FROM THE CHAIR’S DESK

KRISTEN MARCUSSEN, KENT STATE UNIVERSITY

Dear colleagues and friends:

When we started composing this newsletter, it was under the difficult and frightening context of a global health pandemic. Since that time, the public outcry of police violence and institutionalized racism has increased tension across the country and beyond, which has broadened and intensified the emotions we are all experiencing. Understanding and addressing racial disparities in mental health is at the heart of what we do as scholars and educators, as well as who we are as individuals. As we also know from our scholarship and personal experiences, it is more important than ever to be mindful of our own mental and physical well-being. So, while I suspect you have heard this phrase many times over the past few months, I sincerely hope that you are all well. And as you care for those around you, I hope you are also taking care of yourselves and getting the support you need during these extremely uncertain and challenging times.

My hope with this newsletter is to provide you with information about how the section intends to move forward with the 2020 ASA meetings, share some good news about the outstanding contributions of our colleagues, encourage you to become involved in mentoring the next generation of mental health scholars, and offer an opportunity for section members to share their research. At the end of this newsletter, you will see a “call” for sharing your thoughts, experiences, and ideas regarding teaching, researching, and mobilizing in the context of the current national and global crises. We will plan to devote space to those ideas and thoughts in the August newsletter, along with highlights from the research presentations from the ASA meetings.

ASA 2020 Virtual Meetings

As you all know by now, we will not be meeting in San Francisco this year. This is disappointing for many reasons – not the least of which is the excellent set of sessions that our organizers put together this past winter. As you also know, the ASA has encouraged us to shift our current program to a virtual program. After some discussion with section officers, organizers, and participants, it looks like all four mental health sessions (two regular sessions, two section sessions) will do that! There will be some variation in how the participants will present their research (live online presentations vs. pre-recorded presentations); however, for those that will be presented in real time, the sessions will take place as listed in the online program. Once these sessions are finalized, a link will be available to join the live session and to view pre-recorded presentations.
FROM THE CHAIRS DESK (CONTINUED)

Please note, the session times noted in the online program refer to Pacific Standard Time. More detailed information regarding the sessions will be forthcoming. We are also in the process of organizing our awards session and business meeting. Similarly, a link will be provided for those who would like to attend.

As mentioned above, we will also devote space in the August newsletter to highlighting the all of the research (and activities) associated with the 2020 meetings – including presentations and activities that do not appear in the final online program.

While the organization process for the 2020 virtual meetings is still in-progress, it looks like there is a good deal of enthusiasm for the show going on! I will keep you posted as plans solidify. If you are presenting in a session, you can also expect to hear from your session organizers.

Sociology of Mental Health Election Results

It is my pleasure to announce the results of the 2020 election for the Sociology of Mental Health section. We had a wonderful slate of candidates this year, and are grateful for all of our members who stood for office. A special thank you to our nominations chair, Lijun Song, for her work on this year’s ballot.

- Chair-Elect: Tony N. Brown, Rice University
- Secretary/Treasurer: Bianca Nicole Manago, Vanderbilt University
- Nominations Committee Chair: Fernando Rivera, University of Central Florida
- Awards Committee Chair: Elaine Wethington, Cornell University
- Student Representative: Max Coleman, Indiana University

As always, a special thank you to Richard Adams and Katie Gary for their excellent work putting together our newsletters! I look forward to “seeing” many of you later this summer.

Best,
Kristen

MEMBERSHIP REMINDER

We are coming up on that time of year where our membership will be counted and used to determine sessions for the 2021 meetings in Chicago.

Please encourage membership in our section! You can do this in a few ways:

Renew your own membership! The deadline for your 2021 membership is December 31.

Recommend our section to graduate students and colleagues! There is a great deal of shared interest across ASA sections.

Spread the word about the journal. Society and Mental Health is publishing wonderful work that speaks to many corners of sociology.

Gift a membership to a graduate student! This is a great way to introduce our students to the discipline and the profession. The deadline for gift memberships is July 31.

To learn more about these options, please contact Membership Committee Chair, Matthew Andersson, Baylor University (Matthew_Andersson@baylor.edu).

