The Pedagogy of Precarity: Laboring to Learn in the New Economy

In this dissertation, I argue that a new style of learning is emerging amidst changes in the labor market. I call that new style of learning the pedagogy of precarity and emphasize that it challenges the ways we confer status, jobs, and life chances according to one’s accumulation of qualifications. In sociology, we refer to the systematic distribution of status, jobs, and life chances according to formal qualifications as credentialism. The pedagogy of precarity is a challenge to credentialism and in this dissertation I show how a sample of open learners sought a different way to connect their learning to their labor when neither felt valuable after the 2008 crisis and subsequent recession.

In my study, precarity becomes pedagogized and participants “labor to learn” rather than learn to labor. The pedagogy of precarity relies upon autodidactic communalism, a model for learning that puts the burden of self-education on the individual and the community that she can access by successfully adopting a habitus of trainability. This burden is hard work, but is also described as enjoyable and life giving. Like any labor where one believes they have self-determination over the conditions of work and the culture of that work, the pedagogy of precarity instilled a kind of faux-dignity through a taste for usefulness, a taste for craftsmanship, and a taste for association.

However, these tastes do not come separate of a taste for risk, and thus the pedagogy of precarity lacks sustainability, just as all labor lacks sustainability if not coupled with social insurance. This dissertation broadly begs us to consider how we advocate for social insurance through institutional arrangements like credentialism when self-determination and voluntary association can at least temporarily make people feel alive, worthy, and productive. Standing (2011) predicted the potential rise of populism for the precariat; the pedagogy of precarity,
in its distaste of institutional arrangements, could be one more way that members-only populism becomes taken-for-granted. How do we take seriously the ills of elitism but not succumb to the kind of scapegoating populism that is threatening democracy? This seems to be the prevailing question of our time and the pedagogy of precarity is one more way that question can be posed.

Committee
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2016-17

ELIZABETH MAGNER

The Role of Collective Identity and Framing Processes in Advocacy Efforts to Implement Farm Animal Protection Policy

This study explores efforts by the farm animal protection movement to pass anti-CAFO (concentrated animal feeding operation) farm animal protection legislation in Massachusetts and Rhode Island from 2012 to 2015, aiming to understand why successful outcomes were limited, through the theoretical lenses of collective identities and collective action frames. CAFOs, the predominant source of food animals in the United States, rear animals in intensely confined conditions, which raises significant animal welfare concerns, and also exact serious damage on workers, the environment, public health, and rural communities. Given the animal cruelty inflicted by CAFOs, animal protection organizations have invested much time and effort into passing legislation to ban intensive confinement practices, yet have encountered significant challenges in doing so in some states. This thesis aims to help explain why and how some of these challenges arise, and how they might be avoided or overcome in future efforts. To this end, I describe the collective identities of Massachusetts and Rhode Island farmers and professional farm animal advocates, and analyze the ways that these collective identities interact with and inform framing strategies. I conclude that some elements of the farm animal advocate identity conflict with farmer collective identity, and, further, that consequent advocacy framing strategies at times significantly hinder attempts to pass farm animal protection legislation.

Committee
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JEFFREY STOKES
What’s Love Got To Do With It? Marital Quality And Mental Health In Older Age

There is much prior research on the benefits of marriage for adults, including for mental and physical health (Carr and Springer 2010). Further research has demonstrated that the quality of one’s marriage provides benefits, and not merely the status itself (see Carr and Springer 2010; Proulx, Helms, and Buehler 2007). A close, salient relationship such as marriage is not experienced in isolation, but is rather an interpersonal system, where the characteristics, feelings, and opinions of each partner can influence the other (Berscheid and Ammazzalorso 2001; Carr et al. 2014; Moorman 2016). However, less research has been performed that takes advantage of dyadic data to determine whether and how a partner’s marital quality may affect one’s own well-being (Carr et al. 2014; Kenny 1996). Moreover, emotional experiences rarely remain truly private; individuals unconsciously signal and express their feelings to others, and can even transmit these emotional experiences to close social partners (Christakis and Fowler 2013; Hatfield, Cacioppo, and Rapson 1994).

The present dissertation examines the associations among older husbands’ and wives’ marital quality and well-being, using two sources of dyadic data, a range of measures of marital quality and well-being, and advanced analytic strategies appropriate for longitudinal and cross-sectional data. Older couples can differ from their younger and midlife counterparts, as both men and women trim their broader social networks in later life and increasingly focus on their closest and most rewarding relationships, such as marriage (Carstensen, Isaacowitz, and Charles 1999; Mancini and Bonanno 2006). Gendered roles may shift in later life, as well, as older adults cease activities such as child-rearing and full-time employment (Bookwala 2012). Thus, potential differences according to gender are also explicitly tested. The results of this dissertation will shed greater light on how older couples’ perceptions of marital quality influence various aspects of spouses’ well-being, cross-sectionally and over time.

Mutual Influence and Older Married Adults’ Anxiety Symptoms: Results from The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing analyzes cross-sectional dyadic data from 1,114 married older couples surveyed in the initial wave of The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA; Kenny 2014), 2009-2011. Dyadic structural equation models (SEM) examined the direct and indirect associations between husbands’ and wives’ reports of marital strain and generalized anxiety symptoms in later life. Findings revealed that perceptions of marital strain were related with husbands’ and wives’ own generalized anxiety symptoms. Further, husbands’ anxiety symptoms were significantly related with wives’ anxiety symptoms, and vice versa, illustrating bi-directional feedback. Lastly, husbands’ and wives’ perceptions of marital strain were significantly indirectly related with their partners’ anxiety symptoms, with these associations being mediated by spouses’ own anxiety symptoms. These results suggest that
emotional contagion may be the pathway for partner effects of marital strain on spouses’ well-being. Findings also suggest that efforts to reduce anxiety symptoms may be most effective when taking marital context and quality into account.

Two-Wave Dyadic Analysis of Marital Quality and Loneliness in Later Life: Results From The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing analyzes dyadic reports of marital quality and loneliness over a two-year period, using longitudinal dyadic data collected from 932 older married couples who participated in both of the first two waves of The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA), collected from 2009-2013. Two-wave lagged dependent variable (LDV) models tested the cognitive perspective on loneliness, emotional contagion theory, and actor-partner interdependence by examining whether husbands’ and wives’ reports of marital quality and loneliness at baseline predicted both spouses’ loneliness two years later. Results indicated that one’s own perceptions of negative marital quality at baseline were related with greater loneliness after two years, supporting the cognitive perspective on loneliness. Further, both spouses’ reports of loneliness at baseline were related with loneliness two years later, supporting emotional contagion theory. Partners’ reports of marital quality were not related with future loneliness, failing to support actor-partner interdependence.

Do "His” and “Her” Marriage Influence One Another? Older Spouses’ Marital Quality Over Four Years uses two-wave longitudinal data from the Disability and Use of Time (DUST) supplement to the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) to examine associations between husbands’ and wives’ reports of marital quality over a four-year period. The sample consisted of 209 older married couples who participated in both the 2009 and 2013 waves of DUST. Lagged dependent variable (LDV) models tested whether older husbands’ and wives’ perceptions of marital quality are themselves subject to emotional contagion, by examining whether baseline reports of marital quality were related with one’s own and a partner’s marital quality after four years. Results indicated that (a) husbands reported better marital quality than their wives in both 2009 and 2013, (b) for both husbands and wives, baseline marital quality was significantly related with both one’s own and one’s partner’s marital quality four years later, and (c) there were no differences in effects according to gender. These findings offer support for the framework of “his” and “her” marriage, as well as emotional contagion theory.

Together, these papers examine whether and how older spouses’ reports of marital quality and well-being are associated with one another, with a particular emphasis on assessing emotional contagion as a potential explanation and mechanism for dyadic partner effects. The results of these articles contribute empirically and theoretically to the literature(s) on marital quality and well-being; spousal interdependence; and emotional contagion. I discuss the implications of these articles for theory and future research concerning marriage and well-being in later life.

Committee
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2015-16

FATIMA SATTA
Rights, Responsibilities, and Resettlement: The Competing Notions of Refugee Belonging in a U.S. Welfare Program

Historically, the U.S. has been among the top nation-states of global refugee resettlement, and it continues to be, despite recent domestic political rhetoric against this policy. The U.S. welfare state provides resources to contracted nonprofit immigrant-serving organizations to carry out the U.S. resettlement policy. However, scholars under-examine front-line welfare policy practices with refugees. This area is critical to examine in this historical moment, because scholars argue the rise of neoliberalism has negatively affected the nonprofit human service sector’s capacity to provide social rights to the most vulnerable (Hasenfeld and Garrow 2012). Drawing on participant-observation at a northeastern resettlement organization and 50 semi-structured interviews with front-line bureaucrats and refugees between 2010-2015, I examine how bureaucrats perceive and shape refugees’ initial processes of resettling in the U.S., and how refugees also view this experience. My dissertation found competing restrictive and inclusionary perceptions of and practices with Iraqi, Darfurian, and Bhutanese refugees, which calls into question how, and why, welfare subjects with legal refugee status, are perceived distinctly by their social locations in the shrinking and stigmatized U.S. welfare context. Additionally, my dissertation illuminates how refugees evaluate their resettlement experiences and belonging in the U.S.

I present my research in three articles:

My first article, Rights and Responsibilities: Bureaucrats’ Competing Frames about U.S. Resettlement Objectives for Refugees, examines the salient frames that bureaucrats used to describe the objectives of U.S. resettlement for refugees. I found two competing frameworks informed their perceptions: market citizenship responsibilities and human rights. By this, I mean bureaucrats discussed their role to provide services either geared at making refugees responsible on a path to self-sufficiency, or to provide them with human rights. While I found the responsibilities frame was more dominant, contrary to past findings (Clevenger et al. 2014; Nawyn 2007), frame usage differed depending on one’s professional status and level of experience. Experienced bureaucrats tended to emphasize the responsibilities frame as most important for assisting refugees with becoming self-sufficient in American society. In contrast, less experienced, temporary bureaucrats generally emphasized the rights frame as most important to assist refugees with gaining membership in the U.S. These insights expand recent immigrant welfare scholarship by illuminating how different local level bureaucratic roles, in contrast to organizational (Nawyn 2010) or city level differences (Clevenger et al. 2014), correlate with distinct frames about refugees. Finally, I discuss how
frame usage informs competing notions of the street-level politics of refugee belonging in American society.

My second article, *Refugees Will Be Poor! Managing Diverging Mobility Transitions to the American Welfare Class*, explores how bureaucrats evaluate Iraqi and Bhutanese refugees’ “deservingness” of resettlement benefits in the U.S., based on their compliance with self-sufficiency resettlement goals. I argue that bureaucrats divide refugees into “deserving” and “undeserving” poor categories using ethnic and social class distinctions. Specifically, I examined how bureaucrats made decisions to discipline refugees to adhere to a self-sufficiency path. Consequently, these decisions revealed their distinct perceptions of refugee deservingness. Contrary to past scholarship that found race as most salient in informing welfare disciplinary practices and notions of deservingness (Schram 2005; Soss, Fording and Schram 2008), I found bureaucrats used refugees’ ethnicity as a marker for class origins to make decisions to discipline them. They identified Iraqis as having professional class origins; thus, they experienced “unwanted” downward mobility in the U.S. welfare class. In contrast, they viewed Bhutanese as having low class origins; thus, they experienced “desired” upward mobility in the same welfare class. As a result, bureaucrats thought more discipline was needed with Iraqis, compared to the Bhutanese because of their distinct behavioral reactions to their respective mobility shifts. Thus, bureaucrats marked Iraqis as “undeserving” and Bhutanese as “deserving” in their processes of resettling in the U.S.

My third article, *Waiting for Mobility: Refugee Incorporation as a Process of Temporal Belonging*, examines Iraqi and Darfuri refugees’ sense of belonging, on their path toward social mobility in the U.S. I found Iraqis perceived waiting as a lasting obstacle on a generally blocked mobility path; consequently, they felt a sense of enduring social insecurity and a lack of belonging. In contrast, Darfurians perceived waiting as a temporary obstacle to achievable mobility; thus, they felt a sense of belonging, despite feeling a temporary state of social insecurity. Refugees who reconstructed a generally secure past professional class origin (Iraqis), compared to their insecure U.S. class location, expressed more frustration about waiting for mobility. In contrast, refugees who reconstructed a more politically and economically insecure past origin (Darfurians), compared to their secure conditions in the U.S., expressed positive hope for mobility. Bridging welfare theories of waiting (Auyero 2011; Reid 2013) with theories of belonging (Nawyn 2011; Yuval-Davis 2006), I build an immigrant incorporation process theory of temporal belonging to illuminate how refugees’ perceptions of ‘waiting for mobility’ inform their feelings of belonging in the U.S.

Committee
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SARAH WOODSIDE
Social Mission or Revenue Generation?: Challenges and Opportunities in Social Enterprise From Competing Institutional Logics

Social enterprises are nonprofit, for-profit or hybrid organization that use business methods to create social change (Dees 2007; Light 2005; Martin and Osberg 2007; Neck, Brush, and Allen 2009). If it succeeds, the social enterprise model could prove to be a viable pathway to greater social justice in an era of decreasing funding for government services and nonprofits (Emerson and Twersky 1996; Harding 2004; Murphy and Coombs 2009; Wilson 2008). However, skeptics worry that the perils of privatization, bottom-line thinking, and deceptive marketing potentially embodied by the "business methods" that social enterprises employ may undermine the potential of this new approach to solving social problems (Bateman and Chang 2012; Farmer 2009; Nega and Schneider 2014). The three articles of this dissertation examined the ways social entrepreneurs perceived and managed tensions between social mission and market institutional logics. Their ability (or lack thereof) to reconcile these contradictory imperatives could contribute to whether social enterprises ultimately succeed or fail as vehicles for positive social change.

Social Entrepreneurs at the Crossroads: Four Approaches to Responding to Dual Institutional Logics suggests that the widely accepted characterization of social entrepreneurs as compassionate individuals motivated to address intractable social problems innovatively (Alvord, Brown and Letts 2004; Lehner and Germak 2014; Mair and Marti 2006; Miller, Grimes, McMullen and Vogus 2012) is simplistic. From in-depth interviews with twenty (inter)nationally recognized social entrepreneurs I derived four distinct categories: Disillusioned Dreamers, Social Capitalists, Do-Sometings, and Bridgebuilders. Half of these respondents did not perceive tensions between logics; another quarter did not wrestle with the tensions they did perceive. Only Bridgebuilders perceived tensions and then persisted in focusing on both logics and spheres of actors to harness synergies. As a result, only Bridgebuilders offer a truly hybrid model for social mission work within the current economic context, whereas the others hew toward a single dominant logic.

One Size Does Not Fit All: Legal Form and US WISEs focuses on work integration social enterprises (WISEs), organizations that address the chronic unemployment of marginalized populations. The data demonstrated that contrary to the expectation that WISEs would exemplify "contested" organizations (Besharov and Smith 2014), eight of the ten WISEs studied did not experience significant conflict between social mission and market logics. Rather, WISEs generally had one logic that dominated their operations: a market logic in for-profit WISEs and a social mission logic in nonprofit WISEs. Beneficiaries’ employability emerged as an important variable, with for-profit WISEs creating jobs for more employable
populations and nonprofits offering job training and "wraparound" services to harder-to-employ populations. Only two WISEs experienced substantial tensions, when social entrepreneurs attempted to prioritize a job training/services mission within a for-profit legal form. This data demonstrates that a job creation approach aligns best with a for-profit WISE form and a job training/services approach to a nonprofit WISE form. However, neither form has succeeded in creating a system-transforming model that successfully combines revenue generation with a robust training/services/job creation mission. This suggests that breaking traditional nonprofit and for-profit patterns to deliver substantial market and social mission outcomes within a single organization is a significant challenge.

