

Teaching/Learning Matters

ASA's Newsletter for the



Section On Teaching &
Learning In Sociology

Volume 35, Number 1
Summer 2006

SECTION CHAIR'S CORNER

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Good News All Around!

Greetings to all! Let me begin with the good news that our section membership is now 628! I am a quantitative and qualitative girl myself-- the number of section members and their dedication and skill bode well for our future. Thank you for your sustained and sustaining support, as well as for the encouragement many of you gave to colleagues who joined. Please keep section membership in mind as a gift for graduate students and continue your promotion of the work of teaching and learning to new and long-time colleagues. If you teach, you belong. The door is always open.

In addition, I hope you have found this newsletter to be of value as a member of the Section. Its quality reflects well on the section. We continue to search for ways to keep you connected to the Section and welcome any ideas that you have found valuable in other venues. One thing I encourage is connecting with Section members at regional meetings. Not everyone can travel yearly to national meetings, thus I think we should consider opportunities for bringing section members together at Midwest, Southern, Pacific, North Central, and Eastern meetings. as well as state meetings when appropriate. It could be a casual dinner or lunch coordinated through our list serve, promotion of membership at the regionals, and making sure we send the annual meeting "free gifts" to the local sites. Let me know what you think and how that might work.

The Annual Meetings

While I am rarely inspired by the Weberian bureaucratic aspects of much of life, these past couple

of months have highlighted the exciting parts of serving the Section as Chair. First, working closely with Chair-elect John Zipp as he prepares a strong program for the annual meeting continues to be a pleasure. If you are attending in Montreal, please join us as much as your schedule allows; in particular we hope to see you at the Joint Reception on Sunday evening—we haven't done this type of event for awhile and hope the section members will see it as a good opportunity. In addition to food, cash bar (yeah...just like your cousin's wedding), and great colleagues, we will have some book giveaways and a chance to highlight our shared commitments with the Section on Education. Thanks again to Keith Roberts and colleagues for the initiative to make this happen.

Second, lots of good news abounds in awards and new council members. The downside is that Wava Haney and her nominations committee did such an excellent job putting together the slate of candidates, it was difficult not to have them all win. We have terrific colleagues and I thank everyone for their willingness to run. Our new Chair-elect is Susan Farrell; our 2 year representative is Darlaine Gardetto; our 4 year representative is Marion Hughes; our University

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Representative is Maxine P. Atkinson; and our Secretary-Treasurer is Kathleen Tiemann. Many thanks go to the outgoing Council members who will be highlighted in our fall newsletter. I become nominations chair after the meetings and welcome names for consideration for the next election.

Bernice Pescosolido is the 2006 winner of the Hans Mauksch Award given by the Section. Congratulations! And, long time section member and current Council representative Kathleen McKinney has won the ASA Distinguished Contributions to Teaching Award—a well deserved, career achievement. We will be celebrating all this good news over the next few months. Greg Weiss, the 2005 Hans Mauksch Award winner, will be giving his talk on Section Day, "A Pedagogical Boomerang: From Hans Mauksch to Medicine to the Teaching and Learning of Sociology".

In closing, I'd like to once again pass along an idea regarding effective teaching and learning. I'd recommend to you Stephen Brookfield's 2005 book *The Power of Critical Theory: Liberating Adult Learning and Teaching* Jossey Bass. It is a very sociological book in many ways (e.g. chapter titles like "Contesting Hegemony" ;-)) lucidly written and very relevant for teaching practice.

Hope summer is being kind to you and I look forward to connecting sometime in the future.

Diane Pike – Section Chair 05-06

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EDITOR'S NOTE

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The section newsletter serves section members in several ways. The first (and most obvious) way in which it serves members is by providing information relevant to our professional lives in terms of teaching, research, and scholarship. The second way the newsletter serves section members is by providing information about our personal successes as well as items about different opportunities available to us. The final way the newsletter serves the section is to encourage and facilitate dialogue among section members concerning our teaching and research.

In this issue of the newsletter we continue to accomplish these goals by welcoming Carol Jenkins' SoTL submission as she inaugurates her tenure as column author. Additionally, this issue contains detailed information about the upcoming national ASA meetings in Montreal in August. Finally, a dialogue concerning the future direction of the section is found in two responses to Monte Bute's column from the last issue of the newsletter as well as his compelling call for change.

Finally – my on-going plea to all readers – contact me with any ideas for teaching tips, possible regular columns, personal and professional news, and any other suggestions or ideas. The section's Publications Committee's goal is to make this newsletter the best one of all the ASA sections. We cannot accomplish this without your input, ideas, suggestions, and most importantly, submissions!

See you in Montreal!

SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

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Editor's Note: It is with great pleasure that I present Carol Jenkins' inaugural column as the author of the SoTL column which is now in its third year!

Infusing Rural Sociology into Introductory Classes: Current Challenges

A long-standing concern in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning literature and practice has been to distinguish between good teaching, scholarly teaching and the scholarship of teaching and learning (McKinney 2004, Shulman 2000, Bass 1999). The focus has been to encourage a transition from developing and documenting effective pedagogical techniques to systematic reflection on teaching and student learning and then assessing the extent to which student learning actually occurs. Few current SoTL discussions reference content validity and reliability in textbooks and other instructional resources as significant variables in pedagogical effectiveness and student learning. In this column, I examine whether meaningful student learning in "Introduction to Sociology" courses can occur given that the knowledge represented in introductory texts and resources is often incomplete and unrepresentative of all aspects of American life. What are the implications for teaching and learning when such course materials are used?

A key liberal learning goal in Sociology is to enable students to develop the knowledge and attitudes needed to understand the internal diversities of American society as well as skills needed to function in a pluralistic society. McKinney, et al. (2004) identify key learning outcomes as the ability to demonstrate the inter-relatedness and significance of social differentiations; to describe the domestic and global significance of those variations; and to use insights and perspectives of Sociology to understand how societal and structural factors influence individual behavior. Further, with critical thinking as a valued learning outcome for sociology students, it becomes ethically imperative that instructors also think critically about the knowledge and analyses they present to students. As we all know, textbooks and instructional

resources are used to introduce learners to current scholarship, ideas, and ideals of a given discipline and they do play a role in influencing the types of knowledge and attitudes students acquire. The wider the distribution of a textbook, the more influence the text is likely to have on educators and learners.

