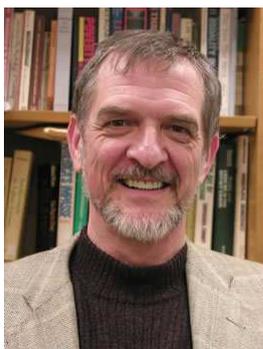


ASA Section on Aging and the Life Course



News from the Chair

As many of you know, at the ASA meeting in Atlanta I was honored to be given the double privilege of delivering the Matilda Riley lecture and assuming the role of chair of the Section on Aging and the Life Course. As I announced in concluding the Riley lecture, ***Age and Sociological Imagination*** will be our theme for the coming year.

Over the three decades of SALC's existence, members of the section have made effective use of sociological imagination in advancing our understanding of social processes that organize age and shape individual aging. In the current intellectual context, we have the opportunity to consider the relevance of recent discoveries and theoretical developments in other disciplines for age and aging. It is clear that new horizons of inquiry are opening that cannot be adequately explored without the rigorous deployment of sociological imagination. For example, research on individual-level physical factors that have not previously received much attention among social scientists (e.g., brain imaging, gene expression) have provided important demonstrations of the effect of social forces on biological change. At the macro-level, other issues call for energetic and well-reasoned social thought. The rapid graying of the age structure, for example, is confronting societies across the planet with unprecedented age-related challenges and questions.

Thus, the program for next year's meeting will be designed to nurture our collective appreciation of the relevance of sociological principles and the impact of social forces on under-explored areas of age-related terrain. The program will feature an invited session, "Bringing the Body Back in: Biology and the Life Course" organized by Deborah Carr. We will also have three open sessions: 1) "Aging, Life Course and Sociological Imagination in Global Perspective" (Feinian Chen and Gunhild Hagestad, co-organizers); 2) "Age and Sociological Imagination: Individual and Micro-level Dynamics" (Dale Dannefer and Michael Shanahan, co-organizers) and 3) "Age & Sociological Imagination: Structural and Demographic Dynamics" (David Warner, organizer). Teresa Cooney and Monica Kirkpatrick Johnson will organize a fifth session devoted to open Roundtables and Research Groups. The call for papers will be coming out shortly for our three open sessions and the Roundtable session. Lastly, Judith Treas will present the the Matilda Riley Distinguished Lecture, followed by a reception and the SALC Business Meeting. And, of course, we could not possibly have a meeting without a mentoring dinner!

As you may have noticed, our line-up of 5 sessions in addition to the Business Meeting and Distinguished Scholar lecture represents one more than our usual allotment. This reflects the bonus session that we are given by ASA because SALC's section day will be the last day of the meeting next year. Securing a line-up of five sessions also depended on the work of Cheryl Elman, Chair of SALC's Membership Committee. Her work, supported by committee member Robin Shura, was critical in enabling us to maintain our membership above 600 --required for the extra session. In our general climate of economic

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Section on Aging and the Life Course Business Meeting Sunday, August 15, 2010, 3:30-4:00 p.m. Atlanta, Georgia

Call to Order: Peter Uhlenberg 3:30

Secretary's Minutes from 2009 Annual Meeting Anne Barrett, Florida State University

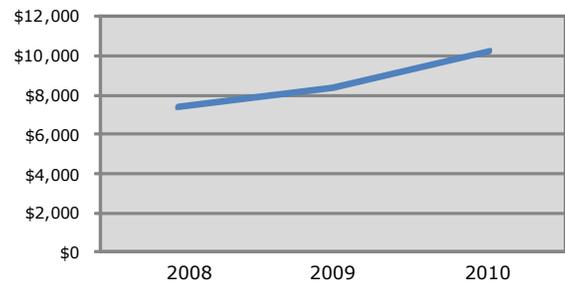
Last year's minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report

Anne Barrett, Florida State University

As of June 30, we had a balance of \$10,256. The fourth quarter statement will include approximately \$6,000 in donations, ticket sales from mentoring dinner, and raffle tickets. Estimated expenses for the meeting (approximately \$7,250) will be covered by section funds. The report was approved.