*Stakeholder Resistance to Social Enterprise Hybridity* examines how social entrepreneurs perceive the support of key stakeholders in their attempts to balance competing social mission and market logics. Despite evidence of social interest in ethical capitalism, this data suggests that well-resourced stakeholders push social entrepreneurs to prioritize price, revenue generation, and measurement. This includes both traditional organizational stakeholders and hybrid-specific stakeholders. Customers and clients demanded low prices and high value. Donors demanded quantification and impact measurement. Investors expected market rate financial return. Finally, social enterprise gatekeeper organizations (fellowship granting bodies) were focused on the market logic characteristics of sustainability, scale, and entrepreneurial ability, pushing the field toward market logic modes of operating. Social entrepreneurs generally responded by acquiescing to pressure to emphasize a market logic in their interactions. Counter to current literature that suggests social entrepreneurs should problem-solve to avoid single logic dominance, social entrepreneurs generally allowed price, business strategy, competition and measurement to shape their interactions with stakeholders. Given the importance of stakeholder buy-in for organizational legitimacy, the field of social enterprise needs to find a way to create and capture stakeholder support for dual logics rather than depending on individual social entrepreneurs to withstand the push toward marketization.

Overall, despite persistent efforts at creative solutions to social problems by some individuals, the research shows a strong undertow for social enterprises to adopt business logics and business models.

Committee
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**AMANDA FREEMAN**

*The Myth of Self-Sufficiency as Success for Low-Income Single Mothers*

With large numbers of low-income single mothers facing a difficult job market while simultaneously experiencing the erosion of social welfare aid, it is vitally important to understand their efforts and the obstacles they face, trying to move out of poverty. This dissertation examines the ways in which a group of low-income single mothers, who were at the center of the ethnographic study presented here, struggled and also succeeded. Attention is paid to the institutional and personal obstacles that impacted the progress of the women. The research, including annual interviews, took place over a three-year period from 2009-2012, as part of a larger ethnographic study on the low-income single parents who were participants in a community based antipoverty program in South Boston. The articles call into question the ways in which social institutions like schools, workplaces, and social services agencies affect the progress of single mother-headed families, raising challenges to conventional approaches and embedded assumptions about social mobility. The mothers’ stories presented in the articles speak directly to the myth of the welfare queen single mother by offering a view of a group of low-income single mothers working very hard to parent, work and attend school.

The research is presented in three articles:

Article One: Social Network Development Among Low-income Single Mothers: Potential for Bridging, Bonding and Building Social Capital. This article explores social networks formed by the interviewees through their participation in the antipoverty program. The interview data
refute the claim that bonds within the community hinder women in their attempts to move their families out of poverty. We observed benefits from social networks that emerged as a result of program participation in the following categories: practical support, emotional support, modeling and mentoring, and expansion of information resources. We also uncovered a new kind of social network formed among low-income women who were actively pursuing a path out of poverty. These hybrid networks, building social networks (BSNs), form among people who are straddling two worlds, and as such, are uniquely positioned to help one another.

Article Two: Moving “Up and Out,” Together: Exploring the Benefits of the Mother-Child Bond for Low-Income Single Mother-headed Families. It is a commonly held belief, even among poverty researchers, that bearing children or bearing additional children negatively impacts the social mobility of low-income single mothers. The data here offer a more complex view of the interactions between mothers and children as they both try to move forward, suggesting that the mother-child bond may be a source of motivation and support. Benefits of the mother-child bond emerged in the following categories: forming an alliance around education for mother and child, viewing children as the primary motivation to move forward, and changing behaviors in order to be role models for children.

Article Three: The Winding Path Back to School: Hidden Obstacles to Higher Education for Low-Income Single Mothers. This article explores obstacles to the pursuit of higher education for these low-income single mothers, uncovering challenges that have yet to be explored in the literature about higher education for low-income parents. Findings revealed institutional and practical obstacles to their pursuit of higher education, including conflicting advice from “experts” and difficulty retaining public benefits while attending school. The primary obstacles that emerged were categorized as follows: (a) winding paths and dead ends, (b) difficult transitions, (c) short-sighted decisions, and (d) inflexible institutions. Also evident among interviewees were misconceptions about the policies and practices of institutions of higher education, such as not predicting the difficulty of transferring credits between schools and lack of understanding about differences between degree programs.

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MARGARET WILLIS

Interpreting “Big Data”: Rock Star Expertise, Analytical Distance, and Self-Quantification
The recent proliferation of technologies to collect and analyze "Big Data" has changed the research landscape, making it easier for some to use unprecedented amounts of real-time data to guide decisions and build ‘knowledge.’ In the three articles of this dissertation, I examine what these changes reveal about the nature of expertise and the position of the researcher.

In the first article, "Monopoly or Generosity? ‘Rock Stars’ of Big Data, Data Democrats, and the Role of Technologies in Systems of Expertise," I challenge the claims of recent scholarship, which frames the monopoly of experts and the spread of systems of expertise as opposing forces. I analyze video recordings (N= 30) of the proceedings of two professional conferences about Big Data Analytics (BDA), and I identify distinct orientations towards BDA practice among presenters: (1) those who argue that BDA should be conducted by highly specialized “Rock Star” data experts, and (2) those who argue that access to BDA should be “democratized” to non-experts through the use of automated technology. While the "data democrats" argue that automating technology enhances the spread of the system of BDA expertise, they ignore the ways that it also enhances, and hides, the monopoly of the experts who designed the technology. In addition to its implications for practitioners of BDA, this work contributes to the sociology of expertise by demonstrating the importance of focusing on both monopoly and generosity in order to study power in systems of expertise, particularly those relying extensively on technology.

Scholars have discussed several ways that the position of the researcher affects the production of knowledge. In "Distance Makes the Scholar Grow Fonder? The Relationship Between Analytical Distance and Critical Reflection on Methods in Big Data Analytics," I pinpoint two types of researcher "distance" that have already been explored in the literature (experiential and interactional), and I identify a third type of distance—analytical distance—that has not been examined so far. Based on an empirical analysis of 113 articles that utilize Twitter data, I find that the analytical distance that authors maintain from the coding process is related to whether the authors include explicit critical reflections about their research in the article. Namely, articles in which the authors automate the coding process are significantly less likely to reflect on the reliability or validity of the study, even after controlling for factors such as article length and author’s discipline. These findings have implications for numerous research settings, from studies conducted by a team of scholars who delegate analytic tasks, to “big data” or “e-science” research that automates parts of the analytic process.

Individuals who engage in self-tracking—collecting data about themselves or aspects of their lives for their own purposes—occupy a unique position as both researcher and subject. In the sociology of knowledge, previous research suggests that low experiential distance between researcher and subject can lead to more nuanced interpretations but also blind the researcher to his or her underlying assumptions. However, these prior studies of distance fail to explore what happens when the boundary between researcher and subject collapses in “N of one” studies. In "The Collapse of Experiential Distance and the Inescapable Ambiguity of Quantifying Selves,” I borrow from art and literary theories of grotesquerie—another instance of the collapse of boundaries—to examine the collapse of boundaries in self-tracking. Based on empirical analyses of video testimonies (N=102) and interviews (N=7) with members of the Quantified Self community of self-trackers, I find that ambiguity and multiplicity are integral facets of these data practices. I discuss the implications of these findings for the sociological study of researcher distance, and also the practical implications for the neoliberal turn that assigns responsibility to individuals to collect, analyze, and make the best use of personal data.

Committee
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LIAM MARTIN
To Go Straight Or Return To The Street? Life After Prison In An Old Industrial City
In the wake of decades of growth in the American prison system, unprecedented numbers of people flow out of penal institutions each year: 750,000 are released from state and federal prison, and 7 million more from local jails. Reentry on this scale creates a host of new policy challenges and important openings for social science research. I study the problems of reentry ethnographically. Based on nine months living in a halfway house for men leaving prison and jail, I examine how the prison experience follows people after they leave, the forces and processes that push people back toward prison, and the strategies of former prisoners confronting often extreme forms of social exclusion. My reentry research doubles as a ground-up account of the American prison boom: a window on the world of a small group of men and women rebuilding their lives under the long shadow of mass incarceration.

I present the research in three articles:

*Reentry within the Carceral: Foucault, Race and Prisoner Reentry* uses concepts from Michel Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish* to re-frame the way we think about reentry, while also taking account of the deep racial inequalities that stamp the American prison system. I argue that people leaving prison are branded delinquent in a society infused with technologies of surveillance and control. In this context, reentry is best conceptualized not as a move from confinement to freedom, but along a carceral continuum of graded intensity. Further, the racialized features of social control in the United States often leave black and brown bodies in themselves marked delinquent. An individual need not commit a crime or spend time inside to become enclosed in social spaces characterized by exclusion and close surveillance. In the case of many black prisoners, formal processing by police and prisons only intensifies a process already underway, and the experience of reentry is best understood as a particular moment in long-term process that begins before imprisonment.

*The Social Logic of Recidivism: Cultural Capital from Prison to the Street* develops a conceptual framework for explaining the cycles of incarceration that so often enveloped the lives of participants. I argue that the growth of incarceration, concentrated geographically along race and class lines, establishes the structural context in which the choice to enter street culture makes sense for large numbers of former prisoners. In high incarceration neighborhoods where street culture is predominant, large-scale movements in and out of prison create networks of relationships that traverse and blur carceral boundaries. Prison and street cultures become partially fused at different times they are populated by many of the same people - and because of this overlap, the skills and knowledges people learn while incarcerated are also valuable in the street. That is, incarceration involves an accumulation of cultural capital that increases the potential rewards of street crime. Rather than providing roads toward a new life, incarceration creates a structure of constraints and opportunities that pushes people back toward the street.

*Free But Still Walking the Yard: Prisonization and the Problems of Reentry* examines the deep and lasting changes that people carry with them after leaving prison. I argue that prisonization transforms the habitus, as penal institutions are deposited within individuals as lasting dispositions, motor schemes and bodily automatisms. This prisonization of the habitus can be observed in the everyday practices of former prisoners: the experience of physical space, the rituals of cleaning and bodily care, and the practices of consuming food. While some of these habits and dispositions may seem innocuous, they express an underlying adaptation of the convict body to the rules and rhythms of prison life that can have powerfully disruptive effects during reentry: creating feelings of stress and anxiety, making it difficult to function in routine social situations, amplifying exclusion from the labor market and other institutions, and encouraging return to street cultures shared with other former prisoners.

Committee
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**RIE TANIGUCHI**
**Dueling Development Models: Japan’s Challenge to the Washington Consensus in the 1990s**

In the early 1990s, at the height of the Washington Consensus, its hegemonic model of neoliberal development was strongly challenged by Japan, the U.S.’s greatest ally. The key event characterizing this challenge occurred when Japan’s Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) began criticizing the World Bank’s famous Structural Adjustment Loans (SALs). This subsequently led to the publication of the “East Asian Miracle Report” by the World Bank financed by the Japanese government. This poses a great puzzle considering Japan’s historically submissive and politically deferential relationship with the U.S. since the end of World War II. I address two questions in my thesis to solve the above puzzle: (1) why did the Japanese state choose to oppose American ideological hegemony in the 1990s? (2) how did the ideas involved in this challenge develop within and beyond the institution of Japanese policy bureaucracy?

The theory and methods used in this paper are inspired by the historical institutionalist tradition in sociology and political science. I argue that the shift in Japan’s foreign aid strategy in the late 1980s was driven by a mixture of economic, institutional and political factors. This along with the escalating influence of the Washington Consensus and its interference with Japanese aid policy, drove Japan to oppose American ideological hegemony in the 1990s. Furthermore, tracing the policy discourses of the OECF during this period revealed that not only economic and political factors, but also the developmentalist idea that valued the central role of the state in its economic development was essential in instigating Japan’s construction and promotion of its own development model. I conclude that Japan’s challenge was both a local and a global social construct, developed in the processes of transnational interaction with other states and their actors, and drawing on internationally available economic ideas.

Committee
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2014-15

**EMILIE DUBOIS**

*The Field of Consumption: Contemporary Dynamics of Capital, Exchange, and Status*

This dissertation analyzes the field of consumption to provide an analysis of Bourdieusian cultural capital. Bourdieu introduced cultural capital to express the summed effect of intergenerational and personal institutional credentials on economic structure (1986). The
three articles of this dissertation – *Imagining Class, Precariat Production, and New Cultures of Connection* – take up the study of cultural capital in a contemporary, American context among Millennial consumers (Bourdieu 1984, 1993). These cases analyze producer and consumer experiences within the capital markets for durable goods, labor, and a barter market for services. The experiences under analysis include the design and purchase of luxury clothing, the selling of labor to temporary employers, and the barter of unlike services for a like medium of exchange. The analyses build upon Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital by tracing its role and evolution through producer and consumer exchanges in the “consumer field” (Bourdieu; 1984, 1986, 1993). The analysis of this dissertation relies on semi-structured interview, ethnographic, and survey data. In total, 96 semi-structured interviews were conducted during the data collection for the three articles. Interview data is supported by economic survey and ethnographic data for research participants.

*Imagining Class* melds postmodern and Veblenian consumer theory through informant narratives of the cynical and strategic production of conspicuous consumption enacted by both producers and consumers of the clothing brand Prep Outfitters (Featherstone 1991; Veblen 1899/1994). Upwardly mobile, young consumers believe that performing an elite lifestyle is a condition upon which financial services career success rests. The shared belief is correlated with income increases and results in an environment of aesthetic and lifestyle conformity on Wall Street.

*Precariat Production* analyzes the motivational aspects and economic benefits of collaborative production work within the online platforms of Airbnb, RelayRides, and Taskrabbit and provides insight into the nature of the new working precariat class (Standing 2009). Analysis shows that three central motivational categories drive participation: money, efficiency / environmental, and workplace flexibility. Possession of economic assets prior to beginning work as a collaborative producer is a key characteristic associated with high earning within the precarious, collaborative marketplace, yet cultural capital is not a significant correlate of high income relative to the labor market. Further, those who enjoy the most economic success within the collaborative marketplace as “high earners” are also most likely to express that a motivation of “efficiency / environmental” drives their production. The efficiency/environmental motivational finding lend a broader support for the claim of an evolution of high cultural capital expressions of *ecohabitus* (Bourdieu 1984; Schor et al. 2014).

*New Cultures of Connection* evaluates the exchanges made on an egalitarian barter market through the medium of a local currency, “time dollars.” The study uses Zelizer’s concept of a circuit of commerce (2005) to show that cultural capital limits potential trades available in the time bank and reveals that those with high cultural capital exit the market. *Ecohabitus* provides one exception to this finding as high cultural capital participants find nonmonetary value in authenticity, localism, environmentalism, holistic wellness and self-reliance. Yet, this new set of high cultural capital preferences does not pair with their exchanges as they demonstrate enduring inclination towards professionalized, market-like services. Disparities in cultural capital challenge the potential of barter networks like the “time bank” to alter the dependence of identities of market practice and success.

