

# ASA Section on Aging & The Life Course



## 102nd Annual Meeting

August 11-14, New York, New York

Summer 2007

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### Home Page:

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### Newsletter Editor

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With less than six weeks to go, the 2007 ASA Annual Meeting is fast approaching! Our Section on Aging and the Life Course theme "Getting, Better, Getting Worse: Who Wins? Who Loses?" focuses on aspects of the causes and consequences of inequality at different points in the life course. By now a large body of research shows that income from assets and accumulated wealth are major factors separating those who are well off in retirement from those who are not. For this reason a life-course and intergenerational perspective dealing with the health and social consequences of asset accumulation and group social mobility will be salient for emerging scholars with interests in cutting-edge research along these lines. The theme is particularly timely because inequality does not exist independent of age, race, and gender. Age, race, and gender-based inequalities are reinforced by social policies that are ineffective in addressing group-specific vulnerabilities such as labor force disadvantages, blocked educational opportunities, and unequal access to health care. The papers in these sessions examine various dimensions of this overall dilemma. Let me note that there will be opportunities to engage with participants in the Section on Medical Sociology who are co-sponsoring two of the related sessions (see inside for more details).

In addition to the paper sessions, the Ad Hoc Committee on Mentoring has organized an exciting program on Monday, August 13<sup>th</sup> aimed at fostering intellectual dialogue, exchange, and intergenerational relationships. (see p. 2).

Other activities worth noting: plan to attend the Matilda White Riley Lecture, Reception and Business Meeting on Tuesday, August 14<sup>th</sup> 12:30 to 2:10 p.m.

In closing, I would like to thank everyone for their involvement in this year's section activities. I am indebted to the dedicated efforts of the Council, Committee Chairs and their Members, and the more than 600 members who have, over the past year, joined the section. I also want to extend my sincere appreciation to our sponsors whose generous support and contributions helped to make this year's program possible.

With this in mind, I hope you find the meeting both informative and enjoyable. See you in NYC!

Jacqueline (Jacqui) Angel, Section Chair

**2007 Section on Aging and the Life Course  
August 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>**

# **Program Highlights**

- 16 Peer-Reviewed Papers Focusing on Aging, Inequality and the Life Course
- Organized Sessions, including two Co-Sponsored with the Section on Medical Sociology
- An Invited Symposium with Leading Investigators Offering Insights of New Frontiers and Perspectives on Aging and the Life Course
- More Than a Dozen Roundtables Encompassing a Wide Variety of Topics on Sociology of Aging and the Life Course
- Research Groups Providing a Unique Opportunity for Scholarly Discourse and Debate
- Mentoring Dinner and Panel Discussion
- Section Reception and Mentoring Program Kick-Off
- Matilda White Riley Lecture and Reception
- Awards Presentation
- Business Meeting and Book Raffle

## **SALC Roundtable and Paper Sessions**

### **Monday, August 13, 2007**

#### **Social Inequalities in Health, Functioning, and Well-Being Over the Life Course**

Organizer and Presider: James House, University of Michigan

**Scheduled Time:** 4:30-6:10pm, **Building:** Hilton New York

Race and Age Trajectories of Functional Health, Jinyoung Kim (University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center)

Health Consequence of Immigration on Women's Later Life, Chizuko Wakabayashi and Katharine Donato (Rice University)

The Effects of Childhood, Adulthood, and Community Socioeconomic Status, Ming Wen (University of Utah) and Danan Gu (Duke University)

The Timing of Early-Life Health and Socioeconomic Disadvantage, Margot Jackson (UCLA)

### **Section on Aging and the Life Course Reception and Mentoring Program Kick Off**

Monday, August 13, 2007

6:30 - 8:00 pm

Sheraton New York

## **SALC Mentoring Dinner**

*Trattoria Dopo Teatro, 125 West 44th*

**Monday, August 13th from 7:30-10pm**

To reserve a ticket, email victor\_marshall@unc.edu with the number of tickets and category of ticket required.

To pay for your ticket(s), either send a check, made out to "SALC American Sociological Association," to Victor Marshall, UNC Institute on Aging, 720 MLK Jr. Blvd., Chapel Hill NC 27599-1030, OR bring your check to the ASA. Reserved tickets can be picked up at the dinner or earlier, at the conference, and from Miles Taylor or Victor Marshall (look for them in SALC sessions and at the reception).

Tickets are \$10 for students, \$20 for faculty and \$55 for guests.