SALC Account Balance as of June 30, 2008-2010



Planning Committee Report

Chair: Peter Uhlenberg, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
James Raymo, University of Wisconsin
Jessica Kelley-Moore, Case Western Reserve University
Debra Umberson, University of Texas-Austin
Debra Street, University at Buffalo, SUNY

We had a mentoring dinner outside the hotel, a council meeting, two open submission sessions ("Social and Demographic Factors Shaping How We Age" and "Fostering Synthesis in Aging and the Life Course Research: Blending Theories and Advanced Methodologies"), one invited session ("Connections Across Age"), 10 roundtables, and the MWR Distinguished Scholar Reception held after our Business Meeting.

Book Raffle Committee Report

Chair: Pam Herd, University of Wisconsin-Madison

The book raffle had 10 books and 10 student memberships for raffle. Tickets were \$5 each and \$500 was raised. Next year, we may try raffling the prizes during the business meeting, rather than raffling after the meeting, emailing the winners, and arranging shipment of books.

Ad Hoc Committee on Mentoring



Chair: Janet Wilmoth, Syracuse University
Don Bradley, Eastern Carolina University
Miles G. Taylor, Florida State University
Amelia Karraker, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Jennifer Karas Montez, University of Texas-Austin
Dale Dannefer (ex-officio), Case Western Reserve University
Peter Uhlenberg (ex-officio), University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

Our 5th annual mentoring dinner was held August 14 at Il Mulino at 191 Peachtree St. There was a brief program on "Grant Writing Tips." We sold 88 tickets – with approximately half sold to faculty (and spouses/partners) and half to students. Tickets were \$15 for students and \$30 for faculty/spouses. Pledged donations received from 27 organizations and individuals totaled \$2850 (\$2400 received to-date). Ticket sales totaled \$2250 and the dinner cost \$5220. Approximately \$1000 will be carried over to seed the 2011 event.

Section Business During 2010 Annual Meeting

Membership Committee Report

Chair: Cheryl Elman, University of Akron

Membership has held steady at 576, but loss of student members is a continuing problem. To address this issue, we increased the number of email rounds to 3 (from 1-2) per year for lapsed members. These have been personalized with some targeting students and highlighting professional benefits. All reminders include links to SALC website and ASA. The committee raised several strategies for increasing membership. We might consider targeting chairs of strong aging/life course graduate programs with a recruitment letter, inviting them to involve their new cohorts of graduate students in SALC. We also might consider having a "Student's Corner" in our newsletter.

Communications Report

Newsletter Editor, Jenifer Hamil-Luker (University of North Carolina at Greensboro)
Section Web Manager, Peter Uhlenberg (University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill)
Listserv Editor, Linda Wray (The Pennsylvania State University)

During the 2009-10 year, regular listserv announcements were distributed to SALC members twice monthly: official Section business announcements at the first of every month and other announcements (e.g., jobs, conferences, journal or book invitations, new books by Section members, and other miscellaneous news) at the middle of every month. Periodic special additional announcements also were distributed to Section members.

All regular and special listserv announcements included the address for the SALC website at the top of the page; the website houses all current and past newsletters and other Section information. The 2009-10 year marked Linda Wray's third and final year as listserv editor; she will turn over listserv responsibilities to David Warren, Case Western Reserve University, at the 2010 Annual Meeting. She thanks the Section for the honor of serving as the listserv editor for the past three years.

Last year, the section approved a fully electronic newsletter, which has worked well. Members receive an email notification when the newsletter is posted on the section website, <http://www.pop.psu.edu/asasalc/index.htm>. The newsletter also is attached to the email.



