Educational Problems

From the Desk of the Chair

Dear Members:

I hope that this newsletter finds you in good spirits. It was a pleasure to meet many of you during this summer's Annual Meeting in Philadelphia. I hope that even more of you are planning to attend SSSP's 56th Annual Meeting in Montréal from August 10-12, 2006.

As you know, I am the newly-elected Chair of this Division with a 2-year term (2005-2007). On behalf of our membership, I would like to thank Deirdre Smythe for all of her hard work as Chair.

It is my pleasure to serve the Division and I am looking forward to working together on increasing the opportunities for community building and discussion across the membership. Please email me with any suggestions, ideas or recommendations for the newsletter, projects, initiatives, etc. Together we will continue to build this strong and diverse community of scholars, practitioners and students.

Happy holidays and best wishes in 2006-
Billie Gastic

2006 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION DEADLINE
January 31, 2006

Papers or extended abstracts (2-3 page summary of your intended presentation) must be sent electronically via the SSSP online submission system to session organizers no later than January 31, 2006. Please see the full Call for Papers and Program Participation (available for download at www.sssp1.org) for more information.

DID YOU KNOW?

There are currently 157 members of the Educational Problems division?

Please continue to encourage your colleagues and students to join our Division.

Division Sponsored Sessions — 2006 Call for Papers
Building Just, Diverse and Democratic Communities
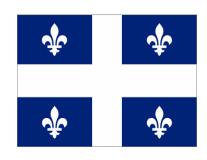
Achieving Educational Equity for Students of Color (Thematic Session)
Organizer: Dorinda J. Carter
       Michigan State University
       dcarter@msu.edu

56th Annual Meeting of the SSSP
August 10-12, 2006 in
Montréal, Québec, Canada

Urban School Reform and American Democracy: Why Many Children Continue to be Left Behind
Organizer: Will J. Jordan
       Temple University
       will.jordan@temple.edu

"And Justice for All?" How Students Negotiate Multiple Identities and Challenge Invisibility in their Schools, Families and Communities (Thematic Session)
Organizer: Dominique E. Johnson
       The Joseph Beam Youth Collaborative
       djohnson@beamyouth.org

Building School-Community Partnerships to Address Youth Delinquency and Violence in Schools (Thematic Session) (co-sponsored by Crime and Juvenile Delinquency)
Organizer: Billie Gastic
       Temple University
       bgastic@temple.edu

Families and Schools in an Age of Educational Change (co-sponsored with Institutional Ethnography)
Organizer: Alison I. Griffith
       York University
       agriffith@edu.yorku.ca

Intergenerational Teaching and Learning in Immigrant Communities (co-sponsored by Youth, Aging and the Life Course)
Organizer: Billie Gastic
       Temple University
Email: bgastic@temple.edu

Member Updates

Ken Kyle has two forthcoming articles on educational issues. Ken currently serves as Editor of *Social Problems Forum: The SSSP Newsletter*.

Kyle, K. (2005, in press). To see or not to see the crisis in the academy: A call to action. *Social Justice, 32*(3).

Thompson, S. & Kyle, K. (2005, in press). Understanding mass school shootings: Links between personhood and power in the competitive school environment. *Journal of Primary Prevention, 26*(5).

Mieko Yamada's article, "Meanings of Tattoos in the Context of Identity-Construction—A Study of Japanese Students in Canada" will soon appear in *Japan Studies Review*. Mieko is a Doctoral Candidate at Western Michigan University.

Dorinda Carter completed her Ed.D. at Harvard University in June. Her dissertation entitled, *'In a sea of White people': The experiences and behaviors of high achieving Black students in a predominantly White high school,* examined Black achievers' behaviors for academic success and maintenance of a positive racial self-conception. She is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Teacher Education at Michigan State University. In November, she was invited to speak at U.C. Berkeley in the Distinguished Lecturer of Color Series and also in the Center for Urban Education.

Melanie E. L. Bush has joined the faculty of Adelphi University in Garden City, NY as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology.

Sharon Tettegah of the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, has several new articles and books in press. They include:

Tettegah, S. & Anderson, C. (accepted, 2006). *Pre-service teacher's empathy and cognitions: Statistical analysis of text data by graphical models*.

Tettegah, S. & Bailey, B. (accepted, 2006). Cognitions, process, and usability: Technology and animated narratives, through the eyes of Pre-service teachers. *Journal of Negro Education.*

Bailey, B. P. & Tettegah, S. (in press, 2006). Clover: Connecting technology and character education using personally-constructed animated vignettes. *Interacting with Computers.*

Member Updates

In October, **Art Shostak**, Emeritus Professor of Sociology (Drexel University) was among 150 invited attendees at the first Educational Design Conference sponsored by the American Institute of Architects. Held for two days at the University of Maryland it featured presentations by leading vendors, a session on rebuilding the New Orleans schools, and workshop responses to educational futures scenarios. Art has a article advocating creation of High Schools devoted to futuristics he would gladly send out (shostaka@drexel.edu).

