

# TIMELINES

NEWSLETTER OF THE ASA HISTORY OF SOCIOLOGY SECTION

## FROM THE SECTION CHAIR

I am pleased to invite you to peruse this issue of *Timelines* just prior to the ASA meeting in Philadelphia (August 11-14). It includes many pieces of useful information, but I will highlight just two. We now have from two of the key founders of HOS, Patricia Lengermann and Gillian Niebrugge, a history of the 1996-1999 founding period of the section. This is the first history we have of the History of Sociology Section. We intend to post on our web site Pat and Jill's text. Perhaps we could encourage other ASA sections to write their histories as well. Of course, much has happened in HOS since 2000 and some of that is recorded in *Timelines*. But I would also invite others to add additional historical information for future issues and for the web site.

Second, because of our small size (under 200 members) ASA Council applied a recent policy decision that could have put our section into a probationary status. "Probationary Status

August 2018

"Threat Lifted" documents that process that triggered a review by the Committee on Sections (COS), our response, and a favorable decision by COS. This includes important information for not only what happened in 2018 but also for protecting and strengthening our section in the future.

I look forward to seeing all of you in Philadelphia. Be sure to note on your schedules our Tuesday, August 14 sessions including the business meeting (Tuesday 9:30-10:10am, Level 100, 106AB) when this year's section awards will be distributed. This year Aldon Morris will be honored by receiving both our 2018 Lifetime Achievement Award and the 2018 Distinguished Publication Award for his book, *The Scholar Denied: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Birth of Modern Sociology* (University of California Press, 2015). Dustin Stoltz, PhD. Candidate in Sociology at the University of Notre Dame will receive the 2018 Graduate Student Prize for his paper "How to Become a Dominant Misinterpreted Source: The Case of Ferdinand

### CONTENTS

Letter from the Chair	Page 1
2018 Section Awards	Page 2
Election Results	Page 3
Conferences	Page 3
ASA Events	Page 3
Publications	Page 4
Essay on Section History	Page 4
Probationary Status Update	Page 13

### OFFICERS & COUNCIL

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de Saussure in Cultural Sociology.” Our congratulations to both Aldon and Dustin for these important achievements.

Note also in the newsletter that we have this year two roundtables and two paper sessions. Tuesday, August 14 will be a full day for the history of sociology. And if you arrive

in Philadelphia on Saturday do join us for a joint reception with Comparative-Historical, Global and Transnational, and Human Rights (Saturday, August 11, 6:30-8:10pm, Philadelphia Marriott Downtown, Level 5, Salon J). This year we will celebrate together Saturday night and then get down to serious scholarly business on

Tuesday. I am looking forward to all of it.

Finally, a special thanks to Brandon Sepulvado for putting together this issue of *Timelines*.

See you in Philadelphia.  
David L. Swartz, Boston University

## 2018 HISTORY OF SOCIOLOGY SECTION AWARDS

The recipient of the 2018 **Lifetime Achievement Award** is Aldon Morris, Leon Forrest Professor of Sociology and African American Studies at Northwestern University. The award committee (Julia Adams, Jean-Louis Fabiani, Jeffrey Olick) made the award in recognition of Aldon Morris's groundbreaking contribution to the history of sociology in the United States: his deeply-researched arguments with respect to the crucial importance of W.E.B. DuBois and the Atlanta Sociological Laboratory in the development of American sociology. Viewed for a long time, as DuBois put it himself, as “Negroes studying Negroes,” the Atlanta group should be considered alongside, for example, Chicago as a founding

site of American sociology. Aldon Morris recasts our understanding of the discipline, drawing on his precise knowledge of German sociology, and illuminating DuBois' methodological rigor, theoretical stringency and substantive, historically-grounded contributions to the understanding of American society and its global context

The **Distinguished Scholarly Publication Award** goes to Aldon Morris, Leon Forrest Professor of Sociology and African Studies at Northwestern University, for his book *The Scholar Denied: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Birth of Modern Sociology* (University of California Press, 2015). The award committee included Mitch Duneier (Chair), Princeton

University, Jennifer Platt, University of Sussex, and Simonetta Falasca-Zamponi, University of California (Santa Barbara).

The **Graduate Student Prize** goes to Dustin Stoltz, PhD Candidate in Sociology at the University of Notre Dame, for his paper “How to Become a Dominant Misinterpreted Source: The Case of Ferdinand de Saussure in Cultural Sociology.” The award committee included Kevin Anderson (Chair), University of California (Santa Barbara), Eleanor Townsley, Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, Mass, and Alford Young Jr., University of Michigan.

## NEWLY ELECTED MEMBERS

**Student Council Member** (3-year term beginning August 2018):

- Taylor Paige Winfield, Princeton University

**Council Members** (3-year term beginning August 2018):

- Martin Bulmer, University of Surrey, UK

- Lauren Langman, Loyola University of Chicago

- Simonetta Falashas-Zamponi, University of California, Santa Barbara

## UPCOMING CONFERENCE

Glenn Goodwin is organizing a special panel at the 2019 Pacific Sociological Association annual meeting entitled "What has happened to classical sociological theory?" The panel

includes Jonathan Turner, Randall Collins, and Norbert Wiley, and topics discussed will include the virtual disappearance of papers on classical theory from regional meetings and journals as well as

what graduate curricula taught to Millennials. Theory papers are welcome as submissions for regular presentations.

## 2018 ASA HISTORY OF SOCIOLOGY EVENTS

**Joint Reception: Section on Comparative-Historical Sociology; Section on History of Sociology; Section on Global and Transnational Sociology; and Section on Human Rights,** Saturday, August 10, 6:30-8:10pm, Philadelphia Marriott Downtown, Salon J, Level 5

**Section on History of Sociology Council Meeting,** Tuesday, August 14, 7:00-8:15am, Pennsylvania Convention Center, 106AB, Level 100

**Section on History of Sociology Refereed Roundtable Session,** Tuesday, August 14, 8:30-9:30am, Pennsylvania Convention Center, Level 100, 106AB

**Section on History of Sociology Business Meeting,** Tuesday, August 14, 9:30-10:10am, Pennsylvania Convention Center, 106AB, Level 100

**Linking History of Sociology and Sociology of Science: Convergences and Intricacies, Potentials and Pitfalls,** Tuesday, August 14, 10:30am-12:10pm, Pennsylvania Convention Center, 113C, Level 100

-*Session Organizer:* Christian Daye, Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt

-*Panelists:* Charles Camic, Northwestern University  
Christian Fleck, University of Graz  
Joan H. Fujimura, University of Wisconsin

