Peace, War, & Social Conflict

Newsletter of the Peace, War, & Social Conflict Section
of the American Sociological Association

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Message From the Chair
The 1997 Meetings in Toronto provide us with an opportunity to reflect on our identity and focus as a Section. Many of you have engaged in lively discussions about changing our Section name, and I hope you will all attend the Name Change Task Force meeting in Toronto. The name debate raises questions about the scope and salience of our work in the post Cold War era. In planning the 1997 ASA Meetings, I have tried to address these questions in two ways. First, I hope to encourage discussion about the legitimacy and importance of peace and war scholarship within sociology. Second, I hope we can make better connections with scholars working outside the peace and war area, in related fields.

Three of our sessions will further the first goal. Kai Erikson and I have organized a session "Are Peace and War on the Sociological Agenda?" that will feature talks by Carol Cohn, Troy Duster, William Gamson, and James Skelly. A second session, "Contemporary Issues in Peace and War" organized by Morten Ender and Laura Miller, will feature a range of papers examining peace, war, and military institutions in the post Cold War world. Metta Spencer has organized a third session, also classified as an ASA Thematic Session, on "Leading Edge Topics in Peace Research," featuring talks and audience interaction with speakers Dietrich Fischer, Johan Galtung, Anatol Rapoport, and Gene Sharp. All of these sessions will provide us with opportunities to reflect on the salience and future of our work.

At last year’s meeting in New York, I was inspired by Ambassador Juan Samovia’s remark that, through his work with the South American Peace Commission, he found that "insecurity was caused by poverty, unemployment, and violence--structural violence and violence against women, instability, drugs, and the environment, especially as it affects the health of children. The problem of security for the people we interviewed had nothing to do with the threat from neighboring countries and those things we traditionally think of as security." The Ambassador’s comment underscores the links between problems of security and other problems that sociologists study. If the concept of security within our section is not this broad, then why not? If it is, or should be, then we need to work with our colleagues in other sections.

To encourage interaction with scholars working within other related areas of sociology, this year our section will sponsor joint sessions with the Sections on Sex and Gender and Law, Crime, and Deviance. We will also co-sponsor a reception with the Section on Political Sociology. An open session on "Women and War," organized by Lynne Woehrle and Mady Segal, will examine the impact of war on women, women’s participation in the military, and women’s movements in opposition to war. William Chambliss and I have organized another invited session, "Hate Crime, Terrorism, and State Sponsored Crime," which will focus on the interrelationships between peace and war issues and criminology. The panel will feature talks by Martha Huggins (who researches the training of terrorists in Brazil), Mark Hamm and Esther Madriz (focusing on hate crime), and Harold Pepinsky and Richard Quinney (who have written on violence and on peacemaking criminology). Finally, our section will cosponsor an event with the University of Toronto Sociology Department and Science for Peace. This "away from the hotel" panel discussion (which is held at City Hall, just across the street from the Conference hotel) also features Dietrich Fischer, Johan Galtung, Anatol Rapoport, and Gene Sharp on "Toward a New Agenda for the Peace Movement," following an "Author meets readers" session with Johan Galtung. Metta Spencer is also organizing this event. See your conference programs for final details.

I hope to also see you all at the annual business meeting, where we will present the Elise Boulding Student Paper Award (we have a record number of submissions this year) and the Distinguished Career Award. The Name Change discussion will be held immediately following the business meeting.

Thanks to all of you who have worked hard to organize these sessions. Thanks also to Jackie Smith, who has put together several outstanding newsletters; to Lee Smithey, who has created a web page for the section; to Lynne Woehrle for chairing the Elise Boulding student paper award committee; to Amy Hubbard for chairing the nominations committee; to John MacDougall for chairing the Name Change Task Force; and to Rob Benford for chairing the membership committee. It’s been a pleasure working with all of you. I look forward to seeing you in Toronto!

