

Society for the Study of Social Problems

# Racial and Ethnic Minorities Division News

## Message From Our Chair

### Upcoming Deadlines

- Hotel reservations—  
July 25th 2005
- Annual Conference—  
August 12-14, 2005.



Division Chair Ione DeOllas, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana

It is hard to believe that the Conference dates are almost upon us. The Racial and Ethnic Minorities Division has once again maintained a high profile. The division is the sponsor of four sessions and is co-sponsoring four other sessions. Melinda Messineo received enough excellent paper proposals to offer two sessions which will focus on race and ethnicity in the media. The session on the Impact of 9/11 on Immigration has some super papers and promises to generate an inter-

esting discussion. Biko Agozino is offering a unique session on DuBois's *Philadelphia Negro*. He has devoted the session to student papers that compare Philadelphia today with that of DuBois's study as well as his impact on students and their education. I do hope you find the time to stop by each of these sessions as well as the co-sponsored sessions.

There is an experiment involving the reception this year. Several division chairs decided to forgo individual session receptions and have a "mass reception" involving several divisions. The joint reception is being co-sponsored by eighteen divisions including Racial and Ethnic Minorities. (For a complete listing of the participating divisions, see the announcement on page 3. I was intrigued by the idea of bringing so many divisions together for a social gathering. I saw the joint reception as an opportunity to renew

friendships and to develop new friendships across the specific areas of interest. It presents an opportunity to discuss ideas from a wide range of perspectives and make some interesting connections between ideas. Who knows where the next research project idea will emerge or what collaborations will be born around the pool on August 12? You might want to be present to see for yourself. If nothing else it promises to be a lot of fun!

Thanks to Melinda, there are several changes in the newsletter this time. You will find the expected information concerning the Annual Conference. Hopefully this information will help you plan your visit to Philadelphia. In addition, there is a review of a book by one of the division members, Hoan N. Bui. There is also an announcement for a book by another division member, Melanie E. L. Bush. (Congratulations to Cont. on page 2.

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## Annual Conference Approaching

The Annual Meeting is rapidly approaching, August 12-14, 2005. If you have already registered for the Annual Meeting, thank you. If not, please consider doing so via the secure website, <https://ecommerce.cas.utk.edu/ssspanlmeet/AnnMeeting1.asp>. We look forward to seeing you in

Philadelphia. The conference is being held in the Crown Plaza Hotel on 1800 Market Street, Philadelphia.

This year's theme: Blowback, the Unintended Consequences of Social Problems Solutions



## Chair Comments Continued...



...cont. from page 1 both of these individuals.) I hope you take some time and look at both of these items. It is always a delight when we can show case the hard work of some of our division members. If you have some information you would like included in the newsletter, please send the information to Melinda Messineo or myself and we will see that it gets into a future newsletter.

Please take the time to come by the division's business

meeting and help us plan for the next year. I am always looking for ideas on how to make the division better and ways to strengthen the role of the division within the academy. We will need several ideas for division sponsored sessions for the 2006 meetings. Now is your chance to have input into the focus of the sessions we will offer in San Francisco.

Finally, we will be holding elections again this next year (Where has the time gone?). I

know this seems early, but be thinking about running for chair of the division yourself or nominating someone else for chair (with their permission, of course). The division is successful because of the willingness of so many people to participate and to serve at all levels. So, please, give some serious thought to becoming even more involved in your division by running for chair.

I hope to see you in Phila-

## Regular Sessions

**Session 24:** Images of Race and Ethnicity in the Media

Friday, August 12  
12:10pm-2:10pm

Room: Independence B  
Organizer:  
Melinda Messineo

**Session 33:** Race/Ethnicity in the Media: Images in Marketing and News

Friday, August 12  
Room: Independence B  
Organizer:  
Melinda Messineo

**Session 93 :** Impact of 9/11 on Immigration: Anti-terrorism Policies

Sunday, August 14  
10:30-12:10

Room: Independence B  
Organizer and Chair: Ione Y. DeOllos

**Session 120:** The Philadelphia African American: 100 Years of the Philadelphia Negro

Sunday, August 14  
Room: Independence A

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*Impact of 9/11 on Immigration: Anti-terrorism Policies*

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## Co-sponsored Sessions

**Session 14:**  
Race Matters at School

(with Educational Problems Division)

