Statement by the Chair

Dear Section Members,

The year 2013 proved to be a significant one for sexuality studies, research, and advocacy and policy: same sex marriages continue to expand as the main purview of a gay and lesbian civil rights platform, and yet, groups like Against Equality not only push back on an “equality marriage” agenda - they also facilitate conversations about what gets done, and undone, with marriage as a main political goal. Discussions about the impact of biased research continued, including the Regnerus legacy, and its use by the Supreme Court. Meanwhile, gender identity laws and recognition outside of the country, most notably in Latin America, offer nuanced ways to fight for recognition, in ways that teach us in US soil that human rights are accomplished in as many fronts, and with different political agendas.

And yet back home, we have faculty members of all ranks being impacted by their teaching of seemingly volatile issues - Patti Adler being a most visible case. We see gains in advocacy, and are part of a vibrant ASA organization supporting these sociologists, but we must continue to organize, to demand to continue to teach and research on these areas, and to stand for a critical field of study. As the sociology of sexualities continues to grow, expand, and become more vital within a mainstream sociology, it inherently also struggles with the challenges of a society that sustains a double standard in understanding sex, gender, and sexuality as social, and thus legitimate fields of study and activism. It is here where our section stands – growing strongly and steadily: we have reached 550 members and continue to gain visibility.

Our section has incredible potential – and yet there is still some work ahead. In terms of the San Francisco 2014 meetings, I have made commitments with the usual sections and caucuses, as well as reached out and initiated collaborative efforts with sections we have not worked with in recent years. We will have an strong presence at this year’s meetings, with panels ranging from thematic, special, and regular sessions to section panels and roundtables. Our collective leadership has brought to fruition a thriving section. Inevitably, with the thematic focus of the 2015 meetings on sexuality and the social, we are going to grow in unprecedented ways.

In our San Francisco gathering, I expect to see topics that go beyond the usual theme of marriage and equality. For these meetings, our section has embraced intersectionality; we have looked for the forgotten “herstories” and other influences to our sociology of sexualities; and we have also aimed to trouble surveillance strategies that may indeed impact sexuality and embodiment in and through the legal systems. Indeed, we are proposing a sexualities that is interconnected, engaged (with other fields within the discipline, and beyond), and one that will foster conversations across the hallways and streets of the Bay Area.

I look forward to seeing you all in San Francisco.

Salvador Vidal-Ortiz
American University
Sex usually occurs in private and is seen as deeply personal, yet it is also profoundly social. Cultural norms and social institutions such as religion, education, mass media, law, and the military all affect what we do sexually with whom. These social forces also affect what is seen as beyond the bounds of legitimacy. Indeed, contemporary politics are full of contentious debates about abortion, sex education, same-sex marriage, pornography, sex work, sexual harassment, systematic rape as a weapon in wars, and female genital cutting. Given the importance of sexuality in people’s lives, and its relevance to many areas of sociology, I selected it as the theme for the 2015 annual meeting of the ASA. Let us gather to discuss a broad set of questions, including the following:

- Why has there been more progress toward gender equality in education and jobs than in heterosexual relations, where men still typically propose marriage, and women are more stigmatized than men for casual sex?
- How are race and class inequalities affected by marriage markets in which preferences and segregation steer us toward intimate relationships, and thus economic sharing, with partners similar to ourselves?
- Why have nonmarital births increased for 50 years, as much in good economic times as in the hard times that make men less marriageable?
- To what extent is bias against gay men and lesbians really a bias against gender nonconformity?
- Why has public opinion on gay marriage shifted so quickly?
- Why do typical parents believe that their own children are sexually naïve but that other children are hypersexual?
- How are notions of sexual propriety marshaled in social movements, anti-colonial revolutions, state formation, and ethnic cleansing?
- How are cultural schema about sexuality reflected in the design of consumer goods such as movies, music, clothing, and drugs for sexual performance?
- Has concern about the dangers of sex kept researchers from studying sexual pleasure as a stratification outcome?
- How do patterns of the transmission of HIV illuminate network principles?
- How do gene/environment interactions affect sexual behavior?
- What new data collection do we need for research on sexualities?
- What theoretical perspectives are most useful in making sense of sexuality?
- Can studying sexuality inform general social theories?

Please join me at our annual meeting in Chicago in August 2015 where our sessions will feature a full range of sociological topics in addition to showcasing exciting new research on sexualities across many subfields.

Paula England, New York University
ASA President-elect and Chair, 2015 Annual Meeting Program Committee
This Section

In the last decade or so, the study of sexuality has emerged as a vibrant interdisciplinary field of social analysis. For many years, sexuality was approached as an individual, biological or psychological phenomena. Today, the idea of sexuality as a social fact or construction is the point of departure for much of the most exciting scholarship in the area...

