

Racial and Ethnic Minorities Division July 2010 Newsletter

Message From Our Chair

Dear Subscribers,

As we prepare for our annual meeting in Atlanta, we are excited about our slate of sessions (see page 2). I want to thank everyone for allowing me to serve as chair over these past two years, and I am confident that our section will continue to grow and thrive.

See you all in Atlanta!

Professor Erica Chito Childs

New Chair Announcement

This year we were fortunate to have two very accomplished and dedicated individuals--Jessie Daniels and Marlese Durr run for the position of Chair of our section. Congratulations to our newly elected Chair Marlese Durr, Professor of Sociology at Wright State University. Marlese will serve from 2010-2012. She can be reached at marlese.durr@wright.edu.

Join with us in congratulating our new chair Marlese Durr.

Graduate Student Paper Award Winner

This year we received almost twenty submissions for our Graduate Student paper award. Given the strong competition, the committee decided to give the award to two papers. Congratulations to co-winners, Brandon Jackson's "Professional Pose: Respect and Compensation among Black Men in College," and Stephanie Laudone's "Facebook: A Raced Space or Postracial?"

Please join us at the awards banquet on Saturday August 14 to congratulate these two scholars!

*See the Racial and Ethnic Minorities Division
Sessions and Workshops on Pages 2 & 4*

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
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Annual Meeting 2010 Racial and Ethnic Minorities Sessions

Friday, August 13

8:30-10:10am **Session 4: Media Representations of Race and Ethnicity**

10:30-12:10pm **Session 12: Representations of Whiteness in Media**

12:30-2:10pm **Session 23: Race and Public Education I: Racial and Ethnic Inequalities**

2:30-4:10pm **Session 31: Race and Public Education II: Unequal Schooling** (All in Georgia 9)

4:30-6:10pm **Division Meeting: Racial and Ethnic Minorities.** Room: Georgia 13

Saturday, August 14

8:00-9:40am **Session 47: Labor Market Reorganization: Immigration, Globalization and Racialization.** Room: Georgia 12

4:30-6:10pm **Session 74: Race, Immigration, Citizenship and Social Justice.** Room: Georgia 8

Sunday, August 15

8:30-10:10am **Session 82: Social Justice and Community Learning: Voices from the Academy.** Room: Georgia 2

10:30-12:10pm **Session 98: Racial and Ethnic Minorities (Papers in the Round).** Room: Georgia 13

12:30-2:10pm **Session 104: Persistent Inequalities: Considering Intersectionalities.** Room: Georgia 8

For more information on the Racial and Ethnic Minorities Sessions please check out:

<http://www.sssp1.org/index.cfm/m/376/fuseaction/sspsession2.onlineSessionIndex/>



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JULY 2010 NEWSLETTER

“RACE AND THE SUMMER BLOCKBUSTER”

By Jason Smith, PhD Student in the Public Sociology Program at George Mason University

As we enter the summer season a vast number of Americans will be entering theatres for doses of entertainment and escape, as well as some glorious air conditioning. This means that Hollywood studios are going to be bringing out the “big guns” of their film production efforts, attempting to attract the most audience members and aim for blockbuster revenues. For us sociologists though, we should be especially mindful this summer movie season to enter the theatres not just for the sake of entertainment, but to also critically assess the images and portrayals of minority groups as they appear on the screen – as well as the production processes that produce these films and how audiences respond to such movies.

Before this year’s summer season even began, two movies have already drawn criticism regarding the casting of white actors in leading roles. The two films I speak of are *The Prince of Persia* and *The Last Airbender*. The former film boasts a Persian prince with white skin and a British-accent, but I would like to focus on the latter film’s casting decisions and how it relates to those of us that study race and ethnicity.

Adapted from a children’s television show – titled *Avatar: The Last Airbender* – that aired on Nickelodeon in 2005 and lasted for three seasons, *The Last Airbender* has received protest for its recasting of the series’ three main heroes. The cartoon was a well-received show and has won various awards, the unique feature of this show was the focus given to Asian-inspired characters and world settings – I was personally blown away to see a children’s show with such depth that broke from standard Western norms. In the film version, the three heroes have been recast with white actors and this has drawn protest from some. The fact that the villains for the first film (a trilogy is planned) are also people of color raises issues as well. One online group, Racebending.com, provides a good source for the casting practices that lead to this outcome and have been following the process ever since.

