

ASA Section on Aging and the Life Course



Peter with his youngest grandchild.

News from the Chair *Encouraging Engagement*

Reflecting on 2009, commentators seem to agree that it was a dismal year. But not everything was negative – it was a great year for the Section on Aging & the Life Course. Our membership remained above

600 (five years ago it was 480); attendance, sociability, and enthusiasm at our 2009 ASA section day were high; and interest in issues related to aging of individuals and populations is unabated. This positive recent history gives us hope that SALC will continue to grow stronger in 2010. I encourage you to be engaged with SALC this year, for your good and our collective good.

The section awards three honors each year, **Matilda White Riley Distinguished Scholar Award**, **Outstanding Publication Award** and **Graduate Student Paper Award**. You would make a contribution to the section by nominating a deserving person for one of these awards. Information on how to do this is included in the newsletter.

The section will elect new officers this spring. The list of candidates selected by the nominating committee (Eliza Pavalko, David Warner, Denise Bielby, Elaine Wethington) is included in this newsletter, and you will receive information on the candidates when your ballot arrives from ASA. **Please vote.**

Plans for the 2010 section day, **Monday August 16**, in Atlanta are underway. We will have an invited session, "Connections Across Age", where Merril Silverstein, Linda J. Waite, Pearl Dykstra, Gunhild Hagestad & Francesco Billari have agreed to present papers. Two other paper sessions are being organized. Jessica Kelley-Moore is organizing one on "Fostering Synthesis in Aging and the Life Course Research: Blending Theories and Advanced Methodologies." Jim Raymo is organizing a session on "Social and Demographic Forces Shaping How We Age." In addition, Debra Street and Debra Umberson are organizing our Roundtables, which will include meetings of research groups. Dale Dannefer will present the Distinguished Lecture, and on the evening of August 15 we will have our famous Mentoring Dinner. If successful, these events will stimulate each of us in our research and/or teaching.

Two more things. First, you also contribute to the collective good of the section when you do good research and write stimulating papers. Second, I would be pleased to hear from you regarding suggestions for how SALC could be more helpful to you.

Best wishes for 2010,
Peter Uhlenberg, 2009-2010 Section chair
peter_uhlenberg@unc.edu

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Section on Aging and the Life Course Roster of Nominees Final Slate for 2010 Election

Members of the Nominations Committee have selected a list of candidates for the 2010 election. Thanks goes to Eliza Pavalko, David Warner, Denise Bielby, Elaine Wethington.

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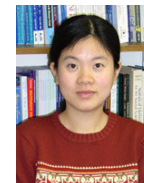
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2009 Outstanding Graduate Student Paper Award Kyle Longest



Outstanding Graduate Student Publication Awards honor graduate student members of SALC who have written recent, exemplary scholarly contributions to the field of aging and the life course. Among nine excellent entries, the Publications Committee selected the article, "Integrating Identity Theory and the Life Course Perspective: The Case of Adolescent Religious Behavior," written by **Kyle Longest**.

Using longitudinal data from the National Study of Youth and Religion, Longest examines how young people manage their identity across time and through major life changes. His work confirms basic hypotheses of identity theory by explaining adolescents' religious identity: strong ties to religious parents increase religious salience, which leads to greater

participation in religious activities two years later. These patterns, however, are modified based on adolescents' age and whether they move out of the parent's home after leaving high school. Specifically, the religious identity of older youth and adolescents who establish an independent household is influenced more by religious salience than by ties to religious parents or peers. In contrast, for younger adolescents and adolescents who continue to live with a parent after leaving high school, previous ties to religious parents and peers are the most influential predictors of future religious identity. Longest's results speak to the value of integrating the life course perspective with theories of identity.

In 2009, Longest received his Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is now Assistant Professor of Sociology at Furman University.

SALC Seeks Nominations for 2010 Awards



Dr. Matilda White Riley

Matilda White Riley Distinguished Scholar

This annual award honors a scholar in the field of aging and the life course who has shown exceptional achievement in research, theory, policy analysis, or otherwise has 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.