New Listserv Editor
David Warren

Ad Hoc Committee on Publications:



Chair: Ross Macmillan, University of Minnesota
Andrea Willson, University of Western Ontario
Dale Dannefer (ex-officio), Case Western Reserve University
Peter Uhlenberg (ex-officio), University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

The committee worked with Teresa Krauss of Springer US to produce a proposal for a SALC sponsored book series and produced a draft proposal. At the council meeting earlier today, it was decided to continue pursuing this option. At the business meeting, members raised questions regarding details about the proposal (e.g., how authors or editors would be chosen, the process of gaining ASA approval).

Research Groups and Roundtables Report:

Chairs: Debra Umberson, University of Texas-Austin, & Debra Street, University at Buffalo-SUNY

At this year's conference the section had 10 roundtables. No research group tables were requested.

New Business:

Introduction of New Chair – Peter Uhlenberg

Dale Dannefer is our incoming Chair. He briefly discussed his plans for the coming year. We should have four sessions and the MWR Distinguished Scholar Reception. Next year's meeting will be in Chicago from August 13-16. Our section day should be on the fourth day of the meeting, which gives us another session.

Meeting Adjourned 4:00

Presentation of ASA Section Awards 2010

Outstanding Publication Award

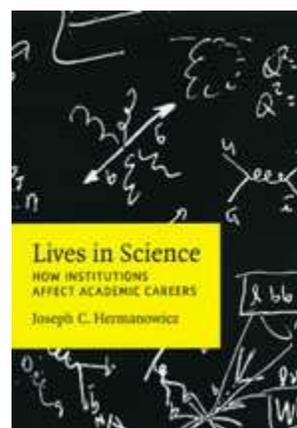
Chair: Mark Hayward, University of Texas at Austin
 Kenneth Ferraro, Purdue University
 Jessica Kelley-Moore, Case Western Reserve University
 Victor Marshall, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
 Cheryl Elman, University of Akron

This marks the 4th year for the outstanding publication award. The criteria considered for the award included originality, theoretical and methodological rigor, and importance. This year's recipient is Joseph C. Hermanowicz for *Lives in Science: How Institutions Affect Academic Careers*. It was published in 2009 by the University of Chicago Press, which provides the following synopsis of the book.

What can we learn when we follow people over the years and across the course of their professional lives? Joseph C. Hermanowicz asks this question specifically about scientists and answers it here by tracking 55 physicists through different stages of their careers at a variety of universities across the country. He explores these scientists' shifting perceptions of their jobs to uncover the meanings they invest in their work, when and where they find satisfaction, how they succeed and fail, and how the rhythms of their work change as they age. His candid interviews with his subjects, meanwhile, shed light on the ways career goals are and are not met, on the frustrations of the academic profession, and on how one deals with the boredom and stagnation that can set in once one is established. An in-depth study of American higher education professionals eloquently told through their own words, Hermanowicz's keen analysis of how institutions shape careers will appeal to anyone interested in life in academia.



Joseph C. Hermanowicz



Outstanding Graduate Student Paper Award

Chair: Ross Macmillan, University of Minnesota
 Dennis Hogan, Brown University
 Madonna Harrington Meyer, Syracuse University
 Feinian Chen, North Carolina State University
 Sarah Matthews, Cleveland State University

This year's recipient is Daniel Carlson, from Ohio State University, for his paper "Explaining the Curvilinear Relationship between Age at First Birth & Depression among Women." In the paper, Carlson investigates why early & late childbearing is associated with increases in psychological distress among mothers. By comparing women's expectations in adolescence and young adulthood with their age at first birth, Carlson finds that late childbearing is a ubiquitously unexpected life course outcome. These deviations from expected timing results in higher levels of depressive symptoms for women who transition to motherhood both earlier and later than expected.



Daniel Carlson

Congratulations to New SALC Officers!