### **Tuesday, August 14, 2007**

#### **1. Where are the Frontiers Today? Perspectives on Aging and the Life Course (Invited Session)**

Organizer and Presider: Glen Elder, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

**Scheduled Time:** 8:30-10:10am, **Building:** Hilton New York

Mark D. Hayward (The University of Texas at Austin)

James S. House (The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor)

Angela O'Rand (Duke University)

Linda Waite (The University of Chicago)

#### **2. Promises and Challenges in Mid- and Late-Life Career Transitions**

Organizer and Presider: Ingrid Connidis, University of Western Ontario

**Scheduled Time:** 8:30-10:10am, **Building:** Hilton New York

Generational Affinities and Discourses of Difference: A Case Study of Highly Skilled Information Technology Workers, Julie McMullin, Tammy Duerden Comeau and Emily Jovic (University of Western Ontario)

Negotiating Flexibility: Age and Cohort Effects on Unemployment and Re-employment in the 'New' Economy, Stephen Lippmann (Miami University)

Pathways to Altruism: A Gender and Life Course Perspective, Christopher Einolf (University of Virginia)

Retirement and the Quasi-Subject: the Case of the Salarariat, Ian Jones (University of Wales, Bangor), Miranda Leontowitsch (St George's, University of London) and Paul Higgs (University College London)

#### **3. Disability Across the Life Course: Physical and Mental Health Dimensions (co-sponsored with the Section on Medical Sociology)**

Organizer: Dennis Hogan, Brown University

Presider: Carrie L. Shandra, Brown University

**Scheduled Time:** 8:30-10:10am, **Building:** Sheraton New York

Resources Across the Life Course and Later-Life Cognitive Functioning Among Women and Men in Ismailia Egypt, Kathryn M. Yount (Emory University)

Cancer Diagnostics and Mental Health: Assess the Immigration, Acculturation, and Socioeconomic Effects on Mexican-Origin Elders' Well-Being, Ching-yi Agnes Shieh (Fayetteville State University)

Navigating a Biomedical Identity: Everyday Life with Memory Loss, Renee Lynn Beard (Univ of Ill Chicago)

Understanding Barriers to Mammography for Women with Disabilities, Judith K. Barr, Tierney E. Giannotti, Thomas J. Van Hoof, Jennifer Mongoven and Maureen Curry (QUALIDIGM, Middletown, CT)

#### **4. Section on Aging and the Life Course Roundtable Session**

Session Organizers: Cheryl Elman, The University of Akron and Richard Settersten, Oregon State University  
**Scheduled Time:** 10:30-12:10pm, **Building:** Hilton New York

##### **Table 01. Research Group on Parent-Child Relations**

**President: Jill Suito, Purdue University**

Differences in Mothers' and Fathers' Parental Favoritism in Later-Life: A Within-Family Analysis, J. Suito, Jori Sechrist, Michael Steinhour (Purdue University) and Karl Pillemer (Cornell University)

"Do as I do, not as I say": How Parents Influence their Children to Provide Support to Them in Old Age, Daphna Gans and Merrill Silverstein (University of South California)

Marriage and Adult Children's Relationship to Their Parents, Naomi Gerstel (University of Massachusetts) and Natalia Sarkisian (Boston College)

How Parental Status Affects Weight Gain and Loss Over the Life Course, Debra Umberson, Hui Liu and Corinne Reczek (University of Texas at Austin)

##### **Table 02. Research Group on Retirement**

**President Maximiliane Szinovacz, University of Massachusetts Boston**

Entries into Retirement: Gender and Race Variations, Maximiliane Szinovacz, Emma Chung, Jerrilyn Quinlan (University of Massachusetts Boston) and Adam Davey (Polisher Research Institute)

Aging Workforce in Japan: Three Policy Challenges, Masa Higo (Boston College)

##### **Table 03. Research Group on Disability**

**President: Eva Kahana, Case Western Reserve University**

Negotiating Health Transitions in Later Life: Older Couples, Adult Children and Assisted Living, Candace Kemp (Georgia State University)

Orientations toward Disability: Differences over the Life Course, Rosalyn Darling and Daniel Heckert (Indiana University of Pennsylvania)

Predictors of Positive Philosophies of Life: A Preliminary Study, Rebecca Siders (Case Western Reserve University), Rachel Hammel (Case Western Reserve University), Eva Kahana (Case Western Reserve University), Boaz Kahana (Cleveland State University), Vinay Cheruvu (Case Western Reserve University), and Cathie King (Case Western Reserve University)

If: "I Think, Therefore I Am," Then: "I Can't Think, Therefore I'm Not"?, Christine Schneider (Case Western Reserve University)

