

2025 Section Annual Report: Part 1 for History of Sociology & Social Thought Section

Introduction

Annual reports are used by the Sections Committee to assess the health of a Section, measure the Section's vitality, and identify processes, programs, or initiatives that could serve as a model for other Sections. In addition, they serve to provide institutional memory, socialize new Section leaders, and promote transparency to Section members.

This annual report covers the period of Section activity from September 2024 to August 2025 and a fiscal year from January 2025 to December 2025. This report is shared publicly.

Section Governance

Business Meeting

Date and Time: Monday, August 11, 2025, 11-11:30AM

Place: East Tower, Hyatt Regency Chicago, Concourse Level/Bronze, Michigan 2

Our business meeting was held during the ASA's annual meeting in August 2025 in Chicago, IL. The meeting was attended by approximately 15 members.

The first order of business was to acknowledge both our new and departing office holders.

Past Chair, Laura Ford:

- a. welcomed Lisa McCormick as the new Chair; George Steinmetz as the Chair-elect; Timothy Perez as the Student Representative; and Lauren Langman and Grégoire Malla as the new Council Members. Their roles became effective as of 1 September 2025.
- b. conveyed how a section newsletter, *Timelines*, finally came to fruition. She was happy to report that newsletter editors/volunteers Jarron Long and John Mirsky –graduate students from the University of Michigan— had been secured.
- c. highlighted the importance of fundraising. She was happy to convey that a plan had been developed. Once approved by the ASA, she hopes the section will be able to implement it starting the next budget cycle.

Past Chair (Laura Ford) and Section Chair (Lisa McCormick) solicited volunteers to participate in Section sessions/activities and for members to contribute to the newly developed newsletter.

Council Meeting

Date and Time: Monday, August 11, 2025, 7-7:45AM

Place: East Tower, Hyatt Regency Chicago, Concourse Level/Bronze, Randolph Boardroom

Officers Present: Lisa McCormick (Section Chair), George Steinmetz (Chair Elect); Laura Ford (Past Chair), and Jean-Pierre Reed (Secretary-Treasurer)

Council Members Present: Javier Treviño; Besnik Pula; and Michael Strand

Members-at-Large Present: Margaret Walkover

Introductions and Approval of Agenda

- Past Chair, Laura Ford, convened the meeting at 7AM.
- Attending members introduced themselves.
- An agenda document was introduced by the Past Chair. It was approved by council members.

The following items were discussed during the meeting:

