

Fall 2003

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## A Note from the Section Chair

Though August in Atlanta now seems rather far away, it was a good time. The sessions put together by Richard Arum and Chandra Muller were very interesting. We saw the continued flowering of sociological research on the sources and impacts of early childhood education, and there was extensive attention to the role of race and immigration in education and to issues of higher education access and success. The section reception and dinner were replete with good company and good food. And finally, the Professional Workshop for Young Scholars, the day before ASA, was a great success due to the efforts of Brian Powell and Chandra Muller. For all of this, we owe great thanks to the outgoing chair, Barbara Schneider, who put all this in motion and kept it on track.

## Section Offices

In the time between annual meetings, the Section's vitality rests with the efforts of many people. I will be enjoying the advice of the past chair, Barbara Schneider, and the chair-elect who takes office in 2004, Jim Rosenbaum. The Secretary-Treasurer, Helen Marks, and her successor in 2004–2006, George Farkas, provide key continuity across the one-year terms of chairs. And I look forward to working with the Council, whose members for 2003–2004 will be Richard Arum, Karen Bradley, Claudia Buchmann, David Kinney, Kathryn Schiller, and John Robert Warren.

Happily, Gary Dworkin, Tom Hoffer, and Carl Schmitt have agreed to continue in key positions. Gary has done wonders as our Membership Coordinator. Tom will be editing the Section newsletter. And Carl will be continuing as our webmaster for the Section homepage.

## Program Committee

I have decided to continue the precedent set by Karl Alexander and Barbara Schneider of delegating the responsibility of putting together the Section's sessions at the annual meeting to other hands. This will free me up to pursue some special initiatives that are detailed below.

To my great pleasure, David Karen and Katherine McClelland have agreed to take on this very important task. They will be working closely with the organizer of the Regular Sessions in Sociology of Education, Roslyn Mickelson. David Karen and Katherine McClelland can be reached at [dkaren@brynmawr.edu](mailto:dkaren@brynmawr.edu) and

[kmcclell@fandm.edu](mailto:kmcclell@fandm.edu).

### **Standing Committees**

The Nominations committee will be chaired by Chandra Muller and will also include Prudence Carter, Francisco Ramirez, Sean Reardon, and Ricardo Stanton-Salazar. Nominations should be sent to Chandra at [cmuller@mail.la.utexas.edu](mailto:cmuller@mail.la.utexas.edu).

The Willard Waller Award Committee will be chaired by Jeanne Ballantine and will also include Floyd Hammack, Aaron Pallas, William Trent, and Pamela Walters. The award for this year is for a career of distinguished scholarship. Nominations should be sent to Jeanne at [jeanne.ballantine@wright.edu](mailto:jeanne.ballantine@wright.edu).

The David Stevenson Graduate Student Paper Award Committee will be chaired by Brian Powell and will also include Gregory Anderson, Grace Kao, John Meyer, and Karolyn Tyson. Nominations should be sent to Brian at [powell@indiana.edu](mailto:powell@indiana.edu).

### **Section Dinner Arrangements Committee**

Dan McFarland and Rebecca Sandefur have agreed to find a place for the Section dinner. Theirs is a very difficult task. Finding a place with good food should not be hard in San Francisco. But finding one at a reasonable price may be an impossibility, though of course we will all still expect it.

### **Special Initiatives**

Following up on discussions at the Council and Business meetings, I will be pursuing two special initiatives this year. One will address how the Section can do a better job of recruiting and retaining scholars of color. The other will address how sociology of education can gear itself up to address the research and policy issues raised by the recent federal re-authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind) and similar accountability efforts.

### **Increasing the Representation of Minority Sociologists in SOE**

In taking on the role of chair of the Soc of Ed Section, I have been struck yet again by the fact we have so few sociologists of color who are members of the Sociology of Education Section, despite the fact that there are many minority sociologists doing very interesting research on the educational system. This is of great concern. The Section would be more vibrant and effective in both research and policy if more minority scholars were present in the Section, on its program, and among its officers. There is also an equity question: has the Sociology of Education Section failed to have minority scholars feel welcome so they instead choose to go elsewhere? What can the Section do to better recruit and retain minority scholars?

