

SexualitiesNews

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION SECTION ON THE SOCIOLOGY OF SEXUALITIES

Statement by the Chair

Greetings Sexualities Members! It has been an exciting spring!

In April, I was in Des Moines, Iowa for the Midwest Sociological Society's Annual Meeting when the announcement came that the Iowa Supreme Court struck down the state's gay marriage ban. At the celebration rally in downtown Des Moines, speakers cited Iowa's history of being a bellwether state on civil rights issues. Their remarks seemed prescient. A few days later in April, Vermont legalized same-sex marriage (in addition to its previous civil union laws), in May, the state of Maine legalized gay marriage, followed by New Hampshire in June. Hopefully a trend for equal rights for same-sex partners is gaining momentum in the United States.

We'll have time to share our collective thoughts on these and other sexuality-related developments at the ASA Annual Meeting in San Francisco. We have five fascinating sessions this year that all in some way ask us to think about sexuality studies at a macro-level. Eve Ilana Shapiro and Bernadette Barton have organized a session on Sexuality, Community and Social Change. We have two co-sponsored sessions this year. Salvador Vidal-Ortiz has put together a panel on Transnational Genders and Sexualities in Religious Contexts that is co-sponsored by the Transnational Caucus. Kristen Schilt and Tey Meadow have organized a session on Gender, Sexuality and the State which is co-sponsored by the Sex and Gender Section. Prostitution in the post-industrial age will be discussed during our Author-Meets-Critics session featuring Elizabeth Bernstein and her book *Temporarily Yours: Intimacy, Authenticity and the Commerce of Sex*. Finally, Alison Better, Dana Berkowitz and Reese Kelly have done a superb job of organizing our Section Roundtables. I'd like to thank the Program Committee for their work in putting together an outstanding set of panels.

In addition to the Sexualities Section program, our Section is also helping to support a one-day conference on August 7th in San Francisco. The conference, *Marking 20 Years of AIDS in Sociology: Reflecting Back & Moving Forward*, is sponsored by the Sociologists' AIDS Network (SAN). For more information or to register, please go to: <http://www.sociologistsaidsnetwork.org/>

Be sure to join us for the Sexualities Section Reception on Monday, August 10th from 6:30-8:30pm at San Francisco's GLBT Historical Society Museum in the exhibition space of "Passionate Struggle: Dynamics of San Francisco's GLBT History." Thank you to James Dean and the San Francisco-based reception committee for their efforts.

Congratulations to this year's awards winners (Catherine Connell, Edward Laumann, C. Shawn McGuffey, and Anthony Christian Ocampo) We are proud to have you represent our section through your outstanding scholarship. I'd also like to congratulate our newly elected officers – Mary Bernstein, Juan Battle, Ann Meier, Catherine Connell and Maura Kelly. Your service to the Section is invaluable.

Thank-you to the Sexualities Council members for their advice and efforts in supporting our section. It has been a rewarding year for me as chair of the section and I'm grateful for the cohesiveness and supportiveness of this organization.

Best wishes,

Nancy L. Fischer, Augsburg College, Minneapolis

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Sexualities Section Reception
Monday, August 10th, 6:30-8:30pm
San Francisco GLBT Historical Society Museum, Castro District
499 Castro Street, at 18th

We will be able to enjoy the exhibition “Passionate Struggle: Dynamics of San Francisco’s GLBT History” and we’ll learn about the GLBT Historical Society’s rich research archives. Please come for food, drinks, and to celebrate our awards recipients and our section.

Mass Transit Directions: From San Francisco Hilton, walk to the intersection of Market Street and Powell Street to the Metro Powell MUNI Station. Take the Castro Shuttle, K, L, or M MUNI lines (outward bound, heading southwest) to the Castro Street Station. Walk one block south to 18th Street to 499 Castro.

