Constructing neoliberalism: Opening Salvo

Loïc Wacquant

An excerpt from Loïc Wacquant, 'Desperately Seeking Neoliberalism: A Sociological Catch' (plenary address to The Australian Sociological Association Annual Conference, University of Queensland, Brisbane, 26 November 2012). The full text is forthcoming in the Journal of Sociology.

This kind of plenary address provides an opportunity to tackle the 'big picture' and venture beyond the boundaries of established knowledge. This is what I propose to do before you, under the title 'Desperately seeking neoliberalism – a sociological catch': I'm going to try to construct a specifically sociological concept of that woolly, shifty, difficult-to-catch entity called neoliberalism. This is a notion that is presently used mostly as a rhetorical device or a term of polemic, being that it is uneasily suspended between political dispute and scientific debate, partaking at once of the idiom of radical activism – especially anti-capitalist and anti-globalisation mobilisation – and of the technical language of the social sciences. I want to turn it into a robust analytic construct that can be deployed to characterise and probe the epochal sociohistorical transformation that we are both undergoing and witnessing. Essentially, I will argue that neoliberalism is not the coming of King Market, as the ideology of neoliberalism would have us believe, but the building of a particular kind of state. Following Max Weber, neoliberalism is best defined not by its end but by its means. For it is not primarily an economic venture, as classical liberalism was: it is a political project of market-conforming state-crafting.

Loïc Wacquant finds his Platypus!

It takes a bit of daring, or not caring, to attempt this kind of broad sociological canvassing – not caring about one's scholarly reputation in particular. (Deans do not much like what can seem to pertain to free-floating speculation; they feel reassured by the falsely rigorous positivist research reports with technically impeccable methodology that set the professional standards of normal science everywhere.) As a rule, it is done by older scholars who feel they have nothing to lose because they are either well-established with a solid body of work behind them, moving beyond the strictly academic realm of debate, or already retired. This kind of diagnosis

TASA 2013

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Celia Lury

Director of the Centre for Inter-disciplinary Methodologies at the University of Warwick. Celia is a widely published expert on the sociology of culture with much of her recent work focussing on consumer culture. Her research interests also include interdisciplinary methodologies, feminist and cultural theory and sociology of culture.

Raewyn Connell

photo by Mignonne Breier

Holds a University Chair in the University of Sydney, is a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia, a recipient of the American Sociological Association's award for distinguished contribution to the study of sex and gender, and of the Australian Sociological Association's award for distinguished service to sociology in Australia.

John Holmwood

A Professor of Sociology at the University of Nottingham. A campaigner in the UK on issues connected to the higher education sector, and is co-founder of the Campaign for the Public University. Professor Holmwood is the President of the British Sociological Association.

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Letter from the Editors

Kirsten Harley and Nick Osbaldiston

Hello TASA members and welcome to the first issue of *Nexus* for 2013, TASA's 50th birthday year! Our aim this year is to continue *Nexus*'s place as a site for sharing of information about the work of TASA and its thematic groups, celebration of colleagues' achievements, reflection on the half century (and more) of sociology in Australia, exchange of ideas about sociological practice, and serious discussion about the challenges facing us as sociologists now and into the future.

This issue features the 'opening salvo' of Loïc Wacquant's keynote address on neoliberalism to the TASA conference held at UQ last November (with a full article to be published in the *Journal of Sociology*), with somewhat related themes apparent in reflective reports by PhD students, Elsa Koleth and Tristan Enright, on a postgraduate seminar (global sociology) and public seminar (universities in crisis) held with ISA president Michael Burawoy when he was at the University of Sydney in February. Because the Australian Research Council has recently released a new policy on open access publication we reproduce a piece by ISA Vice-President (Publications) Jennifer Platt on the implications of open access policy for sociological associations, journals and sociologists.

TASA President Jo Lindsay notes sociology's improvement in the 2012 round of ERA (Excellence in Research for Australia), while also arguing that we need to pull up our sociological socks higher. Inspired by a teaching column from last issue, Nicholas Hookway suggests ways to engage with visual culture in our sociology teaching, and Marcelle Slagter from the Applied Sociology thematic group discusses the challenge of making sociology relevant. We invite your responses and commentaries on any – or all! – of these pieces.

In this issue we congratulate all those who won TASA prizes and conference scholarships last year. Books of Note features the work of recipients of the Raewyn Connell Prize for the best first book by an author in Australian sociology (winner: Catherine Robinson; special commendation: Katie Wright) and the Stephen Crook Memorial Prize for best authored book in Australian sociology (Rob White). We also feature reports by recipients of the Best Paper in the *Journal of Sociology* (Dan Woodman, Andy Furlong and Johanna Wyn), the Jerzy Zubrzycki scholarship (Olga Oleinikova), and conference scholarships for a sociologist outside academe (Janice Allerton) and postgraduates (Handun Athukorala, Chivoin Peou, Jeremy Simpson and Camille La Brooy). The issue also includes reports of thematic group events, celebration of recent PhD completions, a summary of the threshold learning outcomes launched in November, introductions to and reports by new members of the TASA Executive, Sally's fabulous photo-montage from the conference, and more!

We hope that you enjoy this first issue of *Nexus* for 2013. As usual, we are indebted to the many TASA members who have contributed to the newsletter, without whose fabulous input *Nexus* would not be possible. We're also very grateful to Eileen Clark, Roger Wilkinson and Sally Daly for their ongoing assistance with preparing *Nexus*. We encourage members to suggest ideas for celebrating TASA's 50th anniversary and warmly welcome your responses to items featuring in this issue and contributions of articles, news, books of note, historical insights, notification of upcoming events and reports of recent ones. The deadline for contribution to the second issue of *Nexus* for 2013 is Friday 12 July. Contributions can be sent to the editors at kirsten.harley@sydney.edu.au or nick.osbaldiston@monash.edu.au.

Kirsten Harley and Nick Osbaldiston
Nexus Editors

President's letter

Jo Lindsay

I am delighted to welcome you to 2013, our big 50th year! This year we will be taking the opportunity to reflect on where TASA and Sociology has come from in Australia, our current situation and how we can effectively position ourselves for the future. We have entered a volatile and important time for Sociology in Australia, I think, so it is lucky that TASA is in its prime!

Some things are certain – there is a strong and enduring need for sociological analysis. In many fields the scientific and technical problems have been solved and core problems are social – think climate change, inequality, health and so on. There is plenty of work to be done: with the reorganisation of global capitalism (Saskia Sassen's 2011 keynote) and the reorganisation of the State (Loïc Wacquant's 2012 keynote) pressing social problems will come to the fore and intensify in the next two decades. A sociological perspective is necessary to identify and make sense of emerging and persisting social problems, and to point to solutions. It seems to me there are immense opportunities now for sociologists to work with other disciplines and enter new fields.

TASA as an organisation is flourishing – we have record numbers of members, our 20 thematic groups are pushing forward academic debate, reflection and networking opportunities. Our journal *JoS* (the *Journal of Sociology*) is growing in size and reputation and this very newsletter demonstrates our reflexivity, the contribution of our research and ideas and the diversity and health of our discipline. TASA conferences are well attended – the professoriate have returned, students are well-represented, as always, and valued members from outside academe are demonstrating how real world sociology is done.

Yet the discipline faces some serious problems too. Some say we are in decline – we are confused about our 'object' (see the latest *JoS* special issue, edited by Gary Wickham). Debates in the UK and the US suggest that sociology lacks academic legitimacy and a strong and coherent identity. John Holmwood, one of our TASA 2013 keynote speakers, writes evocatively about 'Sociology's misfortune' and Raewyn Connell, another TASA 2013 keynote speaker, in Southern Theory alerts Australian sociologists to the challenges of creating knowledge from the periphery and working in the neoliberal university (see *Nexus* 24(2)). The decline and sense of crisis in sociology can take younger scholars by surprise – perhaps Sociology is just experiencing a mid-life crisis? (See Beer http://sociologicalimagination.org/archives/10599). We shall take a good hard look at ourselves in our anniversary year and I hope develop a more generous and optimistic sense of who we are, and where we are going, by year's end.

Aside from important questions about identity we do have some practical issues that we need to address, too. Sociology has an image problem in Australia – we have a low profile and low status relative to other disciplines in higher education and in policy and public debate. The Excellence in Research Australia (ERA) process did not go well – none of our departments in Australia got the excellent mark of 5. This is likely to have serious consequences as funding is squeezed for higher education in the next few years. Indeed, being a Sociologist outside of a Sociology department may have already become the norm. So we need to find new ways to support our discipline if the traditional centre (the Sociology department) cannot hold.

Our public profile and engagement with both traditional media and new social networking opportunities needs to be addressed comprehensively, as we have known and been talking about for some time. To that end, TASA has employed Fenton Communications to assist with a marketing and communication plan for our 50th year. The TASA Executive had a workshop with Fenton at the Brisbane conference last year, the draft plan is completed and a TASA working party led by Deb King is sorting out the nuts and bolts of implementation. Please take it as a compliment if you are tapped on the shoulder to represent TASA and dazzle the world with your ideas. We will also be providing tools and support for members to promote Sociology and run their own local events to celebrate our 50th.

All things considered, TASA is in good shape and we are looking forward to celebrating our achievements this year. TASA has come a long way and we have a humming organisation filled with fantastic people who are committed to the discipline. If last year's conference is anything to go by, our academic and social skills are well above 'world class' (ERA) and the dancing at the conference dinner has entered a whole new level of excellence. Yes, there is lots of work to be done in effectively positioning ourselves for the future and promoting Australian Sociology in higher education, in policy and in public debate. Together we will get on with it this year. I'm looking forward to working with you in 2013 and to our big 50th celebration bash at the conference at Monash in Melbourne in November.

Click here to read the President's Welcome on the TASA website

The Jerzy Zubrzycki Postgraduate Scholarship Award

Olga Oleinikova

PhD candidate, University of Sydney, Department of Sociology & Social Policy

The Jerzy Zubrzycki Postgraduate Scholarship Award is a truly special and inspirational one for me. I am sincerely grateful to TASA for recognition and expression of interest in my work on post-socialist transformations and life strategies of post-Soviet migrants. The research paper I presented at the conference is based on my Master's research project, examining the role of social responsibility of the nation state towards a mass-scale labour emigration. The paper presents a concept of national social responsibility with a link to evaluation of the Ukrainian case. It puts forward the idea that the combination of a lack of social responsibility of the Ukrainian nation state and the transitional economy formed by the collapse of a socialist polity has encouraged the dramatic movement of Ukrainians to work in European Union countries, specifically Italy and Poland.

My current PhD research project, titled 'Life-Course Strategies and International Migration: Ukrainian Post-Independence Migrants in Australia', focuses on post-independence Ukrainian migration to Australia and is centred on migrants' life-course strategies with respect to their employment, education or marriage. The focus is on the rationale behind the 'waves' of migrants who came to Australia in three periods (in the 1990s, 2000–2009, and since 2010). Particularly, the research analyses the link between social transformations in post-Soviet Ukraine and international migration of Ukrainians to Australia since the 1990s, by focusing on the impact of socioeconomic and political restructuring on the migrants' life strategies.

This research investigates how individual pathways change and adapt under social transformations, and identifies strategies individuals chose to follow to accommodate to changing social conditions, focusing on the peculiarities of forming life strategies with the help of international migration. It also explores migration outcomes and the associated impact on migrants' life-course. Therefore, migration is viewed as both a cause and effect of the evolving economic and social statuses of migrants, shifts in cultural and national identities and reshaping of gender roles within the diverse societal and cultural Australian context. In order to trace the institutional impact and influence on the process of life strategy formation on micro-level of analysis, social transformations in Ukraine will be analysed within 3 dimensions – economic, political and social milieus – in combination with the analysis of Australia's immigration policy in relation to migrants from post-Soviet countries since 1990.

This project aims to provide insights into the following areas: (1) daily life and the sociocultural problems Ukrainian migrants face in recipient societies, particularly barriers in realising migrants' pathways in terms of social inclusion, cultural differentiation, and shifts of national and cultural identities; (2) official migration policies of Ukraine and Australia; and (3) the socioeconomic contradictions within Ukrainian society as a migration push factor. This research takes an original approach in that it brings the life-course strategy within migration methodology and deploys it in sociological context rather than its original psychological focus.

Presenting a paper to the Migration, Ethnicity and Multiculturalism Thematic Group was a highly beneficial experience. The conference gave me thought-provoking material, not only for refining my assumptions about migration within the Australia context, but also provided opportunities for comparison between integration scenarios of different minority groups, which ultimately will improve the quality of my scholarly papers and thesis chapters. I am very thankful to TASA for giving me the chance to attend such an inspiring conference and to receive valuable feedback from theoretically and practically oriented scholars!

Disclaimer

What Doors does 'Open Access' Open?

Jennifer Platt, University of Sussex, UK, and
ISA Vice-President for Publications, 2010-2014

Open access' is a movement which is spreading rapidly beyond its points of origin, and brings some threats as it approaches the social sciences. The basic idea is simple and attractive: everyone should be able to benefit from the research knowledge available in journal articles. Important from one side of the movement has been the anger of natural scientists at the excessive prices charged, and profits made, by some publishers of the journals they use, which has led to a boycott of Elsevier journals. A more recent ideological theme, crucial to new British government policy, is that the products of state funding should be freely available to the state's citizens. Relatedly, it is claimed that businesses, in particular, will benefit from such access and thereby promote national economic growth. Major funding bodies in the USA and Britain are now requiring that the research they have funded should be published only in journals which provide free access for readers – thus putting pressure on journals to change their practices.

At present the normal system is that publishers produce journals, and access to them depends on the payment of a subscription. Most often these days that is paid by universities, which then make the journals free online to their members. This is complicated by the fact that major publishers now normally sell subscriptions to libraries in the form of large bundles of journals rather than single ones, which gives access to many but at considerable cost. Authors of articles are not paid, and considerable unpaid labour goes in at the university end, but there is no doubt that the production process also has considerable costs, which somehow need to be covered.

Two broad alternative models of "open access" are being widely discussed. The 'Gold' model requires the authors [assumed to mean their university or research funding body] to pay a substantial fee to cover the cost of publication, but the articles will be open to readers without payment. The 'Green' model does not make authors pay, but requires deposit of the article in some accessible repository, perhaps after an embargo period of 6 or 12 months (too long for the speed of some natural science fields) to leave some incentive for subscriptions.

Under either model, authors benefit from more readers having access to their work, and readers benefit from having that access. But what are the other effects?

Gold: Most authors from poor countries may not be able to publish in strong rich country journals unless they have a grant from an international funding body. In sociology, it is certainly not automatic that articles are based on grant-funded research. It is not clear whether authors without such funding would be exempt from the charges. Authors from poorer universities even in rich countries may have their publications limited by their own administrations. Universities will save money now spent on subscriptions, but will not necessarily use that to support research. The research that is available seems likely to be reduced, and more biased in its range.

