

SWS Networknews

The Newsletter of Sociologists for Women in Society

2006 Winter Meeting, January 26-29

Gender in the Context of Globalization: Exploring Diversity and Change

By: Christine E. Bose
SWS President-Elect

The 2006 Winter Meeting takes us to San Juan, Puerto Rico-our first meeting to be held in the Caribbean. Although you may not get a chance to go outside the metropolitan area of San Juan, there will be ample opportunity to explore the walled old city (Viejo San Juan) and the fortifications from the Spanish colonial era, which is just a mile away from our location, visit some of the major museums (Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico, Museo de Arte

Contemporáneo, Museo de las Américas), which reveal the history of Puerto Rico through its artists, or visit the Condado and Isla Verde hotel sections to watch the tourist economy in action. If you have more time, I also recommend you go "out on the Island" using the tourist magazine "Qué Pasa" as an excellent guide to sites like the El Yunque Rainforest, the Arecibo Observatory, Camuy Caves, Cabezas de San Juan Nature Reserve (dry forest), the Caguana Ceremonial Indian Park, or even go to the Island of Vieques where demonstrations finally closed a U.S. military base that, for decades, held target practices there using live ammunition.

While touring is fun, the Winter Meetings in San Juan also are intended to attract a different audience in addition to our usual one and, through a series of plenaries, to give everyone an introduction to Puerto Rico through presentations by well-known feminist scholar activists. The theme for the SWS Winter Meetings is "Gender in the Context of Globalization: Exploring Diversity and Change," and my particular focus is Puerto Rico and the Spanish Caribbean. Friday morning's opening "Presidential Visions" panel includes Vilma Santiago-Irizarry, Professor of Anthropology at Cornell University and the current President of the Puerto Rican Studies Association (PRSA)-a group that links researchers and research on the Island and in the U.S. Francis Fox-Piven, President-Elect of the ASA, and Christine Bose, 2006 President of SWS, will share the podium with her.

Friday's lunch plenary will give you an introduction to "Understanding Puerto Rico's Politics and Economy-Gender, Race, and Class." Our distinguished guests

include María Dolores (Tati) Fernós, Head of the Office of the Women's Advocate (Procuradora, Oficina de la Procuradora de las Mujeres), and former Executive Director of the Legal Office for the Community at Inter-American University of Puerto Rico. We also welcome feminist lawyer Celina Romany, who is an expert on race and gender issues in human rights, as well as Ana Irma Rivera Lassen, a member of the Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women's Rights (CLADEM) and co-author, with Elizabeth Crespo Kebler of Documents on Feminism in Puerto Rico (2001).

Saturday's lunch plenary will address issues raised in many of our task forces-combining action and research-but with a local focus on "Research and Action: The Hispanic Caribbean in Transnational Context" Our guests showcase the type of action research that is typical in many Latin American and Caribbean countries. In this session, we are fortunate to have presentations by Blanca Ortiz (Decana Auxiliar en Gestión y Obtención de Fondos Externos at the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras), an expert in gender, sexuality, and HIV prevention among Latinas, and Magaly Piñeda, Founder and Coordinator of the Centro de Investigación para Acción Feminina (CIPAF) in the Dominican Republic.

We will have a chance to hear about each other's research in a set of roundtable sessions on Friday morning-this is the first time paper roundtables have been held at a Winter Meeting. There are also sessions organized by our committees, held Saturday morning. These include a Career Development Committee session on

...continued on page 2

contents...

Winter Registration Form.	pg 3
People and Places	pg 4
Members' Bookshelf	pg 4
Breast vs Bottle	pg 5
Web Site Action Items	pg 6
Award Deadlines	pg 11
Video Review	pg 12
Fact Sheet	pg 14
Job Opportunities	pg 20

next issue...

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Phone. (910) 962-7849
Email. HossfeldL@uncw.edu

2006 Winter Meeting...continued from page 1
 "Preparing for Tenure" and a Sister-to-Sister session on "Mentoring Across Race and Class Lines" (also co-sponsored by CDC). Finally, there is one invited workshop, reflecting a confluence between SWS and a group in Puerto Rico. The Women in Management group, women leaders who are organized across the several Johnson & Johnson pharmaceutical plants in Puerto Rico, is headed by Yolanda Vega who suggested that a connection between their group and our scholars over issues of women's work and gendered organizational hierarchies could be beneficial to both groups. The workshop on Women and Management is a shared session involving 10-20 members of that group who will meet with SWS members Dana Britton and Sharon Bird in this session, held concurrently with our paper roundtables. This joint session is one way for us to turn our research into action. In addition, their members will be attending our plenaries on Friday. Please

make them feel welcome.

Of course, a major purpose of the Winter meetings is to carry out SWS business, and there is ample opportunity for committee meetings and our two business meetings. The traditional silent auction is being organized by Linda Treiber and Shannon Davis to help support feminist activism in Puerto Rico. Both the auction and our banquet will be held Friday night at the Normandie Hotel. Then on Saturday night we will break out, moving to salsa, merengue, and reggaetón beats with a live orchestra and some dancing lessons.

For help in many of these endeavors, especially in inviting the plenary panelists, I am extremely grateful to my on site local arrangements committee--Alice Colón (University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras) and Sara Benítez (University of Puerto Rico, Humacao)--as well as to my University at Albany, SUNY arrangements group--Edna Acosta-Belén, Kecia Johnson, and Courtney Allensworth. ■

SWS Auction! We Need You!

Bring Items to the Winter Meeting!

SWS President-Elect Chris Bose will be continuing the tradition of an SWS "Silent" Auction. This year the auction will be held in conjunction with the Friday evening (1/27) banquet. As in the past, the money raised at this event will be donated to a local service agency that supports women and girls. But the success of this venture depends on you. We need your donations for the auction, and we need you to be present at the Winter Meeting to bid on and hopefully purchase some of the treasures for yourself. This is definitely one event you won't want to miss!

Wondering what to do with those unwanted or duplicate Christmas, Hanukkah, or Kwanzaa gifts? Save them for the 2006 SWS Auction (remember, one person's junk is another's treasure.) Taking a trip over the holidays? Remember to pick up something special for the SWS auction when you hit the gift shops. Just published a new book? Consider donating an autographed copy for the SWS auction. Have a creative hobby? Make a one-of-a-kind item to donate! Through this auction we have discovered that SWS members have some amazing non-academic talents. Over

the years we have seen the number of incredible homemade items increase, and these items nearly always result in a bidding war.

Bring your items to the SWS Winter Meeting in sunny San Juan or mail them to either of the auctions co-organizers, Shannon Davis or Linda Treiber.

Shannon Davis: Carolina Population Center, University Square CB 8120, Rm. 501 East, 123 W. Franklin St. Chapel Hill, NC 27516-2524, shannon_davis@unc.edu

Linda Treiber: Kennesaw State University, 1000 Chastain Rd. #2401, Office SS 222-B Kennesaw, GA 30144, ltreiber@kennesaw.edu

SWS Networknews

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Material for publication (including advertisements) should be submitted to *Networknews* Editor: Leslie Hossfeld, Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice, University of North Carolina at Wilmington
 601 South College Road, Wilmington, NC 28403. Phone: (910) 962-7849.
 Email: HossfeldL@uncw.edu

Deadlines for submission:

Summer - May 15; Fall - September 15;
 Winter - November 15; Spring - March 15

Attention: For those submitting time sensitive materials, target dates for publication and mailing are: Summer-June 15, Fall-October 15, Winter-December 15, Spring-April 15.

Fee schedule for advertisements: Full page-\$200.00; Half-page-\$100.00; Quarter-page or less-\$50.00; Job announcements-\$25.00. Invoices will be sent after announcements appear.

Please send membership and change of address information to: SWS Executive Office, Department of Sociology, University of Akron, Akron, OH 44325-1905
 Phone: (330) 972-7918; Fax: (330) 972-5377
 Email: sws@uakron.edu.

SWS WINTER MEETING REGISTRATION FORM

January 26-29, 2006
San Juan, Puerto Rico

Name: _____ E-mail: _____

Registration Fees*

\$175.00 (members) _____

\$115.00 (student member rate) _____

*Registration includes Continental Breakfast Friday - Sunday; Lunch on Friday and Saturday; Reception on Thursday, Banquet on Friday, and dance on Saturday nights. *Payment must be received in the EO by Friday, December 31, 2005.* Please note that the registration fees do not include the hotel room.

Meal Preference (please check one): Vegan ____ Vegetarian ____ Nonvegetarian ____

Accommodations: Hotel rooms are \$150/night plus tax for single and \$160/night plus tax for a double. Some rooms will hold up to three. To make reservations contact the Normandie Hotel at (787) 729-2929; ask for reservations or for Wanda Rivera at ext. 1015. Make sure you mention Sociologists for Women in Society in order to get our conference rates. **The conference rate is good until December 26, 2005. Please book your room early as it will not be extended, the hotel is small, and this is tourist season.** For more information on the hotel you can also visit their website: www.normandiepr.com, using reservation (RSC) code=N9D and password WHSAN002.

Mail, fax or email your registration form with payment to:

Make checks payable to Sociologists for Women in Society or pay by credit card:

SWS Executive Office

Department of Sociology
University of Akron
Akron, OH 44325-1905
Phone 330-972-7918
Fax 330-972-5377
sws@uakron.edu

Credit Card Type: Mastercard Visa Discover

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CHARGE WILL SHOW AS CASHIER'S OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY OF AKRON

Roommate(s) Wanted: If you need a roommate, please email Kecia Johnson at kjohnson@albany.edu **no later than December 22, 2005.** In that message, please indicate how many roommates you want, what nights you'll be there, smoking preference and any other considerations.