**Mary Jo Deegan's "Jane Addams and the Men of the Chicago School": Recovering Lost Founders,** Tuesday, August 14, 2:30- 4:10pm, Pennsylvania Convention Center, 113C, Level 100

-*Session Organizer:* Patricia Madoo Lengermann, George Washington University

-*Presider:* Jill Niebrugge-Brantley, George Washington University

-*Jane Addams and the Women Founders of the Social Sciences: Inclusion and Anti-racism,* Lynn McDonald, University of Guelph

-*Economic Foundations of Jane Addams's Pragmatist Political Friendships,* Wynne

Walker Moskop, Saint Louis University  
 -Addams, Canon  
 Burnett and Spencer in Egypt: Orientalism and Having Classical Sociologists as Boon  
 Companions, David John Chalcraft, Liverpool John Moores University

-An Enigmatic Classic: The Case of Charles H. Cooley  
 Natalia Ruiz-Junco, Auburn University; Baptiste Brossard, Australian National University  
 -A Jewish Woman Refugee Sociologist and Representations of West Indian Migrants to London,

1950s-60s, Abby Suzanne Gondek, Florida International University  
 -Discussant: Mary Jo Deegan, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

## RECENT AND FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS

Anderson, Kevin B. 2017.

"Marx's *Capital* after 150 Years: Revolutionary Reflections," [Socialism and Democracy](#) 31:3, pp. 1-10; reprinted in [New Politics Online](#) (Dec. 17)

Anderson, Kevin B.

2017. "Marx's Intertwining of Race and Class During the Civil War in the U.S.," *Journal of Classical Sociology* 17:1, pp. 28-40

Skovajsa, Marek and Jan

Balon. 2017. *Sociology in the Czech Republic: Between East and West*. Series *Sociology Transformed*. London: Palgrave Macmillan (Pivot).

## AN ESSAY ON THE FOUNDING OF THE ASA SECTION ON THE HISTORY OF SOCIOLOGY

Like the shoemaker's children, the Section on the History of Sociology (HOS) has been too long without a history of its own genesis. The history of its founding that follows here is inspired by the efforts of Section Chair David Swartz (2017-2018) to remedy this defect and is intended to serve three purposes: (1) to give readers a basic chronology of key events, dates, people, and documents essential to that founding, (2) to interpret that chronology at the level of the meanings motivating the actors whose actions produced it and at the level of the structures that enabled, impelled, or impeded actions, and (3) in so doing to illustrate the significance of having a section devoted to the history of sociology as discipline and profession. The thesis that has emerged for us here is that the founding of the HOS was the product of conflict or at least tensions between these perennial two aspects of sociology (or any academic field)—its professional organization of rules and opportunity structures and its disciplinary core of distinctive ideas and beliefs. In the case of the founding of HOS, the precipitating factors were changes in the discipline regarding the place of women in its history, most especially, women's role in the classical period, roughly 1830-1930; in the 1990s these changes in thinking, which we will term a feminist revision, encountered professional structures that seemed to the revisionist scholars to allow little place for their new insights. In this interpretation, then, HOS is an outgrowth of the principle articulated wittily by Charlotte Bunch as "You can't just add women and stir"; though this principle could be applied to the experiences of other minority groups, our purpose here is the historian's, explaining why this conflict and its resolution occurred in the form they did at the time they did—the perennial question of history, why here now?

Our presentation takes the form of a chronology and is interpolated with accounts that set that chronology in context, tracing two main themes—substantive disciplinary issues and professional organizational concerns. Further because our relation to this material is twofold, we distinguish between ourselves as professionals who specialize in the history of sociology and our role as actors in and key informants on the founding of HOS by reserving the first person “we” for ourselves as analysts writing in 2018 and using the third person “Lengermann and Niebrugge” to name us as actors in the narrative.

#### Chronology—and Contextuality and Synchrony

Building “a simple chronology” is a complex task, partly because one quickly confronts the problem of finding the beginning (as well, later, the end) of an event—*Is there ever any particular spot where one can put one’s finger and say, “It all began that day, at such a time and such a place, with such an incident.”—Agatha Christie (1967).* It is also because of the enormous problem of rendering synchrony, that is, of accounting for all that overlaps and interferes with the chain of occurrence one is trying to describe. In what follows, we start with an event in the chronology, make a necessary detour to the context for the actions chronicled, and then return to the chronology.

May 1996: Patricia Lengermann and Gillian Niebrugge (aka Jill Niebrugge-Brantley) made a direct outreach via a phone call to the ASA Executive Office in Washington, D.C., where they were put through to Elizabeth Czepiel, Governance Co-ordinator at ASA (1994 to 1998) saying they wished to form a Section on the History of Sociology and requesting instructions on how to do so.

Lengermann and Niebrugge (hereafter L&N) were living in Ithaca, New York; pursuing the ideal of being scholar-activists, they had left full-time teaching careers in Washington, D.C., where Lengermann retained the title of “Research Professor in Sociology at The George Washington University” (as shown in some of the appended documents), serving as visiting professors at Wells College and researching and writing what was to become *The Women Founders: Sociology and Social Theory, 1830-1930* (1998). This research was one major element in the motivations prompting this phone call.

These motives grew directly out of the tensions, alluded to in our opening, between sociology as a discipline and sociology as a profession—tensions that both provided a context for the call and were synchronous with the events that followed, indeed, persisting beyond the dates in this chronology. These tensions occurred through a discourse that while usually civil was also passionate—people spoke and acted because to remain silent seemed “profane” given the sense participants’ shared sense that “history,” that is, the attempts to create an accurate record of what actually happened, was in some ways “sacred,” an expression of the core scholarly virtues of logic, coherence and validity. Indeed, the conflict over the establishment of a separate section on the History of Sociology may seem an almost too perfect illustration of Simmel’s dictum that conflict is interaction that resolves the tension among opposites. In terms of the discipline, this tension came to a head over the place of women in sociology’s history. In terms of the profession, it came to revolve around the creation of a section, because a major way ASA handled the relation between discipline and profession was through the mechanism of the sections. So, when L&N turned to the creation of a section as the logical way to get a hearing for the position they represented, they were following a path clearly charted by professional rules.

