

Teaching/Learning Matters

ASA's Newsletter for the



Section On Teaching &
Learning In Sociology

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SECTION CHAIR'S CORNER

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In my last chair's column, I'd like to thank everyone who has contributed to our section's strength and vitality. This is evidenced in our program for the upcoming ASA meeting in Boston. Chair-elect Betsy Lucal and her program committee has put together some very exciting sessions. In addition to their listing in this newsletter, please check the ASA program website for additional and updated information (http://www.asanet.org/cs/root/leftnav/meetings/2008_preliminary_program)

Our section's business meeting will be on Friday, August 1, 2008 (this is also our section day) at 11:30am right after the Hans Mauksch Award lecture to be given by last year's winner, Maxine Atkinson. In lieu of a rather expensive evening reception, council decided to have refreshments served at our business meeting so please do be sure to attend. We will be meeting in the Sheraton Boston.

We are pleased to announce that this year's Hans Mauksch Award winner is Prof. Jay R. Howard of IUPUI Columbus, Indiana. A recipient of Indiana University's President's award, we congratulate Prof. Howard and look forward to his presentation in 2009. I would like to thank Rebecca Bach and the awards committee for their work on the selection of this award.

A special thanks to Kate Linnenberg and Mary Nell Trautner for putting together a terrific pre-conference workshop "Teachers Are Made Not Born," the workshop is scheduled for Thursday, July 31st in the Hilton Boston starting at 8am and ending at 5:30pm. The workshop description can be found in this newsletter. Please plan to come and encourage your colleagues and graduate students to attend as well.

As part of the establishment of the Sage/Pine Forge Teaching Innovations and Professional Development

Awards, 19 graduate students will be funded to attend the pre-conference workshop. Thanks to the following section authors who made this award possible: Jeanne H. Ballantine and Keith A. Roberts, *Our Social World*, Kathleen McKinney and Barbara Heyl, *Sociology through Active Learning*, Earl Babbie, *Adventures in Social Research*, Jeanne H. Ballantine and Joan Z. Spade, *Schools and Society: A Sociological Approach to Education*, George Ritzer, *The McDonaldization of Society*, Jodi O'Brien, *The Production of Reality*, Joan Spade and Kay Valentine, *Kaleidoscope*, William Roy, *Making Societies: The Historical Construction of the World We Live In*, Ken Allan, *The Social Lens: An Invitation to Social and Sociological Theory*, *Contemporary Social and Sociological Theory: Visualizing Social Worlds*, *Explorations in Classical Sociological Theory: Seeing the Social World*

The section would most especially like to express our appreciation and thanks to Ben Penner of Sage/Pine Forge for his support and help and to Keith Roberts for chairing this awards committee. Congratulations to all. A full list of award winners can be found with the workshop description later in this newsletter.

I'd like to extend congratulations and a warm welcome to our newly elected officers and council members:

Chair-Elect

Kathleen McKinney, Illinois State University

Council Member - 2 Year College Representative

John Glass, Colin County Community College

Council Member - 4 Year College Representative

Kerry Strand, Hood College

Council Member - University

Diane Taub, Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne

All the section committees have worked hard over the past year to maintain and grow membership, create ties to other sections and groups and I thank all of you for your work and support.

I would like to offer a special thanks to Kathy Rowell as she finishes her first year as newsletter editor. She has done a terrific job and we can all be proud of our newsletter.

Finally, I would like to welcome Betsy Lucal, the incoming section chair. Enjoy your summer and I hope to see you in Boston!

Susan Farrell, 2007-08 Chair

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2007-2008 OFFICERS AND COUNCIL MEMBERS FOR THE SECTION ON TEACHING AND LEARNING IN SOCIOLOGY

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EDITOR'S NOTE

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Well it is difficult to believe but I have finished my first year as editor of the newsletter. I would like to issue a very special thanks to Stephen Sweet, Publications Chair, for his support, patience and advice. I also need to recognize, Linda Schock, my program aide at Sinclair Community College who assists in putting this newsletter together throughout the year. I would not be able to produce this newsletter without her assistance and technical support. I continue to learn as I go and hope you will find this newsletter interesting and informative. I have made an editorial decision to try to use more color and graphics in this newsletter given that we are now posting our newsletters online. I would appreciate your thoughts and concerns with this new format as well as any suggestions you may have for the future. As always, I am searching for news worthy stories and articles on the scholarship of teaching and learning. The deadline for fall is October 1, 2008. Please consider sending me a submission. Articles need to be 750 to 1000 words. Again, thanks for your support and I hope you enjoy this summer edition.