Special Needs: Contact Chris Bose at c.bose@albany.edu

Reimbursement Schedule for Winter Meeting: *The Winter Meeting Reimbursement Program is intended to enable members who would not otherwise be able to attend the Winter Meetings to do so. Please seek alternative sources of funding before you apply for SWS reimbursement. SWS will reimburse MEMBERS who participate in the Winter Business Meeting for their major transportation expenses (airfare) over and above an amount of "cost share" determined according to income, up to a maximum of \$300. Officers, officers elect, chairs and chairs elect have a maximum income cost share of \$150 regardless of income category (max reimbursement of \$300 still applies). Copies of all receipts must accompany the request for reimbursement. Requests must be received by March 4, 2006 to be eligible for reimbursement.*

Members' Bookshelf

People and Places

Mounira Maya Charrad received the 2005 Distinguished Service to the Tunisian American Community Ibn Khaldun Award for her contribution to "bringing a better understanding of Tunisian society, history, and culture to American universities, students, and educated public." This inaugural award recognizes Charrad's publications such as her book, *States and Women's Rights* (UC Press, 2001), and articles on states and gender politics in Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco. The award is named after the 14th century Tunisian philosopher Ibn Khaldun, often considered the greatest historian of the Middle East, whose legacy is that a spirit of community and solidarity is essential to the welfare of societies.

Virginia Olesen, Professor Emerita, University of California, San Francisco, and long time SWS member received the 2005 UC Constantine Pannunzio Award, the first time a UCSF retired faculty has won it. The system-wide award recognizes outstanding scholarship and service by a retired faculty member.

Ronni Tichenor recently received the Student Association Excellence in Teaching Award for 2004-2005 at SUNY-Institute of Technology; this Fall she was appointed Program Coordinator for the BA and MS in Applied Sociology at SUNY-Institute of Technology.

Virginity Lost: An Intimate Portrait of First Sexual Experiences

Laura M. Carpenter
New York University Press 2005

Nervous, inexperienced, confused. For most, losing your virginity is one of life's most significant moments, always to be remembered. Of course, experiences vary, but Carpenter asks: Is there an ideal way to lose it? What would constitute a "positive" experience? What often compels the big step? And, further, what does "going all the way" really mean for young gays and lesbians? In this first comprehensive study of virginity loss, Carpenter teases out the complexities of all things virgin by drawing on interviews with both young men and women who are straight, gay or bisexual. *Virginity Lost* offers a rare window into one of life's most intimate and significant sexual moments. The stories here are frank, poignant and fascinating as Carpenter presents an array of experiences that run the gamut from triumphant to devastating. Importantly, Carpenter argues that one's experience of virginity loss can have a powerful impact on one's later sexual experiences. Especially at a time of increased debate about sexual abstinence v. safe sex education in public schools, this important volume will provide essential information about the sex lives of young people.

Different Wavelengths: Studies of the Contemporary Women's Movement

Edited by Jo Reger, Routledge, 2005

Different Wavelengths provides an empirical look at the state of contemporary feminism. Bringing together a variety of authors studying aspects of feminism today, this book raises questions about the appropriateness of a "third wave" label, the difference between contemporary and earlier feminism, the state of former debates over inclusivity, and the future directions of the movement. Chapter topics include: transgender and feminism, 'zines and issues of inclusivity, black and Chicana women's feminism, the Vagina Monologues and the internet as a site of activism. Contributors include: Ednie Kaeh Garrison, Astrid Henry, Nancy Naples, Kristen Schlit, and Kimberley Springer with a forward by Leila Rupp and Verta Taylor.

Earning More and Getting Less

Ronni Tichenor Rutgers University Press 2005

For nearly two decades the wage gap between men and women has remained virtually unchanged. Women continue to earn, on average, 80 cents for every dollar that men earn. Yet despite persistent discrimination in wages, stud-

ies are also beginning to show that a growing number of women are out-earning their husbands. Nationwide, nearly one-third of working women are the chief breadwinners in their families. The trend is particularly pronounced among the demographic of highly educated women. Does this increase in earnings, however, equate to a shift in power dynamics between husbands and wives?

Tichenor shows how, historically, men have derived a great deal of power over financial and household decisions by bringing home all (or most) of the family's income. Yet, financial superiority has not been a similar source of power for women. Tichenor demonstrates how wives, instead of using their substantial incomes to negotiate more egalitarian relationships, enable their husbands to perpetuate male dominance within the family. Weaving personal accounts, in-depth interviews, and compelling narrative, this important study reveals disturbing evidence that the conventional power relations defined by gender are powerful enough to undermine hierarchies defined by money.

Families with Futures: A Survey of Family Studies for the 21st Century

By Meg Wilkes Karraker and Janet R. Grochowski, Lawrence Erlbaum and Associates, 2006

Families with Futures offers a fresh approach to the study of families in everyday life. Learners are presented with an opportunity to explore not only "what was" but "what could be" for today's families, through a positive prism-families as dynamic, evolving organisms, and the family members as creative and resilient. The book provides several unique chapters, including a strong theory and methods chapter that positions family studies as a scientific discipline, grounded in not only ethics but also concerns for social action. *Families with Futures* contains thoughtful chapters on resilience, time, wellness, sexual intimacy and an Epilogue that frames family studies as a professional career.

Each chapter opens with a concise survey of the chapter content and a detailed table of contents and ends with a glossary and a set of provocative questions. Each chapter closes with references for cited works, plus electronic, organizational, and print resources for the students who want to move deeper into the material. Finally, the full text of the National Council on Family Relations' Ethical Principles and Guidelines is included as an appendix. Another appendix includes a comprehensive Guide to Resources for Family Studies prepared by an information management specialist in social science.

Breast Versus Bottle in the "Real World" or What I Did Last Summer.

By: *Linda M. Blum*

Early this summer, a spectacle provoked by U.S. TV reminded me, once again, that breasts are contested terrain in American society. On the highly-rated daytime-TV talk show *The View*, the celebrity cast was visiting its youngest cohost during her maternity leave by satellite hook-up. They heartily congratulated Elizabeth Hasselback on her month-old daughter's first bottle of formula. Venerable cohost and producer Barbara Walters then confessed that sitting near a breastfeeding mother and baby on a crowded plane flight had made her uncomfortable. Walters was widely misquoted for calling this public breastfeeding "gross and disgusting;" a fury of responses burst across the internet, and several weeks later, some 200 "lactivists" gathered to nurse their babies outside the ABC TV studio in New York City. Public "lactivism" organized across the internet has also arisen to protest against Starbucks, where mothers in several local stores were asked to nurse in bathrooms; instead some returned with friends, supporters, and signs reading, "what's more natural than coffee and milk?"

One of the fascinating ironies about studying contemporary infant-feeding ideologies is the disjuncture between this passion the topic provokes in the "real world" and the relative lack of interest among fellow social scientists. The confession of a trusted colleague, after I spoke on a broader-based panel, drove home that any potential scholarly audience for such research would require convincing: "I really came to hear the *other* panelists. I mean, I thought, 'breastfeeding, that's a nice little topic.' But now I see it's big. I mean, it's really big."

Although I have experienced other such heartening academic moments, it was still so gratifying to be invited to a conference where everyone (or almost everyone) realized the significant sociological themes: the politics of motherhood and the nation's health; the policing of families and the boundaries of respectable bodies; the medicalization of modern life. British sociologists Ellie Lee and Frank Furedi of the University of Kent organized the seminar, "Ambiguities in Infant Feeding," held this past July, to discuss the intensely moralized prescriptions that "breast is best" and their interview findings - somewhat similar to my own -- of the marginalization British mothers experience when they turn to demonized formula and bottles.

Breastfeeding is so politicized, according to

Lee and Furedi, that current public health campaigns induce moral panic. The conference primarily focused on the impact of this fervor: mothers who feel judged rather than supported, some who are dishonest with their healthcare providers or who are fearful and anguished at failing their babies, and women providers who conceal their own less-than-ideal experiences. Such a singular focus on breastfeeding, Lee and Furedi conclude, individualizes responsibility for infant-child health, placing it squarely on the mother as the crucial determinant. I was intrigued to learn that, despite different welfare state structures -- especially the British National Health Service with its midwives and health visitors -- breastfeeding rates in the U.S. and U.K. are quite similar. In both nations, mothers are exhorted to breastfeed for at least one year, the first six months exclusively (i.e., with no solids or formula), and about 70 percent of mothers in both nations do initiate nursing their newborns. These figures represent substantial increases from earlier decades, yet the rates are lower than across Europe. Moreover, because many of those British and American mothers stop breastfeeding after the early weeks, both governments estimate that billions could be saved on routine healthcare from greater compliance.

This background can help us better understand 'real world' responses like those provoked by *The View* and Starbucks. The "lactivists" do not merely demonstrate for breastfeeding, but against contradictory ideals for female bodies that trap us between the medicalized-maternal and the heterosexually displayed. *The View* does not significantly challenge either: on one hand, Barbara Walters stressed apologetically, "Hasselback had not completely stopped breastfeeding." On the other, her confession revealed that leaky maternal breasts do disgust, even if the word was used literally only in the second-hand iteration. We see heterosexual display of breasts and cleavage throughout the media, and tellingly, on *The View* itself on the shapely blonde sitting next to Walters on the day in question. At Kent I learned that, in the UK, such media endorsement of formula-feeding would be unlikely, though as a nation, they are no less dominated by the male gaze. (If such an outburst were broadcast, one Kent conferee quipped, the Health Minister would be on TV immediately to apologize and reiterate the importance of exclusive breastfeeding.) Research in both countries confirms that women's fears of public exposure carry more weight in their choice between breasts and bottles than economic or workplace constraints.