Submit nominations and additional letters of support by **March 1, 2010** to:

Professor Dale Dannefer

Department of Sociology

Case Western Reserve University; 10900 Euclid Ave.

Cleveland, OH 44106-7124

Email: dale.dannefer@case.edu

Outstanding Publication Award

This annual award honors an outstanding recent contribution to the field of sociology of aging and the life course as determined by the Outstanding Publication Award Committee. Eligible publications include original research reports, theoretical or methodological developments, and policy-related contributions. The outstanding publication can be an article, chapter, or book published within the past three years. The committee will consider nominations and self-nominations. The award will rotate between a book and an article (or chapter) at least once every three years.

Eligible nominations are limited to publications appearing from 2007-2009. A single author or one of the coauthors must be a SALC member. Only SALC members are permitted to make nominations. Nominations should be submitted to the Chair of the Outstanding Publication Award no later than **March 1, 2010**:

Professor Duane F. Alwin

McCourtney Professor of Sociology and Demography

326A Pond Lab, Pennsylvania State University

University Park, Pennsylvania 16802

E-mail: dalwin@pop.psu.edu

Graduate Student Paper Award

This annual award honors the outstanding paper written by a graduate student or students of the Section on Aging and the Life Course, as determined by the Graduate Student Paper Award committee. Papers authored or coauthored solely by students are eligible; faculty co-authorship is not allowed. Eligible student authors include master's students and pre-doctoral student members of the section who are currently enrolled in a graduate program or who have graduated no earlier than December of 2009. Unpublished, under review, accepted, or published papers are eligible. If published, the paper should have appeared within the past two calendar years (e.g., a paper nominated in 2010 may have been published anytime during 2009 or 2010). The nominated paper should be journal-length (35 pages maximum) and in the format used by the American Sociological Review. The award consists of \$250 presented to the winner at the Business Meeting of the Section, held during the annual ASA meeting. Only one award will be given. All nominations are due by **March 1, 2010**. Self nominations are encouraged. To be nominated send a hard copy and an electronic version of the paper to the Chair of the Graduate Student Paper Award Committee:

Dr. Ross Macmillan

Department of Sociology, University of Minnesota

909 Social Science Tower, 267 19th Avenue S

Minneapolis, MN, 55455

Email: macmi005@umn.edu

Nominations Sought for 2010 Beth B. Hess Memorial Scholarship

The Hess Scholarship will be awarded to a student in an accredited US PhD program in sociology who studied for at least one full academic year at a two-year college in the US before transferring to complete a BA. The Scholarship carries a stipend of \$3500 from Sociologists for Women in Society (SWS) to be used to support graduate studies, a one-year membership in SWS, and a subscription to *Gender & Society*. To honor Beth Hess's career, the committee will be looking for: commitment to teaching, especially at a community college or other institution serving less privileged students; research and/or activism in social inequality, social justice, or social problems, especially with a focus on gender and/or gerontology; service to the academic and/or local community; and high quality research and writing in the proposal and letter of application. Applications must be postmarked no later than **March 31, 2010**. Contact Denise Copelton at dcopelto@brockport.edu for further information.



Funding Opportunities

The **National Institute on Aging** announces the availability of Dissertation Awards in all areas of research within the Institute's mandate to increase the diversity of the research workforce on aging. The research award is designed to stimulate participation of individuals from underrepresented racial & ethnic groups; individuals with disabilities; and individuals from socially, culturally, economically, or educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. Application deadlines are February 16 and June 16.

The Ruth Landes Memorial Research Fund awards grants for interdisciplinary research and publications on subjects that include, but are not limited to: aging, gender & sexuality, race & ethnicity, immigrant & minority populations, culture and education, language and identity, and religion. Awards range from \$10,000 to \$60,000 per year, and may be used for work toward a doctoral dissertation, for postdoctoral work, or for independent scholarship. Eligibility is limited to U.S. citizens and permanent legal residents. Senior scholars may request stipends based on their previous year's salary & professional standing. Applications for multiyear grants will be considered. Grants are awarded on a rolling schedule; there is no application deadline. For more information, visit www.thereedfoundation.org/landes/grants.html.

