

Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association

40th Annual Meeting - February 19th and 20th 2009

Sociology in Alabama and Mississippi:
Challenges and Opportunities for the 21st
Century

Hosted by Jacksonville State University, Department of Sociology and Social Work
Houston Cole Library Conference Center, 11th Floor

A-MSA 40th Annual Meeting

Sociology in Alabama and Mississippi: Challenges and Opportunities for the 21st Century

Jacksonville State University, February 19-20, 2009

"Although social change cannot come overnight, we must always work as though it were a possibility in the morning."

Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Be ashamed to die unless you have won some victory for humanity."

Horace Mann

"People who like to avoid shocking discoveries, who prefer to believe that society is just what they were taught in Sunday School, who like the safety of the rules and maxims of . . . the world taken for granted should stay away from sociology."

Peter Berger

"We can only live these changes: We cannot think our way to humanity. Everyone of us, and every group with which we live and work, must become the model of the era, which we desire to create. The many models which will develop should give each one of us an environment in which we can celebrate our potential---and discover the way into a more humane world."

Ivan Illich

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	3
Acknowledgements	4
2008-2009 Executive Committee	5
2008-2009 EC Members At Large	6
2008-2009 Committees	7
Past Presidents of A-MSA	8
Past A-MSA Award Recipients	9
Program	
Thursday, February 19th	10
Friday, February 20th	14
Abstracts	17
Notes Pages	28
Houston Cole Library Conference Center	
Floor Plan	32

Acknowledgments

The 40th annual meeting would not be possible without the support of the following contributors, and for that we sincerely thank you.

*National Strategic Planning & Analysis Research Center**

*JSU Enrollment Management and Student Affairs**

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Mary Anthony, Jacksonville State University
Erin Robinson, Jacksonville State University
Heather Cummings, Jacksonville State University

E-Journal (A-MSA Online Sociological Review)

Editor: Gary Long, The University of Mississippi
Deputy Editors
Elise S. Lake, The University of Mississippi
Minjoo Oh, The University of Mississippi
Ming Tsui, Millsaps College

Awards Committee

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Kimberly P. Brackett, Auburn University Montgomery
Gary Long, The University of Mississippi
Dennis L. Peck, The University of Alabama
Duane Gill, Mississippi State University

Past Presidents of the A-MSA

1969	Dr. Harold F. Kaufman, Mississippi State University
1970	Dr. Harry E. Dickerson, Samford University
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2007	Dr. Kimberly P. Brackett, Auburn University Montgomery
2008	Dr. Domenico "Mimmo" Parisi, Mississippi State University
2009	Dr. David G. LoConto, Jacksonville State University

* In 1978, no fall meeting was held since the annual meeting was moved to January.

Past A-MSA Award Recipients

1984	Dr. Ernst Borinski	Memorial Tribute
1985	Dr. Harold F. Kaufman	Tribute
1986	Dr. N. Wilbur Carpenter	Tribute
1987	Dr. Harry Dickinson	Tribute
1988	Professor H. S. Abdul-Hadi	Distinguished Service
1991	Dr. Donald R. South	Outstanding Achievement
1992	Dr. J. Selwyn Hollingsworth	Distinguished Service
1994	Dr. Arthur G. Cosby	Outstanding Achievement
1994	Dr. John E. Dunkelberger	Distinguished Service
1996	Dr. Columbus Hopper	Distinguished Service
1997	Dr. John Saunders	Distinguished Service
1998	Dr. Roy Brigance	Distinguished Service
2000	Dr. Danny E. Harrison	Distinguished Service
2000	Dr. Billy T. Lindsey	Distinguished Service
2002	Professor Mary Kuhn	Distinguished Service
2005	Dr. Donald W. Bogie	Distinguished Service
2006	Dr. Ming Tsui	Distinguished Service

*The 40th Annual Meeting of the
Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association*

*Houston Cole Library Conference Center
Jacksonville State University*

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2009

Registration **11:30 – 4:00**
Room 1103B

Welcome and Program Comments **12:30 – 12:50**
Room 1103A

David G. LoConto, A-MSA President
William Meehan, President, Jacksonville State University

Book Publishers Display **1:00 – 4:00**
Room 1103B

Session 1 Challenges and Opportunities for Teaching Sociology **1:00 – 2:15**
Room 1103C

Presider

Tina Hebert Deshotels, Jacksonville State University

Panel Participants

Annice Yarber, Auburn University Montgomery
Stephen Parker, The University of Montevallo
Shelly McGrath, The University of Alabama, Birmingham
Robert B. Jenkot, The University of Alabama