Kathy Rowell, 2007-08 Newsletter Editor



NOTES ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

Guest Columnists:

Steven M. Saus, Wright State University

Leslie R.S. Elrod, University of Cincinnati

Stan C. Weeber, McNeese State University

NOTE: The editor is currently seeking articles on the scholarship of teaching and learning for the upcoming year.

I'll Pencil You In:

Perceptions and Class Schedules for the Older Student

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Even while teaching the sociological imagination, it is easy to forget its application in everyday life. Scheduling lunch, for example. The duration, time, and location of the second meal of the day will vary greatly between people. A factory worker may be used to thirty-minute lunchtimes, while a member of the academy may regularly schedule hour-long working lunches.

This kind of everyday scheduling assumption, when applied to the class schedule, strongly affects older students. As I began to study its effects, I continued to find assumptions in both the literature and my own research. I present this as not only as research into class scheduling and its effects on older students, but also as a practical example of the use of the sociological imagination in research. One's framework of assumptions can lead to misinterpretation of the data. Sometimes simply adopting another's viewpoint can explain apparent contradictions in the literature.

The first assumption to address is the idea that colleges and universities primarily serve "traditional" aged students, i.e. those under the age of twenty-five. That assumption may still be true for some institutions, but older students are and will continue to be important to both postsecondary education and the surrounding communities. Students over the age of twenty-five currently make up nearly a third of the undergraduate population in the United States (Belcastro & Purslow 2006, Anderson 2003). This percentage will increase as the echo of the Baby Boom passes. Further, the economic pressures of a postindustrial globalized society require more people to further their education - or even gain new training in order to change careers (Rich man, poor man 2007).

Older students are also important to their communities. Older students tend to select their schools based on factors of convenience (e.g. price

and location) rather than prestige (Tumblin 2002, Munday 1976). This means that older students are more likely to be local students. It is also more likely that they will remain in the area after graduation. This is suggested by research conducted for the private sector. Management journals regularly publish research that investigates the factors influencing a worker's willingness to relocate. There is a consistent negative relationship between age and willingness to relocate. Older workers are tied to a community, whether through mortgages, a spouse's career, or just a sense of "place" (Eby & Russell 2000, Brett, Stroh, & Reilly 1993, Gould & Penly 1985). It is reasonable to think this effect also holds with older students. This implies that investing in educating older students is investing directly in the region's human capital.

The literature gives some glimpses into the mindset of older students. They tend to define themselves differently than traditional students. They view themselves as "employees who study", not "students who work" (NCES 2002). That is, home and work concerns are an integral part of their lives and identity (Hart 2003, Bowl 2001, Kember 1999). This explains why complex concepts like "career relevancy" and "satisfaction with education" have a strong negative relationship with dropout risk for older students (Levy 2007, Belcastro & Purslow 2006, Tumblin 2002).

Qualitative studies of older students who have dropped out of postsecondary education indicate that finances, childcare, and the availability of classes were their primary barriers to education (Bowl 2001, Kember 1999). Yet the literature can be conflicted and equivocal in its attempts to quantify the difficulties of older students in regards to class availability (Bean & Metzner 1985).

I conducted my own research by administering a survey to a convenience sample of 241 students at a local public university. I found that most respondents reported having difficulties scheduling classes because of conflicts with other classes, classes not being offered every term, or that classes filled up too fast. Relatively few respondents - less than a third - reported that work or childcare created problems scheduling classes.

This seemed to contradict the qualitative findings in the literature. Rather than make assumptions about the respondents, I created a problem scheduling index to triangulate the respondent's scheduling difficulties. The index was then compared to other questions in the survey instrument that approached the same criteria from different directions.

In short, I found that the respondent's difficulty scheduling classes had significant positive correlations

with the degree of financial support provided by the respondent, whether or not the respondent cared for children, and the respondent's age. A simple shift in the way questions were asked revealed a previously hidden relationship and reconciled the perceived differences between the qualitative and quantitative data in the literature.

The survey also found, as expected, that older students significantly preferred evening and weekend classes. However, the correlations were not nearly as strong as I expected, even though they were statistically significant. This again turned out to be an artifact due to researcher assumptions.

I work a full-time "day shift", and most of my problems are scheduling classes after four in the afternoon. I presumed that other older working students had similar arrangements. When I began talking to other older students, my error became obvious. I learned of an EMT who had the opposite problem; he went to work at three in the afternoon. I talked to a single mother who could not afford daycare, leading her to take classes while her children were in school.

A reanalysis of the data revealed that there were two clear groups of students. One group preferred traditional daytime classes. The second group preferred evening, weekend, and web-based classes. More importantly, being in either group had a significant negative relationship of wanting the other group's class offerings.

