For Immediate Release

Trailblazing Sociologist Receives National Creativity Award

Dr. Patricia Leavy has just been announced as the recipient of the 2014 American Creativity Association Special Achievement Award. The ACA honors achievements in innovation and creativity in all fields from medicine to technology to education. They have honored pioneers including astronaut John Glenn (astronaut), Jack Kilby (inventor of the microchip), and Ann Medlock (journalist & founder of Giraffe Heroes Project) as well as corporate groups including LEGO and Pixar Animation Studios. Dr. Leavy is the first sociologist to receive this honor.

Dr. Leavy is receiving this award for her work advancing arts-based research in the public domain. Arts-based research merges the creative arts with scientific or social research in order to make the products of research more accessible to the public (scholarly research may be represented as a play, visual art installation, or novel, for instance). Dr. Leavy is the founding editor for the Social Fictions book series which is the first book series ever published by an academic press to publish books written entirely in literary forms but grounded in scholarly research. They publish novels, plays, short story and poetry collections written by leading scholars and covering a range of pressing social issues. The books are intended to promote deep engagement and reflection in college classes and to extend that learning to diverse public audiences.

Dr. Leavy is receiving her award on September 12th in Philadelphia. Here is an advance copy of what the ACA plans to read at the award ceremony:

Dr. Patricia Leavy is a trailblazing sociologist and one of the world’s most influential leaders in arts-based research (ABR). Arts-based research is a transdisciplinary approach to knowledge-building that merges the creative arts with research practices across the disciplines. A primary strength of arts-based research is the ability to extend public scholarship. In a contemporary context Dr. Leavy has been the world’s most vocal advocate of ABR as a means of creative and public scholarship. In addition to the many books she has authored on the topic, including the best-selling and beloved Method Meets Art: Arts-Based Research Practice, Dr. Leavy has taken her work public by routinely talking with media, publishing op-eds and blogs including for The Huffington Post and The Creativity Post, and speaking at universities and international conferences. Of her many achievements, she is widely recognized for pioneering the Social Fictions book series which is the first book series published by an academic press to solely publish the products of ABR. The series, published by Sense Publishers, includes full-length novels, short story collections, poetry and plays written by professors and researchers and grounded in scholarly research. The Social Fictions series represents a watershed moment in the academy and publishing and is a landmark achievement. Dr. Leavy’s work has had a profound impact on research practices and the dissemination of research findings within and beyond the academy on an international scale and for this we honor her as a visionary.

Patricia Leavy, PhD. earned her PhD in Sociology at Boston College in 2002. She was a tenured Associate Professor of Sociology at Stonehill College from 2002-2012 where she also
served as Founding Director of the Gender Studies Program and the Chairperson of the Sociology & Criminology Department. Dr. Leavy previously taught at Boston College, Northeastern University and Curry College. In 2012 Dr. Leavy left academia to focus her full-time efforts on her work as an author, independent researcher and public intellectual. Dr. Leavy has published 14 nonfiction books to date in the areas of innovative approaches to research methodology. A selection of those books includes: *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Oxford University Press, 2014); *Fiction as Research Practice* (Left Coast Press, 2013); *Essentials of Transdisciplinary Research: Using Problem-Centered Methodologies* (Left Coast Press, 2011) and *Method Meets Art: Arts-Based Research Practice* (Guilford Publications, 2009, 2015). She is also the author of two novels that are grounded in interview research she conducted with women over the course of a decade, *American Circumstance* (Sense Publishers, 2013) and *Low-Fat Love* (Sense Publishers, 2011). Dr. Leavy is also editor for 5 book series including *Understanding Qualitative Research* (Oxford University Press) and 4 series with Sense Publishers including *Social Fictions*. A vocal advocate of public scholarship, Dr. Leavy has appeared on national news, radio and is regularly quoted by the print and online news media (for example, *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *USA Today*). She has regular blogs in *The Huffington Post*, *The Creativity Post* and *We Are the Real Deal* and publishes freelance op-eds. Dr. Leavy is the recipient of the 2014 Special Achievement Award from the American Creativity Association. In recognition of her remarkable contributions to the discipline of sociology The New England Sociological Association named Dr. Leavy the 2010 “New England Sociologist of the Year.” She has also been nominated for the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry’s Lifetime Achievement Award and remains on the list of active nominees.

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