##### **Table 04. Research Group on Comparative Aging**

**President: Duane Matcha, Siena College**

A Comparison of American and European Newspaper Coverage of the Elderly, Duane Matcha (Siena College) and Bonita Sessing-Matcha (Hudson Valley Community College)

Everyone In? Whether a Labour Market without Exclusion is Possible: a Comparison of Policies in Britain and Germany, Bettina Kohlrausch (Graduate School of Social Sciences)

##### **Table 05. Research Group on the Life Course**

**President: Cheryl Elman, The University of Akron**

Life Stories: Case Studies to Explore Race and Gender Diversity, Janet Giele (Brandeis University)

Changes in Mother-in-Law and Daughter-in-Law Relationships Over the Life Course, Deborah Merrill (Clark University)

Age Preferences for Partners Among Internet Daters, Joy Pixley, Cynthia Feliciano, and Belinda Robnett (University of California, Irvine)

**Table 06. Research Group on Race and Ethnicity**

**President: Sherrill Sellers, University of Wisconsin-Madison**

Black/White Differences in Neighborhood Social Cohesion: Does Neighborhood Disadvantage Make a Difference?, Tetyana Shippee (Purdue University)

Disability Among Elderly Mexicans in the United States: The Case of the 0.25 Generation and Beyond, Mercedes Rubio (National Institute of Mental Health)

**Table 07. Work, Family, and Identity Dynamics in the Life Course**

**President: Richard Settersten, Oregon State University**

Intergenerational Transmission of Attitudes Towards Gender, Work, and Family Roles and Their Reconciliation, Maria Andrade (University of Porto, Portugal)

Influences of Parents' Health and Financial Support to Parents on Women's Labor Market Withdrawal: Variation by Cohort and Marital Status, Ying-Shan Wei (University of Hawaii-Manoa)

Getting Involved in Humanitarian Aid: Biographies and Transnational Careers of Humanitarian Aid Workers, Silke Roth (University of Southampton)

Adult Experiences and Attitudes About Adulthood, Christopher Donoghue (Kean University) and Peter Stein (William Paterson University)

**Table 08. Social Inequalities in the Life Course**

**President: Dale Dannefer, Case Western Reserve University**

The Mental Health Consequences of Unrealistic Achievement Expectations: Is It Better to "Shoot for the Stars" or "Plan for the Probable"?, John Reynolds (Florida State University) and Chardie Baird (University of Texas at Arlington)

Co-Morbidity of Self Rated Health and Psychological Well-Being by Socioeconomic Status and Over the Life Course, Seung-Eun Song and Hyeyoung Woo (University of Texas at Austin)

Inequalities in Social Participation Over the Adult Life Course: Community Matters, Julia Rozanova (University of Alberta), Donna Dosman (University of Alberta) and Jenny De Jong Gierveld (Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute)

**Table 09. Adaptation to Life Stressors**

**President: Jon Hendricks, Oregon State University**

Bodies and Breast Cancer: Perspectives of Younger, Middle-Aged and Older Women, Lisa Hall (University of Kansas)

The Psychological Impact of Sexual Harassment During the Early Occupational Career, Jason Houle, Jeremy Staff, (Pennsylvania State University), Jeylan Mortimer, Christopher Uggen (University of Minnesota), and Amy Blackstone, (University of Maine)

**Table 10. Aging, Social Support, and Well Being**

**President: Monika Ardel, University of Florida**

Convoys of Social Support Across the Life Course and the Impact on Subjective Well-Being of Older Adults, Christine Armstrong Mair (North Carolina State University)

Constraints and Consequences: Older Adult Children Providing Care to Elderly Parents, Twyla Hill (Wichita State University)

Attitudes about Successful Aging in Michigan Communities, Heather Dillaway and Mary Byrnes (Wayne State University)

**5. Section on Aging and Life Course Business Meeting and Matilda White Riley Lecture**

**Scheduled Time: 12:30-2:10pm, Building: Hilton New York**

**6. Aging and Health Policy: Gender and Race/Ethnic Dimensions (co-sponsored with the Section on Medical Sociology)**

**Scheduled Time:** 2:30-4:10pm, **Building:** Hilton New York

Organizer and Presider: Jill Quadagno, Florida State University

Examining the Black/Black Gap: An Exploratory Study of Health Disparities Among Elderly Blacks in the United States, Sharmila Udyavar and Jessica D. Severance (Fayetteville State University)

The Work-Health Insurance Nexus: The Weak Link for Hispanics, Ronald J. Angel, Jacqueline L. Angel, and Jennifer Karas Montez (The University of Texas at Austin)

Alzheimer's and Dementia: The Extent of Mortality by Alzheimer's by Gender in the U.S., Mary Ann Davis (Sam Houston State University)