Committee:
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**ADAM SALTMAN**
Surviving Dispossession: Burmese migrants in Thailand’s border economic zones

This dissertation explores the intersection of gender, violence, and dispossession among Burmese migrants living in precarious circumstances in Thailand, close to the border with Myanmar. In this space, particularly in the town of Mae Sot and surrounding areas, migrants are targets of multiple intersecting technologies of governance, including the Thai state, multinational garment export processing facilities, plantation-style agricultural firms, international humanitarian NGOs, and transnational social and political networks. Through a multi-modal qualitative approach relying on collaborative action research and key informant interviews, I consider how this complex web of discursive and relational power simultaneously renders migrants invisible subjects of global supply chains and yet hyper-visible targets of humanitarian assistance and intervention. Invisible because actors associated with state or market forces performatively enforce upon migrant bodies the violent notion that they are deportable, reiterating the boundaries of sovereignty at each encounter. And visible because as migrants struggle to make ends meet working long hours for illegally low wages, NGOs spotlight their social problems and offer solutions that promote individual biowelfare but not wider transformative change. Despite what appear to be opposing forces, both forms of power contribute to the production of gendered border subjects that are healthy workers; ethical and self-reliant yet docile.

Migrants interpret and negotiate these overlapping systems, exerting agency as they rely on their own social and political networks to establish mechanisms of order that are shaped by but not necessarily subordinate to the disciplinary regimes of factories and farms, the juridical frameworks of the state, or the biopolitical gaze of NGOs. This dissertation finds that within these mechanisms, gender becomes a key discursive metaphor both to make sense of the widespread violence of displacement and to maintain collective order. Migrants’ own gendered performances of discipline are themselves a product of border precarity and forge pathways of limited agency through which migrants seek to navigate the everyday conditions of that precarity.

Throughout, this dissertation reflexively examines its own collaborative action research approach as well as humanitarian intervention on the border to identify ways that both are complicit in gendered border subjectivation. Gender in this analysis manifests itself as a set of discursive resources that NGO staff and migrants make use of as they seek to effect change—albeit in ways that tend to leave unchallenged the larger structural conditions of violence and neoliberal sovereignty that undergird and require the formation of a docile and disposable border population. Thus, in one sense, this dissertation is about how migrants survive in a violent context of dispossession, but it is also just as much about the generative
qualities of violent life, the spaces in which agency challenges precarity, and the ways in which performatively reproduced gendered hierarchies are at the center of both precarity and resistance.

Committee
Chair: Stephen Pfohl
Members: Shawn McGuffey, Brinton Lykes, Karen Jacobsen

KIMBERLY BACHECHI

Workin’ Towards Something Steady: Aspirations and Education in a Semi-Rural Hispanic Community

Recent work on Hispanic immigrants has consistently shown a decline in educational attainment over generations-since-immigration despite the fact that advanced education is currently presented in the public arena as the foundation for economic mobility. (Telles and Ortiz). This study investigates the seeming contradiction of Hispanic youth’s disengagement from the system that is presented as the pathway to increased economic achievement. The dissertation is based on findings from a qualitative study consisting of in-depth interviews, focus groups, and ethnographic data collected during an 18 month stay in a small, semi-rural, largely Hispanic, community in New Mexico, where the local high school has a graduation rate of 55%.

Refuting claims that school disengagement emerges from either low ability or “leveled aspirations,” the findings of this study indicate that young people’s decisions are based largely on the advice that they are given regarding the economic utility of post-secondary schooling. Lacking this advice these young people determined it was not worth the risk of time out of the labor market, money, and effort that advanced schooling required. The findings of this study argue that one of the key reasons these young people disengage from school stems from the failure of any institution or individual to make it clear to students how educational credentials connect to occupational opportunities. Thus, a number of young people who have had some success at school still choose to leave because they are unconvinced that educational credentials are actually economically useful.

Committee
Chair: Stephen Pfohl
Members: Zine Magubane, Eve Spangler, Lisa (Leigh) Patel

DAVE HARKER

Service, Politics, and Identity: On Realizing the Potential of Service Learning

Service learning has emerged as one of the most popular mechanisms to promote and teach students about civic, moral, and political responsibility in American colleges and universities.
This dissertation offers a critical exploration of the potential and limitations that engagement in service activities, and service learning in particular, can offer. The research was designed to explore how individual long-term volunteers attach meaning to their service experience, as well as how these meanings are constructed. In other words, what is the process by which students come to make sense of the volunteer work in which they are engaged? Of particular interest are the potential connections between these constructed meanings and a sense of politics or a sense of social change strategies.

To explore the ways in which volunteers attach meaning to their service experience, I conducted participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and focus groups with a number of college students currently participating in a structured long-term service learning program; along with staff members of this program and of community partner organizations; and a group of comparison volunteers.

This research provides an overview of the relationships, roles, responsibilities, benefits, challenges, and overall structure and design of a long-term service learning program. Participation in a structured service learning program shapes the ways in which students think about their service as it relates to a sense of politics and social change. However, the connection between service and political engagement is often complicated by a lack of political opportunities, a perceived lack of civic skills or political knowledge, and views of politics as divisive and ineffective. This dissertation also contributes to a greater understanding of the ways in which collective identity can develop among student service learners, and how this collective identity may impact their work.

Committee
Chair: Lisa Dodson
Members: William Gamson, Eve Spangler, Deborah Piatelli, and Jennie Purnell (Political Science)

2013-14
CRISTINA LUCIER

*Behind the Screen: The Changing Face of E-waste Politics and What it Means for Environmental Justice*

For my dissertation research, I am focused on the sociopolitical relations of electronics disposal, a less-considered but increasingly important stage in the life cycle of electronics. Although much has already been written on the global trade in hazardous wastes, the Basel Convention that regulates this trade, and even the environmental injustice of the global waste trade—-with wealthy countries dumping the "negative externalities" of their consumption on vulnerable communities in the global South—the reality today appears to be more complex.

Regulators in the Basel Convention and the UN Environment Program, as well as civil society actors in industry and NGOs, have an increased interest in promoting the development of markets and infrastructure in high tech e-waste recycling. Historically, e-wastes have been both talked about, and treated as, a toxic and unwanted byproduct of the digital age. However, today key actors in the regulatory, industrial and civil society spheres are now discussing e-wastes as critical "resources" for economic and technological development. I hypothesize that uncovering the economic, technological and geopolitical drivers of this shift will reveal that the global trade in e-wastes can no longer be described as a clear-cut North/South, "perpetrator-victim," scenario, rather, it must be seen as a dynamic process where environmental inequalities are mitigated and reconstituted in new forms and at various sites.

I identify two dominant paradigms that scholars, activists, policy makers and industry actors employ in evaluating the global trade in electronic wastes. I label these two paradigms the "environmental justice evaluation" and the "resource capture evaluation." By engaging concepts from global political economy and environmental sociology (particularly, O’Connor 1979; Harvey 2003; Pellow 2003) and applying them to my case, my dissertation attempts to bring a nuanced perspective to the e-waste debate. My initial findings suggest that both of
these frameworks do not account for the key economic processes that are driving the e-waste trade. A better understanding of these processes will better illuminate the pathway to finding meaningful solutions to the persistent, presently illegal global trade in discarded electronics.

My data consists of a comprehensive examination of meeting archives from the Basel Convention (where the experts and political decision makers on this issue implement policies that affect the global e-waste trade) spanning from 1992 to the present, as well as reviews of the proceedings of other relevant actors in e-waste policy (for example, annual meetings of the global organization StEP, and publications and pamphlets from trade organizations in the US and abroad and publications from the US government). In addition, I conducted semi-structured interviews with 25 key actors in the national regulatory, global regulatory, industry and NGO spheres in order to understand how the key decision makers in the e-waste trade understand the drivers and implications of the shift "from waste to resources."

Finally, I draw on ethnographic observations conducted at a pivotal Basel Convention meeting in 2011, where a decision was made that has the potential to fundamentally reshaped the Basel Convention and enable increased global trade in discarded electronics through the development of formalized recycling centers in less-developed countries.

Committee
Chair: Brian Gareau
Members: Juliet Schor, Sarah Babb

JOHANNA PABST

Empowered Youth: The Co-Creation of Youth as Technological Citizens and Consumers Within Community-Based Technology Programs

The purpose of this study is to investigate the new media ecologies of urban, low-income youth and youth of color, and how they develop literacies and competencies around technology in the particular spaces of Community Technology Centers (CTCs), while placing them within their broader technological experiences and raced, classed, and gendered identities. This study builds on the concept of youth as experiencing a “new media ecology” in which youth engagement with technology is understood a phenomenon which connects all spheres of experience. Through this work, I refine the understanding of how marginalized young people engage with technology in order to expand our understanding of digital inequality and its effects, as well as how digital inequality and inclusion interact with young people’s identities and social worlds more broadly. Young people, marginalized by their raced, classes, and gendered identities, are both accused of being wasteful in their technology engagement, and are welcomed into these non-traditional learning spaces in order to cultivate their uses of technology into more meaningful and productive outcomes. There is a growing proliferation of informal and creative digital learning programs, and corresponding research and interrogation of the activities within these spaces. However, we
lack a full and holistic understanding of who these young people are as technological citizens and consumers, an understanding that is necessary to inform effective interventions around digital inequality.

Through qualitative research within two Boston-area Community Technology Centers, including participant observation and interviews, this study presents an analysis of how young people as agentic individuals interact with the contexts they enter into to produce new forms of agency – and disempowerment. Rather than focusing on one area of the digital learning environment or youth technological experience, as other researchers have done, I delineate a more complete and dialogic view of less-advantaged young people and their technological engagement.

My findings build on the need for supportive informal technology learning environments for marginalized youth, both in terms of providing stable environments with rich resources for technological exploration and skill-building, as well as providing learning environments which valorize and encourage youth agency and identity work. It is also necessary to recognize and allow for differences among youth in these spaces, who vary not only in terms of race, class, and gender, but also skills, abilities, interests, and motivations. I also call attention to the ways in which structural inequalities enter into these informal learning environments, resulting in their reproduction.

Committee
Chair: Stephen Pfohl
Members: Juliet Schor, C. Shawn McGuffey

ALEXANDER A. HERNANDEZ

Adapting to Technological Change in the Workplace: An assessment of the effects of information and communication technology on older workers

While much has been written about the effect of information and communication technology (ICT) on the workplace, little research has focused specifically on its effect on older workers. Using Pierre Bourdieu's theories of "capital" as a frame, I investigate how older academic faculty, clergy, and government employees have been affected by the rapid technological changes that have occurred in the workplace over the past 25 years. I conducted 75 semi-structured interviews and discovered that older workers, while generally limited in their technological familiarity and competence when compared to their younger coworkers, do have a wealth of skills that make them invaluable as employees even in the modern workplace. Through the use of their social connections and their organizational knowledge, I found that older workers are able to successfully mitigate any lack of technological skill. Moreover, as the responsibilities of workers change, because of globalization and the
automation of work, I contend that the skills embodied by older workers will be able to successfully manage the transition for all workers.

Committee
Chair: John Williamson
Members: Sara Moorman, Brian Gareau

ELIZANGELA STORELLI

Support Transfers and Well-being among Older Adults in Latin America

This research examines social support transfers, social support networks and psychological well-being among older adults (aged 60+) in five countries in Latin America: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Uruguay. Latin American countries are aging rapidly and, compared to Western Europe and North America, have had a relatively short amount of time to accommodate to their aging population (United Nations 2009). While families have traditionally served as the primary support network of older adults in the region, current demographic, social and economic changes have cast doubt on the future viability of these informal supports (Agree and Glaser 2009; United Nations 2002). In general, little is known about the receipt and provision of support to older adults in the region, and how such support is tied to their well-being as they age.

This dissertation examines support transfers, support networks and well-being of older adults in Latin America and is based on the following three research questions: 1) How is network structure associated with the receipt of financial and instrumental support among older adults in Latin America?; 2) What motivates the provision of financial or instrumental support to older adults in Latin America?; and 3) Do support transfers from kin and non-kin differently affect psychological well-being among older adults in Latin America?

To answer these questions, this study used data from the Survey on Health, Well-Being, and Aging in Latin America and the Caribbean (SABE), which includes information on over 7,000 older adults living in private homes in Buenos Aires (Argentina), Sao Paulo (Brazil), Santiago (Chile), Mexico City (Mexico) or Montevideo (Uruguay) (Peláez et al. 2000). Additionally, the study examined data on over 50,000 members of older adults’ household and family networks.

Study findings confirm the importance of network structure for the receipt of both financial and instrumental support among older adults in Latin America. They also suggest a dynamic perspective of support provision throughout the region, where members of older adult’s networks jointly navigate a mix of motivating factors to provide support to older adults in need. Lastly, results highlight the importance of kin support for the psychological well-being of older adults throughout the region. The findings presented in this dissertation provide an important first step in understanding elder support and psychological well-being in Latin America, and offer a strong foundation for future assessments throughout the region.
The Sounds of Silence: A Structural Analysis of Academic “Writer's Block”

A qualitative study based on forty four in-depth interviews with undergraduates experiencing severe difficulties with academic writing, this dissertation examines how structural factors—social class and race in particular—contribute to academic “writer’s block.” “Writer’s block,” as indicated by the clinical, individualistic nature of the term itself, tends to be viewed as a private “personal trouble” stemming from psychological problems. However, after nine years as a writing tutor, I entered into this project to interrogate whether or not academic writing block might also be understood as a “public issue.” Indeed, the data confirm there are definitive structural rather than merely psychological contributors to the problem. All of the subjects in my study perceived writing as a high stakes performance, albeit for different reasons, and their writing block can be understood as an instance of “choking” in the face of such high stakes. My findings fell largely along class lines. Many blocked working class students become aware when they enter college that they bring a deficit of the kinds of cultural capital elite institutions of higher education value and reward, while at the same time, they tend to feel significant pressure to “pay back” the sacrifices of their parents with academic achievement. Writing block, for such students, can be viewed as choking in the face of these pressures and can even contribute to the reproduction of inequalities over time. On the other hand, many blocked upper middle class students experience significant achievement pressure as an expectation to be “perfect,” and they are anxious about their ability to maintain their social class status in the current economy. The resulting pressure can produce a paralyzing writing block in such students, which represents a psychological cost of structural advantage. Finally, for blocked students whose class-race identifications place them at the margins of the college’s social structure, writing block can embody the liminality of their social status. In today’s economic climate of uncertainty, class status for students across the socioeconomic spectrum has become relatively unstable given individuals’ increased risk of downward mobility. I conclude that the apparent silence of blocked writers is often fertile with the insights of those whose voices have been stilled by the various structural crosshairs in which they find themselves. If one listens closely, one can hear in the sounds of silence truths unsaid. Superimposing a sociological vantage point on a problem otherwise viewed through a purely individualistic perspective, we can begin to trace the outlines of the haunting yet underarticulated intersections of psychology and structure.

