

2023 Section Annual Report: Part 1 for Biosociology and Evolutionary Sociology

Introduction

Annual reports are used by the Sections Committee to assess the health of a Section, measure the Section's vitality, and identify processes, programs, or initiatives that could serve as a model for other Sections. In addition, they serve to provide institutional memory, socialize new Section leaders, and promote transparency to Section members.

This annual report covers the period of Section activity from September 2022 to August 2023 and a fiscal year from January 2023 to December 2023. This portion of the report will be shared publicly.

Section Governance

Provide details of your Section's governance activity during the period between September 2022 and August 2023.

Business Meeting

Copy and paste below (or attach separately) the agenda and draft/approved meeting minutes from the Section business meeting which include a count of members present and summary of decisions made at this meeting. Minutes are not a transcript of proceedings, but a listing of what discussions took place and official actions taken.

Business Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome for new council members Seth Abrutyn and Elizabeth Wrigley-Field.
2. Secretary-Treasurers Report submitted and accepted.
3. Announcement of Section Award for the Best Publication. The award went to M. Eiermann, E. Wrigley-Field, J.J. Feigenbaum, J. Helgertz, E. Fernandez, and C.C. Boen. Racial Disparities in Mortality During the 1918 Influenza Pandemic in United States Cities. *Demography*, 2022, 59(5), pp 1953-1979.
4. Proposal for a new name and new description for the section. In order to increase membership in the section, Dalton Conley introduced a motion to simplify the section name to Biology and Sociology and to use a clearer description of the wide range of interests across the section. The motion was seconded by Guang Guo. After a discussion of the pros and cons of such a change, the motion was adopted unanimously by the section members, with one abstention. Dalton Conley was directed to prepare such proposed changes to be submitted after council approval to the ASA meetings office for inclusion on the section ballot for 2024.

Council Meeting

Copy and paste below (or attach separately) the agenda and draft/approved meeting minutes of all council meetings. Minutes must include a list of council members present and a summary of decisions made. Minutes are not a transcript of proceedings, but a listing of what discussions took place and official actions taken.

1. Welcome for new council members Seth Abrutyn and Elizabeth Wrigley-Field.
2. Secretary-Treasurer Report submitted and accepted.
3. Announcement of Best Publication Award

4. In order to increase membership in the section, Dalton Conley proposed to simplify the section name to Biology and Society and to have a clearer description of the wide range of interest across the section. The motion was seconded by Guang Guo. After discussion among the council members, the motion was carried unanimously with one abstention. Dalton Conley was directed to present his proposal at the business meeting.

Awards

Provide a list of Section awards and awardees conferred in the past year.

Announcement of Section Award for the Best Publication. The award went to M. Eiermann, E. Wrigley-Field, J.J. Feigenbaum, J. Helgertz, E. Fernandez, and C.C. Boen. Racial Disparities in Mortality During the 1918 Influenza Pandemic in United States Cities. *Demography*, 2022, 59(5), pp 1953-1979.

2023 Finances

Provide a narrative on how the 2023 budget matched with actual expenses and income from 2023. Please account for any substantive differences.

The section budget allocation was \$679. There were expenses of annual meeting costs, \$381, and award plaque, \$61. The result was a gain of \$237. The beginning balance was \$867, with a gain of \$237, for an ending balance of \$1,104.

The Previous Year

Describe Section activities during the period between September 2022 and August 2023.

Provide an overview of the Section's communications with its members and include explanation of how your communication strategy meets the goals and values of the Section. Include links to the section website, newsletters, and any other electronic media used.

Now that ASA Connect has been discontinued, we will return to using communications via the section listserv. We also have a section website, <https://sites.google.com/view/asa-ebs>. We also have a twitter account, @ASA_EBS. All three serve to keep our section members well informed about section announcements and activities, and to allow section members to inform others about their own achievements, such as new publications.

Describe the Section's diversity, equity, and inclusion goals. What steps were taken this year to achieve those goals?

One of our two section sessions at the Philadelphia meeting was devoted to the topic of gender and biosociology. One goal at that session was to make it possible for all ASA members attending the meeting to become more familiar with current biosocial research in this very controversial area. The session was attended by a large number of section and non-section members interested in this area of research, as well as in the diversity and equity issues raised by this research.

Provide an overview of the section's programming at the annual meeting and include explanation of how this programming meets the goals and values of the section (e.g. intellectual exchange, professional networking, mentoring, inclusion).

Session: Gender and Biosociology

The intersection of biology, social structure, and environment is a critical nexus for understanding the meaning of gender and biology, and the (re)production of gender inequality. The relationship between feminism and biology has been uneven and not always harmonious, but there is tremendous potential to enhance social scientific understandings of biology and of gender through feminist approaches to biosocial research. These papers seek to creatively meld feminist perspectives with sociology research that analyzes, applies, and critiques biosocial research.

Session organizer and president, Karen Springer, Rutgers University

Papers:

Biofeminism and the Epistemic Politics of Sex and Gender in Policy, Madeleine Pape, University of Lausanne.

Notes from an Interdisciplinary Collaborative Study of Sex, Gender, and Complex Disease, Laura Carpenter Vanderbilt University; Lea Davis, Vanderbilt University; Barbara Stringer, Northwestern University, and Digna Velez Edwards, Vanderbilt University Medical Center.

The Heteronormalization of Sex Cells: Blood, Genes, and the Transmission of Birthright Citizenship, Chloe Sario, Yale University

Session: Opportunities and Challenges in the Use of Biological Data in Social Science Research

In social science surveys, biological data such as biomarkers, genetic and epigenetic information, and brain imaging data are now widely available. How does the use of this biological data help us learn about social structure and social processes? How can we better measure and predict individual outcomes using this novel biological data than we can using survey data alone? What methodological challenges do sociologists face and need to address while using this data? This session covers innovative work that uses biological data to study how social and biological mechanisms interact to shape individual outcomes, social networks, and more broadly social stratification.

Session organizer and president: Byungkyu Lee, New York University.

Papers:

Aspiration, Family Resources, Genomes, and Verbal Ability. Guang Guo, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill; Meng-Jung Lin, National Taiwan University; and Adam Gregory Lilly, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.

Genomic Social Demography: The Dynamic Relationship between Race and Ancestry in the U.S. Fumiya Uchikoshi, Princeton University; Sam Trejo, Princeton University.

Partnership Trajectories, Genes, and Well-being in Early to Middle Adulthood. Meng-Jung Lin, National Taiwan University.

The wide intellectual range of these session papers demonstrates clearly the cross-disciplinary breadth of interests between sociology and the biological sciences that this section is committed to. At a time when many question the very idea of sociology as a science, it is crucial to maintain such a cross-disciplinary commitment within a section of the ASA.

At the Philadelphia meeting, we also were part of Joint Reception with other sections like Medical Sociology and Mathematical Sociology so that our members could meet and network with other ASA members in related areas.

Provide an overview of the Section's programmatic activities outside of the Annual Meeting (e.g. webinars, networking events, mentoring initiatives, resources for dissemination) and include explanation of this programming meets the goals and values of the Section.

None planned at present.