



# Society For the Study of Social Problems Environment & Technology Division Newsletter Summer 2009

**SAN  
FRANCISCO**

**8/7/2009**

- **10:30 am to 12:10 pm**  
**E&T Business Meeting**
- **6:30 to 7:30 pm**  
**Joint Division Reception**

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## E&T Mission Statement Vision of a Just World

A just world is one in which regardless of racial, economic, or cultural background, an individual will have access to a clean, safe, and productive environment. Social justice is at the heart of environmental justice, which advocates for fair treatment of all people regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, economic capacity, national origin, and education level with respect to environmental politics and their implementations. In this and other aspects, the environmental justice perspective differs from traditional environmental philosophies in that it seeks to combine a concern for the natural world with a consciousness of ethnic/race, class, and gender discrimination. From this vantage point it is argued that throughout the world there are marked and increasing disparities between those who have access to clean and safe resources and those lacking such access. Often poor and minority communities bear a disproportionately large burden of toxic contamination and suffer the resulting health problems, while the elite and powerful control the valuable resources. Disparities of this nature may be the result of historical circumstances, contemporary economic and trade relations, and inadequate or inappropriate governmental regulation. Disparities may also be the result of deliberate targeting of disenfranchised communities or weak nations to bear the burden of powerful communities' and nations' unsustainable consumption patterns and these populations are perceived as the "paths of least resistance."

A just world seeks to make explicit the connection between environmental exploitation, human exploitation and social justice. Questions such as the following need to be addressed: why and through what political, social and economic processes are some people denied a clean and safe environment; why is it that certain groups of people are denied basic resource rights or are burdened with pollution of environmental hazards to a greater extent than other groups; what are the social relations of production and power that contribute to these outcomes; what is the role of technology in environmental inequities; and what can be done to correct the histories of inequality?

Stretching our concept of social justice and environment, a just world also considers the role and place of environmental inhabitants and asks us to consider just treatment of all of the world's creatures. To understand the early history of humans is to understand our early relationship to other species, and its impact on population expansion, accumulation of wealth, and the benefits of civilization itself. What are today considered common-sense beliefs about animals, upon closer examination are exposed as mere cultural orthodoxy when examined historically and cross-culturally. Historically, humans were viewed as a part of, rather than in control of, nature. As history progressed and humans were able to garner control over nature and its inhabitants, historic attitudes of respect and stewardship of nature waned. As one example, the consumption of nonhuman animals has become a feature of modern society, intimately connected to the system of social values, which has resulted in many inequalities globally. As a consequence of capital-intensive corporate monopolies, the free enterprise system of rural farming has been destroyed, leaving the farmer either a piecework employee for the corporation or forced to sell his/her land and livelihood due to the lack of capital necessary to compete for market outlets. With environmentalism increasing in the 1970s, the most negative association of animal production and consumption has been in connection with environmental degradation, poverty and starvation among the world's most disadvantaged populations. Countries like Mexico are hardest hit by this newest form of neocolonial exploitation, as more and more land is converted to pasture in order to graze cattle destined for the U.S. market. The attempt to create a single world market for animal products is likely to have powerful repercussions on the political fortunes and futures of these developing nations, further compromising the already marginalized status of the rural poor.

Environmental issues are intimately issues of social justice. They are issues of health, issues of economy and poverty, issues of race and class and gender, issues of colonial exploitation. Environmental issues move far beyond the simplicity with which they are often portrayed in the media of saving trees, or whales, or choosing to drive a hybrid. Environmental issues are at their very root issues of social justice . . . intimately connected to our vision of a just society.

## Note From the Chair

Dear Section Members,

Let me introduce myself as the new and current Chair of the Environment & Technology Division: my name is Lisa Anne Zilney and I am currently an Associate Professor at Montclair State University in New Jersey, in the Department of Justice Studies. I am honored to serve the Division as Chair, as I consider the area of environmentalism and animals of the utmost importance to the social sciences!

While this first newsletter has been months in coming, I hope it will serve as a venue for communication between members, I encourage you to contact me with short articles or notes about publications, environmental events, announcements about successes such as tenure or promotion, etc. that you would like to include in future newsletters. This could be a great venue to share successes of our members and highlight recent publications that would be of interest to those working in this field! It would be wonderful if the newsletter was more than simply an announcement of upcoming annual meeting events. I thank sincerely everyone who has contributed to this newsletter, with a special thank you to our new editor, Randall Greenman.

