

## PUBLIC SOCIOLOGY

### *Sociology translates to public action*

**T**his occasional column highlights sociologists who successfully engage sociology in the civic arena in service to organizations and communities. Over the years, members of ASA and sociologists as individual professionals and citizens have sought to make the knowledge we generate directly relevant to our communities, countries, and the world community. Many sociologists within the academy and in other sectors practice the translation of expert knowledge to numerous critical issues through consultation, advisement, testimony, commentary, writing, and participation in a variety of activities and venues. To submit contributions, first consult with Managing Editor Johanna Olexy (olexy@asanet.org, 202-383-9005 x312) prior to submitting your draft (1,000 to 1,200 words maximum).

## The Inside-Out Experience: The Training Ground for Future Scholars

Angela Harvey, Ohio State University-Newark, and Brian Chad Starks,  
University of Delaware

**T**he Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program serves to bridge the gap between theory and practice by creating an atmosphere of shared dialogue among perspectives of people in the academy and people in prison, with hopes of transforming ideas about crime and justice. The National Inside-Out Prison Exchange program was inspired by Paul, a man serving a life sentence in Pennsylvania, and created by Lori Pompa of Temple University in 1997 ([www.insideoutcenter.org](http://www.insideoutcenter.org)). Courses are held inside a prison with an equal number of university (outside) students and incarcerated (inside) students. It is the intent of the program to educate future criminal justice practitioners, educators, politicians, and citizens about the perspectives of incarcerated men and women as well as to assist inside students in identifying their skill set that will help them to excel in a college course. Inside-Out is self-empowering for everyone involved.

Inside-Out courses are not designed for outside students to study people who are incarcerated or presume some level of help is needed for inside students. Rather, Inside-Out is a college course in a unique context, where every participant is held to the same rigorous standards and active participation. Not only does the pedagogy of Inside-Out create an atmosphere of respect and equal voice for all participants (including instructor as facilitator), it is clear from participants that this unique experience elevates critical thinking, reading, and writing skills while breaking down barriers of “us” versus “them.” This is because the goal is to unleash everyone’s understanding of humanity; participants gain a deeper respect and understanding of themselves, others, the complexities of the criminal justice system, and the impact that mass incarceration has on communities beyond what we can expose them to through university-based courses.

The authors of this article—a graduate student and a sociology professor—participated in the intense one-week National Inside-Out Training Institute in 2009. The carefully developed training is modeled after the pedagogy of Inside-Out, where academic instructors become students and partner with members at the heart of Inside-Out—The Graterford Think Tank. Graterford provides critical expertise and guidance in the development of Inside-Out’s curriculum and trainings, acting as an advisory committee and assisting with training sessions for new Inside-Out instructors. Participants learned how to teach an Inside-Out course in his/her discipline within his/her local prison/university. Below we summarize our experiences with this amazing, non-traditional model of pedagogy.

### Brian’s Perspective

As a student of life, I have always had the idea that learning and gaining knowledge is an evolutionary process. As I evolve, what I believe is the best quality education must combine empiricism and literature. I consider this approach to learning as “having the best of both worlds.” If we are advocates of education, it makes sense to provide our students (and ourselves) with two perspectives: procedural—what is being written; and substantive—what is being done. This dualism forces us to step outside the comfort zone of the classroom into real-life experiences. Inside-Out brings these worlds together. Inside-Out seeks to level the playing field among the “teachers” and “doers” by providing different perspectives on issues that have plagued our criminal justice system since inception with hopes of creating change.

As a graduate student, my experiences with Inside-Out have been uniquely varied. For instance, I participated in the national training, not expecting to teach the course until I obtained a faculty position. After completing the training in 2009, I was invited to guest lecture and serve as a substitute instructor for two Inside-Out courses (Drugs and Criminal Justice and Criminology) offered by my university. I was anxious about going into the prison, particularly about saying the right thing. Inside-Out demands a high level of respect for all parties involved so we do not engage in traditional terminology related to the incarcerated or college students. For example, we do not use words such as “inmate” or “college kids” in our class; everyone is referred to as a student. My experiences were overwhelming and draining, yet filled with purpose. I walked out of substitute courses feeling both eager and nervous about how I would construct my own course if given the opportunity.

In the summer of 2010, I was asked to teach the first Inside-Out class offered by the University of Delaware at a female prison. I was apprehensive about my ability to relate to the women as I did the men, yet I was excited about the opportunity to evolve as a scholar and a man. I was surprised, but appreciative, that the University of Delaware trusted me (a graduate student) to teach the first class at a female institution.