TORONTO UPDATE

Mark your Calendars!
Saturday, August 9, 4:30-6:15 "Hate crimes, terrorism and state-organized violence" (Co-sponsored by the Section on Law, Crime and Deviance) Organizers: William Chambliss, George Washington University & Jennifer Turpin, University of San Francisco. Presider: Jennifer Turpin

Panelists: Mark Hamm, Indiana State University
Martha Huggins, Union College
Esther Madriz, University of San Francisco
Harold Pepinsky, Indiana University
Richard Quinney, Northern Illinois University

Discussion: William Chambliss

Monday, August 11 12:30-- Section Council meeting

Monday, August 11 2:30 - 4:30 pm, Committee Room of the Toronto City Hall, across the street from the hotel. Co-sponsors: University of Toronto Department of Sociology; Science for Peace; Peace and War Section of ASA; Peace Magazine.


Monday August 11 4:30-6:30 pm. City Council Chamber, Toronto City Hall (Across the street from the conference hotel). Co-sponsors: University of Toronto Department of Sociology; Science for Peace; Peace and War Section of ASA; Peace Magazine.

Panel discussion, "Toward a New Agenda for the Peace Movement," Organizer & Presider: Metta Spencer, University of Toronto

Panelists: Gene Sharp, The Albert Einstein Institution,
Dietrich Fischer, Pace University,
Johan Galtung, European Peace University
Anatol Rapoport, University of Toronto

Tuesday, August 12 8:30-10:15 a.m. Thematic Session, "Leading Edge Topics in Peace Research"

Organizer & Presider: Metta Spencer, University of Toronto

Panelists: Gene Sharp, The Albert Einstein Institution, Dietrich Fischer, Pace University,
Johan Galtung, European Peace University, Anatol Rapoport, University of Toronto

Tuesday, August 12, 10:30-11:30 Refereed and Informal Discussion Roundtables on Contemporary Issues in Peace and Conflict

Organizers: Laura Miller, University of California, Los Angeles & Morten G. Ender, University of North Dakota

Tuesday, August 12, 11:30-12:15 Section Business Meeting

Tuesday August 12, 12:30 p.m. The Name Change Task Force will meet following the business meeting.

Tuesday, August 12, 2:30-4:15 panel discussion "Are Peace and War on the Sociological Agenda"
Organizers: Kai Erikson, Yale University & Jennifer Turpin, University of San Francisco Presider: Jennifer Turpin

Panelists: Carol Cohn, Bowdoin College
Troy Duster, University of California, Berkeley
William A. Gamson, Boston College
James M. Skelly, European Peace University

_Tuesday, August 12, 4:30-6:15 "Women and War" (Co-sponsored by the Section on the Sociology of Sex and Gender) Organizers: Lynne Woehrle, Syracuse University Presider: Mady Wechsler Segal, University of Maryland

Papers:

"Construction of Race and Gender in America: The Case of the Womens’ Army Corps During WWII" Brenda Moore, SUNY Buffalo

"Mobilization Propaganda: Advertisements in Womens’ Magazines During WWII" Tawnya Adkins Covert, Purdue University

"Determinants of Success for Women in Military Education," Diane Diamond, Michael Kimmel, and Kirby Schroeder, SUNY-Stony Brook

"Practical Warriors: Women in Military Education," Robin Riley, Syracuse University

Discussion: Mady Wechsler Segal

_Tuesday, August 12, 6:30 p.m. Section on Peace and War and Section on Political Sociology joint reception

NOTE: The two sessions on Monday, 11 August are not official ASA events. These meetings are open to the public, and particularly to non-sociologists who are peace researchers and peace activists. The City Hall rooms are made available without charge, but we are not allowed to charge admission to these events. To defray the costs of transportation and accommodation of the panelists, Metta Spencer solicits contributions from sponsoring groups and/or individuals (Contact her at: mspencer@web.net; 155 Marlee Ave. Apt. 201, Toronto, Ont M6B 4B5 phone: 416/789-2294; fax 416/789-4508.

The Name Change Dialogue Continues

EDITOR’S NOTE: Over the past year, we have engaged in a dialogue about possible changes to the name of the section. A good number of members have participated in this dialogue via list-serve. At the Toronto meetings, there will be an opportunity for members to discuss the name change question face-to-face. To help focus this discussion, I have included in this issue the following excerpts from Les Kurt’s article, "War and Peace on the Sociological Agenda" and an illustration of how one Section member has applied sociological research to analyze environmental conflict in North Carolina. Together with Allen Grimshaw’s report on the Task Force on Genocide, these essays present different approaches sociologists have taken to the social problems encompassed within the Section’s concern about peace, war, and conflict.