This organizational confrontation becomes more meaningful when seen in its societal context. U.S. sociology like other aspects of American life in the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was marked by a restlessness expressed in multiple social movements of which three are most important here--the African American Civil Rights Movement, the Anti-(Vietnam) War Movement, and Women's Movement of Second Wave Feminism. In ASA this restlessness first manifested itself in a growing proliferation of sections that was facilitated by a 1958 ASA Governing Council decision to make sections a more significant part of the Association by regularizing the relationship in ways defined in the resolution "Establishment of a Mechanism for Creating Sections." That had borne more fruit than the Council had perhaps intended—1960s, seven new sections; 1970s, nine; 1980s 8; and the 1990s, 10. By 1995 there was a countering concern with what was characterized by some as "the balkanization of sociology," (e.g. Firebaugh 1997). Anxiety began to build in the profession that the sheer number of sections was producing economic and material constraints on the Association. And there was also a concern that the increase in sections, intended to allow for more disciplinary inventiveness, were diluting the understanding of what constituted the discipline of sociology.

But for the founders of HOS, the concern about numbers of sections seemed a peripheral issue compared to the passionate drive for change fueled by Second Wave Feminism. Six years after Bette Friedan's 1963 *The Feminine Mystique*, the effects of the Women's Movement appeared in professional sociology with the creation of The Women's Caucus (begun at the Annual ASA Meeting in San Francisco in 1969), Sociologists for Women in Society (1970), ASA's Committee on the Status of Women (1970), the Section on the Sociology of Sex and Gender (1973), and the journal *Gender & Society* (1987). This movement produced an explosion of publications on gender as a major stratificational practice. Within the field of the history of sociology, the most significant of these was Mary Jo Deegan's 1988 study *Jane Addams and the Men of the Chicago School*. Deegan's personal statement in her preface captures the experience that would repeatedly motivate feminist scholars in the history of sociology as they made their own discoveries—we quote it here to give some sense of the emotion undergirding the feminist project of revisioning sociology's history.

This book started from a very modest wish. Once a decade ago [this would be about 1975], I wanted to write a popular paper, only eight to ten pages long, on an early woman sociologist. I believed there must have been at least one woman who worked in my discipline, and I wanted to remember and celebrate that work. To my utter amazement, when I examined the early sociology journals, I found not one but dozens of early women sociologists. The story of their lives and work has fascinated me over the ensuing years. I haunted archives, read musty organizational records, and pored over correspondence. These were unfamiliar tasks for a sociologist of our era and I fear that many friends and colleagues thought I was on a wild goose chase. This book is a partial answer to their many questions concerning the nature of my work and that of the early women sociologists. (Deegan 1988: xviii)

Deegan was part of a pioneering effort that included work of men like James Terry (1983), Terry Kandal (1988), and Michael R. Hill (1989); but the primary impact of *Jane Addams and the Men of the Chicago School*, as well as Deegan's over a dozen companion volumes—was to spark the interest of a generation of women scholars in the history of sociology: Kay Broschart, Vickie Demos, Susan Hoecker Drysdale, Patricia Lengermann, Lynn MacDonald, Vicky MacLean, Gillian Niebrugge, Shulamit Reinharz, Barbara Richardson,

Linda Rynbrandt, Jan Thomas, Joyce E. Williams. These scholars formed a central group propelling the drive for a Section on the History of Sociology.

Deegan's 1988 work had solved a major issue for revisionist historians of the discipline by addressing the perennial question of how to recover a lost founder. She had done so by applying to Addams, Dirk Käsler's 1981 criteria for determining whether an earlier thinker could reasonably be classified as a sociologist: "occupy a chair of sociology and/or teach sociology; membership in the American Sociological Society; co-authorship of sociological articles or textbooks; self-definition as a 'sociologist,' and definition by others as a sociologist" (Deegan 1988:9). Using these criteria, feminist historians discovered an expanding community of early women, minority men and a few white men (like settlement residents) who had worked mightily to help shape the new discipline in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, but who had been "erased" from its history. This insight led to the deeper question of what, then, was sociology's history.. The prevailing answer, that it was the account of the intellectual creations that constituted the disciplinary canon of theorists and theories, now seemed to hide politics of gender, race, and knowledge that opened a vista of sociology as a politics of inclusion and exclusion—a social product. This was a heady idea that seemed to the original founders and supporters of the HOS to need ongoing research to be shared with the sociological community.

The Professional Context: To appreciate why an ASA section seemed so important, it is necessary to look at the status quo of the history of sociology in the 1990s. ASA typically placed the history of sociology in the annual meeting Call for Papers as a "Regular Session" titled "History of Sociology/Social Thought." This listing meant that any scholar with a paper on the history of sociology could submit there, but "there" typically comprised slots for only four papers—and the after-slash qualifier pointed to a particular way of understanding that history.<sup>i</sup> The Theory Section also offered opportunities for papers on the history of sociological thought but these tended to be either interpretations of established classical theorists or the "rediscovery" of a forgotten theorist, almost inevitably a white male academic. (A notable exception was the 1995 meeting when the Theory Section offered two sessions, organized by Charles Camic, on "Reclaiming the Argument of the Founders" in which Lynn McDonald, of the University of Guelph, presented on "Classical Social Theory with the Women Founders Included" — a precursor of the momentum for change which would spark the drive for the HOS section in 1996. While McDonald was not the only woman presenter, she was the only presenter who made women sociologists her subject.)

Members of the Theory Section and others whose professional interests were in sociological theory were not unaware of the nascent feminist mobilization, its critique of a theory curriculum that focused exclusively on the work of white men, and, by 1996, its project of establishing a section on the history of sociology. For the "old guard" this last seemed merely to be a "rival theory group," and while some of these scholars would support the idea of HOS, and many more would accommodate with it, others held to their opposition to the revisionist challenge, answering it typically with two arguments: (1) women and minority men were not in the canon because they had been denied the social opportunities for public life and advanced education and thus had no chance to engage in sociological theory; (2) even if women had been writing things that might be considered sociology, those writings had fallen outside the mainstream canon and had not influenced the direction of sociology. Ashley and Orenstein (1998: 30) argued, for instance: "In selecting our 'classical sociological theorists,' we did *not*, of course, take a decision to exclude factory workers, peasants, women, or nonwhites from consideration. Rather, we acknowledged that such types of people were from the very

beginning prevented from participating in the formation of 'classical sociological theory.' To pretend otherwise would be a gross distortion and would also serve to conceal the very significant role that prejudice and discrimination have played in the formation of modern sociology." Or Collins and Markowsky (1998: 297) argued that women did *not* produce "the theoretical schemes [which] tend to be more permanent, since they are more easily passed along to subsequent generations through intellectual networks" (Collins and Makowsky, 1998: 297). But feminist scholars, men as well as women, answered that their own research was showing that these generalizations were mistaken: women had been present at and active participators in the creation of sociology (and had produced "theoretical schemes" if that was to be the key measure) and their absence was due to the complex workings of a politics of gender and a politics of knowledge that was still in play.