Immigrant Aging Populations: Globalization and Transnationalism, Sheba M. George (Charles R. Drew Univ)

**\*\*\*Note: Council Breakfast for Section Officers\*\*\***

**Scheduled Time:** Tuesday, Aug. 14 - 7- 8 am, **Building:** Hilton, New York

**Regular Session: Aging, Social Connections, and Activities**

**Scheduled Time:** Mon, Aug 13 – 10:30 am – 12:10 pm

Session Organizer: Rebecca G. Adams, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Presider: Jori Alyssa Sechrist, Purdue University

Discussant: Rebecca G. Adams, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Disability Onset and Change in Social Activities in Late Life, Michelle Cheuk (University of North Carolina)

Factors Associated with an Age Group's Community Participation in a Community Context, Kyong Hee Chees (Texas State University-San Marcos)

How Socially Connected Are Older Adults?, Benjamin Thomas Cornwell, Edward O. Laumann, and Philip Schumm (University of Chicago)

Social Integration and Cognition Among Older Adults, Cynthia J. Peters, Linda J. Waite (University of Chicago) and Alisa C. Lewis (University of Haifa)

**Regular Session: Aging in Latin Contexts**

**Time:** Mon, Aug 13 – 8:30 – 10:10 am **Building:** Hilton New York

Session Organizer: Rebecca G. Adams, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Presider: Jennifer J. Tovar, University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston

Discussant: Kyriakos S. Markides, University of Texas Medical Branch-Galveston

Mexican Immigrant and Mexican American Elders: Life Satisfaction, Health, and Acculturation, Martha Gonzalez, Roseann Giarrusso (California State University-Los Angeles) and Emiko Takagi (University of Southern California)

Money Isn't Everything; Or Is It? Economic Resources and Mortality in Older Mexicans with Diabetes in the United States and Mexico, Jennifer J. Tovar (University of Texas)

Parental Union Dissolution and Late Life Intergenerational Transfers in Puerto Rico, Claire M. Noel (University of Wisconsin)

Privatizing Public Pension Systems in a Traditional Culture and Low-Income Economy: Lessons for China from Latin America, Esteban Calvo Bralic and John B. Williamson (Boston College)

## Dear Dr. SALC

*Dear Dr. SALC,*

There appears to be a continuously rising interest across population sciences in building interdisciplinary perspectives. For example, one interdisciplinary group of family demographers recently embarked on an NICHD initiative to take stock of their field and to design a coordinated, long-term program for research and data collection for the study of the family. The program will integrate perspectives from biology, psychology, economics, sociology and anthropology, and hence build a remarkably comprehensive and invaluable resource for all family scholars. As a new graduate student interested in aging and the life course, I wonder if there is currently a similar initiative within the ALC area. If not, is there an appetite among the NIA and ALC scholars for such an initiative, and would SALC be in a position to champion it?

*Dr SALC replies:*

Your questions are complex but you are correct that there is rising interest across ‘population sciences’ in building interdisciplinary perspectives. I placed quotation marks around ‘population sciences’ because the interest extends well beyond demography. Many members of SALC also belong to The Gerontological Society of America, which was founded as an interdisciplinary society and explicitly avows that the true way to knowledge is through interdisciplinary research. Just why aging should need to be more interdisciplinary than any other topic is a puzzle to me. Aging is about living, and we live in biological, economic, psychological, political, sociological etc., dimensions. This interdisciplinary approach has long been accepted in gerontology, as evidenced in the importance for research and the training of doctoral students of the Committee on Human Development of The University of Chicago. Bernice Neugarten, who directed the Committee for many years, was a card-carrying member of both APA and ASA. Interdisciplinarity is also a basic principle underlying the development of the life course perspective, which had strong origins not only in sociology and anthropology, but demography and developmental psychology. And now some life course researchers are explicitly attempting to bring biology into the mix.

Perhaps the most notable contemporary example of this trend is the “NIH Roadmap” initiative. According to its website, “The purpose was to identify major opportunities and gaps in biomedical research that no single institute at NIH could tackle alone but that the agency as a whole must address, to make the biggest impact on the progress of medical research.” (See <http://nihroadmap.nih.gov/overview.asp>). The Roadmap initiative, is very much driven by biology– it seeks to move ‘from bench to bedside’, but some sociologists have secured research funding as co-investigators on roadmap projects.