Given these concerns, I have asked William Velez to head an effort to investigate these issues and report back at the SOE business meeting at the next ASA. And if the energy is there, it would be great if there could be a report that we could send to our entire membership and post to the Soc of Ed website. The aim is to interview or

survey minority sociologists of education, both members and non-members of the Section, to find out what factors might be dissuading minority scholars from joining or staying with the Section and what the Section might do to overcome these obstacles.

Advising Bill will be Jomills Braddock, Chandra Muller, and Ricardo Stanton-Salazar. Bill would welcome interest from others who would like to take part in this effort. He can be reached at [velez@uwm.edu](mailto:velez@uwm.edu).

### **Sociological Responses to No Child Left Behind**

The No Child Left Behind Act is a landmark and, as we already know, controversial piece of legislation that may carry far-reaching consequences for education. Already there is talk of spreading similar accountability efforts to higher education in the next re-authorization of the Higher Education Act. And of course state governments have been busily pushing accountability requirements for K-12 and higher education for years now.

As a discipline, we have much to say about key concerns of No Child Left Behind: testing, school reorganization and reform, teacher recruitment and professional development, school choice, and safe schools. But I am concerned that our voice may not be heard unless we organize ourselves to determine what light our research sheds on these issues and forcefully introduce our perspective into the national policy discourse. That discourse has been dominated by educational psychology and economics, with insufficient regard to the issues of stratification processes, organizational dynamics, and institutional structure that our discipline would illuminate.

For this reason, I would like to organize a small conference at the end of the 2004 meetings in San Francisco to consider these critical issues. The conference will be open to all. The aim will be to clarify what are the issues raised by NCLB (and the accountability movement more generally) and to take stock of what sociology of education at this point can say to those issues. If that small conference does get held and it seems to spark sufficient interest among our membership, consideration can be given to having a followup at the 2005 meetings.

I am hoping that the conference will give us a head start in organizing ourselves to raise our voice when Congress holds hearings on NCLB. This is most likely to occur in 2006, with re-authorization occurring in 2007.

I have appointed a committee to further develop the conference format, pick speakers, and raise funds. The chairs of the committee are Alan Sadovnik and Kathy Borman. They are joined by Gary Dworkin, Adam Gamoran, David Karen, Roslyn Mickelson, James Rosenbaum, Laura Salganik, Barbara Schneider, Janelle Scott, and myself. Several other people readily came to mind as excellent choices for the committee, but I decided to keep the committee somewhat small in order to keep it from becoming unwieldy.

As you can see, much may be going on this year. I look forward to an eventful year

and an exciting meeting in San Francisco.

Kevin J. Dougherty  
Chair, 2003–2004

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212–678–8107

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## Re-Upping Membership

November 24, 2003

Dear Colleague:

Recently, the American Sociological Association notified members of the option to renew their memberships for 2004 on the web. Whether you plan to renew your ASA membership by e-mail or by snail mail, the Membership Committee of our Sociology of Education Section would like to remind you to renew your membership in our section, too. Over the past ten years our section has grown from slightly over 300 members to almost 700. The result of this growth has enabled us to hold more sessions at the American Sociological Association annual meetings and to sponsor more activities for members. For many years our goal had been to reach the 600-member level in order to be permitted by ASA to add more sessions at the meetings. However, membership totals tend to be fluid and if we fall below that level, we lose some of the sessions we have worked to gain. In an effort to preserve sessions and even to expand benefits the committee and I ask to consider something in addition.

Besides renewing your own membership, we would offer two modest suggestions. First, ask one of your colleagues to become a member of the section. The section dues are low and we offer numerous benefits to section members. Second, there may be a graduate student with whom you work who is a member of the ASA, but not a member of the Sociology of Education Section. Please consider buying one or more of your students a membership, which costs \$7 at the student rate or \$12 at the regular membership rate, as a "thank you" for their help on a particular project or their work as your teaching or research assistant. It is an inexpensive reward, but it will help them with their professional socialization and benefit your section, too.