The annual meeting in San Francisco promises many exciting sessions...including seven E&T sponsored or co-sponsored sessions of special note which are highlighted later. I hope to see great attendance at these sessions as I know they will bring great intellectual discussion!

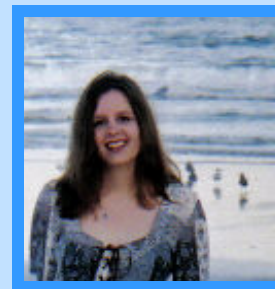
It is never too soon to think about submitting your work for presentation at the 2010 annual meeting in Atlanta, Georgia. Please attend the E&T Business Meeting scheduled for Friday, August 7, from 10:30 am until 12:10 p.m. where we will discuss sessions for next year's meeting and request volunteers for organizers and discussants. We always need more individuals contributing ideas at the business meeting, so please make every effort to attend! As well, please join us for the joint division-sponsored reception on Friday, August 7 from 6:30 to 7:30pm!

I look forward to meeting (or seeing again) many of you in California! To make your travels smooth, don't forget the 3-1-1 travel guidelines (accessible at <http://www.tsa.gov/311/>)!

See you in San Francisco!

~Lisa

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## Message From the Editor

Hello and thank you for taking the time to read SSSP's Environment and Technology Division Newsletter. I am pleased to accept the reigns as the Division's Newsletter Editor and would like to thank Dr. Lisa Anne Zilney for appointing me.

Although this is my first year with the SSSP, I feel that I bring several important qualities to the Division. I am a Justice Studies Major with a concentration in Justice Systems and a double minor concentration in Environmental Justice and Paralegal Studies at Montclair State University. I am also the lead paralegal at Farer Fersko, PA, assisting in the Environmental and Brownfields Practice Group, Commercial Real Estate Group and the Litigation and Condemnation Group for about four and a half years. My experience has enabled me to study both the sociological and regulatory aspects of environmental law and its effect on society.

Our goal for the newsletter is to bring the most relevant and recent information in our field to the SSSP members in a concise format on a quarterly basis.

Our new sections will include current events, awards and honors of our members, a profile of an environmentally responsible worldwide corporation, and a tribute to professional contributors in the field.

Please feel free to provide feedback, comments and questions so that we can continue to enhance our information sharing capabilities.

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Parker, 8 months old  
Norwegian Elkhound

**“The Chief Financial  
Officer of Menu  
Foods, sold over  
\$100,000 of his shares  
in the company  
shortly before the  
recall was  
announced;”**



## **“It’s a Horrible Coincidence”: Corporate Responsibility and the 2007 Pet Food Recall**

The 2007 pet food recall has perhaps become best known for marking the beginning of the barrage of recalled items produced in China. The importance of this case, however, extends well beyond that distinction. The media coverage the recall received is extensive, the implications are vast, and the threads of corporate malfeasance woven throughout are plentiful. The pet food recall therefore provides an instructive case for examining discourses of corporate responsibility and crime in the media. That task was undertaken in the presentation through an analysis of newspaper accounts of the recall in Canada, where the primary pet food manufacturing company involved is located,



and in the United States, where the bulk of the affected ‘pets’ and ‘owners’ reside. Building on previous research examining mediated discourses of corporate crime, this study documents a shift in the depictions of responsibility for the recall over time. Further, a continued reluctance to invoke a “social vocabulary of corporate crime” is observed in the descriptions of the actions of domestic actors, most notably Menu Foods, the pet food manufacturing company involved; the Chief Financial Officer of Menu

Foods, who sold over \$100,000 of his shares in the company shortly before the recall was announced; and a domestic livestock feed producer which was also adding banned ingredients into its product. Once juxtaposed against the behavior of the Chinese companies involved, which became constructed as “folk devils” in the case, the all-too-familiar questionable actions of corporations and corporate actors domestically were left largely unexamined.