Many of us recall the struggles in legitimizing and the successful inclusion of race-class-gender in introductory texts. However, there is another key diversity variable that remains systematically absent from text narratives: geographic location, especially rural. As a part of a 2005-2006 Maricopa Institute for Learning Fellowship in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (Maricopa County Community College District-Arizona), my project goal was to document the need to broaden the notion of "diversity in American life" to include regional and rural diversities. I conducted textbook reviews as well as developed culturally responsive pedagogies, student inventories, an analytical writing exercise, curriculum materials and assessment of student learning. A content analysis of selected introductory sociology textbooks ascertained the nature and extent of coverage about American rural life. Two inventories assessed the extent of student familiarity with American rural life and rural issues. An analytical writing exercise (critical film review) assessed the extent of student mastery of selected sociological concepts, inter-group processes, explanatory theories, and applications to everyday life. As anticipated, student understanding of the influence of geographic location on an individual's life chances, the diversities and complexities of American rural life, and the impact of multiculturalism on rural community sustainability were significantly enhanced with emphasis on such issues.

I continue to encounter students, and as well as colleagues, who have a limited familiarity with, let alone an awareness that some places in the United States are not considered "diverse", "multicultural" or "heterogeneous." Most sociologists theorize and study issues of race, class, gender, sexuality, (dis)ability, homelessness, age, crime, migration, and other social problems or interactions as if they were typical of urban settings only. Texts and resource materials used in Sociology undergraduate classes seldom address the characteristics and problems of rural communities and social groups in general, let alone diversity issues specifically (Jenkins and Rakowski 2000).

Diversity issues are not exclusive to urban settings. America is diverse in many ways. Overall, current textbooks, especially introductory sociology texts, give much more attention to urban life than to either rural-urban interfaces or the diversities and complexities of

rural life. The nature and extent of coverage of American rural life is unrepresentative and problematic. Rural life is often portrayed as insulated traditional homogenous communities. Rural complexities and diversities are virtually ignored. If included at all, these concerns remain marginalized, rather than finding their way into the narrative.

Students surveyed during my project term tended to believe that diversity and multiculturalism belong to urban areas and to places with large minority populations. How would their world view about rural diversities been changed if they were taught that while America is predominantly an urban society, rural people and communities continue to play important social, economic, and political roles in the nation's life (Brown and Swanson 2005). While the 2000 Census shows that eight out of every ten Americans live in urban areas, *over fifty-six million* persons reside in rural communities (Johnson 2005). According to the Population Reference Bureau (2000), this exceeds the total population of all but twenty-two of the world's two hundred nation-states. So while rural people make up a minority of the U.S. population, they are a very *large* minority (Brown and Swanson 2005).

How would student understanding be broadened if they became aware that it is migration that now drives demographic change in rural America and that there are significant demographic and social trends that are transforming the ethnic makeup and climate in rural America – including awareness of and attitudes toward an increasingly multicultural rural population (Johnson, 2005). There are also significant changes in rural America's racial and ethnic composition. Moreover, there is a continuing impoverishment of a disproportionate share of rural African Americans (Harris and Worthen 2005), American Indians (Gonzales 2005), and Latinos (Saenz and Torres 2005).

Current introductory texts do not provide students the opportunity to learn that rural areas are very diverse and complex. While the ideal is inclusion, the reality is that an important segment of the American population continues to be systematically excluded from discourse and analyses. While we all should be concerned, the unrepresentative coverage is consistent with the lack of inclusion of rural diversities in the general sociology literature. Without significant revision, texts will continue to promote hegemonic groups in American society and marginalize the role and perspectives of diverse rural groupings.

With regard to sociology introductory textbooks, why are these systematic analyses continually absent? Perhaps the real question: How and to what extent is an intellectually honest and representative

presentation of American life important to authors, publishers, and adopters of introductory textbooks? Regardless of one's view there are implications for teaching, learning and the scholarship of teaching and learning. Broadening the concept of "diversity" to include geographic location (especially rural) and a more representative analysis of American societal life is urgently needed in instructional resources.

If you would like to begin or continue to infuse rural diversities into your course and curriculum the Jenkins/Rakowski resource manual is available for purchase through the ASA-TRC. The strengths of this resource include over 300 annotated citations referencing "diversities in rural life" and a wonderful article by Jan and Cornelia Butler Flora discussing an historical overview of race – class – gender in American rural life. Other helpful resources include Brown/Brown (2005) *Challenges for Rural America in the Twenty-first Century* and Flora/Flora (2004) *Rural Communities: Legacy and Change* (2nd edition).

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PEDAGOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE PERSPECTIVE

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Editor's Note: I am grateful to Susan St. John-Jarvis for inaugurating a column dedicated to examining teaching, and teaching-related, issues from the perspective of community college instructors.

Service Learning: An Interdisciplinary Option for the Community College

At Corning Community College, a rural campus in Upstate New York, I have committed service-learning as a component of my course curricula. In the past, I have embedded service-learning in courses by requiring students to participate in the Veterans History Project which required students to use qualitative research skills. Recently, I proposed and taught the *first* stand alone service-learning course on our campus. As a sociologist, I have felt that civic engagement should be part of college education and should be available for all students not simply as part of social science curricula.

Service-learning emerged as a university movement in the 1980s with the creation of the Campus Compact, a national coalition of three major university presidents who envisioned civic and social responsibility as an essential component of higher education (<http://www.compact.org/about/history>). By the mid-90s, about 300 college and university presidents had joined Campus Compact (Myers-Lipton 1998). In 2002, with funding from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, Campus Compact focused attention on service-learning within the unique structure of community colleges (Zlotkowski 2004).