Yet such fears are trivialized when attributed to individual "embarrassment" or "self-consciousness" rather than seen as a result of larger social forces, particularly contemporary forms of compulsory heterosexuality.

In past eras the ownership of women's bodies was more clear-cut: in the mid-twentieth century U.S., experts counseled new mothers to avoid making a husband jealous by nursing the baby, especially if the husband thought bottles best. But the helpful role of breastfeeding in getting your figure back could be offered as consolation. In the 1990s, in my own interview research, I had expected to study breastfeeding as an instance of work/family conflict, with most of my questions about returning to the workplace. Instead, I was surprised to find myself listening to stories about boyfriends, partners, husbands, and exes. While employment and the material context of mothers' lives do matter (and women did want to talk about them), sexuality, that is, heterosexuality, figures centrally in infant-feeding choices.

We can appreciate the perspective of the New York "lactivists" all the more when we consider the breastfeeding mothers asked to leave (or to use the restrooms in) malls, bookstores, restaurants, swimming clubs, movie theaters, and their local Starbucks. In the recent past such mothers could be cited for "lewd and lascivious conduct" or "indecent exposure" - but currently, a majority of states in the U.S., and interestingly Scotland as well (though not the remainder of the U.K.), have laws allowing public breastfeeding. Yet, cultural expectations for rigid (even plastic) display rather than leaky maternal breasts are resistant to change.

Now all this is not to say that I side with the lactivists. There are so many problems with making breastfeeding the measure of the mother: the reinforcing of class privilege (it takes resources to sit and nurse a baby around the clock), the pressure placed on individual women (especially if recovering from a difficult birth or other health issues, or if responsible for other children and restoring household order), and the marginalization experienced by those who fall short (for the above reasons, and for the need, especially of those vulnerable to state intrusion, to protect against public exposure). With all the conflict in the real world, only a minor amount reverberated within the Kent conference. For some healthcare professionals attending, the breastfeeding imperative rests on infant-health alone - though there are far greater risks, no others, they admitted, are so easily manipulated. The sociologists objected: to

...continued on page 6

Breastfeeding...continued from page 5 make breastfeeding so important is to exaggerate modest health advantages (that is, in nations with safe water), many of which are deeply intertwined with material advantage or are not clearly established. My own work has been vigorously attacked, nonetheless, by those who maintain that I misunderstand science and how crucial breastfeeding really is.

Kent sociologists Lee and Furedi are now receiving their share of such attacks. The British National Childbirth Trust has dismissed their findings in the press because research funds came from the Infant and Dietetic Foods Association (INFORM), a group representing formula manufacturers. My initial reaction to the invitation to speak, on reading of this funding, had been to decline to shield myself, yet the opportunity for reasoned, nonpolarized discussion is too rare. I had already been accused of writing *The Intelligentsia's Guide to Bottlefeeding Without Guilt*, although -- another irony -- I am no industry fan and remember the Nestle boycott against unscrupulous Third World marketing with nostalgia. Kent conferees offered that today's antiglobalization movements, stronger in the U.K., contribute to moral absolutism about breastfeeding as much as to combating global profiteering.

I would have liked to hear more about such politics, but the Kent conference emphasized a pragmatic health-policy conversation. Still, another question deserving more attention was whether the racialization of motherhood is a factor in British infant-feeding discourse as it is in the U.S. The white, well-groomed women of *The View* may compete with the lactivists to be the better mothers - yet, in the U.S., only low-income women of color are in the running for the truly disreputable. Good, white mothers may struggle to control, contain, and display bodies and breasts, but only women of color have bodies so often cast as risky or dangerous. Fetal rights cases, the so-called crack baby epidemic, and campaigns against fetal alcohol syndrome represent only more recent examples. Race has also lurked in centuries of infant-feeding discourse shaped by slavery, and then, eugenics. The twentieth century opened with the 1917 American Medical Association panel debating the link between race and quality of

mother's milk, and closed with news coverage of Tabitha Walrond. Walrond, a low-income African-American, was convicted of criminally negligent homicide in 1999 for attempting to be a good mother and breastfeed her newborn son. Tragically, he starved to death because she had never been warned of the risk to lactation from

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than the ultimate
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previous breast reduction surgery. Walrond had sought medical attention for the baby, from the same clinic where she received prenatal care. Yet they refused to see the baby without receipt of Medicaid paperwork, a process taking until after the boy's death at seven weeks to complete. Walrond's was not an isolated case; my research turned up two similar cases in 1998 alone. In contrast, a 1994 cover story in the *Wall Street Journal* featured the "zeal" of "well to do" mothers whose commitment to breastfeed led to dehydration, brain damage, and in at least two cases, infant deaths. Yet the mothers were "well meaning," "perfectionists" who suffered from a "yuppie syndrome." No state

action was taken against them, with blame pointed at the medical profession.

In the U.S. today, African-American mothers are more likely than others to reject exhortations that 'breast is best.' Health officials bemoan these "alarming low rates," and direct policy to greater education stressing the infant-health advantages. The low-income African-American mothers I interviewed knew these advantages well; but they were also aware of their vulnerability and of the need to keep the state off their bodies and out of their homes. "Natural" mothering may exalt virtuous white women, but it carries a different legacy for those long dehumanized as ostensibly closer to it. University of Nottingham sociologist Elizabeth Murphy pointed out (in a side conversation) that, in contrast, maternal ideals may be more widely shared in the U.K. As in the U.S., class-stratification limits the ability to realize those ideals, but perhaps racialization of maternal bodies is less without a slave legacy in 'mother' England itself. I look forward to future research with British women of color and immigrant mothers.

Even a conference prioritizing health policy surely might have spent more time on breast-pumping. In my research I found only the African-American mothers pointing to the absurdity that breastfeeding, for all its 'naturalness,' has come to mean a great deal of breast-pumping. Though Lee and Furedi are concerned with the scary images of formula in the British media today, I found pretty scary images of breastfeeding in the U.S. Opening one recent issue of *Parents Magazine*, with the largest circulation of all the mothering/ parenting publications, we see a mom having an intimate, perhaps even sensual relationship with her breast pump, with no baby in sight. Further back in the issue, reinforcing the suggestion of perverse sexuality, a headline announces: "I Still Nurse My 5 year-old." I agree wholeheartedly with Lee and Furedi that the breast versus bottle decision should be an informed, practical, flexible choice -- one of many decisions a woman will make for her child rather than the ultimate measure of her motherhood. However, the moral panic created by public health campaigns is just one of multiple conflicts playing out on women's bodies and breasts. ■

¹See among many: Harmon, Amy. 2005. "'Lactivists' Take Their Cause, and Their Babies, to the Streets." *New York Times*, June 7, A-19. Malkin, Michelle. 2005. "Mommyblogging: On the Boob Tube." June 15. <http://michellemalkin.com/archives/0027654.htm>
www.mothering.com/sections/action_alerts/june2005.html "Mad Mommies Plan to Nurse in Plain View."
www.hipmama.com/node/8598 Regales, Jackie. 2005. "Nursing at Starbucks."
www.nurseatstarbucks.org

Linda M. Blum is the author of At the Breast: Ideologies of Breastfeeding and Motherhood in the Contemporary United States and Between Feminism and Labor. She teaches sociology and women's studies at the University of New Hampshire.

"Mothers' Experiences of, and Attitudes to, using infant formula in the early months." Dr. Ellie Lee and Professor Frank Furedi, School of Social Policy, Sociology, and Social Research, University of Kent. Canterbury, Kent, CT2 United Kingdom. June 2005.

Sociologists for Women in Society

Web Site Action Items 2005-2006

1. The outgoing Executive Officer Nancy Miller should ask Cindy Saylor to continue to be the web site manger under her administration. In establishing a new executive office, the incoming executive officer should hire a web site manager as part of her office staff.

2. At the 2005 summer meeting, SWS President Marlese Durr should present to the Executive Officer Board the above web site policy for approval. (Note this will lock in budget for commercial web space and web site manager - though the latter is already part of the budget).

3. Upon approval of the above policy regarding the web site, the Executive Officer should secure by September 30, 2005, a commercial web space that could provide the services outlined in the functionality requirements in action item #6.

4. At the 2005 summer meeting, President Marlese Durr should present to the Executive Officer Board the request for \$3500 for web site redesign (see action item #6 below).

5. If redesign is approved and money allocated, President Marlese Durr in consultation with President-Elect Chris Bose should appoint a new Ad Hoc IT Committee. (On May 15, 2005 President Marlese Durr dissolved the committee that developed the above policy and these actions items.)

6. The new Ad Hoc IT Committee appointed as indicated in action item #5 will research organizational web site designers, solicit three bids and designs, and present the information with recommendations to the EOB at the 2006 Winter Meeting. Bids for the redesign should address the following: user friendly and accessible (ADA) design with low graphics and easy public access to SWS

actions, fact sheets and statements; key functions: online membership and meeting registration, online payment for membership, meetings and other services, online voting, forms-based subscription/unsubscription to SWS listservs. The Ad Hoc IT Committee should investigate data system interface options, including direct data feed into existing Microsoft Access and Excel data management systems. (Note: In Spring 2005 the IT Committee received one bid. Given the above criteria for redesign, we should invite a resubmission of that bid.