~Amy J. Fitzgerald  
University of Windsor



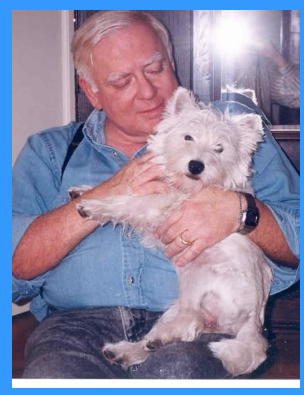
Best Friends Animal Society is guided by a simple philosophy: kindness to animals builds a better world for all of us.

Best Friends Animal Society Best Friends “No More Homeless Pets” campaign created a new vision: A grassroots effort to place dogs and cats who were considered “unadoptable” into good homes, and to reduce the number of unwanted pets through effective spay and neuter programs. Since then, the number of dogs and cats being destroyed in shelters has fallen from 17 million a year in the 1980s to approximately 5 million a year. ~Courtesy of [www.bestfriends.org/aboutus](http://www.bestfriends.org/aboutus)

See page 8 for highlights of fellow member Andrei Markovits’s visit to the Best Friends shelter in Utah.

## Gone But Not Forgotten

### Allan Schnaiberg (1939-2009)



Allan Schnaiberg was a Professor Emeritus of Sociology at Northwestern University. He was born in 1939 in Montreal, earned an undergraduate degree from McGill University, and a Master of Arts and Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Michigan. He joined the Department of Sociology at Northwestern University in 1969 and served as the Chair of the Department from 1976-1979. Throughout the years, he received numerous awards and honors for his scholarship. He retired from Northwestern in 2008 but remained actively engaged in the environmental field.

Allan was the author of scores of scholarly articles and books on topics ranging from globalization and the environment to labor and social inequality. He was a founder of the field of environmental sociology, generating a groundbreaking Treadmill of Production framework for understanding environmental degradation, and authoring a seminal 1980 book titled *The Environment: From Surplus to Scarcity*. His contributions to environmentalism are eternal, and his connections with students, colleagues and friends will be greatly missed!

### Brent Marshall (1965-2008)

Friends and colleagues have been saddened by the loss of Brent Marshall. Brent passed away in late April 2008 due to complications resulting from a motorcycle accident. Throughout his academic career, Brent was sincerely dedicated and actively involved in the Environment and Technology Division of SSSP. As a graduate student, Brent held a SSSP assistantship while attending the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. Since then, his commitment and dedication to the Division was demonstrated repeatedly through his continued membership and active participation in annual meetings serving as a session organizer, presider, and discussant for more than a decade. His personal and

professional dedication to the Division and the field of environmental sociology extended through his mentorship of his graduate students during his tenure at the University of Central Florida.

Brent's research covered a wide breadth of environmental sociology and political economy including research on disasters, risk, environmental justice, natural resource management, and social inequalities. Over the years, his work has strived to make a difference in communities, including the fishing community of Cordova, Alaska, impacted by the 1989 Exxon-Valdez oil spill, and the Wingate community in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.



His most recent efforts were dedicated to the Gulf Coast communities impacted by Hurricane Katrina and the long-term effects on its victims.

In honor of his commitment to the E&T Division, the graduate student paper award has been renamed the Brent K. Marshall Graduate Student Paper Award. In keeping with prior years, this award will continue to encourage student engagement in academic scholarship and research within the Division and the broader mission of SSSP "to find the causes and consequences of social problems, as well as others seeking to apply existing scholarship to the formulation of social policies."

(continued on page 5)



His friends, family, colleagues, and students gathered in Boston at the 2008 annual meeting to remember his life. Friends, colleagues, and former students shared their memories and stories in a special memorial session. Brent will fondly be remembered for his dedication to his work, warm friendship, and his kind spirit.  
~Christine Bevc & J. Steven Picou

## See you in San Francisco at the E&T Sponsored or Co-Sponsored Sessions

Friday, August 7—8:30am To 10:10am

Session 4: Just Sustainabilities in the Urban Landscape

Organizer & Presider: Steven R. Lang, LaGuardia College at CUNY

Papers:

“Debt, Uneven Development, and the Growth of Urban Slums in the Less Developed Countries, 1990-2005,”  
James Rice and Julie Steinkopf Rice, New Mexico State University