These same researches had also generally shown feminists that it was not women alone who were marginalized, that the history of sociology constituted as the history of its theories neglected a vast realm of other practices, products and people that were part of sociology, and that there were currently no organizational spaces devoted to topics on the history of sociology as a profession, such as sociology in places outside the white academy, such as the settlement houses, women's colleges, historically black colleges and universities, government, and social movement organizations; the emergence of multiple sections within ASA or the parallel organizations like the Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP) or the Association of Black Sociologists (ABS); the rise of regional associations; the development and influence of journals; and the political dynamics of exclusionary practices that shaped all these. Many historians of the profession whose interests lay in these and similar topics supported the prospect of a section on sociology's history, even if they had little interest in the claims of the feminists driving the project.

All this was the context for L&N's May 1996 call to ASA headquarters during which Czepiel explained that it was possible to get some meeting space at the 1996 Annual Meeting for groups seeking to formulate proposals for future ASA action and suggested the placement of an announcement in *Footnotes* Volume 24: 6 (July/August 1996) which featured part of what was to become a standard statement about the importance of history to the discipline's sense of itself and publicized a meeting for interested persons for August 17, 1996 at 8:30 a.m. at the Annual Meeting in New York City. (See Appendix I.)

Somewhere between May and August 1996, L&N discovered that the path to section status moved through a multi-stage process specified by ASA's *Section Manual*. This movement in the case of HOS ran for over three years, from May 1996 to October 1, 1999, when the History of Sociology was transferred from "section-in-formation" status to full section status. The 1996 *Manual* required seven stages of action: (1) inform the ASA Executive of the wish to form a new section; (2) recruit supporters for this project; (3) manifest this intention and support by presenting a proposal outlining the value of the new session to the discipline and the association; (4) present that proposal to the ASA Executive along with a petition signed by fifty members in good standing of ASA; (5) upon the validation of the petition by the ASA Executive, present a proposal for the new section to the Committee on Sections which makes a judgment whether to approve and pass on the proposal to the ASA Governing Council for section-in-formation status or to return the proposal for more work to the organizers; (6) upon the approval as a "section-in-formation," recruit 200 ASA members-in-good-standing to join the Section, paying section dues at a reduced rate for the first two years; (7) once membership numbers are achieved and bylaws drafted and accepted, the new Section holds its first



elections and presents an annual report. Much of the rest of this chronology reflects the dictates of that document—as well as the missteps that occurred.

August 17, 1996: At what we now designate “the working group” meeting, a statement prepared of the reasons for proposing a Section on the History of Sociology by L&N was endorsed and the first petitions supporting formation of the Section were signed. A list of names of potentially interested persons was generated by those in attendance and an interim committee established to help oversee the work of achieving section status: Susan Hoecker-Drysdale, Concordia University; Ken Kusterer, American University; Patricia Lengermann, The George Washington University; Helena Z. Lopata, Loyola University of Chicago; Jill Niebrugge-Brantley, Wells College; Harold Orbach, Kansas State University; Alan Sica, Pennsylvania State University; Kathleen Slobin, North Dakota State; Stephen Turner, University of South Florida, and Susan Wright, Wayne State. Other allies from this early period included: Mel Barber, Florida A&M University; Kay Broschart, Rollins College; Terry Nichols Clark, University of Chicago; Donald Cunnigen, University of Rhode Island; Mary Jo Deegan, University of Nebraska; John Drysdale, Concordia University; Michael R. Hill, University of Nebraska; Brenda Hoke, Agnes Scott College; Herbert Hunter, Pennsylvania State University—Indiana; Mike Keen, University of Notre Dame; Larry Nichols, West Virginia University; Jack Nusan Porter, University of Massachusetts—Lowell; Reuben Rumbaut, Michigan State University; Edward Tiryakian, Duke University, and Eleanor Townsley, Mount Holyoke College.

L&N’s leadership in this effort was based in a perhaps idiosyncratic combination of enthusiasm and naiveté—and when those failed, as they did frequently, just plain doggedness. Though they knew about the debates on fragmentation, they did not connect those debates with their project. They had only a scant appreciation of the extreme modesty of the base from which they began (living in Ithaca, without a prestigious academic affiliation, with only a modest scholarly record, and with no real departmental base of administrative support and supplies). They had not a clue to the amount of work they were about to undertake navigating the “mechanism for creating new sections” in a time when that project was out of favor at ASA. Nor did they for some time grasp the tone of seriousness with which ASA dealt with such requests. Finally, as overloaded teaching faculty, they ended up doing a lot of the heavy lifting simply because they couldn’t get enough spare time to set up a system of delegation.

In the Fall of 1996, following the trail of names suggested at the working group meeting, L&N mailed out by regular or e-mail about 100 letters with petitions (and SASEs for the regular mail people); this effort culminated in their being able to send the ASA Office a total of 107 signed petitions; of these 12 were disqualified because ASA records suggested that the signers’ membership was not in effect. This completed Step 4 of the ASA mechanism for creating a new section.

But this effort was not received with enthusiasm by the ASA administration. The direct contacts with the Association went through three representatives of the Executive Office (Executive Director Felice Levine, Associate Director Phoebe Stevenson, and Czepiel, who all gave competent advice but were essentially opposed to adding more sections in general and especially to adding more potentially “small sections.” Contacts were often made by phone and there were problems, sometimes never resolved, getting hardcopies of memos and minutes. In a first call, in Fall 1996, following Lengermann and Niebrugge’s submission of petition signatures, Levine, with Czepiel also on the call, suggested that they consider doing an

outreach to an already existent section that could incorporate the concerns and goals that seemed to underlie the impulse to form a section in the History of Sociology. L&N, after conferring with members of the Interim Organizing Committee, decided to proceed on the course of establishing a separate section for the study of the history of sociology, believing that the subject genuinely merited its own section.

L&N, in what we see today to have been a singularly obtuse reading of the administrative headwinds, proceeded on December 16, 1996 to forward the proposal and petition signatures for Section-in-Formation status to the Committee on Sections (COS), an elected body of ASA members, —meeting Step 5 of the ASA procedure. This first attempt failed: COS returned it with the objection first broached by Levine: how would this affect other sections?