7. Once a web designer is chosen by the SWS EOB, the Ad Hoc IT Committee should take responsibility for working with the web designer, establishing a timeline and overseeing the process to completion. At that point the committee will be dissolved.

www.socwomen.org.uk

Sociologists for Women in Society

Web Site Policy

1. The SWS web site will be located on a domain name server with the URL www.socwomen.org.

2. The Executive Officer will be responsible for assuring that domain name and server fees remain paid so that organization rights to the given domain name are retained and lapses in site availability and functions are avoided. The organization will annually budget for web space, any approved specialized web site functions and domain name registration.

3. The Executive Officer shall hire a web site manager as part of the administrative Executive Office staff. The web site manager will be responsible for routine maintenance of the web site and periodic updates, as requested by the Executive Officer. The organization will include in its annual budget a line to support this position.

4. The Executive Office shall function as the liaison between the members requesting changes or additions to the web site and the web site manager.

5. Decisions regarding the design, general content areas, and functionality of the SWS web site are under the direction of the Executive Officer and the SWS Executive Officer Board. Concerns regarding the web site and its functions should be directed to the Executive Office.

Last Updated May 11, 2005

Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. is Proud to Announce Five New Books in the Gender Lens Series!

Black Intimacies

A Gender Perspective on Families and Relationships

By: Shirley A. Hill

Shirley A. Hill applies a gender lens to the multiple systems of oppression that have shaped the lives of African American women and men. Using a multi-cultural feminist perspective, Hill examines the ways in which gender has affected experiences of intimacy, family relationships, child rearing, and motherhood for contemporary African Americans. Drawing on ethnographic material, interviews, and other scholarly research, Hill's work rethinks the cultural and historical definitions of black identity and personal relationships. January 2005,

Institutional Ethnography

A Sociology for People

By: Dorothy Smith

Sociologist Dorothy Smith outlines a method of inquiry that uses everyday experience as a lens to examine social relations and social organization. Concerned with articulating an inclusive sociology that goes beyond looking at a particular group of people from the detached viewpoint of the researcher, this is a method of inquiry for people, incorporating the expert's research and language into everyday experience to

examine social relations and institutions. This sociology from women's standpoints reveals the present but largely unseen social relations of everyday life. June 2005

Feminist Methodologies for Critical Researchers

Bridging Differences

By: Joey Sprague

This original work explores how standard methods can be adapted toward critical ends by thinking about the links between epistemology and methodology. Joey Sprague's treatment of qualitative and quantitative methods shows how both can be used effectively by progressive researchers. She traces how the social organization of the academy has produced a bias against feminist methodology and proposes that we rethink how we organize our research and our discipline. August 2005

Class Questions

Feminist Answers

By: Joan Acker

Class Questions: Feminist Answers examines feminist theories of class and intersectionality and proposes a theory of gendered and racialized class processes as deeply embedded in capitalist practices, both historically and today. Joan Acker argues that large

work organizations are primary locations in which gendered and racialized class inequalities are created. As neo-liberal market practices reorganize work, gendered and racialized class inequalities are both reorganized and increasing nationally and globally. This book will appeal to readers interested in a feminist discussion of class as a racialized and gendered process intimately tied to the capitalist economic system.

December 2005

Changing Genders, Changing Families

Tracing the Pace of Change Over Time

By: Oriel Sullivan

Feminists often bemoan how slowly the gender gap in household labor is shrinking. Sociologist Oriel Sullivan, however, focuses on the neglected topic of the direction and pace of changing domestic gender practices, from changes in attitudes to quantitative analysis of change in the domestic division of labor cross-nationally. Her theoretical approach connects the interactions and negotiations that individuals engage in on a day-to-day basis to the wider feminist inspired changes in politics and culture. She marshals empirical evidence for a slow but steady and powerful change in gender relations. This work provides evidence for meaningful feminist changes in family life. March 2006

Local Chapters

SWS-West was established in April 2005 during a social sponsored by the Pacific Sociological Association (PSA) Committee on the Status of Women and the Committee on the Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities. SWS members attending the event agreed to establish a regional chapter. SWS-West will meet concurrently with PSA. Officers elected are: President Anastasia Prokos; Vice President Mary Virnoche; Secretary Kathryn Hausbeck; Treasurer Marjukka Ollilainen.

Report from the Publications Committee: Editing *Gender & Society*

November 15, 2005

The SWS Publications Committee is pleased to announce Dr. Dana Britton (Associate Professor, Sociology, Kansas State University) as the next Editor of our journal, *Gender & Society*. The Publications Committee unanimously adopted the recommendation of the search committee.

The search committee (Judith Lorber, Sue Hinze, and Chris Bose, chaired by Lisa Brush) solicited applications, met with potential Editors in Philadelphia, and worked closely with Dr. Britton to develop an exceptionally strong proposal that responds admirably to the primary issues we articulated.

We found the proposal nicely showcased the range of Dr. Britton's strengths: overall strategic approach complemented by down-to-earth commitment to getting the details just right;

high-tech know-how at an important moment of transition in journal publishing; a strong sense of responsibility and accountability tempered by realistic humility about what an editor can do; ability to generate enthusiastic support from her home institution and from a great set of proposed deputy and associate editors. The proposal was well written, demonstrated in-depth knowledge of how the journal is run, and revealed good strategic thinking on how to improve both internal process and external performance/rankings. Dr. Britton proposed a very smart structure of people who will work as deputy editors as well as people who will attract an audience (and potential contributors) as associate editors, all of whom care about the journal's success.

We plan to celebrate at the Winter SWS meetings in Puerto Rico.

Call for Award Nominations
2007 Feminist Activism Award

The Feminist Activism Award is presented annually to an SWS member who has notably and consistently used sociology to improve conditions for women in society. The award honors outstanding feminist advocacy efforts that embody the goal of service to women and that have identifiably improved women's lives. Recipients are recognized for their activist contributions rather than occupational and academic achievements. SWS awards the recipient a one-time honorarium of \$1,000 and a travel budget of \$1,500 for presentations (lectures, workshops, or training sessions) related to their field of activism at two selected campus sites.

Please take a few moments to send us your recommendation so that we can recognize those who help us fulfill our mission as sociologists for women in society.

**Please Send a Letter of Nomination and Any Supporting Materials to:
Shirley Hill; Department of Sociology; Kansas University;
1415 Jayhawk Blvd., Room 716; Lawrence, KS 66045-7556**

If you have any questions about the award or the submission of nominations please feel free to contact Shirley Hill either by phone (785) 864-4111 or (785) 864-9400, fax: (785) 864-5280, or email - hill@ku.edu.

You can also visit the SWS website at www.socwomen.org (click on the awards tab) for more information.

Feminist Activism Campus Visits for
2006 Feminist Activism Award Winner Patricia Yancey Martin

Each year, two campuses are selected by the SWS Feminist Activism Award Committee to host a presentation by the Feminist Activism Award winner. The campus visits are designed to provide an opportunity for the award winner to share his or her expertise with campuses who are interested in the recipient's arena of activism. For each of the sites selected, SWS will provide reimbursement of up to \$750 of the direct transportation costs incurred in bringing the recipient to their campus. This year's winner, Patricia Yancey Martin will be available to discuss *Rape Work: Why Victims of Sexual Assault Don't Get the Response They Deserve*

*If you are interested in having Dr. Martin come to your campus, or if you would like more information about this opportunity, please contact Shirley Hill either by phone (785) 864-4111 or (785) 864-9400, fax: (785) 864-5280, or email - hill@ku.edu. Proposals for the campus visits are due by **March 1, 2006** and should be mailed to Dr. Shirley Hill Department of Sociology; Kansas University; 1415 Jayhawk Blvd., Room 716; Lawrence, KS 66045-7556. Please visit the SWS website at www.socwomen.org (click on the awards tab) for more information.*

Feminist Transformation of the Academy
Taskforce Report
August, 2005

Prepared by Abby Ferber, Taskforce chair

I. Accomplishments for Spring 2005:

1. Sponsored three sessions at the summer meetings:

**The Life Trajectory of an Academic Career*

**Assessing Journal Lag Times*

**Disrupting the Culture of Silence: Managing the Demands of Personal and Professional Life* (there was support for making this a reoccurring session at SWS meetings, as a formal mechanism for providing ongoing support for each other)

2. Report, and position statement on gender and the evaluation of teaching is now on the website, along with a set of recommendations for faculty, researchers, and Universities. Based on this research (by Joey Sprague and Kelley Massoni) and report, an article was submitted to NWSA Journal, and a report to the Women in Higher Education newsletter.

II. Priority for Upcoming Year: Dissemination

Because so much of what we are addressing on this Taskforce concerns all (women) faculty, not just sociologists, we want to explore methods of sharing our work with non-sociologists who may find our work useful and who may have work to share with us.

As a first step towards this goal, we are assembling a list of all organizations of women faculty in academia (ie, organizations like SWS serving other disciplines).

We are discussing possibilities for collaboration with these organizations; sharing research and reports, and our website; providing links on our website to websites of these other organizations where relevant, etc.

III. Needs:

**Website revision:* there are currently a number of overlapping areas which make the website difficult to navigate. We would like to create a “section” on the website for “Feminist Transformation of the Academy” that will be highly accessible.

**A public information officer:* to send out press releases, reports, etc. to Universities, sociology departments, women’s centers, etc. For example, the research and report on *Gender and the Evaluation of Teaching* can be extremely helpful, and potentially have some impact, if we had methods of dissemination.