My class focuses on the criminal court system and is very demanding. Meeting the challenge of covering the traditional curriculum-based criminal court topics, while also creating opportunities to build intellectual bonds is not an easy task. Teaching the class requires me to think about how to eradicate the stereotypes of both groups while creating an open, honest, and respectful environment that allow for tough issues to be critically discussed in a meaningful way. It is definitely an experience that I look forward to each week, it affords me an opportunity to learn as well as teach.

### Angela’s Perspective

Since I began teaching criminology courses, I have found it important to incorporate experiential learning in the form of “field trips” to local jails/prisons in order for students to gain a deeper understanding of the issues discussed in class. I have also taken great care to develop relationships with jail/prison administrators to ensure these visits are as non-intrusive and sensitive as possible to the people who reside and work there. So, when I read about the Inside-Out program, I knew I needed to get involved.

I taught my first Inside-Out course (Corrections) in fall 2009 with 10 outside and 10 inside students at the Southeastern Correctional Institution (a minimum-medium security prison for men in Lancaster, OH). Even with all of the additional work as a faculty member to prepare and teach an Inside-Out course, my first course held within the walls of the prison well exceeded my expectations. In the course, we critically evaluate the historical development and contemporary penal policies that resulted in the United States being a leader in mass incarceration. Students are assigned research that culminates in a group project aimed at detailing specific policy implications and recommendations for some element of the system. In turn, students realize their own potential as agents of social change. For example, my first class

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## Inside-Out

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produced a report for U.S. Senator Jim Webb that used existing research to support and address the key issues he outlined in introducing the National Criminal Justice Commission Act in 2009. In addition to sending the report to Senator Webb's office, all local officials and citizens who participated in our public closing ceremony were provided with the report.

To illustrate the impact of Inside-


Out for students, it seems appropriate to share a couple of quotes from students written for my first public closing ceremony:

"Inside-Out has made me more open and accepting and aware. I learned just as much about myself as I did the criminal justice system. It was the one place where everyone was real and honest for a change. All of the social stigmas we hide behind were stripped away. We all found honesty and acceptance in the most unlikely place." (Outside Student)

"I will take with me a sense of purpose; an understanding that I have a responsibility to either become part of the solution or remain part of the problem." (Inside Student)

As I reflect on my brief tenure with Inside-Out, finish teaching my second course this past fall, and engage in research projects geared toward understanding the short- and long-term benefits of the program for participants, prisons, colleges, and communities, I cannot resist encouraging other universities to

consider the vast benefits of partnering with local prisons to offer this incomparable community-based learning opportunity.

A portion of our research has been funded by a 2010 ASA Carla B. Howery Teaching Enhancement Grant. 

Angela Harvey, an assistant professor in sociology at Ohio State University-Newark, holds a PhD in justice studies from Arizona State University. Brian Chad Starks is a PhD student in sociology and criminal justice at the University of Delaware.

## announcements

## Call for Papers

### Publications

**Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change**, a peer-reviewed volume, encourages submissions for volume 33 of the series. This volume will have both thematic and open-submission sections. For the open-submission/non-thematic section, submissions appropriate to any of the three broad foci reflected in the series title will be considered. The special section will focus on "new" and "old" media in social movements, conflicts, and change. We encourage submissions on the relationship between older media and social movements, conflicts or change, or between "new" media and social movements, conflicts or change. Deadline: May 16, 2011. Contact: Jennifer Earl at [jearl@soc.ucsb.edu](mailto:jearl@soc.ucsb.edu) and Dena Rohlinger at [drohling@fsu.edu](mailto:drohling@fsu.edu). For more information, visit [info.emeraldinsight.com/products/books/series.htm?PHPSessiD=ao67n2qdmb56lqa36v0k6mivb1&id=0163-786X](http://info.emeraldinsight.com/products/books/series.htm?PHPSessiD=ao67n2qdmb56lqa36v0k6mivb1&id=0163-786X).

### Meetings

**National Borders in the 21st Century 35th Annual PEWS Conference**, April 28-30, 2011, Stony Brook University-SUNY. Investigating ongoing transformations in the purpose and meaning of national borders in the world: state sovereignty and global governance, global inequality and transnational migration, citizenship and human rights, new global flows, transnational predicaments, and transnational activism. Deadline: December 19, 2010. Contact: Timothy P. Moran at [timothy.p.moran@stonybrook.edu](mailto:timothy.p.moran@stonybrook.edu).