“Green for All? Justice and Equitability in Sustainable Cities,” Ethan Schoolman, University of Michigan

“Informality and Autonym in the Slums of the Developing World,” Jayne Grigorovich, University of Toronto

“Mapping New Urbanism on a University Campus in a Disaster prone Region: a Service Learning Approach.”  
David Gray, Tulane University, Mariah Harrison, Center for Public Service, Tulane University, Elizabeth Davey,  
Office of Environmental Affairs, Tulane University and Ricardo B. Duque, Sociology, Tulane University

“Striving for Just Sustainability on the New York City Waterfront,” Steven R. Lang, LaGuardia College at CUNY

Friday, August 7—12:30pm to 2:10pm

Session 25: Issues in Environmental Sociology

Organizer, Presider & Discussant Tamara Mix, Oklahoma State University

Papers:

“‘Raptor-matics’ or Clean Energy. An Assessment of the Debates of Wind Power in the U.S.” Michael Mascarenhas, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

“Al Gore’s Army: The Strategic Use of Narrative in the Climate Protection Movement,” Stephan Groschwitz, University of Cincinnati

“Environmental Injustice across the U.S. The Relationship between Landfill Sites and The Communities Surrounding the Sites,” Emily Wood and Joyce Joyce, St. Bonaventure University

“Zoning and Local Land Use Regulation,” Jennifer Girouard, Brandeis University



## E&T Sponsored or Co-Sponsored Sessions Continued

Sunday, August 9 - 12:30pm to 2:10pm

Session 112: Social Justice, Peace, and Environment

Organizer & Presider: Julie Andrzejewski, St. Cloud State University

Papers:

"Social Justice, Peace, and Environmental Education: A Key to Addressing Social Problems," Julie Andrzejewski, St. Cloud State University

"Devastation by Hurricane Katrina as a State Crime: Perceptions of Victims and the Public," Kelly L. Faust and Susan M. Carlson, Western Michigan University

"When the Rally Is Over: Patriotism, Presidential Approval, and Dissent in the Aftermath of War," Jeremy Straughn, Purdue University and Tauna Sisco, St. Anselm College

"Barack Obama as a Human Rights President: A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis," Laura Finley, Barry University

Sunday, August 9 - 2:30pm to 4:10pm

Session 123: Globalization and Environmental Justice

Presider: David F. Steele, Austin Peay State University

Papers:

"Monsanto, Biotechnology, and Framing Theory," Anne Larsen, California State University, East Bay

"Global Environmental Pollution and Human Rights," Rebecca Katz, Morehead State University

"Computer Waste in the World-System: The Case of China," Scott Frey, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

"The Role of Local NGOs in Building Democracy and Poverty Reduction in Ethiopia and their Challenges," Zelalem Getaneh and Wossene Abebe Desalegn, St. Francis Integrated Development Organization-FIDO

"Globalization and Ethnic Conflicts: Understanding Baluch Opposition to Gwader Port in Pakistan," Tarique Niazi, University of Wisconsin

Sunday, August 9 - 4:30pm to 6:10pm

THEMATIC Session 127: Environmental Racism and Community

Organizer, Presider & Discussant: Shawn A. Cassiman, University of Dayton

Papers:

"Poverty and Inequality issues in Environmental Problems: A paradox on the White River," Esha Sanyal, Kansas State University

"I Keep to Myself: Negotiating Social Interactions Under Conditions of Scrutiny," Tennille Allen, Lewis University

"Captive Audiences? How Residents in Two Detroit Neighborhoods Respond to Lack of Accessible, High Quality Food Sources," Daniel Rose, University of Michigan

"Right to water as a right to health issue: world polity, contention and prospects," Michelle Thompson and Alex Otieno, Arcadia University

"Narratives of Urban Space Among the Jamaican Middle Class," Jennifer Simon, Georgia State University  
, Biotechnology, and Framing Theory," Anne Larsen, California State University, East Bay

"Global Environmental Pollution and Human Rights," Rebecca Katz, Morehead State University

"Computer Waste in the World-System: The Case of China," Scott Frey, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

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## E&T Sponsored or Co-Sponsored Sessions Continued