After a series of exchanges, mediated by the Executive Office, it was agreed in a call of February 12, 1997 among Lengermann, Niebrugge, Felice Levine and Stevenson that the aspiring HOS group would elicit the response to the prospect of a new section on the History of Sociology with Science, Knowledge and Technology (SKAT) and the Theory Section, as the two sections Felice Levine felt might be most impacted and also seemed most likely as a possible home for a history of sociology without constituting a new section. On May 30, 1997, L&N turned to the Interim Coordinating Committee for advice on correspondence with SKAT, chaired by Karin Knorr Cetina; with the Theory Section, chaired by Donald Levine, and on preparation of a second or revised request to COS for Section-in-formation status (Appendix IV). In preparation for answering the major objection to the new section, the effects on already existent sections, L&N charted what SKAT and Theory had offered at the last four Annual Meetings in terms of contributions to the history of sociology as well as what had been offered generally in the history of sociology at the Annual Meeting (Appendix VI).

L&N's communication with SKAT and the Theory Section brought responses of reservation from both, based in the concern that multiplication of sections would weaken those already in place; but both also stressed that they did not think it appropriate for existing sections to thwart the formation of new sections on these grounds. On June 14, 1997, acting for the Interim Coordinating Committee, L&N sent a "Revised Proposal for a Section on the History of Sociology" to the Committee on Sections (see Appendix V). What we now see as remarkable about this proposal was the growth in the collective understanding of HOS supporters of where the Section could and should go. The proposal suggests plans for the new history section to work with existing sections to produce a more balanced history of sociology than was currently offered by the Association. It contains a direct but nuanced discussion of the effects on existing sections. It reports on the responses of the Theory and SKAT sections as not wishing to stand in the way of the creation of a new section. At the same time, the proposal maintains its belief in the importance of history in the creation and maintenance of a common identity.

The Governing Council granted the status of Section-in-Formation at its August 1997 in Toronto (the site of that year's Annual Meeting).

As representatives of a section-in-formation, L&N, with the help of the Interim Organizing Committee and its allies, now had to get 200 supporters to become members of HOS, which would require being willing to pay dues, at a reduced rate, for two years. This effort was challenged by the added complication of doing this in the midst of a revision to the Section Manual that changed the requirement for Section status from 200

supporting members to 300. L&N appealed to Executive Director Felice Levine who ruled that the Section could continue under the old 1996 rules in regard to this criterion.

From March 1998 to September 30, 1999, L&N led the work of recruiting members for the new section (Appendix VII). The responses at this point—when people had not only to signal support *for the idea* of a history section but to pledge that they would fiscally support such a section--ultimately did not auger well for the new Section. First, the responses were never overwhelming—goals were met with a few members over the required quota but not with a flood of memberships. A number of people replied that they would offer support for the first two years to help the Section move from “in formation” to full status—but no more. Some people expressed hostility to the idea of the Association turning to its history, arguing that this should be left to the historians. For the organizers, who truly loved the idea of a history of the discipline and saw it as part of the work of shaping the identity of sociology, these responses were disheartening. On the other hand, L&N also reached out with some success to current supporters and to every friend they had among ASA members to ask for the purchase of gift memberships. And they tried to seize every opportunity to promote the Section.

For instance, at the 1998 Annual Meeting in San Francisco, as a section-in-formation, HOS was allowed one business session of an hour and 45 minutes. But L&N, believing they were in the home stretch of member recruitment, tried to use the meeting to promote the Section and push its membership count over the bar. They shortened the business meeting to 45 minutes, ran a paper session on regional sociology in the first hour, and requested a Special Session from ASA President Jill Quadagno focused on a topic germane to their situation: “History of Sociology: Issues of Inclusivity.” But in the midst of this very successful show of activity, ASA affirmed its new policy of 300 members for Section status—going forward; it would not dis-establish already existing sections and would not apply to the HOS Section-in-formation; but sections with less than 300 members would become subject to recurring “audits” of section viability. (This action led to the formation of a loosely structured but vocal “coalition of small sections.”) All this made the future murky and part of the Section-in-Formation Business meeting was devoted to explaining what ASA policy meant for HOS.

L&N chose to cover every eventuality, first availing the section-in-formation of the “grandfathered” exemption by sending on September 29, 1998 to Jim Morrill, then in charge of ASA membership, a membership list for 212 members for HOS, pointing out that “this now qualifies HOS for Section status.”

Between September 1998 and October 1999, L&N, in consultation with the HOS Interim Coordinating Committee, submitted the section by-laws for approval by COS so they could then go to the membership for a vote—all of which was accomplished in September 1999.

L&N and other supporters spent the time between the 1999 Annual Meeting and September 30, the close of the ASA membership year, in one last desperate push to get everyone they had ever known to become a member or buy a gift membership for another ASA member to move HOS to full Section Status with over 300 members. Amidst the now usual rejections, L&N were also cheered by help from people that they didn't know. One magnificent response was from new section member Ruben Rumbaut (Michigan State University) who sent a mass email outreach saying, “these women are sending these emails at 2 a.m. in the morning; help them!” and including his delightful sense of the significance of the history of sociology:

I think what's past is prologue, that origins shape destinies, that an unexamined sociology is not worth living, and that an ahistorical sociology is blind (like the pilot flying a 747 at full speed through an electrical storm, which causes the plane's instruments to go haywire, so the pilot gets on the PA system and says: "Ladies and gentlemen, we're lost, but you'll be glad to know we're making excellent time").

That concern with our roots as a discipline -- and the conviction that no sociology worth its salt is ignorant of its social origins--underlies the . . . effort . . . to form a "History of Sociology" Section within the American Sociological Association.

On October 1, 1999, the History of Sociology emerged from the administrative gauntlet as a full section—news that was announced in the first newsletter, which Lengermann christened "Time Lines" (Appendix ix). With a membership of 312 for the 1999-2000 year, the Section held its first elections, choosing Helena Znaniecki Lopata as first President, Michael R. Hill, President-elect; Kathleen Slobin, Secretary-Treasurer; Mary Jo Deegan, Susan Hoecker-Drysdale, Terry Nichols Clark, Edward Tiryakian, Brenda Hoke, and Eleanor Townsley, Council Members, and Robert Woodberry, Student Representative. The Section was entitled to one paper session and a business meeting and chose to combine its business meeting with a roundtable session. The program presented by the new Section fulfilled the aspirations of many of the Section organizers: with papers on the social settlements, academics in the US government in the 1960s, and the ecofeminism of Charlotte Perkins Gilman; the roundtable session featured titled like "The Intellectual and Social Organization of ASA 1990-97," "Attention Deficit Disorder: The Sociological History of a Disease," and "Consequences of State Censorship: Western Migration of Polish Sociologists." And Joe Feagin in the 2000 Presidential Address gave significant attention to the importance of the history of sociology in his call for a return to sociology's social justice tradition.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a number of white women, black men, and black women sociologists as well as a few white male sociologists did much innovative sociological research and at the same time took strong informed positions in regard to ending the oppression of women, black Americans, the poor, and immigrants. Among the now forgotten women and black male sociologists were Jane Addams, Florence Kelley, Emily Greene Balch, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and W. E. B. Du Bois. All were practicing sociologists, and all developed important sociological ideas and research projects. Most were members of the American Sociological Society (Deegan 1988).