Steven Epstein, recipient of the ASA’s 2009 Distinguished Book Award

The Section would like to congratulate Sexualities Section Council member Steven Epstein on receiving the American Sociological Association’s 2009 Distinguished Book Award for *Inclusion: The Politics of Difference in Medical Research* (University of Chicago Press, 2007). *Inclusion: The Politics of Difference in Medical Research* is about the social implications of medical science trying to diversify its population of research subjects. While new inclusive research practices are meant to aid underserved groups, efforts on recruiting and maintaining minority subjects have distracted medical science from the enormous inequalities in medicine and health care that are *socially*, not biologically caused.

Epstein will accept the book award at the ASA awards ceremony in San Francisco on Sunday, August 9th at 4:30pm, following the formal address of ASA president Patricia Hill Collins.

Key Dates

August 7, 2009: Sociologists’ AIDS Network (SAN) Conference, San Francisco, CA.

August 8-11, 2009: “The New Politics of Community,” the 104th ASA annual meeting, San Francisco, CA.

December 15, 2009: submission deadline for the Winter 2010 issue of *SexualitiesNews*.

March 18-21, 2010: Eastern Sociological Society meeting, Cambridge, MA (submission deadline: 10/15/09)

April 8-11, 2010: Pacific Sociological Association meeting: Oakland, CA. (submission deadline: 10/15/09)

Have Something to Say?

Submit your brief announcements, 500-word essays, reviews, letters, art or photos for the next issue of *SexualitiesNews* to: Bayliss J. Camp, bayliss.camp@csus.edu, Dept. of Sociology, CSU Sacramento, 6000 J St., Sacramento, CA 95819 Fax (916) 278-6281

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 supports from the ASA, including funding for information dissemination and a guaranteed number of paper sessions at the annual conference.

In short, we believe it is in the best interests of the discipline of sociology to advance the sociological study of sexuality. One way to promote this goal is to support the... "Sociology of Sexualities" as an ASA section and to encourage you to join... when you renew your membership in the ASA.

Text written by Steve Seidman, Gil Zicklin, and Mark Hager

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.

Officers for 2009-10

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Sociologists' AIDS Network (SAN) Conference (San Francisco, August 7 2009)

In commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the first major ASA panel on HIV/AIDS, SAN is holding a one day conference on Friday, August 7th 2009, entitled "Marking 20 Years of AIDS in Sociology: Reflecting Back & Moving Forward". The conference is an opportunity for sociologists of HIV/AIDS and interested others (sociologists and non-sociologists alike) to reflect on work in our field, contemplate new directions, and appreciate one another's work. The mini-conference will also include talks by local and national activists, meetings with HIV researchers from a variety of fields, and presentations by federal agency representatives regarding prospects for HIV/AIDS research in the new administration. We view this as an important opportunity to enhance research networks among sociologists of HIV/AIDS, chart future possibilities for the field, and draw new scholars into HIV/AIDS research. Whether you are well-established in HIV-related work, new to the field, or just interest in exploring this area of sociology, please join us! The conference is sponsored by the ASA Sections on Medical Sociology and Sexualities, the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, and the Sociologists AIDS Network.

For more information, visit <http://www.sociologistsaidsnetwork.org/> or contact **Tasleem Padamsee** at: padamsee.1@osu.edu.

Sociology of Sexualities Section Awards Winners for 2009

2009 Simon-Gagnon Award

The Simon and Gagnon Award honors career contributions to the study of sexualities as represented by a body of work or a single book. This award commemorates decades of research and writing on sexualities by Professor William Simon (University of Houston) who died on July 21, 2000, and his longtime collaborator, Professor John Gagnon (SUNY-Stony Brook).

2009 Honoree: **Edward O. Laumann, George Herbert Mead Distinguished Service Professor of Sociology and the College, University of Chicago**

2009 Distinguished Article Award

C. Shawn McGuffey (Boston College) for “‘Saving Masculinity:’ Gender Reaffirmation, Sexuality, Race, and Parental Responses to Male Child Sexual Abuse” in *Social Problems*, 55(2) (May 2008): 216-237.

Martin P. Levine Memorial Dissertation Fellowship

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.

