



SSSP

Pro Bono



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Content

Notes from the Chair	1
Message from Richard Quinney	3
New Mission Statement	6
Member Publications	8
Announcements	8



Notes from the Chair

As Chair, I want to send all of the membership the warmest wishes for a fantastic year in 2016! 2015 was a productive year for the Division, with excellent sessions at our meetings in Chicago, including the presentation of the Lindesmith Award for the Best Graduate Student Paper to Alix Winter and Matthew Claire of Harvard University, and the presentation of the William Chambliss Lifetime Achievement Award to the universally well-regarded, boundary-pushing scholar, William Quinney. In gratitude for the Chambliss Award, Dr. Quinney has penned a note pushing us as activist scholars toward rigorous research both as service to our community and as a spiritual exercise for ourselves. His fuller conceptualization of the value of our work might be just what is needed in this time of renewed activism focused on police violence, immigration, and LGBT rights, and the associated emergence of a long-smoldering conservative resistance to the social, legal, and cultural changes that we have witnessed during the Obama Presidency. I am happy to publish Dr. Quinney's letter in the Newsletter and hope that it invigorates us all to do some amazing work in 2016 and beyond.

Continued on page 2

Our Seattle meetings will present a fantastic opportunity for the membership to engage in dialogue and confront some of the most pressing issues for activist scholars during the ten sessions the division is happy to sponsor or co-sponsor. This year's theme *Globalizing Social Problems* invites us into boundary-pushing, critical scholarship that expands our scope and focus beyond the realm of Western social problems. Here we confront and disturb deeply entrenched power relationships and the multiple hierarchies that exist in relation to dominant economic, political, legal, and cultural systems in order to find new pathways toward social justice. Along with some of our most well-attended, yearly sessions, the division will be sponsoring sessions that ask us to dig deeper into issues of globalization, the environment, policing and social control in global context, conflict and movements against the law, institutional ethnography in local and global contexts, as well as law and (in)justice. These exciting new sessions provide opportunities for us to see some groundbreaking work and to realize the possibility of activist scholarship that Dr. Quinney has envisioned for us.

In addition, the division needs your nominations for awards as well as the position of Chair as I will be ending my two-year term in Seattle this August. While the position of Chair can be a busy one, it has been incredibly valuable for me as a junior scholar who is really just beginning to learn the ins and outs of service to our discipline. Should you wish to serve as Chair, or if you know of any amazing potential candidates, feel free to nominate yourself or that person for the position. We will hold an election prior to our meetings.

We will again have our yearly Lindesmith Graduate Student Paper Award. Nominations should be sent to Lloyd Klein via email to lklein@hostos.cuny.edu. Additionally, we will have our bi-annual Sutherland Book Award Competition this year for the best book in the field of law and society. Please contact Stephen Morewitz at morewitz@eathlink.net in order to nominate books and to arrange for their shipment to Sutherland committee members. Both competitions have deadlines of January 31, 2016. For more information, please see our website at the following link, <http://www.sssp1.org/index.cfm/pageid/1715/>.

Last but not least, I want to thank Anna Linders, our Vice Chair, who has been a joy to work with since she took the reins from Lori Sexton last August. I even had the joy to grab lunch with Anna in Cincinnati after I returned from some grueling fieldwork in Kentucky prisons last summer. While finishing up field work, the dissertation, revising articles, being on the job market, and moving back to the East Coast, Anna has been a consistently reliable and enjoyable person to work with. Thanks, Anna. It is Anna that you can thank for our new facebook page which can be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/sssplawandsociety/?fref=ts>. Please like our page and visit it often! It has been a joy to work with both Lori and Anna as Chair. Thanks to you both.

And, one more thing, let's all thank our newsletter editor, Kristen Maziarka, who continues to do great work while continuing her graduate studies at UC Irvine. Tackling anything outside of PhD work is always tough, and we appreciate you Kristen!

Once again, here's to an amazing 2016! I look forward to seeing all of you in Seattle!

Cheers,

Jay Borchert, Chair

This World of Dreams—and Yet

Dr. Richard Quinney, In Appreciation of our Lifetime Achievement Award

I have thought about and contemplated the nature of reality for as long as I can remember—beginning on the farm, walking the land, working in the fields, tending the farm animals, and listening to the soft words of my family as the darkness folded us into the night and we dreamed ourselves into another day.

