

# THE STUDENT SOCIOLOGIST

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## Editor's Column

By: Karina Havrilla, ASA Minority Affairs Program

It's hard to believe that a month ago, many of us were gathered in San Francisco for the 2009 ASA Annual Meeting. For those of you who attended, I hope the you had a great time at the meeting and exploring all that San Francisco has to offer. If you weren't able to attend, we hope to see you next year in Atlanta!

The Student Forum hosted many sessions at the meeting this year. There were two paper sessions, one roundtable session, a professional workshop (which

you can read more about below), a Business Meeting, and the Student Reception.

The Student Reception was a huge success this year. The purpose of this reception is to give students an opportunity to meet with each other, have a few appetizers and drinks, and network. We also take this opportunity to talk about the Student Forum Advisory Board, and acknowledge the winners of the Student Travel Award. Thank you to all who came out!

The board also had a few students attend the business

meeting. This is the time when the board has an opportunity to hear from you directly about things you would like to see at the meetings and take the suggestions back to the ASA staff liaison. If you didn't have a chance to stop by this year, we hope you can make it next year and voice your thoughts and opinions.

As the semester continues, the board will be working with us here at the ASA office on preparing the call for papers, presiders, and nominations for next year's board. Look out for all that information in the next newsletter.

## 2009 ASA Student Forum Workshop A Great Success: Reflections on the "Confident Graduate Student" Panel

At each ASA Annual Meeting, the Student Forum hosts workshops to help graduate students navigate, and be successful in, the academic world. Past workshops have focused on topics such as publishing, funding your dissertation research, etc. This year Student Forum Advisory Board members, Elyshia Aseltine (University of Texas-Austin) and

George P. Mason (Wayne State University), decided to take the workshop in a different direction. The workshop focus for this year: struggles with self-doubt and strategies for being a "Confident Graduate Student." Panelists included Rosalind S. Chou (graduate student at Texas A&M University), Simone Browne (Assistant Profes-

sor at the University of Texas-Austin), and Melissa Quintela (graduate student at Indiana University). Though each of the panelists has experienced significant success in their academic endeavors, they also have something else in common: experiences with moments of insecurity and uncertainty.

(continued on page 2)

## Reflections on “The Confident Graduate Student” Workshop (continued from page 1)

During the workshop, each panelist provided an outline of her experiences with self-doubt as well as some of her confidence-building strategies.

Based on attendance and participation, the theme of the workshop resonated with a diverse group of graduate students from across the country. Despite being scheduled for 8:30 on a Sunday morning, the panel was well attended; in fact, there was standing room only in the meeting room. During the workshop, participants shared their own experiences of self-doubt, insecurity, or feeling of out-of-place. They also asked for encouragement on how to deal with particular struggles they were currently facing and offered advice for others on challenges they were able to manage or overcome in the past. Participants were also vocal on the need for doing similar panels at future ASA Annual Meetings.

Below is a list of some of the strategies discussed by the panelists and workshop participants. It is our hope that this list may be useful to those contemplating graduate school or those graduate students who are in the midst of their own challenges with self-confidence. We've also included some references for those who would like to read more about being confident in graduate school.

Adopt a ‘cloak of confidence’ by covering up the appearance of incompetence or the feelings of incompetence, by role playing the confident graduate student, or by using symbols and appearances of competence. (From a Goffman interactionist framework; discussed by Haas and Shaffir.)