The Sociology of Education Section has a website that can be accessed by clicking on <http://www.asanet.org/soe>. Please click on this web address and familiarize yourself with the numerous benefits and sources of information, employment, and data provided by the section. Then please print a copy of the section membership form displayed below for that student you wish to thank. In addition, please print off other copies and talk to your colleagues or graduate students. We hope that you will encourage at least one person to join the section.

When you speak to your colleagues and students, you might want to point out that the section has many benefits to offer, including access to an on-line website that contains an extensive bibliography on educational issues created by Robert Dreeben of the University of Chicago; a jobs and fellowships board and access to data and information for research projects and research funding. The section sponsors a successful and delightful annual dinner at the ASA meetings and an auction that generates funds for graduate students. We make awards to students and honor the accomplishments of educational researchers; we hold conferences that address salient issues in educational research and education policy;

and we sponsor large and successful roundtables at the ASA meetings where, frequently, senior scholars have served as critics, offering positive suggestions to improve student and faculty research.

Thank you for helping our section and one another. If merely one-quarter of us are successful in recruiting one new member each, we shall not only assure ourselves of continued access to all of the sessions we currently enjoy at ASA meetings, we shall gain additional sessions, thereby enabling more people to share their research.

Sincerely,

A. Gary Dworkin  
SOE Membership Chair 2003–2004

[Print Ready Application Form](#)

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE WILLARD WALLER AWARD FOR 2003–2004**

The Willard Waller Award commemorates Willard Waller, whose seminal work on teaching and schools laid the foundation for the sociology of education. The nature of the award rotates on a three-year cycle. The 2004 Willard Waller award will be for career of distinguished scholarship. The distinguished career award is given to an individual whose scholarly contributions over the years have advanced the study of education within the field of sociology. The closing date for nominations is February 2, 2004. Please send nominations to the chair of the Waller Award Committee, Jeanne Ballantine, at 202 North Walnut St., Yellow Springs, OH 45387. You can also contact Jeanne at [jeanne.ballantine@wright.edu](mailto:jeanne.ballantine@wright.edu); 937–775–2442.

### **CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE DAVID STEVENSON GRADUATE STUDENT PAPER AWARD FOR 2003–04**

The David Lee Stevenson Graduate Student Paper Award is given for an outstanding paper written by a graduate student or students on a topic in education. The author or first author must be a graduate student at the time of submission, and all authors must have been graduate students when it was written. Nominations from members of the Section and self-nominations are welcome. Please send submissions by February 2, 2004 to the chair of the Stevenson Award Committee, Brian Powell, at Department of Sociology, Indiana University, Ballantine Hall 744, Bloomington, IN 47405. You can also contact Brian at [powell@indiana.edu](mailto:powell@indiana.edu) and 812–855–7624.

### **MEMBERS SURVEY FOR REVISION OF "Teaching Sociology of Education."**

The ASA publication "Teaching Sociology of Education" is being revised by several section members. Earlier this fall they sent out a questionnaire on goldenrod-colored paper and a request for teaching items such as syllabi, class projects, assignments, bibliographies, and videos used in sociology of education and related classes. Please return the questionnaire if you have not done so and send any materials that they might consider for the publication. If you need a copy of the questionnaire, contact Jeanne Ballantine at

[jeanne.ballantine@wright.edu](mailto:jeanne.ballantine@wright.edu) or Department of Sociology, Wright State University, Dayton, OH 45435.  
The committee thanks you!

## **FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES: RESEARCH GRANT COMPETITIONS IN IES**

Undersecretary Grover Whitehurst announced that initial grant competitions for FY 04 have been announced in the federal register, and are described on the U.S. Department of Education web site at: <http://www.ed.gov/programs/edresearch/applicant.html>

## **RESEARCH POSITION AT RAND CORPORATION**

RAND is searching for a History/Organizational Ethnography Expert to work as part of a major reform of Qatar's public education system. This position will be based in Santa Monica, California for a two-year term. The Government of Qatar has approved a reform plan to establish a new K-12 education system in Qatar. RAND has worked to establish the research basis for the reform activities and is charged with ensuring the quality of the implementation effort and with assessing the overall implementation of the reform.