This also explains the original puzzling data. As older students, they see themselves as workers who study. When trying to schedule classes, they do not look at the whole course catalog, but only the limited offerings that fit their life obligations. When students experience schedule conflicts within either set of limited offerings, they do not see their job or daycare as the problem. They perceive a lack of classes that are available for them.

As I progressed through this project, I was continually reminded that my original assumptions about schedules and older students were flawed. A surface analysis of the data might have led one to believe that the qualitative literature was flawed. Without moving beyond my own bias, I might have simply recommended adding more classes without considering when those classes were offered. Further analysis - by stepping outside of prior assumptions - allow us to look deeper and craft policy recommendations that will truly serve student bodies.

The environment surrounding the academy continues to change. As we adapt, we must remember to employ our skills at seeing the strange in the familiar. Our students assume that we, as sociologists,

use the skills we strive to teach them.

That is one assumption we all hope to find significant.

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The Three C's of the Tri-Dimensional Hybrid: Classroom, Computer, and Community

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In keeping with the ASA's mission to advance sociology as a scientific discipline and serve the public good, over the past several years I have been using a method of tri-dimensional hybrid teaching that includes traditional classroom, computer, and community engagement in the form of service learning. In academics a great deal of emphasis is placed on outcome assessments, generally in the form of examinations. In the case of undergraduate, particularly lower-level (freshman, sophomore) courses, these examinations frequently rely on memorization and regurgitation rather than overall concept comprehension. This examination format tends to place a significant amount of unnecessary stress on students; while outcomes are reflective of little more than short-term memorization skills, these same exam results are largely indicative of the final course grade. In the end, the outcome assessed becomes memorization rather than material mastery. If, as educators, we are interested not in strict memorization but in conceptual competency, then perhaps a different method of student assessment is necessary.

Because I feel that memorization-based assessments are reflective of little more than one's ability to memorize material for short periods of time, I elect to conduct class from an applied-perspective. Rather than the standard "talk-and-chalk," class time is filled with directed clarification and in-class individual and group projects designed to make the subject matter personal and therefore more memorable, as it becomes personally meaningful. While this approach seems to work well and is generally enjoyed by students, there is still the original problem of outcome assessment, particularly in an introductory, foundation-building course.

In addition to projects designed to assess concept application, I wanted to ensure that students were reading and understanding the appropriate material. I thus opted to utilize online testing on Blackboard. In so doing, students did not have to memorize the material but instead used time out of class to use any printed resources, usually the textbook, to find the appropriate answers to the extensive list of objective

questions. Because this was an open-book test with a full week to complete the exam, the exam itself was by all accounts long—approximately 140 questions per exam. While students could take as much time as they needed to finish the exam (until the expiration of the week-long deadline), most students finished the exam in four to five hours. The assessment reflected the students' diligence and understanding without relying on memorization. Every student *could* get an "A" if they were willing to put the time and energy into understanding the material. The intent was to remove the unnecessary stress of memorization, enabling the students to instead focus on material comprehension.

Valuing the face-to-face interaction of the traditional classroom and appreciating student interest in the flexibility offered by online accessibility, I felt students need a still deeper understanding of the world and of those whom they might not encounter every day. Beyond that, I also wanted to ensure that the students I am teaching are equipped to confront issues, identify prejudices, and hopefully, work to eliminate them. I felt that students would benefit from developing a greater understanding and appreciation of often overlooked parts of the community. What transpired was a blending of renewed self-awareness, confrontation of previously unrecognized prejudices, and a new-found respect for people with different abilities.

In addition to the requirement of service hours, students were required to apply their new-found knowledge in a setting that typically takes them outside of their comfort zones, providing an objective observation experience. For example, Introduction to Sociology students were required to journal their participant observation of their service learning (including maps), helping them understand and develop their sociological imaginations.

All told, over an academic year students contributed over 7000 service hours to the MR/DD (Mental Retardation/Developmental Disability) community. As a result of their positive experiences and newfound friendships, several students intend to continue serving beyond their course requirements. Many described the valuable relationships and incredible respect they had for both the MRDD consumers and staff. At least one student decided to change her major to special education as a direct result of their positive interaction. While undeniably a lot of coordination was required to make this service learning experience a success, I can say without a hint of doubt that the results were certainly worth the effort, producing a win-win situation for all involved. I believe the students developed a greater understanding of a neglected population and respect for the Butler County Board of MR/DD tag line: "Together, we are the Community."