SWS AWARDS DEADLINES

Cheryl Allen Miller Award **May 15, 2006**

Contact: Cynthia Anderson, Iowa State University

Feminist Lectureship **February 1, 2006**

Contact: Susan Farrell, Kingsborough Community College

SWS Feminist Mentoring Award **March 1, 2006**

Contact: Bonnie Thornton Dill, University of Maryland

SWS Activism Award **March 15, 2006**

Contact: Shirley Hill, University of Kansas

Barbara Rosenblum Cancer Dissertation Award **April 1, 2006**

Contact: Jenny Kronenfeld, Arizona State University

Beth B. Hess Memorial Scholarship **May 15, 2006**

Contact: Myra Marx Ferree

*For complete descriptions of awards and nominating procedures,
please check the SWS Website www.socwomen.org*

Student Concerns Committee

Student Concerns Committee
By Marcia Hernandez

The Student Concerns Committee welcomes all of the new student members to SWS and new members to the student listserv. Members can join the student listserv by sending an email to SWS-Grad@yahoo.com or by contacting the listserv manager, Jenny Korn directly at j-korn@kellog.northwestern.edu.

Ongoing Committee Efforts

The Student-to-Student Mentoring Program was a success at the summer meetings. I want to thank Rachel Kutz-Flamenbaum for taking the lead role in matching partners and organizing this program. Information about the Student to Student Mentoring Program is available on the Student Concerns site on the SWS webpage. I want to continue the student mentoring program at the winter meetings, and also receive feedback from SWSer's matched in the summer. If you are participating in the student mentoring program or want to provide feedback about your experiences please contact me at mdhernandez@hotmail.com.

The Student Concerns Committee is considering the possibility of co-sponsoring a student presentation session with another organization at future

meetings. Participants in the Emerging *Scholarship in Sociology: ABS-SWS Student Roundtable* session reported that this event was an enjoyable, informational event at the August meetings. If students are interested in co-sponsoring a similar event with ABS, or another group, at the upcoming meetings in Montreal please send me an email. It is best to start this process fairly early to work through the logistics of co-sponsoring a session with other organizations.

Student representation is an ongoing issue for discussion and development in SWS. The survey results from the summer questionnaire indicate that students want flexibility and choice in style and form of representation in SWS. Some respondents stated that formal, institutionalized representation (e.g., the Student Concerns Committee) was the best way to develop representation, while others voiced the option for informal representation and engagement (e.g., serving on committees to work on a project, and not taking on the responsibilities of an officer) was preferable. There was also some discussion that both types are needed for students to enjoy the full range of membership benefits in SWS. Also, some students advocated for the Student Committee to be co-chaired, and to have the committee

members consist of a partially elected body. We will continue this discussion on-line through listserv conversations and in Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rico Activities

The Student Concerns Committee will meet during the winter conference. Please send me an email if there is something you would like to see on the agenda for this time. I also encourage students to attend other committee meetings during the winter conference. Most of the committees are open to everyone, and welcome new members, particularly students. The winter conference is a good time to explore different SWS committees and their ongoing projects. In Puerto Rico, there will be an informal meeting for Student to Student Mentor participants; more details about this event are forthcoming.

Video Review for *SWS Newsletter*
Diane E. Levy
Department of Sociology
UNCW

Working Women of the World. A film by Marie France Collard.
Icarus Films 2000, 53 minutes (in French and Flemish with English subtitles)

Chain of Love. A Film by Marije Meerman
Icarus Films 2001, 50 minutes

Diamonds in the Dark. A Film by Olivia Carrescia
Icarus Films 1999, 60 minutes

In the 21st century, workers are caught between traditional patterns of making a living and the new demands of the global economy. As globalization reaches into more forms of work and locations, workers are faced with dilemmas unknown by previous generations. While these trends affect both men and women, women as both workers and primary caregivers have more complex response to global changes in the workplace. Each of these recent three films addresses the impact of globalization on women's work. All by women filmmakers, they allow women to speak in their own voices and share their daily lives and struggles with the viewer. Although they are set in very different locales and feature women of various ages and skills, the subjects of the films are women with a similar problem—how to survive in a globalized economy where the old ways no longer apply.

The women in *Working Women of the World* are employees of Levi-Strauss in Belgium and France having to cope with plant closings and the loss of 1400 jobs. As a purely profit-driven decision, the company decided to transfer manufacturing jobs to Turkey and Indonesia with cheaper labor. French and Belgian women are paid based on productivity but have traditionally limited their production to minimize stress and promote good health. Workers in developing nations can be counted on to out-produce them for lower costs. The French and Belgian unions failed in their negotiations with management to keep the plants in Europe, and the film follows the workers' last days sewing jeans. We see that many of the women are fully aware of the politics of the situation—they know that capitalistic motives outweigh the concern for social issues. In spite of themselves, the women admit that they will miss their “machines” and the companionship of the other workers.

The film follows the jobs to sweat shops in Turkey and factories in Indonesia. In Indonesia we meet a young woman called Yanti who describes the extremely poor working conditions (long hours; hot and crowded work environment; 2000 people using 5 broken down toilets). Indonesian workers are subject to constant surveillance and intimidation. Whereas the French women demonstrated because “a job is a right”; the workers in Indonesia are afraid to speak out for fear of losing their jobs. An interesting twist in the film is watching the Indonesian women view the video of the French women workers. They appear to envy the working conditions and life style, but don't appear to understand that they too can be displaced in the global economy. The film also portrays Levi-Strauss workers in production zones in the Philippines—conditions the filmmaker calls modern slavery. Levi's jeans—the iconic American product—are no longer made in the US or even Western Europe. Each pair of jeans comes with a story of despair.

Despair is endemic for the women in *Chain of Love*. This film follows the largest export product in the Philippines—its women—as they attempt to make a living and support families at home by taking personal service in Europe. Philippine women are favored by European employers for their combination of desirable characteristics: they are “god-fearing”, trust worthy, educated, clean and obedient—perfect attributes for a child care provider or domestic worker. As one commentator states, they are the “Mercedes Benz of domestic employees.”

The film interviews women at various roles in the situation—European employers, Philippine workers, and experts in global flow of labor, notably Professor Rhacel Parrenas of University of Wisconsin at Madison, the author of *Servants of Globalization: Women, Migration and Domestic Work*. [Stanford

University Press April, 2001] The benefits to each category of women are portrayed—the Dutch professional woman employer enjoys “freedom, flexibility, and peace of mind” as her Philippine child care provider cares for her family; the domestic worker is able to send money back to her family. Estimates are that \$8 million is remitted back to the Philippines each year—the largest earner of foreign exchange. The Philippine government encourages women to emigrate for income and holds classes for them to face the issues of adjustment and finances. They are trained to see themselves as “professional home managers” and ambassadors for their country. They are congratulated as the “new heroes of the economy.” Interestingly, they are encouraged to maintain transnational families rather than permanent emigration because of dependence on their remittance income back home.

Their overseas work allows women to realize their dreams for their families. The down side for the worker is that she is not with them. They have to leave their own children back in the Philippines for others to care for—hence the chain of love. Women in the post-industrial formal economy hire women from the third world to perform their domestic labor. The filmmaker shows how the process creates a “fourth world” of workers who care for the families of third world workers who migrate to the first world. The work conditions of the Philippine workers vary by the benevolence of their employers—some see them as servants, others as family members. The tragedy for these workers is their place in the global system requires them to be displaced in both worlds.

The women in *Diamonds in the Dark* are displaced within their own society. The film examines the lives of several women in Romania who are experiencing the transition from the oppressive communist regime under Ceausescu to a capitalist system. Archival footage vividly displays the harsh daily lives of women and families under the former regime—food and energy shortages, no freedom of expression. Romania is a traditional patriarchal society reinforced by rural culture and religion. Under the previous regime, lip service was given to gender equality, but the reality was far from equal. In 1948, all peasants were forced to leave their traditional lands and work in factories or communal farms. Interviews with older women tell stories of harsh and difficult work. The government confiscated private homes and forcibly moved peasants to villages. Women were honored for having many children (“heroine mothers” with 10 or more children). To reinforce childbirth, abortion which had been freely available, was prohibited in 1966. As a result, many women learned to initiate their own terminations or had illegal ones with the use of “connections”—under threat of a prison sentence. In this period, Romania had the highest infant mortality rate in Europe and many abandoned babies.

The film examines the vast economic disparity of women in Romania today. Women in the rural areas have returned to domestic labor and appear to be in a time warp compared to women in the urban areas who engage in formal labor and strive to take advantage of the luxuries of a modern society. We see major distinction in values between groups of urban and rural women; older and younger women; and the struggles of each group to come to terms with the past. The filmmaker uses images of city and rural areas—the beauty of the countryside, the grey ugliness of urban block housing; and traditional costumes, dances and rituals to emphasize these disparities. We hear the voices of women from each segment of society, and learn of outside NGO’s which contribute to development and entrepreneurial projects in isolated villages.

These three films have much to offer sociology courses, especially those in gender stratification, women and development, and globalization. Each one allows women in various statuses to speak in their own voices to illustrate the consequences of global economic forces. The filmmakers’ sensitivity to gender, class, and age discrimination subtly infuses the viewers’ experiences and teaches us much about the impact of globalization on women in the 21st century.