Upset over racial portrayals in film is nothing new, last summer *Transformers 2* received complaints for its demeaning and stereotypical “black” Autobots. But beyond the initial portrayals and the focus on single individual stereotypes, race and ethnicity studies are beginning to shift into a new paradigm that focuses on how race is embedded within institutions and how certain frames are used to confer racial privilege. Popular culture is a pivotal site for racial inequality to persist, and particularly within Hollywood films. *The Last Airbender* offers us an interesting case this summer as we see a white-washing of the heroes and yet a plug by the studio that produced the film (Paramount) that celebrates its diverse cast. While we see a multicultural cast in the credit listings of the film, a critical look would question what kind of multiculturalism we see. Is it an “empty multiculturalism” that feeds into the idea of a post-racial America, or is it a multiculturalism that brings us into dialogue with groups outside of our own? In his recent book, *The White Racial Frame*, Joe Feagin demonstrates how white racial frames work to maintain racially structured institutions and the need for counterframes to develop. As we go off to enjoy a movie or two this summer, let us look at more than just portrayals and at how these films are productions of an established institution that has its own ideals of race firmly embedded within it. More importantly, we should take notice of films that offer counterframes and pay attention to the successes or failures that they face.



RACIAL AND ETHNIC MINORITIES DIVISION JULY 2010 NEWSLETTER

Racial and Ethnic Minorities Division Workshop

Working Together To End Racism and Internalized Racism

SATURDAY, AUGUST 14, 2010

12:30 AM – 2:10 PM

Rooms Georgia 11 and 12

The Sheraton Atlanta Hotel, Atlanta, GA

One of the key difficulties we face in taking effective action to end racism in the institutions we work for, in our families and in our lives in general is due to the ways that racism has affected us personally. This workshop will provide us with an opportunity to be listened to as we talk about the ways we've experienced racism and internalized racism and how that has affected us.

Leaders



Jacqueline Kane
Office of Higher
Education
*University of NYS
Education Department*

Claire Renzetti
Center for Research on
Violence Against Women and
Department of Sociology
University of Kentucky



Adriana Leela Bohm
Public Services and
Social Sciences Divi-
sion
*Delaware County
Community College*

Pamela Roby
Department of Sociology
*University of California,
Santa Cruz*



For more information contact: Pam: robby@ucsc.edu or 831-427-2218; see
“The Personal Remains Political,” Claire Renzetti, *Social Problems Forum*,
Fall 2007, pp. 4-5.

RACIAL AND ETHNIC MINORITIES DIVISION

JULY 2010 NEWSLETTER

Division member Barbara Gurr is submitting this resolution to SSSP for consideration at the annual meeting this August. She has asked our division to support this initiative, which falls in line with the mission of our division.

Proposed Resolution

Whereas in 2007, the SSSP approved a resolution calling for the discontinuation of the demeaning and racist use of Native American nicknames, logos, and mascots in sport; and

Whereas the Atlanta Braves organization, despite decades of requests and protests by Native American groups and organizations, continues to use Native American mascots, symbols, and images that perpetuate stereotypes and the stigmatization of Native American people and Native American Nations, who, having survived European and American imperialism, for centuries suffered and continue to suffer, including with this practice, untold attacks on their dignity; and

Whereas the use of Native American mascots, symbols, and images reproduces stereotypically racialized conceptualizations of Native people which hinder the development of intercultural cooperation and further marginalize America's indigenous peoples, is offensive to Native Americans and others, and undermines the ability of Native American Nations to accurately represent their own histories, cultures, traditions, and images; and

Whereas the American Psychological Association, the United States Commission on Civil Rights, and the Society of Indian Psychologists have determined that Native American mascots exert a damaging effect on the psychological well-being of Native Americans; and

NOW, Therefore, the SSSP joins the American Psychological Association; the American Sociological Association; the National Council for Multicultural Education; the United States Commission on Civil Rights; the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; and numerous Native American Nations and organizations such as the Association of American Indian Affairs, the Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribal Council, the National Congress of American Indians, and others in condemning all ethnic-themed mascots in general and the Atlanta Braves' nickname, logo, and mascot in particular; and

Therefore, be it resolved that the membership of the SSSP authorizes and directs the Administrative Office of the SSSP to send a letter to the Administrative Office of the Atlanta Braves, the Governor of Georgia, the Mayor of Atlanta, with a copy to local newspapers, calling on the Atlanta organization to discontinue the "Braves" as its nickname, logo, and mascot.

Contact: Barbara Gurr at Barbara.gurr@uconn.edu

In spring 2010, Barbara Gurr was recognized with multiple awards for her scholarship, teaching, and activism; she was awarded: The Michael J. Dunphy Award from the University of Connecticut Department of Sociology; the Graduate Instructor Award from the University of Connecticut, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; the Susan Porter Benson Graduate Research Paper Award from the University of Connecticut Women's Studies Program; and the Marita McComiskey Distinguished Graduate Career Award for Feminist Praxis from the University of Connecticut Women's Studies Program. Barbara's research, which she will continue in her dissertation this coming year, examines the subjective experiences of Lakota women seeking reproductive healthcare through the federally funded Indian Health Service (IHS) on and near the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. Her findings indicate that the complex organization and chronic underfunding of IHS are profoundly influenced by race, class, gender and citizenship ideologies. Congratulations Barbara!