Friday, August 12  
10:30am-12:10pm

Room: Independence B  
Organizer: Lorna Rivera  
Discussant: Ottis B. Grant

**Session 60:** Race Issues in the Labor Market  
(with Labor Studies Division)

Saturday, August 13  
12:30-2:10pm

Room: Delaware  
Organizer:  
Stephani Williams

**Session 81:** Women of Color, Conflict, Collaboration, and Social Change

(with Conflict, Social Action, and Change Division)  
Saturday, August 13  
4:30-6:10pm

Room: Delaware  
Organizer:  
Marie Sarita Gaytán

**Session 99:** Health Disparities

(with Health, Health Policy, and Health Services Division)

Sunday, August 14  
12:30-2:10pm

Room: Liberty B  
Organizer: Jean Elson



## Student Paper Competition—Winner Announced

The Racial and Ethnic Minorities Division invited students to submit their work for consideration for the 2005 paper competition. The committee received a number of fine examples of student research and are pleased to announce that the work by Leslie Wang from UC Berkeley titled:

“From ‘Missing Girls’ to America’s Sweethearts: White American Pa-

rental Ideologies and the Construction of Cultural Identity in Adopted Chinese Daughters” was selected as this year’s winning entry.

The winner will receive a \$100 stipend and a ticket to the awards banquet.

The Program Committee is sponsoring two Student Award Winning Papers sessions this year, one on August 12 from 4:30pm -

6:10pm and another on Sunday, August 14 from 8:30am-10:10am.

Congratulations to all of the participants on their fine work. We wish each of you success in your future pursuits



## Social Function Promises to Bring People Together

**Please Join Us!**

**FRIDAY**

**AUGUST 12**

**6:30pm - 7:30pm**

The Community Research and Development; Conflict, Social Action, and Change; Crime and Juvenile Delinquency; Educational Problems; Environment and Technology; Family; Global; Health, Health Policy,

and Health Services; Institutional Ethnography; Labor Studies; Law and Society; Poverty, Class, and Inequality; Racial and Ethnic Minorities; Sexual Behavior, Politics, and Communities; Social Problems Theory; Sociology and Social Welfare; Teaching Social Problems and the Youth, Aging, and the Life Course are all hosting a

Joint Reception

Location: by the pool.

In the event of rain, the reception will be held in the foyer/pre-function area, 2nd floor..

*See you on  
Friday at the  
reception!*

## Misc. Items

### A call for news!

Do you have division related news to share? Do you have a book or article coming out you would like to direct division attention toward? Let us know...

### Division Spotlight

In our next edition we would like to highlight the activities and accomplishments of some of our division members. Let us know who we might highlight.

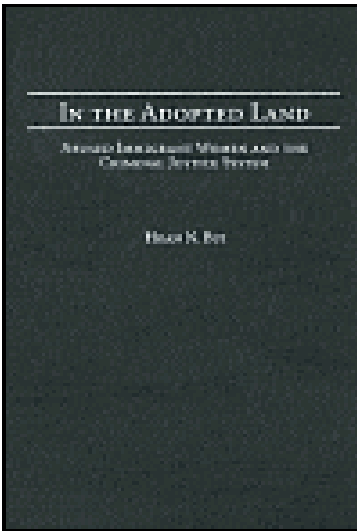
### Lost and Found

Are you looking for a specific book, article, contact name, grant source, etc. but have not had any lucky? Have you found a specific book, article, contact name,

grant source, that you have no need for but think a colleague might need? Let us know what it is you are looking for and we will post it.

Please send your ideas to Division Chair Ione Y. DeOllós, [ideollos@bsu.edu](mailto:ideollos@bsu.edu)





A new book from Hoan N. Bui.

## Book Review

Hoan N. Bui, *In the Adopted Land: Abused Immigrant Women and the Criminal Justice System*. Westport, CN: Praeger, 2004. 154 pages.

*In the Adopted Land* is a flawed gem. Hoan N. Bui gives the reader a useful and, at times, fascinating introduction to the experience of Vietnamese immigrant women in coping with intimate partner violence, but her lapses in scholarship too often distract the reader from fully appreciating her work.

Bui's book is based on interviews with a purposive sample of 34 Vietnamese women in four locales. Bui also interviewed eleven persons who had contact with abused Vietnamese women through their jobs. The first-hand accounts of the women interviewed by Bui are the strength of the book. They describe the nature of the violence directed against them, the pressures on them from family members, neighbors, and employers, and their experiences with police, prosecutors, judges, and victim service workers. Bui's status as a Vietnamese woman and her fluency in Vietnamese gave her both access to and understanding of her subjects.