**Specific Duties and Responsibilities:** The History Expert will document the reform effort and collect data and information necessary to produce a detailed report on its implementation. The expert will report to the RAND Principal Investigator directing the reform implementation and work closely with other project staff on such tasks as developing key concepts underlying the design of data collection and reporting, determining reform activities to be documented and most appropriate research methods to employ, developing instruments for use by various research staff to collect data, assisting in data collection, consulting on design of data storage and retrieval system for access by various reform stakeholders, and producing reports that describe the history of the project and the implementation of key reform activities.

The successful candidate must work well with both the RAND team and with the Qatari partners. Demonstrated strong research, analytic and writing skills are critical. A portfolio of published work is required to be considered for the position.

**Educational requirements:** Masters required; PhD strongly preferred. The advanced degree will ideally be in history, although a degree in education, public policy, anthropology, or other social science will be considered.

**Specific technical skills required:** Candidates should be familiar with trends in education reform, including decentralization and privatization. Experience working in education or on education topics is desirable. Knowledge and understanding of international education-sector policies and reforms is desirable. Individuals with experience working on international projects related to education or other human capital issues are strongly encouraged to apply. Candidates with Arabic language skills are preferred.

**Related experience required:** Minimum 3 years experience with PhD; 5 years experience for Master's-level candidates.

**To apply:** Visit the RAND employment website <http://www.rand.org/jobs/>. Job reference# 001274. RAND is an equal opportunity employer. Applications from candidates of minority backgrounds are

encouraged.

## **AIR PREDOCTORAL STUDIES FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM**

The American Institutes for Research and the Johns Hopkins University Department of Sociology are pleased to invite applicants for the AIR Fellowship Program for Predoctoral Studies in Education Research. The program supports advanced training in educational research and evaluation for exceptionally able candidates in the Department of Sociology at Johns Hopkins University who wish to pursue a concentration in sociology of education as a core component of their graduate studies. AIR Fellows receive financial support for two years of graduate study (tuition and school-year stipend at the prevailing level established by the department for its financial aid packages), a paid summer internship at AIR's Washington, D. C. division to introduce Fellows to research opportunities and allow first-hand participation in on-going research, and a \$500/year training supplement for professional development activities, including attendance at professional meetings. At the dissertation stage, Fellows may also apply to AIR for dissertation funding to support research costs (other than salary), up to a maximum of \$5000.

The Department of Sociology, for its part, provides up to three years of additional financial aid (including training supplement), research training through coursework and apprenticeships, and close, supportive mentoring.

This partnership between AIR and the Department of Sociology is to encourage educational research and evaluation that is sensitive to the social context through rigorous formal training and "hands on" research involvement.

AIR Fellows are selected by AIR from among candidates nominated by the department who have been admitted into the Ph.D. program under its regular admissions review. One Fellow will be appointed annually. It is expected that most Fellows will be appointed from among incoming students, but advanced students also are eligible.

### **Sociology of Education at Hopkins**

Sociology as a recognized discipline was introduced at Hopkins in 1959, when James S. Coleman was recruited from the University of Chicago to found a new department. He arrived with an exciting vision for sociology at Hopkins: empirically rigorous, theoretically eclectic, and problem driven. As the preeminent sociologist of education of that era, problems surrounding the functioning of schools as social institutions, including the role of schools in furthering the dual causes of educational quality and educational equality, were at the forefront of Coleman's personal scholarly agenda. Under his leadership, the Hopkins sociology department quickly established itself as one of the premier graduate programs in the world for training and research in the sociology of education. It remains so today.

