



FALL 2006

Healthy Outlook

Division of Health, Health Policy and Health Services of the Society for the Study of Social Problems

Statement from the Co-Chair *Amy J. Schulz*

It is a pleasure to assume the role of Co-Chair for the Division of Health, Health Policy and Health Services for the Society for the Study of Social Problems. The past co-chairs of this division have done an excellent job of building and sustaining a diverse, engaged and committed membership, and I hope to contribute to a continuation of that tradition. As a student at the University of Michigan, my training encompassed the relevance of social theories to understanding inequalities and their contributions to disparities in health. As a post doc at Yale, I was introduced to the role of health policy in shaping health care. For the past decade, my research has focused on understanding and developing strategies to intervene on the social processes that contribute to unequal racial and socioeconomic health outcomes. The richness and complexity of perspectives brought by the membership of SSSP's Health division to the multiple components of health and medicine are much needed as we continue to build knowledge to inform efforts to work toward a vision of health and justice.

Recent evidence indicates that the life expectancy of Americans varies by up to 21 years, depending on race and geographic area of the country, with African American males residing in high poverty urban communities among those experiencing the greatest health disadvantage (see Ezzatti and colleagues, 2006). The largest differences in health are seen between people who are considered middle aged – 45-64 – rather than among newborns or the elderly populations. Thus, the impact of inequality falls on adults who are in their prime wage-earning and, for many, care-giving years, with profound implications for economic stability, child rearing, and elder care, in addition to their implications for quality and, ultimately, length of life for those who are most disadvantaged in America. These inequalities are pervasive, with the patterning of health by relative advantage or disadvantage persisting over decades.

These gaps bring particular focus to the importance of this year's thematic session focused on the role of research, policy and justice. Our continued commitment to bring our diverse lenses to bear on the social processes that produce inequalities in health – whether on the basis of race, ethnicity, income, gender, sexuality, or any other axes of inequality - is of continuing and critical importance. The rich academic and activist experience within SSSP has much to contribute to addressing these persistent inequalities. I look forward to continued and energetic dialogue with division members on these and other issues of importance to health throughout the coming years.

The SSSP President, Valerie Jenness, identified the theme “Research Matters: Creating Knowledge, Policy and Justice” for the 2007 SSSP Annual Meetings to be held August 10-12 at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York City. This theme provides an exciting opportunity for us to discuss the potential and realized effects of health research on extending our understanding of critical issues in health, health policy and health services, and moving toward social justice in each of these arenas. SSSP, with its mission of promoting justice through the pursuit and application of knowledge, is uniquely positioned to critically examine the possibilities for research to contribute to understanding and informed policy toward the end of more equitable health outcomes, both nationally and internationally. At the 2006 Division Meeting in Montreal, Canada, our members proposed a rich and diverse set of sessions. These include joint sessions with Sexual Behavior, Politics and Communities; Racial and Ethnic Minorities; Environment and Technology; Institutional Ethnography; Social Problems Theory; and Drinking and Drugs. Health Roundtables, Stigma and Health, and Transgender Embodiment and Identity will

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constitute our slate of regular session. We will also host a thematic session, entitled "Health Research Matters." Please note that the deadline for submissions is January 31, 2007.

Both Valerie Leiter and I are interested in and welcome your comments and suggestions regarding division activities. As always, we anticipate thought-provoking sessions at our annual meeting in New York City. Between now and then, I welcome your emails at ajschulz@umich.edu.

Send Correspondence to:

Alexis Bender
Healthy Outlook, Editor
Department of Sociology
PO Box 5020
Georgia State University
Atlanta, GA 30303
or
abender1@gsu.edu

New Books by our members

Amy J. Schulz and Leith Mullings (eds), 2006. Gender, Race, Class and Health: Intersectional Approaches. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Judith Lorber and Lisa Jean Moore. 2007. Gendered Bodies: Feminist Perspectives. Los Angeles: CA: Roxbury

Wendy Simonds, Barbara Katz Rothman, and Bari Meltzer Norman. 2007. Laboring On: Birth in Transition in the United States. New York: Routledge. (available November 2006).

Valerie Leiter
Division Co-Chair
Department of Sociology
Simmons College
valerie.leiter@simmons.edu

Amy J. Schulz
Division Co-Chair
Health Behavior and Health
Education
School of Public Health
University of Michigan
ajschulz@umich.edu

Call for Proposals

Society for Disability Studies
20th Annual Conference Seattle,
May 31-June 2, 2007 "Disability
& Disability Studies: Works in
Progress."