- Strive for balance in your life by taking time away from academics and giving yourself blocks of time for relaxing activities. Volunteer, play rugby, read a novel, take Friday nights off, or anything else that segments your work from play.
- Set goals but be sure not to make them unreasonable/unattainable. Breakdown big goals into *doable short term goals*.
- Recognize that you enter graduate school with valuable forms of social and cultural capital, even if those forms may be undervalued at your institution. These forms of capital can be (and often are) translated into insightful and meaningful research.
- Stay focused on what you want to do in graduate school. Most of us go to graduate school because we are passionate about something. Don't let graduate school dull your passion.
- Many of us start out saying yes to everything and need to learn how to say no. Practice saying no and letting go of guilt you may feel about it. Your time is a valuable resource.
- Develop allies and networks of peers and mentors that can help you develop your strengths and foster your abilities. Share your work and engage with others.
- Put self-effacing behavior in check. You are a strong and competent scholar and you have earned your place at the academic table.
- Graduate school and academia are hierarchical. Reflect on the hierarchy and be strategic in how you work to subvert it.
- Publish what you've got. You can always go back and revise/challenge what you've written but keep it moving. Eventually, it will be published.
- Practice writing systematically. Avoid binge-writing. Schedule consistent blocks of time to get some writing going.
- Recognize that graduate school is not a lifestyle. Get a defendable thesis/dissertation and realize that there's life after you finish. Don't take graduate school too seriously. It's only one component of your life and is shouldn't be what defines you or your worth.
- Find your niche. You are here for a reason.
- Take time to reflect on your accomplishments.
- There's a difference between perfectionism and excellence. Perfection is an illusion and you'll kill yourself trying to get there.
- Join or start a reading or writing group. They help to hold you accountable and are a valuable source for feedback on your work.
- You can't do all the readings. More often than not, you can't even come close to it.
- Attend a summer program. You'll come into contact with people who have similar interests and you'll set yourself up knowing you are capable.
- Don't let the isolation of the academic world overcome you. Work in places with other people, such as the school or public library.
- Recognize that what you have to contribute is just as valuable as anyone else.

Elyshia Aseltine, University of Texas-Austin

George P. Mason, Wayne State University

### Further references:

- Albas, Daniel C. and Cheryl Mills Albas. 1984. *Student Life and Exams: Stresses and Coping Strategies*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.
- Becker, Howard. 1986. *Writing for Social Scientists*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry. 2000. *Helping Students Adapt to Graduate School: Making the Grade*. New York: Haworth Press.
- Hinchey, Patricia and Isabel Kimmel. 2000. *The Graduate Grind: A Critical Look at Graduate Education*. New York: Falmer Press.
- Puwar, Nirmal. 2004. *Space Invaders: Race, Gender and Bodies Out of Place*. Oxford: Berg Publishers.



## Save the Dates: Regional Meetings 2009-2010

### Association for Applied and Clinical Sociology (AACS), October 7-

11, 2009

San Antonio, TX

[www.aacsnet.org](http://www.aacsnet.org)

### Mid-South Sociological Association (MSSA), November 4-7, 2009

Lafayette, LA

<http://www.midsouthsoc.org/>

### Sociologists for Women in Society

February 4-7, 2010

Santa Barbara, CA

[www.socwomen.org](http://www.socwomen.org)

### Eastern Sociological Society (ESS)

March 18-21, 2010

Cambridge, MA

[www.essnet.org](http://www.essnet.org)

### Southwestern Sociological Association (SSA), March 31-April 3, 2010

Houston, TX

[www.sssaonline.org/sociology.html](http://www.sssaonline.org/sociology.html)

### Midwest Sociological Society (MSS)/North Central Sociological Association (NCSA)

March 31-April 3, 2010

Chicago, IL

[www.themss.org](http://www.themss.org) or [www.ncsanet.org](http://www.ncsanet.org)

### Pacific Sociological Association (PSA)

April 8-11, 2010

Oakland, CA

[www.pacificsoc.org](http://www.pacificsoc.org)

### Southern Sociological Society (SSS)

April 21-25, 2010

Atlanta, GA

[www.nsstate.edu/irg.sss](http://www.nsstate.edu/irg.sss)

### Association of Black Sociologists (ABS)

August 11-14, 2010

Atlanta, GA

[www.blacksociologists.org](http://www.blacksociologists.org)