**'CRITICALLY REFLECTIVE TEACHING':
TEACHING SOCIOLOGY AFTER HURRICANES
KATRINA AND RITA**

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Many New Orleans sociology students faced the unfortunate cancellation of their collegiate semesters following Hurricane Katrina in the fall of 2005. These students' careers were "on hold" as they waited months for colleges to reopen. This note is about circumstances that allowed the reinitiating of a fall, 2005 sociology semester after a substantial delay. I encountered this while teaching at McNeese State University in Lake Charles, Louisiana following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Teaching Sociology After Katrina

On August 30, we began to see the first wave of students arrive from New Orleans who enrolled at McNeese on an emergency basis. We extended late registration, raised enrollment limits in classes, and did all possible to accommodate the newcomers.

In a memo, my supervisor stated how my colleagues and I should view the new students. He instructed us to treat them with dignity and respect, showing flexibility in admitting late entrants and generosity in helping them catch up to material already covered. This approach was adopted unanimously by the social science faculty, becoming my colleagues' view of the situation. Thus, we watched the students closely to see if their needs were being met, and also to obtain their view of their own situations.

Only weeks later, Tropical Storm Rita formed in the Gulf. The displaced students were frightened by Rita as it grew into a hurricane. A portion of New Orleans was still under water and the broken levees were patched up but not repaired. On September 22nd, an evacuation order was issued for Lake Charles, and the New Orleanians were forced to move again.

Teaching Sociology After Rita

Returning to Lake Charles after my own evacuation and facing a long delay after Rita, I was immersed in "new territory." Graduate education and years of teaching sociology left me with no script to follow after such an event. Then, I remembered Stephen Brookfield's work on the "chaos" of skillful teaching.

Skillful teaching is tied to student outcomes, particularly the student's own sense that something has been learned (Brookfield, 1986, 1990, 1995, 2006). It is not teaching's "storybook" version but one in which mutual respect, negotiation, collaborativeness and praxis are present for teachers and learners. Brookfield (1990: 2) called this a creative, unscripted, messy pursuit – "the educational equivalent of white water rafting."

Fundamental to skillful teaching is the art of "critically reflective teaching" – teaching that is guided by a critical rationale but adapted to students' experience of learning and to the contextual variables of classroom life. This might mean a painful process of reframing purposes, methods, and evaluative criteria in your teaching, as the dominant themes or concerns emerge from your students. For Brookfield (1995), there were four aspects to critical reflection: (1) obtaining the students' view; (2) obtaining our colleagues' perceptions; (3) reading the theoretical literature guiding our work; and (4) studying details of our own autobiographies.

My colleagues and I had already heeded part of Brookfield's advice without being aware of it. We had agreed to be charitable to students after Katrina, obtaining the student's view of their own situations at that time. Speaking for myself and perhaps some colleagues, I had contemplated the pedagogical writings of sociology and found them mostly deficient in the post-disaster situation after Rita. And, I had pondered the low points of my own post-Rita biography. Now, we needed to carry on what we had started after Katrina, this time factoring in our post-Rita experience and letting Brookfield be our guide.

When my classes finally re-started on October 31st, I sent a memo via Blackboard to all students announcing that classes would be resuming. For each class, I approached the initial class as a "meeting" whereby a new set of requirements could be negotiated jointly by students and instructor.

In two sections of Introductory Sociology, I sought the students' view of their situation by asking them how many tests they wanted to finish the semester. Surprisingly, they said that they wanted 4 tests. I therefore scheduled 3 more tests (test 1 was before Rita), with a non-comprehensive final test during the revised finals week. Homework assignments were reduced from four to two.

In the advanced classes, I encountered older, nontraditional students carrying heavy work and child care responsibilities. These students were begging for leniency and mercy. About one half of my Sociological Theory class had already taken test 1 before Rita hit. Collaboratively, we agreed to a staggered start to the class: those who had already taken test 1 were allowed the first week off while those who had not taken the test were given the opportunity to re-review for it and to take it. Assignments were reduced from 4 to 3, the last a non-comprehensive "take home" test.

The second advanced class, Collective Behavior and Social Movements, met for their class meeting on the evening of November 2. About half the class attended, while others weighed in via e-mail. These students voted for and received an online class, possible because many class functions were already set up utilizing Blackboard. I scheduled two take

home tests, the second one a final non comprehensive test. Two critical thinking assignments were assigned, and the term paper was cancelled.

Conclusion

This unusual semester ended in late December when 752 students, including a few displaced seniors from New Orleans, graduated after an accelerated eight weeks of study. Though the semester was over, critical thinking about my own situation was incomplete. I contemplated how faculty should never be in such a powerless state as I had been after Rita. And I dropped a longstanding objection to distance and accelerated learning. Distance learning classes went on with few interruptions after Rita, and the intensive eight week program at McNeese after the storm demonstrated that accelerated education can and does work effectively.