**The 3rd Joint Conference of the German, Austrian, and Swiss Sociological Associations**, September 29, 2011-October 1, 2011, Innsbruck University, Austria, in German/English. Theme: "The New Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere." Abstract deadline: April 1, 2011. Contact: [frank.welz@uibk.ac.at](mailto:frank.welz@uibk.ac.at). For more information, visit [www.soziologie2011.eu](http://www.soziologie2011.eu).

**The York Deviancy Conference**, June 29-July 11, 2011, University of York. Theme: "Critical Perspectives on Crime, Deviance, Disorder and Social Harm." The conference theme is broadly conceived and we encourage papers from a variety of critical perspectives. We particularly encourage papers that are speculative, theoretically informed, and future oriented, as well as those straying outside the usual parameters of mainstream criminological thought. We seek papers that draw on diverse topic areas providing variously constructive, polemical, considered, and critical discussions of key elements of socially harmful and criminal behaviors. We are particularly keen to hear from those working around economic harms; globalized and networked forms of criminality and harm; environmental criminology; "invisible" problems of criminality and hurt; psycho-social assessments of, among other things, violence and abuse, and treatments that bring in spatial considerations. Deadline: January 31, 2011. Contact: Josine Opmeer at [josine.opmeer@york.ac.uk](mailto:josine.opmeer@york.ac.uk); [www.york.ac.uk/sociology/about/news-and-events/department/deviancy-conference](http://www.york.ac.uk/sociology/about/news-and-events/department/deviancy-conference).

## Meetings

**February 19, 2011. 32nd Hawaii Sociological Association Annual Meeting**, Kapiolani Community College, Honolulu, HI. Theme: "Making Sense of Conflict in a Changing World." Deadline for meeting registration: February 1, 2011. For more information, visit [hawaiiisoc.org/](http://hawaiiisoc.org/).

**February 3-6, 2011. Sociologists for Women in Society 40th Anniversary Winter Meeting**, El Tropicano Hotel, San Antonio, TX. For more information, visit: [www.socwomen.org](http://www.socwomen.org).

**February 15-25, 2011. XX International Conference on Addiction Problems**, Tioman Island of Malaysia. Theme: "Drug Addiction Prevention and Molding a Healthy and Sober Life Among Young People." Contact: tel./fax: +7 (831) 421 13 21 or 251 96 59; [mayurov@sandy.ru](mailto:mayurov@sandy.ru) or [mayurov@mail.ru](mailto:mayurov@mail.ru); [www.intacso.ru](http://www.intacso.ru) or [www.intacso.com](http://www.intacso.com).

**March 24-27, 2011. Midwest Sociological Society Annual Meeting**, St Louis, MO. Theme: "The Dynamics of Inequality." Contact: Mary Zimmerman or Pooya Naderi at [mss2011@ku.edu](mailto:mss2011@ku.edu); [www.theMSS.org](http://www.theMSS.org).

**March 31-April 2, 2011. Eastern Community College Social Science Association 37th Annual Conference**, Erie Community College-City Campus, Erie, PA. Theme: "The National and Global Impacts of Economic Collapse: Perspectives from the Social Sciences." For more information, visit [www.ecc.edu](http://www.ecc.edu).

**April 28-30, 2011. National Borders in the 21st Century 35th Annual PEWS Conference**, Stony Brook University-SUNY. Investigating ongoing transformations in the purpose and meaning of national borders in the world. Contact: Timothy P. Moran at [timothy.p.moran@stonybrook.edu](mailto:timothy.p.moran@stonybrook.edu).

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## Funding

**2011 Wisconsin Longitudinal Study Pilot Grant Program**. The Center for Demography of Health and Aging (CDHA) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison will award two to three pilot grants to investigators using

the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study (WLS) data for scholarly research. The WLS provides an opportunity to study the life course, careers, retirement, intergenerational transfers and relationships, family functioning, physical and mental health and well being, morbidity and mortality, and gene-environment interactions from late adolescence to the retirement years. Selected recipients will receive \$5,000 to support their research, and a travel stipend to WLS training workshops. The training workshop will take place in Madison on August 11-12, 2011, while the research workshop will be held one year later. Deadline: May 27, 2011. Contact: Carol Roan at (608) 265-6196; [roan@ssc.wisc.edu](mailto:roan@ssc.wisc.edu); [www.ssc.wisc.edu/wlsresearch/pilot](http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/wlsresearch/pilot).

**Catalyzing New International Collaborations Program**. One component of the National Science Foundation's strategic plan is to increase the extent to which U.S. researchers engage with the international research and education community. It is the

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