Committee
Chair: David Karp
Members: John Williamson, Sarah Babb

**NOA MILMAN**

*When Do Mothers Matter? An Intersectional Analysis of News Media Welfare Discourses in Israel and Massachusetts.*

Taking an intersectional approach, I show how news media portrayals of neoliberal welfare reform and welfare rights movements are rooted in culture-specific racial and gendered ideologies. Using critical discourse analysis in combination with frame analysis, I analyze 462 articles published in two central newspapers in Massachusetts (The Boston Globe and The Boston Herald) and in Israel (Haaretz and Yediot Achronot) during the public debates on welfare reform in 1995 and 2003 respectively. I trace the surprising discursive success of the Israeli welfare rights movement in the news media, and compare it with the failure of their American counterparts. At the conclusion of the dissertation, I offer an intersectional cultural explanation for this phenomenon.

My findings are twofold: on the one hand, I find that the news media and elite actors used culturally-hegemonic sexist, racist, and classist discourses to stigmatize and silence welfare mothers and to justify neoliberal policies. Both the American and the Israeli news media tapped into readily available gender-specific racial discourses to discredit welfare recipients and welfare activists and to silence them. On the other hand, I demonstrate that the Israeli case is nevertheless quite distinct. The Israeli movement was more successful in discursively challenging the neoliberal welfare discourse than its counterparts in the U.S.

I argue that what accounts for this difference are three unique cultural features of Israeli society: First, (1), a nationalist fertility discourse that served as a value system alternative to the neoliberal logic; second, (2), related to this, a strong “heroic mother” ethos that is a part of the Zionist nation-building project, which valorizes Jewish motherhood and thus provided an ambiguous entry point to the public sphere for Jewish mothers; and third, (3), a nationalist tension between Jewish-Israelis and Palestinian-Israelis that stimulates perceptions of Mizrahi women (i.e. Jewish women of North African and Middle Eastern descent) as a part of the imagined national collectivity, thus lessening their stigmatization and exclusion.

Committee
Chair: Bill Gamson
Members: Zine Magubane, C. Shawn McGuffey, Charlotte Ryan

**AUTUMN GREEN**
Babies, Books, And Bootstraps: Low-Income Mothers, Material Hardship, Role Strain And The Quest For Higher Education.

Non-traditional students are quickly becoming a statistical majority of the undergraduate student population. Furthermore, nearly one-quarter of contemporary undergraduates is a student parent. Emergent imperatives shaped by technological changes in the economy, deindustrialization, credential inflation, the continuing feminization of poverty and the diminished safety net for low-income families have created a mandate for postsecondary education for anyone hoping to move from poverty into the middle-class. Yet, welfare reforms of the past 17 years have deprioritized, discouraged, and disallowed post-secondary education as a meaningful pathway for low-income parents to achieve economic mobility, even despite a large body of research demonstrating the connections between higher education and: income, occupational prestige, access to employer sponsored benefits, positive intergenerational outcomes, community development, and broader societal gains. While previous research has focused on the impact of welfare reform on access to post-secondary education for participants within the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) cash assistance program, declining overall TANF participation rates indicate that low-income families are largely turning to more diverse strategies to support their families and pursue higher education. Despite both the recent growth of the population of student parents as a significant minority of the undergraduate population, and the rise of governmental initiatives promoting the expansion of post-secondary education and training to traditionally underserved student populations, very little is known about the comprehensive experiences of contemporary low-income mothers as they navigate college while simultaneously working to balance these endeavors with motherhood and family labor, paid employment and public assistance requirements.

This dissertation presents the findings of a multi-method institutional ethnographic research process through which the author collected data regarding the experiences of low-income mothers across the country. This process included conducting in-depth interviews with 31 low-income mothers who were currently enrolled in college or who had been enrolled in college within the past year. Additionally, research journals were collected from an additional 20 participants documenting their experiences across an academic term. In total these participants represented 10 states in three regions of the United States: The West Coast, Mid-West, and Northeast. Secondary data were collected through: institutional interviews with student parent program coordinators, collection of primary materials from programs serving student parents throughout the country, and review of primary policy documents regarding higher education and federal and state welfare policies. As a feminist participatory action research project, participatory methods were employed at all stages of the research process and included the use of two interpretive focus groups within campus-based programs serving student parents that both added to the research findings and to the process of analysis and interpretation.

This findings of this dissertation begin by painting the picture of the complex lifeworlds of low-income mothers and their simultaneous experience of role strain and material hardship as they work to balance the responsibilities of college enrollment with mothering, work, and the labor involved in researching, applying for and maintaining multiple public assistance benefits. Next, the author argues that conflicts between higher education policies and public assistance policies as experienced by participants shape the strategies through which they attempt to make ends meet and finance their education and ultimately exacerbate their experiences of role strain and material hardship. The author then moves to explore the impact that these policies have on academic outcomes for this sub-set of students. The dissertation concludes with a discussion of the broader social context in which this takes place: one in which policies have been structured on meritocracy rather than equal opportunity for higher education. This presents a dual-edge sword scenario however in that the American Dream both drives the motivation of low-income mothers to persevere in college despite tremendous hardship and personal sacrifice, while it also serves to frame the very policies that make their quest for higher education so grueling.
Committee
Co-Chairs: Lisa Dodson and Shawn McGuffey
Members: Stephen Pfohl, Erika Kates (Wellesley College), and Sandi Morgen (University of Oregon)

MICHAELE CERMAK

Hip Hop Ecology: Investigating the connection between creative cultural movements, education and urban sustainability.

There is an emerging pairing between the grassroots hip hop movement and urban sustainability initiatives that I call hip hop ecology. The synergy between hip hop and environmentalism defies stereotypes of the whiteness of the environmental movement and the forms of discourse that are used to raise awareness of the ecological crisis. This dissertation builds from my work in the Boston Public Schools where, for four years, I have taught environmental science using environmentally-themed (green) hip hop. In these classes I have asked students to express their learning in their own creative verse. I present three studies that situate the connection between hip hop and environmentalism in social and educational contexts. The first is a comparative content analysis of environmental science textbooks and green hip hop tracks that will help define the sociotextual scene of the urban environmental classrooms where I worked. The second research site is the community, where I interviewed “hip hop ecologists,” activists and emcees who work directly on urban sustainability and environmental justice while producing hip hop with green themes. The second study provides an in-depth look at how these young environmental activists of color navigate the racial dynamics of the movement and try to sustain their careers as leaders and artists. The third study is an ethnography where I synthesize four years of classroom teaching and analyze the various cases where constructs of race and nature intersected, deconstructing both the social interactions in the classroom as well as the green hip hop lyrics written by the students. The implications of a hip hop ecology are that we as environmental practitioners actively rethink what counts as an environmental text and what part of our own creativity we tap as educators who endeavor to promote a more racially diverse and powerful movement for sustainability.

Committee
Chair: Juliet Schor
Members: Stephen Pfohl, Leigh Patel Stevens

2011-12

BETSY LEONARD-WRIGHT
What are the class culture differences among US progressive activists?

This mixed-methods study finds that members of 25 social movement groups in five states spoke and acted differently depending on their class background, current class and class trajectory, confirming previous research on cultural capital and conditioned class predispositions.

I found class differences in group process preferences, in tastes in speech style and humor, and in ways of recruiting new members, combating racism, dealing with people who talk too much in meetings, and resolving conflicts.

Group styles were formed by the interplay of members’ predominant class trajectories and groups’ movement traditions. Better understanding these class culture differences would enable activists to strengthen cross-class alliances to build more powerful social movements.

Committee
Chair: Bill Gamson
Members: Eve Spangler, Lisa Dodson and Francesca Polletta

CHRISTINE CROFTS

The Public Face of Human Gene Therapy: Images and Metaphors of an Emerging Medical Technology in the Mainstream Media

This study seeks to better understand the “public face” of human gene therapy through an examination of coverage of the technology in mainstream U.S. newspapers, news magazines, and online news sites from 1989 to 2011. By conducting a qualitative content analysis that employs a constant comparative method and uses the computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software HyperRESEARCH, prevailing images and metaphors about human gene therapy are identified. These images and metaphors are analyzed through the lens of the sociology of technology, with particular attention given to technological determinism, geneticization, and the sociology of expectations. Further, their connection to issues of self and identity, embodiment, and illness meanings is explored. Four main types of images and metaphors emerge from this analysis: essentialist, fatalistic, expectant, and conflictive. While these types present an array of diverse (and sometimes conflicting) characterizations of human gene therapy, they all contribute to a positive, hopeful public face of the technology, despite its limited successes and sometimes tragic failures over the past three decades. The study considers the broader implications of these findings and
addresses the role sociologists could play in helping the public to navigate the media discourse surrounding human gene therapy and other emerging medical technologies.

Committee
Chairperson: Eve Spangler
Members: Eva Garrouste, David Karp

SUSAN LEGERE

Narratives of Injustice: Measuring the Impact of Witness Testimony in the Classroom

Can a vivid presentation about a tragic chapter of history elicit in viewers an empathetic reaction, as well as evidence of the telescopic perspective Mills ([1959] 2000) described as the “sociological imagination”? Does the addition of victims’ voices make a noticeable difference in their response to the historical event, as well contemporary controversies?

Some scholars propose that oral histories, especially witness testimonies, have the potential to reach audiences more deeply than facts alone. “Narratives,” as K. Slobin observed, “unfold with flesh and blood…encouraging empathy, identification and a humanization of content” (in Bochner and Ellis, 1992:171). But, little systematic research has examined how or to what extent personal testimony may encourage empathetic understanding and a broader, more nuanced understanding of social problems. In an era where entertainment content skew toward “reality” programming and technology supersedes face-to-face interactions, the challenge to pierce cultural white noise is great. Educators, then, must figure out ways to counteract the desensitization, apathy and cynicism that follow these trends—but in ways that are proven, effective and lasting.

My research sought to discover if victim narratives help students connect intellectually and emotionally with lessons about social justice. Thirteen undergraduate classes were exposed to three variations of a fact-based, multimedia presentation about Japanese internment in America during WWII. Each presentation included the same photographs, newsreel, and factual information. Presentations varied, however, in their use of survivor testimony and in the manner of its incorporation (video versus written accounts). Two groups of the sample were exposed to adult survivors describing their experiences as children in the internment camps. All groups completed surveys, and 21 participants gave extensive interviews. Data analysis examined information recall, sociological perspective, emotional response, empathetic identification and predictions of future behavior. The experiment generated much-needed empirical data on the efficacy of testimony and its ability to shape attitudes,
broaden world view, and possibly influence behavior. These findings will assist educators in anticipating outcomes associated with various heuristic strategies, especially the use of witness testimonies.

Committee
Chairperson: Paul Gray
Members: Eva Garroute, David Karp, Sara Moorman

**JARED DEL ROSSO**

*The Reality of Torture: Congress and the Construction of a Political Fact*

Existing studies of governmental responses to human rights allegations emphasize the rhetorical forms that official claims take at the expense of demonstrating how contextual factors influence discourse. Analytically, this dissertation accounts for these factors by theorizing and analyzing how knowledge and culture operate in American political discourse of torture. Drawing on a qualitative content and discourse analysis of 40 congressional hearings, held between 2003 and 2008, this dissertation documents a transition in American politics from a discourse of denial, which downplayed allegations of abuse and torture, to a discourse of acknowledgement, which criticized the Bush administration’s interrogation policies on the grounds that the policies permitted torture and undermined U.S. interests. By situating this transition within its institutional and political context, this study examines the influence of documentary evidence of torture, interpretive frames in which American officials situated that evidence, and political power as expressed in control over congressional committees on political discourse.

Between 2003 and 2008, a significant volume of documentary evidence of violence against detainees in U.S. custody entered public discourse. Typically, shifts in congressional discourse followed the release of official, documentary evidence produced by government sources, such as military police or FBI agents, that provided first-hand or localized portrayals of abuse and torture at U.S. detention facilities. Such documents, including the photographs taken at Abu Ghraib prison and FBI emails documenting torture at Guantánamo, secure a “reality” of violence that is difficult to rationalize as legitimate state violence. This difficulty stems, in part, from the fact that localized portrayals of interpersonal violence frequently capture the excesses of that violence—the irrationality, sadism, and innovations in cruelty of torturers and the vulnerabilities of sufferers of torture. Significantly, though, the political meaning of documentary evidence derives from the interpretive frames in which it is situated. Between 2003 and 2008, “human rights” and the “rule of law” became increasingly available as interpretive frames for the political debate over detention and interrogation. This development resulted from several changes in the political environment, including the Bush
administration’s mobilization of human rights to legitimize the Iraq war and the Supreme Court’s rulings on cases involving detainees. The Democrat’s mid-term victory in 2006, which won Democrats control over both the House of Representatives and Senate, also profoundly influenced political discourse. Democrats used congressional committees to pursue broad, reflective hearings on the Bush administration’s detention and interrogation policies. By inviting legal scholars and representatives of human rights organizations to speak about the policies, the Committees further elevated human rights and the rule of law in the debate about torture.

Given these developments, a critical discourse of torture gradually emerged and solidified. This discourse labeled American interrogation practices—known to their supporters as “enhanced interrogation”—as torture and linked their use to significant and negative global consequences for the U.S. In addition to documenting and accounting for this discourse’s emergence, this dissertation critically examines it. I argue that the discourse of acknowledgement employs nationalistic arguments against torture and systematically excludes the voices of victims of American torture. This discourse, then, fails to reckon with the profound personal, communal, and national implications of U.S. torture for its survivors. I conclude by drawing on the work of Physicians for Human Rights to develop an alternative discourse of acknowledgement that seeks to permit an encounter with the others of American violence.

Committee
Chairperson: Stephen Pfohl
Members: Sarah Babb, C. Shawn McGuffey

AMY SOUSA
Mothering in Modern Disability Bureaucracies

Using a three-article, mixed methods format, Mothering in Modern Disability Bureaucracies examines the profound pressures placed on women to conform to “good” mothering standards within the context of raising children with developmental disabilities. Furthermore, this work offers critical insights into cultural, economic, and bureaucratic mechanisms that present barriers to mothers’ advocacy on behalf of their children with developmental disabilities.

- Article One explores the cultural context and performance of intensive mothering as well as structural barriers to fulfilling the image of a “good mother” from the standpoint of middle class mothers raising children with intellectual disabilities.
- Article Two considers low income mothers’ experiences navigating special education systems for children with severe developmental disabilities and situates those

http://www.bc.edu/schools/cas/sociology/grad/recentgrads/dissertations.html
experiences within the intensive mothering ideal and class expectations

- Article Three proposes a theoretical model for adapting Brooks and Pearce's Self Sufficiency Standard (2000) by estimating the relative costs of obtaining basic necessities as well as the costs of care-giving and advocacy for children with disabilities of varying severity.

*Mothering in Modern Disability Bureaucracies* concludes with policy recommendations to facilitate mothers’ increased access to supportive services for children with developmental disabilities.

Committee
Chairperson: Eve Spangler
Members: Lisa Dodson, David Karp

**AMY FINNEGAN**

*Beyond Victimhood: Narratives of Social Change from and for Northern Uganda*

Alongside a burgeoning popular fascination with Africa, new forms of US activism have emerged that seek to address social problems experienced in Africa. Uncritically performed, this activism can have consequential implications in Africa and in the US where young Americans’ understanding of Africa, global social problems and strategies for social change are being shaped. This dissertation illuminates such phenomena through problematizing the US efforts to address the war in northern Uganda and juxtaposing it with the struggles of indigenous activists based in northern Uganda.