Sections are an important mechanism for getting out information about our specialty area... Section status also affords a variety of institutional sup

 Officers for 2014-15

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The Purpose

The purpose of the Section on the Sociology of Sexualities is to encourage, enhance and foster research, teaching and other professional activities in the sociology of sexuality, for the development of sociology and the benefit of society, through organized meetings, conferences, newsletters, publications, awards, and other means deemed appropriate by the Section Council.

The Section seeks to promote communication, collaboration, and consultation among scholars in sociology, the sociology of sexualities, and allied disciplines.

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

2014 Junior Theorists Symposium
Berkeley, CA
15 August 2014
Submission Deadline: 15 February 2014

We invite submissions for extended abstracts for the 8th Junior Theorists Symposium (JTS), to be held in Berkeley, CA on August 15th, 2014, the day before the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association (ASA). The JTS is a one-day conference featuring the work of up-and-coming theorists, sponsored in part by the Theory Section of the ASA. Since 2005, the conference has brought together early career-stage sociologists who engage in theoretical work.

We are pleased to announce that Marion Fourcade (University of California - Berkeley), Saskia Sassen (Columbia University), and George Steinmetz (University of Michigan) will serve as discussants for this year's symposium.

We invite all ABD graduate students, postdocs, and assistant professors who received their PhDs from 2010 onwards to submit a three-page précis (800-1000 words). The précis should include the key theoretical contribution of the paper and a general outline of the argument. Be sure also to include (i) a paper title, (ii) author’s name, title and contact information, and (iii) three or more descriptive keywords. As in previous years, in order to encourage a wide range of submissions, we do not have a pre-specified theme for the conference. Instead, papers will be grouped into sessions based on emergent themes.

Please send submissions, Daniel Hirschman (University of Michigan) and Jordanna Matlon (Institute for Advanced Study in Toulouse), at juniortheorists@gmail.com with the phrase “JTS submission” in the subject line.

Text written by Steve Seidman, Gil Zicklin, and Mark Hager
Transnational Queer Activism
Janice Irvine and Jill Irvine, eds.

This call for papers seeks contributions to an edited volume on transnational queer and LGBT politics, movements, and activism. This volume will feature work that bridges theoretical and empirical methodologies, and that is located within both disciplinary and interdisciplinary frames. Drawing upon current research on a broad range of cases, it aims to provide a comparative analysis of queer politics both within countries and across regions. We are particularly interested in the notion of queer as it has traveled around the globe and the opportunities and/or obstacles it presents for various types of activism, movement building, strategic action, and identities. In addition, we are interested in articles that address the following questions:

1.) What political strategies have queer and LGBT movements pursued? How have these strategies been shaped by factors such as nation, religion, gender, and other axes of difference?

2.) How do LGBTQ activists frame issues? How do global discourses, norms, and languages shape local issues and how, in turn, do local issues and frames shape global discourses? Do queer politics versus LGBT politics create alternative or mutually reinforcing sets of issues and political demands?

3.) What alliances do LGBTQ movements and activists build locally, regionally and internationally? What factors have caused rifts or fissures in queer or LGBT movements? To what extent does queer activism intersect with other forms of activism/resistance?

4.) How have activists disrupted or been shaped by geographical and other binaries, such as east/west, north/south. Are there different variants of queerness as it is understood and applied in transnational contexts?

Paper Proposals of no more than 250 words should be submitted to Jill Irvine at Jill.Irvine@ou.edu and Janice Irvine at irvine@soc.umass.edu by April 1, 2014. Proposals will be reviewed quickly and authors will be notified by May 15, 2014. Draft papers, approximately 8,000 words in length, will be due January 15, 2015.

Check It Out
Check out this special issue of *The Sociological Quarterly* on "Critical Heterosexuality Studies" published this fall (volume 54, no. 4). The special issue includes five articles:

2. Doing Fear: The Influence of Hetero-Femininity on (Trans)women’s Fears of Victimization by Jill E. Yavorsky and Liana Sayer
4. Sexual Misgivings: Producing Un/Marked Knowledge in Neoliberal Marriage Promotion Policies by Melanie Heath
5. Long-Term Heterosexual Cohabitaters and Attitudes towards Marriage by Timothy A. Ortyl

Kudos! If you have something you’d like to announce or someone you’d like to recognize in the next newsletter, please email christin.munsch@furman.edu.
The deadline for submissions is April 1, 2014.

The Martin Levine Memorial Dissertation Award was established to honor the memory of Martin Levine, who died of AIDS in 1993. It provides $3,000 to a graduate student (and $500 to an honorable mention) in the final stages of dissertation research and writing, who is working on those topics to which Levine devoted his career: 1) the sociology of sexualities, 2) the sociology of homosexuality, and 3) HIV/AIDS research. It is designed to help students complete their dissertations, and as such the committee evaluates dissertation proposals rather than completed work.

Send your proposals to: Michael Kimmel, Department of Sociology, SUNY at Stony Brook, Stony Brook, NY 11794.

In Print
Recent Articles


Books


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