1. Past Chair, Laura Ford:
 - a. acknowledged and expressed gratitude for council members' commitment to the section.
 - b. welcomed the new Chair (Lisa McCormick) and Chair-elect (George Steinmetz).
 - c. announced Election results: George Steinmetz (new Chair-elect), Lauren Langman (new Council Member), Grégoire Mallard (new Council Member) and Timothy Perez (Student Representative).
 - d. acknowledged and expressed gratitude to paper session (Omar A. Lizardo, George Steinmetz) presiders.
 - e. reiterated her / the section's interest on developing a mentoring program to support scholarship of young scholars in the history of sociology. She recommended senior scholars be recruited for this important section task. They will be in a better position to enable knowledge transfer. Section Chair, Lisa McCormick, plans to continue the mentoring tradition.
 - f. conveyed how a section newsletter, *Timelines*, finally came to fruition. She was happy to report that newsletter editors/volunteers Jarron Long and John Mirsky –graduate students from the University of Michigan— had been secured.
 - g. highlighted the importance of fundraising. She was happy to convey that a plan had been developed. Once approved by the ASA, she hopes the section will be able to implement it starting the next academic year 2025-26.
 - h. reminded us that the ASA wishes for us to align the start of the Section Leadership with the start of the ASA-wide Position Dates, which falls on September 1. If adopted, the alignment will require amending section bylaws.
2. The council unanimously voted to provide a \$500 honorarium to newsletter editors. The first issue under the stewardship of the new editors is expected to come out in October 2025 (as in fact it did).
3. Past Chair (Laura Ford) and Section Chair (Lisa McCormick):
 - a. called for volunteers to participate in Section sessions/activities and for members to contribute to the newly developed newsletter.
 - b. A Google form will be sent out to recruit volunteers.
4. Past Chair (Laura Ford) and Section Chair (Lisa McCormick):
 - a. reminded officers and attendees of section bylaws concerning three standing committees: Nomination Committee; Program Committee; and Membership Committee.
 - b. reminded officers and attendees of the due date –11/15– for the Annual Reports.
5. Section Chair, Lisa McCormick:
 - a. expressed her intention to continue to shepherd the mission of the section. She intends to work on highlighting the section's importance to discipline.
 - b. announced that the basic allocation to a section of our size is six sessions (which includes a business meeting slot).
 - c. plans to co-sponsor a session with the sociology of culture section for next year's meeting in NYC.
 - d. suggested having a session focusing on archives of social theorists. She used the Garfinkel archive as an example. In her estimation, such a focus would present itself as an opportunity for the section.
 - e. hopes to develop some online programming during the academic year. She is planning on reaching out to our counterparts in the ISA to see if they were interested in co-organizing a session.
6. Past Chair (Laura Ford) and Treasurer/Secretary and Chair of the Graduate Student Paper Award Committee (Jean-Pierre Reed):
 - a. Discussed the Graduate Paper Award process. The present conference year revealed that committee members needed to know from the get-go that they had the option not to award the prize. This instruction will be pass on to future committees.

7. Treasurer/Secretary, Jean-Pierre Reed, shared section-related financial information. Briefly put, the net assets for the section at the time of the meetings in mid-August is \$4, 441.

Awards

Lifetime Achievement Award, 2025, Winner: Jeffrey C. Alexander, Yale University

Committee Chair: Matt Dawson

Committee Members: Gary Alan Fine, George Steinmetz, Eleanor Townsley, and Javier Treviño

Distinguished Scholarly Publication Award, 2025, Winner: Ali Meghji, University of Cambridge, “Du Boisian Sociology After Du Bois: Frazier, St Clair Drake, and the Global and Comparative Study of Race and Empire,” *Sociological Forum*, 39: 361–372. 2024.

Committee Chair: Eric Malczewski,

Committee Members: Gary D. Jaworski, Amín Pérez, and Stephen Turner

Graduate Student Paper Award, 2025, No Awards were granted

Committee Chair: Jean-Pierre Reed

Committee Members: Andrea Cossu, Mervyn Horgan, Vanina Leschziner, and Marek Skovajsa

2025 Finances

After the annual meetings last year (see August 2024 financial report), we started this financial period with net assets of \$3,395 in our section account. This amount reflects income received of \$1,125 based on the ASA Allocation-Base (\$942) and Dues Income (\$183). It also reflects annual meeting related expenses in the amount of \$1,390 based on award (\$370) and reception (\$1,020) expenses at the Montreal meetings.

After the annual meetings this year (see end of August 2025 financial report), we started this financial period with net assets of \$3,455 in our section account. This amount reflects income received of \$1,086 based on the ASA Allocation-Base (\$915) and Dues Income (\$171). It also reflects annual meeting related expenses in the amount of \$1,134 based on award (\$125) and reception (\$1,009) expenses at the Chicago meetings.

To put this in perspective: Compared to the budget after last year’s annual meetings, this marks an increase of \$60 ← \$3,455 (2025) - \$3,395 (2024) = \$60+

The Previous Year - Describe Section activities during the period between September 2024 and August 2025.

Provide an overview of the Section’s communications with its members and include explanation of how your communication strategy meets the goals and values of the Section. Include links to the section website, newsletters, and any other electronic media used.