Session 2 **Science, Technology, and Its Uses** **1:00 – 2:15**
Room 1101C

Presider

Michael Taquino, Mississippi State University

Presentations

Communication Technologies: The Effect on Social Interaction and Social Capital Formation Among College Students, Zach Tatum, Angela B. Jenkins, Kelly Cantrell, Jeffery Jones, Matt Simpson, Terry Grayson, Delta State University

Understanding Identity Theft: A Test of Routine Activities Theory, Craig T. Robertson and Lisa Keys-Mathews, The University of North Alabama

An Old Sociological Debate in a New Era: Applying the Knowledge of Science, Values, and Objectivity, from One Generation into Another, Geoffrey L. McIntyre, Troy University Montgomery

Session 3 **Challenges and Opportunities for Sociology Programs** **2:30 – 3:45**
Room 1103A

Presider

David G. LoConto, Jacksonville State University

Panel Participants

Frederick A. Myers, West Alabama University
Kimberly P. Brackett, Auburn University Montgomery
Nicole Carr, The University of South Alabama
Theresa Davidson, Samford University
Xiaohe Xu, Mississippi State University

Session 4 **Race, Ethnicity, and Inequality Issues** **2:30 – 3:45**
Room 1103C

Presider

Todd Matthews, The University of West Georgia

Presentations

Mississippi in Black and White: Racial Differences in Attitudes toward Race-Specific Policies, Deadric T. Williams and John Yu, Mississippi State University

Us v. Them: The Cycles of Nativism in the United States 1795-2007, Janet

E. Smith, Troy University Montgomery

Creating An Effective Housing Assessment Plan: The Connection Between Social Capital And Housing In Lambert, Mississippi, Julie Green, Delta State University

Session 5 **Poster Session** **2:30 – 3:45**
Room 1102

Presider

Steven M. Grice, Mississippi State University

Posters

Folk Nation: The Gangster Disciples, Kenneth Lewis, Hinds Community College

The Coffee House Subculture in Jackson, MS, Trish Pohlhaus, Hinds Community College

Race and Politics, Ryan Cannatella, Hinds Community College

Tattooing Gender, Kara Marie Voorhest, Jacksonville State University

Session 6 **Issues in Gender** **4:00 – 5:15**
Room 1101C

Presider

Marie Sheneman, Fairhope, Alabama

Presentations

Gender vs. Decomposed Bem Scale, Gregory S. Kowalski and Arthur S. Wilke, Auburn University

Heavy Metal and Hegemony: Gender Performance in a Subcultural Context, Ben Hutcherson, The University of Mississippi

Does Motherhood Alter Dating Behaviors and Expectations? An Exploration, Kimberly P. Brackett, Auburn University Montgomery

Religion, Patriarchy, and Identity: An intersectional exploration of surname changing when a man finds his wife, Marie Sheneman, Fairhope, Alabama.

Session 7 Health and Medicine I **4:00 – 5:15**
Room 1103A

Presider

Adrian F. Aveni, Jacksonville State University

Presentations

The Effectiveness of the Biomedical Enrichment and Recruitment (BEAR) Program at USA-COM, Willette Brye, The University of South Alabama Center for Healthy Communities.

Friending Ana: Pro-Anorexia on the Internet, Brandon Christian, The University of Southern Mississippi.

Emergency Departments as Medical Homes, Carley Jefcoat, Delta State University.

Session 8 The Ins/ Outs of Teaching and Scholarly Oriented Publishing **4:00 – 5:15**
Room 1103C

Presider

Dennis L. Peck, The University of Alabama

Panel Participants

Charles E. Faupel, Auburn University
Robert Jenkot, The University of Alabama
Ronald Jones; Auburn University Montgomery
Representative of Pearson Publishing
Representative of Cengage Learning
Representative of McGraw-Hill

Executive Committee Meeting **4:15 – 5:00**
Room 1102

PRE-BANQUET STUDENT AND FACULTY SOCIAL **5:30 – 6:30**
12th Floor

BANQUET
Room 1101B

6:30 – 8:30

Presider

David G. LoConto, Jacksonville State University

Keynote Address

Fran Curry, First Priority of Alabama

“Sociology and Christianity: Enemies or Bedfellows in Today’s Society.”