According to the Community College National Center for Community Engagement, *service-learning* is a teaching methodology that "combines community service with academic instruction as it focuses on critical, reflective thinking and civic responsibility" (Campus Compact 2003). It is credit-bearing and educational, rather than solely volunteering to fulfill a course requirement. Volunteering is a requirement of many campus organizations including the Phi Theta Kappa, a national community college honor society. However, volunteering differs from *service-learning*, which links newly acquired college learning with community work that includes planning, evaluation, and structured reflection. Few colleges report having stand alone credit for service-learning courses (Zlotkowski 2004), although over 1,100 community college campuses nationally claim to have some form of service-learning education in place or are planning for it (Zlotkowski 2004).

My passionate pursuit of service-learning stems from three concerns I have as a teacher. First, recent survey research has repeatedly demonstrated that we are at an all-time low in youth political engagement (Battistoni 2003). In spite of tremendous efforts to engage young adults, even basic voter participation is low, a point often made in the introductory sociology curriculum. Students often express little faith in the political process and doubt their ability to influence it.

Secondly, community college students, who are likely less affluent than their university counterparts, avoid valuable internship experiences to take "McJobs" at minimum wage. Students usually commute and struggle to support themselves, their cars, and, often, their dependents (children or aging parents). Besides educational loans, many students have substantial credit card debt. Individual materialism and consumerism is increasing among young adults (Myers-Lipton 1998).

Third, collaboration among faculty and community groups for the greater good is especially fitting for community college sociologists, who may be the only

sociologist in their departments or on their campuses. Service-learning across disciplines meets the invitation of *public sociology* to work collaboratively to better our communities. It seeks to involve students and faculty who may have little exposure to the collective benefit of the social action. In addition, civic engagement is not optional in this country but necessary in order to maintain a democratic and humanitarian way of life.

For the one-credit course in Service-Learning (INDI 1000, INDI refers to Interdisciplinary), I required weekly class meetings over seven weeks, two 3-page structured reflection papers, 20 hours of volunteer service, and a final exam. There were additional assigned readings, self-evaluations, assessments, and training for volunteering. As a part of the course, eleven students and I identified three areas of need in the local community: the City of Corning (building structure identification for historical preservation), the local Salvation Army (Kids Club, after school program), and a political campaign. I also often worked along with students so we could help keep individualized learning goals in mind.

Each student identified a recent or current course to link to the service-learning experience. One student planned to be a psychologist. Based on learning in a child psychology course, she helped develop and lead five lessons in social awareness for middle-childhood girls. Another student was taking his first digital photography course. He photographed building structures for documentation and for building structure training sessions. He also documented several service learning activities for the class Web Site.

At the end of the course, students wrote letters describing the service-learning experience. One student, a former factory worker who was taking his first business courses, wrote his first Letter to the Editor of a local newspaper, and saw it published! Through the course, which was recommended to him by his counselor in the Business Division, he used business writing skills, organized and managed a work team, and gave an oral report on his project. Since sociology courses were not part of his vocational business program, this course gave him the opportunity to develop a sociological imagination and civic involvement.

Does a service-learning requirement lead to greater civic engagement? A comprehensive university study indicates that linking academic skills to community service which included organized reflection does transform student attitudes regarding civic engagement positively (Myers-Lipton 1998). Students can learn that they are agents in creating a culture of meaningful civic engagement. It was very surprising

for my students in this predominately white community to discover that about half the children in the Kids Club program were non-white.

I further discovered that an important value of service-learning may not be simply for the students, but it may be in developing community partners. Each of our community partners made a presentation to the class and provided training. One community partner gave service learning students preference in summer job hiring.

There were some drawbacks. A couple students felt the course was too demanding for one credit, since they really wanted credit for volunteering. Several students reported that they wished for a greater variety of worksites. However, I found three worksites just manageable as a faculty member. There is no doubt that service-learning is very time consuming for faculty. However, this should not discourage faculty from teaching these courses. Since most community colleges require faculty to perform community service as a requirement for promotion, I felt the extra time involved was well worth it, especially if you considered the student outcomes.

In the future, I hope the interdisciplinary nature of INDI 1000 will encourage faculty collaboration. While service-learning embedded in courses is popular, I will continue to advocate for stand alone service-learning credit. For community college faculty, it promotes collaboration across disciplines and, with the open-door admission policy of most community colleges; it introduces civic engagement to students who might not be exposed to any sociology offerings.

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Resource listing cont'd on next page

Web Resources

American Association of Community Colleges
www.aacc.nche.edu/servicelearning

Campus Compact – www.compact.org

Community College National Center for Community Engagement – www.mc.maricopa.edu/engagement

PEDAGOGY AND STUDENT LEARNING

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Editor's Note: Katherine Rowell raises compelling questions in her submission – please contact me about submitting a piece that starts to address any of those questions.

What Our Students are Learning in the Hallways: Thinking About Sociological Pedagogy and Informal Learning

I recently gave a "Reflection on Teaching" talk at the North Central Sociological Association Annual Meeting in March of 2006 in Indianapolis. In that paper, I suggest that sociologists need to take a close look at the literature on "informal learning" and that we should begin systematically researching the importance of informal learning in helping our students learn sociology (Paper is forthcoming in August edition of *Sociological Focus*). I have discovered that much of what my students learn about sociology has less to do with what happens in the classroom and more about what happens outside the classroom. Other disciplines including nursing, psychology, and business have been discussing this for quite some time and it is surprising to realize the discipline that has both the theories and the methods to understand and analyze informal learning has remained mostly silent on the topic. My recent analysis of our disciplines' premiere journal on teaching revealed that only one article even asked the question. The purpose of this column is to encourage a dialogue, as well as research, concerning the role and impact of informal learning in the sociology classroom.

So, what is meant by the term informal learning? Well, that depends on who you ask. For this article, I am going to focus on what the field of business/training is doing with this topic. In the world of business, the term has gained much popularity and you will find

numerous websites, books, and journal articles on informal learning. All the academic research in business and economics on the topic suggests that 70 to 80% of what people learn about their job is from informal learning not from formal training (Lowenstein and Spetzer 1999). I wonder how much our students learn about sociology is informal.

