

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Newsletter of the Social Psychology Section of the American Sociological Association

Fall, 2013

Remarks from the Chair



Jeremy Freese,
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Greetings from Australia! I am spending the year at the Institute for Social Science Research at the University of Queensland. While being two hemispheres away from home has posed some logistic challenges to getting started as section chair, all the sunshine and scrumptious accents make it worth it. I cannot yet pull off a passable "G'Day," but "no worries" has become a cornerstone of my sabbatical vocabulary.

Our section is off to a great start. Much of the credit for that goes to my predecessor, Jan Stets, who left everything in great shape, provides a role model for being an effective section leader, and continues to prove very patient in answering my questions. Credit also goes to the section membership, who have bowled me over with their enthusiasm in responding to my requests to serve on section committees or to help the section in other ways. Bridget Welch deserves special mention for taking over the newsletter, and I want to thank Laura Aufderheide Brashears for all her work on the newsletter in the past and for helping with the transition. In addition, D'Lane Compton gets credit for getting the section's Facebook group off the ground. This was explicitly one of the goals our Council had for the coming year, and we already have over 100 members. (If you use Facebook, search for "Social Psychological Section" and you will find us -- or click [here](#).)

Remarks from Chair continued on Page 2

Inside this Issue:

Story	Page
Remarks from the Chair	1-2
Note from the Editor	2
Voice of Experience: Shel Stryker	3-4
Book Notes	5-6
Facebook Announcement	6
Section Officers	7
Committee Members	7
Call for 2014 Outstanding Recent Contribution in Social Psychology Award	8
2014 Group Processes Mini-Conference Announcement	8
Membership Form	9

Note from the Editor

Bridget K. Welch

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Hello Social Psychologists! Now that we are all coming down from our trick-or-treat sugar highs, it's time for the newest edition of the Social Psychology Newsletter. I hope you enjoy all the great information and other pieces of news we put together for you.

When I got the opportunity to take over as newsletter editor and was told by Laura that it was up to me to pick who we featured in the "Voices of Experience" section, it took me less than half a second to know that I could approach no one less than my personal hero — Shel Stryker. (Yes, I am photo bombing him above, poor man.) He tells us about the development of his career and gives us the advice to have fun. Read more on pages 3 and 4.

Our members have been busy publishing books. Check out information on some of these on pages 5 and 6. We also have some congratulatory news found on page 5, along with a way for you to post your personal brags as D'Lane tells us about social psychology on Facebook.

Learn about the Mini Groups conference in April and the nomination process for the Outstanding Recent Contribution Award on page 7.

Finally, some thank-yous:

I relied heavily on advice from Laura Aufderheide Brashears and would not have been able to put this together without her help. Thanks so much!

And, as always, the success of the newsletter is dependent upon all of our contributors. Thank you for your time and your input.

Remarks from the Chair

(Continued from Page 1)

We have an exciting program planned for the coming meetings. The idea was to start with the classical "three faces" of social psychology and choose a theme for a specific session that might represent one emerging frontier loosely connected with each one.

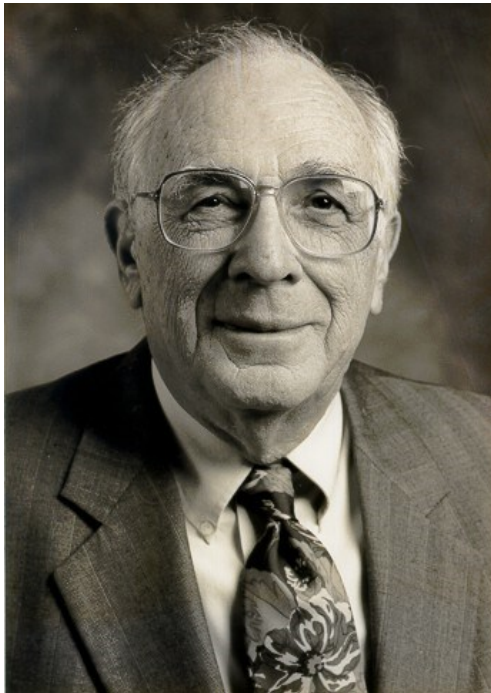
We will have sessions on biosocial perspectives, on computational social science, and on the integration of culture and practice in the study of everyday life. (Connecting particular topics to particular faces will be left as an exercise for newsletter readers.) Particular thanks to section members Mike Shanahan, Jessica Collett, Chris Bail, and Matt Brashears for discussions in developing the sessions. In addition, we will also have our usual session of roundtables, which will once again be held in conjunction with the section on Emotions. And, of course, the first half of the session with our business meeting will feature an address by this year's winner of the Cooley-Mead Award.