Election Winners

Richard Settersten, Oregon State University, Chair-elect
 Janet Wilmoth, Syracuse University, Secretary-Treasurer
 Teresa Cooney, University of Missouri, Council
 Monica Kirkpatrick Johnson, Washington State University, Council
 Georgeanna Bostean, University of California, Irvine, Student Member

Committee on Nominations

Chair: Chair: Eliza Pavalko, Indiana University
 Denise Bielby, University of California, Santa Barbara
 David Warner, Case Western Reserve University
 Elaine Wethington, Cornell University



Richard Settersten

Judith Treas Receives 2010 Matilda White Riley Distinguished Scholar Award



Judith Treas

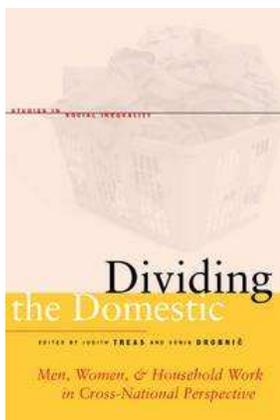
Chair: Dale Dannefer, Case Western Reserve University
 Jessica Kelley-Moore, Case Western Reserve University
 Victor Marshall, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
 Phyllis Moen, University of Minnesota

The committee selected Judith Treas as the winner of the MWR Distinguished Scholar Award for 2010. She will present a distinguished lecture at the 2011 annual meeting.

Dr. Treas is Professor of Sociology and Director of the Center for Demographic and Social Analysis at the University of California, Irvine. She has received the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research Meeting and the Petersen Scholar Award for Aging and Family Research. Dr. Treas has served as President of the Pacific Sociological Association and Fellow of the Gerontological Society of America.

Engaging issues of inequality, gender, family, aging and the life course, her research is represented in nearly 100 published articles, chapters, and books. Her cross-national research on how partners manage household work has been supported by the NSF and by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. She is the U.S. partner in EQUALITY, the European Science Foundation collaboration on sustainable gender equality and the first EuroCores initiative in the social sciences. Her other main line of research, funded by the Russell Sage Foundation, considers older adults in America's immigrant families. In development is a project to study how the prestige of occupations has changed over time.

Dr. Treas' latest book, co-edited with Sonja Drobic, is *Dividing the Domestic: Men, Women, and Household Work in Cross-national Perspective* (2010). According to the description provided by Stanford University Press, leading international scholars roll up their sleeves to investigate how culture and country characteristics permeate households and private lives. The book introduces novel frameworks for understanding why the household remains a bastion of traditional gender relations—even when employed full-time, women everywhere still do most of the work around the house, and poor women spend more time on housework than affluent women. Education systems, tax codes, labor laws, public policies, and cultural beliefs about motherhood and marriage all make a difference. With its cross-national perspective, the pioneering volume speaks not only to sociologists concerned with gender and family, but also to those interested in scholarship on states, public policy, culture, and social inequality.



SALC Seeks Nominations for 2011 Matilda White Riley Distinguished Scholar Award

The Section on Aging and the Life Course seeks nominations for the 2011 Matilda White Riley Distinguished Scholar Award. This award honors a scholar in the field of aging and the life course who has shown exceptional achievement in research, theory, policy analysis, or who has otherwise advanced knowledge of aging and the life course. Letters of nomination should describe the nominee's contributions to the study of aging and the life course that warrant consideration. Additional letters of support are encouraged but not required.

Nominations and additional letters of support should be submitted by **March 1, 2011** to:

Richard Settersten
 Oregon State University
 123 Womens Building
 Corvallis, OR 97331
 richard.settersten@oregonstate.edu

Appreciation to Outgoing Officers

Thanks to outgoing chair Peter Uhlenberg for an outstanding job running the section and putting together a great 2010 meeting in Atlanta. Thanks also to outgoing council members Jennifer Karas Montez, Victor Marshall, and Jessica Kelley-Moore and to outgoing secretary/treasurer Anne Barrett for their service.