Green: Nobody will be paying the costs of publication, unless the embargo makes enough libraries or readers prepared to pay for earlier access to the journal contents. (The half-life of journal articles in the social sciences is considerably more than a year.) Publishers therefore tend to prefer the Gold model. Learned societies such as the ISA, which are not likely to regard author payment as acceptable, could lose a significant part of the income from publications, income that supports other activities.

There are variants on these basic models which we cannot go into here. It is accepted that there could be 'hybrid' journals that are prepared to let some papers be released to a repository while others are not; this is the American Sociological Association's current policy. Some

TASA Migration, Ethnicity and Multiculturalism Thematic Group Public Lecture:

Fifty Years Of Australian Migration Studies

On 30 October 2012, the TASA Migration, Ethnicity and Multiculturalism thematic group organised an evening public lecture celebrating the significant contribution of Professor James Jupp to Australian migration studies, on the event of his 80th birthday. The public lecture, sponsored by TASA and the University of Newcastle and in association with Macquarie University, was attended by a range of academics, students, and members of the public. The evening aimed to highlight the ongoing relevance and historical significance of the scholarship of Professor Jupp, one of the most prominent scholars in the field of migration, ethnicity and multiculturalism in Australia.

The evening, chaired by TASA MEM thematic group co-convenor Dr Margot Ford, began with reflections from Professor Jupp on his personal trajectory into the field of migration studies. Professor Jupp spoke about the political nature and motivations of his academic work, which were shaped not only through personal experience of living in London during the Second World War, but also through his formative years in the Australian Labor Party and encounters with key political figures during that period. He commented on his own involvement in and contribution to the multiple waves of ALP immigration and multicultural policies, and the significant changes wrought by the change in government in 1996. Reflecting on the development of migration studies since the 1950s, Professor Jupp praised the role of sociology in advancing our understanding of contemporary issues relating to migration in Australia. He also highlighted the need for disciplinary fields such as history and political sciences to more actively debate and engage with issues relating to immigration and multiculturalism. Finally he set out a research agenda for migration and multicultural studies in sociology into the future, arguing for a more robust advocacy role from sociologists.

A conversation with radio broadcaster Phillip Adams followed, which touched on several aspects of the development of Professor Jupp's work and its continuing relevance in academia, as well as the contemporary political and policy context. Both commentators reflected on the circular nature of some of the more contentious issues in the politics of migration, such as asylum seeker policy, racism and the Cronulla riots, which were likened to the kind of anti-immigration sentiment that emerged in the Pauline Hanson period, of which Professor Jupp was a vocal critic. The changing role of the ALP in migration politics and the future of multiculturalism were also discussed. Throughout the conversation, Professor Jupp pointed to the possibility of more democratic and balanced debates about immigration policy and multiculturalism, while also signalling his frustration with the circular nature of migration debates and ongoing politicisation of migrants in Australia.

The floor was then opened to the discussants, who included Professor Stephen Castles (University of Sydney), Melissa Phillips (University of Melbourne), Professor Jock Collins (UTS) and Associate Professor Ellie Vasta (Macquarie University). Each discussant shared personal anecdotes about their own engagement with Professor Jupp's vast works, from one of his earliest books on Australian migration, Arrivals and Departures (1966), in which he in many ways set the scene for what has become an insightful and razor-sharp analytical approach to Australian migration studies, to more recent publications, such as The Australian People: An encyclopaedia of the nation, its people and their origins (2001), From White Australia to Woomera: the story of Australian immigration (2002) and Australia's Immigration Revolution (co-authored with Andrew Markus and Peter McDonald, 2009).

The established academics spoke of the formative nature of Professor Jupp's work on their own migration scholarship, as well of the works of other pioneering migration experts, such as Professors Charles Price, Jean Martin, and Jerzy Zubrzycki among others. Melissa Phillips, previous postgraduate coordinator of the TASA MEM thematic group, spoke about the ongoing relevance of Professor Jupp's work for a younger generation of scholars.

is offered, for instance, by Anthony Giddens in *Modernity and Self-Identity*, Ulrich Beck in *The Risk Society*, Zygmunt Bauman in *Liquid Modernity*, or Manuel Castells in The Network Society. Typically, it takes the form of a self-contained exercise of pure theorising, after the author has left the research enterprise behind.

By contrast, I'm going to engage in this big-picture theorising from the ground up, firmly embedded in a string of empirical projects on the structure, experience, and political treatment of urban marginality in advanced society, conducted over the past two decades and summed up in a trilogy I've just completed. The first book, *Urban Outcasts* (2008), compares the sudden implosion of the black American ghetto with the slow dissolution of the workers' territories of Western Europe to reveal their supersession by a new regime of urban poverty that I call 'advanced marginality', fed by the fragmentation of wage labour and territorial stigmatisation. The second book, *Punishing the Poor* (2009), charts how the state has reacted to the emergence of this novel marginality through a double punitive shift, from protective welfare to disciplinary workfare on the social front and by growing and glorifying the police, the courts, and the prison on the penal front. The third book, coming out in 2013, is *Deadly Symbiosis: Race and the Rise of Penal State*; it probes the two-way connection between ethnoracial division and the stunning return of the prison to the institutional forefront of advanced societies; and it takes a model of penality as state-sponsored dishonour and negative sociodicy from the US to Western Europe to Brazil to deepen our grasp of the mutual imbrication of punishment and marginality. Because I anchor my characterisation of neoliberalism in these empirical projects, I will first retrace briefly how I became an odd sort of political sociologist by plodding my way, inadvertently and reluctantly,

Photo courtesy of Deb Dempsey (Swinburne University)

" *…we need to forge a sociological concept that moves us beyond the polar opposition between the two rival models of neoliberalism*".

from the micro-ethnography of the everyday life of the precariat at the heart of Chicago's hyperghetto and in the working-class estates of outer Paris up to the macro-historical sociology of neoliberalism as perhaps the biggest social constellation looming over us all.

I wish to connect my argument to the theme of the TASA meeting, 'Emerging and Enduring Inequalities', in two ways. First, if I had to essay a rough characterisation of our era in one sentence, I'd say we are living in a society of rampant social insecurity: objective social insecurity at the bottom, for the post-industrial working class faced with the destabilising combination of high joblessness and spreading job precarity, and subjective social insecurity in the middle, taking the form of the fear of downward mobility and of failing to transmit one's status to one's children among the educated middle classes – in sharp contrast with the stupendous expansion of material abundance, institutional buffering, and self-seclusion for the upper class. Second, the effects of social insecurity are amplified by sharpening inequality, manifested by the onset and spread of advanced marginality and abetted, precisely, by the building of the neoliberal state.

To understand the building of the neoliberal Leviathan, we must first break with the two views of the state that dominate contemporary social science: what I call the 'ambulance' conception and the 'service counter' conception of the state. Both portray government as a reactive outfit that tackles 'social problems' such as poverty after they have taken root, by rolling out welfare programs or distributing goodies by way of compensation. Instead, drawing on Esping-Andersen and Bourdieu, I will urge you to construe the state as a stratifying and classifying agency, the paramount institution that sets the basic coordinates of social space and produces inequality and marginality upstream, before it manages them downstream.

Next, we must specify what we mean by 'neoliberal'. Most analysts invoke this qualifier to refer to a set of policies (sometimes dubbed the 'Washington consensus') entailing the retrenchment and reduction, if not dismantling, of the state in favour of the market, as if these two entities were locked in a life-and-death battle for supremacy or a zero-sum game: market wins, state loses. I contend that this is the ideology of neoliberalism, not its sociology. 'Actually existing neoliberalism' entails everywhere the reengineering of the state, indeed the construction of a strong state capable

of effectively countering social recalcitrance to commodification and of culturally shaping subjectivities conforming to it.

To realise this, we need to forge a sociological concept that moves us beyond the polar opposition between the two rival models of neoliberalism. On the one side, we have the hegemonic economic model of market rule, inspired indifferently by Adam Smith or Karl Marx, canonised by Hayek and Friedmann, and exemplified by the work of David Harvey and assorted political economists. On the other side, we have the insurgent biopolitical model of neoliberalism as governmentality, derived from the lectures of Michel Foucault (with or without a touch of Deleuze), and particularly popular among philosophers, geographers and anthropologists like Dardot and Laval, Larner, and Ong. I will critique both approaches for being at once too narrow and too broad and for failing to identify the distinctive institutional machinery that actualises the neoliberal blueprint. Then I will bring into the mix Bourdieu's theory of the state, as encapsulated by his flexible and powerful notion of bureaucratic field, to carve a middle path between these two poles of 'market rule' and 'governmentality' that captures what is 'neo' about neoliberalism: namely, the erection of a Centaur-state that acts very differently at the two ends of the class structure and puts its considerable disciplinary capacity on the social, penal and cultural front at the service of commodification. This state practices laissez-faire at the top, at the level of the circulation of capital and the production of inequality, but it turns interventionist and intrusive when it comes to managing the consequences of inequality at the bottom, for the life spaces and life chances of the precarious fractions of the postindustrial working class.

2012 TASA Sociology Honours Award Recipients

Curtin University of Technology	Joni Lariat
Deakin University	Elizabeth Normand
James Cook University	Alexander Page
La Trobe University	Rachel Loney-Howes
Monash University	Fabian Cannizzo & Levan Wee
Swinburne University of Technology	Laila Sakini
University of New South Wales	Holi Birman
University of Queensland	Stephanie Raymond
University of Tasmania	Kesherie Gurung
University of Technology of Sydney	Katerina Pavlidis & Katrina Ferrer

Please contact the TASA Office if your university had a candidate in 2012 that is not listed above.

Visions of the Social:
Toward the Visual in Teaching Sociology

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"…I've made use of a variety of non-textual media in my own teaching, including film, TV, YouTube clips and podcasts."

Sociology no longer has – if it ever did – a monopoly on 'the social'. Sociology must compete with a range of visions of social life from television, film, music, literature, journalism and advertising. For example, the critically acclaimed HBO TV series The Wire has been dubbed an exemplary piece of sociology that reaches a global audience and arguably does a better job detailing the dynamics and inequities of modern urban life than any professional sociologist could muster. For some, the success of media forms like The Wire has been a site of reflection concerning the relevance and impact of the social sciences (Atkinson and Beer, 2010).

In this article, I argue that rather than seeing contemporary visual or non-textual culture as a threat to sociology, we need to take advantage of the opportunities it provides, particularly as a way to enliven our teaching, engage students and reach new audiences. I outline some of the key benefits of a non-textual approach to teaching sociology and offer some examples and resources for implementing this, based on my own experiences.

In the last issue of *Nexus*, Karen Farquharson, Kirsten Harley and Karen Willis wrote an interesting piece on how technology is changing the way we teach. Their reflections got me thinking about my own teaching practices, and in particular, how I try to use visual media and popular culture to fire-up students' sociological imagination (and my own) and to help students see the relevance of sociological theory and research.

For me, there are two standout advantages to using visual or non-textual approaches for teaching sociology. The first is the ways in which contemporary media forms can work as exemplary sociological texts that assist students to connect emotionally to social realities and relate sociological ideas to the 'real world'. I mentioned The Wire at the beginning. Penfold-Mounce, Beer and Burrows (2011) argue that The Wire is a premier example of a 'social science-fiction' that is 'profoundly' sociological in its socially complex and morally sophisticated treatment of issues of class, urban inequality, crime, law, media, education and politics. From portrayals of the organisational structure of gang life to the institutional realities that politicians, police, lawyers and judges face in the 'war on drugs', it shows how social, political and economic forces profoundly influence individual choices. Its vision of the city and its institutions is deeply sociological; a vision achieved not through a textual 'telling' but a visual and emotional 'showing' that makes sociological ideas accessible and relevant.

The second key benefit in using visual media to engage students is that it aligns with principles of good teaching practice. Atkinson and Beer (2010) suggest that media forms like The Wire can figure as part of a shift from pedagogic to andragogic approaches to student learning. An andragogic approach recognises the life experiences and capacity for self-direction in motivated adult learners and the importance of lifelong learning that occurs in relation to diverse cultural forms. They propose that The Wire, with its non-linear narrative and significant time and viewing demands, is consistent with andragogic principles of self-directed learning and recognising learning as 'situated within the ongoing practices of everyday life' (Atkinson and Beer, 2010: 537).

An andragogy, Atkinson and Beer (2010) suggest, acknowledges how ongoing learning and self-development occur in relation to cultural sources that are typically not explicitly academic in origins. By using television, news and social media in our teaching we not only help instantiate sociological ideas and concepts, we offer a model for engaging with cultural media that now saturate our lives. This resonates with what Bauman (1987) would call the shift from social scientists as knowledge 'legislators' to interpretive 'sense-makers'.

Increasingly, our job is not to be the 'sage on the stage' but the 'guide on the side' (Delvin, 2012): to work as a sort of sociological tour guide – to help draw attention to what's important and worthwhile – in our increasingly mediated world; a world marked not by scarcity of information and knowledge but abundance and excess. Further, adding cultural media to our teaching repertoire allows us to step out from

behind the lectern and encourage active and interactive learning. It enables a model of teacher as curator and facilitator of learning rather than creator and sole bestower of knowledge.

I've made use of a variety of non-textual media in my own teaching, including film, TV, YouTube clips and podcasts. I use these to help 'bring alive' key concepts and theories and to encourage active engagement and discussion. For example, when teaching a unit on crime and deviance, I used Shane Meadow's film This is England (now also a TV series) to capture elements of Sutherland's differential association theory; clips from The Wire to generate discussion around how power and class structure crime in urban contexts; and an ABC radio podcast on changing bail laws in NSW to highlight the practical relevance of theoretical debates concerning labelling and deterrence theories.

When teaching first-year sociology, I juxtaposed short YouTube clips from the film versions of Fiddler on the Roof and American Psycho to flesh out theories of de-traditionalisation and individualisation. Together we distilled the key social qualities of these visual cultural worlds (e.g., focus on collective/tradition vs. focus on individual/importance of self) and then fed the students' observations back into the theories. In another first year example, I streamed a radio podcast with a leading Australian sociologist discussing the results of a recent survey on loneliness in Australia for a lecture on social change. Students were given a set of questions to answer as they listened to the audio and then using a 'think-pair-share' activity, were asked to discuss their observations with peers and then the whole group, with me steering the conversation and using the whiteboard to underscore key ideas. While I don't have systematic evidence, both formal and informal feedback suggests these techniques help students grasp abstract material, see the wider relevance of sociological ideas and make learning fun.

In addition to your own DVD library, there are plenty of online resources to help sociologists wanting to complement their teaching materials with visual/non-textual mediums. I've found The Sociological Cinema (http://www.thesociologicalcinema.com/) and Sociological Images (http://thesocietypages.org/socimages/) helpful. Both websites offer a range of images and videos that are uploaded by sociologists across the globe on a diversity of topics and are accompanied by useful descriptions of their sociological relevance. YouTube, ABC iview and Radio National's podcasting service are also invaluable sources. Clearly academics need to consider copyright issues and should check fair use requirements when showing film, TV and other licensed materials in the classroom.