2020 SECTION AWARDS
TERESA SCHEID
Leonard I. Pearlin Award for Distinguished Contributions to the Sociological Study of Mental Health

The “Pearlin Award" honors a scholar who had made substantial contributions in theory and/or research to the Sociology of Mental Health. This year’s winner is Phyllis Moen, who is currently the McKnight Endowed Presidential Chair in Sociology at the University of Minnesota. Her research builds upon a life-course perspective which integrates the stress process model introduced by Leonard Pearlin. Professor Moen extends research on stress to articulate how mental health and well-being are structured by age-graded and gendered institutional frameworks. Her letter of nomination
details the many ways in which Dr. Moen is herself an institution builder, and has created centers such as the University of Minnesota Advanced Careers Initiative and the Bronfenbrenner Life Course Center at Cornell. She is currently Director of the Life Course Center at The University of Minnesota. Her extensive research and publication record contribute to not only scholarship on mental health and life course theory, but to understanding how paid work and caregiving affect people daily and over time. We look forward to reading her newest book with Erin L. Kelly, *Overload: How Good Jobs Went Bad and What We Can Do About It* (2020, Princeton University Press), which will no doubt be important to future policy discussions as we consider the relationship between work and well-being over time. Dr. Moen has mentored faculty and graduate students who have gone on themselves to make significant contributions to our understanding of the ways that work, gender, and family influence stress and well-being.

**Best Publication Award**

We had numerous books and papers to select from this year, but there was agreement that the “best publication” be awarded to a paper published in *The American Sociological Review* (2019) by Daniel Schneider and Kristen Harknett titled “Consequences of Routine Work-Schedule Instability for Worker Health and Well-Being.” This paper is timely with its focus on precarious work and unstable work schedules which create work-life conflicts with subsequent negative effects on psychological distress, sleep, and unhappiness. The paper provides a rich historical and theoretical overview of precarious work, and describes the policy context at both the federal and state levels. The researchers developed an innovative method to collect survey data from a large, strategically selected sample of service sector employees, thereby overcoming the weaknesses of existing data sources. This paper is particularly relevant now as not only have service sector employees been negatively impacted by COVID-19, we have all experienced heightened work-life conflicts with social distancing. The paper has already had an impact of policy making and has been cited in the popular press.

**Best Dissertation Award**

Dr. Atsushi Narisada (University of Toronto, 2019). His Chair, Scott Scheiman, wrote that his dissertation tackles the important problem of distributive injustice in both Canada and the United States. Dr. Narisada focuses on the causes and consequences of distributive injustice—and the mediating and moderating dynamics embedded in these processes. The dissertation (along with three papers already published from the dissertation) uses a rich range of population-based data bringing a fresh interdisciplinary lens by integrating perspectives from social psychology, the sociology of mental health, the stress process, and occupational health psychology.

**Best Graduate Student Paper Awards.** This is our second year of awarding graduate student paper awards, and it is a testament to the mentoring of our section members and the hard work of our students that we had a number of excellent papers, all which will no doubt be published soon.

**Doctoral Student Paper Award**

Mary Ellen Stitt. Ph.D. Candidate in Sociology, University of Texas at Austin.

“Adjudication Under Cover: Court-Mandated Treatment and Inequality.” This paper draws on extensive ethnographic work (12 months of fieldwork in courthrooms and 105 in-depth interviews) and a large administrative data base to explore the consequences of placing mental healthcare in the criminal justice system. Stitt documents the various ways that coerced treatment both obscures and amplifies the production of social inequalities. The paper is rich empirically as well as theoretically, and extends our understanding of how compliance operates at the interface of mental health and the law.

**Master’s Student Paper Award**

George Usmanov. M.A., Sociology, Georgia State University.

“Types of Types: Social Network Typologies and Meaning of Clients with Serious Mental Illness.” This paper is based on George’s master’s thesis (recently defended), and uses the Indiana Mental Health and HIV Risk Study to explore the impact of clinical context and staff networks on clients attitudes and engagement in psychiatric care.

Congratulations to all of the awardees!
MENTORING PROGRAM
ALISA LINCOLN & TANYA WHITWORTH

In light of the current COVID-19 crisis, including the cancellation of the ASA in-person meetings, mentorship for graduate students and early career scholars is more important than ever. We are working to develop new ways to build community and connection for our section. During these uncertain times, we hope that our Section Mentoring Program can help to provide support, guidance, and encouragement to members of our Section. We have heard from some section members already but are eager to hear from more of you.

In 2018/19 we supported 10 mentor/mentee pairs both prior to and throughout the annual meeting. We are excited to be continuing the program this year. This program matches mentees and mentors based on research interests and self-identified mentoring needs to promote formal mentoring of graduate students, post-docs, and junior faculty in the Mental Health Section; in addition to the many informal mentoring relationships that are ongoing.