Marcia Conner, a columnist for *Fast Company* and co-editor of *Creating a Learning Culture* (Conner and Clawson 2004), states, "Most learning doesn't occur during formal training programs. It happens through processes not structured or sponsored by an employer or a school. Informal learning is the term I use to describe what happens the rest of the time. In order to truly differentiate between formal and informal, I also find it valuable to examine what is learned intentionally or accidentally." (Conner 2005) She goes on to differentiate between five types of learning:

"Formal learning includes the hierarchically structured school system that runs from primary school through the university and organized school-like programs created in business for technical and professional training. **Informal learning (sometimes called accidental)** describes a lifelong process whereby individuals acquire attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience and the educative influences and resources in his or her environment, from family and neighbors, from work and play, from the market place, the library and the mass media. **Intentional learning** is the process whereby an individual aims to learn something and goes about achieving that objective. **Accidental learning** happens when in everyday activities an individual learns something that he or she had not intended or expected. **Non-formal learning** is any organized educational activity outside the established formal system whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity intended to serve identifiable learning objectives." (Conner 2005)

While these distinctions are helpful, I do not necessarily agree with her definitions of non-formal learning and of intentional learning. If an activity is associated with clear learning objectives and tied to a course it would be more formal than informal. Service-learning typically takes place outside the classroom and would be closer to formal learning than informal however there are informal elements of service-learning. The difference between informal learning and formal learning is more of a continuum than a dichotomy. Informal learning, for the most part, is the learning that takes place without identifiable learning objectives. In other words, it is the learning that takes place that was not-intended and for the most part unplanned. My guess is that most informal learning

takes place outside the classroom and in interaction with other people. I do think informal learning for students could even take place in the classroom. For example, a student may be having a conversation with another student and learn something very important about sociology.

I also have come to realize that the "informal" relationships (it is debatable to what extent they are really informal) that I have with my students outside the classroom are very important in increasing informal learning. For example, students often note that they learn a lot about sociology by just reading the posters in my office or examining the titles of the books on my bookshelves. At the end of all my courses, I often go out to dinner at some type of ethnic restaurant with the entire class. A former student recently wrote me to explain that this experience increased his curiosity about other cultures and led him to pursue a degree in international communication. Again, I had not planned for that meal to have that impact but it turns out he is not the first student to tell me a similar story. Of course, what both of these experiences have helped me understand is the fluid nature of learning and the unpredictability of the impact that we may have. Both of these experiences (there are many others) have caused me to reevaluate the informal and to think about what I do informally that potentially may help a student learn sociology. Over the years I have intentionally made sure that students who visit my office are exposed to as much sociology as possible. I place recent sociological publications on the book shelf students would most likely notice. I make sure that I have posters and quotes by sociologists as well as career information where students can see it.

I do not think this topic is just of interest for understanding how our students learn. It is equally important in understanding how we learn to be teachers. I have been teaching in a college setting for almost twenty years and much of what I learned about teaching was NOT through formal education but rather informal activities. I definitely learned how to live in an academic environment through informal means. I never had a class on how to work in a cubicle, teach five classes a quarter, serve on college committees, work with sometimes difficult colleagues and be a good teacher. If there were such a class I would have been the first in line. I venture to guess that much of what each of us learned about sociology and being a sociology teacher was often through informal means.

Overall, my goal is for this short article to raise more questions than answers. I find that I have many that remained unanswered in our literature. Do office hours really matter? What do students learn about sociology by just sitting down and having coffee in the cafeteria with classmates and teachers? Should we

figure out what impacts our students informally and make efforts to formalize it in order to have a better ability to assess it or should we just let the informal remain informal? Is it even important to know what students learn informally? Could it be they also learn misinformation about sociology through informal means? What about us as teachers and colleagues? Should we just accept the fact that much of what we learn is informal or make efforts to be more formal?

I do not really have a "formal conclusion" to this article. I hope to just start an informal discussion on this issue. What do you think?

Sources (Just a beginning):

Books:

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<http://www.bls.gov/ore/abstract/ec/ec940090.htm>

Internet sources (Be sure to see the reference sections for more readings):

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Cross, Jay. 2003. "Informal Learning the Other 80%."

<http://www.internettime.com/Learning/The%20Other%2080%25.htm>

Smith, Mark. 1999. "Informal Learning."

<http://www.infed.org/biblio/inf-lrn.htm>

Organizations and Other Articles on Informal Learning:

<http://www.informalscience.org/>

<http://www.learningcircuits.org/2000/aug2000/digenti.html>

National Science Foundation Project. 2006. <http://life-slc.org/>

POINT-COUNTERPOINT

Continuing Discussions

The purpose of the "Point-Counterpoint" column is to stimulate thoughtful discussion and future dialogue as well as research concerning issues of interest to section members.

Monte Bute's original Point submission, entitled "From Interest Group to Social Movement, Redux", did indeed stimulate discussion as evidenced by the following two submissions by Kathleen McKinney and Norah Shultz. Additionally, Monte responds to the writers thoughts thereby completing the first round of dialogue.

Please send your ideas for, or submission of, the next Point-Counterpoint dialogue to the editor.

Divide and Conquer?

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I read with great interest Monte Bute's "From Interest Group to Social Movement, Redux," his commentary on the current direction of the Section on Teaching and Learning. I must admit that I consider myself somewhat of a neophyte in the area and yet have strong reactions to this piece connected to my own work and my understanding of the issues faced by faculty at many of our institutions. My reactions are twofold – one side pragmatic and one more conceptual.

Let me begin with a brief personal story in which some of the issues raised by Monte are reflected. In going up for promotion to full professor this past spring as the first administrator in the history of my institution to do so, part of my promotion portfolio included submission of my co-edited volume on teaching diversity classes (Peters-Davis & Shultz 2005), a non-quantitative volume. Part of the discussions concerning my promotion centered on whether the co-edited volume represented scholarship or a collection of "stories."