We're on the web!

<http://www.pop.psu.edu/asasalc/index.htm>

Mark Your Calendars for the 2011 ASA Annual Meeting!



106th ASA Annual Meeting
August 13 - 16, 2011
 Hilton Chicago and Palmer House Hilton
 Chicago, Illinois

The 2011 Call for Papers will be launched on October 29, 2010 on the ASA's website. The program schedule will be announced late April 2011. Aging and Life Course Section day will be August 16.

News from the Chair, Continued

entrenchment and belt-tightening, many organizations (and apparently some ASA sections) are struggling and losing membership. Thanks to Cheryl and Robin for agreeing to continue to serve on the membership committee this coming year.

Among the others who have made important contributions this year, I especially want to thank Janet Wilmoth for organizing an excellent mentoring dinner and program, and Ross Macmillan for laying the groundwork for a section-sponsored book series with Springer BV. Special recognition also goes to those who contribute to the health and vitality of the section by ensuring that we are informed of what is happening. Jenifer Hamil-Luker has done a great job as Newsletter Editor, and thankfully has agreed to serve another year. Linda Wray is stepping down after faithfully serving as Listserv manager for three years, and David Warner has agreed to serve as the Listserv manager this year. Thanks to all of you!

In closing, I strongly encourage you to consider sending your work to the organizers of one of the open sessions described above. The common theme of "sociological imagination" is intended to spur our reflection and thought about the reach of social forces, but beyond that intent, the session topics are deliberately broad in scope. We look forward to hearing stellar papers across a diverse range of topics in Chicago.

I look forward to working with you all over the coming year. Please feel free to contact me with any ideas about the Section.

Dale Dannefer, Chair 2010-2011

Call for Chapter Proposals

The Society for the Study of Social Problems and the Justice 21 Committee invites you to consider preparing a chapter for ***Agenda for Social Justice-2012***. This publication is designed to inform the public-at-large about the nation's most pressing social problems and to propose a public policy response to those problems.

We ask you, individually or with colleagues, to consider submitting a brief proposal identifying a social problem, and answering (a) *What do we know?*, (b) *How do we know it?*, and (c) *What is to be done?*

Please submit a copy of your 1-2 page proposals to each of the members of the committee by March 1, 2011, and contact us if you have questions or would like additional information. Final manuscripts will be due near the end of 2011, and will appear in print prior to the 2012 SSSP annual meetings in August 2012.

Glenn Muschert (chair), Miami University, muschegw@muohio.edu
 Kathleen Ferraro, Northern Arizona University, kathleen.ferraro@nau.edu
 Brian Klocke, SUNY Plattsburgh, bkloc001@plattsburgh.edu
 JoAnn Miller, Purdue University, jlmiller@purdue.edu
 Robert Perrucci, Purdue University, perruccir@purdue.edu
 Jon Shefner, University of Tennessee, jshfner@utk.edu

For an expanded discussion of **Justice 21**, see the May 2001 issue of *Social Problems* ("Inventing Social Justice"). To see the 2004 and 2008 publications of ***Agenda for Social Justice***, see the SSSP website at: <http://sssp1.org/index.cfm/m/323>