2009 Winner:

Catherine Connell (University of Texas – Austin)

Title: “School's Out: Workplace Sexuality as Demonstrated through the Experience of LGBT Teachers.”

Honorable Mention:

Thomas John Waidzunus (UC – San Diego)

Title: “Drawing the Straight Line: Hierarchies of Evidence in Sexual Reorientation Therapy Debates.”

Best Graduate Student Paper

This award is given to a paper authored by a student currently enrolled in a sociology graduate program. A paper may be co-authored by two or more students who would share the award (papers co-authored with faculty are not eligible).

2009 Recipient:

Anthony Christian Ocampo (UCLA) for “Making Masculinity: Negotiations of Gender Presentation among Latino Men.”

Honorable Mention:

Catherine Connell (University of Texas – Austin) for “Dangerous Disclosures: How Occupational Context Shapes Gay and Lesbian Teachers' Presentations of Self.”

Please join us in congratulating all of the honorees at the annual reception:

Monday, August 10th, 6:30-8:30pm

San Francisco GLBT Historical Society Museum, 499 Castro St., at 18th

2009 ASA Meeting, Sexualities Section Activities

NOTE: Please check the final ASA program schedule for the specific room locations of various sessions.

Sunday, August 9th:

8:30 – 10:10 a.m.: Regular Session, Sociology of Sexuality (Hilton)

Organizer and Presider: Amy T. Schalet (University of Massachusetts at Amherst)
Elizabeth A. Armstrong (Indiana University), Paula England (Stanford), and Alison Carol Kaplan Fogarty (Stanford): “Determinants of Women’s Orgasm in College Hookups and Relationships.”
Thomas John Waidzunas (UC-San Diego): “Drawing the Straight Line: Hierarchies of Evidence across Social Worlds in Homosexuality Conversion Therapy Debates.”
Koji Ueno (Florida State University): “Sociodemographic Backgrounds, Family and School Contexts, and Patterns of Same-Sex Experience Between Adolescence and Young Adulthood.”
Orit Avishai (Fordham): “What to Do with the Problem of the Flesh? Negotiating Orthodox Jewish Heterosexuality.”

Monday, August 10th:

4:30-6:10 p.m. Paper Session: Sexuality, Community and Social Change (Hilton)

Organizers: Eve Ilana Shapiro (Westfield State College) & Bernadette Barton (Morehead State)
Presider: Amy L. Stone (Trinity University)
Chong-suk Han (Temple): “I Know a Lot of Gay Asian Men Who are Actually Tops.”
Aho Tabatabai (University of Cincinnati): “Protecting the Lesbian Border: The Tension Between Individual and Communal Authenticity”
Jane Ward (UC-Riverside): “Sex Without Meaning: Necessary, Accidental, and False Homosexualities.”

6:30-8:30 p.m.: Section on Sexualities Reception

San Francisco GLBT Historical Society Museum

499 Castro Street, at 18th Street: see <http://www.glbthistory.org>

Tuesday, August 11th:

8:30-10:10 a.m. Paper Session: Transnational Gender and Sexualities in Religious Contexts (co-sponsored by the Transnational Caucus) (Hilton)

Organizer and Presider: Salvador Vidal-Ortiz (American University)
Bandana Purkayastha (University of Connecticut) “Imagined and Real Humans: Gender, Sexuality, and Hinduism.”
Sandra Lynn Barnes (Vanderbilt) “Black Mega Church Responses to HIV/AIDS in Africa: Implications for Inclusive Ministry.”
Joshua Love (Metropolitan Community Churches Global HIV/AIDS Ministry) “Fractured Faith/Uncommon Hope: Queer Theology, AIDS And The Church.”
Jodi OBrien (Seattle University) “How Big is Your God?”