While some might interpret a turn to the visual as a sell-out to slick commercial productions, a dumbing down of what we teach or even pandering to the short attention spans of an MTV generation of learners, we need to think about how we can use an increasingly media-saturated world for our own benefits. Yes, we need to remain critical of a fast, disposable and superficial media environment, but we also need to be responsive to the opportunities it provides to energise our teaching, respect a diversity of learning styles, stimulate our students' sociological imaginations and respond critically to our increasingly mediated worlds.

Jennifer Platt continued from p. 6

journals might act on the perverse incentive to prefer papers without the funding which required them to provide open access. British national research councils are now requiring not only free access to the papers published, but that each provide access to its data so that it can be mined or reanalysed. How would this deal with issues of confidentiality in social science?

The ISA clearly needs to develop a policy appropriate to its international mission, and it will be very much helped in doing that if it has information on how these issues are emerging in worldwide sociology. We know that in some places the system of journal publication and funding varies from that taken as standard in Europe and North America, and the discussion elsewhere may raise further questions that we should consider. It will be very much appreciated if you could let us know how things look from where you are, and what your thoughts are on what ISA policy might be. Please write to me at j.platt@sussex.ac.uk.

This article was originally published in the ISA newsletter, Global Dialogues 3(1), and is available here: http://www.isa-sociology.org/global-dialogue/2012/10/what-doors-does-%E2%80%9Copen-access%E2%80%9D-open/

TASA Teaching Sociology Thematic Group Workshop Report

Kristin Natalier and Kirsten Harley

The Teaching Sociology thematic group held our annual workshop on the very hot, very steamy day following the close of the TASA conference. The sessions addressed the topic Diverse Sociologies: Valuing difference and teaching sociology. Many of us work in contexts where research is the more highly valued activity, but teaching is the bread-and-butter of universities. The workshop gave us all an opportunity to explore teaching as an enjoyable and creative part of our work, and a set of practices with theoretical and conceptual implications for disciplinary knowledge and identities.

Throughout the session we explored ways in which we can teach sociology as a discipline in contexts where our traditional disciplinary aims and identities are challenged by institutional values and priorities, and students' motivations, practices and their imagined professional futures.

The day was organised into three thematic sections:

How do we engage students who don't aim to be sociologists?
Catherine Doherty, Karen Dooley and Annette Woods (QUT) discussed the pedagogical and strategic challenges of locating sociology within teacher education when sociological knowledge becomes re-contextualised through different disciplinary frames. James Connor (ANU/Australian Defence Force Academy) discussed the challenges of being seen to 'always hate everything' as he teaches critical thinking in a context that emphasises group identity and conformity to authority. Peta Cook (UTas) discussed the practical and ethical constraints on encouraging students to use an under-developed teaching and research technique – auto-ethnography – to explore the sociological dimensions of the body, and in so doing, positioned assessment practices within relationships between students and teachers, and institutional cost and time imperatives.

How do we use different knowledges in teaching sociology?
Deirdre Howard-Wagner (Sydney) presented work she is conducting with Cat Kutay, Lynette Riley and Janet Mooney, building Aboriginal knowledge systems into an immersive on-line environment in a way that requires meaningful engagement by students and is respectful of the meanings and processes of that knowledge. Martin Forsey (UWA) described the challenges and possibilities of encouraging students to think about the culture – a very slippery concept – they live in and the cultures they move through.

What is the relationship between valuing diversity in the discipline and implementing standardized outcomes?
Karen Farquharson (Swinburne) discussed the imperatives and challenges of engaging with the processes of developing Threshold Learning Outcomes in a discipline which is valued as a broad church of methods and methodologies and theoretical and political perspectives.

Throughout the day it was evident that questions of disciplinary identity are key to the decisions we make about what we teach and how we teach. For those of us who still work in identifiable sociology streams, the issue might not be so evident; identity claims and politics are most evident for those working in different disciplinary contexts, and particularly so for those teaching in sometimes hostile environments. But those extra-disciplinary contexts are a means of strengthening the discipline; indeed, they may be its saviour: they allow us to reach a much larger number of students, embed sociological knowledge in contexts and professions not traditionally associated with a sociology career path (whatever that may look like today) and require alternative and creative ways of building sociological perspectives and understandings. Thanks to TASA for providing thematic group funding to support this day of sustained, stimulating discussion about our teaching practice.

Kristin Natalier and Kirsten Harley,
Co-Convenors
Teaching Sociology thematic group

Michael Burawoy on 'Universities in Crisis'

Tristan Enright

Doctoral Candidate, Department of Sociology and Social Policy
The University of Sydney

I commenced my PhD in early 2010 with interests, among others, in the sociology of knowledge, education, and Australian social policy. At that time, I had the vague intention of writing a thesis on neoliberalism's ascendency in Australian governance, albeit with a view to connecting this story more explicitly to the broader international one. Needless to say, any number of specific cases could have provided scope to such an undertaking. Even so, there was one case in particular that, while certainly not neglected, appeared to me to occupy only a peripheral position in the imaginations of scholars of neoliberalism: that is, the commercialisation of knowledge vis-à-vis the state-regulated marketisation of 'the university'.

Granted, there have been some notable contributions in this regard (e.g., Marginson, 1997; Marginson and Considine, 2000; Slaughter and Leslie, 1997; Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004). Yet, the absence of a more concerted scholarly effort to understand how neoliberal ideas came to conquer the university – whether their proponents were or are avowedly 'neoliberals' or not – appeared to me to be more than a little curious. Indeed, beyond the seemingly banal observation that this is the context in which many of us pursue our chosen vocations, the university has been one of the foremost institutions implicated, in one way or another, in the production, reproduction, dissemination and 'performance' of neoliberal ideas. For the better part of the past three years, then, I have been working on developing a genealogical sociology of neoliberal knowledge from its hazy inception in interwar Europe to something approaching a globalised meta-logic framing much of what has passed as the 'reform' of higher education in Australia, as elsewhere, over the past 30-odd years.

So, with an immediate intellectual and increasingly personal interest in the current state of the university in 'the neoliberal age', it was a rare privilege to have had the opportunity to hear Michael Burawoy speak directly to his views on 'Universities in Crisis' on Monday 11 February. Hosted by the Department of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Sydney, the event was well attended and drew a range of participants from related disciplines and other local universities. For those interested, a recording of the first part of the seminar is available on the Department's website)http://sydney.edu.au/arts/sociology_social_policy/about/seminars/2013_seminars_series.shtml), which I would encourage anyone to listen to in conjunction with having read Burawoy's 'Redefining the Public University' (http://burawoy.berkeley.edu/workingpapers.htm#Universities).

Many of you will recall Raewyn Connell's piece on neoliberalism and, or in, the university in issue 24(2) of *Nexus* last year. Importantly, to my mind at least, the issues canvassed by Connell also lay at the heart of Burawoy's description of the challenges facing the now global field of higher education that has taken shape over the past three decades. Despite being experienced by degree, or marked by 'combined and uneven development' to use Burawoy's parlance, the processes and pressures now bearing down upon the 21st Century university are in all places the same: commercialisation, vocationalisation, rationalisation or standardisation, polarisation between rich and poor, and all this in the context of the intensified competition for scarce resources that comes with rapid (I'd say haphazard) systemic expansion. The story of the university in crisis is thus a familiar one.

Having sought to revive a little of the discipline's sleeping giant, functionalism, Burawoy went on to contend that the intersection of these processes has amounted to a crisis in four parts. Leaving aside theoretical discussion for present purposes, his essential argument was that the increasing dominance of market and regulatory (i.e., neoliberal) models of the university has resulted in (related) budgetary and governance crises. In terms of the former, universities are operating as revenue or profit-seeking 'firms' in the face of waning public funding; while in terms of the latter, their 'management' has progressively become the domain of corporate professionals and

policy wonks oriented to short-term 'strategy' and somewhat arbitrary measures of 'output', to the detriment of collegial deliberation and decision-making over long-term vision and deep, cumulative disciplinary innovation.

These more or less seismic shifts in the organisation and orientation of the university, he continued, have given rise to two further crises. First, the university, and by extension, the academy, is facing a crisis of identity insofar as the rising tide of commercialisation raises questions about whether what we do as academics, collectively, is gradually becoming driven by competitive, self-interested ambition (the hallmark of a PhD under neoliberalism, or so we are told). Consequently, second, the university is facing a public legitimation crisis, since the more clientelism and self-interest take root the more imperilled our engagement with and accountability to the public(s) we set out to serve becomes. In other words, the university appears to be progressively suffering from a case of relevance deprivation syndrome: the architects of public choice theory could not have written this script!

While in many ways Burawoy's substantive argument could be considered a diagnosis of the worst-case scenario, it was clear from the issues raised by the participants in the ensuing question and answer session that his take on things resonated with the experience of academic life in Australia. In brief, questions posed to Burawoy related to whether professional schools have a place in the university; the extent to which he thought academics were complicit in the current malaise; whether the perception of crisis was, in fact, an invention of baby boomers pining for a (mythical) Golden Age; whether the rapacious promotion of ed-tech and distance learning poses a genuine threat to the academy; how we might go about working more closely with grassroots social movements, old or new; and whether the market and regulatory models of the university are in some way always dependent on the critical faculties of the academy because the underlying logic of capitalism is, as always, to create crises rather than solve them.

Arguably, however, the most significant thread running throughout the questions related to what we can do collectively to 'reclaim' (I would simply say 'claim') the university as a fundamentally public institution. Clearly, those in attendance were deeply concerned about the direction in which the university has been, and continues to be, heading. I suspect their concern is shared equally by many more. For Burawoy, though, there is no easy or expedient answer to this question. Nonetheless, he was certain that the answer lies in reinvigorating the public service ethic and democratic deliberation that has been waning over recent times, be this in our research, our teaching, or in our engagements with one another within or across disciplinary and institutional boundaries. This, he added, demands that we make our best efforts to have, maintain, and force such a discussion, one that necessarily must be conducted publicly, in public, and with the public, not behind closed doors or when congregated around the proverbial water cooler as so often appears to be the case. I, like others I'm sure, am inclined to agree (and can't help but feel there is a conference in there somewhere…).

In any event, I am grateful for having had the chance to attend what I think is a particularly important and timely lecture by one of the discipline's leading figures. On that note, I would like to extend, personally and on behalf of those in attendance, a warm thank you to Robert van Krieken and the Department of Sociology and Social Policy for making this opportunity possible.

Sources cited available from author.

2013 *Nexus* dates

Issue 2 *Contributor Deadline*: 12 July 2013.   Publication Date: August 2013
Issue 3 *Contributor Deadline*: 11 October 2013. Publication Date: November 2013

ERA 2012 round: Why we need some 5s
The disappointing outcome for Sociology

JO LINDSAY

The release of the ERA results on 6 December 2012 showed that the discipline of Sociology as a whole did better than the last round but we still have a long way to go to be well regarded relative to other disciplines. Sociology (code 1608) received an average national rating of 2.9 out of 5 (up from 2.4 last time). The benchmark set by the ARC was 3 so we have achieved a pass grade this time, which is perhaps a relief. The average score for social science disciplines (3) remains lower than many other discipline groupings so we are not alone at scoring ourselves harshly.

The ERA reports do point to the health of our discipline but also to some attrition since the last ERA round. Sociology is substantial – we are present at most universities, with 29 institutions assessed in the ERA. With 457 FTE staff members we were the second largest social science discipline assessed, following politics with 491 staff. We submitted more publications (4,591) for the 2012 round and generated more research income ($70,964,733) than the previous round too. Again the Sandstones did relatively well while the regional universities struggled. Congratulations to colleagues at ANU, Melbourne, UNSW, UQ and Sydney for gaining a 4!

Sadly though, no universities received a score of 5 for Sociology in the 2012 round, which is a substantial problem. Why? Because it says to the higher education minister, university administrators, international colleagues (and other key audiences) that there are NO 'excellent' sociology departments in Australia! We know this is not the case. The contribution of Australian sociological research is at least as good as disciplines such as history or cultural studies. We know there are universities in Australia where excellent sociological research has been, and is being, conducted. But it was apparently impossible for any university to meet the criterion of all staff well above world standard for a score of 5 in the 2012 round. It is particularly concerning that none of the Group of 8 universities was able to achieve a 5 in Sociology – the G08 usually have the resources and strategic capacity to achieve a 5 in disciplines they value. The social sciences have always played second fiddle to the hard sciences in terms of research investment: perhaps sociology is being deinstitutionalised and the ERA will drive this further?

It is not only an issue of profile. The ERA exercise will have real material effects that are probably being felt by many members in universities across the country now. The ERA is linked to funding and research prioritisation within universities. In my view, there will be no substantial investment in Sociology at any Australian university in the near term, because no university scored a 5 for the discipline. In some places, sociology departments have begun to contract. It is concerning that the base of the discipline has been weakened for the purpose of achieving other success in national ARC or NHMRC grant and fellowship rounds where 'research environment' counts. The dream of having an ARC laureate in Sociology remains a very distant dream.

What can we do? We might like just to ignore the ERA as a flawed and unfair bureaucratic process – but the problem with this approach is that we may be 'disappeared' unless we engage with it. As I have been arguing for some time, we need to act strategically and politically to raise the profile of our discipline within individual universities and across the higher education sector as a whole. TASA is committed to facilitating and supporting you in this. The TASA exec will put together practical suggestions in the coming weeks on how Sociology can do better in the next round, including tips on strategic publishing and raising citations and so on. Your suggestions on how to best move forward would be most appreciated (email Jo.Lindsay@monash. edu). I'd actually like this analysis to be wrong, and get off this high horse, so feel free to debate these arguments too.

The ERA outcomes are available at http://www.arc.gov.au/era/era_2012/outcomes_2012.htm

Books of note
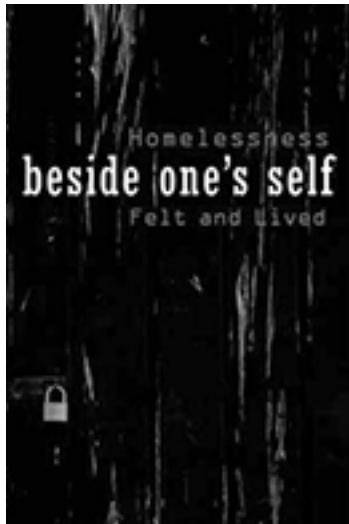
Winner of the 2012 TASA Raewyn Connell Prize

Title: *Beside One's Self Homelessness Felt and Lived*
Author: Catherine Robinson
Publisher: SyracuseUniversity Press.
Published: 2011

What is it to feel homeless? How does it feel to be without the orienting geography of home? Going beyond homelessness as a housing issue, this book uniquely explores the embodied, emotional experiences of homelessness. In doing so, Robinson reveals much about existing gaps in service responses, in community perceptions, and in the ways in which homelessness most often becomes visible as a problem for policy makers. She argues that the emotional dimension of displacement must be central to contemporary practices of researching, understanding, writing, and responding to homelessness. She situates the issue of homelessness at the nexus of important, broader intellectual and methodological developments that take bodily and spatial experience as their starting point.

