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Message from the Chair

Sociology faculty and students are exceptionally active in research, creating and disseminating the sort of cutting-edge scholarship that truly shapes our field. After five years as chair, I continue to marvel at the creativity, range, and impact of this scholarship and see how it enlivens every aspect of our mission. We’ve gone from bidding for major journals to actually publishing them from Minnesota, building contexts.org and the society pages into top sociology destinations on the web. We’ve gone from committing to principles of excellence and diversity to actively recruiting the very best and most diverse faculty and students in over a century of departmental history. We’ve gone from talking about self-examination to conducting a successful self-study and external review. And, through the generous support of a remarkable donor, we’ve established the department’s very first endowed chair.

But this is no time for hubris or complacency. While Minnesota sociology is clearly moving from good to great, we have not yet attained the critical mass that will sustain our excellence over the next decade, much less the next century. Moreover, the recent recession and state budget crunch is forcing hard choices upon universities and funders, as well as our communities, students, and their families. Yet these economic challenges also imbue our research activities with even greater meaning and purpose -- we aren't just pushing paper these days -- and the stakes are high for sociology and for our department.

And while we are accomplishing much collectively, we remain a community of amazing individual scholars. Beyond the big books, important articles, and major grants listed here, we also hope to convey our passion and high intellectual standards. The breadth and vitality of our research is enacted in our lively Tuesday department workshops and celebrated each spring in our Sociological Research Institute. Our graduate program is also flourishing, with students garnering prestigious awards and fellowships to support their research and job placements in top sociology departments throughout the world.

In short, I share the conclusions of the external review committee that recently evaluated our department: Minnesota has become a “top-tier department with a fine record of research productivity, a vibrant intellectual community, and an impressive record of service … well-positioned to become one of the leading departments in the nation.” We are also a community of scholars endeavoring to conduct research that matters. We are engaged in teaching at a great public university, engaged in the communities around us, and, first and foremost, engaged in conducting first-rate sociological research.

Chris Uggen

Professor and Chair
INTEREST AREAS:
Migration; Gender, Race and Class; Islam; Family; Human Rights; Development Studies; Globalization; Africa; Middle East.

CURRENT RESEARCH:

“Moving Beyond ‘Xenophobia’: Structural Poverty, Conflict and Encounters with the ‘Other’ Africans.”


SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:
“Threatened Identities and Gendered Opportunities: Somali Migration to America.” Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society. (Forthcoming)


INTEREST AREAS:
Historical and Comparative; Political Sociology; Sociology of Development; Nationalism; Race Relations; Social Movements; Democratic Theory; Sociology of Higher Education.

CURRENT RESEARCH:
"Nationalism and the Politics of Exclusion: An Historical Sociology of Tanzanian Nationalism,” a book manuscript exploring how processes of exclusion with respect to internal and external others (i.e. racial minorities and non-citizens) have shaped nationalism and the nation-building project during the colonial, state socialist, and neo-liberal eras.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


INTEREST AREAS:
Structural sociology; Social stratification and mobility; Economic sociology; Social networks; Contemporary Chinese societies in East Asia.

CURRENT RESEARCH:

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


INTEREST AREAS:
Sociology of Law; Globalization; Children’s and Women’s Rights.

CURRENT RESEARCH:

“The Impact of International Law on the Eradication of Female Genital Cutting,” with Wenjie Liao.

“Integration of Demographic and Health Survey Data: A Pilot Using Female Genital Cutting Rates.”

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


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**INTEREST AREAS:**  
Political Sociology; Environmental Sociology; Social Movements; Network Analysis; Discourse Analysis, Institutions and Culture; Cross-national Comparative Methods; Climate Change; Japan; East Asia; Field Work.

**CURRENT RESEARCH:**  
**COMPON—Comparing Climate Change Policy Networks.**  
Comparative study of how discourse and mobilization affect national policies to mitigate (reduce) climate change. Research teams in over 20 countries and at the level of international negotiations collect equivalent data for comparative analysis. Funded by National Science Foundation

*Networks and Polities:* Japan’s “Butterfly State” in U.S. and German comparison. How do multiple political networks define polities?

*Pathways to Participation:* How do networks and resources affect the participation of environmental NGOs in Japanese government policy formation about climate change?

*Culture and Governance:* Does culture affect the authoritarian state-environmental movement relationship?—China, Taiwan, South Korea, Soviet Union and Japan: Funded by East Asian Institute, Seoul, Korea.

**SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:**


INTEREST AREAS:
Sociology of Culture; Sociology of Religion & American Religion; Gender, Work, & Family; Symbolic Boundaries & Inequality

CURRENT RESEARCH:
Prof. Edgell is working with a colleague, Prof. Hull, on a new research project funded by the National Science Foundation, analyzing how religious, scientific, and legal frameworks intersect to shape how people understand controversial social issues (e.g. like genetic engineering, Intelligent Design, or GLBT adoption). Her work on the National Survey of Religion and Family Life focuses on the support that religious communities and networks provide for managing work and family life across different racial and socio-economic contexts. She is also working with colleagues at Minnesota and across the country on a second wave of the American Mosaic Project, a study of how Americans make sense of racial, religious, and other forms of diversity in American life.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


Gabrielle Ferrales
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INTEREST AREAS:
Law and Society; Gender; Criminology and Criminal Justice; International Criminal Law; Quantitative and Qualitative Methods; Factorial Survey Methods for Empirical Analysis.

CURRENT RESEARCH:
Prof. Ferrales’s scholarship lies at the intersection of gender, crime and law. Her current research examines in three distinct case studies the legal treatment of gender-based violence in both domestic and international contexts including: a factorial survey quantitative analysis of the sentencing decisions of Iraqi judges; an examination of prosecutorial decision-making in a domestic violence unit of a state district attorney’s office; and studying rape victimization survey data and field interviews collected in the Darfur region of Sudan.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


• 2008 Law and Society Association Best Article Prize


INTEREST AREAS:
Historical Sociology; Politics and Social Movements; Social Theory; Diversity and Solidarity in American Society.

CURRENT RESEARCH:
Prof. Gerteis is interested in the dynamics of difference and solidarity and how these play into the formation of group boundaries, interests, and identities. His recent work has involved a book on interracial labor movements of the late 19th century and papers from the American Mosaic Project exploring how Americans think about issues of diversity and solidarity in modern America through the lenses of race and religion. He is currently exploring how Americans think about both the benefits and costs of diversity, as well as how claims about American national identity often involve racial and religious exclusions.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


INTEREST AREAS:
Transnational, Political, Environmental, and Development Sociology; Global Cities; Transnational Institutions (international finance, expert networks).

CURRENT RESEARCH:
Globalizing cities; speculating on Bangalore, India; transnational policy networking; "discipline and finance" in the new urban context; in/out-sourcing.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


INTEREST AREAS:
Urban Sociology; Ethnography; Poverty and Inequality; Deviance and Social Control.

CURRENT RESEARCH:
“Addiction Treatment as Neoliberal Poverty Management.” Over the last 30 years we have seen a fundamental shift in American models of inequality and poverty from structural to individual understandings, starting with the reworking of historical fears of a self-reproducing culturally pathological ghetto "underclass" in the late 1970s. Over the same period the mandate of "rehab" has increased in scope until its institutional forms and core narratives have become central to contemporary strategies of poverty management. Prof. Gowan’s second long-term research project addresses this crucial, yet understudied, area of contemporary American social policy, examining the crucial role of addiction and "rehab" within contemporary understandings of poverty and crime.

With Sarah Whetstone, Zachary Binsfeld, Tanja Andic, and Kristin Haltinner, Prof. Gowan is pursuing long-term ethnographic fieldwork in some local treatment institutions which exemplify the most important contemporary approaches to drug treatment. Their sites include a "therapeutic community" which brings together intensive “behavior modification” and elements from the "12-step" philosophy of AA; a more explicitly faith-based institution focused on spiritual renewal; and a weekly drop-in group following the alternative “harm reduction” model which emphasizes practical, "non-judgmental" health education and outreach.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


INTEREST AREAS:
Sociology of Education; Stratification; Quantitative Methods.

CURRENT RESEARCH:
*STEM in the New Millennium* examines how the effects of grades, test scores and course taking on college attendance and declaring a STEM major have changed over time. In a related project we will evaluate the relationship between STEM course taking and labor market outcomes for students who complete sub-baccalaureate degrees.

*Ready or Not? California’s Early Assessment Program and the Transition to College* evaluates how informing students of their need for remediation while in high school impacts students senior year course taking patterns, transition to college and need for remediation upon college entry.

*Should Everyone Go to College?* In this project we take seriously the question of whether or not America is best served by pushing more and more students into higher education. Reviewing empirical work on the chances of degree completion and the earnings distributions of students who start but fail to complete their postsecondary credential, we suggest that higher education is a kind of a lottery in which those who win do quite well but those who lose are not necessarily better off than they would have been had they not played at all.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


INTEREST AREAS:
Race and Ethnicity; Culture (including popular culture, sports, and religion); Social Movements and Social Change; American Society; Field Methods; Contemporary Theory.