In our professional lives, we have to make decisions. At times, in order to reach a goal (e.g., getting tenure and/or promotion), we need to work within the system. As a tenured faculty member I can afford to take "risks" in terms of the work I choose to do. But a junior person's scholarship would need, at my institution, to fit within the very type of research agendas that Monte feels have dismantled the social movement. We, as a group of whatever name, risk losing our best and our brightest if this sort of work continues to be devalued and then we reject those who choose, for whatever reason, to follow a more traditional research agenda.

It is not just within my university nor within sociology that there is a struggle to recognize teaching and learning as an area of scholarship that is to not only be rewarded, but recognized, appreciated and ultimately implemented. In this battle for recognition we fight

against the long standing trend of only accepting classic positivist methodology as producing "real findings." This flies in the face of our understanding that the study of learning is grounded in a constructivist view focused on meaning. The opening to a recent piece by Huber and Hutchings (2006) reflects not only the potential transformative nature of our work, but also, the need for institutional acceptance: *The scholarship of teaching and learning . . . has the potential to transform higher education by making the private work of the classroom visible, talked about studied, built upon, and valued, - conditions for ongoing improvement in any enterprise. . . . To be sure, considerable work must still be done to bring institutional work on teaching and learning.* " (pp. 25-26) The authors go on to discuss the work that is going on, the meetings that are taking place, the transformations that are happening.

I therefore find myself trying to think about why we cannot operate from several positions. Through my work in multicultural education, I've become fixed on the notion of dichotomy – and more specifically binary, oppositional categories. When we teach about gender, race, sexual orientation we warn students about the way in which Americans dichotomize these characteristics. Further, since dichotomous groups are seen as mutually exclusive this sets up an oppositional relationship. That to be a "woman" is to be "not a man;" to be "African-American" is to be "not white." We warn that our language forces us further into this divide by not providing words that express continua. One is short or tall, fat or thin, young or old.

I am beginning to ponder the many ways in which we, as educators, dichotomize. I've been doing curricular work related to the notion of globalization in general education programs. There has been a constant tension, over the past decade, between those in higher education who focus on domestic multicultural issues and pedagogy on our campuses and those who are seeking to internationalize our institutions and curricula. They are areas seen as competing for the same resources in terms of funding, staffing and faculty. Recently, there is a developing awareness that, at least conceptually, the two are intrinsically linked. There is more recognition on the understanding that the U.S. is part of the globe, so that universities who claim to provide a "global education," as my own institution does, need to make sure that U.S. diversity is an integral part of that education. If we stop dichotomizing multiculturalism and internationalization; stop thinking of them as binary oppositional categories then the resources feed off of each other; the ideas support each other; the education becomes something that has the potential to

change the way in which we interact with each other globally and locally.

I feel that the Section on Teaching and Learning is now finding itself immersed in binary, oppositional categories as well: interest group versus social movement, academic professionalism versus activism, field of sociology versus assessment, and on and on. Would it be possible to be all of these categories? Do they have to be separate? Could they not overlap? Why not be an interest group and a social movement? Why not work to allow multiple ways of inquiry to be rewarded? The different ways of being can inform each other and lead to some pretty remarkable understanding of teaching and learning. Let us not divide and conquer ourselves as we try and reach the same goal. There should be room for everything.

REFERENCES

- Huber, Mary Taylor and Pat Hutchings. 2006. "Building the Teaching Commons." *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*. 38(3): 24-31.
- Peters-Davis, Norah and Jeffrey Shultz. 2005. *Challenges of Multicultural Education: Teaching and Taking Diversity Courses*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.

Evolution, Adaptation, and Integration

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Monte Bute raises a number of provocative ideas in "From Interest Group to Social Movement, Redux" in the winter/spring 2006 issue of *Teaching/Learning Matters*. Bute has become "increasingly troubled" by the direction taken by the Section on Teaching and Learning in Sociology (STLS) and he appears distressed by the section's interest in and support of the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL). Based, in part, on an earlier piece in *Teaching and Learning Matters* in which I frequently used the word scholarly, he implies that I (and, presumably, others active in STLS) have a fetish with SoTL—and an unhealthy one at that. While it seems reasonable to me that the word scholarly would be used frequently in a piece about defining the scholarship of teaching and learning and delineating differences between SoTL and scholarly teaching, one person's life work is perhaps another's fetish.

That said, what about Bute's provocative points that need further clarification and elaboration? As I read his piece, I was struck by how often the phrases and ideas he associates with SoTL, or with some look in to the

future of SoTL, are not quite SoTL to me. He talks about assessment, scientific rigor, core curriculum, faculty rewards, national assessment tests, universal criteria... Though these certainly have connections to SoTL, they are not the primary characteristics of SoTL or key types of work done by most people that do SoTL. Most SoTL is local, classroom-based, and reflective. It is done by practioners—instructors interested in teaching and the learning by their own students. It is tremendously diverse in topic, conceptual framework, and methodology. That is, individuals involved with SoTL (and STLS) come from all different types of institutions and are in many different sociology specialty areas. These faculty and students are interested in a wide range of SoTL questions such as what are factors associated with participation in class; what are the outcomes of using a new technology; and how do our majors believe they best learn our discipline. SoTL methodologies range from qualitative systematic reflection to focus groups to questionnaires to quantitative quasi-experiments. Furthermore, SoTL is or should be read and used by all of us, whether we conduct SoTL ourselves or not. Thus, I believe Bute misunderstands what SoTL means to most of us in the STLS. It is not the "narrow careerism" to which he refers.

I do agree with Bute on some of his concerns about SoTL research standards and the trend toward a 'publish or perish' mentality. As I have argued elsewhere (McKinney 2005a), SoTL, broadly conceived, has value. The work need not be deductive, quantitative, experimental, or use only large probability samples to be of value to us as teachers and learners. In addition, SoTL, by definition, should be made public as one criteria of any form of scholarship is that it is public and, thus, open to peer evaluation and replication (e.g., Shulman 1999). But the phrase, make public, includes many ways of making public beyond traditional scholarly publications. These include web sites, presentations at any level, teaching or course portfolios, reflective creative products, and so on (McKinney 2005b). At the same time, the work is most valuable when shared and publications are, in fact, a widely accepted way to do that.