Women and Low-Wage Work

Prepared by:

Mark Vermillion, Oklahoma State University

Jaime Burns, Oklahoma State University

Distributed by the Sociologists for Women in Society

December 15, 2005

Introduction

Traditionally, women earn less than men. With over 60% of women in the U.S. paid labor force and over 73% of single mothers being employed in the paid labor force, it is gender that is the “key variable affecting work.”¹ Numerous scholars (Gilbert 2003; Blau 1998; Hughes and Kroehler 2005; Marger 2002) and governmental agencies have noted the importance of educational attainment, race, family issues (such as marital status and number of children), globalization, industry or occupation, and whether the person is participating in governmental assistance programs for determining whether women are defined as living in poverty. A topic that is continuously at the forefront of women and low-wage work discourse is welfare. While demographics such as race, employment, and educational attainment are necessary to understand women in the low-wage sector, welfare programs are recurrent themes throughout. Consequently, the purpose of this fact sheet is to provide easily accessible statistics and ideas concerning the aforementioned key variables as affecting women in low-wage work.

For our purposes, low-wage workers earn more than \$20 per week but less than \$218 per week (or less than \$6.20 per hour at 35 hours per week).² In addition, low-wage work is defined as earning less than \$12,000 per year in successive years.³ Women, over time, are more likely to remain in low-wage occupations than men.⁴ In the low-wage workforce, women hold the majority (59%) of low-wage jobs, and they are still more likely to be low paid than are male workers.⁵ Almost 70% of U.S. working women earn less than \$20,000 yearly, and nearly 40% earn less than \$10,000.⁶

According to Kim (2000), 8.27% of all women workers are below the poverty status. Furthermore, 16.94% of low-wage women workers are below poverty status. Additionally, only 4.76% of those low-wage women workers received any type of welfare.⁷ As a result of low-wage work for women, many times they are forced to accept work that no one else wants. These jobs are more likely to offer few or no benefits and little job security.⁸ Following is a non-exhaustive review of those variables that greatly affect women in low-wage work.

Welfare's Impact on Women and Low-Wage Work

Women that use welfare benefits generally work low-wage jobs with few or no benefits. Rice (2001) notes that one-third of those receiving welfare are adults, but that 90% of them are women. With this statistic in mind, the move from welfare to work continues to hinder women and their children because “most of the new jobs obtained by former welfare recipients pay far below the poverty line.”⁹ Furthermore, because states have cut back on training activities and education, more and more women on welfare must drop out of school in order to afford items for themselves and their children. In turn, a lack of formal education keeps these women under or near the poverty line. Additionally, women on welfare many times have nonstandard schedules which make finding affordable childcare very difficult.¹⁰

Education

Of those employed at the lowest literacy level, 56% of employed women had low wages (compared to 30% for men). About 41% of women of this functional category experienced low wages (compared to only 17% of men).¹¹ Contrary to a popular notion that women in low-wage work are uneducated, almost 42% of women in low-wage work have high school diplomas. Furthermore, nearly 30% of women in low-wage work have some college experience with 7% having a college degree or higher.¹² Rice (2001: 359) notes that “states have cut back drastically on participation in education and training activities. Thousands of women on welfare who were also in college have been forced to drop out of school. These results are all the more unfortunate, since higher education has been documented to be a successful educational strategy for escaping long-term wage poverty among poor

women.” Women are also less likely to attain a college degree.¹³ According to the statistics, one is more likely to engage in low-wage work if a college degree is not obtained.

Individual Characteristics

Individual characteristics in relation to women and low-wage work include race, age, number of children and marital status. About 30% of the female workforce is considered low-wage. Of these women, nearly three-fourths are white. Yet, “the proportion of minority women is significantly higher than white women: 35.8% and 46.6% of African American and Latino women in contrast to 26.2% of white women.”¹⁴ The majority of workers in low-wage jobs are adults. Teenagers “comprise only 7% of the low-wage workforce.”¹⁵ Specifically for women in low-wage work, nearly 45% are ages 25 to 45 years old.¹⁶ Concerning the number of children of women in low-wage work, about 17% with one to two children under the age of 6 are in low-wage occupations. Furthermore, 37% of women with one to two children under the age of 18 are in the low-wage sector occupations.¹⁷ In 2002, 13 million families were headed by single females (18% of families).¹⁸ In 1998, single parents headed 23% of all families. Women headed 76% of those single-parent families. 59% of all families that earned less than \$10,000 in 1998 were headed by single women, even though single women headed less than 18% of all families.¹⁹ For further description of these statistics, please refer to Figure 1.

Globalization

In the United States, wages for women are higher in the West, the Northeast, and parts of the Midwest, while they are lower in the Southeast and Mountain States.²⁰ On a global scale; however, there are a number of manufacturing jobs that compete internationally. These jobs include automobile manufacturing and various other assembly-line employment. In an effort to save money, corporations have moved these jobs to other countries. In fact, many corporations use globalization as a rationale for not increasing wages.²¹ As a result, the United States has moved away from these large, production-oriented operations to a service sector of the economy characterized by employment in low-wage occupations such as child care, health care, and food service.²² While it is noted that these types of jobs are not being exported, so they must be filled by Americans. Consequently, women are generally going to be the ones occupying these positions.

Industry & Occupation

As previously mentioned, women are disproportionately employed in those industries and occupations defined as low-wage. 26% of low wage earners work with a business with less than 25 employees.²³ 11.3% of all low wage earners are employed in eating/drinking establishments, 11% in educational services, and 10% in business services²⁴, 59% of low wage jobs are held by women.²⁵ In 1998, about 16 million, or 39% of female wage and salary workers, were paid low wages.²⁶ In 2002, among women above the age of 16, 73% worked in four occupational groups: administrative support, including clerical (23%), professional specialty (19%), service workers (except private household)(17%); and executive administrators, and managerial (15%).²⁷ As previously noted, women tend to be clustered in low-wage occupations and industries. Some of these industries include clerical and service workers. For a further description of these industries and the percentage of women who occupy these positions, see Figure 2.

Unionization

According to the Fairness Initiative, “Over the past quarter century, a variety of political, economic and corporate decisions undercut the bargaining power of the average worker, but especially those in the lower strata of the workforce.”²⁸ For many women in low-wage occupations, such as the hotel industry, joining a union provides such benefits as raising minimum wage, increasing health benefits, and offering paid leave. However, the government’s attempt to “deregulate those industries that are highly unionized” have “contributed to the deterioration in low-wage conditions and a worsening of disparities in income and wealth.”²⁹

Conclusion

With all the statistics, it is shown that women in low-wage work is not only a complex issue, but an issue with far-reaching effects. While solutions are not simple, and often involve structural changes, possible suggestions are to

increase minimum wage in order to assist women and their families, provide improvements in the Earned Income Tax Credit, and require businesses that receive public monies to provide quality jobs.³⁰ There is the realization that such legislation could only result from lobbying efforts as well as more social awareness about the situation. Educating the public is crucial to bringing both public consciousness and social reform.

Important Activist and Community Organizations

American Federation of Labor- Congress of Industrial Unions	www.aflcio.org
National Organization for Women	www.now.org
National Women's Law Center	www.nwlc.org
Women's Policy, Inc.	www.womenspolicy.org
American Civil Liberties Union	www.aclu.org
U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau	www.dol.gov/dol/wb/
Wider Opportunities for Women	www.wowonline.org
Women Work! The National Network for Women's Employment	www.womenwork.org
9 to 5 National Organization of Working Women	www.9to5.org
Institute for Women's Policy Research	www.iwpr.org
Low-Wage Work	www.lowwagework.org

Resources for Further Information

In addition to the above mentioned sources, the following videos, books, and journal articles can be utilized in the classroom by instructors, practitioners, and students interested in learning more about women and low-wage work.

Videos

Fast Food Women. By Anne Lewis Johnson; [produced by] Headwaters. Whitesburg, KY: Appalshop Film and Video, 1991.

There's No Such Thing as Women's Work. United States Women's Bureau, Division of Information and Publications. Produced by United States Department of Labor, Division of Audiovisual Communication Services; distributed by National Women's History Project, 1987.

The Willmar 8. California Newsreel; produced by Julie Thomson and Mary Beth Yarrow; directed by Lee Grant. San Francisco: California Newsreel, 1986[?], 1980.

Breaking the Glass Ceiling (n.d.). This new, two-part series examines the obstacles preventing women from getting to the top of the corporate ladder. It includes case studies of women in the U.S. and the U.K., providing practical insights for future breakthroughs.

Books and Journal Articles

Budig, Michelle J. and Paula England. 2001. "The Wage Penalty for Motherhood." *American Sociological Review* 66: 204-225.

Handler, Joel F. and Lucie White (editors). 1999. *Hard Labor: Women and Work in the Post-Welfare Era*. New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc.

Julia, Maria. 2000. *Constructing Gender: Multicultural Perspectives in Working With Women*. California: Wadsworth.

Lambert, Susan J. 1999. "Lower-Wage Workers and the New Realities of Work and Family." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 562: 174-190.

Matthaei, Julie A. 1982. *An Economic History of Women in America*. New York: Schocken Books.

Taniguchi, Hiromi. 1999. "The Timing of Childbearing and Women's Wages." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 61: 1008-1019.