Focusing upon US activism for northern Uganda, and the group Invisible Children in particular, I raise critical questions about what social change efforts look like in both the US and northern Uganda and why they take the shapes they do. Building on a long-term relationship with northern Uganda and utilizing the methods of ethnography, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups, I expose both overlaps and mismatches in the two contexts, and most importantly, lay the groundwork for building a dialogic between insider and outsider efforts for social change in northern Uganda, with lessons for those interested in social change throughout Africa. Beyond creating useful academic knowledge, this participatory action research infused project seeks to contribute to consciousness-raising in the US and Uganda and, ultimately, to more synergistic and fruitful efforts for social change.

Ultimately, I argue that while grounded in a strong foundation of benevolent intentions alongside savvy and sophisticated mobilization tactics, the American activists have an inflated sense of themselves and their roles in responding to and ending the war in northern Uganda and the LRA-affected areas. Among other concerns, this tone of self-absorption
translates into a continuity of patronizing victimhood as well as a lack of consciousness of the existence of indigenous social change agents from the region. Ugandans, on the other hand, are not overly alarmed or concerned with this US activism carried out on their behalf because its impact has been largely peripheral to their lives. While many Ugandans articulate some critiques of the young American activists advocating on their behalf, a thunderous anti-imperialist narrative from Ugandans is unlikely primarily because the Americans’ impact is marginal.

Committee
Co-Chairs: Bill Gamson, Zine Magubane
Members: Brinton Lykes, Ron Atkinson (University of South Carolina)

2010-11
DAVID NYANZI
The Role of Contextual Factors in HIV Transmission In Uganda: A Multi-Level Analysis

Since the early 1980s, Uganda has been in the spotlight of global concerns about the HIV/AIDS epidemic that has almost brought the country to its knees. Consequently, a number of social epidemiologists and researchers from different social science fields have, over the past two and half decades, focused their attention on Uganda, attempting to identify the risk factors that expose people to HIV infection in order to inform intervention policy. Although studies coming out of this effort have provided important insights into risks of HIV infection, they have been criticized for almost entirely focusing on individual behavioral factors, such as prostitution and inconsistent condom use, as the primary causal factors of HIV infection, without comprehending the contextual background in which HIV infection takes place. Using the 2000/01 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey and employing multilevel logistic regression methods, I address this concern by investigating the influence of contextual factors on three behaviors related to the risk of HIV infection (HIV testing, multiple sexual partnering, and inconsistent condom use). Analyses reveal that educational attainment, socioeconomic status, and religion significantly predict HIV testing, multiple sexual partnering, and condom use for both men and women – and at both the individual and neighborhood levels. Analyses also reveal that age has an inverted U-shaped association with HIV testing and multiple sexual partnering for both men and women at the individual level. Despite important gains in slowing HIV infection rates over the past two decades, Uganda’s increasing burden of the HIV/AIDS epidemic – amid faltering healthcare and other social services investments - is inevitable. It is apparent that there are formidable
obstacles to effectively eradicating HIV/AIDS, unless essential social services – such as education, accessible healthcare services – are enhanced, and policies are introduced to improve socioeconomic status of individuals and entire neighborhoods.

Committee
Chair: John Williamson
Members: Jeanne Guillemin, Natasha Sarkisian

**PATRICIA AREND**

*White Weddings: Fantasy, Femininity and Consumer Desire*

The white wedding, the dominant form of marriage ritual in America, is a key site for the study of gender inequality because it ritualizes, dramatizes and makes pleasurable patriarchal gender relations. While men and women are becoming more equal in education, the labor force and other social institutions, many women are opting for a traditional, highly gendered wedding ritual. This dissertation unpacks this paradox through the use of qualitative methodology on women’s subjectivity and subconscious experience. My methodological strategy includes participant observation, survey research, free association narrative interviewing and photo-elicitation. These varied methods reveal not only that the majority of my respondents desire a traditional, white wedding complete with a standard package of goods and practices, but that in so enacting heteronormativity they seek a singular emotional and romantic experience.

Committee
Co-Chairs: Juliet Schor and Leslie Salzinger
Member: Stephen Pfohl

**GRETCHen SISSON**

*Parenthood as privilege: The cultural tensions of acceptable reproduction*

Parenthood is one of the most salient, fundamental roles that adults adopt cross-culturally, yet, as this dissertation will show, the process of becoming a parent is culturally fraught with both meaning and privilege. In particular, I focus on the cultural tensions of biological parenthood, exploring what the biological relationship between parent and child means for various groups, and how the concept of biological parenthood is judged differently for those different populations. Specifically, I focus on young parents (who society deems unfit to both reproduce and to parent) and teen pregnancy prevention efforts, birthparents who relinquish infants for adoption (who society deems fit to reproduce, but unfit to parent) and the consequences for their lifecourses, and individuals experiencing infertility (who society deems fit to both reproduce and parent — but challenges their ways of achieving either) and
their interactions with the biomedical model and healthcare system. From each population, we can gain more nuanced insight into the role of biology in framing parenthood, and how society determines whose parenthood is "acceptable," allowable, and supported. Finally, I draw specific recommendations from each piece, hoping to gain insight into how changes to sexual education, reproductive health advocacy, adoption policy, and the healthcare system can improve the outcomes for vulnerable, marginalized populations and legitimate the pathways to parenthood for all.

Committee
Chair: Stephen Pfohl
Members: David Karp, Shawn McGuffey

JUAN CARLOS HENRIQUEZ-MENDEZA
The Belief System and the Pop-Esoteric Wave: A Theory on the Operational Belief System

This work inquires about the subjectivity construction individuals perform in our contemporary media culture. It examines the structure of believing that can be inferred from social conversations when pop-media related to spirituality or transcendency is used as inputs for conversation. For this purpose, I investigate the consumption among Mexican middle-class subjects of three films that triggered for their audiences intense controversies that included topics belonging to the blurry crossroad where science, spirituality, and religion intersect: What The Bleep do We (k)now!? (USA 2004), The Da Vinci Code (USA 2006), and The Passion of the Christ (USA 2004). Based on a multi-method strategy of inquiry, formal film analysis, focus and discussion groups, and interview data collected from the audience, this dissertation finds that the burgeoning of a media driven popular culture spirituality in Mexico is creating a wave of Pop-Esotericism. As a rational narrative with consumption and conversational drives, Pop-Esotericism is not only a resonant media-reference, but also constitutes a pre-text in the construction of ephemeral and collective conversational spaces wherein the belief system is engaged and refurnished. To give a full account on the pop-esoteric phenomenon and on overall contemporary belief systems, I propose a theoretical model aimed to uncover the dynamics and strategies we engage to articulate spirituality, identity, and reality in our current global media context.

Committee
Chair: Stephen Pfohl
Members: Zine Magubane, Eve Spangler

SHELLEY WHITE
The U.S. Public Health Profession and Economic Globalization: A Responsive System of Knowledge Production?

This dissertation examines how the U.S. public health profession has responded to economic globalization through its research and education/training approaches. More broadly, this project is concerned with the breadth of knowledge production engendered within public health, and whether critical, structural analyses — particularly in the realm of economics, policy and politics — are being advanced to meet the profession's stated mission of protecting and promoting the public's health. An historical literature review reveals that while the profession was born in response to industrialization and urbanization, it underwent a gradual shift in professional focus from structural to individual-level analyses, and from preventive to curative approaches. Utilizing a mixed methodological approach of case study, content analysis, and interview data, this dissertation finds a dearth of attention to economic globalization in contemporary mainstream public health research, and an ongoing tendency to focus on localized amelioration rather than structural policy and political approaches. Interviews with faculty members of Schools of Public Health identify several important external and internal influences on current research and training approaches, including funding constraints, conflicting student demand, influences of political orthodoxy, professional methodological limitations, and restricted paradigms established by professional organizations. However, they also reveal potential opportunities for advancing structural
critique, including through ongoing competency development projects, the potential of interdisciplinary or joint-degree programs, and various topical openings linking health and political economy. Key examples from the non-profit realm demonstrate the promise of bolder, more transformative analyses of health.

Committee
Chair: Eve Spangler
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SEIL OH

High Modernity and Multiple Secularities: Various Forms of Religious Non-Affiliation in the United States

The rapid increase in the number of religious non-affiliates in the United States makes non-affiliation an important issue to study. Traditional secularization theories have explained the overall increase of non-church-going people, but have not explored the diversity among them. Studies attempting to explain the rise in non-affiliation have been basically descriptive, focusing on some sociodemographic characteristics or social networks of religious non-affiliates, examining the effects of cohorts, political orientations, parents’ religions, peer religions, etc. There is no comprehensive social theory on the dynamics of religious non-affiliation. In sum, the previous literature requires us to reconsider the theoretical limits of modernity and a unilateral understanding of secularization and suggests a new framework for multiple secularities in accordance with high modernity.

In this study, I conceptualize religious non-affiliation as “multiple secularities,” creating a new framework that takes into account the existence of various forms of non-affiliation in the United States. Specifically, I identify three categories of worldview-beliefs (theism, spiritualism, immanent frame) and two categories of institutional religious affiliation (affiliation and non-affiliation). Thus, six substantial forms of belief are considered — affiliated theism, affiliated spiritualism, affiliated positivism, unaffiliated theism, unaffiliated spiritualism, and unaffiliated positivism.

The main research task of my dissertation is — utilizing the 2005 Baylor Religion Survey and the 2008 International Social Science Survey, Religion Module — to explore differences of multiple secularities in the U.S. with respect to three dimensions of head, heart, and hand.
Findings indicate there are distinct differences between belief types of unaffiliated individuals. Unaffiliated theists have a quite different view from unaffiliated spiritualists and unaffiliated positivists regard self-centeredness, moral liberalism, attitude toward the tension between religion and science, spiritual experience of being filled with the Spirit, the levels of participation in political associations. Unaffiliated spiritualists show the highest levels of experiences of oneness with the universe, New Age experience (e.g., astrology and alternative medicine), socio-political transformation (e.g., political rallies or public protests) among the unaffiliated individuals. Unaffiliated positivists present the highest levels of self-centeredness among the unaffiliated, but the lowest levels of religious or spiritual experiences.

These outputs present several significances in the literature. First, they reflect the Weberian insight of ‘elective affinities’ in a high modern society between worldviews and ideological, experiential, or social implications. Second, "unchurched believers" require a careful subdivision in social research in accordance with their worldview orientations. Third, political orientation plays a significant role in regard to socio-political transformation. These provide contemporary social scientists with a changing attitude in a transition from the negation of the traditional secularization thesis to a new conundrum of post-secularity beyond belief types and affiliation for the sake of social cohesion.

Committee
Chair: Paul Schervish
Members: Natasha Sarkisian, Alan Wolfe

MASA HIGO

Social Construction of Older Workers: Experiences of Aging under the Institution of Lifetime Employment in Japan

Today, against the backdrop of the demographic pressures to delay the retirement of older workers, sociologists of aging have begun exploring the impact of national labor market institutions on individual workers’ experiences of aging. Using semi-structured, life story interview data drawn from a sample of 52 male workers in the Tokyo area (born between 1940 and 1953), this dissertation research has contributed to uncovering the ways in which the institution of lifetime employment — the most foundational labor market institution of contemporary Japan — uses age to control individuals’ perceptions and behaviors over the course of their working lives. This dissertation research includes data from pre-mandatory retirement older workers (n=29, aged 55-59) and post-mandatory retirement older workers (n=23, aged 60-68). Based on a social constructionist perspective, this dissertation research has explored three areas of these workers’ experiences of aging over the course of their
working lives: (1) perceived instances of being subjected to age discrimination; (2) changes to their attitudes toward these age discrimination experiences; and (3) changes to their self-concepts as workers.

Committee
Chair: John Williamson
Members: Natalia Sarkisian, Marcie Pitt-Catsouphes

MELISSA GILBERT

Educated in Agency: A Feminist Service-Learning Pedagogy for Crossing Civic Borders

Service-learning is an experiential form of education that moves students outside of the walls of academe to meet a community-identified need through the application and renegotiation of a set of theoretical and methodological skills. It is simultaneously a teaching strategy, an epistemological framework, and an educational reform movement. This research takes the form of multi-methodological case studies of service-learning classrooms and service-learning partnerships, examining the translation of feminist pedagogy to the service-learning experience. The voices of students, faculty, pioneers, administrators, and community partners articulate the common and uncommon struggles of teaching a new generation of students to learn and serve in agencies while simultaneously recognizing their own capacity for agency. This work provides evidence that applying feminist pedagogical principles to our service-learning initiatives creates more meaningful transformations for our students, faculty, and communities. The interdependent Feminist Service-Learning Process posited here as a framework for moving our students across the civic borders necessary for community engagement also suggests that the responsibility for authentic and transformative experiences are the shared responsibility of all participants.

Committee
Co-Chairs: Sharlene Hesse-Biber, Carol Hurd Green
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2009-10

MATTHEW WILLIAMS

Strategizing Against Sweatshops: The US Anti-Sweatshop Movement and the Global Apparel Industry
In my dissertation, I examine the strategic evolution of the US anti-sweatshop movement, particularly United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS) and the Worker Rights Consortium (WRC). While scholars of social movements have analyzed individual tactics used by movements, they have only recently begun to look at the larger question of strategy — how movements make choices about which tactics to use when and how they link these tactics together into a larger plan to alter macro-level power relations in society. This dissertation is one of the first empirical examinations of the processes by which particular groups have developed their strategy. I look at how ideology and values, a sophisticated analysis of the structure of the apparel industry, strategic models for action handed down from past movements, and the movement’s decision-making structures interacted in the deliberations of anti-sweatshop activists to produce innovative strategies. I also focus on how the larger social environment, especially the structure of the apparel industry, has shaped the actions of the movement. In seeking to bring about change, the anti-sweatshop movement had to alter the policies of major apparel corporations, decision-making arenas typically closed to outside, grassroots influence. They did so by finding various points of leverage — structural vulnerabilities — that they could use against apparel companies. One of the most important was USAS’s successful campaign to get a number of colleges and universities to implement pro-labor codes of conduct for the apparel companies who had lucrative licensing contracts with these schools. In USAS’s campaigns to support workers at particular sweatshops fighting for their rights, they could then use the threat of a suspension or revocations of these contracts — and therefore a loss of substantial profits — as a means to pressure apparel companies to protect the workers’ rights. This combination of strategic innovation and access to points of leverage has allowed the US anti-sweatshop movement to win some victories against much more powerful foes.

Committee
Chair: William A. Gamson
Members: Sarah Babb, Robert Ross, Charlotte Ryan

MICHELLE GAWERC

*Israeli Palestinian Peace-Building Partnerships: Stories of Adaptation, Asymmetry, and Survival*
This work presents a longitudinal study of greater than 10 years, of all the major peace-building initiatives with an educational encounter-based approach in Israel and Palestine, during times of relative peace and times of acute violence (1993-2008).

Interestingly, my results indicated that when the environment became more tumultuous and hostile, the effectiveness and even survival of these organizations depended to a significant degree on the ability of the organizations to manage the power asymmetry between the two sides and work as equally as possible. Organizations which failed to deal effectively with matters of equality, and the needs and desires of both sides, ended up struggling to maintain commitment, or were doused in conflict that could have been tempered if they strived for more equality.