War and Peace on the Sociological Agenda
The Two Cultures

[. . . ] One of the most striking aspects of the research on issues of war and peace among sociologists is the presence of two distinct camps, one drawn toward military institutions and the other toward peace movements. These two networks of scholars have different agendas, different sources of funds, and different traditions of research. For the most part, those drawn toward the military have themselves been . . .

War, Peace and the Sociological Agenda

The attempt by sociologists to address the issues of war and peace has been meager indeed. The priority placed on war and peace issues is one accepted by the state, but not the society. Although people are concerned about war if asked, they usually do not think much about it; that concern is left to the state, which is charged with the responsibility in a specialized society. The attention given by the public to the Gulf War was something of an exception, and partly a media phenomenon that considerable segments of the population came to resist long before that short war ended. Most individuals are more concerned about local and family gossip, health, sports, and economic affairs than matters of war and peace. Sociology does not always attend to what is most important to individuals’ lives, of course; the choice of research topics seems to reflect the funding priorities of granting agencies, the methodological constraints of the discipline, and societal concerns indirectly through sociologists’ personal biographies.

Sociologists reflect the broader social apathy about these issues rather than succumbing to the seduction of large amounts of resources provided by the military for social research. Furthermore, those sociologists who do concern themselves with such matters reflect not the state’s concern so much as the interests of the marginalized subcultures of the military and the peace movement.

What work has been done by sociologists has had relatively little impact on public policy. Its effects have been primarily indirect-- through the institutions that have been aided by the two cultures in sociological studies of war and peace. This institution-building role of sociologists has not been central to the development of either set of institutions, but is not altogether meaningless.

Why have war and peace been so far down the priorities list of the sociological agenda? Why has the impact of sociologists on the topic been so meager? Why is it that, despite enormous sums of money available for research on the military, so little of it has been captured by sociologists?

Sociological attitudes and behavior with reference to war and peace in some ways mirror those of the larger culture, and in some ways resist them. On the one hand, sociologists mirror the larger culture by attending more to war than to peace, and by promoting military solutions to international problems. There has been little systematic or concerted effort to solve the dilemma, short of the continued amassing of increasingly sophisticated weapons and delivery systems. Significant alternatives to existing institutional arrangements are not widely supported, and there is the legacy of the McCarthy period, in which many with deviant positions (especially with regard to the Soviet Union) were drummed out of the academy. Sociologists have not provided research fundamental to the growth or maintenance of the military machine (as have its sibling disciplines of economics and political science), but neither has it made a major contribution to its critique.

Some characteristics of the academic community and the structure of scholarly research also contribute to the failure of sociologists to address the issues of war and peace. Institutional arrangements internal to the field of sociology have mitigated against work on these topics, and subfields of the discipline tend to become more or less wealthy in proportion to their networks and resources. For example, until very recently, war and peace were not taught in introductory sociology texts, and have not been featured in general definitions of mainstream sociology. Moreover, academic life in the latter half of the 20th century, and the field of sociology itself, is not structured so as to promote the solving of the big issues of our time, but toward getting publications and expanding vitas. [. . . ] Most sociologists,
consequently, do not tackle the big issues, unless they happen to be in an area in which there is significant funding. [. . .] As Tilly (1988:3) observes, "In the discipline’s present condition, its best minds do not turn easily to the study of war and military power—untidy phenomena that lend themselves badly to ‘clear, brilliant solutions.’" Although the Gulf War turned society’s attention to the issue of war in a significant new way, it will be difficult for sociologists to examine the issue, because of the problems with operationalizing the larger issues in concrete, empirical studies beyond attitudinal surveys. [. . .]

Finally, the failure of sociologists to address issues of war and peace in a meaningful way is related, at least in part, to the structure of war and peace research itself. Despite efforts to maintain a modicum of independence (and certainly a sense of independence) from the institutions they are aiding, both military sociologists and peace researchers are allowing the institutions toward which they are respectively drawn to influence the agenda for their work. Because military research is more predominant, that is what gets funded most frequently, and the work tends to be myopic. Most of it remains outside of the disciplinary boundaries of sociology, even when it is carried out by sociologists. Even that peace research and military sociology within the discipline still tends to exist on the margins. Because their numbers are so small, and since there are many outside the discipline who share their substantive interests, peace researchers and military sociologists tend to work in interdisciplinary networks. [. . .]