CURRENT RESEARCH:
Sports-Based Social Intervention; Race, Religion, and Pluralism/ The “American Mosaic Project”; Social Science in the Public Sphere.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


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INTEREST AREAS:
Culture; Law; Social Movements; Family; Gender and Sexuality.

CURRENT RESEARCH:
“The Construction and Contestation of ‘Family’ in LGBT Communities.” This project draws upon interviews and focus groups to examine the close relationships in the lives of sexual minorities and gender variant people. LGBT people are often invoked as threats to family in “family values” discourses, even as the gay rights movement focuses more than ever on a range of family issues including marriage and parenting rights. This project seeks to advance theorizing about nontraditional families.

“The Role of Cognition in the Development of Social Fragmentation, Commonalities, and Consensus.” This NSF-funded project with Professor Penny Edgell uses focus group discussions of contemporary social controversies to examine how ordinary citizens deliberate on complex issues and evaluate competing forms of expert discourse from religion, science and the law.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


INTEREST AREAS:
Organizations and Work; Gender; Family and the Life Course; Law and Social Policy.

CURRENT RESEARCH:
Dr. Kelly studies changes in U.S. workplaces and their effects on employees, families, and organizations. She is principal investigator, with Phyllis Moen, of the Flexible Work and Well-Being Center, part of the Work, Family, and Health Network funded by the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control. See <http://www.flexiblework.umn.edu> for more information.

Dr. Kelly has investigated flexibility initiatives, non-compliance with the Family and Medical Leave Act, sexual harassment policies, and employer-sponsored child care benefits, as well as the effects of diversity policies on the representation of women and African-Americans in managerial positions.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


INTEREST AREAS:
Organizations and Work; Social Networks; Economic Sociology; Methods and Statistics.

CURRENT RESEARCH:
“Multilevel Latent Class and Social Network Models for Observational Adolescent Obesity Data.” Co-PI with Profs. Melanie Wall, Richard MacLehose, Dianne Neumark-Sztainer, Mary Story, and Peter Hannan. NIH, NICHD.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


INTEREST AREAS:
Race and Ethnicity; Sociology of the Family and Life Course; Social Demography; Social Stratification; Indigenous Peoples; Social Support.

CURRENT RESEARCH:
Prof. Liebler is fascinated by the translation of individuals’ racial identities into their answers to standardized questions about race, as well as the ways in which these answers are grouped to form the statistics used by social scientists and policy makers. Several of her ongoing research projects address aspects of the process of translation from racial identities of individuals to race statistics describing a society, a process which is complicated by changes in identities and changes in questionnaire wording.

Current research on this topic includes “Intertwining the History and Biography of Race in America: American Indians, Whites, Blacks, and Multiracials in the 21st Century” with Meghan Zacher. This paper uses maps and the history of race in local areas in the US to understand current patterns of racial identification.

The newly opened Minnesota Research Data Center is providing the best available data for Prof. Liebler and student collaborators to study the following questions: Why do some people answer the new race question differently than might be expected? And what are the characteristics of people who have especially fluid answers to census questions about race?

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


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INTEREST AREAS:
Contemporary U.S. Race Relations; Sociology of Afro-Latin Populations; Family, Marriage and Gender; Race and Media; Race and Law; Historical and Comparative Methods.

CURRENT RESEARCH:
Youth Speak: College-Student Perspectives on Race in the 2008 Presidential Election. The central aim of this study is to explore understandings of race among young people in the 21st century U.S. The data consists of 125 in-depth interviews conducted with undergraduate students in the weeks leading up to the election. While journalists and other paid political commentators provided an immense repository of points of view on the 2008 presidential race (analyzed in my first book), this study seeks to understand the perspectives of the members of the electorate in their own words.

Race, Baptism and Marriage in Post-Emancipation Cuba. To date, there is little published work on the Cuban family before the 1959 revolution, and even less about families of color in the decades immediately following emancipation. This project consists of a large-scale, quantitative examination of the practices of marriage and baptism among whites, blacks, and mulattos during the first four decades of Cuban independence (1899-1940). I collected data from nearly 60,000 marital and baptismal records housed in four historic parishes in the city of Havana. While I have published two articles based on my research thus far, several others are in progress.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


INTEREST AREAS:
Juvenile Justice; Homicide; Adolescence; Law and Society; Law and the Mental Health System.

CURRENT RESEARCH:
Depression and Its Relationship to Violence; Characteristics of Juveniles Who Commit Parricides; Infanticide and Comparative Legal Issues Post-Termination Relationships with Professionals; Borderline Personality Disorders: A High-Risk Group for Violence.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


• 2006 American Psychological Association Guttmacher Award

INTEREST AREAS:
Family and Life Course; Adolescent and Young Adult Development; Research Methods.