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PEDAGOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE PERSPECTIVE

Guest Columnist

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NOTE: The editor is currently seeking articles of community college interest for future editions

QUANTITATIVE LITERACY AND THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE CLASSROOM

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After a hiatus of nearly twenty years, I recently began teaching community college students again. During my time away from the two-year campus, I had interspersed faculty appointments at baccalaureate institutions with stints in research. Intrigued by the fact that I had evidently come full circle in my professional journey, I looked forward to working with a new generation of community college students.

I have found that the “new” generation is much like the previous one. My students are motivated and like to do well in their classes. They struggle to reconcile their beliefs about individualism with the realities of life in a stratified society. They juggle multiple obligations and, from time to time, they express uncertainty about their plans for the future. They frequently regard personal experience as the gold standard against which they gauge the validity of sociological explanations. And yes, they occasionally forget to mute their cell phones before coming to class. In short, they are like college students everywhere.

Or are they?

The belief that community college students are different from their peers at baccalaureate institutions derives in part from Burton Clark’s case study of a junior college in 1950s’ California. Borrowing a phrase from Erving Goffman, Clark argued that “cooling the mark out,” which called for shifting the focus of lower-achieving students from a transfer program to a terminal one, was an irreducible function of two-year institutions (1960: 160-165; cf. Stein 1977; Clark 1980; Brint and Karabel 1989; Hellmich 1993; Herideen 1998; Levin 2001; Kisker 2007).

In my own experiences with community college students, past and present, I have uncovered little evidence in support of Clark’s claim that a community college “is basically a secondary school” whose duty it is “to remove from higher education those students who should not be there” (1960: 173-174). I instead concur with the view that community college students are most appropriately regarded as equivalent to first- and second-year students elsewhere (Culpepper 2006).

Nevertheless, I know that federal data suggest that community college students face specific challenges in their quest for a postsecondary degree. For example, they are likelier to enroll in remedial math courses than holds true for their peers at other institutions.

Although some educators assert that this finding reflects the fact that community colleges routinely administer placement tests to incoming students, the federal data also reveal that adult Americans at all levels of educational attainment do not usually display robust quantitative literacy (QL) skills (U.S. Department of Education 2007: 155).

QL and Sociology

As guest editors Stephen Sweet and Kerry Strand demonstrated in the introduction to a special issue of *Teaching Sociology*, sociologists are uniquely positioned to promote QL among students (2006). In fact, sociologists share a long history of concern for QL. To the brief list of influential early sources that Sweet and Strand supply can thus be added a number of sociological publications. A few examples of these

additional sources are the three essays, written by Max Weber, that comprise *The Methodology of the Social Sciences* (1949), W.S. Robinson's treatment of ecological correlation (1950), and the appendix on table reading that Roberta G. Simmons supplied for *The Logic of Survey Analysis* (1968).

The tenets of QL, which stress logical thinking, systematic attention to evidence, and the importance of numeracy in everyday life, are ones with which sociologists are thoroughly familiar. We excel at teasing out the patterns that emerge from our examinations of the social order. Real-world problems lie at the heart of our discipline. Moreover, we are proficient in the use and interpretation of statistical data. Joel Best has pointed out that we possess the tools and knowledge not only to unpack "the process by which numbers are produced" but also to facilitate our students' efforts to grasp "the larger social context within which numbers emerge" (2008: 11).

QL-Friendly Teaching and Learning

The pedagogical strategies that I have found useful for enhancing the QL skills of my community college students draw from sociology's strengths. They also emphasize three overlapping dimensions of the learning process. One, they stress the immediate context. Two, they encourage students to place situation-specific information within a broad analytic framework. Three, they entail hands-on activities that engage students in the examination and interpretation of data.

The Immediate Context. "Immediate context" comprises the communities where my students live and from which their social identities derive. When discussing a topic such as urbanization, I find it helpful to begin by asking students to identify some of the changes that they have seen in their home communities. They quickly compile a list: new subdivisions and business parks; expansion projects at shopping, entertainment, and sports complexes; the development of new highways.

We then consider the population dynamics that give rise to these kinds of changes. With some guidance from me, the students select data for their county of residence or neighboring counties from the Census Bureau web site (<http://www.census.gov>). Working independently or in teams, the students calculate statistics that are fundamental to social research: proportions, percentages, percent change, rates, gender and dependency ratios. They construct summary tables, ranking lists, and graphs.

