-February was 190 including 51 new members! Thanks and congratulations to all those who worked on recruiting new members. There are 92 colleagues who were members of the section in 1997 who have not yet renewed. We will do all we can to get them to renew them in time to get the election ballots. If all or most of them renew we would be within striking distance of 300 members by September 1998 - a year early! I am very encouraged that we were able to gain 51 new members by solid efforts to recruit colleagues with similar interests and without a name change. Let's get 20 more!

The discussion of the name change in the last issue of our newsletter deserves some amplification. The name change committee and others that met did not reach a consensus on either 1) the question of whether there should be a name change at all, or 2) if there was to be a change, what would be the preferred alternative. There will be three alternative new names proposed on the May ballot. The alternatives on the ballot will be: Peace, Conflict, and the Military; Peace, War, and Social Conflict; Peace, War, and Violence. We will ask voters to choose between each alternative and the present name, Peace and War. The discussants did agree that the name should reflect accurately the work and interests of section members, and any change should enhance our potential for attracting new members. Both of these are important factors. A letter to the editor in this issue also reflects on these issues in a thoughtful way.

Quite apart from the name change possibility we need to consider the future of the section as we reach our 20th year anniversary. To that end, I have asked that several tables at our round table session be reserved for a "section future" discussion. In addition to the need to recruit new members, we need to be sure we are meeting the needs of current
Best wishes for a happy spring when it arrives. Make your plans to come to San Francisco in August.

~Mary Anna C. Colwell

New Chair for Task Force Outlines New Initiatives:

Genocide and the Social Sciences

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I have agreed to become the chair of the Task Force on Genocide with some trepidation. The twentieth century has not witnessed the extinction of genocide as a political tool, but rather its acceleration. We live, as David Rieff has noted, in an "age of genocide." As a political practice, it knows no geographical bounds. Just in the 1990s alone, we have seen acts of genocide in Rwanda, Bosnia, and Chechenya. These have taken place in full vision of the "civilized" world and sometimes with that world's silent acknowledgment. Sociologists on the whole have not been actively involved in trying to understand this phenomenon even as it occurs all around us. It is basically absent as a serious topic of study in the programs of the Annual ASA meetings. We sociologists are faced with an interesting challenge to our relevance to the world when we consider that analysis of one of the world's most serious problems is invisible to us. What accounts for this invisibility?

The first "task" of a Task Force on Genocide is guided by the sociology of knowledge. What is needed is a serious examination of the sociology of the social scientific study of genocide. I use the term "social scientific" intentionally because I do not think that sociologists can think about genocide in a disciplinary vacuum. Historians have developed the important and lively tradition of Holocaust studies. But this seems the exception rather than the rule. Anthropology suffers the same fate as sociology: one is hard pressed to find studies of genocide in that field. Indeed, in a recent major journal, an anthropologist argued that: "by classifying recent Yugoslav events as "genocide" the nature of events is actually obscured rather than explained." (1) In light of such statements, genocide is not simply ignored as a topic of study, but willfully denied. We must ask, as well, why some social scientists come to deny that genocide occurred, even as the evidence for it fills the archives of our mass media institutions. My first priority as Chair of the Task Force on Genocide will be to convene an interdisciplinary group of prominent social scientists to explore these issues.

A Special thanks goes to Allen Grimshaw for his years of leadership and service as chair of the Task Force on Genocide. Allen's work has helped bring greater attention to this subject and has shaped the work of the Peace and War Section. Thank you, Allen!

Subsequent to this "archaeology" of genocide studies, we need to turn to the question of why genocide has reemerged as a political solution at the end of this century. Much energy has been expended in the twentieth century on making sure such solutions would never again be tolerated, but they have been. Sociological theory can be brought to bear on this question. I do not think that the discussion of this issue should be left solely by those who have already studied the phenomenon, although they could take the lead. Works such Irving Louis Horowitz's "Taking Lives" need to be reexamined in light of contemporary events. I think it is important to open up the question to our most accomplished theorists and researchers and ask them to apply their theoretical and methodological skills to the task of understanding the reemergence of genocide. We need a sociology of genocide that takes account of the nature of postmodernity. Sociology is constantly worried about its relevance. One way to make it more relevant is by facilitating work on this
most important crime and sharing the results with policymakers and those who have the power to stop this crime from occurring. This issue is all the more important since toleration of genocide at the end of this century only ensures that it will continue into the next. Thus, my second priority as Chair of the Task Force is to think of ways to create structural opportunities that facilitate new and sociologically imaginative explanations of genocide.