The deadline for proposals is 15
November 2006. Please see
[http://www.uic.edu/orgs/sds/
annualmeetings.html](http://www.uic.edu/orgs/sds/annualmeetings.html) for more
information.

NEXT ISSUE

Publication Date: December 15
Submissions Due: December 1

Other News of Note

— Aviva Twersky Glasner is starting as an Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice at Bridgewater State College in Massachusetts. She just completed her Ph.D. in Criminal Justice at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York.

— Kristen Springer started as an Assistant Professor in Sociology at Rutgers University this fall.

— Pamela Valera successfully defended her dissertation entitled "Self-identified heterosexual African American/Black Men engaging in male-to-male sexual encounters: Attitudes, behaviors and reasons for marriage" on August 30, 2006. Dr. Valera has also been awarded a 3-year postdoctoral fellowship at Columbia University The HIV Center for Clinical and Behavioral Studies.

***Social Problems* Editorial Search**

The Editorial and Publications Committee of the Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP) is searching for the next Editor of *Social Problems*. The three-year term of the new Editor will begin at mid-year 2008 with responsibility for editing Volumes 56-58 (years 2009-2011). All members of the SSSP are encouraged to apply or nominate colleagues.

The Editor is responsible for soliciting, reviewing, and making final decisions on manuscripts, and for preparing four issues of the journal for publication annually. The editorial office is responsible for managing the review process and for copy editing and proofreading in accordance with customary publishing standards.

The SSSP seeks an individual with a distinguished scholarly record, previous editorial experience (e.g., service as a journal editor or associate editor), strong organizational and management skills, an ability to work well with others, and a familiarity with and commitment to *Social Problems*.

The SSSP supports the editorial office with an annual budget and provides a modest stipend and travel expenses for the Editor. Support is also expected from the host institution. This support may include office space, utilities, the use of computers and other office equipment, stipends and tuition waivers for office personnel, faculty release time, and other basic expenses. Each year the Editor will be expected to submit a budget to the SSSP to cover operating expenses that the host institution does not support.

Applications, requests for further information, or names of potential nominees should be sent to: James D. Orcutt, Chair, SSSP Editorial and Publications Committee, Department of Sociology, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL 32306-2270; [850] 644-6416 (Office); [850] 644-6208 (FAX); email: jorcutt@fsu.edu.

Deadline for Initial Nominations and Inquiries: January 31, 2007.

Co-Chair Nominees

Emily S. Ihara is an Assistant Professor of Social Work at George Mason University, Fairfax, VA.

Recent Research Activities: My research focuses on the social determinants of health, particularly for racial and ethnic minority groups and for low-income populations. "Ethnicity matters: Socioeconomic position and health among Asian Americans" (Brandeis University, 2005) explored the complex relationship between ethnicity, socioeconomic position, and health for specific Asian American ethnic groups. Studies in progress examine the role of unions in providing health insurance; family structure effects on mental health among low-income children; and Congressional debate and dialogue on health disparities.

I co-authored "Racial and ethnic minorities" (with David Takeuchi) in *Mental Health Services: A Public Health Perspective, Second Edition* (Oxford University Press, 2004). I co-authored several papers examining the Medicaid program for the AARP Public Policy Institute, including "Simplifying enrollment in Medicaid and Medicare Savings Programs for the elderly and individuals with disabilities," "The Medicaid personal care services benefit: Practices in states that offer the optional state plan benefit," and "State-Funded Home and Community-Based Services Programs for Older Persons." I have written policy briefs on workers and chronic conditions, cultural competency, and child and adolescent mental health services for *Challenges for the 21st Century: Chronic and Disabling Conditions* at Georgetown University's Health Policy Institute.

While I was the W.K. Kellogg/H. Jack Geiger Congressional Health Policy Fellow (2005-2006), I worked in the office of Congressman Michael M. Honda and with the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus. I worked on the Tri-Caucus Healthcare Equality and Accountability Act of 2005 and the National Hepatitis B Act of 2005.

Areas of Interest in Health, Health Policy, and Health Services: Social and economic determinants of health, health and mental health inequities, immigration and health, and access to care.

Other Professional Activities: Member of the Board of Directors of the Washington, DC chapter of the Japanese American Citizens' League, the nation's oldest Asian American civil and human rights organization (2002-present).