The interviews reveal a tangle of competing needs and pressures. "Women want the violence to stop but not at all costs" (p. 124). Women must balance the desire to stop the violence against religious and cultural norms emphasizing their subordinate status and

the primacy of the family over the individual, economic constraints imposed by limited education, marketable skills, and fluency in English, need for husbands and boy-friends as companions, fathers, wage-earners, and fear of deportation for themselves and for the abusive males they depend on.

Bui's research replicates the findings of earlier studies: women wish to use police, prosecutors, and victim advocates as allies in achieving their goals of reducing or eliminating violence without unacceptable costs. But criminal justice agencies are uncertain allies. Policies such as mandatory arrests in cases of intimate partner assault and mandatory prosecution of intimate assault cases ("no drop" policies) are intended to achieve the goal of specific deterrence of the assailant. The emphasis on arrest and prosecution often conflicts with the interests of victims. At worst, women are arrested for assault on the basis of false allegations by their partners or due to the insensitivity of the arresting officers to the gendered context in which assaults occur. In particular, women's acts of self-defense may be equated with men's acts of aggression. Similarly, victim advocacy organizations encourage separation and divorce as a

means of dealing with an abusive husband, but this approach may also be in conflict with the needs of victims.

Bui argues that both criminal justice agencies and victim advocate groups are focused on the women they serve as individuals, and not as members of families. Women are not necessarily empowered by their services. Instead, they are encouraged to follow "cultural scripts directing them to get away and stay away from their abusers" (p. 122). Bui concludes that the freedom of choice of the victims of violence must be respected, including their choice to stay with their abusers. In the context in which poor women and women of color live, this choice is often entirely rational. The larger task is to correct gender inequalities and improve women's status (p. 125).

I suspect that any reader of *In the Adopted Land* will empathize with the tremendous stress undergone by the women Bui interviewed. It is the sense of empathy and understanding that is Bui's foremost contribution to the literature. Bui may be the only person in the world who could have conducted this research and written this book. Cont. page 5

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*"Women want the violence to stop but not at all costs"*  
(Bui, p. 124).

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**This book review is by :**

**Jerome McKean,  
Associate Professor of  
Criminal Justice and  
Criminology,  
Ball State University.**



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## Book review Continued...

At the same time, the reader will be frustrated by the flaws in this gem. Although the overall organization of the book is straightforward, it is difficult to get a sense of which women in which places had which experiences. Although an appendix provides tables showing the demographic characteristics of the 34 women in Bui's core sample, one is left with many questions. For example, were early-wave immigrants or late-wave immigrants more likely to experience abuse? Were ethnic Chinese women more or less likely than other Vietnamese refugees to be involved? In which jurisdiction(s) were women most likely to be arrested for domestic violence?

All of the jurisdictions had some version of mandatory arrest policies, but Bui indicates that the level of fidelity to these policies varied widely. How did this variation affect women's experiences?

Bui provides extensive verbatim excerpts from her interviews with her subjects, but it is hard to gain a sense of narrative biography for the women as individuals. Their experiences are presented as examples, but it is difficult to trace subjects from victimization to contact with the police to the reactions of her partner and family members. Ironically, Bui's approach decontextualizes her subjects' experiences. It would have been

helpful if Bui provided brief profiles of each of her subjects, describing their background, their experience of violence, their experience with criminal justice agencies, and what they would like to see done differently in the future.

Bui's interviews with her subjects are, quite rightly, the main source of information in this study. Bui also links her observations and findings to those of other scholars. But her almost total reliance on her subjects as sources of information is another limitation. It is difficult to get a sense of how their perceptions of their experiences with social service and criminal justice agencies agree

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*"It is the sense of empathy and understanding that is Bui's foremost contribution to the literature." McKean*

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## Book review Continued...

with the perceptions that workers at these agencies might have. As Bui points out, a lot is lost in translation. But this opens the possibility that, contrary to the views of her subjects, agency workers have made great efforts to help them (or at least might perceive themselves as doing so). It would be most useful to have a practitioner's eye view of the same events that are described by the victims of domestic violence. The failure to consider the point of view of agency workers undermines Bui's conclusion that they ignore the needs of the victims they serve. Bui also makes less use of agency and federal data than she could have. For example, Bui