The main method of communication with Section members is through the Section’s email list-serve. At the opening of the new Chair’s tenure (Laura Ford) she sent a communication to Section members articulating her vision for the Section, her understanding of her role as Chair, and her priorities for the Section, *e.g.* encouraging involvement from grad students and new scholars. Laura also articulated a concern about growing politicization within the ASA and reminded Section members that this concern had been explicit in her candidacy statement. She proposed a possible theme for a panel at the ASA

Annual Meeting to address conflicts over the appropriate place for value-commitments within sociology. She noted that this conflict has been with sociology since its beginning, briefly discussing Max Weber's position on similar conflicts in the founding of the German Sociological Association. The vision Laura proposed for the Section was one in which the Section could provide a forum for debate and discussion about this very important historical and contemporary challenge. Laura also promised, however, to be strictly neutral in her use of the list-serve for communications. Over the course of her term, Laura sent communications over the list-serve approximately once a month, conveying information about opportunities for history of sociology-related research and symposia, as well as recent publications of Section members, among other things.

In October, at the conclusion of her term, Laura published an essay in [the Section's revived Newsletter, Timelines](#). This essay, "Historical Conscience for the ASA: An Invitation" offers an extended statement of her concerns about politicization of the ASA, together with her hope that the Section could provide a forum for research, discussion, and debate about this issue.

Over the past year, current Chair (then Chair-Elect) Lisa McCormick also encouraged an active [Twitter/X presence for the Section](#).

Describe the Section's diversity, equity, and inclusion goals. What steps were taken this year to achieve those goals?

Section Council members and officers seek to be inclusive in the ways they communicate, plan Section activities, and recruit new officers and members. From member to member and officer to officer, these goals would probably be described in different ways. In the narrow, demographic sense of DEI, Section officers and members doubtless share a hope that the Section will appeal to people with a wide range of backgrounds, experiences, and interests. In recruitment of new officers and Council members for election, there is sensitivity to ensuring that the section is demographically diverse.

Conceived broadly, DEI goals can be advanced by seeking to ensure diversity of viewpoint, in addition to demographic diversity. [The ASA Code of Ethics, Principle D \(Respect for People's Rights, Dignity, and Diversity\)](#) embraces a broad conception of diversity and inclusion by disavowing discrimination on the basis of age, gender, race, socioeconomic status and socioeconomic origins, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, health conditions, political affiliation, marital status, domestic status, parental status, or any other applicable basis proscribed by law. This statement of principle also explicitly affirms the value of viewpoint diversity. ("In all of their workrelated activities, sociologists acknowledge the rights of others to hold values, attitudes, and opinions that differ from their own.")

Whether we conceive DEI narrowly or broadly, the Section is advancing DEI related goals in the ways that it seeks to support research, scholarship and teaching related to the history of sociology and social thought. The section is currently chaired by a woman (Lisa McCormick) and the outgoing chair is a woman (Laura Ford). Members with diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds serve on the Council, as officers, as grad student representatives, and as newsletter editors. The Section includes a number of members who are retired or semi-retired, and we are actively seeking to recruit and support junior scholars, making the Section inclusive with respect age. And the Section is seeking to foster debate and discussion showcasing a diversity of viewpoints. For example, the Newsletter editors invited responses to outgoing chair Laura Ford's essay, so the next Newsletter may feature a critical response to the arguments that she made. As discussed further below, the Section's 2025 Annual Meeting program reflected all these types of diversity in its content and design.

Provide an overview of the section's programming at the annual meeting and include explanation of how this programming meets the goals and values of the section (e.g. intellectual exchange, professional networking, mentoring, inclusion).

Our program at the Annual Meeting was successful and well-attended. We organized two paper panels, one in our allocated 1.5 hour section session and one in the additional hour adjacent to the Business Meeting that is often used for roundtable sessions. The program for each of these sessions is copied below.