Participating in the mentoring program will involve two activities this year, which we have adapted in light of the cancellation of the ASA in-person meetings and the current physical distancing guidelines: (1) Schedule at least two phone calls or video-conference calls during the summer of 2020; (2) Attend a virtual mentoring event in August 2020.

I know many of us, myself included, appreciate the generosity of many scholars from our section who have taken the time to share their experiences, wisdom and expertise and served as mentors over the years. With this in mind we are asking students, post-docs, and junior faculty who would like to be paired with a mentor to email Tanya Whitworth, section student representative (twhitworth@soc.umass.edu). Please provide a brief description of your research interests and any specific areas you would like mentorship in along with a CV if you have one. In addition, please consider serving as a mentor. If you are willing to be a mentor, please email Tanya. We will again work to create appropriate matches.

GRADUATE STUDENTS ON THE JOB MARKET

Name: Tanya Rouleau Whitworth, Ph.D.
Affiliation: Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Sociology, University of Massachusetts, Amherst
twhitworth@umass.edu
Dissertation Title: Parents as School Supplies: How Support from Mothers and Fathers Contributes to Inequality in College

I am currently a PhD candidate in Sociology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. I will defend my dissertation in the spring of 2021. My research focuses on various dimensions of well-being among adolescents and young adults and contributes to the sociological subfields of mental health, family, education, and children and youth. My published work has appeared in the Journal of Marriage and Family, Gender & Society, Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health, and Contexts. I am also a committed and experienced teacher; in 2018, I received the University Distinguished Teaching Award, the highest teaching honor at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. I have contributed to the profession as past Co-Chair of the Children and Youth Section Mentoring Committee and current Student Member of the Sociology of Mental Health Section Council.

My dissertation, “Parents as School Supplies: How Support from Mothers and Fathers Contributes to Inequality in College,” examines the role of parental support in contributing to inequality in college. Using nationally representative, longitudinal data from the Transition into Adulthood supplement to the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, I investigate how social class and race shape the types and
amount of support—or what some theorists have conceptualized as capital—that college students receive from their mothers and fathers, and how support in turn predicts grade point average and psychological well-being.

Name: Rebecca Ewert  
Affiliation: Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Sociology, University of Chicago  
Email: rgewert@uchicago.edu  
Website: rebeccaewert.com  
Dissertation Title: Where there’s Smoke, there’s Fire: Class, Gender, and Disaster Recovery

I am a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Chicago researching mental health, rurality, gender and sexuality, disaster, and culture. My research uses qualitative methods to examine how place, particularly residence in rural locales, produces mental health outcomes. Existing research offers some hypotheses for why we continue to see poor mental health outcomes in rural areas, yet that research does little to shed light on the processes that contribute to or challenge those patterns. Using a post-megafire time period in a rural Northern California county as a case with which to study mental health help-seeking, I argue that local culture, deeply imbued with messages about gender and class, structures attitudes towards mental health services as well as disaster experience. Paying particular attention to mental health outcomes, I examine how factors such as local culture, gender expectations, insurance status, and organizational processes work together to produce unequal disaster recovery trajectories. I find that people come into and emerge with disparate resources, both material and emotional, during periods of disaster. Resource allocation exacerbates existing social status distinctions, in this case, those of class and gender. Material and emotional wellbeing are intertwined, as people without material resources have little chance of rebuilding, the cultural demonstration that one is establishing a “new normal.” Without this symbol of recovery, displaced residents have a difficult time coping emotionally. Meanwhile, the gendered division of labor that gives men the opportunity to feel heroic while women perform tedious and emotionally involved insurance tasks produces a gendered inequality in emotional recovery following a disaster. This work sits at the intersection of the sociology of disaster, gender, mental health, and economic sociology, elucidating the processes that produce or challenge patterns of poor mental health outcomes in rural communities.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PUBLICATIONS


*Chemically Imbalanced* is a study of the growing turn among ordinary people dealing with common forms of mental suffering to imagine their experience in the thin and mechanistic language of neurobiology, and what this turn might tell us about ourselves, our society, and the norms that we live under.

This book is dedicated to Sheldon Stryker. He was important to Sociology, Social Psychology, and my career (Richard Adams). There are also some pretty nice articles in it.


Regular Session: Mental Health – Advancing Stress Research
Sat, August 8, 8:30 to 10:10am

In this session we will re-examine the stress process and explore new directions for the Sociology of Stress and Mental Health. Several papers will explore the role of anticipatory stress. In addition, special attention will be paid to the role of racial and ethnic diversity in experiences and responses to stressors and the unique impact of gender attitudes across the life-course.

