

Racial and Ethnic Minorities Division December 2009 Newsletter

Message From Our Chair

Dear Subscribers,

I am happy to have our newsletter back up and running. For those of you who I have not had the pleasure of meeting, I am serving as chair of our division through 2010. I am an Associate Professor of Sociology at Hunter College and the CUNY Graduate Center. My research focuses on a number of important issues in race and ethnic relations, including multiracial families, media representations, and educational inequalities.

I look forward to continuing the important work that our section does. We have an exciting bunch of sessions planned for the 2010 meetings in Atlanta (see page 2). Our sessions this past August in San Francisco were very successful, and we hope to have even greater participation in 2010. I am trying to create new ways for us to stay informed and network, so please note the information about our new Facebook page which we encourage everyone to join. You can also send me important announcements about new books, conferences and call for papers, which can be distributed to the listserve. Serving as chair of our division has been a rewarding experience, and I strongly encourage you to consider running for Chair (2010-2012). Given the important responsibilities that come with being chair, we will be voting at the 2010 business meeting to implement staggered elections for chair, which some other divisions do, where those elected would serve one year as chair-elect and one year as chair, in order to ensure more consistent leadership. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any ideas, questions or concerns at: echitoch@hunter.cuny.edu.

Nominations for Chair 2010-2012

This year we are holding an election for Chair (2010-2012). Please consider self-nominating or nominating one of our members by sending an email to the current chair Erica Chito Childs at echitoch@hunter.cuny.edu.

We need to have the nominations by January 6, because the election will be held in early 2010.

Join the Racial and Ethnic Minorities

Division on Facebook!

See our Facebook invitation and article inside on page 3

Society for the Study of
Social Problems




60th Annual Meeting

August 13-15, 2010

The Sheraton Atlanta Hotel
165 Courtland Street NE
Atlanta, GA



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**RACIAL AND ETHNIC MINORITIES DIVISION
DECEMBER 2009 NEWSLETTER**



2010 Racial and Ethnic Minorities Sessions

Division Sessions

Thematic Session 1. Race, Immigration, Citizenship and Social Justice,
Organized by Tanya Golash Boza, tgbo@ku.edu

Thematic Session 2. Media Representations of Race and Ethnicity,
Organized by Melinda Messineo, mmessine@bsu.edu

Thematic Session 3. Understanding Race in a Global Perspective,
Organized by Erica Chito Childs, echitoch@hunter.cuny.edu

Papers in the Round--Roundtables. Stephanie Laudone, Fordham University: laudone@fordham.edu and Erica Chito Childs, Hunter College: echitoch@hunter.cuny.edu

Co-sponsored Sessions

Race and Public Education: Co-sponsored with Educational Problems
Organizer: Erica Chito Childs: echitoch@hunter.cuny.edu

Labor Market Reorganization: Immigration, globalization and racialization, Co-sponsored with Institutional Ethnography: tba

Social Justice and Community Learning: Voices from the Academy Co-sponsored with Community Research and Development, Organizer: Theo Majka, University of Dayton: theo.majka@notes.udayton.edu

Bridging the Gap between Research and Practice in Poor Communities: Co-sponsored with Community Research and Development Organizer: Sara ToweHorsfall, Texas Wesleyan: shorsfall@txwes.edu

Racialization and Sports: Co-Sponsored with the Division on Sport, Leisure, and the Body: tba

(Session times and dates will be confirmed in the month before the meeting)

Racial and Ethnic Minorities on Facebook

We have created a Facebook group for the SSSP Racial and Ethnic Minorities Division!

This page will allow us to share and discuss information regarding publications, job ads, conferences and events, research interests, teaching materials and any other concerns/ideas people may have regarding race and ethnicity.

Please join the group at “**SSSP Racial and Ethnic Minorities**” on Facebook.

Facebook was invented in 2003 by Mark Zuckerberg while attending



Harvard University. It now has over 300 million members and is currently the most popular online social networking site.

Facebook: A Raced Space or a Racially Invisible?

Political and social commentary, as well as popular culture discourse, abound with references to “post-racial” America. In the Obama “post-racial” America, race no longer matters; racial discrimination is no longer a public concern. For many this is none more evident than on the popular social networking site, Facebook, heralded as the epitome of a post-racial space.