## AAHE 2010 Graduate Fellows Program

The American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education (AAHE), Inc. is now accepting applications for the AAHHE Graduate Student Fellows Program. Fellows will attend the 2010 AAHHE National Conference: "Raices y Alas/Roots and Wings: A Mal Tiempo/Buena Cara." The conference will be held March 4-6, 2010 at the Hilton Costa Mesa Hotel in Costa Mesa, CA. Participating in the AAHHE Graduate Student Fellows Program

will begin on March 2nd and continue throughout the conference and end at noon on March 7th. Please refer to the AAHHE website, [www.aahhe.org](http://www.aahhe.org), for more information about AAHHE and a listing of former Graduate Fellows.

To apply for an AAHHE Graduate Student Fellowship, submit the following materials online by Thursday, **October 1, 2009** by 5pm (PST) at <http://aahhe.org/gradstudentprogramform.aspx>.

[gradstudentprogramform.aspx](http://aahhe.org/gradstudentprogramform.aspx).

Application Form; Letter of interest, resume/vita, letter of support from advisor, supervisor or faculty member.

For more information, contact David Perez at [perez@psu.edu](mailto:perez@psu.edu) or AAHHE's website: [www.aahhe.org](http://www.aahhe.org).

## Institute for Health, Health Care Policy, and Aging Research Postdoctoral Fellowships

The Institute for Health, Health Care Policy, and Aging Research, directed by David Mechanic, offers postdoctoral opportunities for research and training in mental health research. The National Institute of Mental Health provides funding for the program. Trainee stipends range from \$37,368 to \$51,552 per year, depending on years since completing the doctorate.

The major foci of the program are mental health services research and psychosocial factors in mental health and illness. Participating disciplines include sociology, psychology, psychiatry, history, economics, anthropology, public policy, and social work. One year appointments starting June 2010 are available.

Applicants must have a PhD in hand by June 30, 2010 and should send a CV,

statement of research interests, and three letters of reference by **April 1, 2010**. Only citizens, non-citizen nationals, or persons lawfully admitted for permanent residence are eligible for these positions.

For more information, visit: [www.ihhpar.rutgers.edu](http://www.ihhpar.rutgers.edu).

## Michigan Society of Fellows, Postdoctoral Fellowships in the Humanities, Arts, Sciences, and Professions

The Michigan Society of Fellows was founded in 1970 through grants from the Ford Foundation and Horace H. Rackham School of Graduate Studies for the purpose of promoting academic and creative excellence in the humanities, the arts, the social, physical, and life sciences, and in the professions. In 2007, the Mellon Foundation awarded a grant to add four Mellon Fellows annually in the humanities, expanding the number of fellowships awarded each year from four to eight. The objective of the Society is to provide financial and intellectual support

for individuals selected for outstanding achievement, professional promise, and interdisciplinary interests. We invite applications from qualified candidates for three-year postdoctoral fellowships at the University of Michigan.

Candidates should be near the beginning of their professional careers. Those selected for fellowships must have received the PhD degree or comparable artistic or professional degree between June 1, 2007 and September 1, 2010. Fellows are appointed as Assistant Professors, or Re-

search scientist in appropriate departments and as postdoctoral scholars in the Michigan Society of Fellows. Applications from degree candidates and recipients of the PhD from the University of Michigan.

The online applications is available at: [www.rackham.umich.edu/sof](http://www.rackham.umich.edu/sof). For more information, email [society.of.fellows@umich.edu](mailto:society.of.fellows@umich.edu)

**Deadline: September 30, 2009**

## National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program

The NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program is one of the most prestigious science and engineering fellowship programs in the US. Awardees are provided three years of graduate school support. Fellows receive a \$30,000 annual stipend, a \$10,500 annual cost of education allowance, a one-time \$1,000 international travel allowance, and access to TeraGrid supercomputing facilities.