I ask the students to reflect on the social implications of the statistics and graphics that they have amassed. The questions that I pose for written assignments or to jumpstart class discussion range from straightforward

(how do birth and death rates affect the age composition of populations? what about migration rates?) to comparative (how do the age distributions of the counties differ?) and applied (why gather population data at all? what impact do population shifts have on the tax base and provision of public services?)

Expanding Analytical Frameworks. Peter Berger's memorable description of a lecture on race illustrates an instructor's attempt to elicit recognition of the commonalities that link familiar and unfamiliar settings. In Berger's example, the instructor who compares social hierarchies on a country-by-country basis fosters students' awareness of the fact that "things are not what they seem" (1963: 23).

Of course, encouraging students to adopt a broad view of social life can take a variety of forms. The way that this aspect of my interactions with students plays out in the classroom depends upon the nature of the topic that we are addressing. When focusing on urbanization and population, for example, I typically ask my students to supplement their analysis of intraregional variations with state, national, and global data. In doing so, they expand their knowledge of population dynamics and build upon the skills that they used while completing the county-by-county comparisons.

While working with my students on other topics (family transitions, say, or attitudes toward the criminal justice system), I may opt to administer a questionnaire comprised of items that are in the public domain. After tallying the results of the questionnaire, we compare and contrast them with the results obtained from the original source. Similarly, interactive online data analysis sites (see, e.g., <http://sda.berkeley.edu>) allow students to select variables, calculate statistics, and construct tables and graphs.

Whatever the topic, I stress the need to think about the social dimensions of quantitative information. I likewise emphasize the point that the "production of numbers," to which Joel Best referred, echoes the predilections and attributes of an individual or organization. The "openness to alternatives ... [and] ...healthy skepticism" that are indigenous to exploratory data analysis (Hartwig and Dearing 1979: 78) play a vital role in all forms of systematic inquiry.

Hands-On Learning. An emphasis on hands-on activities, particularly the use of technology, threads throughout the pedagogical strategies that I employ as part of my efforts to enhance students' QL. The learning outcomes that students achieve, and the assessment of those outcomes, are consistent with the objectives for a specific course and the institution-wide, competency-based curriculum that provides a

framework within which pedagogy evolves. The curriculum includes measures for mathematical proficiency, data-based decision-making, the analysis of social systems, and computer skills.

Encouraging students to work collaboratively on QL projects in the classroom entails certain oversight responsibilities for the instructor (e.g., facilitating discussion when it lags or structuring and managing groups to minimize the possibility of free rider behaviors). These responsibilities are apt to surface in any learning environment, however, and my experiences with collaborative learning groups in the community college classroom have been positive. Less concerned about giving a "right" answer than about discussing their ideas, my students exchange information with one another and trade good-humored barbs as they examine the data, complete the calculations, and develop a rationale for their collective interpretation of the evidence.

My students not only respond positively to the opportunities for critical thinking that QL-centered learning activities supply but also appreciate the real-world nature of the work. As one student commented in response to an open-ended question on a course evaluation instrument, "One aspect of this instructor's course that I valued was how we learned to formulate and evaluate research ... [we related] ... the course material to everyday situations."

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Check out these ASA Sessions in Boston for community college faculty:

Opportunities and Obstacles to Faculty Professional Development at Community Colleges

Session type: Workshop
Time: Sat, Aug 2 - 2:30pm - 4:10pm
Place: Sheraton Boston

Community College Faculty Breakfast

Session type: Reception
Time: Sun, Aug 3 - 7:00am - 8:15am
Place: Hilton Boston Back Bay

SECTION NEWS AND NOTES



**Section on Teaching
and Learning in
Sociology
2008 Hans O.
Mauksch Award
Winner**

**Jay R. Howard,
Ph.D. (University
of Notre Dame,
1992) Professor
of Sociology and
IUPUC Interim
Vice Chancellor
and Dean**



Teaching Specialties: Sociology of Religion, Sociology of Work, Theory, Research Methods, Sociology of Education

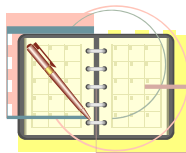
Research Interests: Scholarship of Teaching and Learning; Religion & Popular culture

Selected Recent Publications: *Discussion in the College Classroom: Applications for Sociology Instruction*. (2004) Howard, Jay R. 2005. "An Examination of Student Learning in Introductory Sociology at a Commuter Campus," *Teaching Sociology* (2005). *Apostles of Rock: The Splintered World of Contemporary Christian Music* (with Streck) (1999 hardback/2004 paperback)

Other Professional Activities: Deputy Editor, *Teaching Sociology*, 2003-2009; President-elect, North Central Sociological Association, 2005-2006; American Sociological Association Section on Teaching and Learning Sociology, Secretary/ Treasurer, 2000-2003

Honors: 2004 Mack Fellow, The Mack Center at I. U. for Inquiry on Teaching and Learning
2001 Indiana University President's Award for Teaching Excellence
1997 I. U. Faculty Colloquium on Excellence in Teaching (FACET) Award

**Mark your calendar...
Section on Teaching and
Learning at the 2008 Annual
Meetings in Boston**



Section Day is Friday, August 1st

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

Pre-Conference Workshop "Teachers Are Made, Not Born."