Furthermore, I think Bute misunderstands the work of the STLS and its members. It is still about much, much more than SoTL. In fact, I would argue that most of the work of the section is not about SoTL but, rather, is about good teaching, scholarly teaching, faculty support and development for teaching, reward and recognition for teaching, and the importance of student learning. It is still the case that in *Teaching Sociology*, most of the papers are not empirically-based in some narrow or extreme "scientific rigor" sense of the phrase. There is much reflection,

anecdotal discussion, sharing of ideas, and concern with day-to-day teaching. The section offers teaching workshops, a listserv for discussion and reflection, a newsletter, and sessions to share teaching ideas—all with an emphasis on undergraduate education. Members are from a wide-range of institutional types but most are not at Research I schools.

Bute urges the section to “begin transforming itself from an interest group back into a social movement.” I do not believe, as I have argued above, STLS is a narrow interest group. Over 20 years ago, Mauksch (1985) wrote about the “structural and symbolic barriers to improved teaching in sociology” which included conditions of employment, practice, and worth of college teachers. Though there has been improvement, unfortunately, many of these remain today. STLS has been and still is part of the important social movement for promoting teaching and learning in our discipline. It functions to keep awareness of many issues related to teaching and learning in the forefront of ASA and our colleagues. It lends some legitimacy to our cause. It provides one organizational structure, active workers, and some (very limited) resources to the movement. The current motto of STLS is “If you teach, you belong,” an effort to remind all sociologists that they teach in some way or another and, thus, should all belong to STLS.

But, social movements evolve, adapt, and reemerge... or they die. Part of this evolution is to bring SoTL in to the movement as one way to promote the understanding and value of teaching and learning. It is to involve a wider range of sociologists in, not only good teaching, scholarly teaching, and supporting teaching, but also in SoTL. It is important to look to and learn from the past, and Bute’s piece is valuable in reminding us of that. But it is equally important not to live in the past but, instead, to look to and create the future.

Mauksch, Hans O. 1985. “Structural and Symbolic Barriers to Improved Teaching of Sociology.” Pp. 48-58 in *Teaching Sociology: The Quest for Excellence*, edited by F. L. Campbell, H. M. Blalock, Jr., and R. McGee. Chicago: Nelson Hall.

McKinney, K. 2005a. “Response to Hanson’s ‘The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning---Done by Sociologists: Let’s Make that the Sociology of Higher Education.’” *Teaching Sociology* 33: 417-419.

McKinney, K. October, 2005b. “The Meaning of Making Public.” Presentation on an invited panel, International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. Vancouver.

Shulman, L. 1999. “The Scholarship of Teaching.” *Change* 31(5):11.

For a Populist Insurgency

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Kathleen McKinney and Norah (Peters-Davis) Shultz have written incisive rejoinders to my article in the Spring Issue of *Teaching/Learning Matters*, “From Interest Group to Social Movement, Redux?” While these authors are dedicated reformers, they remain far too willing to work within the scholastic ethos that dominates the discipline and profession. By contrast, I am proposing a populist insurgency that seeks a more public sociology.

McKinney argues that I have mischaracterized both the Section on Teaching and Learning in Sociology (STLS) and the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL). She has misread the scope of my essay. I was neither trying to create an inclusive portrait of STLS nor a comprehensive definition of SoTL; rather, I was attempting to chart the “direction” of the STLS and explicate the “growing cottage industry of scientism” within SoTL.

Jeffrey Chin’s leadership role within STLS and SoTL is illustrative of my argument. As editor of *Teaching Sociology*, he was a powerful gatekeeper for a particularly retrograde understanding of scholarship. Chin’s “Is There a Scholarship of Teaching in *Teaching Sociology*? A Look at Papers From 1997-1999” (2002) is a manifesto for what Peter Berger (2002) calls “methodological fetishism.” His recent series of three articles in *Teaching/Learning Matters* is filled with scholastic platitudes, a neo-positivist guide for perplexed junior faculty. While I agree with McKinney that STLS and SoTL still contain considerable diversity, Chin’s work is representative of the ascendant perspective within the section.

Shultz’s personal story about her promotion process demonstrates how little the professional culture and reward structure of our discipline have changed over the past half century. The practices of elite sociologists at prestigious research universities continue to hold sovereignty over the entire profession. Shultz’s analysis of how a narrow understanding of scholarship still dominates the tenure and promotion processes is astute. Her conclusion, however, concedes too much ground to the status quo. The idea of “working within the system” until one is tenured, and only then can one “afford to take ‘risks’” is an example of the “narrow careerism” and

"interest-group mentality" that I identified in my original essay.

Shultz's post-tenure behavior might be an exemplary exception, but I find that tenured colleagues who have followed this strategy more often come to resemble the priest who wanted to become a bishop as presented by Saul Alinsky in *Rules for Radicals*.

[He] bootlicks and politicks his way to the top, justifying it with the rationale, 'After I get to be bishop I'll use my office for Christian Reformation.' . . . Unfortunately, one changes in many ways on the road to the bishopric . . . and then one says, 'I'll wait until I'm a cardinal and then I can be more effective' . . . and so it goes. (Alinsky 1971)

Shultz finds my distinction between interest groups and social movements to be a false dichotomy. Like Shultz, I hold dualistic thinking in low regard. Nevertheless, the postmodernist tendency to pejoratively reject all paired ideal types as "binary, oppositional categories" would soon eliminate the enterprise of social science. McKinney, in turn, not only denies that STLS has become an interest group, but she claims that the section remains a social movement. To be sure, these two concepts are analytical tools that, in reality, overlap and never perfectly fit any single case. Regardless, I stand by the claim that seems so incomprehensible to McKinney: STLS is an interest group.