Drawing on field research and interviews, Robinson details the lives of homeless individuals in Sydney and Brisbane, Australia. The moving narratives of these individuals bear witness to the key experiences of corporeal fragmentation, geographical detachment, and social alienation. At the book's core lies a call to legitimize scholarly work that focuses on emotions, particularly displacement and trauma, facilitating researchers and policy makers to explore new avenues for evaluating service delivery. *Beside One's Self* bridges the divide between research that has policy implications and research that makes theoretical contributions.
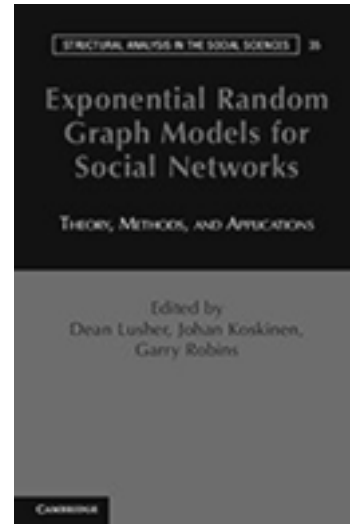

Title: *Exponential random graph models for social networks: Theory, methods and applications*
Authors: Lusher, D., Koskinen, J., & Robins, G.
Publisher: University Press.
Published: 2013

Exponential random graph models (ERGMs) are increasingly applied to observed network data and are central to understanding social structure and network processes. The chapters in this edited volume provide a self-contained, exhaustive account of the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of ERGMs, including models for univariate, multivariate, bipartite, longitudinal and social-influence type ERGMs. Each method is applied in individual case studies illustrating how social science theories may be examined empirically using ERGMs. The authors supply the reader with sufficient detail to specify ERGMs, fit them to data with any of the available software packages and interpret the results.

Further details at:

http://www.cambridge.org/gb/knowledge/isbn item6897868/?site_locale=en_GB
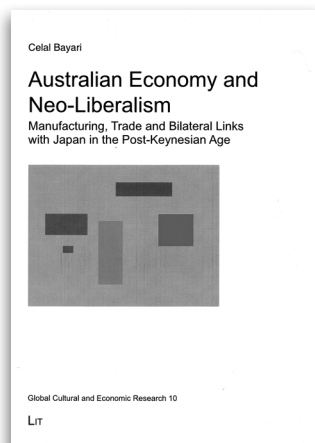
Title: *Australian Economy and Neo-Liberalism: Manufacturing, Trade and Bilateral Links with Japan in the Post-Keynesian Age*
Author: Celal Bayari
Publisher: LIT Verlag
Published: 2012

This book defines Australian economy as having been typified by neo-liberal governance, foreign investment dependence, exports dominated by grains, resources and energy, and an industrial structure in which foreign multinational enterprises play the leading role. These factors in combination, the book argues, have not always contributed to a stable growth, and a strong manufacturing sector.

The book further states that these factors have not always led to the best outcomes for Australia in its integration into the regional and global patterns. These themes form the focus of this book, which presents an analysis of the economic orthodoxy and its effects.

TASA Awards and Prizes

Jean Martin Award

The Jean Martin Award recognises excellence in scholarship in the field of sociology and aims to assist with establishing the career of a recent PhD graduate.

This Award, which was given for the first time in 1980, is granted to the best PhD thesis in social science disciplines from an Australian tertiary institution submitted to the Award Committee. Theses may be on theoretical as well as empirical topics. Excellence in scholarship in the field of sociology, and the balanced treatment of sociological theory and research are the main criteria for deciding the Award. Work done in one of Jean Martin's major areas of interest and which assesses implications for social policy are other criteria the judges will also take into account. Jean Martin's research interests are defined as: migration, community and family studies, the concept of 'ethnicity', ethnic politics, social class, theories of culture and of social change.

Nominations close April 1st, 2013. The Award will be granted only for theses examined and passed during the designated period: March 1st 2011 to 28 February 2013.

Full details are available at http://www.tasa.org.au/about-tasa/tasa-awards-prizes/jean-martin-award/

TASA Award for Distinguished Service to Australian Sociology

This award is made to a TASA member who has demonstrated outstanding, significant and sustained service to Australian sociology over many years. While not necessarily a lifetime achievement award, candidates for the Distinguished Service Award would usually be nearing the end of their careers.

In this context, outstanding service may take the form of one or more of the following:
  – contribution to the teaching and scholarship of sociology in Australia
  – advancing international appreciation of sociology in Australia through research and publications
  – involvement as a recognised sociologist in the public arena; for example in policy development, administration, public debate or service to the community in a voluntary capacity

In all cases the quality of the service is the determining criterion, rather than the quantity alone.

Nominations close May 31

Full details are available at http://www.tasa.org.au/about-tasa/tasa-awards-prizes/distinguished-service-to-australian-sociology/

Outstanding Service to TASA Award

This honour is accorded to a TASA member who has demonstrated an outstanding level of participation in and promotion of TASA over a number of years. There are many ways in which this can occur, but in all cases the quality of the service is the determining criterion, rather than the quantity alone.

Nominations close May 31, 2013

Full details are available at http://www.tasa.org.au/about-tasa/tasa-awards-prizes/honour-roll-for-meritorious-service/

Sociology Threshold Learning Outcomes

This is a summary report of the threshold learning outcomes for sociology launched at TASA's Annual General Meeting at the 2012 Conference at the University of Queensland. The full document is available on TASA's website, at: www.tasa.org.au/uploads/2011/12/Threshold-Learning-Outcomes-for-Sociology-final.pdf

Discipline peak bodies have been charged with developing threshold learning outcomes (TLOs) for their discipline groups. The Australian Sociological Association (TASA) has developed TLOs for the Sociology discipline in Australia. These TLOs are the minimum outcomes that graduates of Bachelor degrees with majors in Sociology are expected to have achieved at the completion of their course of study. Associate Professor Karen Farquharson was appointed by TASA to lead the development of the TLOs with the assistance of a Discipline Reference Group and in consultation with sociologists throughout Australia.

The Discipline Reference group drafted the TLOs in 2011 before they were circulated by TASA for feedback. The draft TLOs were presented at the 2011 TASA annual conference held at the University of Newcastle in November, 2011 and placed on the TASA website with a request for comments. All known Australian sociology programs were also contacted, provided with the draft TLOs, and asked for their comments and feedback. The consultation process took place between November 2011 and May 2012. All feedback received was considered by the Discipline Reference Group and shaped the final TLOs. The revised TLO document was completed in October 2012.

In addition to describing how the TLOs were developed, this document provides a description of sociology as an academic discipline and identifies the seven threshold learning outcomes for Australian Sociology programs across the domains of Knowledge, Skills and Engagement. The TLOs were developed in consultation with Australian and international discipline experts, and with reference to key national and international benchmarks including the Australian Qualifications Framework (2011) and the United Kingdom's Quality Assurance Agency's benchmarks for Sociology (2007). A comparison of the TLOs and these other benchmarks is also provided.

The Sociology TLOs reside with TASA and will be reviewed regularly. Anyone wishing to request changes can do so via TASA. This TLO document is meant to be a living document that changes over time.

A/Prof Farquharson and the Discipline Reference Group wish to extend their thanks to the community of sociologists and other interested parties who provided helpful suggestions and feedback on the TLOs.

Scope

The TLOs for Sociology cover all Australian programs that lead to a Bachelor degree with a major in the discipline of Sociology. Bachelor degrees are defined as Level 7 in the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). Other types of qualifications, such as Honours or Masters degrees, are outside the scope of these TLOs.

Sociology is taught in a number of degree programs. These TLOs, however, only apply to programs that include a major in Sociology that is recognised by a higher education provider. The TLOs are expected to be achieved across complete majors, not individual units, so individual units may contribute to some but not all TLOs. It is hoped that those who develop and teach sociology units in other contexts, including those taught outside Sociology programs (e.g., in health, business, or other degrees), will find the TLOs helpful in their content development.

The TLOs for Sociology will constitute the minimum (threshold) outcomes a graduate of a Sociology major or degree would be expected to achieve by the completion of their Bachelor degree. Individual higher education providers may set standards for their graduates that are above the threshold learning standards. Many individual graduates will also exceed the TLOs.

These TLOs do not constitute a national curriculum and do not prescribe the ways they shall be achieved. Sociology teachers will continue to develop programs and units with a range of content and will maintain flexibility in terms of the topics they offer for sociological study and their broad approach to the discipline. The TLOs do not prescribe methods of teaching or of assessment. Sociology programs will be expected to meet the TLOs, but the ways they achieve them will vary.

Higher education providers may reference these TLOs for degrees with other titles. It is the responsibility of individual providers to identify the appropriate TLOs for their teaching areas. TASA will maintain responsibility for defining and updating the Sociology TLOs, including identifying and implementing a process for discussing and updating them on a regular basis. This threshold learning outcomes document is a living document that is expected to change over time.

Nature and Extent of Sociology

Sociology is the study of human societies, focusing on the organisation of social life from individuals to social institutions. It examines individuals and groups in their personal, local, national, global and other social contexts, and provides insights into the ways factors such as class, wealth, race, gender, ethnicity, age, sexuality, disability, and religion shape societies at the individual, group, and institutional levels. Central to the sociological endeavour is a critical perspective: sociologists question the popular explanations of social life through the application of rigorous and systematic methods of enquiry, and examine the dynamics of power and inequality.

As a discipline, Sociology is characterised by empirically based social research and by carefully examined social theory. Sociology students develop skills in critical thinking, self-direction, collaboration, reflexivity and communication. Graduates of sociology programs are well equipped to go into a variety of careers across a range of government and non-government sectors, particularly those that require high level research and critical thinking skills.

Sociology graduates are expected to exhibit an understanding of sociology as an academic discipline. Sociology includes a great diversity of areas of specialisation, objects of study, research methods and theoretical approaches. Sociological knowledge is contested, provisional, and situated in particular contexts.

As one of the social sciences, sociology has traditionally had a strong theoretical and methodological connection with disciplines such as anthropology, political science, history, human geography, gender studies, legal studies, social work, social psychology, organisation studies, demography, public policy and social policy studies. Sociology also contributes to wider intellectual debates about society, social organisation and the patterns underlying different social worlds.

Sociology Threshold Learning Outcomes

The TLOs are arranged into three domains:

'Knowledge and understanding': This domain broadly refers to the 'intellectual' achievements specific to the discipline of Sociology. These TLOs meet the AQF Level 7 requirements for depth of knowledge in a particular discipline.

'Skills': This domain refers to practical capabilities rather than narrow 'competencies'. While Sociology may not be the only discipline that teaches these skills, we can reasonably argue that a major in Sociology will equip students with them. These TLOs meet the AQF Level 7 requirements for critical thinking, knowledge synthesis, cognitive, technical and communication skills generally and in the field of sociology in particular. They also meet the AQF Level 7 requirement that students demonstrate an ability to apply their knowledge and skills with initiative.

'Engagement': This domain encompasses generic graduate attributes, but also focusses on what might reasonably be expected as the outcome of a major in the discipline. This domain also meets the AQF Level 7 requirement for communication skills.

Threshold Learning Outcomes (TLOs) for Sociology

Domain	Threshold Learning Outcome
Knowledge and understanding	Demonstrate a sociological understanding of the nature of social relationships and institutions; patterns of social diversity and inequality; and processes that underpin social change and stability. Demonstrate knowledge of sociology as an academic discipline in its social, historical and world context, including its principal concepts and theories. Demonstrate an understanding of research processes in sociology including design, methodology and methods, ethics, analysis, interpretation, and the diversity of approaches to research.
Skills	Demonstrate an ability to apply sociological theories, concepts and evidence to sociological questions. Demonstrate an ability to critically review, analyse, summarise and synthesise sociological scholarship including research using quantitative and qualitative data. Demonstrate an ability to develop arguments by using evidence, evaluating competing explanations, and drawing conclusions.
Engagement	Demonstrate an ability to communicate sociological ideas, principles and knowledge to specialist and non-specialist audiences using appropriate formats.

Postgraduate conference scholarship

CAMILLE LA BROOY
University of Melbourne

Having attended three TASA conferences in the past, I was extremely pleased and honoured to receive one of the 2012 postgraduate scholarships. The 2012 TASA conference was a great experience, as always. The University of Queensland did a fantastic job at hosting this event and it was filled with interesting and insightful presentations. It also provided great networking opportunities and the social activities organised by the conference committee were enjoyed by all.

My paper joins the conversation about the so-called failure of multiculturalism in Europe. I presented findings of content and critical discourse analyses based on my doctoral thesis examining the media's representations of Muslims around the period of the London bombings. Specifically, my paper discussed a single case study that considered the media's representations of the Dutch politician, Hirsi Ali, in the British press. The positive depiction of Hirsi Ali as a successfully integrated former Muslim appeared indicative of why multicultural states find Islam problematic to tolerate. While Muslim 'differences' are recognised, their negative representation in the dataset signified that limits exist to what can be 'tolerated' in multicultural states. It is argued that alleged failure of multiculturalism is a reflection of multiculturalism's inherent liberality rather than illiberality, as illustrated in the case of Hirsi Ali. Further, the fact that radical alterity beyond the spaces allotted by liberalism cannot be tolerated represents the failure of multiculturalism.

I am sincerely grateful to TASA for the opportunity afforded by the scholarship and I look forward to attending the 2013 conference.

Fifty Years Of Australian Migration Studies *continued from p. 7*

Questions from the audience further highlighted the extent to which Professor Jupp's work has contributed to public knowledge of immigration policy debates and trends and Australia's rich migration history. For many present, his work The Australian People, was of immense public significance, and provided a window into family migration histories for many Australians. Addressing a question regarding the challenges of engaging in both academia and advocacy, Professor Jupp noted that the next generation of migration scholars needs to be more mindful of the challenges of negotiating academia and advocacy. He compared this to his own experience, which had been never to fully differentiate between an academic and political stance – at times controversially. Professor Jupp concluded by saying that he was himself interested to see how the current transformations of migration, particularly in the form of increased labour and temporary migration, will impact upon the articulation of multiculturalism in Australia.

A recording of the event will be made available to the public via the TASA MEM thematic group webpage on the TASA website. The TASA MEM thematic group is grateful to the TASA Executive for the financial support that enabled this event to take place.

Workshop with Professor Michael Burawoy: Global Sociology

Elsa Koleth
The University of Sydney

On 11 February 2013, doctoral students in the Department of Sociology at Sydney University had the privilege of attending a workshop with Michael Burawoy, President of the International Sociological Association and Professor of Sociology at the University of California, Berkeley. Professor Burawoy drew on the broad range of research topics covered by the students present at the workshop to undertake an engaging exposition of the theoretical and methodological principles of global sociology.