. . . [I]t is time for the discipline to fully recover and celebrate its historical roots in a sociology committed to social justice in ideals and practice. In recent decades no sociologist has published even one substantial article in a major sociology journal (e.g., the *American Journal of Sociology*, *American Sociological Review*, and *Sociological Theory*) on the sociological ideas of the women sociologists in the founding generation (Lengermann and Niebrugge-Brantley 2001). It is time for us sociologists to remedy this neglect and help to reclaim the important ideas of those women sociologists and sociologists of color who are among the founders of our discipline. (2001: 6-7, 10)

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#### Appendix I:

From *Footnotes* July/August 1996 Vol. 24 Number 6—HOS makes first public appearance as an idea

## Section on the History of Sociology is Proposed

**I**nvestigations of the history of sociology have been one of most long standing and influential areas of research and teaching in the discipline. Yet as we approach the end of the twentieth century and recognize a century and half of sociological work, there is no section in the American Sociological Association devoted to bringing together this body of scholarship.

The term "the history of sociology" is most frequently used to refer to the chronicle of the discipline's general theories and theorists. But other issues investigated in this scholarship include: methodological advances, the politics of the profession, the discovery and introduction of forgotten theorists, biographies of significant contributors to the disciplines subfields, accounts of departments and of the work of applied sociologists, and historiographic probings of the construction of and challenges to the

canon of "sociology's founding texts."

The group proposing the establishment of a section on the history of sociology under the leadership of co-organizers Patricia Lengermann and Jill Niebrugge-Brantley will meet on August 17, 8:30-10:15 p.m. during the ASA Annual Meeting in New York. Please check Final Program for room assignment. A formal statement of intent and petition with at least fifty signatures of ASA members needs to be presented to the Committee on Sections and Council in January. Lengermann, Research Professor at The George Washington University, and Brantley, at Wells College and Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press, may be reached by e-mail at [PML4@cornell.edu](mailto:PML4@cornell.edu), or by mail (academic year) 1996-97 at 613 Utica Street, Ithaca, NY 14850, or by phone (607) 277-7396. □

## PROBATIONARY STATUS THREAT LIFTED FOR NOW

On January 13, 2018, I received an ASA email saying that our section, because its membership is below the 200 mark, was in danger of being put into probationary status: a precursor to eliminating the section. As you will note from reading Pat and Jill's founding history of the section, certain ASA members and administrative staff have given a disparaging eye toward small sections. Preeminent among the various reasons is that too many sections will contribute to extreme fragmentation of the profession and the ensuing loss of a core axis of sociology as an intellectual discipline. And it is easier to pick on small sections than large ones to reduce this perceived threat of fragmentation. As Pat and Jill note, there was fear from the very founding of HOS in 1996-1999 that it would be small.

Fear of small sections has continued if not increased over the years leading to a 2017 ASA policy decision to automatically trigger probationary consideration if a section has less than 200 members in three of the last five years. HOS was targeted in 2018 and I am including below the email from Kristine Ajrouch announcing that decision. I discussed this with Peter Kivisto who as the previous HOS Chair and also a former member of ASA Council had learned that some ASA leaders are opposed to small sections and wish to limit the creation of any new sections. (I believe there is a current moratorium on creating new sections.). Current ASA policy does permit avoiding a probationary status if certain conditions are met. As a small but active and productive section, we satisfy several of those conditions. Had the ASA Committee on Sections actually read Peter's 2017 annual report they would have understood this. So I prepared a response (see below) that addresses each of the relevant conditions. I also sent them a copy of the very fine rationale prepared by Martin Bulmer two years ago for the section and am including that below as well. I am happy to report that our response was well received and that the ASA Committee on Sections (COS) has decided to shift from an annual review to one every three years for possible probationary status. This means that HOS will be reviewed next in 2021 rather than 2019. I am including below the email announcing that decision.

This was a frustrating and time-consuming process and it is only because we are an active and productive section that we survived. I think that the quality of our efforts helped convince the COS that an annual review is a waste of time. For our part, we just need to continue our important work of bringing a critical, self-reflective, historical understanding of the practice of sociology to enrich our intellectual discipline.

David L. Swartz

Email exchange:

On Jan 13, 2018, at 6:55 AM, Mark Fernando <mfernando@asanet.org> wrote:

The following email is being sent on behalf of Kristine J. Ajrouch, Chair of the ASA Committee on Sections

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Dear Section on History of Sociology Leaders,

I am writing to inform you that the ASA Council will be considering your section for probationary status at its upcoming meeting in March.

Per the ASA policy passed in March 2017, your section is automatically considered because it had less than 200 members, excluding gift memberships, in three of the last five years (Criterion 2). No section is exempt from this automatic review if it fails to meet the guidelines articulated in the policy. Please see below for the full policy text.

The ASA Council determines whether a section is placed into probationary status, and Council is willing to consider arguments about why your section should be allowed to be non-compliant with association rules. Your section is invited to submit a statement explaining why your section should not be placed on probation by February 1, 2018. This statement can include information and evidence of the vitality of your section, plans for increasing membership, and any additional reasons why your section should not be placed on probation.

We also invite section chairs to schedule an informational phone call with Mark Fernando, the ASA staff member charged with coordinating ASA's sections, and myself. If you would like to schedule a call, please let us know your availability from the following dates and times: Tuesday, January 23 from 2-4 PM or Friday, January 26 2-4 PM.

COS and Council will review your submitted statements and inform you of the Council's decision after the March 2018 meeting.

Please do not hesitate to let us know if you have any questions.

Best,

Kristine J. Ajrouch  
Chair, ASA Committee on Sections

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1/30/18

To: ASA Council  
From: David L. Swartz  
On behalf of the History of Sociology Section

I am writing in response to the January 13, 2018 email sent by Kristine J. Ajrouch, Chair of the ASA Committee on Section, via Mark Fernando, ASA Director of Governance and Administration. That email indicates that the ASA Council will be considering the History of Sociology Section for probationary status because of its small size at its upcoming meeting in March. The HoS section vigorously opposes such a measure because we exhibit considerable vitality and offer an important service to the profession of sociology in spite of our small size as I will document below. I have consulted through a series of emails with the HoS Council members and they are supportive of the responses offered here.