Focus on Research: Baby Boomers' Suicide Rates Rise in Middle Age

By Ken Branson, Media Contact at Rutgers University

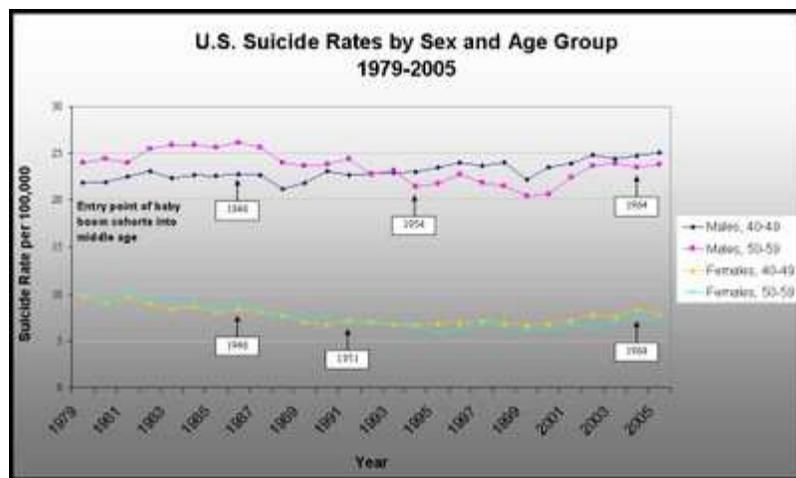
The suicide rate for middle-aged people, a group considered relatively protected from suicide and with historically stable suicide rates, took a sharp upward jump between 1999 and 2005, according to a new study by sociologists Julie Phillips of Rutgers University and Ellen Idler of Emory University. Their study has been published in the September/October issue of the journal *Public Health Reports*.

"This is a striking new trend," said Phillips, a social demographer who holds a joint appointment in the Department of Sociology and Rutgers' Institute for Health, Health Care Policy and Aging Research. "Since the 1930s and up to the 1990s, suicide rates among middle-aged people – people aged 40 to 59 – were declining or pretty stable. But after 2000, this picture changed dramatically."

Phillips and Idler relied on data from the National Center for Health Statistics and the United States Census Bureau in their research. They were joined by two co-authors, Ashley Robin, an undergraduate at Vanderbilt University at the time of the research, and Colleen Nugent, a graduate student at Rutgers.

Among their key findings:

- There was a substantial increase in the suicide rate for men (50-59) and women (40-59) between 1999 and 2005. For men aged 40 to 49, the increase began about a decade earlier, in the late 1980s.
- Increases in middle-aged suicide rates were typically greater among those who were unmarried.
- The rise in suicide was particularly dramatic for people without college degrees, with increases near 30%.
- People with college degrees seem to have escaped the trend.



Traditionally, U.S. suicide rates rise in adolescence and again in old age. They stabilize in maturity and middle age, a time when people are invested in their families and work. For men in particular, suicide rates rise again in old age, when children are grown, illness is more frequent and spouses and contemporaries start to die.

Phillips and Idler note that although Baby Boomers – those born between 1946 and 1964 -- had a higher than usual suicide rate as adolescents, they followed the usual pattern in maturity. In fact, the suicide rate in general declined steadily in the United States for several decades before 2000. Beginning in 1999, however, the rates rise dramatically for middle-aged people and, in particular, for people born during the 1950s, breaking the decades-long trend. What happened?

Phillips and Idler think that both "period" and "cohort" effects are at work. Boomers had high suicide rates as adolescents and have been noted for their relatively high rates of substance abuse, the researchers report. Furthermore, among boomers, the onset of chronic health problems in middle age and the associated financial burden may have struck particularly hard, given boomers' unprecedentedly high levels of life expectancy and overall health. But problems particular to Baby Boomers aren't enough to explain the dramatic rise in rates after 1999, Phillips and Idler write. They speculate that economic pressures, particularly for people without college educations, intensified in those years, and thus put many middle-aged people, particularly unmarried, non-college-educated men, at greater risk.

Teaching Tools

The **National Academy of Social Insurance (NASI)** offers a range of research-based, timely publications on Social Security, Medicare and Health Policy, Long-Term Care, Workers' Compensation and Unemployment Insurance. Many of these publications are well-suited for classroom use, and all can be downloaded free of charge at www.nasi.org. NASI is a non-profit, non-partisan organization made up of the nation's leading experts on social insurance. Its mission is to promote understanding of how social insurance contributes to economic security and a vibrant economy.

Thanks to our Sponsors!

2010 Section on Aging and the Life Course Mentoring Dinner and Program

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