The program ensures quality, diversity and vitality of the next generation of U.S. scientists and researchers. The GRFP is intended for students in the early stages of their graduate career who are seeking research-based master's or PhD degrees in NSF supported disciplines. Applicants should have completed no more than 12 months of graduate study. Applicants must be US citizens, US nationals, or permanent residents prior to the Application

deadline.

**The application period is currently open and will close in early November.** For more information, applicants are encouraged to visit [www.nsfgrfp.org](http://www.nsfgrfp.org) or [www.nsf.gov/grfp/](http://www.nsf.gov/grfp/).

## National Science Foundation East Asia and Pacific Summer Institutes

The NSF East Asia and Pacific Summer Institutes for US Graduate Students (EAPSI) is a flagship international fellowship program for developing the next generation of globally-engaged US scientists and engineers knowledgeable about the Asian and Pacific regions. The Summer Institutes are hosted by foreign counterparts committed to increasing opportunities for young US researchers to work in research facili-



ties and with host mentors abroad. Fellows are supported to participate in eight-week research experiences at host laboratories in Australia, China, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Singapore and Taiwan from June to August. The program provides a \$5,000 summer stipend, round-trip airfare to the host location, living expenses abroad, and an introduction to the society, culture, language, and research environment of the host location.

NSF recognizes the importance of enabling US researchers and educators to

advance their work through international collaborations and the value of ensuring that future generations of US scientists and engineers gain professional experience beyond this nation's borders early in their careers. The program is intended for graduation students pursuing studies in fields supported by the NSF.

**The application period will begin in September and close in December.** Application instructions are available online at [www.nsf.gov/eapsi](http://www.nsf.gov/eapsi). For more information visit: [www.nsf.gov/eapsi](http://www.nsf.gov/eapsi).

## The Academic Job Market 101: Job Market Strategies and Advice for Graduate Students in Sociology (Part 3)

*By: Danielle Antoniette Hidalgo & Daina Cheyenne Harvey*

### III. Applying for Jobs:

#### The Interview:

Learn as much about the department as possible before the interview. Good advice given to me by a former colleague is to try and read something (article, book chapter) written by each member of the department so that you know something about their work and have something to talk about other than your work. With that in mind, prepare a two, five, and ten minute summary of your work. Sometimes faculty will really want to hear about your work, but most of the time they want to talk about their own. Have a prepared set of questions that you intend on asking most of the members of the faculty/hiring committee (i.e. relations with their colleagues, the town/city, the good and not so good things about the department). There are of course numerous other questions you should keep in mind (questions about tenure/promotion, publication expectations, teaching expectations, university and departmental committee expectations, etc.). Have a teaching philosophy prepared (most departments will ask for one). And finally, take meetings with the dean and graduate students seriously. While they might not make the final decision, their advice can weigh heavily on the hiring committee.

### IV. Applying for Jobs:

#### Accepting a New Position:

Typically you will be applying for either a job in your area of specialty or a position where the specialty is open. Avoid applying for jobs in areas where you have limited or no research or teaching experience. At the first stage of considering your application faculty members on the hiring committee are looking to eliminate applicants (at large research universities it is not uncommon to have two hundred

applicants for every open position). Applying for a job in an area for which you are underprepared simply wastes the committee's time and more importantly your own. If you are applying to teaching heavy university and have interest in area but have never taught a related course, you can include a detailed course outline or demonstrate that you have relevant research experience.

It is not always possible to find a job listing in your primary area. When the specialty is open it typically means that the department is committed to hiring the best applicant and may be willing to wait for that applicant if consensus can not be reached on the pool of applicants for the current academic year. When the specialty is specified it is most likely that the department wants to immediately fill the position. Either way don't be surprised if it takes a few months to hear about your application.