In November 2009, the **National Institute on Health** announced a new initiative, the Basic Behavioral & Social Science Opportunity Network (OppNet). The first year OppNet will use \$10 million in Recovery Act funds & focus on short-term efforts to develop existing programs' capacity for conducting basic behavioral and social sciences research. Starting in Fiscal Year 2011, OppNet will be supported through NIH's pool of common funds shared across its institutes and centers. For more details, see <http://oppnet.nih.gov>.

ASA and the **National Science Foundation** seek proposals for the Fund for the Advancement of the Discipline (FAD). The goal of FAD is to nurture the development of scientific knowledge by funding small, groundbreaking research initiatives and other important scientific research activities such as conferences. FAD awards provide scholars with small grants (\$7,000 maximum) for innovative research that has the potential for challenging the discipline, stimulating new lines of research, and creating new networks of scientific collaboration.

Publication Opportunities

The **Journal of International Aging, Law & Policy**, a joint publication of Stetson University College of Law and the AARP, invites submissions for Volume 5, to be published in Spring 2011. Submissions will be reviewed beginning Jan. 4, 2010; the due date for final drafts will be Nov. 22, 2010. The *Journal* is peer-edited, and accepts for publication law review-style papers that address a wide range of topics involving the elderly, both domestically and internationally.

The **Journal of the American Medical Association** will publish a theme issue on aging in October 2010. The issue will emphasize the central and still unmet need for medicine to adapt to the shifting demographics and the changing requirements of caring for an aging population. Topics to be considered for the *JAMA* theme issue include improving the health & quality of life of elders through better care interventions & health care delivery. Improving care delivery in the primary care setting, enabling flexible patient-centered care to support older patients and their caregivers, and helping patients to remain at home and independent are important issues to be considered. High-quality randomized trials and prospective cohort studies will be given priority; outcomes such as functional status and quality of life are important to assess. The needs of aging patients with few resources should be considered, as should the needs of aging patients of color. Papers received by April 15, 2010, will have the best opportunity for consideration for the issue.

Longitudinal and Life Course Studies (LLCS) is a free, online journal published by Longview, a London-based independent think tank. LLCS brings together the broad range of specialist fields undertaking and using longitudinal and life course research. It aims to reduce interdisciplinary barriers & encourage the application of findings in policy and practice. The journal is of interest internationally to academics and policy makers working at the interface of social, developmental, and health sciences, including sociology, psychology, education, epidemiology, genetics, economics, demography, geography, criminology, political science, policy studies, history, and statistics. It will also appeal to those concerned with all types of methodological development of relevance to life course and longitudinal research. For more information, visit www.journal.longviewuk.com.

We're on the web!

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

AGING IN THE NEWS

NIA Funds Centers to Study Demography of Aging

The National Institute on Aging (NIA), part of the National Institutes of Health, announced that it has committed more than \$36.7 million over the next 5 years to support and expand its Centers on the Demography and Economics of Aging. The Centers form a network of universities and organizations leading innovative studies on the characteristics of the aging population. The awards, which include some support from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, renewed support for 11 Centers and established three new ones.

Centers with renewed support are housed at Harvard University, the National Bureau of Economic Research, Princeton University, Rand Corporation, Stanford University, University of California at Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of Chicago, University of Michigan, University of Pennsylvania, University of Southern California, University of Wisconsin-Madison. The three new Centers, their principal investigators and research emphasis are:

- Center on the Demography of Aging, Duke University
James W. Vaupel. Research focus: Biodemography
- Hopkins Center for Population Aging and Health, Johns Hopkins University
Emily Agree. Research focus: Disability, intergenerational support
- Center for Aging and Policy Studies, Syracuse University
Douglas Wolf. Research focus: Behavioral responses, public policy, gerontology education



Each NIA Demography Center has its own set of disciplinary specializations, although research conducted at the different Centers is often interrelated. All Centers investigate aspects of health and health care, the societal impact of population aging and the economic and social circumstances of older people. Many Centers also conduct research on global aging and cross-national comparisons, and several are pioneering work on the biodemography of aging, investigating the relationships among biology and genetics, health and mortality and life expectancy.