In addition to the paper sessions we co-sponsored a reception with six other sections: (1) Global and Transnational Sociology, (2) Comparative-Historical Sociology, (3) Labor and Labor Movements, (4) Peace, War, and Social Conflict, (5) Political Economy of the World-System, and (6) Sociology of Development. While we (the Program Committee) considered the possibility of an alternative to a reception – perhaps smaller gatherings organized more informally – we had budgeted for a reception and decided that it would be better to provide this conventional opportunity for member socializing. We considered it likely that some members would be disappointed if there were no organized reception. We gladly accepted the opportunity to co-sponsor with the other listed sections.

Our program met our goals and values in providing an opportunity to showcase excellent scholarship pertaining to the history of sociology and social thought. The second of our two sessions offered a diverse set of viewpoints on the appropriate place of value commitments within sociology and the ASA, in particular. That session was especially well attended and featured lively discussion in the brief Q&A at the end.

Open Call Session – Showcasing Excellent Scholarship in the History of Sociology & Social Thought (90 minute session) - Description: The History of Sociology and Social Thought section issued an open call for papers that focus on central themes and developments in the history of sociology, as a discipline, and in the broader history of reflection on the “social” dimension of human life. The selected papers showcase the high quality of cultural and scientific insights that are possible through systematic and sustained historical reflection on sociology, as a discipline and also a specific type of social thought.

Session Presider: Omar Lizardo, UCLA

Daniel R. Huebner, UNC Greensboro, *Refracting the Canon: Disability Theory in Sociology's Founding Period*

Silvia Rief, University of Innsbruck, and Alan Scott/UNE (NSW), University of Innsbruck, *The Political Flexibility of a Theory: Holism between Empiricism and Metaphysics in Early Twentieth-Century Vienna*

A. Javier Treviño, Wheaton College, *Talcott Parsons and the Totem-Taboo Problematic*

Jane Jia-Win Yang, Jeewoo Shin, Jungmin Shin, and Chunxu Fang, University at Albany, SUNY, *Trends and Changes in American Sociological Pursuit: A Review of Major Sociological Journals from 2000-2023*

Values Panel – Debating the Place for Value-Commitments in Sociology (60 minute session) -

Description: Disputes about the place of value-commitments in sociology are active today, but they run like a red thread through the history of sociology, leading back to the origins of the discipline, and beyond. What, if anything, has changed today? Are new methods of analysis possible to enable new insights into the role(s) of politics and political commitments in sociology? Is the discipline more politicized today, and, if so, what does this say about the possibilities for sociology as a social “science”? This session, preceding the section’s business meeting, facilitated a pluralistic debate regarding themes of value-freedom, value-neutrality, and value-commitment in sociology, considered from a historical perspective and in light of contemporary controversies.

Session Presider: George Steinmetz, University of Michigan

Julia Potter Adams, Yale University, *Agency, Institutional Neutrality, and Disciplinary Crisis*

Musa al-Gharbi, Stony Brook University, *Value Blindness in Sociological Research*

Michael Burawoy, UC Berkeley, *Why and How Should Sociologists Speak Out on Palestine*

Note: This paper was submitted by invitation prior to Professor Burawoy’s tragic death; a small portion of the paper was read by Laura Ford, who also offered an expression of appreciation for Professor Burawoy’s willingness to contribute to the session and to engage in respectful dialog across intensely held differences in value-commitments

Jill Niebrugge-Brantley and Patricia Madoo Lengermann, George Washington University, *Sociology in Crisis – Or Sociology Amidst Crisis? – Sociology Versus the Florida Board of Education*

Provide an overview of the Section’s programmatic activities outside of the Annual Meeting (e.g. webinars, networking events, mentoring initiatives, resources for dissemination) and include explanation of this programming meets the goals and values of the Section.

Outside of the Annual Meeting our main activity was limited to periodic communications via the list-serve. At the Council meeting in Chicago we discussed possibilities for a mini-conference or symposium that would enable additional opportunities for scholarly exchange. We came to no resolution about how to pursue this goal, but we see it as being closely connected to our fundraising and member recruitment goals. This is something we plan to continue discussing, with hope that we will arrive at a model that is financially feasible and easy to replicate from one year to the next.