I would be grateful to hear from anyone about ideas about how the Task Force on Genocide can proceed with its work. I would be particularly happy to receive suggestions on funding sources for the initiatives I've laid out above.

Notes:

Charles Moskos & The ASA Public Understanding of Sociology Award
David R. Segal, University of Maryland

Last summer, when opposition was voiced at the ASA meetings in Toronto regarding Charles Moskos's receipt of the first ASA Award for Public Understanding of Sociology, Jennifer Turpin, then chair of our Section, asked me if I would write an article for the newsletter on the matter. Other articles were to be solicited from the committee that selected Professor Moskos for the award, the groups that opposed the selection, and Professor Moskos.

Because the debate goes beyond our Section, these other statements were solicited and published in ASA Footnotes. In the Fall, Mary Anna Colwell, our current chair, asked if I were still willing to write an article in the Section newsletter to accompany the reprinting of these statements. I suggested that, since all members of our section receive Footnotes as well, we not reprint them. However, as Mary Anna noted in her column in the October issue of the newsletter, I did agree to provide "another perspective," although I am not sure I have anything new to add to the debate.

I think that three issues have been raised by the establishment of this award, by Charles Moskos's selection as the first recipient, and by the ensuing debate. The first is whether such an award should exist. There are those within the discipline who get nervous when sociologists speak to audiences outside the discipline. Interestingly, these same people get nervous when the existence of university sociology departments is threatened. These issues are not independent. Historically, American sociology has attempted to cast off or marginalize those subfields that threatened to have value in the policy arena, and the discipline has never developed a constituency outside the academy. The subfield with which Moskos is most strongly identified, military sociology, has always been policy-oriented (urban sociology and criminology are others).

Other social science disciplines are different, and have developed external constituencies. Abolish an economics department, and the business community will reduce your financing. Menace a political science department and the legislature will cancel your appropriation. Close a psychology department and the mental health profession will question your sanity. In an era of declining academic resources, it is unwise not to garner outside support, and this award is a mechanism for recognizing outstanding contributions in this area. Ironically the Section on Peace and War has been more committed to influencing policy beyond the discipline and the academy than virtually any other section, but we have also been less tolerant of those who study war and the military than of those who study peace and peace movements, and we have colleagues who challenge Moskos receipt of this award, although he was an early officer of and contributor to the Section.

It is difficult to attract public attention to sociology without noting the policy implications of sociological research, and having sociologists take public positions involves risks. Public intellectuals do not represent their disciplines; they merely represent themselves beyond their disciplines. Given that sociology tolerates a substantial dose of ideology along with its science, not all sociologists are likely to agree on what is happening in a particular arena of social life, or how to fix problems that have been identified. Sociologists who seek a higher public profile for the discipline must agree to tolerate disagreement in sociological analysis. Public intellectuals themselves, to the extent that they use their disciplinary identities to legitimize their positions, in my view, must remember the difference between analysis and advocacy, focus on the former, and leave the latter to attorneys and to interest groups, who subscribe to different rules of evidence. It is, for example, one thing to disagree on the meaning of data. It is another to completely ignore or
debunk relevant data that do not support one's own prejudices. Sociologists can damage rather than enhance the discipline by sociology-bashing.