Books

Crime and Racial Constructions: Cultural Misinformation About African Americans in Media and Academia

Professor Jeanette Covington, *Rutgers University*.

Crime and Racial Constructions: Cultural Misinformation about African Americans in Media and Academia focuses on how film images of dangerous, hedonistic blacks have assumed greater significance since blacks protested racial injustice during the Civil Rights Movement and the Black Power Movement of the 1960s and 1970s. It does so by reviewing a number of films that have been released from the 1970s until the present in which black males are depicted as violent and threatening. It likewise considers how these same films represent black females as prostitutes; drug addicts; and irresponsible, abusive mothers who spawn violence in their children. Because these on-screen images of a violent, apolitical, and immoral black underclass find their way into the criminological literature, the book also takes a look at how criminologists use these images to link crime to underclass culture. Both Hollywood and criminologists alike manage to ignore how black activism during the 1960s social movements actually sparked black opposition to the kind of black-on-black crime that is routinely depicted on-screen. By taking a critical look at these negative images, *Crime and Racial Constructions* seeks to correct some of the distortions that arise from the undue academic and cinematic focus on black criminals at the expense of racially conscious blacks.



Articles and Book Chapters

Conley, T.D., Rabinowitz, J. and Rabow, J. "Gordon Gekkos, Frat Boys and Nice Guys: The Content, Dimensions and Structural Determinants of Multiple Ethnic Minority Groups Stereotypes about White Men." Accepted for publication in *Analysis of Social Issues and Social Policy*.

Rabow, J. and Yeghnazar, P. "Transformative Teaching in the University: Uncovering and Confronting Racism, Sexism and Homophobia." In *Teaching Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education: Perspectives from North America*. (The Center for the Study of Sociology, Anthropology, and Politics - The Higher Education Academy Network, University of Birmingham, UK), 2010.

Sewell, Abigail A. and David R. Heise. in press. "Racial Differences in Sentiments: Exploring Variant Culture Theory" *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*: doi:10.1016/j.ijintrel.2010.03.001

Sewell, Abigail A. 2010. "A Different Menu: Racial Residential Segregation and the Persistence of Racial/Ethnic Inequality." In *Race and Ethnic Relations in the Twenty-First Century: History, Theory, Institutions, and Policy* (ed. Rashawn Ray). San Diego, CA: University Readers, Inc.

Stuesse, Angela C. 2010. What's "Justice and Dignity" Got to Do with It? Migrant Vulnerability, Corporate Complicity, and the State. *Human Organization* 69(1):19-30.

Stuesse, Angela C. 2010. Challenging the Border Patrol, Human Rights, and Persistent Inequalities: An Ethnography of Struggle in South Texas. *Latino Studies* 8(1):23-47.



JOB POSTING

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY

The **Department of Social and Cultural Sciences** invites applications for a **tenure track position** at the rank of Assistant Professor, beginning August 2011. Applicants should be prepared to contribute primarily to the Sociology major and should be able and willing to teach in more than one of the following areas: Sociology of Health and Illness; Medical Sociology; Aging/Life Course; Political Sociology; Social Change/Movements; Comparative/Historical Sociology; International/Global Sociology. Research specialization open. Applicants should demonstrate excellence in teaching, evidence of scholarly productivity, and a coherent research agenda. Ph.D. strongly preferred, but ABDs will be considered.

The Department of Social and Cultural Sciences offers undergraduate majors in Anthropology, Criminology and Law Studies, Social Welfare and Justice, and Sociology. The department is committed to excellence in both teaching and scholarship. Please visit the department web site: <http://www.marquette.edu/socs/>.

Marquette University is an Equal Opportunity Employer committed to a diverse faculty, staff, and student body. Members of racial/ethnic minorities and women are strongly encouraged to apply. The campus is located near downtown Milwaukee in a racially diverse area with convenient access to national, state, and local government agencies, and many private institutions and non-profit organizations.

Review of candidates will begin on **October 1, 2010**. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

Instructions for application.

Please note: All applicants must apply online.

Use the following links to Marquette's department of Human Resources to apply.

Assistant Professor – Sociology

<https://careers.marquette.edu/applicants/Central?quickFind=52459>

In addition to applying online, candidates should also submit directly to the department a letter of interest, curriculum vitae, evidence of teaching effectiveness, writing samples, a brief research plan, a statement of how the candidate might contribute to the various departmental majors, and three letters of reference. ABD candidates please provide a timetable for completion of the Ph.D. Please send applications to the following address.

Search Committee

Department of Social and Cultural Sciences

Lalumiere Hall 340

Marquette University

P.O. Box 1881

526 N. 14th Street

Milwaukee, WI 53201-1881



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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