Sunday, August 9 - 4:30pm to 6:10pm

Session 131: The Footprint of Scholarship

Organizers: Lauren Eastwood, SUNY Plattsburgh Susan M. Turner, University of Guelph, Canada

Presider & Discussant: Lauren Eastwood, SUNY Plattsburgh

Papers:

"After the Storm: The Role of Catastrophe in Social Evolution," Debra Davidson, University of Alberta

"Reflections on 'Heat', Air Travel and Research Footprints," Marie Campbell, University of Victoria and Dorothy Smith, OISE/University of Toronto

"The Footprint of Scholarship: Questions, Strategies, Initial Thoughts," Marjorie DeVault, Syracuse University

"What might institutional ethnography contribute to our response to climate change or can we justify our footprints?" Dorothy Smith, University of Victoria

## Experience San Francisco's Beautiful Treasures

### Muir Woods

On January 9, 1908, President Theodore Roosevelt used the powers of the Antiquities Act to create Muir Woods National Monument. William Kent, who donated the land for the monument, requested that it be named for noted conservationist John Muir. Today, the Muir Woods National Monument is a part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), one of the largest urban national parks in the world, GGNRA was established in 1972 and contains 75,398 acres, encompassing 59 miles of shoreline, and is one of the nation's largest coastal preserves (<http://www.nps.gov/muwo>). This stunning redwood forest is a mere 10 minutes from downtown San Francisco and (from everyone we know who has visited), is well worth the trip...especially for environmentalists like ourselves!!! For information regarding shuttles to Muir Woods visit <http://goldengate.org/news/transit/muirwoods.php>.

### Muir Beach

This quiet cove, beach, and lagoon are tucked into the coastline three miles west of Muir Woods. Sunbathers can brave the crisp Pacific breezes and hikers can picnic on their way north or south over the coastal bluffs. The sheltered picnic area next to the Muir Beach parking area is furnished with barbecue grills, tables, and restrooms. A small signpost north of Muir Beach along Highway 1 points the way to Muir Beach Overlook which provides you with an opportunity to explore the old stations, hike to the tip of a rocky promontory, and enjoy views of migrating whales and the California coastline. The short but breathtaking overlook trail follows the narrow crest of a coastal promontory. On either side of the promontory, the land sheers off dramatically down to the ocean hundreds of feet below.

### Golden Gate Bridge

Many suggest walking the Golden Gate Bridge to appreciate the size and height. At mid-span you are 220 feet above the water's surface, and passing ships below look like small toys. The distance from one vista point to another is 1.7 miles, a fun round trip if you're up to it, but even a short walk will be interesting. For more information (<http://gocalifornia.about.com/cs/sanfrancisco/a/ggbridge.htm>).



**Muir Woods**  
100th Anniversary 2008



## Perspective

# Andrei Markovits's Visit To Best Friends

My wife Kiki and I became members of the Best Friends organization in 2002 and have continued to support the agency. In the spring of 2004, we took our first trip to Best Friends, just as tourists, and we fell in love with the place. The massive expanse of this canon, the wonderful physical space in which these thousands of animals live and the dedicated and well-trained staff members are simply a heavenly mix of positive elements. For our most recent trip in March 2008, we decided to go back to Best Friends for a longer visit so that we could stay on the premises and work with the animals.

Over time, I had become very interested in making the changing nature of human - animal relations part of my scholarly life. Together with my University of Michigan colleague Robin Queen, a distinguished young linguist and a dog lover herself (particularly border collies), we embarked on a study of pure breed canine rescue organizations in the state of Michigan. Thus, for my most recent visit to Best Friends, I arrived with my academic hat in place, having set up interview dates with a number of leading figures of the society, including some of its founding members.

My wife and I arrived on a Sunday night and settled into our beautifully appointed, very clean and welcoming cottage for our week-long stay. There are fourteen cottages right on the premises as well as a number of cabins that one needs to rent months in advance because the interest in the place has become so wide all over the United States and has even attained international attention. On Monday morning, we took a full tour of the premises to re-acquaint ourselves with all the places, especially Dog Town before we began our volunteer work. The tour is open to all and is very professional and excellent in that it gives a comprehensive introduction of the place to all.