The second issue is whether Charles Moskos is an appropriate recipient of the award. Here, the organizations that opposed his selection are incorrect in their stated assessment that the attention he has received is largely attributable to his role in the debate on the service of gays in the military. That policy is the reason for their opposition, but in fact Moskos has been a public intellectual for at least three decades, starting with an active role in the debates on ending military conscription in the United States, on racism in the military, on gender integration in the military, on educational benefits for military service, and on civilian alternatives to military service. His critics missed the first couple of decades of his public role. I have disagreed with Charles Moskos on policy issues more often than I have agreed with him—starting with his view of the dangers of ending the draft and most recently with regard to policies on gays in the military, women in combat, and gender integration of basic military training. He and I make different assumptions about the fundamental nature of the social order, and tend to use different research methods. However, in part because of these differences, I frequently learn from him, and he generally puts sociological integrity above celebrity status.

His critics also missed some of the facts with regard to his position on gays in the military. As Moskos notes, contrary to the assertion, not all of our allies (except the United Kingdom) permit gays and lesbians to serve in their militaries, although gays probably do serve in all, as they do in ours, and Moskos probably exaggerates the degree to which they are excluded in countries like France.

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The third issue is whether Moskos's position on gays in the military should have disqualified him from receipt of the ASA award, even if he had a high profile on other issues as well. We would do well to remember the role that Moskos played in this area.

Bill Clinton early in his presidency sought to lift the ban on gays in the American military; a ban that was not included in federal statute, but rather reflected military policies and practices. Clinton was opposed by many senior military leaders, including the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and by a number of congressional leaders, some of whom sought to use the opportunity afforded by Clinton's raising of the issue to introduce legislation directing the services to screen personnel on the basis of sexual orientation, to discharge military personnel automatically on the basis of homosexuality, and to discipline personnel who enlisted fraudulently by hiding their homosexuality. Thus, two potential alternative outcomes were to maintain the status quo, allowing the services to question people about their sexual orientation and seek out homosexuals, or to pass a law banning the service of homosexuals. Surveys showed the American people to be fairly evenly divided on the issue (although with majorities taking a more tolerant position than Moskos). Against the alternatives, "don't ask', don't tell, don't pursue" may have been the most benign resolution at the time.

The fact that it was an effective pragmatic resolution of a rancorous conflict does not make it a good policy. The "don't pursue" clause seems not to have been honored, and the policy still calls for differential treatment on the basis of sexual orientation. In my view, it would be far more tolerable if it were a universal policy regarding sexuality in the military, such that nobody was asked about sexual orientation, everyone was strongly discouraged from discussing his or her sexuality in the workplace, what military personnel did in their bedrooms was their own business, and rules were enforced without regard to gender or sexual orientation. However, Moskos was not solely responsible for the policy, he cannot be held solely responsible for its flaws, particularly in implementation, and he should be applauded for having helped resolve a conflict.

A couple of decades ago, when the late James Coleman reported that court-ordered school busing produced white
flight rather than school integration, he was shunned for years by much of the discipline of sociology, not because his findings were wrong (they were correct), but because they portrayed a world that differed from the world in which we wanted to live. Both he and the discipline were injured by our response to him. I would take little pride in being a member of a discipline that could not learn from its own mistakes, and continued to apply a political litmus test to the decision of what represents an important sociological contribution. ~

LETTER: The Name Change Debate

John MacDougall's recommendation for a name change illustrates the difficulty of increasing membership in small sections or associations. My initial response was that MacDougall's proposal would alienate macrosociologists like me, who want to study war and peace and who do not equate the terms conflict and war, the latter being inclusive enough to accommodate non-violent, healthy microinteractions that have nothing to do with war.

But I recalled a survey of two sections of the Consortium on Peace Research, Education, and Development (COPPED) I did several years ago with Mary Anna Colwell, from which I learned that no one in my own section was remotely interested in the kind of macro research I was doing. Well, I thought, isn't the same true of the ASA Peace and War Section? War research from my perspective tends to be highly statistical and micro-oriented, probably valuable in the pursuit of a paradigm, but not useful to me. The result is that I have gravitated to the International Studies Association where one unofficial section is concerned with war and another of ficial subsection is receptive to macrosociologists. I have not attended an ASA or a COPRED meeting since 1992, though I still remain a member of both, including the Peace and War Section.