10:30-12:10 p.m. Invited Session: Gender, Sexuality and the State (Co-sponsored by the Section on Sex and Gender Section) (Hilton)

Organizers: Kristen Schilt (University of Chicago) and Tey Meadow (NYU)
Presider: Judith Stacey (NYU)
Jyoti Puri (Simmons College) “Sexual States: Theorizing the conjunctions of sexuality and state.”
Ashley Currier (Texas A&M) “Homosexuality ‘Never Happened before Independence’: Political Homophobia in Postcolonial Namibia.”
Tey Meadow (NYU) “The State of Sex: Cultural Logics of Legal Gender Classifications.”
Mary Bernstein (University of Connecticut) and Nancy A. Naples (University of Connecticut) “A Queer State of Affairs: Relationship Recognition Policies in Comparative Perspective.”

Tuesday, August 11th (cont.)

12:30 -2:10 p.m. Author Meets Critics: *Temporarily Yours: Intimacy, Authenticity and the Commerce of Sex* (University of Chicago Press, 2007) by Elizabeth Bernstein (Hilton)

Organizer and Presider: Nancy L. Fischer (Augsburg College)

Featured Author: Elizabeth Bernstein (Barnard)

Critics: Nicola K. Beisel (Northwestern), Wendy Chapkis (University of Southern Maine), Steven G. Epstein (Northwestern), and Arlene J. Stein (Rutgers)

2:30-3:30 p.m.: Refereed Roundtables (Hilton)

Organizers: Alison Better (Brandeis), Dana Berkowitz (LSU), and Resse Carey Kelly (SUNY-Albany)

Topics: Bodies; Gendered Sexualities; Film and Media; the Life Course; Medicalization, Medicine and Health; Race, Class, Gender and Sexuality; Theorizing Sexualities, the Nation-State and Transnationalism.

3:30 a.m.-4:10 p.m.: Business Meeting (Hilton, same room as roundtable session). Please attend and share your thoughts about the coming year in the life of the Sexualities Section.)

2009 ASA Annual Meeting, Other Sessions of Interest

NOTE: please check the final ASA program for specific room locations.

Saturday, August 8th

8:30-10:10 a.m.

Regular Session. Sex at Work (Parc 55)

4:30: 6:10 p.m.

Regular Session. Sexual Citizenship (Parc 55)

Sunday, August 9th

10:30 a.m. – 12:10 p.m.:

Presidential Panel. Through the Lens of Gender, Race, Sexuality and Class: The Obama Family and the American Dream (Hilton)

Regular Session. Identity Matters: Making LGBT Genders and Sexualities Visible (Parc 55)

Thematic Session. Globalization and Sexual Communities: Queer Tourism, Migration, and Sex Cultures (Parc 55)

12:30 – 2:10 p.m.:

Regional Spotlight Session. Migration and Shifting Sexualities among Latinos/as in California: Implications for HIV (co-sponsored with the Sociologists AIDS Network) (Hilton)

Regular Session. Marriage, Civil Unions, and Cohabitation (Parc 55)

2:30-4:10 p.m.:

Regional Spotlight Session. Queer Organizing in the New Millennium (Hilton)

Thematic Session. Feminism(s) 2.0: Gender, Sexuality, Race, and Community in Cyberspace (Parc 55)

Thematic Session. Sexual Communities/Sexual Politics (Parc 55)

4:30 – 6:10 p.m.:

Regional Spotlight Session. Same Sex Marriage in California (Hilton)

Monday, August 10th

8:30-10:10 a.m.

Thematic Session. Community Responses to AIDS: Looking Back/Looking Forward in Some Hard-hit Locales (Hilton)

Film Review: *No Dumb Questions*

The documentary film by Melissa Regan, *No Dumb Questions* deals with the taboo topic in society and the growing issue in academia of transgenders. Addressing the change Uncle Bill is ready to undertake to be Aunt Barbara, the 24 minute documentary focuses on the perspective of his three nieces and how they come to understand this experience. The girls talk about their reactions, perspectives, and, in relation to the title, their questions as they are first informed about the choice and then again with his eventual visit.