This study, which involved fieldwork, participant observation, and interviews with Palestinian and Israeli peace-builders prior to, during, and post-the 2nd Intifada, is in many ways a natural experiment of peace-building organizations operating in radically different contexts. Involving various fields, this research contributes to the broad fields of conflict resolution, peace studies, and organization studies. It offers critical insight into how organizations adapt in radically changing environments, what is problematic, what are their possibilities, and what allows some to survive while others do not. Practically speaking, this study also has political import as it suggests ways to strengthen and sustain peace-building efforts in different contexts and strengthen peace-building’s symbolic, cultural, and political worth and value. In addition, it has significance for building sustainable coalitions across an arena of inequality, asymmetry, and difference.

Committee
Chair: William A. Gamson
Members: Charles Derber and Raymond G. Helmick

External Advisory Board
Herbert C. Kelman (Harvard University), Ifat Maoz (Hebrew University), and Lucy Nusseibeh (Al Quds University)

CHIWEN BAO
Within the Classroom Walls: Critical Classroom Processes, Students’ and Teachers’ Sense of Agency, and the Making of Racial Advantages and Disadvantages
Despite decades of research and efforts to reform schools, racial disparities in educational opportunities and outcomes, often referred to as the “achievement gap,” persist and concerns about students’ math learning and achievement continue. Among researchers, educational practitioners, and the wider public, explanations for these ongoing problems usually point to structural influences or individual and cultural factors. For example, structures of schooling (e.g. school funding, organization and curriculum) and those outside of school (e.g. family background and neighborhood characteristics) become focal points for understanding educational inequalities and places for intervention. In terms of explanations that look to individual influences, teachers and students are either targeted for their inadequacies or praised for their individual talents, values and successes. Regarding students in particular, racial inequalities in academic outcomes often become attributed to students’, namely black and Latino/a students’, supposed cultural devaluation of education and their desires to not “act white” and academically achieve. Together, these explanations lead to the assessment that possibilities of teaching and learning are predetermined by a host of structural and individual influences. But how is the potential to teach and learn at least partially actualized through everyday processes? Moreover, how do these processes, which simultaneously involve structures and individual agents, lead to the production or disruption of racial disparities?

To explore these questions, I investigated processes of teaching and learning in one well-funded, racially diverse public high school with high rates of students’ passing the statewide standardized test, many students going onto prestigious colleges and universities, and enduring racial inequalities in academic achievement. I conducted fieldwork over three years in 14 math classrooms ranging from test preparation classes to honors math classes and interviewed 52 students and teachers about their experiences in school. Through analyzing the data, I find that what happens within the classroom walls still matters in shaping students’ opportunities to learn and achieve. Illustrating how effective learning and teaching and racial disparities in education do not simply result from either preexisting structural contexts or individuals’ virtues or flaws, classroom processes mold students’ learning and racial differences in those experiences through cultivating or eroding what I refer to as students’ sense of academic agency and teachers’ sense of agency to teach. For students, that sense of agency leads to their attachment to school, identification with learning in general and math in particular, engagement, motivation and achievement. As classroom processes evolve in virtuous or vicious cycles, different beliefs about students (e.g. as “good kids” or “bad kids”) importantly fuel the direction of these cycles. Since racial stereotypes often influence those beliefs, students consequently experience racial advantages and disadvantages in classroom processes. As a result, some students fail to learn and achieve not because they fear “acting white,” but because they do not always get to experience
classroom processes that cultivate their sense of being agentic in the classroom space, a sense that is distinctly racialized.

Committee
Chair: Juliet Schor
Members: Shawn McGuffey, Leslie Salzinger, Lisa Patel Stevens, Ted Youn

ANDERS HAYDEN

When Green Growth Is Not Enough: Climate Change, Ecological Modernization, and Sufficiency in the UK and Canada

A key emergent issue in debates over how to respond to climate change is whether wealthy countries can continue to pursue endless economic growth and still meet emissions targets called for by scientists. This study examines how and why ideas of sufficiency—which emphasize the need to limit production and consumption growth—have emerged in this context, despite great obstacles in growth-oriented societies more favourable to “business-as-usual” or ecological modernization (“green growth”) approaches. These issues are examined through a comparative case study of the United Kingdom and Canada—the former one of the most successful nations to date in reducing its greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions and the latter one of the worst performers in terms of emissions levels, emissions growth, and climate-policy implementation. The study draws on data from semi-structured interviews with actors involved in climate politics; attendance at public events and conferences debating climate-change responses; analysis of documents such as climate strategies, policy statements, speeches, op-eds, and press releases; and media articles. Evidence from these cases indicates that an ecological modernization project is very important to move beyond business-as-usual, but its limits are also evident in many light of the need for deep and rapid emissions cuts. Combined with a critique of economic growth’s faltering capacity to improve well-being, opportunities have emerged for a more challenging sufficiency perspective. Ideas of the limits to macro-economic growth have re-emerged, although they face daunting obstacles in neoliberal, consumerist capitalism. The idea of sufficiency has made greater inroads when formulated in more limited ways, such as: partial and nuanced growth critiques, demands for alternative economic indicators to replace GDP, or calls for micro-level sufficiency with respect to specific products, practices, or sectors. Sufficiency-based ideas have also benefitted where the boundaries with ecological modernization are blurred, including, paradoxically, instances where they could be linked to increased economic output in some other form. This emergence of sufficiency-based thinking has advanced further in the UK than in Canada—in large part because in Canada, a significant push for
green growth has yet to occur and thus ecological modernization's limits have been harder to see or articulate.

Committee
Chair: Juliet Schor
Members: Sarah Babb, Charlie Derber
Reader: Brian Gareau

CHARLES PINDERHUGHES

21st Century Chains: The Continuing Relevance of Internal Colonialism Theory

This dissertation examines Internal Colonialism Theory's importance to a comprehensive understanding of the oppression of African Americans still living in USA ghettos. It briefly explores the 180 year history of Black activist depictions of a "nation within a nation," the impact of the depression-era Marxist notion of a Negro nation, Latin American influences on Robert Blauner, and the pervasive effect of international anti-colonialism and the Black Power Movement upon the development of American academic Internal Colonialism Theory. This appraisal evaluates Blauner's seminal presentation, "Internal Colonialism and Ghetto Revolt," and the major contributions of Robert L. Allen and Mario Barrera in analyzing African American and Chicano internal colonial experiences respectively. It re-assesses colonialism and moves beyond Eurocentric characterizations to elaborate a Continuum of Colonialism, including direct, indirect, external, internal, and "end of" colonialisms.

This analysis addresses the contradiction that the American Revolution supposedly decolonized America without improving colonized conditions for African Americans or Native Americans, and defines internal colonialism as geographically based, disagreeing with the prevailing interpretation which contemplates the existence of diasporic African America as one collective colony. While summarizing the USA's course from settler colony system to today's inner cities of the colonized, this investigation explores African American class formation utilizing a variation of Marable's conception of Racial Domains as historical context through to the present. With the majority of African Americans in ghettos [internal colonies] scattered around the USA, this document outlines the positive and negative means of ending internal colonial situations within the contemporary USA.

While elaborating how Internal Colonialism Theory quite practically fits harmoniously within several differing conceptualizations of American and global racial relations, this perspective offers a framework for more rigorous future discussions and debates about Internal Colonialism Theory, and previews three major international populations to which this assessment of Internal Colonialism Theory can be extended.
This study assesses the influence of old-age pension policy on older adults’ life satisfaction, and examines factors that shape this relationship. It theorizes that two distinct dimensions capture variation in the type of pension policy: individualization of risk (as opposed to socialization, or pooling, of risk) and redistribution of resources (that is, poverty prevention through income redistribution mechanisms such as non-contributory pensions). To empirically evaluate the presence of these two dimensions and to assess their influence of life satisfaction among older adults, this study analyzes data for 126,560 adults age 45 and over living in 91 countries over the period 1981-2008. Using principal component factor analysis, it finds support for the two-dimensional model of pension policy. Next, using three-level hierarchical linear regression, this study assesses the effects of pension policy individualization and redistribution on life satisfaction, generating three additional major findings. First, redistribution increases life satisfaction, but individualization has no significant effect on life satisfaction. Thus, the potential impact of individualization (whether positive or negative), and of the associated with it increased risk, choice, and opportunities for return, has been clearly overstated in theoretical debates on pension policy privatization. Second, the relationship between pension policy and life satisfaction is contingent on the macro-social context. Specifically, individualization that takes place in more affluent societies has beneficial impact on life satisfaction, while individualization unfolding in contexts of material scarcity has detrimental impact on life satisfaction. Further, the overall beneficial effects of redistribution on life satisfaction are substantially higher in the context of traditional cultures and lower in the context of secular-rational cultures. A third finding is that governmental commitment to social security (i.e., government expenditures on social security as a percentage of total government expenditures) also shapes the relationship between the type of pension policy and life satisfaction: Higher government commitment to social security substantially improves the life satisfaction outcomes of individualization. Findings from this study are used to integrate and advance theory on comparative public policy and the larger macro-social context shaping subjective well-being. Policy implications for pension reform are discussed, highlighting redistribution of resources and alleviation of need as more
efficient avenues to increase older adults’ life satisfaction than privatization or pooling of risk.

Committee
Chair: John Williamson
Members: Natasha Sarkisian, James Lubben, Alicia Munnell

ALEXANDRA PITTMAN
Transforming Constraint: Transnational Feminist Movement Building in the Middle East and North Africa

This dissertation focuses on the intersection of global and indigenous advocacy strategies in feminist women’s movements in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). I explore strategies of resistance and innovation in three contexts: (1) Globally, I analyze a sample of MENA NGOs in a transnational women’s rights network, Women’s Learning Partnership (WLP) and their interactions in the international funding sphere; (2) Domestically, I examine a local Moroccan NGO’s strategy development process and their domestic and regional partnerships when organizing to reform the Moudawana (1999-2004); and (3) Regionally, I analyze inter-organizational collaboration and coalition building between three NGOs in the Campaign to Reform Arab Women’s Nationality (2001-2008). I locate the dissertation in a feminist activist framework and draw from diverse data sources, including years of fieldwork with WLP (2004-2008); participant observation and notes from five transnational women’s rights meetings (2005-2008); a content analysis of a sample of international funders’ and MENA feminist NGOs’ websites; and two in-depth case studies with data derived from historical analysis, three months of fieldwork in Morocco, interviews with Moroccan, Lebanese, and regional activists, and secondary document analysis. The findings provide deeper clarity into the strategic action of MENA feminist movements and the variety of social, political, and economic forces that shape their discourses and practices for achieving social change and gender equality. The findings contribute to the scholarly literature on transnational feminism and social movements and its intersection with the law.

Committee
Co-chairs: Sarah Babb (BC Sociology) and Ali Banuazizi (Political Science)
Members: Bill Gamson (BC Sociology), Brinton Lykes (Lynch School of Education) and Patricia Ewick (Clark University Department of Sociology)

JEFF LANGSTRAAT
New Boston Marriages: News Representations, Respectability, and the Politics of Same-Sex Marriage
In 2006, Mariane Valverde announced the birth of what she called, “a new type in the history of sexuality” (155), the Respectable Same-Sex Couple. This work analyzes newspaper coverage of same-sex couples during the Massachusetts campaign for marriage equality to explore the content of and contours around that new socio-sexual category. The processes involved in the incorporation of lesbians and gay men into the governing relations of American society are used to explain the development of this type, and its replacement of the pathological Homosexual. The manufacture of respectability by movement activists is explored via the selection of “public face couples” as a framing strategy that links the lives of these couples to marriage itself and the hardships they suffer due to their inability to marry. The respectability of these couples and their incorporation as economic citizens is also linked to representations of professional status, upward mobility, economic success, and the creation of identity-based markets through entrepreneurial and consumptive practices. Boundaries around this respectability are evident in stories of failure, either to remain together as couples or to act in accordance with marital normative standards, while the boundaries between Heterosexuality and Homosexuality, and among and between same-sex and different-sex couples, are also being re-drawn as marriage becomes available. The broader historical transformation of lesbian and gay life is discusses in the development of new life-scripts becoming available. While these transformations have led to greater possibilities for the living of gay and lesbian lives, the absorption of these lives into governing relations also erases and expels other queer life practices and reinforces other forms of social inequality and injustice.

Committee
Chair: William Gamson
Members: Eve Spangler and Sarah Babb
Readers: Charlotte Ryan and Sarah Sobieraj

JOELLE SANO
Making the Grade: Moral Framing and the Catholic Teachers Union
Over the past half-century, the percentage of U.S. Catholic secondary school teachers that are laypeople has skyrocketed from approximately 10% in the 1950s to more than 90% in 2006. With this change comes many important issues that beg to be studied in terms of labor relations between these lay employees and the Roman Catholic Church. While the Church has repeatedly made statements in support of labor unions such as in Laborem Exercens, the relations between lay teacher associations and Catholic dioceses in the U.S. have not always mirrored these ideals. This dissertation investigates the case of one organization, the Catholic Teachers Union (CTU), which represents over two-hundred lay teachers at eight high schools in the diocese of Camden, NJ. Using interviews, content analysis, and archival analysis, the investigator found that the union overcame diocesan opposition by deliberately framing (through media outlets and direct communication) their movement and message as strongly connected to Catholic doctrine, Catholic Social Thought, and Church teachings. This "moral framing" helped the union gain support from the parent-consumers sending their children to these schools, which contributed greatly to the union's recognition in 1984 and then their negotiation of nine contracts for diocesan lay teachers. Incorporating Erving Goffman's Frame Analysis, Johnston and Noakes schema for Social Movement Framing, James Coleman and Thomas Hoffer's concept of Social Capital and Intergenerational Closure, and the concept of Community Unionism, the author concludes that CTU can be considered a leader in lay teacher-Catholic Church labor relations and that its tactic of moral framing can inform other unions and the larger labor movement.

Committee
Chair: Paul S. Gray
Members: Charles Derber and Ted Youn (LSOE)
Readers: Sarah Babb and Rick Eckstein

DIANE WATTS-ROY

Technology to Delay Aging and Extend Life
The desire to defy the aging process and to prolong the lifespan has long captured the human imagination. Recognized as one of the most ancient known pieces of literature, the Epic of Gilgamesh documents a King’s quest to find immortality. More recent examples include the story of Ponce de Leon's sixteenth century search to discover the Fountain of Youth, Sir Francis Bacon's (1659) assertion that humans are naturally immortal "potens non mori," and Benjamin Franklin's desire to be preserved in a vat of madeira until science is capable of life extension. The present day "anti-aging" market, estimated to be worth $45.5 billion in 2007, is fueled by unprecedented optimism. Developments in science and technology, including telomere manipulation, genetic engineering, cloning, nanotechnology, the potential to create new organs from stem cells, and the creation of therapeutic pharmaceuticals that could significantly postpone disease, have served to inspire; aging in the twenty-first century is no longer regarded by scientists as an inevitable process programmed by evolution (Olshansky, et. al, 2006). This qualitative research project will explore the experiences of individuals currently engaged in the pursuit to delay aging and extend life in an effort to understand the present-day meaning, motivation, justification, and inspiration behind this ancient desire.

Committee
Chair: John Williamson
Members: David Karp, Stephen Pfohl, and Robert Binstock

MARLENE BRYANT

Circles of Community and the Decline of Civil Society
This paper looks at a number of theoretical and phenomenological frames used in community sociology and the decline of civil society discussion to analyze data from 24 semi-structured interviews with African Americans. The structural-functional and systemic analyses that serve as the foundation of the decline of civil society social commentary falsely assume a linear continuum of human and societal development. There is a false dichotomy between urban-rural, folk-peasant, organic-mechanical, and instrumental-expressive models used to explain the evolution of social relationships and institutional dynamics in our technologically transforming society in America. These macrolevel theories ignore or minimize the significance of the microlevel interactions, that is, the formal, informal social and civic transactions that routinely occur in nearly every type of situation or setting.