Interest groups are organized associations that act collectively to further their members' ideal and material interests. Interest groups acknowledge the legitimacy of the powers that be and, in turn, are condoned by those who rule. Sections within the American Sociological Association (ASA) are, by definition and practice, interest groups. On the other hand, Blumer's (1939) classic definition of social movements provides a sharp contrast with interest groups. "Social movements can be viewed as collective enterprises seeking to establish a new order of life. They . . . derive their motive power on one hand from dissatisfaction with the current form of life, and on the other hand, from wishes and hopes for a new system of living." McKinney writes that "social movements evolve, adapt, and reemerge . . . or they die." It's time to hold a belated wake and have faith that STLS can arise from the dead.

Make no mistake; I oppose not scholarship but methodological fetishism. Alfred Schutz (1945), an outsider to the disciplinary canon, poses an alternative to this elitist paradigm of practice that has steadily infiltrated STLS and SoTL. He distinguished between scholarship aimed at the "expert" and scholarship aimed at the "well-informed citizen." American sociologists once saw the well-informed citizen as their

primary audience. Conversely, the sociological elite of today see fellow experts as their only audience. STLS members need to reject this "expert" model and become insurgents for a more populist paradigm of practice.¹

¹ I am writing this response on short notice from the porch of my cabin. Lacking access to my library, the references in this essay are quite abbreviated. For anyone seeking full citations, contact me by e-mail.

SECTION NEWS AND NOTES

Section on Teaching and Learning in Sociology *2006 Hans O. Mauksch Award*



Professor Bernice Pescosolido will receive the ASA Section on Teaching and Learning in Sociology, 2006 Hans O. Mauksch Award for distinguished contributions to undergraduate education.

Bernice A. Pescosolido is Chancellor's Professor of Sociology at Indiana University and Director of the Indiana Consortium for Mental Health Services Research. She has focused her research and teaching on social issues in health, illness, and healing

Many of you are familiar with her work as co-editor of the invaluable resource, *The Social Worlds of Higher Education*, her articles in *Teaching Sociology* on the scholarship of teaching and learning in sociology and preparing graduate students to teach, and her contributions to materials for the ASA Teaching Resource Center.

In addition, she has worked tirelessly to promote the quality of teaching in undergraduate sociology at Indiana University and nationally through her many workshops, curricular initiatives, and leadership in the Preparing Future Faculty program and the organizing committee for the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. Professor Pescosolido is a beloved mentor to graduate students and colleagues who seek to improve their teaching as

well as the recipient of numerous awards for her teaching and mentoring.

Section on Teaching and Learning at the 2006 Annual Meetings in Montreal

Section Day is Sunday, August 13th

The listing below ONLY represents those workshops and sessions organized by the Section.

Pre-Conference Workshop

“New Knowledge on Teaching and Learning: A Course for Experienced Faculty”

Time: Thursday, August 10 – 9:00 am – 4:30 pm

Co-Organizers and Co-Leaders: Jeanne H. Ballantine (Wright State University) and Gregory L. Weiss (Roanoke College)

Abstract: The scholarship of teaching and learning has stimulated conversation about new approaches to teaching and to working with students and has examined the effectiveness of both traditional and newly developed teaching techniques. Experienced faculty are often looked to as models and mentors by newer faculty and teaching assistants. This workshop is designed for experienced faculty who serve as role models, who would like to learn about and discuss new ideas and approaches to teaching, and who wish to consider ideas to revamp their own courses. The course will feature expert and award-winning faculty teachers, the latest philosophies and techniques in teaching, and opportunities to share teaching strategies with other faculty members. Topics ranging from learning theories and teaching styles (multiple intelligences) to teaching outside the box, from teaching critical skills and classroom assessment techniques to teaching so that students can get a job and developing a culture of teaching will be covered in a variety of formats from mini-plenaries to roundtable discussions to speakers.

The remaining listings represent those sessions organized specifically by the section. Note that there are many more teaching sessions and workshops at the meeting in addition to those sponsored by the Section on Teaching and Learning! You can search the program at the ASA website using “teaching” as a key word.

Paper Session. Research on the Teaching and Learning of our Students: SoTL in Sociology

Scheduled Time: Sun, Aug 13 - 8:30am - 10:10am

Session Organizer and President: Kathleen McKinney (Illinois State University)

The Role of the Introductory Sociology Course on Students' Perceptions of Achievement of General Education Goals

Jay R. Howard (Indiana Univ/Purdue Univ Columbus), Aimee Zoeller (Indiana and Purdue University at Indianapolis)

A Questionnaire Study of Views and Correlates of Success in Sociology

Kathleen McKinney (Illinois State University)

Bridging the Divide Between Methods and Technology: Linking up Software to Qualitative Methods Instruction

Sharlene J. Hesse-Biber (Boston College), Jeannette Belcher-Schepis (Boston College), Xiaoxia Chen (Boston College)

What is Racism? A Project to Assess Undergraduate Sociology Students' Understandings of Racism

Laurie Russell Hatch (University of Kentucky), Carey Ruiz (University of Kentucky)

Paper Session: False Divides: Research and Teaching

Scheduled Time: Sun, Aug 13 - 10:30am - 12:10pm

Session Organizer and President: Bernice A. Pescosolido (Indiana University)

Living Life as a Sociological Servant Leader in the "Blurred" Borders that Divide Teaching, Service, and Research

Katherine R. Rowell (Sinclair Community College)

Macroteaching: Some Lessons from a Longitudinal Assessment Project

Daniel F. Chambliss (Hamilton College)

The Professoriate as a Lifework: The Necessity of Finding Synergies in Teaching and Research

Emily Fairchild (Indiana University)

Necessary Knowledge: Overcoming the Division of Pure and Applied in Research and Teaching

Craig Calhoun (Social Science Research Council)

Abstract:

Since World War II, the three fundamental tasks of academic life have come to be seen, not as complementary, but as competing, forcing professors to choose which would be their primary area of contribution. This session categorizes this view as creating false divides and argues that creativity lies in their intersection. Each of the panelists, award-winning sociologists, takes on one pair of tasks, examining the synergy between them.