The most recent work of **John Barnshaw** of the Disaster Research Center at the University of Delaware has focused on inequality in different contexts. His forthcoming articles in 2006 include:

> No child left behind: Choice, segregation and equity in American public education. *Social Problems*, Vol. 53

> Structural foundations of the enduring race gap: The effects of race, gender, and high school racial composition on grade 12 English track placement. *Social Forces*, Vol. 86

> To rebuild or to relocate? An investigation of post-catastrophe housing intentions among Hurricane Katrina evacuees. In *Learning from catastrophe: Quick response research in the wake of Hurricane Katrina,* edited by G. Guibert. Boulder, CO: Natural Hazards Research and Applications Information Center.

The College Access and Opportunity Act, H.R. 609

In October, SSSP released an announcement regarding the College Access and Opportunity Act, H.R. 609. Visit http://www.sssp1.org/index.cfm/m/184/pageId/563 to learn more.

Data Releases

The public-use version of the **Adolescent Health and Academic Achievement Study** (AHAA) is now available from Sociometrics (www.socio.com). For details about the study, visit www.prc.utexas.edu/ahaa/.

Data from the **Educational Longitudinal Survey** (ELS, 2002: Base Year) and the **Early Childhood Longitudinal Study** (ECLS-B, Birth Cohort 2001-02, 9-month data) is now available through NCES. Visit nces.ed.gov.

Visit ICPSR for information on how to access recently released data from **Monitoring the Future: A Continuing Study of American Youth** (8th, 10th and 12th grade surveys). Visit www.icpsr.org.

Schooling in 2010 CE: Beckoning Possibilities

by Art Shostak

By 2010 more extraordinary changes could occur in upscale versions of K-12 schooling than many of us now imagine. Teachers and youngsters, for example, could be savvy users of very powerful wireless computers carried on their person. Known as "wearables," they may take the form of a Palmtop (a mini-laptop) or a watch-like gadget worn on the wrist. Users will speak to, and be spoken to by "wearables" whose small size belies their very great significance.

Housed in a child's "wearable" might be an Intelligent Agent (based on artificial intelligence software). Any question that might occur could be asked of one's Intelligent Agent, which, in turn, would rapidly research the matter in cyberspace, using search engines vastly improved over those crude upstarts available on Google, Yahoo, etc.). In school, one's Agent would stand by ready to provide whatever information its young "creator" might need.

As if this wasn't enough, a child might "train" his or her Agent to provide counsel, solace, support, advice, or just plain friendly chit-chat, much as every child occasionally wants. At home, the Agent could offer a shoulder to cry or lean on, provide a wise head with which to argue, and in 1,001 other ways, be a non-judgmental, unflappable, and thoroughly reliable pal.

Teachers and young learners could also become savvy users of remarkable computer-aided electronic books. A child could carry around an entire bookshelf programmed into one lightweight attractive volume (and easily re-programmed as the teacher and/or the child wishes). A child could re-write any story putting himself or herself into the tale. An embedded voice chip could help tutor the child eager to learn how to read better, and could provide immediate self-scoring quizzes with which to assure a youngster he or she is really "getting it."

As if electronic books, computers as "wearables," and Intelligent Agents were not enough, K-12 schooling in 2010 could also employ the most exotic learning tool of all, virtual reality aids to education. As long ago as the mid-1990s especially adventurous school districts created VR labs in which youngsters could don goggles, take a joystick in hand, and "magically" transport themselves via VR computer simulations inside of molecules, algebraic formulas, or oceans they wanted to study. These "wrap-around environments" enabled children, as telepresences, to "drop in" on VR re-creations of the signing of the Constitution, Dr. King's seminal address at the Civil Rights March, or the impeachment of Pres. Andrew Johnson.

A dramatic complement to the 4,000 year old conventional classroom system, Virtual Reality programs would enable youngsters to "feel" like they were "there," interact with other participants, and explore what it would mean to modify the (artificial) world itself. VR breaks down the traditional and costly distinction among work, play, and education. It offers the possibility of a class choosing to "meet" in a simulation of Antarctic, Brazil, Croatia, Denmark, or Ghana. It allows participants to explore the enormity of our solar system by "moving" around in it, or get inside the micro-world of bacteria. Best of all, VR essentially dissolves the wall of the schoolhouse, and offers educational access to the universe.