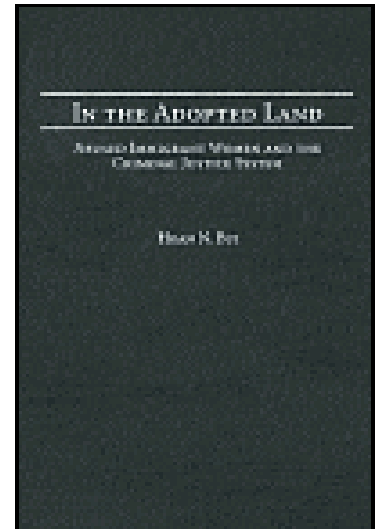
finds that both victims and offenders are concerned about the possibility of deportation. It would be helpful to know how likely it is that deportation could occur. How many Vietnamese residents have been deported? How many were deported for reasons related to their criminal behavior? In particular, how common is deportation in the immigrant communities described in the book?

The questions that occur to the reader are a tribute to Bui's effort. One wants to know more about her subjects and the context of their lives precisely because Bui excites not just scholarly curiosity, but compassion, concern, and even outrage on behalf of her

subjects. This is not because her approach is sensationalistic. On the contrary, it is Bui's willingness to let her subjects speak for themselves that makes one care. Students, researchers, and activists should all find space on their shelves for *In the Adopted Land*.

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Dr. McKean has co-authored several books and has several journal articles and book chapters to his credit. Currently, he is involved in research on women and violence. He has also held academic appointments at Florida Atlantic University and Wichita State University.



A new book from Hoan N. Bui.

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*"Students, researchers, and activists should all find space on their shelves for 'In the Adopted Land.'"*  
McKean

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## New Book Announcement



# BREAKING THE CODE OF GOOD INTENTIONS Everyday Forms of Whiteness

MELANIE E. L. BUSH

FOREWORD BY JOE R. FEAGIN

“**BREAKING THE CODE OF GOOD INTENTIONS** breaks new ground in the field of whiteness studies, yielding provocative and positive results. —Elizabeth Martinez, Author, Educator and Director of *The Institute for MultiRacial Justice in San Francisco*

“Dr. Melanie Bush's **BREAKING THE CODE OF GOOD INTENTIONS** brilliantly explores the everyday dimensions of how white Americans maintain and reproduce the inequalities of race through common interaction. Well-written and effectively argued, this study provides critical new insights and makes an important contribution to the social science literature about race.”

—Leith Mullings, Presidential Professor of Anthropology, CUNY

“Dr. Bush’s book effectively deconstructs white racial identities, showing them to be fraught with uncertainty and contradiction, and explaining the peculiar perception of beleagueredness many whites experience today. This book goes mad deep into the inner workings of white racial identity. Highly recommended!” —Howard Winant, University of California, Santa Barbara and author of *The World is a Ghetto: Race and Democracy since World War II*

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Examining the contemporary white experience, **BREAKING THE CODE OF GOOD INTENTIONS** examines why most white people in the United States believe we have achieved racial equality, even though social and economic indicators suggest otherwise. Drawing on systematic research conducted at the largest urban public university in the country, Melanie Bush explores students’ perceptions about identity, privilege, democracy, and inter-group relations.

The book explores mechanisms that reinforce adherence to dominant narratives and function to maintain and reproduce racialized structures of inequality. It identifies “cracks in the wall of whiteness,” circumstances that can foster understanding about systemic and racialized patterns of inequality. The author illuminates the connection between everyday thinking and the policies and programs that structure society.

Framed within an analysis of economic and political transitions that have occurred within the United States and globally in the second half of the twentieth century, the author examines the shift in public opinion from a presumption of collective responsibility for the common good, toward a belief in the social survival of the fittest.

Concluding with recommendations for academia and society at large, the author contends that the time is overdue for the dismantling of narratives that align ordinary whites with global elites. Indeed, she argues, the very future of humanity depends on challenging this persistent pattern.

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## Purpose Statement of SSSP

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.



**SSSP Website**  
**<http://www.sssp1.org/>**

## Consider Sending Your Conference Paper to *Social Problems*

Manuscripts for *Social Problems* should be prepared according to the style guide. Authors should submit five copies of their manuscript. These copies will not be returned. *Social Problems* requires no submission fee. However all papers accepted for publication pay a \$50.00 fee to help pay for copy editing and other editorial expenses. Papers written by graduate students or the unemployed are exempt from this fee. Submissions should be sent to:

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