The documentary, as a resource in academia and sociology in particular, I review from three different reference points. As a source of academic knowledge, the documentary is limited, offering no experts to explicate ideas, nor references to statistics, definitions or related sociological concepts. The conceptual connections that can be gleaned from the video will derive from a viewer's own recognition of sociological concepts and social issues, such as the separation between sexuality and gender, as Aunt Barbara is going to be a woman who is attracted to, and in a relationship with another woman. As his brother succinctly shares, "I think...my brother is a lesbian." (Although more theoretical, Monro's (2007) article engages the binary discussion surrounding gender, sex, and sexuality in relation to transgender studies.)

This limitation of its use as an academic reference is minor in terms of the utility of the documentary in an educational setting. The documentary is an excellent tool for developing discussions in the classroom, which can focus on people's personal experiences and/or difficulties in dealing with such social issues by drawing on the niece's questions. The documentary can also generate, as with the quote above about sexuality, an opportunity to engage larger sociological issues, such as the differentiation between sexuality, gender identity and gender. These opportunities exist throughout the video, allowing for consistent references throughout a class, and not limited to the section of the class during which it is shown.

Beyond discussion promotion, the documentary offers numerous examples to help identify sociological concepts, with a strong reference toward socialization, identity formation, and child development. As is documented throughout the video, each daughter has a different response to their Uncle's decision, allowing for references of identity, and gender identity development among the kids. For example, the youngest had no problem with her uncle, even wondering if Aunt Barbara would want to paint her nails with her, displaying her understanding of gender identity as more fluid and changing, as opposed to her sisters who struggled more with the change, referencing more structured notions about gender. The video consistently offers opportunities to identify examples that help students understand difficult social concepts, including referencing behaviors as examples of "doing gender," a prominent issue in the lives of transgender individuals. (Gagne and Tewksbury (1999) engage the connection between "doing gender" and transgender in an older, but relevant article.)

Ultimately, the documentary presents a realistic perspective through a lived experience, which helps to contextualize the issues surrounding transgender individuals and their experiences (Davidson (2006) offers an interesting discussion surrounding the term of transgender). It also helps to generate discussion beyond the experiences of the transgender community. Initiating discussions and offering examples, establishes this video as a useful tool within classroom settings, or any other venue in which education occurs.

Todd Migliaccio
6/2/09

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Todd Migliaccio is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at CSU-Sacramento.

Announcements

In Memoriam

Dr. John Vincke of the University of Ghent died on May 27 after a long struggle against a very aggressive sarcoma cancer. Dr. Vincke was a sociologist and Dean of the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences at Ghent, and the author of over 40 articles on gay life in Belgium, on HIV, and social stress and homophobia. He was 53. He decided to stop the fight and chose euthanasia. He died in the presence of his spouse, parents and some close friends. He will be missed by all of us who knew his smiling presence and boyish charm at many sociology conferences and LGBT Caucus events over the years.

Kudos!

...to Rebecca Plante (Ithaca College) and Lis Maurer (The Center for LGBT Education, Outreach, and Services at Ithaca College), on the publication of their new edited collection: *Doing Gender Diversity: Readings in Theory and Real-World Experience* (Plante and Maurer, eds.). Westview Press.

...and to Reese Kelly (SUNY-Albany), upon receipt of a 2009 Woodrow Wilson Women's Studies Dissertation Research Fellowship, for a thesis project titled "Borders That Matter: Trans Identity Management."

...and to Kristen Barber (University of Southern California) upon her receipt of the Pacific Sociological Association's 2009 Distinguished Graduate Student Paper, for: "'Pretend You're Talking to a Caveman': Maintaining Masculinity in Cross-Gender Research."

...and to Nicole C. (Nikki) Raeburn, Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of San Francisco, who received the first annual Outstanding Faculty Award for LGBTQ Issues, in recognition of her scholarship and contributions to the community.

Call for Participants

Alison Moss (University of Illinois – Chicago) is looking for participants in a "gathering of oral histories" research project on the experiences and life histories of married bisexual women. For more information, please contact Alison at: amoss4@uic.edu or 269-357-3329.

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