Presentation of Awards

Student Poster Competition Recognition & Award Presentation

Steven M. Grice, Mississippi State University

Undergraduate Student Paper Competition Recognition & Award Presentation

Tina Hebert Deshotels, Jacksonville State University

Graduate Student Paper Competition Recognition & Award Presentation

Thomas M. Kersen, Jackson State University

Door Prize Drawings

Emily Carden, Jacksonville State University

Jennifer M. Shabel, Jacksonville State University

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2009

Registration
Room 1103B

8:30 – 10:30

Breakfast Pastries & Beverages
Room 1103B

8:30 – 10:30

Book Publishers Display
Room 1103B

8:30 – 11:30

Session 9 **Advancing the Art and Science of Survey Research** **9:00 – 10:15**
1101C

Presider

John J. Green, Delta State University

Panel Participants

John Edwards, Ph.D., Coordinator, Wolfgang Frese Survey Research Laboratory,
Mississippi State University Social Science Research Center

John J. Green, PhD., Director, Delta State University Institute for Community-
Based Research

Carley Jefcoat, Hearin Fellow in Community Development, Delta State
University Division of Social Sciences

Albert Nylander III, Ph.D. Chair, Delta State University Division of Social
Sciences

Session 10 **Teaching Introduction to Sociology On-line** **9:00 – 10:15**
Room 1103A

Presider

Rodney N. Friery, Jacksonville State University

Panel Participants

Adrian F. Aveni - Jacksonville State University

Jerri Bullard – The University of North Alabama

Carol Chenault - Calhoun Community College

Rodney N. Friery, Jacksonville State University

Session 11 **Education and Community** **9:00 – 10:15**
Room 1103C

Presider

Tina Hebert Deshotels, Jacksonville State University

Presentations

Assignments That Work: Personal Course Reflection, Marie Sheneman,
Fairhope, Alabama.

*The Effects of Merging Schools Within the Greenville School District on
Students' Social Capital*, Elliot Meador, Delta State University

Community-Based Assessment of Farmer's Markets In the MS Delta,
Miranda Walker and J. R. Love, Delta State University Institute for
Community-Based Research

Session 12 Health and Medicine II
Room 1101C

10:30 – 11:45

Presider

Geoffrey L. McIntyre, Troy University Montgomery

Presentations

*Waging an Uphill Fight: Healthy Start Initiative Program in the
Mississippi Delta,* Mechelle Wallace, MSCD, Delta State University
Institute for Community-Based Research

*AIDS Knowledge and Risky Sexual Behavior among Young Ethiopian
Females,* Naima A. Mohamed, Auburn University Montgomery

*Pharmaceutical Advertisements and the (Bio)medicalization of Subjective
Experience,* Andrew Whitaker, The University of Mississippi

Session 13 Popular Culture
Room 1103C

10:30 – 11:45

Presider

Robert B. Jenkot, The University of Alabama

Presentations

Political Ideology and how it's changed 1972-2006, Derrick Shapley,
Mississippi State University.

Tattooing: An Exploratory Look, Kara Marie Voorhest, Jacksonville State
University

An Ethnography of a Comic Book Speciality Shop, Wess Gregg,
The University of Montevallo

Cultural Bias and Environmentalism, Joshua Lee Walker, Delta State
University.

General Business Meeting (Open to All Members)
Room 1103A

12:00 – 1:00

~ **ABSTRACTS** ~

SESSION ONE: Challenges and Opportunities for Teaching Sociology in Alabama and Mississippi

Panel session addressing the various challenges and opportunities for teaching sociology in the deep south. Panelists will tackle the various issues that engulf sociologists when teaching sociology. The goal is to share information to provide a context where everyone can find better methods for teaching sociology, and also address subject materials that have provided a better learning experience for the students and sociologists alike.

SESSION TWO: Science, Technology, and It's Uses

Understanding Identity Theft: A Test of Routine Activities Theory, Craig T. Robertson and Lisa Keys-Mathews, The University of North Alabama

The U.S. population increasingly conducts personal and social relationships electronically with many transactions involving the use of credit cards, bank accounts, the Internet, and phone solicitations. Wrongfully obtaining and using another individual's personal data, typically for economic gain, constitutes identity theft and reported incidences of such criminality have increased dramatically over the last several years with some estimates pointing to nearly three million annual victimizations. This study, using Federal Trade Commission data, breaks new ground in two important research areas. First, the study tests the efficacy of routine activities theory (RAT), a theory regularly applied to street-level victimization experiences, to see if it explains identity theft victimizations. Second, the study tests RAT by comparing victimization reports aggregated at the county level with spatial data aggregated at the same scale.