Global sociology, Professor Burawoy reminded us, was a matter of scale. In contrast with universalising tendencies in the work of major social theorists, such as Durkheim, Weber and Marx, and in contemporary times, Bourdieu and Beck, global sociology allows for contrasts to be drawn between sociological work at global, national and local scales while recognising the specificity of sociological analysis at each scale. In particular, Professor Burawoy stressed the enduring importance of the nation state as a key site for the development of global sociology as an amalgam of national sociologies.

The key elements of the methodological framework drawn by Professor Burawoy for a global sociological approach were global forces, global connections and global imaginations. Professor Burawoy called on students in the workshop to consider the ways in which these elements manifested in the different studies they are conducting. He also discussed the need for theoretical frameworks that are capable of explicating social change at a global level. Taking the work of Karl Polanyi as an example of a theoretical framework for understanding global social change, the group discussed the applicability of Polanyi's ideas on the commodification of land (or, more broadly, nature), labour, money, and knowledge to the research being undertaken by students in the class. Professor Burawoy argued that such a global analysis demands that we be more reflexive as social scientists as to where we are in the global hierarchy of knowledge, and to ask to whether it is possible to build alternative knowledges.

Referring to himself as an 'emissary of public sociology' Professor Burawoy impressed upon students that public engagement was imperative for the survival of the social sciences. Students also noted the complementary task of fostering receptive publics for sociological intervention. To that end, Professor Burawoy highlighted the empowering role of pedagogy in facilitating the development of critically engaged publics.

Given the often isolating nature of doctoral research, Professor Burawoy made a prescient plea for connection, urging us to make concerted efforts to communicate with each other about our work. Professor Burawoy observed the global reach of the research interests represented among the attendees of the workshop, and commended students' engagement in research beyond their own countries of origin or residence. Under Professor Burawoy's enthusiastic and inspiring tutelage the workshop served as a reminder of the benefits of a collective exploration of a concept like global sociology in the course of PhD study.

"Professor Burawoy impressed upon students that public engagement was imperative for the survival of the social sciences."

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Best paper award in *Journal of Sociology*
An agenda for the sociology of youth

Dan Woodman (on behalf of Andy Furlong and Johanna Wyn)

A few weeks before last year's TASA Conference at the University of Queensland I received the news that a paper I had co-authored with Andy Furlong from the University of Glasgow and Johanna Wyn from the University of Melbourne had been given the biennial Best Paper Award in the *Journal of Sociology*. The award was to be presented at the conference dinner and, as the food was served, my anxiety grew. I was excited – I think of TASA members as my people and it was an honour to be receiving the award – but at 190 centimetres (or 6'3" for those colleagues who still work in the old measure) I have a heightened anxiety about going up on stage at formal dinners. When I slip, I fall properly and, barring serious injury of course, it can be hilarious for others1. While Andy was unfortunately not able to make it, with Johanna, who I'm sure would have caught me if I had slipped, we managed to make it up on stage to receive our certificates and to thank the selection panel without incident. Happily back at my table with certificate in hand, I returned to my usual TASA conference dinner state – eager anticipation at discovering which unique moves this year's keynote speakers would unleash on the dance floor.

Our article was titled 'Changing times, changing perspectives: Reconciling 'transition' and 'cultural' perspectives on youth and young adulthood' (December 2011). The paper aimed to provide a basis for working across what have traditionally been two distinct areas of research: the study of young people's cultural forms and meaning-making on the one hand and their patterns of transition to adulthood on the other. We argue that this separation has drawn attention away from crucial questions that lie at the intersection of these two approaches to youth research. Young people are facing new challenges in building identities in the face of changing social conditions, which frequently involve the blending of contexts, the necessary search for new meanings and a changing sense of self in relation to others.

While there is a need for convergence between the 'transitions' and 'cultural' perspectives in the sociology of youth, as yet we do not have a conceptual framework that is accepted by those aligned to either tradition. We suggest in the paper that the concept of social generation can offer the potential to break down the false binary in the sociology of youth. The major strength of a youth studies better informed by the sociology of generations is that it can enable us to understand the significance of subjectivities in responding to social conditions, and hence in making unique generational patterns. The paper proposes a framework, including some modifications to historical conceptions of generations, that we believe has the capacity to reveal local variations on global patterns and to trace the uneven capacity across groups (gender, class, race) to create and access valued forms of selfhood.

This paper is not the only place where some sort of bridging of these research traditions is being discussed. As well as an international conference on this theme hosted by the TASA Sociology of Youth thematic group (see report in this issue), our paper was part of a broader special issue of *JoS* on this theme edited by Paula Geldens, Sian Lincoln and Paul Hodkinson. The edition also includes contributions from Ani Wierenga, Ruth Rogers, Rob McDonald and Emma Renold, and Jessica Ringrose that are equally worthy of attention. The sociology of youth research community, both in Australia and globally, is particularly vibrant and I believe the best paper award is in part an outcome of this strength. I look forward to seeing what new directions in youth sociology, and in the case of the conference dinner new dance styles, emerge at this year's TASA conference at Monash and in future issues of *JoS*.

Youth Cultures, Belongings and Transitions: Bridging the Gap in Youth Research

A joint conference of the Centre for Cultural Studies, Griffith University and the TASA Sociology of Youth Thematic Group

21–23 November 2012, Griffith University

Very early on a Tuesday in mid-November last year, after finally signing off on my teaching commitments for the year the day before, I jumped on a plane to take me to what, at least for a Melbournian, is tropical Brisbane. This was not an emergency constitutional to treat the dangerously low levels of vitamin D that plague us Southern academics, but the beginning of ten days of focused discussion on the sociology of youth. Book-ended by the TASA annual conference and a workshop convened by Dr Sarah Baker to celebrate twenty years since the publication of the path-breaking Youth Subcultures: Theory, History and the Australian Experience, edited by Rob White, was the Youth Cultures, Belongings and Transitions Bridging the Gap in Youth Research conference at Griffith University, Southbank Campus.

This international conference was co-convened by the Griffith Centre for Cultural Research and the TASA Sociology of Youth thematic group. The conference had its genesis a year earlier, close to midnight at the end of the TASA 2011 conference dinner in Newcastle, a likely time for the hatching of grand plans that might never come to fruition. Over a bottle of wine that had somehow found its way to our table from elsewhere after our allocation had been exhausted earlier in the evening, Professor Andy Bennett, the Director of the Centre for Cultural Research, told me of his plans for a youth conference during 2012 and his interest in involving the Sociology of Youth thematic group. From my perspective as one of the conveners of the group, this seemed like an ideal way to mark the third year of our thematic group. Over three years the group had grown into one of the larger thematic groupings within TASA and, while we had run a number of successful events, we had yet to take on the challenge of organising a conference.

I suggested we consider a theme of exploring ways of working across the two dominant approaches that shape youth sociology, the

Youth Cultures, belongings, transitions: Bridging the gap in youth research

transitions and cultures perspectives that have traditionally remained two distinct traditions of research. The first traces patterns in transition to 'adulthood' and the second studies young people's cultural practices. While the two approaches have developed along separate paths, with real engagement rare, the conditions appear right for increasing engagement and even convergence. Indeed, the special issue of the *Journal of Sociology* for 2011, which had just been released as we started our planning for the conference, had tackled a similar theme (see the piece on the *Journal of Sociology* Best Paper Award also in this issue of *Nexus*). Someone at the table with a better memory, or less of a taste for the 'free' wine at conference dinners, managed to recall the discussion and the potential theme and after a few emails the conference organising committee of Andy, Christine Feldman, Steve Threadgold and me was in place and our theme of 'Bridging the Gap' confirmed.

The theme, no doubt helped by the sunny Queensland location, garnered more interest than we imagined and we had close to 100 registered delegates for the three-day conference. This included many international visitors, coming from as far afield as Singapore, Estonia

and Finland. Our keynote speakers, Professor Andy Furlong from University of Glasgow UK, Associate Professor Anita Harris from Monash and Professor Robert Hollands from University of Newcastle UK, set the pace for the conference. Andy, Anita, and Robert challenged us respectively to ask what youth means today, how we understand belonging and its political consequences and finally to better recognise all the work crossing youth research traditions that already takes place. The various plenary sessions scheduled for the three days featured equally luminary presenters including Johanna Wyn, Rob White, Alan France, Pam Nilan, Ani Wierenga, and Dorothy Bottrell, as well as some up-and-comers in youth studies such as David Farrugia and Chris Driver. Professor Peter Kelly, one of our scheduled plenary presenters, was felled before he could make the podium by a mysterious illness and confined to his hotel room bed. This was not the 'conference sickness' some suffer the day after the conference dinner (or after sitting through one too many papers on reflexive modernity). From seeing the victim the day before it was clear that quarantine was necessary, lest the graduate students think that his symptoms might be the effects of an extended period working in the field.

Apart from the above, and a small challenge experienced by one of our international guests getting back to their hotel uninjured, because of our 'uneven' footpaths of course, the conference went off flawlessly. In particular, the wonderful food and coffee – and venue for post-conference debate — provided by the Ship Inn were a highlight. The great service from this pub at the Griffith Southbank campus was no doubt facilitated by the close relationship Professor Bennett has with the proprietor and staff. It seems Andy is what is called a 'regular' at the Inn.

Through the multiple topics addressed at the conference, including gender, global and local identities, the culture industries, creative education and the rise of digital technologies, a common theme did emerge. Continuing to work across the division of the cultural and transitions approach is an important task for the future of youth studies. As the conference presentations showed, for example, the cultural competencies acquired by young people through their engagement in particular youth practices are increasingly providing pathways into new types of adulthood, transcending leisure to shape other aspects of their biographical trajectory including paid employment, relationships, and parenthood.

The conference, I believe, has helped set the agenda for the sociology of youth for the coming years. As well as the significant administrative support provided by the Centre for Cultural Studies, particularly from Christina McKinley and our PhD volunteers, it was possible only due to a Thematic Group Support Scheme Grant from TASA.

Dan Woodman
(On behalf of Andy Bennett, Christine Feldman and Steve Threadgold)

2013 *Nexus* dates

Issue 2 *Contributor Deadline*: 12 July 2013.   Publication Date: August 2013

Issue 3 *Contributor Deadline*: 11 October 2013.   Publication Date: November 2013

Postgraduate Completions

If you have completed a PhD or Masters by research recently be sure to contact Karen Soldatic (Postgraduate Representative) to have your abstract printed in *Nexus* and allow us to share your success. Congratulations to the following students!

KIM ST. JOHN SPURWAY
University of New South Wales

Decision-making in disaster management: mapping the thematic complexities and understanding the contested rationalities of social practice

Supervised by Professor Marc Williams and Dr Leanne Dowse – August 2012.

This thesis augments the extant literature into the use of knowledge and rationality in disaster decision-making practice by undertaking a systematic review of the empirical research body in the field. It provides scholars, practitioners and policymakers with a much-needed conceptual map of the key thematic and conceptual directions of research into decision-making practice in disasters. Based on an initial mapping of the thematic content of the body of research, the thesis draws out key trends within the studies in terms of the ways in which social action unfolds in specific disaster-related contexts. This structuring of social action and the influence it has on the decision-making behaviour of the social actors involved has important implications for disaster management and policymaking scholarship. This thesis demonstrates that competing theoretical approaches to policymaking, decision making and disaster management are actually accounts of three different, intersecting dimensions of social action.

The argument presented is not so much about the truth or correctness of these claims because they are not in simple opposition to each other. Instead, through the use of disaster management as an exemplar of the domain of public policy practice, this thesis demonstrates that these different dimensions of social action intersect to produce the dynamic, complex set of processes labelled policymaking and decision making. Further, the thesis argues that because social actors operate within social processes that are structured in different ways, they in turn understand and respond differently to these particular contexts through the use of appropriately situated forms of rationality. In effect, the body of research into disaster decision-making practice demonstrates that social actor comprehension of how social action is structured influences their use of rationality and associated knowledge forms. These rationalities can often be highly contested during the decision-making and policymaking processes but, in fact, reflect the highly contextualised reasoning social actors use to respond to the range of contingencies and challenges they encounter during their everyday social practice.

JULIA COFFEY
University of Melbourne

Exploring body work practices: bodies, affect and becoming

Supervised by Professor Johanna Wyn, Associate Professor Helen Cahill, Professor Timothy Marjoribanks – September 2012.

This PhD thesis explores the body and contemporary body work practices. Through a Deleuzian approach to bodies, this research focuses on how body work and bodies are understood and lived using concepts of affect and becoming. Using interviews, I explore the affective relations involved in body work, including the ways that health and gender, two major 'forces' among many, affect participants and impact on the ways their bodies may be lived. The increase in health, beauty and fitness industries is aligned with an increase in attention to the body, and 'body image' for both women and men. The relationship between the body and society has long been a key tension in sociology and feminist theory.

I argue that it is particularly crucial to look for ways to negotiate and move beyond the core dualism that frames the body; the mind/ body dualism. The aim of this research has been to find non-dualist, embodied approaches to studying the body empirically, while also

"...The men who were interviewed in this study were found to hold traditional gender values still about the role of men and women in the family."

critiquing the social conditions that frame the bodies of the participants. The body is thus understood as a 'relationship of forces' which connects to other forces, including social relations such as gender, consumer culture and health discourses. I explore the ways social relations affect participants' body work including practices of exercise, weights training and cosmetic surgery. Through examining the relations and affects between bodies and the world, I am concerned not for what the body is – and how it is determined or dominated – but for what relations and affects enable bodies to do.

Kristine Aquino
Macquarie Univerity.

Everyday racism and resistance: The lives of Filipino migrants in Australia

Supervised by Dr Samantha Wise and Dr Selvaraj Velayutham – December, 2012.

To better understand why racism persists, we need to reconnect the study of race and racism with the lives that racism continues to distress in both violent and subtle ways. More importantly, there is much to learn about how racialised individuals resist ongoing racism in their day to day lives. This thesis investigates how Filipino migrants in Australia manage racist marginalisation and domination in their lived experiences. It explores how 'race' is produced and racism manifests in routine situations across diverse social spaces; particularly taking into account the ways in which race intersects with the categories of class and gender in local and transnational contexts. Moreover, the research significantly contributes to discussions on antiracism by expanding on the micro struggles people engage to counteract racism and redeem respect in everyday life.

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Manh Cuong La
La Trobe University

Social change and sexual expression among young married men in Vietnam – July 2012.

Since Vietnam conducted the reform policy known as Doi Moi in 1986, the country has experienced rapid social change, particularly in gender relations and sexual practice. Although there have been a number of studies on gender in Vietnam, in particular focusing on women, research on masculinity and sexuality among Vietnamese men is limited.