When you get the call/letter thank the chair/head of the committee for their consideration. You should remain professional throughout the process regardless of the outcome. If the department makes a mistake and offers the job to someone less qualified, ask if there was anything that specifically weighed against you in the committees' mind. When the committee makes the right decision and offers you a position remain positive but do not immediately accept the position. Take a few days and consider other options. This is a good time to call other departments (if you have given talks elsewhere or if your application has been short-listed). If you are considering other offers, know that there is usually some room for negotiation (benefits, moving expenses, consideration for finding opportunities for a partner, computer and other research equipment, sabbaticals and reduced teaching load for the first year, office space, and conference travel money to name just a few). Remember, however,

that accepting and declining offers is a delicate matter. Again, remain professional. Experiences at annual or even regional meetings might

cause you to believe we are members of a vast community, but its really a small world. Strangers today might well be tomorrow's colleagues.

Please note: Many of the strategies listed here are cited in Sandra L. Barnes' (2007) *On the Job Market: Strategies for a Successful Academic Job Search*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Students should also be aware of a wonderful guide written by Janet Mancini Billson for the American Sociological Association titled *Mastering the Job Market with a Graduate Degree in Sociology* (2nd ed.) 1996.





American Sociological Association  
Student Forum Advisory Board



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[http://wiki.socstudentforum.org/index.php?  
title=Main\\_Page](http://wiki.socstudentforum.org/index.php?title=Main_Page)

## Sociology of Bodies and Embodiment Announcement

Join the section-in-formation on the Sociology of Bodies and Embodiment. Many of us focus on bodies in different ways in our work and I think this section will have a lot to offer us all... sessions at conferences, newsletters on body research that cuts across a variety of subfields in sociology, networking opportunities, opportunities for national service, etc. In order to become a permanent section of ASA, Bodies and Embodiment needs close to 50 new members to join between now and the end of September. Adding this to your membership is easy and cheap: go to the ASA website, log in on the left, and then click on the link on the right that says "add a section". Adding a section to your membership can be done online and it takes less than 2 minutes.

## Employment Announcement: Senior Research Associate at ASA

The Research Department of the American Sociological Association is pleased to announce an exciting job opportunity as a Senior Research Associate for a highly motivated quantitative analyst with research experience. Ph.D. in hand preferred, though ABD will be considered. The successful candidate will be given a two-year contract, with potential for renewal, to create and maintain Excel and SPSS databases and to conduct multivariate and network analysis for three National Science Foundation-funded research projects. A fourth project is anticipated. Knowledge of Ucinet and Pajek is necessary. The projects include: (1) Diffusion of Innovation in Digital Libraries, (2) Production, Diffusion, and Use of STEM Teaching Materials; and (3) Mentoring, Networks, and Underrepresented Minorities in the Science Pipeline. Each of these projects requires creating databases, metrics, and

measures that allow for a comparative analysis of the workings and outcomes of intentional networks.

The Senior Research Associate will work with a team of three senior and five junior sociologists under the direction of the Principal Investigator, and will have some responsibility for providing guidance to the junior staff. The outcome of these studies will be research briefs, reports, and articles for peer-reviewed journals in which the Senior Associate will be a co-author. Salary Range \$60,000-\$70,000, plus benefits (12 months).

The American Sociological Association (ASA), founded in 1905, is a non-profit membership organization dedicated to advancing sociology as a scientific discipline and profession serving the public good. With nearly 14,000 members, ASA encompasses sociologists who are faculty members at colleges and uni-

versities, researchers, practitioners, and students. The ASA Research Department is responsible for developing and dissemination information about the discipline. Located in downtown DC near Metro Center and McPherson Square, ASA has a 30-person staff and offers a friendly work environment with a competitive salary and benefits package. Equal Opportunity employer.

Applicants should email a cover letter and a current resume (with the names and e-mail addresses of three references) to [spalter-roth@asanet.org](mailto:spalter-roth@asanet.org) or to Roberta Spalter-Roth, American Sociological Association, 1430 K St. #600, Washington, DC 20009. Resumes will be accepted until the job is filled.