While it seems that there is a growing trend towards interdisciplinarity, it is also clear that this is a long-term trend going back to the 1940s in aging studies and a part of the life course perspective sine it began to gather steam in the 1960s. What is perhaps new, as least in the aging area, is the increased commitment of research dollars to support such research. Matilda White Riley gave a huge boost to aging studies and eventually to life course research when she served as director of social and behavioral research at NIA; but the greater emphasis on biology reflects the current power structure at NIA and more broadly at NIH. Much of this trend is also reflected in a report of the Committee on Future Directions for Behavioral and Social Sciences Research at the National Institutes of Health, edited by Burton H. Singer and Carol D. Ryff (2001), *New Horizons in Health, and Integrative Approach*. Washington DC: National Academy Press. If your interests are in life course and health, I urge you to take a look at this book.

There is not agreement as to whether the education of scientists should be uni-disciplinary or multi-disciplinary. The late Walter M. Beattie Jr. (who had a masters in sociology from The University of Chicago but ended his academic career as dean of social work at Syracuse), the founder and first president of the Association for Gerontology and Higher Education, wrote that what gerontology education requires is ‘disciplinary depth, multi-disciplinary breadth, and interdisciplinary linkages’. This is a mantra that I endorse and frequently repeat– yet there are now, I believe, ten interdisciplinary doctoral programs in gerontology. My own advice as a sociologist in aging and life course research would be to give priority to becoming a good sociologist, but to take courses and do masters or doctoral research on life course and aging topics, and ideally work on interdisciplinary research projects in an interdisciplinary research institute or center. In addition to the intellectual gains from this approach, it is practical. Regrettably, some sociology departments are reluctant to hire anyone whose Ph.D. is not in sociology proper. On the other hand, it is likely that most gerontology departments, programs and centers – and the few emerging life course centers that are not necessarily oriented to later life– would be happy to hire a sociology Ph.D. so long as they had a strong course work and research background in the life course and/or aging.

Turning to the last , part of your question– is there currently an initiative in the ALC area or an inclination among SALC members to develop one– I am not aware of any explicit efforts in this direction other than specific research projects and some training programs that are interdisciplinary. I would like to know of any noteworthy initiatives, as well as any reactions to my own views in this area, and will be happy to pass the views along in forthcoming issues of the SALC newsletter.

## Keep our Numbers Growing!

by Noelle Chesley

Membership in the Aging and Life Course Section has been growing in recent years and underscores the vibrancy, energy, and dedication of our scholars. Section membership is an inexpensive and easy way to stay in contact with a broad intellectual community (and we have fun parties, too!). To obtain our renew your membership online, visit: <http://www.asanet.org/page.wv?section=Join+or+Renew&name=Join>

Membership in the Aging and Life Course section is available to all members of the American Sociological Association. A one-year membership is \$13.00 for regular members and \$6.00 for student members. Further inquiries about section membership can be directed to Noelle Chesley (414-229-2398; [chesley@uwm.edu](mailto:chesley@uwm.edu)).

### SALC Election Results: 2007

Chair Elect : Eliza Pavalko (Indiana University)

Secretary-Treasurer: Anne Barrett (Florida State)

Council: Victor Marshall (UNC); Jessica-Kelley- Moore (CWRU)

Student Representative: Jori Sechrist (Purdue University)

### Opportunities/Announcements

#### *De Jong Lecture in Social Demography*

"Social Class Health and Mortality Differentials: Are There Important Selection Effects?" will be the topic of the second annual De Jong Lecture in Social Demography, to be held at Penn State. Alberto Palloni, Ph.D., professor of Population and International Studies in the Department of Sociology, at the University of Wisconsin at Madison and president of the Population Association of America, will be the featured speaker. Discussants include: Duane Alwin, Professor of Sociology and Demography at Penn State, and Dalton Conley, University Professor of the Social Sciences and Chair of Sociology at New York University. Free registration at <http://www.pop.psu.edu/events/dejonglecture/>

#### **RESOLUTION PASSES!**

The Section Membership adopted the following Resolution on the 2007 Election Ballot:

"The Council of the Section on Aging and the Life Course (SALC) would like to consider sponsoring the Elsevier annual book series, "Advances in Life Course Research." Tim Owens of Purdue University has served as the Series Editor, but he will step down after the 2010 volume. The series has firm footing, circulation of approximately 300 volumes, and is catalogued in major social science databases. Tim Owens brought to the Section leadership the idea of developing a formal relationship between the Section and this series upon the completion of his tenure as Editor.

With this resolution, the Council seeks approval from SALC members to develop a proposal that would outline the relationship between the Section, the ASA, and Elsevier, as the publisher of "Advances in Life Course Research." If a satisfactory relationship can be negotiated, a later resolution would provide SALC members an opportunity to vote on whether to accept the terms of that proposal."