Many of the responses below can be readily found on the section web site, in the 2016-2017 Annual Report submitted November 2017 by the past-chair Peter Kivisto, and in "The Rationale of the ASA History of Sociology Section" submitted two years ago by the 2015-2016 HoS Chair Martin Bulmer. Those documents should already be in your possession, but I am attaching additional copies just in case they are not.

The Ajrouch email quotes from the Section Manual the following: "Sections with fewer than 300 members may be dissolved by the ASA Council if they fail to demonstrate their continued vitality. Vitality can be demonstrated by meeting the following criteria..." I offer responses in CAPS to each.

- Meaningful activities as reflected in Annual Meeting sessions, newsletters, or other initiatives.
  - o THESE HAVE BEEN DOCUMENTED IN THE ANNUAL REPORT FROM PETER KIVISTO FOR 2016-2017. THE SECTION HELD A SESSION AT THE 2017 ANNUAL MEETING AND PRODUCED A NEWSLETTER IN 2017. OUR WEB SITE SHOWS THAT THE SECTION HAS PRODUCED NEWSLETTERS FOR THE LAST 14 CONSECUTIVE YEARS.

- An annual business meeting with at least 25 Section members present.
  - o THIS OCCURRED AT THE 2017 ANNUAL MEETING IN MONTREAL AND IS DOCUMENTED IN THE KIVISTO REPORT, WHICH WAS SENT TO YOU 11/20/17. 19 MEMBERS WERE PRESENT AT THE BUSINESS MEETING.
- An annual Section council meeting.
  - o THIS WAS HELD AT THE MONTREAL ASA AND DOCUMENTED IN THE KIVISTO REPORT.
- An annual report that describes the business and council meetings, activities of the year, plans for the following year, and includes a copy of all Section newsletters for that year.
  - o THIS APPEARS IN THE KIVISTO REPORT SUBMITTED IN NOVEMBER 2017.
- A Section-approved operating budget and sound management of operating budget.
  - o CHRISTIAN DAYE HAS KEPT CAREFUL RECORDS OF THE FINANCES OF THE SECTION. THE BUDGET WAS REVIEW IN THE MONTREAL BUSINESS MEETING.
- A democratic nominations and election process.
  - o ELECTIONS WERE HELD IN 2017 AND I JUST SUBMITTED A SLATE OF CANDIDATES FOR THE 2018 ELECTIONS. ELECTIONS HAVE BEEN REGULARLY HELD IN PREVIOUS YEARS.
- Each Section must have an annual Business Meeting at the ASA Annual Meeting with a quorum of at least 25 Section members present. A report of the meeting, including its agenda and a count of the people present, shall become part of the Section's annual report.
  - o THIS WAS ALL SUCCESSFULLY CARRIED OUT.
- The council of each Section must have at least one meeting a year, which is normally held during the ASA Annual Meeting. If the Section does not use the time-slot allocated in the annual meeting program, the Section Council is responsible for making other arrangements for a Council meeting. The date, time, and location of the meeting must be determined at least one month prior to the meeting. A report of the meeting becomes part of the Section's annual report."
  - o ALL OF THESE CRITERIA WERE SUCCESSFULLY MET AND DOCUMENTED IN THE KIVISTO REPORT.

The Manual further specifies several negative features that might justify probationary status for a small section. None of them apply to the practices of the HoS section over the last several years. Again, I supply responses in CAPS to each.

- failed to demonstrate meaningful section activities, such as active annual meeting sessions, newsletters, or other initiatives;
  - o WE HAVE SUCCESSFULLY DONE ALL OF THESE.
- failed to hold an annual business meeting at the Annual ASA meeting that had least 25 verified section members present;
  - o 19 MEMBERS WERE PRESENT FOR THE 2017 BUSINESS MEETING.
- failed to hold an annual Section council meeting at the Annual ASA meeting (with the date either occurring at the ASA offered council time or at an alternative time such that the date, time, and location of the meeting are determined at least one month prior to the meeting);
  - o WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY HELD SECTION COUNCIL MEETING.
- failed to submit an on-time and/or adequate annual report describing the business and council meetings, activities of the year, plans for the following year, and including a copy of all Section newsletters for that year;
  - o THIS WAS SUBMITTED IN NOVEMBER 2017.



- failed to approve a Section operating budget;
  - o THE SECTION OPERATING BUDGET HAS BEEN REVIEWED BY THE SECTION COUNCIL.
  
- failed to demonstrate sound management of their operating budget by even temporarily going into deficit;
  - o CHRISTIAN DAYE HAS DEMONSTRATED SOLID MANAGEMENT OF THE BUDGET OVER THE LAST THREE YEARS.
  
- failed to hold competitive elections for one or more of open elected positions;
  - o WE HAVE HELD COMPETITIVE ELECTIONS OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS.
  
- failed to include at least 1 member who has never held office in the section among the slate of candidates competing for elected section positions."
  - o WE HAVE DONE THIS CONSISTENTLY IN PREVIOUS YEARS. FOR THE 2018 ELECTIONS AT LEAST THREE CANDIDATES HAVE NEVER HELD OFFICE IN THE SECTION.

Finally, several HoS Council members offer additional reasons that point up the vitality of the section.

It is noteworthy that two members of our Council hold important editorial positions for the new journal *Serendipities: Journal for the Sociology and History of the Social Sciences*. George Steinmetz is an editor, and Christian Daye, an associate editor.

The HoS Section is one of the more international sections of the ASA. Two recent chairs, Jennifer Platt and Martin Bulmer, have been from outside North America, as was the previous Secretary/Treasurer Christian Dayé for three years, who is now a member of Council.

In "The Rationale of the ASA History of Sociology Section" Martin Bulmer (2015-2016 HoS Chair) argues that "Every discipline needs to remember its past to honor its present condition and to point directions for the future." Bulmer further observes that "The history of sociology ... provides the discipline with its working memory. It is central to the discipline and crucial to the reflexivity that defines the sociological imagination." In other words, the section is not only interested in cultivating the memory of the classic founders (e.g. Durkheim, Weber, and Marx) and recovering the forgotten ancestors, such as Du Bois and Addams, - both worthy enterprises - but also studying sociology sociologically. This is one place in the ASA where a reflexive practice of sociology is esteemed. Alvin Gouldner, Peter Berger, Pierre Bourdieu, and Michael Burawoy, though from rather different perspectives, all argue that a reflexive practice of sociology should be an integral part of the practice of sociology. Bourdieu in particular argues that a social history of sociology is necessary to enhance its degree of objectivity. The HoS attempts to make good on this mission.