CURRENT RESEARCH:
“Parental Age and Child Health and Development.” Delayed childbearing and a recent up-tick in teen birth rates have resulted in increasing variability in parents’ age at the birth of their first child. This project examines how parental age shapes children’s health and development.

“Social Development into Adulthood.” This project investigates the ways in which adolescent social relationships promote or inhibit the development of adult family relationships.

“Adolescent Sexual Activity and Well-Being.” This project examines the effects of early sexual activity on a number of domains of adolescent life. A current study examines the role of friend and school norms in shaping the effects of sex on mental health, academic outcomes, and risk behaviors.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


INTEREST AREAS:
Work, Family, and Well-Being; Health, Age and the Gendered Life Course

CURRENT RESEARCH:
Professor Moen investigates how to change work-time to make it more compatible with the rest of life. She co-directs (with Professor Erin Kelly) the Flexible Work and Well-Being Center, part of a larger NIH-funded research network initiative studying ways to promote individual and family health and life quality by increasing the degree of flexibility around the clockworks of paid work. Professor Moen also engages in research on gender, couples, and time use, as well as work and volunteering in the “3rd age” of the life course.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


INTEREST AREAS:
The Life Course; Social Psychology; Work.

CURRENT RESEARCH:
The “Youth Development Study,” supported by NICHD, examines pathways through the transition to adulthood, mental health and attainments, and how parental trajectories influence children.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:
“Origins and Outcomes of Judgments about Work,” with Monica Johnson. Forthcoming, Social Forces


“Parental Timing and Depressive Symptoms in Adulthood: Gender, Stressors, and Resources,” with Christina Falci & HarmoniJoie Noel. Advances in Life Course Research 15: 1-10. 2010


“'Holding On' or ‘Coming to Terms' with Educational Underachievement: A Longitudinal Study of Ambition and Attainment,” with Mayumi Uno, Minzee Kim, & Michael Vuolo. New Directions for Research on Child and Adolescent Development 130:41-56. 2010

INTEREST AREAS:
Crime, Law, Deviance, and Punishment; Labor and Unionization; Political Sociology; Qualitative Research Methods; Social Theory.

CURRENT RESEARCH:
*The Minnesota Juvenile Justice Transitions Project:* This study analyzes the transition of young offenders from Minnesota juvenile justice institutions back into their communities. It investigates the following question: What factors impede or facilitate the "reentry" process for juvenile offenders after release?

*Minnesota Correctional Officer Survey Project:* This research analyzes the living and working conditions in adult state prisons. It also examines correctional officers’ attitudes and beliefs about correctional policies and practices. Amy Lerman, a political scientist in California, conducted a similar survey of correctional officers in that state (Professor Page adapted Ms. Lerman’s survey instrument for the Minnesota study). Based on our respective research, Ms. Lerman and Prof. Page will compare the experiences and dispositions of correctional officers in California and Minnesota.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


• 2010 American Sociological Association, Labor and Labor Movements Section, Best Article Award


INTEREST AREAS:
Immigration and Welfare Policy; Immigrant Health Care; Race, Class, and Gender; Asian American Studies; Environmental Justice; Urban Theory and Methods.

CURRENT RESEARCH:
Prof. Park’s research primarily focuses on U.S. migration in two, related ways. First, Park is interested in the social location of immigrants and how their experiences coincide and conflict with larger national ideologies and histories. Second, she is concerned with how immigration politics functions within the context of neoliberalism to endorse the retrenchment of public goods, services, and space. Given these questions, she approaches migration from an interdisciplinary and comparative perspective that centers issues of gender, race, class and nation. Her publications delve into these issues from multiple vantage points including environmental justice concerns among immigrant women workers in Silicon Valley, social citizenship struggles among second generation Asian Americans, health care advocacy for low-income pregnant immigrant women, and nativist environmental movements in Colorado. Prof. Park is currently in the early stages of two new projects: 1) the politics of immigrant births, and 2) a comparative study on the interaction of immigration politics and refugee policy.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


INTEREST AREAS:
Environmental Justice Studies; Racial and Ethnic Inequality; Transnational Social Movements; Qualitative Research Methods; Labor Studies; Immigration.

CURRENT RESEARCH:
Prof. Pellow is mainly interested in the intersections between social inequality and environmental conflict. He continues to work on transnational environmental justice movements and global policy frameworks concerning sustainability. He is working on a study of radical environmental and animal rights movements and their experiences with state repression.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


INTREST AREAS:
Criminal Law and Procedure in U.S. Society; History of Criminal Justice.