An Old Sociological Debate in a New Era: Applying the Knowledge of Science, Values, and Objectivity, from One Generation into Another, Geoffrey L. McIntyre, Troy University Montgomery

Many sub-issues within the areas of scientific knowledge and the discipline of sociology were presented in the readings some forty plus years ago. Questions concerning values, subjective versus objective science, anti-science, scientific research, and so forth, contend an ideological legitimization and fundamental methodology that have in the past led to controversy both within and outside the discipline. This paper will attempt to theorize why underlying social values related to scientific knowledge have played a most significant role in the current U.S. social crises.

SESSION THREE: Challenges and Opportunities for Sociology Programs

This is a panel session addressing the challenges and opportunities sociology programs are engaged in here in the south. Sociology faculty will discuss the many problems facing programs in the past as well as today. Issues involving financial support; dealing with administrations; competing with other programs/departments; and many other issues will be addressed. Various solutions, successes and failures will be shared in an open discussion.

SESSION FOUR: Race, Ethnicity, and Inequality Issues

Mississippi in Black and White: Racial Differences in Attitudes toward Race-Specific Policies, Deadric T. Williams and John Yu, Mississippi State University

Historically, as well as contemporarily, the state of Mississippi has seen its share of racial disparities along an array of social indicators. Previous research explains racial disparities by presenting the structure versus individualism debate. The former argues that many inequalities experienced by many racial minorities are a by-product of larger structural issues such as poor neighborhoods, poor schools and poor job availability. The latter argues that racial minorities experience inequalities due to a lack of motivation and a willingness to succeed. Many scholars have furthered this research by addressing racial differences in race-specific policies. However, many of the explanations are still limited to the structure versus individualism debate. Using data from the Mississippi Poll 2008, we use Omi and Winant's theory of racial formations to capture a more holistic understanding of racial differences in attitudes in race-specific policies.

Us v. Them: The Cycles of Nativism in the United States 1795-2007, Janet E. Smith, Troy University Montgomery

Nativism is a sociopolitical policy favoring the interests of established inhabitants over those of immigrants. In the extreme, it is a fear and loathing of immigrants or other "aliens." It can involve overt verbal and physical hostility toward these "others." Nativism knows no boundaries. It has been directed towards those of different ethnic backgrounds, different religions, and those considered to be political radicals. Nativism traditionally surfaces in cycles during times of political, social, or economic upheaval or strife. Nativism has proven to be cyclical. There have been nine major cycles of nativism in the United States between 1795 and the present. Several social, political, and economic factors contributed to these cycles. There is a connection between nativism and anti-immigration in the United States, exacerbated by the federal government's historically ad hoc legislation dealing with immigration issues. The current immigration issue is complicated and is not one that will be solved easily or quickly, however the lack of action on the part of the government will not make the nativists go away. It is incumbent that the United States government solve the problem on the federal level, by opening a dialogue with the Mexican government to find ways to develop Mexico's natural resources to create jobs in that country so its citizens are no longer forced to illegally immigrate to the United States. The issue must be settled at the highest levels of government as a policy issue, not by vigilante groups on the border.

SESSION FIVE: Poster Session

Folk Nation: The Gangster Disciples, Kenneth Lewis, Hinds Community College

By using the three main sociological theories, I will analyze a new emerging framework of what the Gangster Disciples organization stands for.

The Coffee House Subculture in Jackson, MS, Trish Pohlhaus, Hinds Community College

Using symbolic interaction and participant observation a survey of the different coffee houses located in the Jackson area was made.

Race and Politics, Ryan Cannatella, Hinds Community College

A comparison between media depictions (political cartoons) of political candidates and student surveys is made. How similar/dissimilar are students race/political perceptions to that of the mainstream media?

Tattooing Gender, Kara Marie Voorhest, Jacksonville State University

The title of this poster is Tattooing Gender. The concept of this poster is to demonstrate the differences between the tattoos that women choose versus the tattoos that men choose. Tattooing has been known to be a more masculine art. Now with the boom in mainstream media, tattooing is not just reserved for deviant men. Women are also partaking in the art not only being tattooed, but also being the tattoo artist and owners. In the article, "Why do people get tattoos?" by Miliann Kang and Katherine Jones discusses how and when women started becoming more noticed in the subculture of tattoos. Some of the statistics and history included in this poster were taken from this article. Photographical research and in-depth interviews were conducted to visually show the difference between the genders tattoo choices. A total of ten individuals were chosen, photographed, and interviewed.