This essay explores the ways in which individuals define community and how they use those definitions to inform their perceptions and discussions about civic engagement, responsibility and community memberships. Virtually everyone who participates in society is a member of circles of communities. These multiple communities offer researchers the opportunity to investigate why and how people place themselves in spatial, social, ideological, and experiential relationship or proximity to community members and institutions.

The articulation of the decline of civil society as a social problem continues to privilege those with power and influence in American society. Academics, politicians, writers and editors, religious leaders, radio and talk show hosts and many others have been able to gain credibility, implement policies and impose normative standards for civic engagement. These standards are often used to identify insiders and outsiders in society. This research adds the voices of those who have been excluded from the discussion.

Committee
Chair: Charles Derber, Michael Malec
Members: James Jennings
Readers: David Karp, Eve Spangler

2007-08
KRISTEN DRUMMEY
The Role of Cultural & Economic Capital in Education 1972-2002

Beginning with Bourdieu’s observations on Algerian schools in the 1950’s, the role of cultural capital in the education system has been conjectured, confirmed, and scrutinized. He and other scholars have subsequently examined the influence of cultural and economic capital on academic success. While many studies have confirmed Bourdieu’s assertion that cultural capital plays a role in social reproduction, others have asserted that it can also affect student’s opportunities for social mobility. The conclusions drawn depend profoundly on how cultural capital is operationalized. Cultural capital acquired prior to schooling is associated
with the social reproduction model, while that acquired through participation in school-based cultural activities is associated with social mobility.

Based on surveys undertaken by the National Center for Educational Statistics of three cohorts of students — the graduating class of 1972, 8th graders in 1988, and sophomores in 2002 — as well as a series of follow-up surveys for the two older groups, this study uses hierarchical linear modeling to investigate the role of both student and school levels measures of three types of cultural capital and economic capital on a wide range of academic outcomes.

Parental and family-based cultural capitals are used to confirm the role of cultural capital in social reproduction, while significant effects for school-based cultural capital also offer support for the social mobility model. Student-level effects have a larger impact on outcomes than school-level variables. Along with the analysis of separate models of social reproduction and social mobility, an investigation of equations for where all four types of capital are present indicates that social reproduction is the dominant effect of cultural capital throughout all three cohorts and for both immediate and long-term outcomes.

Committee
Chair: Juliet Schor
Members: Natasha Sarkisian, Ted Youn

JOYCE MANDELL, PH.D.

Before, During and After Bricks and Mortar: Network Organizing As A Community Development Strategy

This is a case study of Lawrence Community Works (LCW), a community development corporation (CDC), in the mill city of Lawrence, Massachusetts. As a "deviant" case, LCW serves as a model in the movement for organizing truly community controlled development. This ethnographic study assesses the variables that make a neighborhood based organization a locus of participatory democracy. For Lawrence Community Works (LCW), the question is not whether to base development on what the community wants. Organizing "before, during and after" bricks and mortar is a given basic mode of operating. The question becomes: What kind of community organizing? What is the best way to engage residents to shape the development agendas in neighborhoods and cities? How can CDCs work with people to create a truly engaged civic culture on the streets?

This dissertation makes a contribution to the academic literature on community development corporations by demonstrating how CDCs can theoretically and in practice become true vehicles of grassroots neighborhood owned development. The case study of LCW demonstrates that CDCs are able to organize residents of a neighborhood effectively and become internally democratic neighborhood vehicles directing local neighborhood change. Secondly, this dissertation makes a contribution to the theories and literature on community organizing while drawing out the variables of a new method of community organizing based on network theory. A comparison of network organizing to traditional Alinsky style community organizing highlights the theoretical and practical differences between the models. The third contribution of this case study is to the literature on social capital and specifically the academic debate on whether there is a link between social capital and social change. Through an analysis of LCW's success in community building emerges a model of how network building can be directly linked to civic power. This case study challenges the literature in the field that denies the link between "picnics" and "power". Ultimately, the true test to the power of this work is if this case study can serve as a model and template in testing out the replication of this model in other contexts.

Committee
Chair: Paul Gray
Members: Eve Spangler, Charles Derber, Severyn Bruyn

DEB PIATELLI, PH.D.

Stories of Inclusion? Power, Privilege and Cross-Difference Organizing in a Contemporary Peace and Justice Network
This multi-method, qualitative study of the organizing processes of a predominately white, middle-class peace and justice social movement network enhances the literature on cross-difference organizing by bridging the literatures of social movement theory, critical race studies, and feminist theorizing on intersectionality and community organizing, challenging common assumptions about inclusivity and difference. Why are white, middle-class progressives experiencing difficulty working across racial and class differences? What are the obstacles and what is being done to overcome them? How do these activists approach cross-difference organizing when race, class, and other intersecting identities can often prevent cooperation? What type of movement structures, cultures, and practices can best facilitate building alliances across differences? Since working across race and class had been historically problematic for the white, middle-class peace movement, I was interested in uncovering how a newly formed network planned to overcome this history. What lessons might be learned? How are people within this network working to create a multi-racial, multi-class movement? How and to what extent are individuals and organizations within this network building relationships, goals, and strategies together? What might be uniting these actors and sustaining collective action?

This dissertation explores these questions through the examination of the practices, beliefs, and social biographies of a predominately white, middle-class peace and justice network that is working to transform itself into a multi-racial, multi-class network. "Stories of inclusion?” refers to the myriad of ways marginalized populations have been historically silenced and excluded from the peace movement. Stories of inclusion questions whether this network’s organizing practices are silencing and excluding diverse populations despite its commitment to create an inclusive movement. This dissertation explores the processes of collection action and examines the context in which members of this network are working, or not working, across differences.

The data provide a greater understanding as to how power and privilege influence the dynamics of cross-difference organizing, as well as what organizing practices may best facilitate inter-racial and inter-class solidarity. This research also calls attention to the continuing importance of race for those collective actors attempting to construct inclusive movements across diverse groups, and raises critical questions for this network as well as the larger community of progressives working for peace and justice. Can a broader definition of peace work be more successful in changing U.S. policies? Is the goal of a creating a unified, multi-racial, multi-class movement feasible and desirable, and if so, what form should it take?

Committee
Chair: Charles Derber
Members: Lisa Dodson, William Gamson, Juliet Schor, Margaret Lombe, Susan Ostrander

ABIGAIL BROOKS, PH.D.
Growing Older in a ‘Surgical Age’: An Analysis of Women’s Lived Experiences and Interpretations of Aging in an Era of Cosmetic Surgery

This dissertation explores women’s lived experiences and interpretations of aging against the contextual backdrop of the growing normalization of cosmetic surgery. C. Wright Mills’ (1959; 1999: 21, 22) articulation of the “task and promise” of the sociological imagination—the reflexive interaction between “personal troubles” and “public issues”—inspired my investigation into the meanings women ascribe to aging in our contemporary era of commercialized medicine. How do women make sense of growing older in a world of expanding anti-aging surgeries and technologies, in a world whereby the older woman’s body is increasingly targeted as source of profit?

Drawing from intensive interviews with women between the ages of 47 and 76 who are having and using, and refusing, anti-aging surgeries and technologies, themes of self, identity, and self-body relationships are analyzed. I also investigate the construction of my
respondents’ attitudes and experiences of growing older in and through their immediate social milieu (including interactions with friends, family members, colleagues, and doctors.) Finally, I seek to illuminate the interplay between my respondents’ understandings of aging and their encounters with, and exposure to, the cultural prevalence of anti-aging surgeries and technologies at large—from media images of older women, to anti-aging surgery/technology print and television advertising campaigns, to marketing brochures and posters in doctors’ offices.

This dissertation is located at the intersection of four emergent sociological fields: critical gerontology; feminist age studies; sociology of the body, and feminist theories of the body. Even within these fields, the older woman’s body is relatively absent. Through giving voice to women’s articulations of self, body, and aging, my research empirically informs each of these fields and contributes new theorizations of the older woman’s body.

Committee
Chair: Steven Pfohl
Members: Sharlene Hesse-Biber, David Karp, Juliet Schor, Margaret Gulletto

DELARIO LINDSEY, PH.D.

Controlling the Spectacular World City: A Discursive Analysis of Inclusion and Exclusion in the Making of Giuliani’s New York

The dissertation seeks to examine the relationship between crime/social control and the discursive production of World Cities (specifically New York). Frame Critical Analysis is used as a method of de-coding the rhetoric shaping and informing not just crime/social policy in New York City since 1991, but the city itself. The analysis seeks to demonstrate the ways in which narratives regarding safety and the control of violence are an integral component of the processes governing the acquisition and maintenance of “World City” status. The 1999 slaying of African immigrant Amadou Diallo by New York police officers is viewed as the consequence of particular “crime stories” constructed about New York City as a means of justifying the creation and implementation of crime/social policies and strategies that have proven to be particularly repressive for communities of color in the city.

Committee
Chair: William Gamson
Member: Steven Pfohl
Readers: Sarah Babb, Zine Magubane, Anthony Farley

2006-07

MICHAEL ANASTARIO, PH.D.

An Analysis of Violence Victimization and Women’s Mental and Reproductive Health in Two Internally Displaced Populations
Mental and reproductive health consequences of violence victimization have been reported in various female populations, however these associations have not been tested among internally displaced persons (IDP’s), who already have elevated rates of psychiatric and reproductive health abnormalities. This dissertation examined associations between violence victimization, individual symptoms of depression, and simple reproductive health attributes using data from two probability samples of women: those displaced by the 2006 Gulf Coast hurricane season living in FEMA trailer parks in the United States, and those displaced by human conflict living in internal displacement camps in Darfur, Sudan (2005). Using logistic regression models, this study found that in the Gulf Coast sample, women who reported motor dysregulation and/or suicidality were more likely to be victims of sexual violence, and women with at least one failed pregnancy were more likely to be victims of any violence. Further, women who used birth control and who exhibited motor dysregulation were more likely than any other subgroup to be victims of violence. In the Darfur sample, violence victimization data were not available, and secondary physiological indicators of violence (SNDV) were examined. Women who reported anhedonia were more likely to have experienced SNDV. Further, among women with standard depressive symptoms, lack of birth control use elevated the likelihood of SNDV. To determine the prevalence of any lifetime violence victimization in the Darfur sample, logit coefficients derived from the Gulf Coast analyses were used to obtain propensity scores for lifetime victimization in Darfur, suggesting that the prevalence of any lifetime violence victimization in South Darfur is 57%. This study demonstrates that there are clear associations between violence victimization and mental and reproductive health among female IDP’s. The models developed in this study can be used to predict the prevalence of lifetime victimization in IDP populations where victimization screening is not possible. The results of this study will be particularly useful to practitioners working with female IDP’s who may not be permitted to directly screen for victimization.

Committee
Chair: Eve Spangler
Members: Charlotte Ryan, Natasha Sarkisian
Readers: Michael Malec, Sara Cherkzerian

ROBERT LEVINE, PH.D.

The Effects of Organizational Democracy On Organizational Social Capital
Using multilevel modeling, this dissertation examines the effects of the organizational democratic structures of employee ownership and participation in decision making on organizational social capital. Non-managerial level employees (n=520) were surveyed in five traditionally owned companies matched to five employee owned ones. The results show that participation has a positive and linear main effect on the strength of ties among co-workers and trust towards co-workers. Employee ownership has a positive main effect on organizational identity, organizational commitment and reciprocity towards co-workers. Ownership also moderates effect of participation on organizational identity, organizational commitment, trust towards managers, and reciprocity towards one's company with employee owned companies having higher levels of these outcomes.

The results also show how the effects of participation further differ between employee owned and traditionally owned companies. In traditionally owned companies, participation has a curvilinear relationship with organizational commitment, trust in managers, and reciprocity towards managers. Higher levels of participation are initially associated with increased levels of these outcomes, but the relationship reverses and increases in participation become associated with lower levels of these outcomes.

However, within employee owned companies the effects are linear with respect to organizational commitment and trust towards managers, and less curvilinear for reciprocity towards companies. Thus, in additional to higher levels of organizational social capital associated with organizational democracy, employee owned companies are in a better position to take advantage of the positive effects of participation in decision making.

Committee
Chair: Juliet Schor
Members: Natasha Sarkisian, Sandra Wattick, Christoper Mackin

**WILLIAM WOOD, PH.D.**

*Asking More of Our Institutions: The Promises and Limits of Restorative Justice in Clark County, WA*
In 1999, the Clark County Juvenile Court (CCJC) in Washington State adopted the use of victim offender mediation for offenders and victims harmed by these crimes. The CCJC subsequently expanded the use of mediation to address a larger number of serious offenses; developed a separate unit within the court to address crime victims’ needs; and reoriented its diversion, probation and community service programs towards the inclusion of victims and community members into these practices. These changes were part of a larger shift towards the court’s adoption of “restorative justice,” a loosely aligned set of juvenile and adult justice practices that have become increasingly popular within the United States and elsewhere over the last two decades.

In this research I seek to better understand two questions, namely how or under what conditions do organizations such as juvenile courts change, and what do people do with restorative justice? I look first at the organizational changes that have taken place at the court in relation to its implementation of restorative justice and the integration of such practices throughout the court. I map the degree to which victims, offenders and community members have been afforded new decision-making capacities within the court’s diversion and probation processes. Within this organizational framework, I also consider how the court has navigated constraints and opportunities related to legal and political structures, funding, community support, support from other organizations, and internal problems related specifically to the culture of the court itself.

Secondly, I look at the experiences of victims, offenders and community members within three of the court’s restorative programs and interventions. Here, I give consideration as to what these groups and individuals do with restorative justice, as well as to how the standardization of juvenile justice practices in Washington State informs the limits and scope of the type of restorative work that can be done within this framework.

Committee
Chair: Stephen Pfohl
Members: Juliet Schor, Diane Vaughan
Readers: Sarah Babb, Jessica Hedges

2005-06

ALLEN FAIRFAX, PH.D.
Challenging the Rules: The Merrimack Valley Project and the Construction of Public Space

The Merrimack Valley Project (MVP) is a regional organization of congregations, labor unions, and other community groups that began to come together in 1989 to address issues of common concern across the historic industrial district along the Merrimack River in northeastern Massachusetts. The MVP is a modern Alinsky-style organization (ASO). This means that it is a grassroots coalition working on multiple issues with a diverse set of participants and connected to an evolving community organizing tradition rooted in the work of Saul Alinsky and the Industrial Areas Foundation. This case study of the MVP provides an analysis of an exemplary ASO from the framework of participatory democracy. The particular question addressed is whether or not groups such as the MVP are able to find ways to institutionalize participatory democratic practices in the local/regional polity. As well as simply telling the story of the Merrimack Valley Project, the study also presents a conceptual framework for understanding the political “rule patterns” that dominate a local/regional polity and how the MVP organizes/constructs public spaces through its organizing work. These public spaces are the ground from which new rule patterns are practiced and linkages built with various power structures in the polity. In short, the study looks at how the MVP organizing practices challenge the dominant rule patterns and examines the internal organizational practices that allow those challenges to be sustained over the long run.