Grant Awards and Research Recognition

Stephen J. Morewitz, Calif State Univ, East Bay, & S. Morewitz, Ph.D., & Associates, IL & CA, received a faculty research grant to study suicidal risk behaviors among domestic violence victims.

Valerie Leiter (Simmons College) has been named as a William T. Grant Scholar and will receive a five-year grant to support her work on "The Transition to Adulthood Among Youth with Disabilities."

Sam Friedman reports that his co-authored report has received a lot of attention in the medical press and has also been the basis for two invited presentations at Major Sessions of the International AIDS Conference (in Toronto August 2006) and will be the basis for an "Author meets discussants" session at the American Public Health Association meetings in Boston in November 2006. Samuel R. Friedman, Susan C. Kippax, Nancy Phaswana-Mafuya, Diana Rossi, Christy E. Newman. Emerging future issues in HIV/AIDS Social Research. *AIDS* 20, 959-965.,

Frank W. Young (fwy1@cornell.edu) reports that his 100 page monograph entitled "The Social Ecology of New York State Development" is now online under <http://hosts.cce.cornell.edu/rnyi/>. It presents an explanation for how social problems in communities of all levels, from household to nation-state determine population health levels, apart from germs and other pathogens. It thus extends the scope of social problems research. In addition, the report describes a plan for lowering the average mortality of New York counties and reproduces four articles that illustrate inexpensive methods of research for 50 or more communities.

Co-Chair Nominees

Pamela Valera is a Research Fellow at Columbia University The HIV Center for Clinical and Behavioral Studies, New York, New York.

Recent Research Activities: My recent research work focuses on African American/Black men sexual identity, “Self-identified heterosexual African American/Black men engaging in male-to-male sexual encounters: Attitudes, behaviors and reasons for marriage” (Dissertation) is a phenomenological study of the lived experiences of southern married men who have sex with men.

I have also provided direct services to, and conducted research with, immigrant communities of color. I have experience in both quantitative and qualitative research and will be developing a sexual health instrument for African American/Black men during my post doctoral fellowship. I am working on a manuscript for a special issue on ethnic minority male bisexuality for the Archives of Sexual Behavior. I am also the managing editor of an electronic journal for health professional students entitled, Context Journal.

Areas of Research Interests: health policy, HIV/AIDS, sexual identity, men’s health, African American, LGBTQ, and human sexuality.

Other Offices Held: Member at Large, The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI, 2003-2005)

Elroi Waszkiewicz is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Sociology at Georgia State University, works as an instructor in upper-level gender and sexuality courses, and is the department’s Teaching Associate.

Recent Research Activities: I recently completed an intensive qualitative study entitled, “Getting by Gatekeepers: Transmen’s Dialectical Negotiations within Psychomedical Institutions.” I intend to prepare several articles for publication from this project, including topics dealing with the central theme of the pathologization and consequent regulation of transsexual bodies, strategies for transgender people in navigating health care systems, and queer theoretical approaches to studying transmen’s gender and sexual identities. Currently, I am revising a paper for publication that I co-authored, “I Feel So Much More in My Body’: The Insignificance of the Penis in Transsexual Men’s Pursuit of an Appropriately Gendered Body,” which won the Health, Health Policy, and Health Services Division’s Graduate Student Paper Award in 2005. I am also working on a paper on the complimentary usage of queer theoretical frameworks and grounded theory methods and another on pedagogies for social justice. Next semester, I expect to begin my dissertation research attuning to gatekeeping practices during transsexuals’ pursuits of medical transition. I intend to include the perspectives of both the consumers and providers of these services.

Areas of Interest in Health, Health Policy, and Health Services: LGBTQ health, transgender access to health care, regulation and pathologization of transgender bodies, psychiatric stigmatization of gender and sexual diversity.

Other Offices Held: Graduate Student Paper Prize Committee, Health, Health Policy and Health Services Division, SSSP (2006-2007); Graduate Student Representative for Georgia State University’s Department of Sociology Graduate Committee (2003-2004) and Teaching Committee (2005-present); and Founding Member of Graduate Students in Sociology (2003-present).

Do you have News of Note?

We would love to hear from you!!!

Items of interest are new books, promotions, successful dissertation defenses, acquisition of first jobs and anything else you would like to share with fellow division members.

Also let us know about calls for papers and relevant grants or fellowships.

Send your good news to:

Alexis Bender, Newsletter Editor
Via postal mail at Georgia State University
Department of Sociology
P.O. Box 5020
Atlanta, GA 30303
or via email at abender1@gsu.edu