SESSION SIX: Issues in Gender

Gender vs. Decomposed Bem Scale, Gregory S. Kowalski, Auburn University, Arthur S. Wilke, Auburn University

Utilizing a sample of undergraduates (N = 273), previous work (Kowalski and Wilke, 2007a, 2007b) found that: 1) while gender identification and Bem Sex Role Inventory results were highly associated, 2) gender was more discriminating than the Bem Scale when examining favorite television programs, favorite kinds of sports, reported feeling states related to responses to sporting events and their outcomes. A closer examination of the Bem scale suggested logical incongruities, though correcting for these did not result in improvement in the discrimination of the Bem Scale. This paper reports on looking for substantive associations ($r > .316$) to compare the above behaviors to gender and specific

Bem items. Only one Bem item, masculinity shows enhanced discriminating power, enhancing then gender association with several responses to observing sporting events.

Heavy Metal and Hegemony: Gender Performance in a Subcultural Context, Ben Hutcherson, The University of Mississippi

Heavy metal is a style of music that emerged as part of a counterculture movement in direct opposition to the overly upbeat “hippie” movement. Deena Weinstein’s landmark publication *Heavy Metal: the Music and its Culture* stood as the first academic exploration of the heavy metal subculture, one which is still cited in subcultural research today. In my paper, I examine Weinstein’s book as it relates to contemporary gender studies, utilizing the doing gender theoretical framework. Within this framework, gender deployment in the heavy metal subculture is framed as an ongoing performance wherein a hierarchical structure of gender inequality is maintained. Further, I examine the idealized forms of masculinity and femininity that are enacted by utilizing Connell’s formulation of hegemonic masculinity, and the ways in which those gender performances are dictated by the construction of the subculture itself as a gendered space. The paper concludes with a critique of Weinstein and a call for a more in-depth examination of male and female agency when utilizing the doing gender perspective, particularly in an ethnographic study such as Weinstein’s wherein interviews are often the basis of the research.

Does Motherhood Alter Dating Behaviors and Expectations? An Exploration, Kimberly P. Brackett, Auburn University Montgomery

There is relatively little data on how parenting roles influence dating behavior. Given that the majority of children in single parent families are being cared for by mothers, how do mothers view dating in these contexts? Among the assumptions in the traditional conception of dating are that persons are single, have no children, and are looking for a long term (marital) relationship. There have been some studies of dating for remarriage that consider the influence of children, but usually in a superficial way. The present exploratory study is designed to examine the ways in which motherhood determines a woman’s choices about dating, particularly whether she views her status as a mother as antithetical to the status of dater. Potential areas for exploration include age of the mother and child, numbers of children, goals for dating, and practical accomplishment issues. Of critical concern is how those mothers who view dating as important in their lives construct ways to make it possible to date.

Religion, Patriarchy, and Identity: An intersectional exploration of surname changing when a man finds his wife, Marie Sheneman, Fairhope, Alabama.

Throughout history, women in the United States have been expected to take their husband’s surname after marriage, ridding of the identity attached to their birth surname. Through the rise of feminist movements and women’s decision to obtain professional careers and identities, the expectation has been challenged in recent years. In 2007, a

sample of Western Michigan University students completed a survey-questionnaire regarding perceptions and self-conceptualization towards surname changing after marriage. This paper examines the intersectionality of religion, patriarchy, and identity in students' responses to the survey-questionnaire, revealing that some women and men find identity as a wife/husband through the wife taking the man's surname after marriage, with patriarchal beliefs and religion as rationale.

SESSION SEVEN: Health and Medicine I

The Effectiveness of the Biomedical Enrichment and Recruitment (BEAR) Program at USA-COM, Willette Brye, University of South Alabama Center for Healthy Communities

Recent efforts to address health disparities have focused on increasing the number of minority physicians. Minority physicians are more likely to provide care for patients who are minority, patients with low income, and patients who are uninsured (Lloyd and Johnson 1982; Johnson et al 1989; Moy and Bartman 1995; Komaromy et al. 1996). In addition, African American patients who have African American physicians are more likely to give higher ratings for their physician than African American patients who have non African American physicians (Saha et al. 1999).

This paper reports findings from analyses of two components of the University of South Alabama College of Medicine Biomedical Enrichment and Recruitment (BEAR) program, an enrichment program for minorities interested in medicine. Specifically, the paper analyzes the effectiveness of the program components: instruction in first year medical school courses and Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) preparation. The objectives of the BEAR program are: to prepare underrepresented African American minority students for application to and performance in medical school, to increase the rate of acceptance to medical school for underrepresented African American minority students, and to increase the numbers of underrepresented African American minority students who graduate from medical school.