CURRENT RESEARCH:
Prof. Samaha has written three influential textbooks, which are used at 465 colleges in 48 states. Joel’s teaching methods challenge students’ ideas and assumptions about criminal justice, and forces them to admit that other ideas are worth considering and studying. Prof. Samaha’s students find their lives and academic careers changed by this experience. A former student claims, “Joel’s style challenges the student to take the risks necessary to learn and achieve new understandings of the subject matter—and a great deal about themselves.”

Prof. Chris Uggen, Department Chair, recognizes his influence and success claiming that Prof. Samaha has “shaped the instruction of criminal justice courses in every state and had a profound impact on the administration of criminal justice in Minnesota.”

Many of his former students have gone on to become professors, academics, and criminal justice leaders. “I have never met anyone who combined the depth of knowledge of law and history with [the] genius for analytical reasoning and powerful oratory,” stated a former student. “Joel is one of a kind.”

“Teaching undergraduates, to me, means making students uncomfortable with their assumptions.... I don’t see my job as picking the right or best assumptions for students, but as driving home a different point: that there are several reasonable meanings to any topic worth studying.”

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


INTEREST AREAS:
Knowledge; Law, Crime & Punishment; Human Rights; Comparative; Theory.

CURRENT RESEARCH:
“Collective Representations and Memories of Atrocities after Judicial Intervention: Darfur in International Comparison.” NSF-funded research examines impact of ICC decisions on representations of Darfur in eight Western countries.

“Discourses on Darfur: Law, Science, Media” (with J. Hagan and J. Meierhenrich). Book project (under contract with Cambridge University Press); Bellagio conference engaging scholars, journalists and representatives of international human rights/criminal justice institutions (funded by the Rockefeller Foundation).

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


Rachel Schurman
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INTEREST AREAS:
Sociology of Food and Agriculture, Social Movements, Political Sociology, International Political Economy, Environmental Sociology, Latin America.

CURRENT RESEARCH:
Prof. Schurman’s most recent book, Fighting for the Future of Food: Activists Vs. Agribusiness in the Struggle Over Biotechnology, analyzes social resistance to agricultural biotechnology and how it has shaped the development and deployment of genetically modified organisms around the world. The book explores the significance of industry structures, and activist and industry lifeworlds for the contemporary struggle over biotechnology.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


INTEREST AREAS:
Families; Intergenerational Relations; Social Inequality; Asian American Studies; Gender; Foster Care and Welfare State; Transitions to Adulthood; and Carework.

CURRENT RESEARCH:
Growing Up But Not Apart: Young Adults’ Relationships with Their Parents. This study focuses on the changing transition to adulthood and what this has meant for intergenerational relationships among families from diverse racial, ethnic and social class backgrounds.

Segmented Assimilation in Cultural Cross Generational Perspective: The Incorporation Experience of Hmong Young Adults and their Parents (with Douglas Hartmann and Pao Lee). This project explores how young adult Hmong children of immigrants have understood and experienced their ethnic identities and cultural heritage over the course of growing up in St. Paul, Minnesota. Attention is focused on how ethnic identity formation is mediated through intergenerational family relationships, aspirations for social mobility, and experiences with racial discrimination.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


INTEREST AREAS:
Crime, Law, and Deviance; Life Course; Inequality; Methods.

CURRENT RESEARCH:
The Effects of Criminal Records and Race on Employability. NIJ and JEHT Foundation.
Incarceration and Health, with Jason Schnittker. 2010-2013. R.W. Johnson Foundation Investigator Award in Health Policy Research.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:
―Incarceration and the Health of the African American Community,‖ with Jason Schnittker and Michael Massoglia. Forthcoming in Du Bois Review.


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INTEREST AREAS:
Social Inequality; Education; Aging and the Life Course; Health Disparities.

CURRENT RESEARCH:
WORK AND FAMILY ACROSS THE LIFE COURSE (with Jim Raymo)
Using data from the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study, we are modeling the impact of work and family roles and conditions across the life course on health, well-being, financial security, and other outcomes in late adulthood.

PANEL CONDITIONING EFFECTS IN LONGITUDINAL STUDIES
How does participating in a long-term longitudinal study alter individuals’ attitudes and behaviors—or at least their propensity to report those attitudes and behaviors accurately? To address this issue we are using data from the Current Population Survey, the German Socioeconomic Panel, and the U.S. General Social Survey.

SHOULD EVERYONE GO TO COLLEGE?
With Eric Grodsky and Stephanie DeLuca, I am considering the social and economic consequences of America’s push to get all kids to college.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS:


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