This study investigates how young, married, middle-class men in Hanoi are making sense of their masculinity and sexuality in everyday life, by focusing on five themes: sexual debut; married lives; being fathers; extramarital sex; and sexual practice. Using a qualitative methodology, 20 men aged from 26 to 38 years were purposively recruited in 2009 for semi-structured interviews. Interview data were then thematically analysed in relation to the five themes.

The men who were interviewed in this study were found to hold traditional gender values still about the role of men and women in the family. Their views on family and gender roles appeared to be influenced by culturally dominant ideas of patriarchy and masculinity defined by the status of being married and having children (particularly sons) and the ability to earn a living to support their immediate and sometimes extended families. However, this was not uniform. Having social skills, being socially knowledgeable and gaining life experience were also regarded as masculine traits, which were valued more than physical strength. Male privilege was often taken for granted, entitling men to extramarital affairs, while retaining control and power over women's sexuality. Other men exercised traits of a more modern masculinity in which men and women enjoy an equal gender value.

This study helps to understand the operation of patriarchy, masculinity, male sexuality and gender relations in contemporary Vietnam. It will contribute to further public debate, particularly at a policy level, about sexuality and gender relations in a modernising Vietnam.

Theresa Sauter
Queensland University of Technology

Governing self: SNSs as tools for self-formation

Supervised by Professor Gavin Kendall and Associate Professor Barbara Adkins – January 2013.

My thesis is a Foucaultian study of processes of subjectivation in the context of modern techno-social hybrid landscapes. It considers the use of online social networking sites as one particular set of practices through which people relate to themselves and others in the service of shaping their ethical conduct and governing themselves. I explore examples of how people use Facebook, Twitter and other social networking sites to manage their day-to-day conduct and generate their understandings of self, and how this is similar and different to practices that we have used in the past to shape ourselves. Conceptualising social networking sites as tools for self-formation contributes a different way of thinking about self and the Internet that does not seek to define what the modern self is, and how it is staged online, but rather analyses the multiple, contingent and historically conditioned processes of subjectivation through which individuals constitute themselves as ethical and governmental objects through regularised daily conduct.

Brady Robards
Griffith University

Systems of belonging: identity, integrity, and affinity on social network sites for young people in Australia

Supervised by Professor Andy Bennett and Dr Sue Lovell – November 2012.

Social network sites such as MySpace and Facebook play an important role in mediating the everyday social and cultural lives of many Internet users. Young Internet users were among the first to incorporate these sites into their everyday lives, and many young people continue to use them to connect and share with their networks, forging conventions and strategies for 'being' in online social spaces. Drawing on qualitative data collected between mid-2009 and late 2010 through observations of participants' profiles and in-depth in-person interviews, this thesis charts the role of the two most dominant social network sites, MySpace and Facebook, in the social lives of 33 young people in Australia. My analysis is centred on the performance of identities and belongings in online social spaces, and how these performances represent a reflexive ordering of self-narratives that manifest in a 'digital trace'. I explore friending strategies, audience segregation practices, and the slippery binary between private and public, while also considering notions of integrity and authenticity. This thesis also works to challenge dominant conceptualisations of belonging that do not adequately encompass the multiple and complex systems of belonging made visible by my participants on social network sites.

Jean Martin Award

Nominations close April 1st, 2013

For theses completed and awarded
in the period March 1st 2011 to 28 February 2013

Host the 2014 TASA Conference:

Call for Expressions of Interest

Expressions of interest are sought for hosting the November 2014 TASA Conference.

The annual conference is a key event for sociologists to present their research and network with peers, attracting approximately 350 participants each year. Hosting the conference is an ideal opportunity for a university or department to showcase their achievements, and promote their strengths. Alternatively a collective of sociologists from universities in a particular city or region may wish to use the conference to highlight the benefits of sociology to a broader audience.

TASA has secured the services of a professional conference organiser to provide continuity in processes and assist in organising the administrative side of the conference. The intellectual input into the conference is provided by the Local Organising Committee, which will select the theme, invite guest speakers, determine the format and maintain overall responsibility for the success of the conference.

In 2012, TASA introduced a reinvestment initiative in the form of a teaching release grant, to be made available to the hosting university in the 12 months preceding the Conference; a sum of up to $15,000 for the purpose of obtaining release for the Local Organising Committee from their usual teaching duties.

Expressions of interest are due in the TASA office (admin@tasa.org.au) on or before Friday 5th July 2013. In preparing an expression of interest, please refer to TASA's Conference Hosting Application Guidelines.

For more information on hosting TASA's 2014 Conference, including preliminary inquiries, please contact TASA Vice-president:

A/Prof Katie Hughes email: Katie.Hughes@vu.edu.au

TASA Conference Scholarships

Applications for the 2013 conference scholarships close on September 6th.

TASA Postgraduate Conference Scholarships

The TASA Executive encourages postgraduate members to apply. It also encourages academic supervisors to promote the scholarships to their postgraduate students. Full details are available at http://www.tasa.org.au/about-tasa/tasa-awards-prizes/tasa-aasr-postgraduate-conference-scholarship/

Conference Scholarships for TASA Members with Disabilities

The TASA Executive encourages postgraduate members to apply. It also encourages academic supervisors to promote the scholarships to their postgraduate students. Full details are available at http://www.tasa.org.au/about-tasa/tasa-awards-prizes/tasa-aasr-postgraduate-conference-scholarship/

The Jerzy Zubrzycki Postgraduate Conference Scholarship

The TASA Executive encourages postgraduate members to apply. It also encourages academic supervisors to promote the scholarships to their postgraduate students. Full details are available at http://www.tasa.org.au/about-tasa/tasa-awards-prizes/tasa-aasr-postgraduate-conference-scholarship/

TASA MEMBERSHIP

TASA membership offers sociologists numerous ways to enhance their careers through professional activities, scholarly information exchange and networking opportunities. Member benefits include:

- Online access to the Sage Sociology full-text collection (currently 36 journals);
- The *Journal of Sociology* (*JoS*) - four issues per year published by SAGE (not available for $0-$27, 999 income category - $50 membership);
- *Nexus*, TASA's Newsletter - three issues per year;
- Thematic Group membership;
- Member conference registration discount of over $100;
- Postgraduate web site, Facebook, Annual PhD Workshop, Postgraduate Conference Scholarships, and Postgraduate representation on the TASA Executive Committee;
- Substantial membership and conference discount rates for student membership;
- Online TASA Directory listing members' research interests and contact details. The directory is a real-time, fully searchable and updatable database that is particularly useful for locating potential supervisors and examiners as well as for networking;
- Members-only TASA Email list: access to the latest information on new jobs, scholarships, publications and conferences;
- Members-only section of TASAweb: access to TASA publications such as current Refereed Conference Proceedings and the Online TASA Directory;
- The option of being listed on TASA's publicly searchable database for use by the media, government agencies and researchers who wish to locate sociologists with particular areas of expertise;
- Member discount rates for conference registration at the American, British, Irish and New Zealand sociological association annual conference;
- Eligibility for TASA Awards: Jean Martin Award, Raewyn Connell Prize, Distinguished Service to Australian Sociology, Best Paper in the Journal of Sociology, Stephen Crook Memorial Prize, Jerzy Zubrzycki Postgraduate Conference Scholarship, TASA Postgraduate Conference Scholarship, TASA Conference Scholarship for Sociologists Outside Academe, Outstanding Service to TASA Award, Conference Scholarship for TASA Members with Disabilities, and the TASA Honours Student Award;
- Free advertising in the TASA e-list;
- Discounts on advertising in *Nexus* and TASAweb;
- Access to bonus offers exclusive to TASA members:

 - 15% discount from Footprint Books & 30% discount on all SAGE journal subscriptions

 - *Health Sociology Review* (*HSR*) : Free delivery of current print subscription (membership year), 20% on all *HSR* Special Issues (print, individual price)

 - eContent Journals: 10% discount on all journals (print, individual price) including International Journal of Multiple Research Approaches, Journal of Family Studies, Rural Society, Advances in Mental Health, Contemporary Nurse, Innovation: Management, Policy & Practice and International Journal of Pedagogies & Learning

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 - 30% discount subscription for *Critical Public Health*

To join TASA, go to http://www.tasa.org.au/members/signup

Postgraduate Corner

Karen Soldatic
UNSW TASA Postgraduate Representative

The life of a postgraduate researcher is a journey that appears to take many of us down an adventurous path of learning and self-discovery. As Theresa Petray, the former TASA Postgraduate representative (2011–12) once described, it can also entail moments of sheer hard work and disillusionment. I would like to thank Theresa for all her efforts in easing the difficult and lonely moments of the postgraduate journey over the last two years. Theresa established a range of new postgraduate networks, such as the TASA Post-Grad Facebook site and the Google list, which have flourished under her direction. These new networks have become open spaces for TASA postgrads to develop collegial networks, explore collaborative research opportunities, and share ideas, knowledge and friendship.

With Theresa moving into her new role as the TASA Executive Secretary, I will be working with you all to develop the TASA postgrad network further for the next two years (2013–2014). We have some new developments planned over this period and we are keen to get your input, support and feedback on these.

First of all, to celebrate TASA's 50-year history, the UNSW Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences will host a one-day master class for TASA postgraduates as part of their co-sponsorship of the anniversary events. Given that TASA postgrads are the future of Australian sociology, the theme of the master class is entitled Digital Methodologies – the next 50 years of sociological research? Dr Robert Ackland (https://researchers.anu.edu.au/researchers/ackland-rj), ANU, will facilitate the event. Dr Ackland works at the intersection of empirical social science and computer science, developing new approaches (involving information retrieval, data visualisation and social network analysis) for studying networks on the World Wide Web. The one-day master class is planned for June or July during the semester break. The TASA Executive has indicated it will offer a number of scholarships to support students financially who would benefit from attending. Once a date is confirmed and the scholarship applications are finalised, we will send out the full details via TASA's e-news and the TASA Post-Grad sites. So if you are not connected now to TASA news and information please make sure you hook up to these so you don't miss out.

The other new development that the TASA Executive has endorsed is the establishment of a Postgraduate Sub-Committee to support the work of the Postgraduate Rep and, more significantly, provide ongoing feedback into the organisation to ensure that it maintains its relevance to its postgraduate members. We aim to send out Expressions of Interests, again through the TASA info sites including the Facebook site and Google list, in early April 2013. We hope to have the first meeting of the new Postgraduate Sub-Committee by mid-May 2013.

Thanks to all of you who came along to last year's conference at University of Queensland and the Post-Grad Day. The Post-Grad day was a great success overall. We would particularly like to thank the TASA members who contributed throughout each of the sessions. Special thanks also to Raewyn Connell for the half-day writing workshop. Many of us were very pleased to learn that even great scholars get journal rejection letters! Otherwise, I hope you have all had a chance to follow up with your 'dates' from the speed dating opening of the day.

The only disappointing feature of the Post-Grad day was the turn-out of participants against those registered to attend. Total attendance was only at 50% of all postgraduate registrants. We understand that things change and that we can't always attend as hoped, however, it would be appreciated if you could let us know if you have to withdraw prior to the event. Getting the exact numbers can help us sort out accessible room availability, catering needs etc.

Planning for this year's conference will begin once the new Postgraduate Sub-Committee has been established. Theresa and I have compiled your feedback which will help inform the new Sub-Committee's planning. However, in the meantime, I am open to hearing from you about your experiences and if there were certain aspects that you would like to see repeated or included.

I look forward to working with you all over the next two years to consolidate and build upon the outstanding work of Theresa. If you have any suggestions on building upon the previous efforts of TASA PG Reps or have some potential proposals to build the PG network, please do not hesitate to contact me on: k.soldatic@unsw.edu.au.

Otherwise, if you haven't as yet tapped into the TASA Facebook or Google group, please join us in building our postgrad community.

Q & A with New TASA Executive Committee Members

This year we will conduct small interviews with TASA Executive Committee Members who are new to the team in 2013. This issue we introduce two new members, Kristin Natalier and Dina Bowman to the membership. Our thanks to both for their time and efforts in facilitating this discussion.

Kristin Natalier
University of Tasmania.

What will your role be on the TASA Executive?
I am TASA Treasurer. My role is to provide oversight of TASA finances. I'm also looking forward to developing TASA funding and spending priorities.

When did you first become a member of TASA and why?
The answer to this is lost in the mists of time. It was probably in the late 1990s, and I would have joined to get a discount on conference registration or to submit a paper to *JoS*. My reasons for being a TASA member now are very different. I've developed strong professional networks through participating in TASA activities. TASA gives me a sense of disciplinary camaraderie: I am part of something much bigger than my own research program or institution. I value that sense of belonging.

Tell me about your work as a sociologist.
I'm a senior lecturer in sociology at the University of Tasmania, on the Launceston campus. My research work focuses primarily on the gendered and expressive dimensions of child support. I do a lot of this work with Dr Kay Cook, a senior research fellow at RMIT (who is submitting our ARC Discovery as I write this!!); and I've also worked in this area with Dr Belinda Hewitt (senior research fellow, ISSR, UQ). I have a second string to my bow: as an associate member of the Housing and Community Research Unit at UTas I work on the housing experiences and outcomes of disadvantaged groups.

I teach across fields: sociology of intimate life, crime and criminal justice, research methods. I'm interested in how academics' use of flexible education technologies is facilitated and constrained by structural, institutional and personal contexts. To this end I co-convene a flexible education community of practice. I am also starting work on students' and academics' emotional and embodied responses to using technology in teaching and learning.

What reasons for celebration and/or challenges do you see for sociology in Australia in TASA's 50th anniversary year?
Last year I experienced some of the old-school patriarchal practices of European sociology, and I emerged with a deep appreciation for the number and impact of senior female – and feminist – sociologists in Australia. Their strength and presence is cause for celebration.

Australian sociologists undertake rigorous and useful research. It's heartening to read our contributions in traditional and social media, but it would be exciting to see stronger connections with community organisations and more uptake of sociological research in policy, law reform and the public sphere. Making space for ourselves is a real challenge.

We also face challenges in our daily work: how, under the pressures of work insecurity, tight budgets, increased workloads and output oriented institutional cultures, can we maintain our commitment to meaningful and ethical research and relationships with others?

If there were one sociologist who has influenced you the most who would it be and why?
Two sociologists inform almost all my work: Professor Viviana Zelizer and Professor Carol Smart. Both women are sophisticated theorists of the gendered meanings and negotiations of intimate life.

What role do you think sociology can play in the public sphere now and in the future?
Sociologists should and can play an important role in the public sphere. Our substantive areas of expertise and our research skills can counter the individualised, uninformed, ungenerous and marginalising opinion that so often passes for public commentary and evidence in processes of policy development and reform.

Dr Dina Bowman
Brotherhood of St. Laurence.

What will your role be on the TASA Executive?
My role will be multi-media manager. I will work closely with TASA administration to maintain and develop the TASA website and (hopefully) our adventures in social media. If you have any input/ comment on how the site could be improved in terms of content or design, please let me know.