Friending Ana: Pro-Anorexia on the Internet, Brandon Christian, The University of Southern Mississippi.

In the early part of the new millennium, there was an online community generating much concern for parents. This community was known as Pro-Anorexia, or Pro-Ana. This movement is still very much alive today, despite numerous threats from concerned individuals and organizations. The Pro-Anorexia community advocates anorexia as a legitimate lifestyle of choice, rather than an uncontrollable and self-destructive disorder. The current study is designed to assess whether or not the individuals of this community are successful in this attempted transformation of the label, using Becker's Labeling Theory as a basis for the research. Textual analysis is used to analyze one day's worth of posts from the Live journal community for Pro-Anorexia – coding for positive and negative linguistics, as well as group support and control. The results suggest that there are high amounts of positive and negative linguistics throughout the posts; however, they differ in their contexts. Positive linguistics were usually used for encouragement of others

within the community and the occasional self-appraisal. Negative linguistics were mainly self-inflicted, with the occasional target of an outside source – though never anyone else within the Pro-Anorexia community. The study concludes that instead of transforming the label itself, the movement creates an online subculture in which the idea of anorexia as a lifestyle is the acceptable norm.

Emergency Departments as Medical Homes, Carley Jefcoat, Delta State University.

This assessment project is focused on identifying the health conditions, health care needs and resources of patients visiting an emergency department at a hospital located in the Mississippi Delta. The specific focus is on adults seeking “non-urgent care.” The research was conducted through a collaborative partnership between the Delta State University Institute for Community-Based Research, a local Community Health Center, and the Mississippi Primary Health Care Association. Through their partnership with the MPHCA, a Mississippi Delta emergency department served as the site for data collection. This research focused on patients entering the hospital ED as non-emergency cases, as defined by health care professionals. In the ED where data were collected, a questionnaire was administered to patients with items concerning socioeconomic status, reasons for visiting the ED, awareness of local community health centers (CHCs), and the existence of their medical homes. One-hundred patients were interviewed. They were all adults (18 years and older). For those people who brought in children for medical care, adults were interviewed regarding their children on the basis that adults make household decisions, including seeking health care for their children. Based on Andersen’s 1965 Behavioral Model of Healthcare Utilization, an analysis of factors influencing the decisions individuals make when choosing health care providers is included. Univariate and bivariate analysis was performed to reveal several barriers to health care access. Study limitations and next steps for the study are also discussed.

SESSION EIGHT: The Ins/Outs of Teaching and Scholarly Oriented Publishing

This is a panel session addressing the various issues surrounding publishing both books and journal articles. The various techniques, as well as the dos and don’ts of writing are examined. Publishing is more than simply doing research and then writing about it. Panelists discuss the politics, the method, and many other issues involved in the publishing process.

SESSION NINE: Advancing the Art and Science of Survey Research

Panel session. Surveys have a long and diverse history of use in sociology. Methodologically, we have learned a great deal about both the art and science of research design, sampling and data collection from this legacy. However, with rapid changes in culture and technology, there is renewed interest in developing more ethical, efficient, reliable and valid data collection strategies. The panelists in this session will reflect upon survey research using a variety of designs and modes of data collection by highlighting specific projects they have been involved with and then addressing challenges and

opportunities for the future. They will discuss face-to-face, mail, telephone and online surveys, along with lessons learned from surveying specialized groups and conducting research in unique settings. Following the panelists' brief presentations, attention will be directed toward dialogue with the audience concerning the future of survey research.

SESSION TEN: Teaching Introduction to Sociology On-line

Panel discussion discussing and demonstrating the various methods, philosophy, and overall pedagogical styles used in the teaching of Introduction to Sociology online. Panelists have had years of experience in online technology teaching.

SESSION ELEVEN: Education and Community

Assignments That Work: Personal Course Reflection, Marie Sheneman, Fairhope, Alabama.

This paper discusses the effectiveness of a personal course reflection in sociology courses. The assignment asks students to reflect on the course in order to thoroughly explain what they learned or gained throughout the term, sociologically, academically, and personally. More often than not, students leave classes without fully knowing what they learned. This assignment helps students recall, process, and better comprehend what they gained from the class. As students often write about what they enjoyed, the essays also provide a qualitative course evaluation for the instructor.