Committee
Chair: Paul Gray
Member: Severyn Bruyn, Charles Derber

ADRIA GOODSON, PH.D.

Bridging Institutions and Social Policy: Philanthropic Foundations and the Development of Federal Funding for After School Programs

Between 1997 and 2002, federal funding for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, an initiative that funds after school programs for school-age children, jumped from $1 million to $1 billion. This increase made this small federal program one of the fastest growing federal social provisions over the past half-century. This dissertation utilizes Skocpol and Amenta’s polity-centered approach of federal policy development and social movement theory to explain the process by which organizational actors worked over twenty years to transform the federal government’s relationship to after school programs. It demonstrates the opportunities for institutions and individuals to influence the development and structure of social provisions. The historical institutional model undertheorized the importance of philanthropic foundations due to a lack of focus on the pre-figurative processes that bring a particular social provision to the federal level in the first place. In this case, philanthropic organizations played a critical role as a bridging organization. This role is similar to and yet quite different from the role that voluntary organizations played in the early 20th century. Using in-depth interviews and historical evidence from federal legislative documents, philanthropic foundations and grassroots organizations, I document the process by which philanthropic foundations, and individuals within these organizations, collaborated with grassroots organizations, national advocates, and federal agencies to build national support for increased federal funding for after school programs, ultimately resulting in a significant increase in federal dollars for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program. In this case, philanthropic foundations are identified as one of the keys to political leverage in the development of United States federal policy. Finally, this case demonstrates that philanthropic foundations and state agencies are potential allies for grassroots advocacy organizations and social movement actors, not simply adversaries.

Committee
Chair: William Gamson
Member: Eve Spangler

AIMEE VAN WAGENEN, PH.D.

Doing Outreach, Doing Sexual Citizenship: Meanings of HIV Prevention Outreach to Men Who Have Sex with Men

http://www.bc.edu/schools/cas/sociology/grad/recentgrads/dissertations.html
This dissertation explores the meanings of HIV prevention outreach to gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men. I begin the investigation of the meanings of outreach from the perspectives of outreach workers, but also expand my angle of vision to include an examination of the broader institutional discourses of public health and the state in which outreach is situated. In this, I conceive of outreach as an interpretive practice in which outreach workers actively construct the meaning of the work but not wholly on their own terms; the meanings of outreach are constrained by discursive structures. The research combines ethnographic methods and includes participant observation as an outreach in a state-funded, largely volunteer outreach program and in the audience at several HIV prevention conferences, in-depth interviewing with outreachers and outreach program managers, and analysis of public health documents guiding HIV prevention.

Meanings of outreach cohere around differential understandings of the effectiveness of outreach and its measurement, around the tension between fixity and destabilization of sexual identity, and around the tensions between sexual liberation and regulation in understanding outreach. In the dissertation, I devote a chapter to each of these themes and also review the history of HIV prevention in the context of the history of the AIDS movement. Throughout the dissertation, I conceive of doing outreach as doing sexual citizenship. As volunteers, outreach workers actively engage in civic participation in the realm of the sexual. They model a different kind of good sexual citizenship that rejects the compromises of mainstream sexual citizenship including the essentialization of sexual identity, the privatization of sexuality and the marginalization of gender dissonance and sexual deviance.

Committee
Chair: Steven Pfohl
Members: Juliet Schor, Diane Vaughan

2004-05

JOHN SHANDRA, PH.D.

The Economics and Politics of Deforestation: A Quantitative, Cross-National Analysis

Most previous cross-national studies of deforestation have been criticized for being largely atheoretical. While these studies provide some initial insights into deforestation, the absence of theory is problematic because the choice of variables for models remains unguided in that variables are included according to data availability or other ad hoc reasons. I address this concern by conducting an empirical analysis of deforestation informed by five different perspectives using the stochastic impacts (STI) by regression (R) on population (P), affluence (A), and technology (T) or STIRPAT analytical framework. In doing so, I include variables not taken into account in previous research but theoretically relevant to any study of deforestation. These measures include democracy, international non-governmental organizations, and political protests. Initially, these variables do not explain a significant amount of variation in deforestation. However, subsequent analyses incorporating interaction terms suggest international non-governmental organizations and political protests reduce deforestation more in democratic nations than in repressive nations. Analyses also reveal that export partner concentration, commodity concentration, multinational corporate penetration, and International Monetary Fund conditionality increase deforestation more in repressive nations than in democratic nations. I increase the validity and reliability of the findings by estimating the models with three missing data techniques including listwise deletion, group mean substitution, and full information maximum likelihood estimation. Similarly, I use a variety of different model specifications. The findings remain stable and consistent regardless of the method for handling incomplete data and the indicators included in the models.

Committee
Chair: John Williamson
Members: Robert Kunovich, Bruce London, Juliet Schor
SANDRA GEORGE O’NEIL, PH.D.

Environmental Justice In The Superfund Clean-Up Process

In this work, I examine the concerns of the next generation of environmental justice — namely tracing the impacts of race, class and family composition on environmental remediation, or clean-up efforts. This study focuses on environmental “cleanup” justice, and the differential process of Superfund listing across different socioeconomic, racial, gender, and family variables. The overall logic of my argument remains the same; poor people, people in communities of color, and single parent families are at an on-going disadvantage in the remediation process, as they are in the processes which lead to initial exposures. The influence of demographic variables in the Superfund clean up process however, is not as straightforward as past environmental justice research, which supported a more clear-cut relationship between poor and minorities and exposure to environmental hazards. The association between Superfund listings and marginalized populations is one with many fine distinctions since a Superfund listing is dependent on several changeable factors such as: the Superfund budget, community pressure and organization, the availability of alternative cleanup strategies outside the scope of the EPA, and changes in the implementation of the Superfund program itself. Given these complexities, we would expect to see the pattern of association between race, class, family composition and environmental clean-ups to have far more nuances than the relationship between these factors and environmental exposures.

Committee
Chair: Eve Spangler
Members: Daniel Faber, Robert Kunovich

2003-04

EITAN J. ALIMI, PH.D.

The 1987 Palestinian Intifada – Cracks in the Israeli Second Republic

The study promotes a new perspective of inquiry into the analysis of the unprecedented 1987 Palestinian uprising against the Israeli occupation. Combining theories of social movements and conflict study, I attempt to account for the so far neglected aspect in the literature on the Intifada: the reasons for the specific time context in which the Intifada consolidated. For accomplishing this, I combine two methods for data collection. As an exploratory method, I use in-depth interviews with several Palestinian grassroots activists and Israeli journalists and officials. Next, as an explanatory method, I analyze the content of three Palestinian dailies for examining the framing processes that take place in regards to (1) contention with Israeli forces and (2) internal Israeli events and developments throughout the 1970s and 1980s. The style and nature of Palestinian newspapers as a resource of political mobilization provides a rare opportunity for a researcher to grasp the process of social construction of meaning by a consolidating challenging collective actor. The study suggests that the Intifada’s inception is determined by a deepening Palestinian shared perception regarding ripe conditions to act collectively — an internal Israeli system-wide conflict over the future status of the occupied territories and the Palestinian populace inside them. The study suggests further that such a shared perception affects the internal relations among various rival Palestinian political actors and organizations such that a specific mode of action evolves and is elevated as the appropriate strategy for contentious politics. Finally, I argue that the tactics for contention Palestinian insurgents employ during the Intifada should be seen as a deliberate attempt to capitalize on their favored strategy, an attempt to influence the Israeli sociopolitical system and the international community, thereby increasing the prospects for political goals.

Committee
Chair: William Gamson
Members: Robert Kunovich, Charlotte Ryan, Diane Vaughan

ISABEL ARAIZA, PH.D.
How Alternative Definitions of Retirement and Social Class Shape Conclusions about the Retired Population

The conceptualization and operationalization of retirement remains a challenge in retirement research. Those studies which have examined multiple conceptualizations of retirement often limit the investigation to two, three, or four definitions of retirement. These studies also produce contradictory results with respect to the degree of overlap among various definitions of retirement. Moreover, in the investigation of the relationship between predictor variables and the probability of retirement, push and pull factors (such as pension receipt and health) are often the focal point of the inquiry. While most studies include in their analysis a class measure as a control variable for the model, seldom is the relationship between social class and the probability of retirement the focal point of investigation. This study employs data from the 1998 wave of the Health and Retirement Study to perform an extensive analysis of seven operationalizations of retirement and five operationalizations of social class to evaluate how the use of alternative definitions of retirement and social class shape conclusions drawn about the composition of the retired population. Analyses are performed for the entire sample selected for this study, as well as for Non-Hispanic White, Hispanic, and Non-Hispanic Black subgroups. The results of the analyses indicate that different operationalizations of retirement affect the characterization of the retired population; moreover the use of different operationalizations of social class influences the perception of the socio-economic condition of the retired population. Despite socio-economic achievements, the findings suggest that initial inequalities associated with ascriptive traits like race and gender continue to constrain women and minorities’ life course trajectories. While it is not possible to conduct a comprehensive examination of operationalizations of retirement in Gerontological literature, this study includes operationalizations of retirement that acknowledge retirement as an event, an identity, and a process.

Committee
Chair: John Williamson
Members: Michael Malec, Michael Smyer

JULIA CHILDERS, PH.D.

Achieving a ‘Beautiful Birth’: Holistic, Feminist and Medical Discourse in a Free-Standing Birth Center

In this dissertation I suggest that scholars should take seriously the social movement organizing that occurs inside mainstream institutions. My research takes up the issue of insider politics through examination of one of the most powerful discourses in our society: medical discourse and its incarnation in the institution of the hospital. I use ethnographic methods to develop a case study of the Baytown Birth Center, a free-standing birth center on the East Coast. In a renovated Victorian house on the campus of a public hospital, women are empowered to give birth according to a holistic, non-medicalized philosophy while attended by their family of choice, midwives, and doulas.

I argue that the Baytown Birth Center cultivates an identity as an alternative, counter-hegemonic health care group that remains part of the conventional Baytown Hospital. In order to achieve what midwives call a ‘beautiful birth’ and to continue to practice within the traditional institution of medicine, Birth Center midwives and staff draw on three discourses, strategically, to explain, justify, and negotiate their existence: holistic discourse, feminist discourse, and medical discourse. Organizational identity is not easy to categorize and is better understood as a weaving together of ideas rather than strict adherence to one set of beliefs. The maintenance of this complex identity requires the negotiation of situations in which these discourses come into conflict with one another. My findings contribute to the study of alternative health practices, social movement change within institutions, third wave iterations of the women’s movement, and organizational identity and culture.

Committee
Chair: William Gamson
Members: David Karp, Diane Vaughan

CHERYL HOLMES, PH.D.
Sacred Meets Secular: Commonality and Difference Associated with the Self-Determined Nature of the Sacred Christ-Centered and Secular Assertive Life Practice

This study describes what happens when sacred and secular meet in the day and life of the sacred Christ-centered Disciple and the secular assertive practitioner. It suggests there is a difference between ritualized Christianity and sacred Christ-centered life practice. The term orthodox is used to describe how the sacred Christ-centered population learns to view the Holy Bible as the literal Word of God. The term reflexive describes how individuals within the population learn to believe that the person of Christ lives within the heart of the Disciple of Christ. Individuals within the sacred Christ-centered life practice suggest that they surrender individual free will to Christ by accepting him as Savior and Lord. It is a life practice engulfs by reflecting on how Christ responded to tension-generating dilemmas and then normalizing the character of Christ when bombarded by contemporary tension-generating dilemmas. The three tension-generating dilemmas considered within the study are:

- Anger
- Sexual propensity to act on sexual desire while single
- Gossip and speaking ill of others

Within the study the above life practice is juxtaposed against secular Assertiveness in the attempt to uncover areas of commonality and difference associated with the two self determined life practices. The term self-determined is used suggesting that at some point in a practitioner’s life, individuals self-determine that it is best to adopt precepts associated with either life practice. The individual desire becomes the acquisition of greater inner stability while living within a violent and confused world.

Moreover, the study assists in developing an appropriate vocabulary bridging the sociological, secular humanistic psychological, theological and literal orthodox Christ-centered domains. One might ask why study the relationship between these populations? The answer to this question is twofold. The field of sociology has neglected comparative discourse of these groups. In neglecting this area of study, sociology can not comprehend the unique import of commonality and differences associated with the relationship existing between both life practices and the secular society wherein they exist. Additionally, the study provides the field of sociology opportunity to explore the import and impact Christcentered Disciples have within the secular world as they attempt to adopt biblical narrative while living within contemporary secular society.

Primary framing data is drawn from full-participant observation, in-depth interviews conducted with more than twenty five individuals and a survey of secular humanistic psychological literature. With one exception research participants are African American. Yet, research participants indicate that issues addressed in this project extend to anyone who self-ascribes to the literal-orthodox Christ-centered life practice. Diversity was sought in gender, education, economics and age. The sample includes men and women 25-40, and over, who completed college, high school or less. Clusters consist of at least five individuals in each group.

Committee
Chair: William Gamson
Member: Eva Garroux

CHARLES SARNO, PH.D.

Power and the Spirit: Methodological Studies in a Black Apostolic Church

This dissertation examines the sociological workings of the Holy Spirit in a Black Apostolic Church located in the Boston area. Using both participant observation and intensive interviewing techniques, this research explores the variety of meanings the experience of the Holy Spirit has for church members at God’s Victorious Tabernacle. At the same time this research attempts to locate these subjective meanings of the church and its members within the immediate organizational and broader institutional contexts within which and against which they are generated. This research has three distinct but interrelated objectives that should make a significant contribution to the field of sociology in both the areas of religion
and research methodology: 1) to provide a thick and rich ethnographic account of the worldview, meaning structures and rituals found in a black Apostolic Pentecostal church which would further add the few existing case studies on this topic; 2) to further exemplify and develop the theoretical concerns of a critically interpretative (phenomenological) sociology which links up this approach with questions about the structuring effects of power in history, while not engaging in a completely form of reductive analysis; and 3) to follow the logic of a power reflexive methodological approach and thereby explore the knowledgeable possibilities, limitations and tensions of interpretative sociology itself as it desires to achieve understanding of a “sectarian” religious worldview vastly different from its own.

Committee
Chair: Steven Pfohl
Members: Paul Schervish, Eve Spangler

LEAH SCHMALZBAUER, PH.D.

*Striving and Surviving: A Daily Life Analysis of Honduran Transnational Families*

Sociologists and anthropologists have focused considerable attention on contemporary transnational flows of capital, labor and culture, as well as on the ways in which communities create and maintain transnational ties. However very few have studied the specific role of the family in transnational processes and fewer still have looked at how families actually function in a transnational space. In this dissertation I address this gap in the literature by investigating how transnationalism works as a survival strategy in which families use the difference in living costs between Honduras and the United States to support household consumption. Drawing on data I gathered in Honduras and the United States from one week time diaries, in depth interviews, participant observation and interpretive focus groups, I look specifically at the experience and prospects of transmigrant labor in the United States; the aspirations and consumption practices of transnational family members in the United States and Honduras, especially as they relate to the American Dream; and I explore the ways in which families negotiate caretaking responsibilities, both financial and emotional, while striving and surviving in a transnational space. This is the first daily life study of undocumented immigrants and the first transnational analysis of Honduran families.

Committee
Chair: Juliet Schor
Members: Lisa Dodson, Eve Spangler