Conference News

Please join us at the American Sociological Association's 105th Annual Meeting, to be held August 14-17, 2011 in Atlanta, Georgia. The full program schedule will be available April 30. The SALC section day is Monday, August 16.

The Gerontological Society of America is holding its 63rd Annual Scientific Meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana November 19-23, 2010. The conference theme is "Transitions of Care."

From March 15-19, the American Society on Aging and the National Council on Aging are hosting their 2010 conference in Chicago, Illinois. Sessions will focus on retirement and economic security of older adults.

The Council on Contemporary Families will host its 2010 conference in Rock Island, Illinois, April 16 and 17. The conference theme is "Families as They Really Are: How Do We Use What We Know." Linda Burton will present her research on family co-morbidity over the life course and Deborah Carr will discuss how families make end of life decisions.

Dallas, Texas will host the 2010 Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America on April 15-17. Session themes include later life employment, health and wealth disparities across the life course, social support and the biodemography of aging.

Recent Books

Nancy Foner edited *Across Generations: Immigrant Families in America* (2009), published by NYU Press. Drawing on in-depth ethnographic research, chapters examine relationships across generations in a broad range of immigrant groups.

The Development of Persistent Criminality (2009) was edited by Joanne Savage and published by Oxford University Press.

The 6th edition of Harry Moody's *Aging: Concepts and Controversies* was recently published by Pine Forge Press.

Elderburbia: Aging with a Sense of Place in America (2009) discusses how US suburbs will have to be retrofitted for the elderly. Author Philip B. Stafford discusses aging in third places, new social networks in old age, and the creation of place for older adults.

In 2009 Praeger published *The Cultural Context of Aging: Worldwide Perspectives*, edited by Jay Sokolovsky. The book explores the life course, health, ethnicity and intergenerational ties in cultural and global context.

British economist George Magnus has written *The Age of Aging: How Demographics are Changing the Global Economy and Our World* (2010). Wiley & Sons published the book, which examines the macroeconomic effects of aging in the U.S., Japan, western Europe & in emerging and developing countries.

Spotlight on Aging Research: HIV/AIDS on the Rise among Older Adults

According to UNC Charlotte Associate Professor of Sociology Diane Zablotsky, the most damaging response to HIV/AIDS is silence. Silence has contributed to an upsurge of HIV cases among individuals 50 and older over the course of the epidemic. Currently, about **19% of all people with HIV/AIDS in the United States are age 50 and older.**

A confluence of conditions has created an environment for HIV to flourish in a traditionally low-risk, and overlooked, population. Many Americans remain sexually active well into their golden years. They may come out of lengthy marriages or relationships and re-enter the dating scene. Some are uneducated about HIV/AIDS or have antiquated views about the virus. A huge group of the over-50 crowd never got sexuality education in school. Most funding for preventive education in the last 20 years has targeted traditionally high-risk populations, often excluding older adults because of assumptions about their behaviors. In an analysis of National Health Interview data, Zablotsky found that almost half of women over age 50 were totally uninformed about HIV, compared with only 14% of younger women.

Research conducted by AARP indicates that older patients feel uneasy discussing sexual behavior with their physicians. Conversely, many young doctors are uncomfortable talking about risky sexual behavior with people old enough to be their parents or grandparents.

Zablotsky said prevention begins with open conversation, as well as the acknowledgment that humans are sexual beings across the life course. Labels & stigma associated with sexually transmitted disease remain barriers to conversation, but Zablotsky said fewer people might tune out messages that frame sexual health as a lifelong well-ness issue. "What we need to talk about is how you make choices to stay well," Zablotsky said. "The big thing is to keep asking people about their behaviors regardless of age."

Source: Public Relations Office University of North Carolina at Charlotte

As a sociologist, my goal is make conversations a part of our everyday activity. The risk [of HIV/AIDS] does not disappear if we fail to discuss it. Dr. Diane Zablotsky

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