By 2010 no subject is likely to prove as central as the arts, for they stand out in their ability to celebrate our human distinctiveness. Youngsters are likely to inherit a world where "smart" equipment, exemplified by the Intelligent Agents in their "wearables," take the place of humans in doing rote, repetitive, programmable tasks. The jobs left to human job-seekers will require creativity, ingenuity, inventiveness resourcefulness, and even zaniness, fantasy, and fun. The arts uniquely help youngsters nurture their natural gifts in these domains, and learn to accommodate the messy, imprecise ways of their fellows. Playfulness may prosper as never before in K-12 schooling.

Please send all comments and inquiries to Arthur Shostak, Ph.D., Emeritus Professor of Sociology, Department of Culture and Communication, Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA, 19104. Email: SHOSTAKA@drexel.edu. Webpage: http://www.futureshaping.com/shostak/.

Recent Reports on Educational Issues

Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2005.
National Center for Educational Statistics. Available at: http://nces.ed.gov

From Teasing to Torment: School Climate in America, A Survey of Students and Teachers.
The Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN). Available at www.glsen.org

Latino Early Literacy Development: Strategies for Lifelong Learning and Success.
National Council of La Raza (NCLR). Available at www.nlcr.org

The Role of Districts in Fostering Instructional Improvement: Lessons from Three Urban Districts
Partnered with the Institute for Learning.
RAND Corporation. Available at www.rand.org

Promoting Student Success in Community College and Beyond: The Opening Doors
Demonstration
MDRC. Available at www.mdrc.org

Teacher Quality: Equalizing Educational Opportunities and Outcomes.
The Civil Rights Project, Harvard University. Available at www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu

Upcoming Conferences and Training

Building on Success: Providing Today's Youth with Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow
January 9-13, 2006 in Washington, DC.
Sponsored by the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, supported
by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
Webpage: http://www.juvenilecouncil.gov/2006NationalConference/

2006 Educational Problems Graduate Student Paper Award
Deadline: May 15, 2006

The Educational Problems Division announces its 2006 Graduate Student Paper Competition.
Papers must address a contemporary educational problem and may be empirical or theoretical in
nature. Authors must be current graduate students or recent graduates with conferral dates no
earlier than January 2006. Only unpublished, single-author papers will be considered. Papers must
not exceed 30 double-spaced pages (excluding notes, references, tables and figures). All papers
must include a 150-200 word abstract and be prepared for anonymous review with the author's
name and institutional affiliation appearing only on the title page. Winners will receive a small
monetary prize and a complimentary ticket to the Awards Banquet at which all winners will be
recognized. All papers must be submitted electronically (as an attachment) to the Division Chair,
Billie Gastic (bgastic@temple.edu), by the above deadline. Please include your name, institutional
affiliation and contact information in the body of your email.

For more information about the Educational Problems Division, please contact:

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Visit the SSSP website at www.sssp1.org

Funding Opportunities / Deadlines

AERA Research Grants (Due: 1/3 and 3/1)
AERA Dissertation Grants (Due: 1/3 and 3/1)
AERA Institute on Statistical Analysis for Educational Policy (Due: 1/3)
ASA Community Action Research Initiative (Due: 2/1)
ASA Congressional Fellowship (Due: 2/1)
ASA Fund for the Advancement of the Discipline (Due: 12/15 and 6/15)
ASA Small Grants Program: Teaching Enhancement Fund (Due: 2/1)

Call for Contributors

Please share news of your academic, scholastic and professional accomplishments with your Educational Problems colleagues. Email Billie Gastic (bgastic@temple.edu) with details about your most recent book, article, presentation or promotion. Let us know if you've just defended your dissertation or if you have changed jobs. Please email Billie Gastic with any suggestions for newsletter content, including links to resources that you think would be of interest to Division members. Short (1 single-spaced page) essays, articles, book reviews, research briefs or commentary are also welcomed.

Seeking Editorial Assistance

If you are a graduate student looking to increase your involvement in the Division, please consider applying for the Assistant Editor position. Although this is an unpaid position, you will gain valuable editorial experience, have the opportunity to connect with and learn more about your colleagues in the Division and take part in decision-making regarding the content and design of this newsletter. Please email Billie Gastic (bgastic@temple.edu) with a letter of interest and current CV by January 16, 2006.

"This Society shall be a non-profit corporation to promote and protect sociological research and teaching on significant problems of social life and, particularly, to encourage the work of young sociologists; to stimulate the application of scientific method and theory to the study of vital social problems; to encourage problem-centered social research; to foster cooperative relations among persons and organizations engaged in the application of scientific sociological findings to the formulation of social policies; to foster higher quality of life, social welfare, and positive social relations in society and the global community and to undertake any activity related thereto or necessary or desirable for the accomplishment of the foregoing purposes."

- Bylaws of the Society for the Study of Social Problems, Inc., Approved 2005