Unless sociologists begin to change the way in which they address issues of war and peace, it is unlikely that sociologists will play a major role in helping humanity to escape the nuclear cage in which it has entrapped itself. The lack of attention to the issues of war and peace by most of the sociological mainstream has resulted in the failure of the discipline to meet its responsibilities, if one accepts the notion that sociologists have a responsibility to humanity. This idea has gained popularity since the social turmoil of the 1960s, as reflected in the growing interest in applied sociology, although it has been the subject of considerable debate.

Such concerns are often expressed in terms of the tension between the "relevance" of sociological research, on the one hand, and the necessity of carrying out basic research that transcends one’s own interests (and those of one’s funders), on the other. Recent changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe provide some important challenges to sociologists; they offer an important arena in which relevant social problems combine with opportunities to understand basic processes of social structure and social change. Certainly these changes are of great interest to business people. Perhaps establishing and maintaining peaceful international relationships will become a priority of international capital, and sociologists will be able to contribute to the process, while at the same time pointing out the dangers of an increasingly stratified global order dominated by cooperating superpowers.

Sociologists could make a significant contribution to our understanding of both war and peace, and the social processes, cultural orientations, and institutional configurations that predispose human activities in war- and peace-making. If there is going to be a society left for us to study, sociologists must create an agenda for the study of war and peace, beginning with an application of existing research traditions to those issues (see Kurtz 1988). The sociological and anthropological literature on reciprocity provides insights into personal motivations, interactions, and conflict processes. Much of the vast literature on bureaucracy is relevant to understanding not only the military and governments, but the military-industrial complex and the ways in which predispositions toward military solutions to international conflict dominate interstate relations. Finally, cultural sociology provides rich concepts, such as ritual, which could help us understand the symbolic dimensions of international conflict.

If they are to do so, sociologists must have the means for carrying out research independent of either the military or the peace movement, and there must be an infrastructure to promote such studies within the sociological community, even if it means promoting unconventional methods of analysis. Finally, peace researchers and military sociologists have much to learn from each other, in examining their common concerns about war and peace, especially as the world continues to change so rapidly.

References

From ‘Guns vs. Butter’ to ‘Hogs vs. H₂O’? Research on Environmental Conflicts

Bob Edwards & John Maiolo,
East Carolina University

A phone survey of 998 adult residents in 41 counties of eastern North Carolina conducted in July 1996 reveals widespread concern about a number of environmental threats to the quality of life in eastern North Carolina.

Those surveyed were asked about 18 different issues covering a range of trends in the East. People were asked two kinds of questions. First, whether each of these 18 trends would have a positive or negative impact on what they value about living in the region. Second, which of these 18 trends did they consider to be the most positive and the most negative.

Three-fourths or more of the people surveyed said the following would have a positive impact on what they value about living in eastern North Carolina.

- Stricter regulations on hog farms (86%)
- Widening of roads to handle more traffic (83%)
- Stricter regulations on farming to protect water quality (73%)

Using a procedure similar to how the top college sports teams are ranked, we found that the three most positive trends are ranked as follows:

1) Widening roads to handle more traffic
2) Stricter regulations on hog farms
3) Quality of schools

Three-fourths or more of the people surveyed considered the following to have a negative impact on what they value about living in eastern North Carolina.

- Pollution of rivers and sounds (85%)
- Plant closings and layoffs (84%)
- Higher state and local taxes (74%)
- More hog farms (73%)

Ranking the Most Negative Trends: People were also asked to identify what trends they considered to be the two greatest threats to what they value about living in eastern North Carolina.

1) Increasing pollution of the rivers & sounds
2) More hog farms
3) Plant closings & layoffs
4) Higher state and local taxes

What is noteworthy or surprising about these results? Residents of the East are very concerned about increasing water pollution and about the prospect of more hog farms in the region. This concern is widespread. At least three out of four people feel this way. There is also widespread support for stricter regulations on the regions growing hog industry and for widening roads in the East. Some may not consider it too surprising that people would consider increased pollution or even the prospect of more hog farms to be negative trends. However, water quality and more hog farms were ranked as bigger threats to quality of life in the East than either the prospect of higher state and local taxes or current rates of crime in the area. That is surprising!