Figure 1³¹

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of women in low-wage jobs, 1998			
Category	Percent of—		
	all women workers	low-wage women workers	workers in category who are paid low wages
All women, 18–64 years	100.00	100.00	38.50
Age:			
18–24 years	16.87	30.61	69.92
25–45 years	55.46	44.96	31.24
45 years and older	27.67	24.43	34.01
Education:			
Less than high school	11.00	21.22	74.35
High school	36.08	41.86	44.70
Some college	32.88	29.86	34.99
College degree or higher	20.04	7.06	13.57
Race or ethnicity:			
White	80.43	79.42	38.05
Black	14.75	15.82	41.31
Native American91	.91	38.57
Asian	3.90	3.85	37.96
Hispanic (any race)	9.86	13.80	53.96
With no children less than 18 years old	56.04	53.02	36.45
With children less than 18 years old:			
1–2 children	36.05	37.39	39.95
3–4 children	7.58	9.25	47.02
5 or more children33	.34	40.60
With no children less than 6 years old	83.28	82.32	38.09
With children less than 6 years old:			
1–2 children	16.17	16.96	40.39
3 or more children54	.72	51.53
Marital status:			
Married	49.31	42.89	33.50
Separated, divorced, or widowed	22.45	20.96	35.98
Nevermarried	28.24	36.15	49.33
Disabled	2.59	3.50	52.00
Noncitizen	6.31	9.76	59.63

Figure 2³²

Fast Facts about Women in the Labor Force

In March 2002, more than four-fifths of women 16 and over in the civilian labor force were employed in five occupational groups



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, [March 2002 Current Population Survey \[PDF\]](#).
[Graph description](#)

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- ¹³ U.S. Census Bureau. March 2003. *Women and Men in the United States: March 2002*. Current Population Reports by: Renee E. Spraggins.
- ¹⁴ Fairness Initiative on Low-Wage Work. Available online at: <http://www.lowwagework.org/facts.htm>
- ¹⁵ Fairness Initiative on Low-Wage Work. Available online at: <http://www.lowwagework.org/facts.htm>
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- ¹⁷ Kim, Marlene. September 2000. *Women Paid Low Wages: Who They Are and Where They Work*. Monthly Labor Review 26-30.
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- ²² Fairness Initiative on Low-Wage Work. Available online at: <http://www.lowwagework.org/facts.htm>
- ²³ Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics Program. 2002. *LEHD Fact Sheet: Low Wage Work*. U.S. Census Bureau.
- ²⁴ Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics Program. 2002. *LEHD Fact Sheet: Low Wage Work*. U.S. Census Bureau.
- ²⁵ Kim, Marlene. September 2000. *Women Paid Low Wages: Who They Are and Where They Work*. Monthly Labor Review 26-30.
- ²⁶ Kim, Marlene. September 2000. *Women Paid Low Wages: Who They Are and Where They Work*. Monthly Labor Review 26-30.
- ²⁷ U.S. Census Bureau. March 2003. *Women and Men in the United States: March 2002*. Current Population Reports by: Renee E. Spraggins.
- ²⁸ Fairness Initiative on Low-Wage Work. Available online at: <http://www.lowwagework.org/facts.htm>
- ²⁹ Fairness Initiative on Low-Wage Work. Available online at: <http://www.lowwagework.org/facts.htm>
- ³⁰ NOW with Bill Moyers: Politics and Economy, Downward Mobility. Available online at: <http://www.pbs.org/now/politics/wagesqanda.html>
- ³¹ Kim, Marlene. September 2000. *Women Paid Low Wages: Who They Are and Where They Work*. Monthly Labor Review 26-30.
- ³² U.S. Census Bureau. 2003. U.S. Census Bureau Public Information Office. Available online at: <http://www.census.gov/pubinfo/www/multimedia/WomensHistory.html>

Opportunity to Participate

The Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP) invites proposals for its 56th Annual Meeting, to be held August 10-12, 2006 at the Hilton Montréal Bonaventure, Montréal, Québec, Canada. Theme: **BUILDING JUST, DIVERSE AND DEMOCRATIC COMMUNITIES**. Papers or extended abstracts (2-3 page summary of your intended presentation) for presentations at division sponsored sessions must be sent electronically to session organizers no later than January 31, 2006. If your paper does not fit into one of the sessions listed in the Call for Papers, send your submission electronically no later than January 31 to Program

Committee Co-Chairs: Phoebe Morgan, W: 520-523-8245, phoebe.morgan@nau.edu and Jim Gruber, W: 313-593-5611, jegruber@umich.edu. Questions relating to the program should be directed to them as well. When sending an e-mail, please place SSSP in the subject line. For further information, visit <http://www.sssp1.org>.

The Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP) is recruiting applications for the 2006 Racial/Ethnic Minority Graduate Scholarship. Persons accepted into an accredited doctoral program in any one of the social and/or behavioral sciences are invited to apply for the \$10,000

Racial/Ethnic Minority Scholarship. Applications are due by and must be received no later than February 1, 2006. Applicants will be notified of the results by July 15, 2006. All applicants must be current members and should be a citizen of the United States when applying. For further information and an application, visit <http://www.sssp1.org>. Contact Angela M. Moe, Chair, with all questions (Department of Sociology, Western Michigan University, 1903 W. Michigan Avenue, Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5257; W: 269-387-5275; F: 269-387-2882; angie.moe@wmich.edu).

Job Opportunities

University of Akron

The department of Sociology at The University of Akron invites applications for a tenure-track assistant professor position to begin August 28, 2006. The department seeks a candidate whose area of expertise is in the Sociology of Law. Responsibilities include conducting and publishing research, applying for external grants, professional service, and teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Additionally, the successful candidate will be able to teach law-related courses in the Department of Political Science. However, the tenure home for this position is the Department of Sociology. The candidate must hold the Ph.D. at the time of appointment. Preference will be given to the Ph.D. earned in Sociology or a closely related field. The Department of Sociology provides a supportive environment for professional growth. The department is one of 18 Ph.D. granting departments within the university. Presently, the department includes 15 full-time faculty, 550 undergraduate majors, and 30 graduate students, 20 of whom are on full-time assistantships. According to the latest NSF data, the department ranks 16th nationally in federal R & D expenditures. Furthermore, the department has been recognized by the American Sociological Association for its exemplary graduate teacher-training program. Applicants should send a letter of application, a curriculum vitae, and three letters of reference to C. André Christie-Mizell, Search Committee Chair, Department of Sociology, The University of Akron, Akron, OH 44325-1905. Review of Applications will begin on December 31, 2005; however, applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Salary is competitive and depends upon qualifications and experience. The University of Akron is committed to a policy of equal employment opportunity and to the principles of affirmative action in accordance with state and federal laws. Minorities and women are encouraged to apply.

Brooklyn College of the City University of New York

Anticipated Tenure Track Faculty Position Fall 2006. Review of applications will begin on October 15, 2005 and contin-

ue until position is filled. Assistant/Associate Professor (Child Welfare Policy Analysis and Research), Department: Children's Studies Program, department to be determined. Responsibilities: The interdisciplinary Children's Studies Program and Center invites applications for a tenure track position at the Assistant/Associate Professor rank beginning in September 2006. The successful candidate will teach courses in the Program as well as children-and youth-centered courses in his or her discipline. It is expected that the candidate's research can be coordinated with the mission of children's studies - to study the experience and outcomes for children and youth in the New York City and state systems of child welfare, education, juvenile/criminal justice, mental health and physical health. It is the intention of the Children's Studies Program and Center to spearhead interdisciplinary accountability research, utilizing the latest research methods, for the analysis of policy issues central to the well being and the rights of New York's children and young people. Since the state and city-focused New York Child Welfare systems do not exist in isolation from federal legislative and fiscal realities, the successful candidate also needs to be familiar with such contexts. This position provides the opportunity of breaking new ground in urban child policy research. Qualifications: Ph.D. or the equivalent in a relevant discipline such as anthropology, fiscal economics and the public sector, public health, history, public policy analysis, psychology, social work, and sociology. Record of teaching experience and scholarly productivity, the latter evidenced by publications and funded grant applications. Also desirable are: familiarity with policy and evaluation research in the child welfare sector; the ability to work collaboratively with diverse communities of researchers, practitioners, public policy makers and private sponsors; management ability, including experience in project development, fundraising and budgeting. The selected candidate should be familiar with relevant major ongoing child research in the social sciences. Please send curriculum vitae, copies of representative publications, evidence of teaching proficiency, and three

letters of recommendation to: Michael T. Hewitt, Assistant Vice President for Human Resource Services, Brooklyn College/CUNY, 2900 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11210-2889

Brooklyn College of the City University of New York

Anticipated Tenure Track Faculty Position Fall 2006, Associate/Full Professor (Department Chairperson), Department of Sociology. Responsibilities: The selected candidate will be responsible for administering and representing a distinguished department of eleven (11) faculty that offers B.A. and M.A. degree programs in sociology, and participates in the College's Core Curriculum, the campus-based Center for the Study of Brooklyn, as well as in the doctoral program in sociology at the CUNY Graduate center. The chairperson will have limited teaching duties, generally focused on his or her specialized field(s), and will mentor junior faculty and encourage faculty development. Qualifications: Candidates should have a national reputation for scholarship, a distinguished record of publications, evidence of commitment to and excellence in teaching, a demonstrated capacity for intellectual leadership, and a proven record of academic leadership. Area of specialization is open. Ph.D. required. Please send letter of application, curriculum vitae and the names of at least three professional references to Ms. Corinne Amato, Sociology Search Committee, c/o Office of the Provost, Brooklyn College, 2900 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y. 11210-28899

Texas Tech University

The Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work seeks a Chairperson to begin in August, 2006. Applicants must have a doctorate in Sociology, Anthropology or Social Work. The new Chairperson must be able to coordinate and lead a multidisciplinary department of 21 tenured/tenure track faculty (11 in Sociology, 6 in Anthropology, and 4 in Social Work), with three undergraduate majors (currently 227 in Sociology, 80 in Anthropology and 96 in Social Work), which offers two Masters Degrees (cur-

Job Opportunities

rently 14 Sociology and 12 Anthropology Masters candidates), and which participates in many interdisciplinary programs including Women's Studies, Latin American and Iberian Studies, and Criminology/Forensic Sciences. The new Chair must also have an established record that merits the rank of professor, and a commitment to excellence in research and teaching. Discipline and area of specialization are open. Applicants must also be able to work closely with other units in a major research university of 28,000 students with associated law and medical schools. Additional information about the Department and Texas Tech University can be found at www.ttu.edu. We especially encourage applications from and nominations of members of under-represented groups. Applicants should submit 1) a letter describing their interest in and qualifications for the position; 2) a curriculum vitae; and 3) names and contact information of four references to Professor David Roach, College of Arts and Sciences, Box 3083, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX 79409-3083. Review of applications will begin January 15, 2006, and will continue until the position is filled. Texas Tech University is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity employer.