Half the department's faculty conduct research in this area, including three (Alexander, DeLuca, and Plank) for whom sociology of education is a primary focus. And in 2004 - 2005 the list will expand to include Pam Bennett, who will be joining the Department as a new tenure-track member of the faculty (Bennett did her Ph.D. at the University of Michigan and is at Hopkins this year as a Spencer Foundation Post-doctoral Fellow.). Additional training opportunities are available with distinguished affiliated faculty at the Center for Social Organization of Schools, an on-campus education research and development center, and the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

Since 1990 five Chairs of the Sociology of Education Section of the American Sociological Association and three editors of the journal *Sociology of Education* have been Hopkins faculty or former students. The department's graduates occupy positions of distinction in the academy, research centers, and government service agencies.

These accomplishments flow from a deep institutional commitment to the field of sociology of education and its advancement. The AIR Fellowship Program for Predoctoral Studies in Education Research both honors and furthers that commitment by providing the means to recruit and then prepare exceptionally able students to engage in educational studies of the highest quality.

### **The American Institutes for Research**

Since its founding in 1946, the American Institutes for Research has been using the tools of the social and behavioral sciences to inform public policy and improve practice in the areas of education, health, organizational performance, and life quality. The firm's involvement in education R & D is longstanding: AIR was the lead contractor for the massive Project Talent study, launched in 1960 as the first large scale study of American youth.

Education studies currently make up the largest area of AIR's portfolio, involving about half of its 800 professional staff. AIR's education program areas include adult education and literacy, education finance, education technology, education assessment, elementary and secondary education, higher education, international and comparative education, special education, and the Education Statistics Service Institute, which services the R & D needs of, and provides programmatic support for, the National Center for Education Statistics.

AIR has offices in Palo Alto, California, Concord, Massachusetts, and the Washington, D. C., area. The company's merger in 1995 with Pelavin Associates, Inc., a Washington research firm specializing in education studies, expanded its D. C. presence dramatically. Sol H. Pelavin, who founded Pelavin Associates, Inc. in 1982, now serves as AIR's President and Chief Executive Officer.

This partnership between AIR and the sociology department is an expression of the firm's commitment to the advancement of the social sciences and to the use of the social sciences in addressing social problems.

### **The AIR Fellowship Program: Programmatic Structure**

Fellows will pursue the same program of study as all department Ph.D. candidates, using the elective component of the Ph.D. curriculum to concentrate studies in the substance and methods of sociology of education. Specifically, Fellows will take, as elective courses, at least two advanced courses in research methods beyond the three that are required of all students and two substantive courses in sociology of education. Students who receive fellowships at the pre-dissertation phase of their studies will be encouraged to participate in research with faculty members, either by working on an existing study or developing, with faculty supervision, an independent project. Additionally, at least one of the two research placement certifications required for the Ph.D. will involve research in the sociology of education. Fellows will spend one summer, usually the summer between the first and second year of Fellowship support, working as paid interns at the D.C. offices of AIR.

Acceptance of an AIR Fellowship entails no obligation to AIR beyond the curricular requirements specified above.

For additional information on the AIR Fellowship Program for Predoctoral Studies in Education Research, contact Amy Cline ([sociology@jhu.edu](mailto:sociology@jhu.edu)).

The Johns Hopkins University is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, disability, marital status, veteran status, or any other occupationally irrelevant criteria. The University promotes affirmative action for minorities, women, disabled persons, and veterans.

## **2ND EDITION NOW AVAILABLE**

*Schools and Society: A Sociological Approach to Education*, edited by Jeanne Ballantine, Wright State University, and Joan Z. Spade, SUNY-Brockport, published by Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, ©2004

For more information, see

[http://www.wadsworth.com/cgi-wadsworth/course\\_products\\_wp.pl?fid=M2b&discipline\\_number=3&product\\_isbn\\_issn=0534619568](http://www.wadsworth.com/cgi-wadsworth/course_products_wp.pl?fid=M2b&discipline_number=3&product_isbn_issn=0534619568)

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## **FUTURE NEWSLETTER ITEMS**

Please e-mail any section-related news and announcements to

Tom Hoffer

[thoffer@norcmail.uchicago.edu](mailto:thoffer@norcmail.uchicago.edu)

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