When did you first become a member of TASA and why?
I first became a member in the early 2000s – not sure of the year. I became a member because my supervisor encouraged me and my fellow postgrad students to attend the TASA conference. Since then I have attended almost every conference except for 2011. At the last conference there was a sense of change with new people participating.

Tell me about your work as a sociologist.
I work as a senior manager in the Research and Policy Centre at the Brotherhood of St Laurence which is based in Fitzroy in Melbourne. The Centre has around 30 staff and 6 PhD students. We have a partnership with The University of Melbourne, where I am an honorary fellow in the School of Social and Political Sciences. I work in a multi-disciplinary applied setting, with links to academia as well as to service provision and communities. My work includes management; project oversight; policy analysis; meetings with service providers, policy makers, service users and community members; conducting research; teaching; writing and publishing; and liaising with other non-government organisations. I lead a team of around 8 staff who work on about 21 projects, including a three-year ARC Linkage study on 'work force vulnerabilities in midlife and beyond' in partnership with The University of Melbourne and NASTEM, University of Canberra, and Jobs Australia. I am currently supervising four postgraduate students. And I'm developing and will deliver with my colleague Eve Bodsworth an intensive postgraduate subject on social policy and practice at The University of Melbourne in May this year. I'm lucky to work outside academia while also maintaining strong links to the university sector.

What reasons for celebration and/or challenges do you see for sociology in Australia in TASA's 50th anniversary year?
Sociology is underdeveloped in Australia so there is reason to celebrate its survival and look forward to its flourishing. The main challenge will be to communicate what sociology is to the wider community and why it is useful. (That's where the update to website content comes in…)

If there were one sociologist who has influenced you the most who would it be and why?
Pierre Bourdieu. I admire his intellectual sophistication, the explanatory power of his concepts, his political commitment and passion and his engagement with issues beyond academia.

What role do you think sociology can play in the public sphere now and in the future?
We need to challenge narrow economic framing and use our insights to propose solutions to challenging issues. We can do this by encouraging sociologists to contribute to debates; develop better communication skills and work with organisations beyond the academy.

> # Follow us on Twitter @TASA2013

TASA Conference Scholarship for Sociologists Outside Academe

Dr Janice Ollerton

Janice Ollerton and Debra King

I would like to thank TASA for awarding me a 2012 TASA Conference Scholarship for Sociologists Outside Academe. I am the Research Coordinator for Break Thru People Solutions, a not-for-profit organisation that provides a range of employment, community and training programs to various disadvantaged groups (such as people who are long term unemployed, Indigenous Australians, people with a disability, ex-offenders and people from a non-English speaking background). Research within the not-for-profit sector is difficult to undertake without specific funding and so I am grateful to TASA for providing the scholarship, which enabled me to attend the conference and share my research with the wider sociological community.

I presented two papers at the 2012 conference. The first paper, entitled Rights, Risk & Remarkable Resilience, was presented in the Risk thematic stream and came from my PhD research, which used a Foucauldian lens to expose restrictive practices in a group home in NSW and the ramifications for residents who resisted. The second paper, entitled The ESAts Project: Employment Services Assessments (ESAts) emerge as exacerbating enduring inequalities for those who are disadvantaged in the labour market, was presented in the Work and Labour Studies thematic stream. This provided an opportunity to share Break Thru's research findings on the implications of Centrelink changes to employment service staff and job-seeking clients.

I was very encouraged by the feedback I received at the TASA conference and greatly valued the opportunity to share ideas with both university-based sociologists and others, like me, who undertake research outside the academy. I found the networking opportunities of the TASA conference invaluable and now look forward to future collaborations with my TASA colleagues.

TASA 2013

TASA Conference Scholarship for Sociologists Outside Academe

This scholarship seeks to encourage the participation of sociologists working outside academe (in areas such as private industry, government and non-government organisations, and private contract and consultancy work) with The Australian Sociological Association (TASA). The TASA Executive would like to encourage non-academic members who have conducted applied research or written sociological papers on their work to apply for the scholarship. Full details are available at http://www.tasa.org.au/about-tasa/tasa-awards-prizes/tasa-conference-scholarship-for-sociologists-outside-academe/

Applications for the 2013 conference scholaships close on
September 6th, 2013.

Making Sociology Relevant

Marcelle Slagter

Applied Sociology Thematic Group

Dr Alan Scott's article Marketing the Arts Degree? in the October 2012 edition of *Nexus* opened the door for readers to do a great deal of reflection. At first glance you may or may not have agreed that the lack of a 'title' at the completion of a Bachelor's degree is a factor contributing to the decline of the Arts degree, but there is substantial evidence to support this idea. Economic rationalism, corporate governance and other outgrowths of neoliberal ideology have, Hil states, ushered in an entirely new way of thinking about what constitutes academic life, what universities are for, and what values these institutions represent. Tertiary education is no longer about education, it is about business. We now live in a knowledge-driven global economy where students are fee-paying customers with expectations of a vocationally oriented degree (Hil 2012).

So yes, that title at the end of a degree is important! It signifies that the student has entered the world of commerce and has both knowledge and skills to offer would-be employers. Few students today would leave this to chance and hope for the acquisition of enough skills and knowledge to find some sort of employment. Society and the marketplace after all set the level of demand for what is required, and the Australian government has delivered. Our tertiary institutions (TAFEs, universities and other tertiary vocational education and training (VET) facilities) are now categorised as supply centres. A quick look at the 'situations vacant' column of a newspaper or employment website shows a veritable smorgasbord of 'titles' for suitable would-be employees who possess and demonstrate the valued attributes of the job. No one is left without a title.

In 2004, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Education Committee began an international review of tertiary education policy. Its goal was to help member countries (including Australia) share innovative and successful initiatives and to identify policy options to maximise the contribution of tertiary education to national economic and social objectives. The OECD Education Committee argued that the importance of tertiary education as a major driver of economic competitiveness has made 'high-quality' tertiary education more important than ever before. While 40 years ago universities largely provided teaching and learning that required a high level of conceptual and intellectual skills in humanities, sciences and social sciences, more is expected today. Our education system should not merely prepare students for entry to a limited number of professions such as medicine, engineering and law, and support disinterested advanced research and scholarship. Today's tertiary education must be more diverse (Santiago et al. 2008).

In 2011, the NSW Minister for Education sponsored a Tertiary Pathways Review. The resulting report, presented by Gabrielle Upton in June 2012, states that in order to increase the skills base in NSW and rebuild the state's economy, courses at a tertiary level need to have employment outcomes. To support this political and economic direction, the report identifies that student aspirations and expectations for tertiary education are shaped by:

– Experiences at school and/or levels of achievement at school
– The level of support or encouragement from family and friends
– Stereotyping related to gender, community or ethnic background which may result in students moving into jobs or fields that do not require further education
– Understanding and perceptions of the relevancy and benefits of tertiary education; and
– Whether there are positive role models amongst peers and family who have successfully undertaken tertiary study. (Upton 2012)

In addition, Upton says, students' aspirations with regard to school completion and tertiary education are developed early and shape their decision making as they progress through high school. "Many students are deciding by 15 years of age, if not before, whether they will complete Year 12 and continue on to university." (Upton 2012, 42)

It is noteworthy to emphasise that the factor from Upton's research that most closely resembles the majority, if not all, of state and

federal government tertiary education political and economic policies, is that of student understanding and perceptions of the relevancy and benefits of tertiary education. Yet, there is no explanation of what students and their families understand and perceive is relevant and beneficial from a tertiary education.

Sir Howard Newby (Vice Chancellor of the University of Liverpool), from a fellow OECD member country perspective, states that even though higher education is recognised as both a public and a private good, there has never (in the United Kingdom at least) been a properly grounded debate about proportionality, still less about what the public investment is supporting (Access? Standards? Intellectual capacity?) (Newby 2012). In their research study, Curtis and MacMillan note that because of a lack of information, approximately two-thirds of young people in Australia are expecting to be in a profession by 30 years old even though only one-third of the labour force is employed in professional jobs currently, and many young people are planning a level of post-school education that is in excess of that required for their expected occupational destinations (Curtis and McMillan 2008, 46). In fact, apart from determining that tertiary education is a major driver of economic competitiveness and should involve lifelong learning, the OECD review of tertiary education policy has not identified what 'quality education' means, and what, in fact, is needed for students (Santiago et al. 2008, 51).

So, as things stand in our knowledge-driven global economy, it is not actually known what future skills and knowledge will be required (beyond existing commercial considerations), and therefore, what governments and tertiary education institutions will need to provide to ensure that our nation's education and training remains commercially relevant. In short, this leaves our national social and economic wellbeing as much to chance as it has been in the past. This time, however, the environment has a more restricted educational and vocational focus that limits knowledge and skill set development and accumulation to a single "egg basket" boundary under national economic control.

Theoretically modern sociological supporters of, for example, Michel Foucault, can have a field day with the implications of this governmentality. Added to this come the social questions, while economists may measure and rationalise the expected consequences of current tertiary education policies what will happen with the 'unexpected consequences' (Giddens 1992)? What will our governments do if, and when, the limitations of prescribed knowledge and skills in student educational supply outcomes result in a flat-lining and stagnating economy; an economy that lacks the historically original versatility and social inventiveness (social objectivity) needed for continual global competitiveness? After all, as Merleau-Ponty explained, people do not live only in the 'real world' they also live in the imaginary, the ideal, in language, in culture, and in history, all of which contribute to personal experience, consciousness, and the world we perceive (Merleau-Ponty 1964, 2004).

Journalist Simon Castles states that prospective students "rightly fear" that in choosing the humanities they are also choosing future insecurity, possible unemployment, and lower pay than if they studied something else, "something more bankable" (Castles 2012). Yet, while universities as viable businesses in our country must demonstrate and record their acquiescence in meeting community demands in the 'real' world, what will happen to their ability in the future to embrace what students fear the most – oversupply and unemployment? As Professor Dennis Altman stated in regard to recent changes to social Science and humanities courses at La Trobe University, 'universities are in a very difficult position in a country where there's increasingly this belief that higher education is training for a profession rather than giving people a set of general skills they can use in all sorts of ways through their lives' (Preiss 2012).

This leads me back to a speech made by Stephen Crook in 2003 when he talked about 'sociology in crisis'. Crook said then that the problem with sociology was 'as old as the discipline itself' (Crook 2005). To look at it simply and succinctly, in the discipline of sociology, sociologists generate academic knowledge (theory), whereas in the profession of sociology, sociologists apply that knowledge to solve specific problems. The two perspectives are obviously not mutually exclusive. Professionally, however, we are not regulated or licensed as sociologists (membership of TASA is voluntary and our work is publicly peer reviewed), nor do we have a governing body that attempts to standardise the theories and methods involved in providing our services (our theories and our methods are variable). Therefore, in marketing our professionalism we strike a problem because the outcome of our labour is as variable as our methods. Publicly, we cannot 'ring fence' our

product because, unlike lawyers, mechanics, journalists and engineers the focus of our profession and product of our labour e.g., 'analysing social issues' has no finite boundary. We are not restricted by the exigencies of the doctrine of law, the constraints of physical mechanical invention, or the value-laden constraints of journalism even though all of these may impact on us. As sociologists we cannot even claim to be sole practitioners for the delivery of our product since many of our theories are taken from, and contribute to, the wider pool of philosophy. We are fundamentally part of a group of social and physical scientists whose interaction culminates in the identification of the constituent parts of a social problem.

How then do we, as sociologists, make our discipline and professionalism relevant? We can define ourselves by the commonality of our discipline through its focus and distinctive outcome. We can define ourselves by the level (rigour of professional standards and achievements) of our skills and knowledge. This is the point when we are sociologists. This is the point where marketing, and the development of sociology as a profession, and establishing the 'title' of a sociologist at completion of a qualification should, and no doubt needs to, I think, begin.

If we as sociologists are to entice both an interest, and future growth, in our science, discipline, and profession we must make sociology 'relevant'. Relevance begins when students, parents, and future employers can understand, value, experience and identify, what is sociological and what knowledge and skills students will learn from studying sociology. Sociology becomes relevant when people in the community can describe what jobs a sociologist can do!

Perhaps in the theories and methods of, for example, phenomenology, social constructivism, positivism, or structuralism, it will be possible to explain and circumvent the economic rationalism that drives and curtails our current national and global knowledge development? But how will this be conveyed to future students if sociology is no longer taught in our schools and universities? How poor will our communities become if our intellectual and conceptual abilities continue to be dominated by commercially biased economic rationalist perspectives?

Sociologists everywhere face a tremendous challenge; as great as the controversy that surrounded the discipline's formation. We must fight for our discipline and profession's survival and become more relevant. Our success will be measured by our outcomes: how much our communities will have to pay for opportunities foregone in personal and educational freedom, and in, as Santiago et al. describe it, the relevance of the commercially endorsed as well as the commercially 'disinterested' research and scholarship we produce.

References are available from author upon request.

Gary Bouma AM

Congratulations to Gary Bouma AM, who has been appointed a Member of The Order of Australia by the Governor-General of Australia, Her Excellency Quentin Bryce AC AO.

The citation for this Honour reads 'For significant service to sociology as an academic, to interfaith dialogue, and to the Anglican Church of Australia'.

This Award was announced in the Australia Day 2013 Honours List on 26 January 2013.

Risk Societies
Thematic Group of The Australian Sociological Association

The 2012 TASA annual conference hosted four sessions for the Risk Societies thematic group. Two of these sessions were dedicated to postgraduate students, early career researchers and sociologists working outside of Academe. Postgraduate students included Roksolana Suchowerska (University of Melbourne); Jeremy Simpson (University of Sydney); Jennifer Podesta (University of Melbourne) and Jon Stokes (University of Newcastle). Janice Ollerton and Dina Bowman represented sociologists working outside of Academe and Wendy Hillman and Kylie Radel emerging scholars in the field. The remaining two plenary sessions were dedicated to research in the field of risk and religion and also a session dedicated to "Taking Stock of Risk".

Key social theorists in the field of risk, such as Deborah Lupton, Anthony Elliott, and Jens Zinn discussed both theoretical and practical questions associated with risk theory. Elliott in his work 'Ambient terror – individualized' explored his current thinking around the limitations of the risk society thesis in its ability to capture the lived experience of risk. Similarly, Lupton examined the limitations of risk theory in relation to work on emotions in her work 'Beyond the affective heuristic: sociocultural perspectives on risk and emotion'. Zinn attempted to unpack the 'supermarket' of sociology of risk in his presentation 'Challenges and perspectives for sociology of risk and uncertainty'.

The joint session of risk societies and religion thematic groups presented emerging scholarship in the area. The Australian religious landscape – one historically characterised as secular – is marked by aspects of Habermas' post-secularity. These changes provide a lens to understand the connections between risk and religion, one that has been largely absent in the field of risk. Sociologist of religion, Gary Bouma, introduced the session by providing a clear picture of religion within Australia. Sylvie Shaw explored this further through her work on environmental risk and the religious response. The connections between risk and religion were further explored through the theoretical work of Adam Possamai and Alphia Possamai-Inesedy with their examination of risk and religious representations in science fiction. Alphia Possamai-Inesedy concluded the session by examining her work on post-secularity and the impact of mainstream religion on policies surrounding risk medicine.