University of North Carolina Wilmington

Invites applications for two tenure-track assistant professors in the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice beginning in August 2006. The Department has 20 full-time faculty members, roughly 350 majors, and offers bachelors degrees in sociology, criminal justice, and a developing concentration in public/applied sociology. Planning is underway for an MA program. Located on a beautiful 640-acre

campus in an historic port city five miles from the Atlantic Ocean, UNCW is a growing comprehensive university committed to teaching, scholarship, and service. The university currently enrolls nearly 12,000 undergraduate and graduate students. The two positions are: (Ref #3132) a generalist in criminology or criminal justice, with substantive interest gender, race/ethnicity and crime; (Ref#6848) specialist in criminal justice theory or advanced criminology preferred. Interest in at least one of the following areas is desirable: globalization, homeland security/terrorism, multiculturalism, transnational/international crime and justice. For both positions, interest in teaching quantitative data analysis is desirable. Candidates must have a PhD in sociology, criminology, or criminal justice at time of appointment. Strong research skills are required, and interest in obtaining external funding is preferred. Please refer to our website, www.uncw.edu/soccrj, for more information on the department. Review of applications will begin on January 15, 2006. To apply, please complete the online application process available on the Web at <http://consensus.uncw.edu>. A letter of application that includes a statement of teaching philosophy and summary of research plans, complete resume, and contact information for three professional references should be addressed to Kimberly J. Cook, Chair, Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice, University of North Carolina Wilmington, 601 South College Road, Wilmington, NC 28403-5978. Inquiries should be directed to cookk@uncw.edu, and attached to the online application - not emailed or mailed. Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF attachments are specifically preferred. For questions regarding the online application

process, contact Dali Hildebeitel at (910) 962-3420. Under North Carolina law, applications and related materials are confidential personnel documents and not subject to public release. UNCW is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply.

Brooklyn College of the City University of New York

Anticipated Tenure Track Faculty Position Fall 2006, Associate/Full Professor (Department Chairperson), Department of Sociology. Responsibilities: The selected candidate will be responsible for administering and representing a distinguished department of eleven (11) faculty that offers B.A. and M.A. degree programs in sociology, and participates in the College's Core Curriculum, the campus-based Center for the Study of Brooklyn, as well as in the doctoral program in sociology at the CUNY Graduate center. The chairperson will have limited teaching duties, generally focused on his or her specialized field(s), and will mentor junior faculty and encourage faculty development. Qualifications: Candidates should have a national reputation for scholarship, a distinguished record of publications, evidence of commitment to and excellence in teaching, a demonstrated capacity for intellectual leadership, and a proven record of academic leadership. Area of specialization is open. Ph.D. required. Please send letter of application, curriculum vitae and the names of at least three professional references to Ms. Corinne Amato, Sociology Search Committee, c/o Office of the Provost, Brooklyn College, 2900 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y. 11210-28899

The Jessie Bernard Award

The Jessie Bernard Award is given in recognition of scholarly work that has enlarged the horizons of sociology to encompass fully the role of women in society. The contribution may be in empirical research, theory, or methodology. It is presented for significant cumulative work done throughout a professional career. The award is open to women or men and is not restricted to sociologists. Only members of the American Sociological Association may submit nominations for the Jessie Bernard Award. Nominations for career achievement should include a narrative letter of nomination, a copy of the vita of the nominee, and three supporting letters.

**Nominations should be submitted to: American Sociological Association, ATTN: Governance Office,
1307 New York Avenue NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20005; e-mail governance@asanet.org.**

The deadline for nominations is December 31, 2005

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SWS Executive Office
Department of Sociology
University of Akron
Akron OH 44325-1905
Fax: 330.972.5377
Phone: 330.972.7918
Email: sws@uakron.edu
Website: www.socwomen.org

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION – Areas are consistent with ASA number and grouping

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| (38) Aging/Social Gerontology | (19) Family | (24) Quantitative Methodology |
| (58) Alcohol and Drugs | (14) History of Sociology/Social Thought | (64) Race, Class and Gender |
| (67) Anthropology | (15) Human Ecology | (29) Race/Ethnic/Minority Relations |
| (01) Applied Sociology/Evaluation Research | (16) Industrial Sociology | (61) Rational Choice |
| (39) Art/Music | (40) Knowledge | (30) Religion |
| (02) Biosociology | (41) Language/Social Linguistics | (31) Rural Sociology |
| (59) Children and Youth | (57) Latina/o Sociology | (42) Science and Technology |
| (03) Collective Behavior/Social Movements | (17) Law and Society | (43) Sex and Gender |
| (04) Community | (18) Leisure/Sports/Recreation | (62) Sexuality and Homosexuality |
| (05) Comparative Sociology/ Historical Sociology | (60) Marxist Sociology | (32) Small Groups |
| (68) Conflict Resolution | (20) Mass Communication/Public Opinion | (33) Social Change |
| (49) Criminal Justice | (21) Mathematical Sociology | (34) Social Control |
| (06) Criminology/Delinquency | (22) Medical Sociology | (71) Social Networks |
| (07) Cultural Sociology | (51) Mental Health | (35) Social Organization |
| (08) Demography | (53) Microcomputing | (36) Social Psychology |
| (09) Development | (65) Migration and Immigration | (72) Social Welfare/Social Work |
| (10) Deviant Behavior/Social Disorganization | (25) Military Sociology | (37) Socialization |
| (63) Disabilities | (26) Occupations/Professions | (54) Sociological Practice |
| (11) Economy and Society | (66) Organizations, Formal and Complex | (46) Stratification/Mobility |
| (12) Education | (27) Penology/Corrections | (73) Statistics |
| (52) Emotions | (69) Policy Analysis/Public Policy | (47) Theory |
| (13) Environmental Sociology | (70) Political Economy | (56) Undergraduate Education/ Teaching |
| (50) Ethnomethodology | (28) Political Sociology | (48) Urban Sociology |
| | (23) Qualitative Methodology | (55) Visual Sociology |
| | | (44) Work and Labor Markets |
| | | (45) World Conflict |

List three numerical areas in order of importance: #1 _____ #2 _____ #3 _____

Please list the names and addresses of friends and colleagues to whom you wish us to send information and a membership form. Please **print** complete addresses.

SWS PRESIDENT (2005): Marlese Durr
SWS PRESIDENT (2006): Christine Bose

Make check or money order (in U.S. currency) payable to:
Sociologists for Women in Society

Send to:
 SWS Executive Officer
 Department of Sociology
 University of Akron
 Akron OH 44325-1905
 Fax: 330.972.5377
 Phone: 330.972.7918
 Email: sws@uakron.edu

SWS Local and Regional Chapters

ACTIVE STATUS

(Meet on a regular basis)

TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

Irene Padavic (ipadavic@fsu.edu)
Pat Martin (pmartin@fsu.edu)

LANSING, MICHIGAN

Julie Hartman (j_e_hartman@yahoo.com)
Lori Baralt (baraltlo@msu.edu)

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

(<http://www.unlv.edu/faculty2/jkeene/SWS/>)
Jennifer Keene (jkeene@unlv.nevada.edu)
Anastasia Prokos (prokosa@unlv.nevada.edu)

NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK

Jackie Skiles (jsnyc@yahoo.com)

NORTH CAROLINA

Southeastern: Leslie Hossfeld (HossfeldL@uncw.edu)
Triangle (Raleigh/Durham): Cheri Chambers
(CLChambe@server.sasw.ncsu.edu)

KENT-AKRON, OHIO

Elizabeth Grossman eg12@uakron.edu

PIONEER VALLEY, WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS

Kat Jones (kjones@soc.umass.edu)

REGIONAL

MIDWEST (MSWS)

Michelle Miller (mhmill@siu.edu)

NORTH CENTRAL

Martha Schmidt (schmid1@uakron@edu)

SOUTH (SWS-SOUTH)

Diane Everett (deveret@stetson.edu)

WEST

Anastasia Prokos prokosa@unlv.nevada.edu

INTERESTED IN FORMING CHAPTER

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Christina Borel (Christina.borel@simmons.edu)
Mary Churchill (ma.churchill@neu.edu)

ALBANY/TRI-CITIES, NEW YORK

Sally Dear (sdear@binghamton.edu)

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Dina Pinsky (pinsky@arcadia.edu)

WASHINGTON, DC

Amy McLaughlin (am139@umail.umd.edu)

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Catherine Harnois (harnois@uic.edu)

PLEASE SEND CHAPTER UPDATES TO CATHY ZIMMER (CRZIMMER@VANCE.IRSS.UNC.EDU).



Sociologists for Women in Society

Leslie Hossfeld, Editor

Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice

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