

YOUTH AGING AND THE LIFECOURSE NEWSLETTER

Special Division of the SSSP

Winter, 2011

CHAIR: Mary E. Byrnes, mbyrnes4404@marygrove.edu

Message From the Chair:

I hope as you read this you have successfully completed your winter semester and are taking a few moments for yourself in all of your hard work and service. Before moving on to current YALC business, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the outgoing chair, Chris Wellin for his hard commitment and dedication to SSSP and the Youth, Aging, and Lifecourse Division. Thank you, Chris.

Although my introductory newsletter is brief, there are a few noteworthy items including SSSP membership changes, 2012 Denver meetings, and the graduate student paper award.

Membership

Of particular note this year is the change in membership to SSSP. Members will no longer receive three (3) free division memberships. Beginning this year, members will be allotted one (1) special division membership and will be charged \$10 for additional memberships. Please make YALC a priority in your membership choice.

“Our Own Old Age” (No Matter What Your Age)

As the 2012 campaign season ramps up, issues affecting both the old and young are at the forefront of political rhetoric and decision making; for example, Social Security and unemployment. As I write these words, Congress is debating the extension of cuts to the payroll tax that fund Social Security. An extension of these cuts may very well make Social Security more vulnerable and a further open target to its foes down the road. Yet, our political leaders suggest a tax holiday is the “best” stimulus for our weak

economy even when an extension of jobless benefits, benefits primarily affecting younger generations, may be a better stimulus solution. This short example of a much more complex problem is posed to illustrate the importance of thinking about one of the United States most pressing problems and what social justice may mean and look like along the lifecourse.

As I think about these issues myself and my reasons for bringing them to you, I am reminded of a wise mentor who upon my departure from the non-profit sector to enter graduate school to study aging remarked, “You will create your own old age.” I carry her words with me every time I teach an aging course, think about my research, and the impact (or lack of impact) on the population I study. I hear these words every time I watch and read attacks on Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. I contemplate in the spirit of the Occupy Movement: whose old age are *they* creating?

This is why I ask SSSP YALC members to consider these issues for our meetings in Denver and reinvigorate and honor our own “Art of Activism” within SSSP. In the following months I’d like to encourage and challenge you to share your thoughts with me about activism within YALC, the possibility of a SSSP resolution, and what social justice means along the lifecourse. The YALC 2012 paper sessions reflects the call to age, activism and creativity. In doing so, I hope to push us a little harder in our own creative activism, dialogues, and research, so we may collectively work towards “our own old age” no matter what our age. MB

Newsletter

Have a fun or catchy name as I spice up and add content to our bi-annual newsletter? An idea for a story? A recently published article or book? Send me a note at mbyrnes4404@marygrove.edu.

<p>YALC DIVISION SESSIONS FOR THE 2012 MEETINGS, “THE ART OF ACTIVISM”.</p>
--

Our 2012 sessions cover a variety of issues that observe the “Art of Activism” along the lifecourse including those that are co-sponsored with

other divisions. The deadline for submission is January 31, 2012. More details can be found at www.sssp.org.

1. Elder-Friendly Communities, Housing Policy, and Community Development
2. Care Work in the Home
3. Care Workers, Collective Action, and Training
4. Work Across the Life Course
5. Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security: Current Issues
6. Leisure, Creativity and the Life Course
7. Age and Youth in Action Together: Gray Panthers and Intergenerational Activism
8. Aging Inequalities
9. Global and International Perspectives in Lifecourse Studies

GRADUATE PAPER AWARD

DEADLINE MAY 15, 2012

All graduate students are encouraged to apply for the annual **Youth, Aging, and the Life Course Division** Graduate Student Paper Award Competition. Papers should be able to contribute broadly to the sociology of youth, the sociology of aging, or the sociology of the life course. One award will be made, and the winner will receive a monetary prize, student membership in SSSP for one year, 2012 conference registration, and a complimentary ticket to the 2012 SSSP awards banquet in Denver, CO, where the award will be made. To be eligible, the paper must meet the following criteria: 1) the paper must have been completed between January 2011 and May 2012; 2) the paper must not have been accepted for publication (papers submitted for

publication are eligible, as long as they are not already accepted; papers based on theses and dissertations are eligible as well); 3) all authors of the paper must be graduate students and the student who submits the paper must be first author; 4) the paper must be no longer than 30 double-spaced pages, including all notes, references, and tables; and 5) the author of the winning paper must be ready to present this paper at the SSSP meetings in Denver in August of 2012. To be considered for this award, graduate students should submit their papers electronically to the Chair of the Division. E-mail two copies of the paper (i.e., one blind copy and one copy that includes a title page with all contact information), along with a brief letter of submission confirming your graduate student status, to Mary Byrnes, mbyrnes4404@marygrove.edu. Mailings can be directed to Byrnes at the Department of Social Sciences, Marygrove College, 8425 West McNichols Road, Detroit, MI, 28221.

RECENT ARTICLES BY YALC MEMBERS

Roberto G. Gonazales published:

Learning to be Illegal: Undocumented Youth and Legal Contexts in the Transition to Adulthood. *American Sociological Review*, 76:4.

Heather Dillaway (with Jean Burton) published:

Not Done Yet?! Women Discuss the End of Menopause. *Women's Studies*. 40:2.

Mary E. Byrnes published:

A City Within A City: A 'Snapshot' of Aging in a HUD 202 in Detroit, Michigan. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 25:3.

In our next issue: Member and community organization spotlight!