So it seems to me that a name change of the sort that MacDougall is suggesting should be made, and the considerations should be who is presently participating, what kind of research is being presented in Section sessions, and what kind of expansion would be likely to draw more members. If the terms military and conflict will draw in enough members, then that would be a reasonable change. It would be important, though, to organize in the next few years sessions that would entice those interested in these areas.

I have for many years belonged to the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations, which has survived with a membership of 300-500 by always having sessions that relate only tangentially to the comparative study of civilizations, because otherwise there just aren't enough civilizationists to keep the association going. Similarly, the Peace and War Section needs to welcome tangentially related areas in order to maintain a critical number, and the ASA may be right in setting that at about 300.

--Matthew Melko, Wright State University

Candidates for Section Offices

*Highlights*

Chair-Elect


Statement: If elected, I bring to the committee experience, open-mindedness, and the old fashioned value of hard work.
Mady Wechsler Segal, Professor of Sociology at the University of Maryland (1979-present); Distinguished Scholar-Teacher (1985-present); Associate Director of the Center for Research on Military Organization; faculty affiliate of the Women's Studies Program; faculty affiliate of the Center for International and Security Studies at Maryland.

Education: Ph.D., University of Chicago (1973).


Statement: Our section has been intellectually alive, with high quality sessions, active participation, and an informative newsletter. We must address our perennial problem of membership numbers by retaining our current members and recruiting new ones. Our members have diverse interests and I would organize activities that continue to reflect this. If elected, I would try to arrange sessions at the annual meeting in the year 2000 that take advantage of the Washington, D.C. location.

Council

Barbara H. Chasin, Professor, Montclair State University (1970-present).

Education: Ph.D., University of Iowa (1967).


Statement: I would encourage the section to take up more aspects of conflict and violence, and non-violent conflict resolution than is currently the case. I would like to see a name change that reflects this.

Juanita M. Firestone, Associate Professor, Sociology The University of Texas at San Antonio,

Education: Ph.D. Sociology, The University of Texas at Austin, 1984.


Statement: I would like to see the Peace and War Section expand membership by increasing awareness of the varieties of research interests including military, peace and conflict, and both domestic and international issues. Research crosses disciplinary and methodological boundaries and provides a unifying structure for faculty across the world. In addition emphasizing the varieties of courses taught on the topics of Peace, War and CivilMilitary Relations and their importance to students understanding of today's world could revitalize interest in our section.

Meyer Kestnbaum, Assistant Professor of Sociology and Research Associate, Center for Research on Military Organization, University of Maryland.

Education: Ph.D., Harvard University (1997).

Of fices: Chair and Member, Nominations Committee, Section on Comparative and Historical Sociology (1995-1997); Roundtable Organizer, Section on Political Sociology (1996-1997); Co-Coordinator, Mini-Conference on War and State Making, Social Science History Association, 1997.

Statement: I believe an extraordinary opportunity exists for the Section on Peace and War. By fostering attention to the dynamics of large-scale organized violence -- both state-directed and counterstate -- the Section can encourage debate on the relationship between collective action and the organization of armed forces. Such debate, in turn, will lay the foundation for further inquiry at the intersection of social movements and state building. As a consequence, I believe the Section may provide an increasingly congenial home for scholarship focusing on two complementary processes, central to much of our work: both the politics of military change, and the military dimensions of political change.

Lee Smithey, Ph.D. student, The University of Texas at Austin (1994-present).

Education: M.A., The University of Texas at Austin (1995)


Statement: I would like to propose that we renew our efforts to promote the participation of new members who will provide fresh intellectual perspectives to our section's interests and build a firm foundation for the section's future. I would also consider my contributions to the section council to be an extension of the technological support I have already offered. This past year we launched a section web page. I propose that we continue this initiative on the Internet to raise the profile of the section and, thus, ensure that our scholarly interests remain an important part of the dialogue within our discipline.

Publications by Section Members


Louis Kriesberg, Varieties of Mediating Activities and Mediators in International Relations," pp.219-233 in Resolving International Conflicts Jacob Bercovitch, ed. (1996 Lynne Rienner)


Member News

Stanford Lyman's book, *NATO and Germany: A Study in the Sociology of Supranational Relations* (U. Of Arkansas Press, 1995) was awarded Honorable Mention by the Book Award Committee of the MidSouth Sociological Association at the annual meeting in November 1997.