2008 Section on Teaching and Learning
Pre-conference Workshop for New Teachers of
Sociology

Time: 8:00 am – 5:30 pm

Co-Organizers and Co-Leaders: Kate Linnenberg and
Mary Nell Trautner

8:00-8:30 am Arrival/Packet pass out

8:30-8:40 am Workshop welcome

8:45-9:05 am Opening Keynote: *Ed Kain*

9:15-10:15 am Discussion: Scholarship on Teaching and Learning (*Jeff Chin, Liz Grauerholz, and Kathleen McKinney*)

10:25-11:15 am Concurrent Roundtables I: Practical Issues in Teaching and Learning

Getting a Job that Values Teaching (*Denise Copelton and Marybeth Stalp*)

Putting Together a Teaching Portfolio (*Idee Winfield*)

Tips for Dealing with Heavy Teaching Loads (*Kathy Rowell and Rebecca Plante*)

Teaching at an Institution where Teaching isn't First Priority (*Maxine Atkinson*)

Life at a Liberal Arts College (*Roxanna Harlow and Kerry Strand*)

11:25 am-12:25 pm Concurrent Roundtables II: Hot Topics in Teaching and Learning

Dealing with Difficult Students (*Rebecca Bach and Julianne Weinzimmer*)

Classroom Assessment (*Greg Weiss*)

Diversity in the Classroom (*Rachel Neal*)

Classroom Policies to Communicate

Expectations and Sociological Ideas (*Jennifer Keys and Gayle Sulik*)

Helping Students Make Connections through Civic Engagement (*Elizabeth Borland and Heather Laube*)

12:30-2:00 pm Lunch and ASA Registration

2:00-3:00 pm Concurrent Roundtables III: Hot Topics Redux (see 11:25 to 12:25 sessions)

3:10-4:00 pm Best Practices: Award-Winning Teachers Talk about Teaching (*Betsy Lucal, Kathy Rowell and Greg Weiss*)

4:10-5:00 pm Panel: Surviving the First Year(s) in the Classroom (*Shannon Davis, Nancy Martin, and Nate Wright*)

We would like to extend congratulations to our SAGE and Pine Forge Teaching Innovations & Professional Development Award winners and a special thank you to SAGE/Pine Forge Press.



Emily Bowman
Indiana University

Tricia Bruce
Maryville College

Paul Calarco
Hudson Valley Community College

Marisol Clark-Ibanez
California State University, San Marcos

Kathleen Gray
University of Pittsburgh

Heather Griffiths
Fayetteville State University

Brent Harger
Indiana University

Ting Jiang
University of California, Irvine

Robin Kreider
Gavilan College

Samantha Kwan
University of Houston

Zakiya Luna
University of Michigan

Julie Newcamp
Purdue University

Susan Ortiz
The Ohio State University

Gabrielle Raley
University of California, Los Angeles

Jennifer Rogers
University of California, Santa Barbara

Tara Shaw
University of Oklahoma

Anna Sher

State Univ. of New York, Stony Brook

Ana Villalobos
University of California, Berkeley

Megan Wright
University of Arizona

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.

Implications of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) for our Practice as Teachers of Sociology

Time: Fri, Aug 1 - 8:30am - 10:10am

Building: Sheraton Boston

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

Session Organizer: Nancy A. Greenwood (Indiana University Kokomo)

President: Nancy A. Greenwood (Indiana University Kokomo)

Civic Educational Participation: An Analysis of Adult Learners' Experiences

*Helen Rosenberg (University of Wisconsin-Parkside),

*Susan Reed (DePaul University), *Anne Statham (University of Wisconsin-Parkside), Catherine Marienau (DePaul University)

Critical Civic Engagement

*Christine Kay Oakley (Washington State University)

Documenting the Scholarship of Teaching through a Course Portfolio

*Cheryl Albers (Buffalo State College)

Why "Quality Matters" Matters: What Students Value

*Leda E. Nath (University of Wisconsin at Whitewater), Penny Ralston-Berg (UW Learning Innovations)