The Effects of Merging Schools Within the Greenville School District on Students' Social Capital, Elliot Meador, Delta State University

Schools are sometimes consolidated within the same school district for a variety of reasons. This paper examines the effect that school consolidation has upon students' access to social capital, teachers and administrators views on school consolidation, and the effect that school consolidation has had on students' academic success. Quantitative data were collected in the form of surveys and qualitative data were collected in the form of key informant interviews to gather data from Greenville Weston High School. Greenville Weston is a high school that formed from a merger of Greenville High School and T.L. Weston High School in Greenville, Mississippi. The merge of Greenville High School and T.L. Weston High School had a negative effect on students' access to social capital and students' academic performance, and as a whole teachers and administrators felt negatively about the merge. There are a variety of reasons for these findings such as: having two separate campuses, and a lack of communication between the two campuses.

Community-Based Assessment of Farmer's Markets In the MS Delta, Miranda Walker and J. R. Love, Delta State University Institute for Community-Based Research

With concerns over health, environment and community economic development, local food systems are getting a fresh look by researchers, development practitioners,

policymakers and the general public. Farmers markets and other sales outlets occupy important places in many local food systems, yet little systematic research has been done on their successes, challenges and potential strategies for moving forward. Using a community-based research and social assessment framework, this project is focused on the core Mississippi Delta. Six towns located in five counties were chosen for this pilot, exploratory study. Research methods included both telephone and personal, face-to-face interviews, along with participatory meetings. The questions for all of the target groups were both qualitative and quantitative in nature. The topics of the questions ranged from organizational characteristics, successes, challenges, revenue achieved, and ideas for future growth. A look at the growers of vegetables, buyers of vegetables, and organizers of the weekend market place were all taken into account in this study. Findings show that growers are eager to find ways to sustain production and businesses are encouraged to find the potential of local production. Three recommendations have been made in order to move toward filling the gaps between local producers and local consumers. The first recommendation is to establish a direct dialog with individual farmers' markets for the purpose of providing individualized technical assistance and organizational development. Secondly, a proposal was made to provide quarterly workshops and training to farmers' market managers. Finally, working with all interested parties to create a Delta Farmers' Market regional campaign was recommended.

SESSION TWELVE: Health and Medicine II

Waging an Uphill Fight- Healthy Start Initiative Program in the Mississippi Delta,
Mechelle Wallace, MSCD, Delta State University Institute for Community-Based
Research

Maternal and child health represent critical indicators of health and development, and poor birth outcomes are considered particularly problematic. Numerous programs have been used to reduce the prevalence of low birth weight and infant mortality. This presentation will focus on evaluation research conducted for a program with at-risk mothers living in the Mississippi Delta – Healthy Start Initiative program. This research, conducted through the Delta State University Institute for Community Based Research, spans over a four year period. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected using multiple methods: surveys, interviews, observation, and focus groups. Results show that the program has achieved many of its outcome objectives and helped participants to increase their knowledge, access health and social services, and develop social support networks. However, given the context of rural isolation, persistent poverty, and high rates of teenage birth, the Healthy Start program continues to wage an uphill fight.

AIDS Knowledge and Risky Sexual Behavior among Young Ethiopian Females,
Naima A. Mohamed, Auburn University, Montgomery

Young Ethiopian women are faced with several disadvantages such as health care, economic independence, and quality education, which all have adverse affects on their AIDS knowledge. This study examined young women age 15-24 years old for the purpose of evaluating their AIDS knowledge of possible risky sexual behavior using the

2005 Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS). The results show that a high percentage of female respondents (64 %) lived in rural areas and only about one-fourth of respondents have primary school education. Findings from multivariate analysis show that education is the strongest predictor of AIDS knowledge among women in Ethiopia. Such findings suggest that the Ethiopian government should find ways to promote female education in order to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS among young women.

Pharmaceutical Advertisements and the (Bio)medicalization of Subjective Experience, Andrew Whitaker, The University of Mississippi

The author uses content analysis to examine pharmaceutical advertisements in the *Journal of Medical Education* between the years 1952 and 1958, inclusive, to determine whether drugs were presented as chemical solutions for problems of subjective experience (concerning mental disorders). This analysis is performed to explore the (bio)-medicalization of subjective experience and the origins of what Nikolas Rose has termed the ‘neurochemical self.’ Pharmaceutical advertisements targeting subjective states precede the ‘neurochemical self’ and may represent an early example of biomedicalization. The pharmaceutical industry may have created the foundation for a ‘neurochemical self’ paradigm through its advertisements. The advertisement sample includes drugs in six psychopharmacological categories and others which are clearly marketed for subjective states. Pharmaceutical advertisements in medical journals are links between the pharmaceutical industry and the medical profession and constitute sites where pharmaceutical industry attempts to influence medical opinion and practice can be observed.