New developments: The NC Pork Council has launched a multi-million dollar public relations campaign designed to counter the public perception that the hog industry is having an adverse impact on water quality in the region.

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**The research reported here is part of a multi-year project to assess the environmental and socio-economic impact of road and bridge improvements in eastern North Carolina. That larger project was funded by a grant from the North Carolina Center for Transportation and the Environment and by a small grant from the ECU Department of Sociology. Edwards will also be working with the Southern Environmental Law Center's Carolinas Office to develop follow-up questions for the 1997 annual survey of eastern North Carolina. He is also going to be doing a program evaluation of one of the many programs of the Pitt County Community Mediation Center--school-based "violence prevention" and "conflict resolution" programs-- in conjunction with a course on "Advanced Techniques in Applied Social Research."

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**1997 REPORT FROM TASK FORCE ON GENOCIDE/ POLITICIDE/ DEMOCIDE**

Allen Grimshaw, Indiana University

As noted in earlier reports, the charge of the Task Force on Genocide, Politicide, and Democide of the Section on Peace and War is twofold. We have been working to (1) raise awareness of our sociologist colleagues about genocide and (2) help sociologists incorporate materials on war, genocide, and human rights (WGHR) into their regular/traditional/standard sociology courses. To these ends we decided to organize sessions at regional sociology meetings in 1996 and 1997. We presented two sessions at each of three regional meetings in 1996; we have now done the same at three additional regional meetings this spring. As was the case last year one session at each meeting was on concepts and substance, the other on teaching. The sessions this spring (1997) were at the Southwest Social Science Association and the Southern Sociological Society meetings, both in New Orleans, and the Eastern Sociological Society meetings in Baltimore.

**Papers at the 1997 Regional Meetings**

Presentations at this year's sessions once again represented a wide range of scholarship addressed to diverse issues within the field of genocide studies. In contrast to last year, when all papers except that of Gideon Sjoberg on human rights implications for social theory and research addressed empirical or theoretical questions about specific instances of genocide or other large-scale killings, several papers looked at issues related to the second part of the Task Force's charge, i.e., teaching. Train asked how the "uniqueness" formulation came to be constructed, Bischoping and Levy used survey responses to sort out variables which influenced perceptions of and opinions about genocide, and Markusen and Mullin examined the availability of information on WGHR in introductory and social problems texts, in the Annual Review series, and in periodical literature.

**1997 Paper presenters:**
Audiences, generally composed of older people—with a sprinkling of the quite young (at least from the perspective of this reporter)—ranged in size from about ten to the mid twenties, people listened intently and discussion was spirited. While scheduling problems and the expense of airline tickets prevented two slated discussants from participating, three very thoughtful discussants, Helen Fein, Horst-Alfred Heinrich, and Barry Schwartz, initiated discussions with rich commentary which in several instances constituted additional important theoretical contributions.

**Workshops on Teaching**

In their paper at the Southern meetings Eric Markusen and Karen Mullin reported that there has been a noticeable increase in coverage of and specific reference to genocide and human rights concerns in both scholarly and teaching materials. Courses focusing specifically on WGHR topics continue to increase. Our intent in organizing sessions on teaching has not been to persuade colleagues to teach more such independent courses on these topics, but rather to demonstrate that materials on these topics are highly relevant and appropriate for inclusion in sociology courses. Audiences of eight to the mid-twenties attended; interest was high and questions and discussion stimulating at all three sessions. Most participants were eager to incorporate WGHR materials into their courses and many were doing so already. Those attending continued to raise extremely important and often difficult questions, for example, how can students be diverted from unproductive contests over what groups or categories are most oppressed or how can they be helped in coping with emotional stress? A number of interesting suggestions for teaching emerged, ranging from visits from or interviews with genocide survivors to constituting student teams charged with becoming experts on specific genocides. I attended all six sessions on teaching and found each of them valuable. Other panelists who were able to attend included

Howard Adelman, York; Meir Amor, Toronto; E.M. Beck, Georgia; Kathy Bischoping, York; Horst-Alfred Heinrich, ZUMA (Mannheim); David Kopf, Minnesota; Andrea Levy, Guelph; Karen Mullin, Southwest; Jack Nusan Porter, University of Massachusetts/Lowell; Barry Schwartz, Georgia; Kelly Train, York.