A central theme of both sessions was the exploration of the contested terrain of the sub-discipline and to discuss potential pathways forward for the expectations and perspectives for sociology.

We are grateful to TASA for providing funding to the thematic group, which meant that both Anthony Elliot and Deborah Lupton – dominant theorists in the field of sociology of risk – were able to attend the conference. It also provided assistance to Gary Bouma (recently appointed a Member of the Order of Australia) to contribute to the emerging area of risk and religion. Both sessions were full and enjoyed by established and emerging scholars alike.

Alphia Possamai-Inesedy
Co-convenor of Risk Societies thematic group (TASA)

TASA Conference 2013
Reflections, Intersections and Aspirations
50 years of Australian Sociology
25-28 November 2013 – Monash University Caulfield Campus
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Postgraduate Scholarship

HANDUN RASARI ATHUKORALA

Monash University

I was honoured to receive a 2012 TASA Postgraduate Conference Scholarship. As a mother of a young child this opportunity made my attendance financially feasible and I want to express my sincere gratitude to the TASA Executive for their support. The paper I presented in this conference was based on my PhD thesis, entitled ethnic identity of second-generation Sri Lankan immigrants in Australia. My thesis explores the meaning and salience of ethnicity for second generation Sri Lankan Australians and the role of social context in the construction of second-generation ethnic identities. I explore how Sri Lankan identity in Australia is perceived, constructed and experienced by Sri Lankan second-generation members from different ancestries, namely, the Sinhalese, Tamils and Burghers.

In the paper I presented at TASA, I discussed the ways children of Sri Lankan immigrants in Australia understand and interpret their national identities. My study focuses on an immigrant cohort characterised by middle class location, employment in white-collar professions and/or undertaking higher education with the intention of pursuing white-collar professions in the future. It is important to explore how people in this group, which demonstrates a high socioeconomic integration into Australian society, understand their national identities. Through an analysis of 30 interviews, I argue that the children of middle-class non-white Sri Lankan immigrants in my study dwell in a paradoxical condition of visible difference and high socioeconomic integration that directly impacts on their identity formation. This paper focused mainly on participants' narratives on their 'Australianness' and I examined the ways the children of Sri Lankan immigrants describe their sense of belonging to Australia as well as the meanings, practices and limitations accompanying these labels.

TASA has a thematic group for my specific area (Migration, ethnicity and multiculturalism) and presenting there was a wonderful opportunity to share ideas and get some insightful feedback that was helpful in improving my final process of writing. I would certainly recommend TASA to all postgraduate students!

Postgraduate Scholarship

Jeremy Simpson

University of Sydney

The award of postgraduate conference scholarships is, I think, one of the many ways in which both the identity and diversity of the discipline in Australia is constructed and affirmed. This has a particular significance for me as I have been forced by the topic of my research to think about that disciplinary identity, and about the future trajectory of the discipline in relation to the topics and approaches we affirm as being within the sociological mainstream. The particular topic – the sociological problematic which I hope to make a focus of my future research and career – is the intervention in Afghanistan and what it can tell us about the relationship between risk and the encounter between different cultures and societies. This is a difficult topic for a range of reasons. The most obvious of these is the relative difficulty of conducting independent research in such settings; however this is not merely logistical or a question of safety, but rather a question of the regimes of risk-management that surround the research process where it concerns spaces, actors or problematics involving conflict, violence or hazard. These are key contemporary issues, involving the lives and wellbeing of a great many individuals, but as yet sociological research on interventions such as Afghanistan and Iraq, and similarly disordered and conflict-prone global spaces, has been limited; research conducted under the auspices of intervening states or militaries is often subordinated to security interests, and put to problematic uses. These are also difficult topics to approach given present emphases on other topics in the mainstream of the discipline; this is partly a question of a lack of conceptual tools and partly simple unfamiliarity with an area usually considered the province of government or international and security studies. This is, I feel, unfortunate when sociology has a great deal to contribute in this area: the topic of 'nation-building', for example, is an obviously sociological topic, concerning as it does the construction of societies and concepts of 'stabilisation' of a social space and relations between groups.

Through my thesis and my research more generally I am attempting to make a minor contribution to the stock of conceptual tools in this area: my particular interest is the use of risk management regimes and the devolution of security decision-making to the private sector, both by civil-developmental and military actors. The approach I am using is broadly sociocultural rather than the more orthodox risk society or governmentality approaches. However, I employ a more structured concept of culture as strategy and disposition derived from Bourdieu, whose concept of practice can be usefully applied here in explaining the lack of substantive outcomes in attempts to 'stabilise' Afghanistan. This approach can be usefully supplemented by Luhmann's, particularly as regards attribution of risk in decision making and in the relative autonomy or loose coupling of subsystems; there are some useful structural parallels between Bourdieu and Luhmann in this regard. I hope to return to Afghanistan in 2013–14 to continue my research in this area, and to continue to support research capacity building in the Islamic Republic through the Ministry of Education, particularly in the area of women's education.

I would like to express my gratitude to TASA for their support for my research through the postgraduate scholarship; in particular I would like to thank the selection panel for the award, and the former Australian Association of Social Research for donating the funds. I would also like to thank Raewyn Connell for her contribution to the postgraduate day, the convenors of the 'Risk Societies' thematic group for their comments on the risk society and governmentality aspects of my paper, and my postgraduate co-presenters on risk for the papers they contributed to the conference.

Stephen Crook Memorial Prize for Best Australian Sociology Book 2010–2011 Winner

PROFESSOR ROB WHITE
University of Tasmania

Transnational Environmental Crime:
Toward an eco-global criminology

A concern with transnational environmental crime inevitably leads the analytical gaze to acknowledge the fusion of the local and the global, and to ponder the ways in which such harms transcend the normal boundaries of jurisdiction, geography and social divide. Contemporary discussions of environmental crime, for example, deal with issues such as the illegal traffic in radioactive or nuclear substances, the proliferation of 'e'-waste generated by the disposal of computers, transborder pollution, the illegal trade in plants and animals, and illegal fishing and logging.

International systems of production, distribution and consumption generate, reinforce and reward diverse environmental harms and those who perpetrate them. These range from unsafe toys to reliance upon genetically modified grains, the destruction of out-of-date ships and planes through to the transportation and dumping of hazardous wastes. We need to take environmental harm seriously in ways that reflect a sense of scale, and of the essential interconnectedness of issues, events, people and places. This is the mission of *Transnational Environmental Crime* which deals with the sorts of environmental crimes mentioned above through the theoretical lens of eco-global criminology.

Eco-global criminology refers to a framework of analysis where the emphasis is on the ecological, the transnational and questions of justice. The substantive focus of eco-global criminology is transgressions against ecosystems, humans and nonhuman animals. What makes eco-global criminology distinctive is the attention given to specifically ecological considerations of harm, as well as its concern with a global perspective. The major threats to planetary wellbeing posed by climate change, diminished bio-diversity, and pollution, for example, are studied from the point of view of ecology rather than legality per se.

Around the world different countries tend to have different types of environmental problems and issues. While risk and harm can be analysed in terms of movements and transference from one place to another, it is nonetheless imperative that threats to the environment be put into specific regional and national contexts. These are important in relation to both the objective nature of the problems at hand (e.g., pollution, deforestation, lack of adequate water), and in regard to subjective processes relating to the politicisation of issues (e.g., the role of social movements in shaping public consciousness and state action on specific issues). First, environmental threats originate in particular factories, farms, firms, industries and localities. Second, the political and policy context within which threats to the environment emerge is shaped by the nature of and interplay between local, national, regional and international laws and conventions. What happens at the local and regional level counts. For example, the penetration and dominance of the Mafia in the waste disposal industry in Italy provides a unique but devastating illustration of national difference (compared to countries where organised crime is not involved in this industry) that has an international impact (through dumping of toxic waste in international waters).

As with crime generally, there is dispute over what is defined as environmentally harmful and what ends up with the legal status of 'environmental crime'. From the point of view of eco-global criminology, analysis of
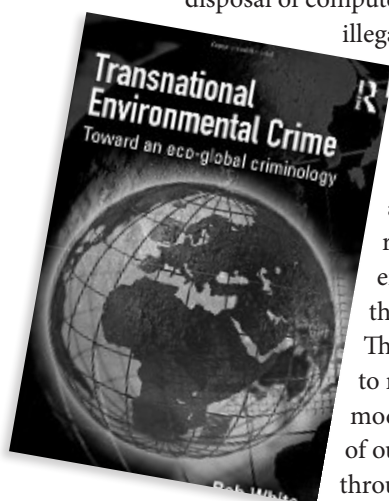
transnational environmental crime needs to incorporate different, albeit inter-related, notions of harm. These include legal conceptions of harm informed by laws, rules and international conventions, and that pertain to things such illegal fishing and the transportation of banned substances (this is the substance of conventional criminology). However, within eco-global criminology there is also a more expansive definition of environmental crime or harm that includes:

– transgressions that are *harmful to humans, environments and nonhuman animals*, regardless of legality per se; and

– environment-related harms that are facilitated by *the state*, as well as *corporations and other powerful actors*, insofar as these institutions have the capacity to shape official definitions of environmental crime in ways that allow, condone or excuse environmentally harmful practices.

What constitutes environmental harm is assessed according to non-legal and ecological criteria, as well as conventional criminological considerations.

Environmental harm is also seen in terms of eco-justice, based upon notions of human, ecological and species rights, and broad egalitarian principles. Environmental victimisation is considered from the point of view of transgressions against humans, specific biospheres or environments, and nonhuman animals (and, increasingly, plants). This is conceptualised in terms of three broad areas of analytical interest: *environmental justice* (where the main focus is on differences within the human population: social justice demands access to healthy and safe environments for all, and

for future generations); *ecological justice* (where the main focus is on 'the environment' as such; to conserve and protect ecological wellbeing, for example forests, is seen to be intrinsically worthwhile); and *species justice* (where the main focus is on ensuring the wellbeing both of species as a whole, such as whales or polar bears, and individual animals, which should be shielded from abuse, degradation and torture).

Eco-global criminology provides a distinctive type of analytical lens for the study of transnational environmental crime. As a perspective, it requires one to be highly conscious of the specifically ecological basis of environmental crime or harm, and to incorporate this into the core concerns of its criminological analysis. As an approach, it demands that one be highly sensitive to the intricacies of doing research on a global scale (even if localised to specific regions), and to develop methodologies that are socially and culturally inclusive while maintaining a strong critical edge. New concepts of harm, as informed by ecological sciences and environmental values, will inevitably be developed as part of this process.

Transnational Environmental Crime provides a consolidated yet comprehensive treatment of issues pertaining to environmental crimes, perpetrators, victims and criminal justice processes. It concludes with a chapter on transnational activism that highlights again the disputes over what is or is not deemed harmful, and the limitations of government responses to the key environmental issues of the present era.

Questions from the audience further highlighted the extent to which Professor Jupp's work has contributed to public knowledge of immigration policy debates and trends and Australia's rich migration history. For many present, his work The Australian People, was of immense public significance, and provided a window into family migration histories for many Australians. Addressing a question regarding the challenges of engaging in both academia and advocacy, Professor Jupp noted that the next generation of migration scholars needs to be more mindful of the challenges of negotiating academia and advocacy. He compared this to his own experience, which had been never to fully differentiate

between an academic and political stance – at times controversially. Professor Jupp concluded by saying that he was himself interested to see how the current transformations of migration, particularly in the form of increased labour and temporary migration, will impact upon the articulation of multiculturalism in Australia.

A recording of the event will be made available to the public via the TASA MEM thematic group webpage on the TASA website. The TASA MEM thematic group is grateful to the TASA Executive for the financial support that enabled this event to take place.

Postgraduate scholarship

Chivoin Peou

University of Melbourne

I am delighted to have received a TASA Postgraduate Conference Scholarship. I am grateful to the selection committee for the opportunity to present a paper and learn a great deal during the 2012 TASA Conference at the University of Queensland.

My research project stems from a desire to make sense of Cambodia's rapid change in the last thirty years, marked by a so-called triple transition from war, authoritarianism and command economy to peace, democracy and free market. This compressed and externally imposed 'reinvention' of contemporary Cambodia has configured a volatile social space characterised by impressive economic growth, swiftly changing structural conditions, weak state institutions, and cultural and political contestations. The life-course context for young people is in particular imbued with a weak institutional framework, accelerating social inequalities, high social mobility, cultural anxiety and renegotiation, and a globalized politico-economic agenda.

In my conference paper, I presented a working typology of biographical expectations among contemporary Cambodian youth, which is intended to illustrate how institutional, cultural and structural dynamics are experienced and appreciated by social actors in constructing life projects, by drawing upon the interpretive utility of the individualisation thesis and Bourdieu's habitus. For the entrepreneurial self, the emergent institutional requirements of high formal qualifications and competitive market attitude for occupational success are reflected in their individualised mode of biographical constructions focusing on self-actualising and flexibility. In contrast, those with a traditionalising orientation find themselves navigating the new structural and institutional conditions but construct biographical expectability through a social habitus based on the traditional framework of given social order and merit-making. For the non-expectant self, the altering social space and lack of family or personal resources to provide material and ontological security tend to induce an apprehensive life orientation.

More broadly in my doctoral project, I aim to illustrate how biographical construction is linked to a social process involving both transnational forces and local cultural, structural and institutional dynamics, thus hoping to contribute to the broader theoretical debate of social change and individual selves. To do this, I employ a grounded theory approach to examine the process of inventing life orientation among two groups of young Cambodians. The first group makes up a new working class in Cambodia's informal economy and labour-intensive, foreign-dependent industries. These are young peasants who have migrated to the country's capital city to do low-paid labouring jobs and in the process reconcile their peasant habitus and urban labouring experience. The second group is an expanding urban graduate class that aspires to middle-class occupations in urban centres, especially the capital city, which have benefited from Cambodia's uneven development and economic growth in the last two decades. These are university students who are not only pursuing formal qualifications but also coming to terms with the neoliberal market ethos of individualised competition, flexibility, self-responsibilisation and life-long learning.

TASA Conference Dinner and Awards

TASA 2012 local organising committee

Presidential address: Debra King

Debra King, Deb D?? and Karen Farquharson

Penelope Marshall

Koichi Hasegawa Tohoku University Japan

Janeen Baxter and Mark Western

Ellie Vasta and Margo Ford

Dina Bowman and Sonia Martin at TASA 2013 Conference dinner

Peter Robinson, Melanie Beres and Lucy Nicholas

Mandy and Jo from Conference Solutions

Fran Collyer

TASA members - is that Nutbush City Limits?