Teaching as a Site of Resistance

Scheduled Time: Fri, Aug 1, 4:30pm-6:10pm

Building: Sheraton Boston

Session Organizer: Andrea D. Miller (Webster University)

Session Organizer: Betsy Lucal (Indiana University South Bend)

Incorporating One's Ethno-Racial Background/Experience in the Classroom

*Salvador Vidal-Ortiz (American University)

Beyond Theoretical Examples: Personifying Transgender in the Classroom

*Elroi J. Windsor (Georgia State University)

Teaching Ability? Disability in the Classroom

*Alexis A. Bender (Georgia State University)

Teaching and the Politics of (In)Visibility: Two Accounts of Teaching about Sex, Gender and Sexuality

*Betsy Lucal (Indiana University South Bend), *Andrea D. Miller (Webster University)

Section on Teaching and Learning Paper Session. From Kansas's /Elements of Sociology/ to ASA's Teaching Resource Center: The History of Teaching and Learning in Sociology

Scheduled Time: Sat, Aug 2 - 10:30am - 12:10pm, **Building:** Sheraton Boston
Session Organizer: Mikaila Mariel Lemonik Arthur (Hamilton College)

Agents of Change: Carla Howery and the ASA Teaching Resource Manuals

*Jill M. Niebrugge-Brantley (American University),
*Patricia Madoo Lengermann (The George Washington University)

Session Organizer: Eleanor Townsley (Mount Holyoke College)

Sociology in U.S. High Schools

*Michael DeCesare (Merrimack College)

Teaching Theory and Teaching History of Sociology Over Time

*Edward A. Tiryakian (Duke University)

The History of Teaching Sociology

*George Ritzer (University of Maryland)

Section Business Meeting --- Refreshments will be served

Scheduled Time: Fri, Aug 1, 11:30am - 12:10pm
Building: Sheraton Boston

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

Scheduled Time: Fri, Aug 1, 10:30am - 11:30am
Building: Sheraton Boston
Session Organizer: Susan A. Farrell (Kingsborough Community College, CUNY)

Presider: Susan A. Farrell (Kingsborough Community College, CUNY)

2007 Hans O. Mauksch Award Lecture Maxine P. Atkinson (North Carolina State University)

Read more about this award winner at:

<http://home.nc.rr.com/rrslatta/RR/Maxine/index.html>

Section on Teaching and Learning Refereed Roundtable Session

Scheduled Time: Fri, Aug 1, 2:30pm - 4:10pm
Building: Sheraton Boston

Sessions

Table 01. Assessment that Actually Improves Learning

Table 02. Community Based Research Projects and their Impact on Undergraduates' Academic Careers

Table 03. Globalizing the Introductory Course: Creating a Meaningful and Measurable Global Curriculum

Table 04. Moving Beyond the Checklist: Advising Sociology Undergraduates

Table 05. Nearly 50 Years and Counting: Teaching C.W. Mills and the Sociological Imagination

Table 06. Resource Poor, Content Rich: Making the Most of Less than Ideal Teaching Situations

Table 07. Scaffolding for Student Success through Diverse Instructional Strategies: A Potpourri of Best Practices

Table 08. Reflective Teaching and Learning in Sociology

Table 09. Teaching about Gender in Institutional Structures

Table 10. Teaching and Learning Online: Best Practices

Table 11. Teaching Sociology at the Community College

Table 12. Teaching Sociology in a Prison Setting

Table 13. Teaching Sociology at Small, Liberal Arts Colleges: Strategies for Success

Table 14. When is the Personal Pedagogical? Strengths and Limitations of Personal Disclosure in the Classroom

Table 15. Strategies for Teaching Research Methods

Table 16. Follow-up to Focus the Nation: Teaching about Global Climate Change

Illinois State University, Illinois Wesleyan University and Heartland Community College invite you to join colleagues from across the nation **September 25-27, 2008** in Bloomington-Normal, IL for the Innovative Partnerships for Student Learning Conference.

*Revised proposal deadline – February 29, 2008.
www.partnershipsconference.ilstu.edu



Hope to see you at:

Just Desserts, a Teaching Enhancement Fund (TEF) Benefit Reception. (Ticket required for admission)

Session type: Reception

Time: Sat, Aug 2 - 9:30pm - 11:00pm

Place: Boston Marriott Copley Place

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 Kathy Rowell. Deadline for submissions is October 1, 2008. 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.

For the most up to date information about the Teaching and Learning Section in Sociology, please check the following websites:

American Sociological Association Meeting website:
http://www.asanet.org/cs/2008_meeting

ASA Teaching and Learning in Sociology website:
<http://www2.asanet.org/sectionteach/>