This beginning has lasted throughout a lifetime, even, particularly, as I became a sociologist, pursuing a teaching career, and researching and writing on crime, law, and this social world of ours. Early on, I imagined the world as one that is constructed out of the many possible ways of being human. Sociology has always been to me of great, and grave, philosophical import. Our calling is both scientific, trying to figure out what is happening, and moral, trying to do the right thing.

Along the way, the spiritual dimension of being human has informed and grounded my work. Whether the concern has been an academic understanding or an investigation personal and aesthetic, Eastern philosophy has offered helpful insights. The Diamond Sutra of the Mahayana Buddhist tradition begins with the phrase “Thus I have heard.” The Buddha had been walking with the monks at the end of day and sat down to rest. An elder monk named Subhuti asked the Buddha a question. What follows is a dialogue regarding perception of reality. The teaching is about the unlearning of preconceived reality. At the end of the Diamond Sutra is the famous four-line verse:

Thus shall ye think of all this fleeting:

A star at dawn, a bubble in a stream,

A flash of lightning in a summer cloud,

A flickering lamp, a phantom, and a dream.

In the sutra we are told that what is true never vanishes. What does vanish when we are mindfully aware is delusion. The Diamond Sutra proclaims that creations of the mind are like dreams, phantoms, and bubbles. Can the mind ever break out of its dream state? Let’s say, at least, that being mindfully aware alters our dreams. Whether the alterations bring us closer to what is true is ultimately a question beyond our human ability to know.

If our lives are the stuff of dreams, if the mind even in awareness can never know the truth, the truth of our daily existence, then what are we to do? Maybe the same as we would do if we knew the truth, could know the truth: we would live carefully and with great compassion. Living without certainty of the truth makes our living more precious and meaningful. Each moment is a moment filled with the meaning that we give to our actions and to our thoughts—the meaning that we create in our daily relations with others, near and far.

Kobayashi Issa, author of the *haibun* spiritual journal *The Spring of My Life*, wrote this poem two hundred years ago:

This world of dew
Is only the world of dew—
And yet . . . and yet . . .

Yes, and *yet*. How to live with life as a dream? These lines could well serve as the theme for our lives, academic and otherwise. One goes on living carefully and with wonder and thankfulness.

Thus, everything that we do as sociologists and students of social problems—what we think, what we do, and how we conduct ourselves—is grounded in a moral philosophy. Our intellectual work is the advancement of one moral philosophy or another. And each moral philosophy generates its own way of bearing witness to the world that we humans have constructed.

Being witnesses, we are already engaging in social action. I note here my appreciation of the Lifetime Achievement Award given to me by the Law and Society Division of the Society for the Study of Social Problems, the award named for my longtime academic colleague Bill Chambliss. Here it is fitting to mention that some years ago, at a meeting of the American Sociological Association held in Toronto, Bill and I participated in a session on “War and Peace.” I advanced the position that the sociologist, and the criminologist, is a witness to the important events of the time—the atrocities, the injustices, the many forms of violence, and the sufferings of many people. My position was, as it continues to be, that the witness is a participant in the essential sense. I thank Bill to this day for being a part of the session, as he had been in other gatherings in the course of our careers, a session that continues to be important in my personal and intellectual development.

We all have waited to be called. We social scientists have answered the call to be witnesses to the world we inhabit. Companions in the long literary and prophetic tradition of the poets, we represent and we present to anyone who will listen the collective consciousness of our times. With the poets of the ages, we can think of ourselves, and our calling, as being the voice necessary for the living of a good life and the creation of a good society.

As witnesses we are appropriately placed—being in the right place at the right time—to actively observe and record what we are witnessing. If other actions more physical in nature follow, they follow because first there has been the witnessing. Without prior witnessing, there will be no subsequent action that is wise and appropriate. Witnesses act with clarity and purpose because they have the awareness and conscience of witnessing. Ready, and with open mind, the witness sees what is happening, and knows what further action needs to be taken. Without witnessing, and without the sensibility of a poet and a prophet, any action is unfocused, misdirected, and little more than a chasing of the wind.

To be remembered, all the while, is the ultimate objective of compassion and peace. Whatever the technique, whatever the philosophy or theory, the movement toward peace is the true test of any thought or action. Our response to all that is human is for life, not violence and death. Punishment is not the way of peace, and responses to social problems are not to be fueled by hate and revenge,

but should be generated by love and nonviolence. Much of what is done in the name of “criminal justice” is a violent reaction, a threat or application of force, not a reconciliation and creation of a society based on caring and equality. A humanistic existence is possible in what is conceived of as a socialistic society.