My current research draws on qualitative in-depth interviews of college students to explore the ways in which college students use and experience Facebook. Most participants suggested that aside from racially homogenous friendship circles, race is invisible on the site. On the contrary, Facebook has become a vehicle through which racist messages and meanings are conveyed. Perhaps you’ve seen some of them: The YouTube clip, circulated by Facebook, of a black newscaster who turns “ghetto” in the middle of his newscast, cursing and spitting after an insect flies into his face during his report. Or perhaps the “What’s your ghetto name?” Facebook quiz. What is often proclaimed as a “post-racial” space is littered with overtly and explicitly racist applications, quizzes, postings and videos.

The popular categorization of the site as “post-racial” actually perpetuates and exacerbates the dissemination of these racist messages and meanings. Given that friendship circles on Facebook are representative of offline friendship circles, most Facebook networks are racially homogenous. In many ways, these racially segregated spaces can operate as a safe place for the dissemination of racism through a number of different features and applications on the site. In addition, in my research, participants claim that behavior on Facebook is not taken seriously, the site allows users to play or joke around with racially harmful messages without being charged as racist. The characterization of Facebook as a post-racial space thus legitimizes online expressions of racism passed as casual virtual badinage.

As scholars such as Jessie Daniels and Lisa Nakamura have shown, the internet has changed the ways in which people experience race and racism. Despite the popular belief that we are in a “post-racial” America, race and racism continue to exist, albeit in different forms. Race still matters, Facebook gives us a lens through which we can explore the forms and representations of contemporary ‘post-racial’ racism.

Stephanie Laudone is a Ph.D. Candidate at Fordham University in the Department of Sociology. She is currently working on her dissertation which explores identity presentation and management among individuals of different age groups on Facebook.



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RACISM REVIEW BLOG

RacismReview, launched in 2007 by Joe R. Feagin, Texas A&M University and Jessie Daniels, CUNY-Hunter College, is a blog intended to provide a credible and reliable source of information for journalists, students and members of the general public who are seeking solid evidence-based research and analysis of “race,” racism, ethnicity, and immigration issues, especially as they undergird and shape U.S. society within a global setting. A collaborative effort, **RacismReview** contributors are scholars and researchers from sociology and a number of other social science disciplines and a variety of academic institutions across the U.S., and we welcome inquiries from new bloggers. By the usual web metrics, **Racism Review** has been a success in its first two years, with over 100,000 unique visitors to the site each month.

<http://www.racismreview.com/blog>

WORDS FROM THE AUTHOR

*Jennifer Correa is a PhD Student in Sociology at the University of Missouri-Columbia. She has a forthcoming article in *Critical Sociology* entitled, ‘The Targeting of the East Los Angeles Brown Berets by a Racial Patriarchal Capitalist State: Merging Intersectionality and Social Movement Research’. Well Done Jennifer!*

The idea for this article first came about in 2004 as a M.S. thesis project when I was a sociology graduate student at Oklahoma State University. By the Fall of 2006, I became a PhD student at the University of Missouri-Columbia and continued to think about this thesis and ways for pushing it in a new direction. As I began enrolling in race/ethnicity courses at MU, I began asking different kinds of questions about it, changing the orientation from the “whats” and “hows” to the “whys.” I was especially concerned about why the state would target the East Los Angeles Brown Berets. In addition, I felt that the literature in social movements did not really reflect how issues of race, class, and gender (intersectionality) could potentially impact racial minority movements. I decided to merge critical race/feminist theories with social movement theories/studies to try and get at the “why” questions in my research. This article examines the decline of a faction of the Chicano movement formerly known as the East Los Angeles Brown Berets between 1967-1973. To do this, I focus on the State and its intersections of race, gender, and class, which contributed to the demise of the Brown Berets.