**Future Task Force Activities**

While about 100 people participated in our six 1997 sessions, some participants were loyalists who had also participated in 1996, others attended more than one session this year, and not all participants were sociologists. Much remains to be done on both our charges. I hope readers will want to help on some projected further activities. Here are
some possibilities, there may be readers who see other needs: (1) future sessions at regional and national meetings: Program chairs at this year's meetings seemed pleased to have the genocide sessions and are likely to welcome future proposals for WGHR programming (I think Bill Gamson can be thanked for at least some of this apparent enlightenment). I don't believe that continuing Task Force sponsorship will be necessary and hope that members will step forward to organize sessions. WGHR sessions will continue to be programmed at our national meetings; it would be great if at some juncture we could co-sponsor sessions at national meetings of sister and cognate disciplines; (2) e-mail lists, networks, etc. We need people who have networking and other modern skills to volunteer to help generate lists, set up a home page, and maintain contact with colleagues in other organizations. (3) dissemination of Task Force materials: Over the past two years we have accumulated a number of interesting papers, some extremely thoughtful and well-informed commentary on papers presented, syllabi, suggestions about teaching, and so on. Not many people have seen or heard these materials, so we need a group of people to review them and determine whether anything further should be done to make them available. If we ask someone (or someones) to edit anything for publication we must assure that we can provide some resources and (especially in the case of younger colleagues) that they will receive credit for their work. This matter should be addressed by our Section Council. I wish to thank all those who helped me and the Task Force in its activities over the past several years. I look forward to reading about future activities of the Task Force in the years ahead. I am giving a roundtable on the teaching sessions in Toronto and would be delighted to talk with any of you about our experiences and what we have learned.

Publications by Section Members

Mary Anna Colwell, "Toward a Research Agenda on American Foreign Policy and American Citizen Groups." Peace Review vol. 9 #2 (1997).


The Bulletin Board

Here’s where members can solicit feedback and other contacts from others in the Section. Please send in announcements of any projects you are doing that may be of interest to Section members.

Ron Pagnucco, Mt. St. Mary's College Emmitsburg) was recently appointed to the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities' Steering Committee on Education for Justice. He would like to be in contact with section members involved in peace and justice education at Catholic schools. Please contact him at pagnucco@mssmary.edu or Dept. of Sociology, Mt. St. Mary's College, Emmitsburg, MD 21727.

Calls for Papers

Hard Copy Resources

Education for Action: Undergraduate and Graduate Programs that Focus on Social Change. Edited by Sean Brooks & Alison Knowles. Food First Books, Distributed by Subterranean Co. Box 160; 265 South Fifth St. Monroe, OR 97456 (800) 274-7826. Provides descriptions and contacts for graduate and undergraduate programs in a range of social science disciplines, peace studies, womens studies, human rights, environment, etc.

Peace Studies-Related Web Sites

- See the Section web page for additional locations.
- INCORE, the Initiative on Conflict Resolution & Ethnicity of the United Nations University and the University of Ulster. INCORE has just produced the first editions of INCORE guides to internet resources on conflict & ethnicity in Russia, Chechnya, Tajikistan, & Afghanistan. The site is found at http://www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/cds/countries/
- Yale University’s Cambodian Genocide Program has developed a site that contains bibliographic, biographic, geographic, and photographic databases related to the program’s in-depth research on the sources and implications of the Pol Pot regime’s genocidal practices. At http://www.yale.edu/cgp
- The Earth Times is the leading independent international nonpartisan newspaper on the environment and sustainable development, and such interrelated concerns of the international system as population, conflict-resolution, governance, human-rights, trade, and women's and children's rights. Published by the not-for-profit Earth Times Foundation, the newspaper specifically explores the subject of change--how individuals and institutions work in their own societies to tackle their challenges and generate positive change in social and economic conditions. This is a good source for following up this summer’s review of the 1992 "Earth Summit." A great supplement to class texts on global affairs. www.earthtimes.org/index.html.