DON'T FORGET TO RECRUIT ONE NEW SECTION MEMBER!!!

Information on Joining the Peace and War Section available from: ASA: 1722 N St. HW; Washington, D.C. 20036 (Phone-202-833-34103, or visit the section web site: www.la.utexas.edu/research/pwasa/index.htm

Book Reviewers Needed:

**Titles**

**Contact:** Jackie Smith jacsmith@notes.cc.sunysb.edu

Announcements & Calls For Papers

* The Ethnic Studies Department at California State University at Sacramento is hosting an international conference on genocide on October 23-24, 1998. The conference organizing committee is soliciting papers dealing with all aspects of genocide. Information on this International Conference on Genocide is at http://www.csus.edu/indiv/b/budgeb/genoconf.htm.

* Injustice Studies (IS) announces its first issue, located at: http://wolf.its.ilstu.edu/injustice/. *Injustice Studies* is a refereed international electronic journal that helps focus academic attention on the study of injustices around the world. The editors welcome essays devoted to understanding the nature of injustice, types of injustice, and the history, politics, and moral psychology of particular injustices, ranging from global to local events. Disagreements over which injustices warrant attention also are part of the problematic of IS. Since IS has an interdisciplinary orientation, its articles should aim to be accessible to the general reader. Please send abstracts of articles for future issues to: twsimon@rs6000.cmp.ilstu.edu or Thomas W. Simon, 4540 Philosophy, Illinois State University, Normal, Illinois 61790-4540.


* Political Power and Social Theory is a research annual committed to advancing our interdisciplinary understanding of the historical linkages between politics and social class. It welcomes both empirical and theoretical work and is willing to consider manuscripts of substantial length (up to 80 pages). Publication decisions are made by the Editor in consultation with the Editorial Board and anonymous reviewers. There are no specific deadlines, and manuscripts are handled in the order in which they are submitted. Potential contributors should send four (4) copies of the manuscript, with all references to the author erased, to: Diane E. Davis Editor, Political Power and Social Theory; New School for Social Research; 80 Fifth Avenue, 5th Floor; New York, NY 10011; Tel: 212 229-5312; Fax: 212 229-5929; email: pps@newschool.edu.

* Current Perspectives in Social Theory invites submissions for the 1999 volume. "Current Perspectives in Social Theory" is an annual journal dedicated to publishing articles across the spectrum of perspectives within social theory,
conceived of in a broad and interdisciplinary sense. To submit a **manuscript**, send **five copies and a one-page abstract** to: Jennifer M. Lehmann, Editor, *Current Perspectives in Social Theory*, Department of Sociology, 741 Oldfather Hall, The University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE 68588-0324. Deadline for submissions is **April 1, 1998**. **Late Manuscripts will not be considered for the 1999 Volume.**

* The Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA) invites participation in its 27th annual conference (November 5 - 7, 1998 Seattle, Washington). Topics include community development, grassroots associations, social action, self-help and mutual aid organizations, neighborhood groups, NGOs in developing nations, pluralism and ethnicity, and community and citizen political action groups. The second is Boom, Bust, Echo: possible topics include the implications of an aging population for the third sector, older citizens as volunteers, and generational issues of giving and volunteering. Request a Submission cover form from: ARNOVA Executive Office, c/o Indiana University Center on Philanthropy' 550 W. North Street, Suite 301, Indianapolis, IN 46202 (phone 317/684-2120; fax 317/684-2128) Proposals due March 31, 1998.

* **Small Arms Web Site:** Efforts to alleviate problems of global proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons took another step forward today with the establishment of a Preparatory Committee (Prep Com) for a Global Campaign on Small Arms and Light Weapons. Building on the successful methods used in the global campaign to ban anti-personnel land mines, a world wide web site (www.prepcom.org) has been established on the internet to bring together the many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and individuals which have begun to work on these problems.