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“MOUNT RUSHMORE, GERARD BAKER, AND THE SO-CALLED ‘POST-RACIAL’ MOMENT”

By Brooke Neely, PhD Candidate at UC Santa Barbara

In 2004, the National Park Service hired Gerard Baker to be the first American Indian superintendent at Mount Rushmore National Memorial. Baker’s presence, as well as his efforts to include American Indian perspectives at the memorial, is surprising because it disrupts the prevalent nationalist and imperial message of the mountain carving. While many Native and non-Native people applaud his taking the post, some white residents argue that Mount Rushmore should celebrate the United States not “Indians.” Others contend his presence does little to undermine the social inequalities experienced by American Indians. I am curious what Baker’s story tells us about the current state of race and racism in the United States.



In the era of the Obama presidency, we can think of Gerard Baker as a charismatic figure akin to Barack Obama, in that people locate a potential for social change in him as a person. Similar to the questions being asked about Obama, people grapple with what it means to have Baker at Mount Rushmore. Some claim Baker ushers in a new era of inclusiveness and multiplicity. Others argue his presence does little to change the nation-state project he manages; he may represent a step toward multiculturalism, but he still helps maintain a traditional nationalist agenda. From a sociological perspective, I would argue we should attend to the ways both Supt. Baker and Pres. Obama serve as focal points for a whole set of discourses around race, nation, place, and history. This would also include recognizing how both leaders arouse racial panic on the part of some white Americans.

The multicultural discourse surrounding Superintendent Baker (and President Obama) reflects larger shifts in racial politics. In the post-civil rights era, the dominant racial ideology has shifted from explicit state-sponsored racism to one that obscures racial inequality through discourses of inclusion and multiculturalism. This includes the prevalence of a colorblind ideology. Indeed, some have argued the Obama presidency signals a “post-racial” moment. This discourse locates racism primarily in individual prejudice and isolated experiences of racial discrimination, and it largely champions American exceptionalism and the promise the United States provides for poor and working people of all colors. In this framework, people such as Pres. Obama and Supt. Baker serve as the ultimate symbol of that promise. This discourse is deployed politically in ways that obscure the structural factors that contribute to deeply entrenched and widespread inequality along racial lines. In the case of Baker, discussions over his significance may redirect attention away from the history of land theft and settlement in the Black Hills area as well as the gross inequalities experienced by Native people in the region.

The irony of the post-civil rights era lies in the fact that with the rise of a colorblind ideology comes a more dispersed and prevalent discourse around race. Race is everywhere—just take a look at the 2008 presidential campaign and the mainstream media coverage of race. In their recent book, *Yes We Can?*, Adia Harvey Wingfield and Joe Feagin argue against the notion that we are living in a “post-racial” moment, and instead illustrate through an analysis of the 2008 presidential campaign how a colorblind discourse in fact maintains white privilege and a system of racial inequality. While wrestling with the social significance of figures such as Gerard Baker, we should certainly think about how a multicultural narrative reinforces frameworks of whiteness. We would also be wise to consider how social life—cultural and political processes—is always overdetermined; its causes and consequences are multiple and often contradictory. Just as with President Obama, we do not know yet what will emerge as a result of Gerard Baker’s presence at Mount Rushmore. We must keep our sociological lenses tuned in to find out.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

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Fade to Black and White: Interracial Images in Popular Culture

Erica Chito Childs, *Hunter College, CUNY Graduate Center*

There is no teasing apart what interracial couples think of themselves from what society shows them about themselves. Following on her earlier ground-breaking study of the social worlds of interracial couples, Erica Chito Childs considers the larger context of social messages, conveyed by the media, that inform how we think about love across the color line. Examining a range of media--from movies to music to the web--**Fade to Black and White** offers an informative and provocative account of how the perception of interracial sexuality as deviant has been transformed in the course of the 20th century and how race relations are understood today.

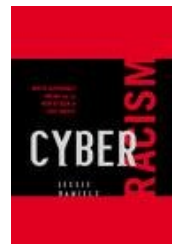


Erica Chito Childs' careful research and creative insights are clearly displayed in this engaging and interesting book. *Fade to Black and White* is an original study that convincingly shows how the depictions of interracial sex and marriage in popular culture and media reflect contemporary attitudes about race and sex in the United States. This book is a significant contribution to the study of American race relations."—William Julius Wilson, Harvard University

Cyber Racism: White Supremacy Online and the New Attack on Civil Rights

Jessie Daniels, *Hunter College CUNY*

Jessie Daniels' new book, **Cyber Racism: White Supremacy Online and the New Attack on Civil Rights** is the first book to explore the way racism is translated from the print-only era to the cyber era. In this highly readable volume, author Daniels examines how white supremacist organizations have moved their printed publications onto the Internet. Through an innovative, mixed method study - from qualitative analysis of the posts at the "Ladies Only" forum at Stormfront.org (online portal of "White Pride World Wide") where women renegotiate white supremacy through a feminist lens to the "cloaked" sites which disguise white supremacy sources as legitimate civil rights websites -- Daniels takes the reader through a devastatingly informative tour of white supremacy online.