Regular Session: Mental Health – Advancing Stigma Research
Sat, August 8, 10:30am to 12:10pm

In this session we will discuss new advances in stigma research and the sociology of mental health and illness. In particular, attention will be paid to the importance of understanding structural stigma, the role of identity, stigma resistance and consequences. Papers will examine these issues across the life course, drawing on theoretical perspectives related to stereotyping and labeling.

Social Networks, Social Roles, and Mental Health

Sun, August 9, 10:30am to 12:10pm

Social integration and social relationships are fundamental themes in mental health scholarship. This session highlights the study of social networks and social roles/identities in terms of their association with mental health. Papers may include research that focuses on the costs and benefits of network ties and social roles for mental health, the ways in which social networks and social roles influence and are influenced by social inequality, structural and/or personal meanings attached to social networks and social roles, etc. Papers that advance theoretical and/or methodological approaches to the study of social integration are welcome.

Integrative Approaches to Studying Mental Health Disparities

Sun, August 9, 12:30 to 2:10pm

Ten years ago, Carol Aneshensel published "Toward Explaining Mental Health Disparities" with the goal of advancing sociological models that explain the social determinants and consequences of social inequality. For this session, we seek papers that address how health disparities impact mental health and mental health care.

Carol Aneshensel Memorial Session

The memorial session for Carol Aneshensel will be rescheduled to take place at the 2021 meetings in Chicago. If you have any questions about this session, please contact Bill Avison or Blair Wheaton.

Awards Reception and Business Meeting

At this time, we are still planning to hold a virtual awards reception and business meeting. Please see the finalized program (late July/early August) for updates.
Call for New Editor

The Section on the Sociology of Mental Health is looking for a new Newsletter Editor.

I have been editing the Newsletter for nearly 6 years and it is time that I move on to other things and let someone new take up this important task. The Newsletter is one of the main vehicles used to let section members know about our work, important events, announcements of award winners, and interesting articles on topics of interest to sections members.

As the Editor, I have had the privilege of working with the Section Chair, Publications Chair, and Council members. It has helped me to connect with Section events and members. It has been a highly gratifying experience that I recommend to anyone who cares deeply about our Section. If you wish to be considered for Editor, please email Section Chair, Kristen Marcussen (kmarcuss@kent.edu) and Publications Chair Ning Hsieh (hsiehnin@msu.edu).

I have really enjoyed being Editor and want to thank the past Chairs and Council members for all the help you have given me. I also what to thank the Graduate Editor, Katie Gary.

Call for Items for the Newsletter

Looking ahead to the next Newsletter, I look for announcements and other material, including:

- Descriptions of class activities/books/films for use in undergraduate sociology of mental health and illness classes or general tips and strategies for teaching at both the graduate and undergraduate level.

Thanks, Richard
Kent State University

Special Call for August Newsletter

As mentioned in the message from the chair, we are devoting space in the August newsletter to covering the research presented at the virtual ASA meetings, as well as your contributions and ideas about scholarship, teaching, and action related to the global health and racism pandemics. As sociologists, we have much to contribute to these conversations. As mental health scholars, we have and will continue to study the consequences of health and healthcare inequities, brutality and violence in the criminal justice system, and systemic inequality.

Please look for announcements over the next two months requesting contributions for this special newsletter.

2020-2021 SECTION OFFICERS

Chair: Kristen Marcussen, Kent State University
Chair-Elect: Pamela B. Jackson, Indiana University
Past Chair: Alisa K. Lincoln, Northeastern University
Council Member: Karen T. Van Gundy, University of New Hampshire
Membership Committee Chair: Matthew Andersson, Baylor University
Secretary/Treasurer: Brea Perry, Indiana University
Awards Committee Chair: Teresa Scheid, University of North Carolina – Charlotte
Nominations Committee Chair: Lijun Song, Vanderbilt University
Publications Committee Chair: Ning Hsieh, Michigan State University 2021
Student Member: Tanya Rouleau Whitworth, University of Massachusetts Amherst
Editor: Timothy J Owens, Kent State University and
Susan Roxburgh, Kent State University
Past Editor Elaine Wethington, Cornell University

Editorial Scope of SMH: Society and Mental Health publishes original articles that apply sociological concepts and methods to the understanding of the social origins of mental health and illness, the social consequences for persons with mental illness, and the organization and financing of mental health services and care. Its editorial policy favors manuscripts that advance the sociology of mental health and illness, stimulate further research, inform treatments and policy and reflect the diversity of interests of its readership.

Manuscripts must be submitted electronically at http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/smh

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