Teaching to Transform: Challenges and Successes

Scheduled Time: Sun, Aug 13 - 12:30pm - 2:10pm

Session Participants:

Session Organizer: Karyn A. Loscocco (U Albany)

Presider: Darlaine C. Gardetto (St. Louis Community College)

Student and Faculty Perspectives on Civic Engagement: Benefits, Barriers, and Policy Implications

Helen Rosenberg (Univ of Wisconsin-Parkside), Anne A. Statham (University of Wisconsin-Parkside)

White Privilege in the College Classroom: Toward Pedagogical Strategies

Brenda Wilhelm (Mesa State College), Sarah Swedberg (Mesa State College), Melissa Shea (Mesa State College)

Section on Teaching & Learning in Sociology Hans Mauksch Award Ceremony (one-hour)

Scheduled Time: Sun, Aug 13 - 2:30pm - 3:30pm

Session Organizer: John F. Zipp (University of Akron)

Presider: Diane Pike (Augsburg College)

Section on Teaching and Learning in Sociology Business Meeting (40 minutes)

Scheduled Time: Sun, Aug 13 - 3:30pm - 4:10pm

Chair: Diane Pike (Augsburg College)

Section on Teaching and Learning in Sociology Roundtables, Keynote and Reception. False Divides? Teaching as Intellectual Work.

Table 01. Teaching Techniques

Scheduled Time: Sun, Aug 13 - 4:30pm - 6:10pm

Session Organizer: David D. Jaffee (University of North Florida) and Jeffrey A. Will (University of North Florida)

Discussant: Melinda Jo Messineo (Ball State University)

Teaching Progressive Sociology: Strategies for Overcoming Student Resistance

Darby E. Southgate (The Ohio State University)

Teaching Research Methodology and Statistics More Accurately

Randa I. Nasser (Birzeit University)

Session Organizer: Jeffrey A. Will (University of North Florida)

Abstract: These papers explore different mechanisms for engaging students in the classroom.

Table 03. Teaching Sociology Through Current Events and Popular Culture

Scheduled Time: Sun, Aug 13 - 4:30pm - 6:10pm **Building:** Palais des congrès de Montréal

Session Organizers: David D. Jaffee (University of North Florida) and Jeffrey A. Will (University of North Florida)

Discussant: Robert C. Bulman (Saint Mary's College of California)

Understanding Changing Gender Roles through Popular Music

Carol A. Minton (California Baptist University)

The Challenge of Disruptive Events

Pamela S. Behan (University of Houston - Downtown)

Abstract:

These papers address several ways to use current events and popular culture as teaching devices.

Mini-Keynote Address: Idee Winfield

Unit / Sub Unit: Section on Teaching & Learning in Sociology / Section on Teaching and Learning in Sociology Roundtables, Keynote and Reception. False Divides? Teaching as Intellectual Work.

Joint Reception: Section on Sociology of Education and the Section on Teaching & Learning in Sociology

Scheduled Time: Sun, Aug 13 - 6:30pm - 8:15pm **Building:** Palais des congrès de Montréal

Just Desserts: A Teaching Enhancement Fund Benefit Reception

Scheduled Time: Sun, Aug 13 - 9:30pm - 11:00pm

Facilitators: Carla B. Howery (ASA) and Victoria Hougham (ASA)

Participant: Victoria Hougham (American Sociological Association)

Looking to escape the pressures of presenting papers, searching book displays, and participating in committee meetings? Come and relax with friends at this benefit event for the Teaching Enhancement Fund (TEF), "Just Desserts." As the name implies, you should bring your sweet tooth along to enjoy special desserts, good coffee, stimulating conversation, and smile that all of this pleasure goes to a good cause.

Admission is by ticket only. A major portion of each ticket price will go toward supporting the Teaching Enhancement Fund, a small grants program designed to support teaching-related projects that have long lasting and transferable impact. Please purchase your tickets in advance when you pre-register online for the meeting. Contribution levels are \$25—donor, \$50—sponsor; \$100—benefactor. If you have already pre-registered, you may add "Just Desserts" to your existing pre-registration at any time before July 13.

Renew Your Membership!

We encourage all section members to join us in recruiting new people to join the section. As Chairperson Diane Pike is known for saying, EVERY sociologist who teaches should belong to the section. Help us in "spreading the word" about the section and its many benefits. We are the leaders in the scholarship of teaching and learning work as well as some of the most talented teachers. Additionally, the section newsletter provides compelling and interesting items to section members that you cannot get anywhere else. Finally, the journal of *Teaching Sociology* represents our interests through its editors (who have all been section members) as well as through its content.

Automatic Enrollment in Section E-Mail

When STLS section members pay their annual dues, including Section membership dues, their email address is automatically added to the email list. This list is used by Section officers to send messages to the entire membership. However, this is not a listserv and therefore membership is not able to send messages to other members. While Section officers value this opportunity to communicate more readily with our membership, we recognize that some of you may prefer to be removed from the list.

To remove yourself from the STLS membership list for mailings, send a message to: infoservice@asanet.org with the following statement in the *body* of your message – ***"Please remove my name and email address from the Section on Teaching and Learning in Sociology announcement list."*** Then add your name and email address to the message.

CALLS FOR.....

Submissions Sought

Please submit suggestions for the Fall newsletter to Anne Eisenberg. Suggestions for articles, regular features, news items to share with other members, and any other ideas are encouraged and welcome! Help me make this the best Section newsletter of the ASA.

Join the TEACHSOC Listserv

Established in 1995 by Jeff Chin and Kathleen McKinney, the Teaching Sociology E-mail List – teachsoc – provides a place to discuss and distribute news on teaching sociology. Teachsoc is open to all individuals interested in pedagogy, curriculum, and any other issues related to the teaching of sociology at any level. To join us, please send the command:

Subscribe teachsoc *Alfred Weber*

In the body of an email message addressed to – teachsoc@googlegroups.com substituting your name for Max's little brother, of course.

MEMBERS' TEACHING NEWS – AWARDS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please let the editor know when you or colleagues have been formally recognized.