SESSION THIRTEEN: Popular Culture

Political Ideology and how it's changed 1972-2006, Derrick Shapley, Mississippi State University.

Over the past several years there has been talk within the news media of a growing political polarization in this country. Yet, there has been very little discussion on the evolution of the two main competing ideologies in this country, Liberalism and conservatism over this time. This research project takes the view that ideology is not a stable concept that remains the same over time but rather a very fluid concept that evolves and changes over time as societies and advance and situations within the society change. The research project tracks the changes of political ideology from 1972-2006 using the General Social Survey and American Conservative Union (ACU) and Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) voter record priorities from the same time period. The goal of this project is to look at what issues have evolved or changed among each of the two main political ideologies and which issues have remained stable during this time period and also to indicate how much do the masses change the elites political ideology or the elites within each dominant ideology change the masses (Barone, 2005 USA Today 2008).

The definition this research project uses for elites is “people who set the political agenda by which non-elites respond” (Parry 1969 P. 1). Within this idea of political elites the

research project looks specifically at special interest groups. While the conceptualization that we are using could be broadened to include many different categories, looking at special interests does give a broad categorization of ideas and interests while being narrow enough to focus the research in a way that is manageable.

There is a central idea concept and research question within the notion of a growing political polarization, which is the concept of a Culture War. The idea of a culture war became popularized by James Davison Hunter in his book *Culture Wars, The Struggle to Define America*. What Hunter (1991) argues is that the culture wars can be seen in certain “wedge issues” that polarize the public and lead to clashes between competing cultural ideal’s in this country.

A counter argument to Hunter’s thesis came from the book *Culture War? The Myth of A polarized America*, written by Morris Fiorina, Samuel Abrams and Jeremy Pope. Fiorina’s et. al (2006) argument is that in fact 80 to 90 percent of the people in the country do not hold polarized beliefs but in fact represent mainly moderate views on these social issues. Fiorina’s argument is that while the activists within each political ideology may be more divided but that the masses in this country are still relatively moderate compared to the activists in each party.

This paper sets to look at the conceptualization of the culture wars and its role in shaping the current major ideologies in the United States through a conflict extension perspective. The conflict extension perspective (Layman & Carsey 2002a, b Layman et. Al. 2006) argues “attitudes toward social welfare, racial, and cultural issues have remained distinct and somewhat cross-cutting. However, the parties in the electorate have grown increasingly polarized on all three of these dimensions” (Layman et. Al. 2006 P. 91). This paper will test the conflict extension hypothesis for the time period between 1972 and 2006 along these three dimensions to not only help answer the culture wars issue but give a greater understanding of each ideology and how it has evolved over time.

Tattooing: An Exploratory Look, Kara Marie Voorhest, Jacksonville State University

This paper is an exploratory look at the subculture of tattoos. The paper discusses many different subjects within the subculture of tattooing. Some of these subjects include: who gets tattooed, why they get tattooed, the pain involved, social stigma, how they view themselves, how they think others view them, and etc. The research methods that were used were interviews and a literature review A few tables include some small statistics that were found based on the twenty-four interviews conducted. . You will find that this paper is a broad look at this subculture and that more research will be conducted in the future.

An Ethnography of a Comic Book Speciality Shop, Wess Gregg, University of Montevallo

Over the course of two separate three-month periods I collected field data at a local comic book specialty shop using qualitative research methods. Foolhardy Comics offered a type of community space that was otherwise unavailable to most customers. The data collected showed that many patrons of the store were not only such in order to facilitate a hobby, but so that they could engage in exchanges that may not have been appropriate or

deemed deviant in other facets of their life. Additionally, it was noted that the staff at the store served many roles within the community, whether it be friend, father figure, open ear or love interest. The camaraderie at the store between patrons and staff alike was somewhat similar to the kinship found among regulars at a neighborhood bar.

Cultural Bias and Environmentalism, Joshua Lee Walker, Delta State University

The following study, conducted by undergraduate researchers at Delta State University in the Fall 2008 semester, explores the associations between cultural bias and environmentalism among a random sample of social science students. The study found that environmentalists express a strong egalitarian bias at higher rates than the general population of social science students. The study also found that the culture of social science students at Delta State University is best described as egalitarian-hierarchical, with the majority of respondents exhibiting both cultural biases. This study affirms the relationship between environmentalism and egalitarianism that appears in the results of the Ellis and Thompson (1997) study.

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