Of course, HoS is not the only section that deals with historical concerns. There is, for example, the Comparative and Historical Sociology Section, and we do have some overlapping membership. But HoS is the only section in the ASA where the discipline and practice of sociology itself is the object of historical reflection and with the expressed purpose of enhancing the sociological imagination.

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THE RATIONALE OF THE ASA HISTORY OF SOCIOLOGY SECTION by Martin Bulmer

[1] This is the mission statement of the History of Sociology section.

The purpose of the Section on the History of Sociology is to provide a forum for sociologists and other scholars interested in the study of the historically specific processes shaping the development of sociology as a profession, an academic discipline, an organization, a community, and an intellectual endeavour. The Section serves its members as a structure (1) to disseminate information of professional interest, (2) to assist in the exchange of ideas and the search for research collaborators, (3) to obtain information about the location of archival materials, (4) to support efforts to expand such research resources and to preserve documents important to the history of sociology, and (5) to ensure that the scholarship of this group can be shared with the profession through programming at both regional and national meetings.

[2] The history of sociology is the memory of sociology - when it comes to theory, methods and the people who have spent their lives as sociologists. This is the rationale for the section, and it serves the ASA not just as a small and remarkably stable section of high quality, but as a window onto issues of wider significance. While there are relatively few specialists on the history of sociology, the history of the discipline is important for the whole of the ASA. In the past ten years, the chairs of the section have been Ed Tiryakian [Duke], Eleanor Townsley [Holyoke], Craig Calhoun [NYU and LSE], Gary Alan Fine [Northwestern], Richard Swedberg [Cornell], Charles Camic [Northwestern], Jennifer Platt [Sussex,UK], Alan Sica [Penn State], George Ritzer [Maryland] and Neil Gross [UBC]. HOS is vital to the collective identity of the discipline.

Every discipline needs to remember its past to honor its present condition and to point directions for the future. As a field, we often rediscover important figures from the history of the discipline and rereading and reconsidering the writings of these theorists encourage us to rediscover those topics that we have lost. The most dramatic recent case has been the magnum opus of Aldon D. Morris, [The Scholar Denied: W E B Du Bois and the birth of modern sociology](#) [University of California Press, 2015] which was the subject of a panel at the Chicago meetings in 2015 and will also be featured in the 2016 meetings. Morris insists that we consider the writings of W.E.B. DuBois not merely as a token, but as an intellectual progenitor in several substantive areas. A similar point could be made about the work of past section chair Mary Jo Deegan over a decade ago in drawing attention to the significance of Jane Addams for the history of sociology. Every field needs to be aware of its past and needs to continue to rethink that past.

Our most important contributions to the ASA is that the section provides a forum for those professionally involved in doing research on the history of the discipline, to share research findings and perspectives on the past in order to better understand the way in which our scholarship and our discipline have developed. The history of sociology is also fundamental to how we enter into the joint sociological endeavour today, and provides the discipline with its working memory. It is central to the discipline and crucial to the reflexivity that defines the sociological imagination.

Three works connected to the section exemplify this contribution. Craig Calhoun, chair of the section in 2009-2010, edited [Sociology in America: A History](#) to celebrate the centenary of the ASA, published by the University of Chicago Press. Three other past chairs of the section, Charles Camic, Neil Gross and Alan Sica, contributed to this 880 page examination of the development of the discipline in the United States. The

section also makes annual awards to signal distinguished publications. In 2012 the section's distinguished book award went to Lawrence A. Scaff, whose work Max Weber in America [Princeton University Press, 2011] threw original light on Weber's American connections which were little known. Another prize winner of our section in 2014 was Marcel Fournier, a member of our Section Council from 2012 to 2015, for his monograph Emile Durkheim: A Biography [Polity, 2012], which attracted much comment from sociologists around the world.

The section has also made important contributions to the preservation of the discipline's archival holdings. Led by former section chairs Charles Camic and Alan Sica, an action group persuaded the ASA that it should not destroy over 600 boxes of journal-related printed materials sent to ASA journals between 1990 and 2010. The association could not afford to store these materials permanently, so an alternative means of preserving them had to be found in the interest of future historical research. ASA administrative staff secured an NSF grant that will guarantee the digitization of the historically important materials within the preserved boxes of records. Without vigorous Section participation, this achievement would never have occurred.

[3] Why do we consistently stay on the smaller side in terms of members?

The section has had around 200 members for many years; this membership is stable and strong. Our influence on the discipline is wider than our numbers might suggest. Past HoS section panels on Jane Addams, on the influence of the media, and in 2009 about DuBois demonstrate this. History of sociology is not a subject which is taught in graduate school, unlike the state of affairs in Psychology, and few positions are advertised in the field. History of sociology at the margins overlaps with sociological theory and with comparative and historical sociology, both of which have large and flourishing sections within ASA. We co-exist comfortably in this mixed economy of sub-fields and sections, while continuing to insist that history of sociology is a viable sub-discipline, with international links to the ISA section and to journals in the field, organised around a committed band of scholars.

Martin Bulmer  
HoS Chair, 2015-2016

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March 26 email from ASA Committee on Sections

Dear Section on History of Sociology Leaders,

Thank you for taking the time to submit a thoughtful report to the ASA Committee on Sections (COS) and the Council making the case for your section's continued vibrancy. I'm pleased to report that the case was clear and ASA Council has voted NOT to put the section on probation. We know this evaluation period was tough for the section, and we strongly encourage you to continue to think hard about ways to increase section membership. I know the COS is glad to partner with you on that effort, as am I and Mark Fernando, ASA's Director of Governance and Administration.

As Council went through this first round of review for section probationary status, we realized that undertaking this process annually doesn't make much sense in practice. Not much is likely to change year to year, so we would likely end up in exactly the same place next year, with more time being spent on this review process instead of the important work of building the section's membership. As such, Council amended the probation policy to require Council review every three years instead of annually. That means the next review will be in 2021 instead of 2019.

That decision was predicated upon an assumption that COS will continue to do a comprehensive review of each section annually through consideration of annual reports. Council has asked that COS do a careful review of the annual report questionnaire to ensure that it includes questions that are most useful in doing such an evaluation. We hope you will partner with COS during the annual review process by submitting the requested information and engaging in discussion about strategies for growth and development should that be warranted.

Thank you for your service to the discipline and the Association. It is genuinely appreciated.

Warmly,

Nancy

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<sup>i</sup> It should be noted that the annual meeting's final program itself, as opposed to its call for papers, would typically list in its topical index 10-12 paper sessions on the "History of Sociology/Social Thought"; but that accounting was based on whether organizers for any individual session surveying the papers they selected picked that categorization as one of three descriptors chosen from a longer list.