After the tour, we visited Dog Town on our own because I had made arrangements to see the young woman who was in charge of this particular area. It was at this juncture that we were given permission to have a special tour on of the so called Victory Dogs. There are approximately 20 Victory Dogs all of were awarded to Best Friends' in the wake of the Michael Vick case. Later on we had the pleasure of joining the whole crew for lunch, wonderful vegan fare at a very reasonable price. Not only was this trip a great occasion to enjoy good food but also to meet all of the people that work at Best Friends. It is at this venue that we met all the folks whom I interviewed for my research concerning the human/animal relationship.

One of the most exciting lunch events happened when founder, Michael Mountain presented highlights of the week's events and announced all the activities and rescue actions and adoption campaigns that Best Friends had just accomplished or was going to engage in the near future. While we were there, Michael mentioned that two of Best Friends' staff were going to be on their way that very evening to Iowa to perform a massive rescue, where some terrible cat hoarding situation had just been discovered. There were apparently hundreds of cats that needed to be rescued and cared for.

On the aforementioned Wednesday, we did get to meet the Victory dogs that are kept separate from all other canines with their own huge area next to Dog Town. We were immensely impressed by the meticulous care with which the staff approached the dire situation as these poor animals were involuntarily placed. The patience that all the caregivers had for these special needs dogs was truly remarkable. We were so relieved to learn that these dogs will live the rest of their lives on these premises in a happy, dog friendly environment. Although these dogs will never be deemed fit for adoption, they will still have a wonderful life with lots of acreage to run and have the best possible care imaginable.

Many visitors who stay in the cabins and/or cottages have sleepovers with dogs whom they "rent" for the day or night -- or both -- to help the dogs get socialized in the hope that these visitors fall in love with these animals and adopt them. Sure enough, our neighbors in each of the cottages next to ours left with two dogs each. One group was driven to its new home in California, while the other two were flown to Philadelphia where they have become much-loved family members. We keep in touch with both groups. As for ourselves, we could not bear working in Dog Town or "renting" a dog for any part of our visit because we knew full well that we could never leave such a new friend and would take her/him with us to our home. But alas, we cannot have more dogs than we already do.

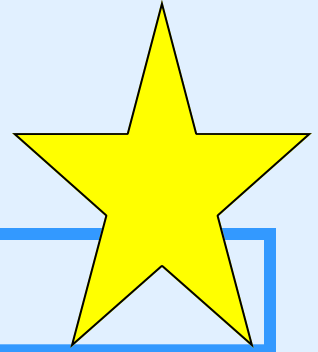
For our next visit to Best Friends, we will be traveling with our canine companions and are sure that this coming visit will be even better than the previous two have been.

~Andrei Markovits





## Honors & Awards



### **THE BRENT K MARSHALL GRADUATE STUDENT PAPER AWARD SSSP, E & T SECTION 2009**

There were a number of outstanding student papers submitted for Environment and Technology Division's Brent K Marshall Graduate Student Paper Award. The Committee has selected Stefano Longo's manuscript entitled "Mediterranean Rift: The Metabolic Rift in the Sicilian Blue Fin Tuna Fishery" to receive this year's award. Dr. Richard York nominated Longo's manuscript which is based on his dissertation research. The paper utilizes Karl Marx's metabolic rift theory, and extensions of this classical conceptual model through the contemporary writings of John Bellamy Foster and Alan Schnaiberg, to interpret the collapse of the Sicilian Blue Fin Tuna industry in the Mediterranean Sea. Using multiple methods, including historical data, interviews with local fishers and secondary data from the Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, Longo documents the "exponential expansion of industrialized methods of production and increasing capture efforts," which has moved this fishery to the point of total collapse. The critical socio-ecological relationships that have resulted in this resource devastation are illuminated by Longo's meticulous and scholarly analysis. As such, this research provides a significant contribution to our sociological understanding of human-environment relationships, as well as the significance of these patterns for global environmental problems. Longo recently received his Ph.D. from the University of Oregon and will be starting at the University of Illinois at Springfield in the Department of Environmental Studies this fall. ~Christine Bevc

### **Way to Go Dr. Picou!**

J. Steven Picou received the William Foote Whyte Distinguished Career Award from the American Sociological Association's Section on Sociological Practice at the 2008 Boston meetings.