This would be a world of peace, finally a world without war—domestically and internationally. What we think and do in the name of “social justice” is one of the paths toward the making of such a world, a path in the creation of structures that make for peace instead of violence. A socialistic humanism gives close and compassionate attention to our everyday existence. Such is the moral philosophy that can guide us as students of law and society. Our efforts and actions are directed to the making of a good society. We are in a world of dreams, certainly—and yet.

A Note About Dr. Richard Quinney



Richard Quinney was born and raised on a farm in Wisconsin, and earned a Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin. He has had a career as a professor of sociology at several universities, including the University of Kentucky, New York University, and Northern Illinois University. He is the recipient of the Erich Fromm Award and the Edwin H. Sutherland Award, and a Fulbright Award for research and teaching in Ireland. He is the author of several academic books, including *The Social Reality of Crime*, *Critique of Legal Order*, and *Class, State, and Crime*. In a series of recent books, he has documented the course of a life that combines the everyday world of experience with the transcendent dimension of human existence. Chronologically, these works include *Journey to a Far Place*, *For the Time Being*, *Where Yet the Sweet Birds Sing*, *Once Again the Wonder*, *A Lifetime Burning*, and *This World of Dreams*. His photographs taken over the years, with meditative attention, are found in his books *Things Once Seen*, *Once upon an Island*, and *Diary of a Camera*. He is the founder of the independent press Borderland Books. He lives in Madison, Wisconsin.

A Revised Mission for the Division

In light of Dr. Quinney's words, the Chair and Vice-Chair would like to announce that they have worked to revise the mission of the division, pushing it slightly toward some of the new directions in Law and Society scholarship that have taken shape over the last few years. They very much look forward to hearing your comments on the revision at our business meeting in Seattle.

Here is our new Mission Statement:

The Law and Society Division of the Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP) focuses on the role of law as both a barrier to and a tool for change toward a more just, democratic and humane world. In particular, our members focus on the ways legal systems, including our criminal justice systems, reshape and refine the myriad inequalities present in society. We examine legal consciousness and actions at the micro and macro levels as pathways toward legal and social change. Since the earliest days of socio-legal scholarship, researchers have examined the variance in the ways laws are applied over time, as well as among and between individuals and groups (e.g., race, class, gender, and sexuality), something we call the difference between law on the books and law in action. Additional scholars address law in global environmental and economic contexts as well as the ways that innovations and technology are met and transformed by the law. These concentrations are often geared toward understanding how and why the law can both advance and limit our human potential at both the individual and community level. In this light, Division Members understand law and society as mutually embedded forces, which continuously affect one another, and in so doing examine the ways that various forms of power contour these dynamics, structure relationships large and small, and contribute to differences in group dynamics and individual life chances.

Call for Nominations

- It is time to nominate papers for the annual Lindesmith Graduate Student Paper Award. Nominations should be sent to Lloyd Klein via email to lklein@hostos.cuny.edu.
- We are also accepting nominations for our bi-annual Sutherland Book Award Competition this year for the best book in the field of law and society. Please contact Stephen Morewitz at morewitz@eathlink.net in order to nominate books and to arrange for their shipment to Sutherland committee members.

Both nomination deadlines are January 31, 2016



Member Publications

If you have something you would like in the next SSSP Law and Society Newsletter, please contact the Newsletter Editor.

- **Budd, Kristen M.**, David M. Bierie, and Katria Williams. 2015. In Press. "Deconstructing Incidents of Female Perpetrated Sex Crimes: Comparing Female Sex Offender Groupings." *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*, doi:10.1177/1079063215594376.
- Mancini, Christina and **Kristen M. Budd**. 2015. In press. "Is the Public Convinced that 'Nothing Works?' Predictors of Treatment Support for Sex Offenders among Americans." *Crime & Delinquency*, doi: 10.1177/0011128715597693.
- **Savelsberg, Joachim**. Representing Mass Violence, link to the online open access site: <http://www.luminosoa.org/site/books/detail/3/representing-mass-violence/>.
- **Joachim J. Savelsberg** and Hollie Nyseth Brehm. 2015. "Representing Human Rights



Announcements

- Stephen J. Morewitz won an annual San Jose State University (SJSU) Author Award for his ninth book, *Kidnapping and Violence. New Research and Clinical Perspectives* (New York: Springer, eBook, 2015, hardcover, 2016) at the SJSU Author Awards Ceremony on October 26, 2015. This award is Stephen's fourth book award.