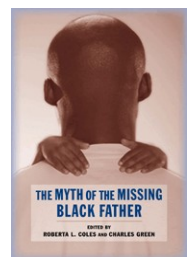


Jack Levin, Co-director of the Brudnick Center on Violence and Conflict at Northeastern University and author of *The Violence of Hate* calls *Cyber Racism* "well-written, insightful, and exhaustive examination of white supremacy "online."

The Myth of the Missing Black Father

Roberta L. Coles, *Marquette University* and Charles Green, *Hunter College, CUNY Graduate Center*

Common stereotypes portray black fathers as being largely absent from their families. Yet while black fathers are less likely than white and Hispanic fathers to marry their child's mother, many continue to parent through cohabitation and visitation, providing caretaking, financial, and other in-kind support. This volume captures the meaning and practice of black fatherhood in its many manifestations, exploring two-parent families, cohabitation, single custodial fathering, stepfathering, noncustodial visitation, and parenting by extended family members and friends. Chapters compare the diversity of African American fatherhood with negative portrayals in politics, academia, and literature and, through qualitative analysis and original profiles, illustrate the struggle and intent of many black fathers to be responsible caregivers



Bette Dickerson, American University, and past president of the Association of Black Sociologists says, "This book demonstrates the gap in positive procreative stories of responsible Black fathers as opposed to a deficit-based model and invites more research on Black fathers 'doing the well' for Black families and children. "



MEMBERS' NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

RACIAL AND ETHNIC MINORITIES DIVISION GRADUATE STUDENT PAPER

The Racial and Ethnic Minorities Division invites graduate student papers that cover any aspect within the field of race and ethnic relations to be submitted for consideration for our Graduate Student paper award. Papers may be empirical or theoretical. To be eligible, a paper must have been written in 2009, may not have been accepted for publication, or currently under review. Papers which have been presented at previous meetings or conferences are eligible. Papers must be single authored by the student. Papers must not exceed 25 pages, including notes, tables, and references. Papers should be accompanied by a cover letter specifying their submission as consideration for the graduate student paper competition to: Erica Chito Childs at echitoch@hunter.cuny.edu.

The winner will be announced in early summer 2010 and will receive a \$100 stipend and a ticket to the SSSP awards banquet.

Deadline: 3/30/10

DR JULIET SALTMAN "CIVIL RIGHTS HERO 2009 AWARD"

*Dr. Juliet Saltman, Professor Emerita of Sociology, Kent State University, was honored with a "Civil Rights Hero 2009 Award" from the California Department of Fair Employment & Housing. The award was given for her "significant contributions to the achievement of fair housing opportunities in California." Specifically she was cited for her work as the volunteer state coordinator of the Cal HISA Task Force, which she founded in 1990, and which finally (after ten years of lobbying) secured funding from the city of San Diego for a housing mobility program for low-income homeseekers. Before moving to San Diego in 1989, Saltman was cited by HUD for her founding of Akron, Ohio's Fair Housing Service in 1965. That agency is still functioning and is now funded by the city and county. Her published books and papers focus on national and local efforts to achieve fair housing and stable racially integrated neighborhoods. The CalHISA Task Force was formed in response to a policy suggestion in one of her books ("A Fragile Movement"). *Congratulations Dr Saltman!**

Society for the Study of Social Problems

Purpose Statement : 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.



Consider Sending Your Conference Paper to Social Problems

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Manuscripts for *Social Problems* should be prepared according to the style guide on the inside back cover of *Social Problems*. Authors should submit five copies of their manuscript plus a PC-compatible electronic file. 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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