Thanks again to everyone for their work so far, and I am looking forward to the year ahead.

"The best advice I have given--and still give--to students whenever I have the chance, stems from what I know as Schuessler's Law... Schuessler's Law is:

"sociology must be fun."

-Shel Stryker, Page 3-4



Voices of Experience: Sheldon Stryker, Indiana University: Bloomington

Dr. Stryker is a Distinguished Professor of Sociology and winner of both the Cooley-Mead Award for Lifetime Contributions to Social Psychology from the Section on Social Psychology of the ASA, and the George Herbert Mead Award for Lifetime Scholarship from the Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction. He was also awarded the W.E.B. DuBois Career of Distinguished Scholarship Award from the American Sociological Association.

What life experiences have contributed to your interest in social psychology in general and/or your specific research areas?

I became a member of a "social club" of sorts called the Young Judean Trailblazers made up of some 14 girls and boys (equal numbers of each) when I was about 16 years old. Part of a larger Young Judea organization, this "club" was serious about many things, not simply socializing, that involved the Zionism of the time, Synagogue attendance, doing "good" in the Jewish community of St. Paul, etc. I spent a good deal of time thinking about the club after leaving for military service in World War II, coming to the realization that my relationships in it changed the course of my life. Note that this idea, the formative power of the social unit with respect to the lives of the individuals who are members of those social units, underlies all of the work I have done as a sociologist.

Later, shortly after returning to the University of Minnesota after the war, I was exposed for the first time to the work of G.H. Mead. I became deeply convinced in the value of that work which emphasized the role of self in human social behavior. I also became convinced that most of what I read in the literature that used Mead did not "test" his ideas; rather, it took Mead's ideas as sacred text that provided the answers to questions they posed. The product of a department that emphasized sociology as science, I deemed that stance objectionable. When an opportunity presented itself to try to build a testable theory that used Mead's ideas as a point of departure, I began the development of Identity Theory, a project that began in about 1964 and continues today.

Where did you spend the early part of your sociological career (first as a student and then as faculty)?

I took all of my degrees, BA, MA, and Ph.D at the University of Minnesota, seeing no need to leave there after obtaining the MA because the personnel of the department of sociology changed considerably at that time, because my mentor at Minnesota encouraged me to stay, and because personal circumstances were such that move did not seem feasible. I returned to Minnesota after military service in 1946 with a number of undergraduate credits, completing the BA in spring of 1948 and the MA in the spring of 1950. Thus, it was with almost exactly two years as a Ph.D student when the then Chair of the Department put his arm around my shoulder and said (and I believe I quote) "It's about time you got out in the world." At that point, I had just completed course work, had not taken pre-lims, and had not even thought of a dissertation topic. Not brave enough to argue with him, and offered the opportunity to join my mentor who had left Minnesota to become the Chair at Indiana, I took that opportunity. I took it even though it consisted of an appointment as a Teaching Assistant at a salary of \$2500. I was promoted the following year to an Instructor rank, then a tenure appointment. I have been at Indiana University Bloomington ever since.

How have your specific interests in sociology changed over time?

I went from a general interest in the conceptual and "theoretical framework" provided by Mead to the development of an empirically testable theory to which I gave the name "Identity Theory."



Sheldon Stryker visiting WIU, giving the dirt on famous social psych fist fights!

Voice of Experience: Shel Stryker

(Continued from Page 3)

What is your current (or recent) research focus?

Most recently, working with my former student who has been my research colleague over the past 30 years, Richard Serpe, as well as with Philip Brenner, I participated in the development of a paper, now accepted for publication in *Social Psychology Quarterly*. The paper deals with the over-time relationship of the concept of identity salience and the concept of identity prominence that comes out of the work of George McCall and J.T.

Simmons. (Psychological centrality and—most simply-- importance have essentially the same meaning as does prominence.)

What interests and/or activities, outside of sociology, are important to you?

Until recently, travel that has concentrated on Europe, Latin American, and southwest Asia; and a wide range of music--jazz (from Louis Armstrong to contemporary free-form), opera, the symphonic and chamber music repertoire, and Ballet.

Given your success in the field, how do you balance professional and personal demands?

Earlier when my children were young, from their infancy through the many years of attending the performance activities of our five children in whatever they might be doing until they left home for their higher education, my work time consisted of time spent in my university office, roughly coincident with the time the children were in school; My home working hours were from roughly 10:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. each weekday night.

If you had to leave academia, what career would you choose?

I've often wondered what alternative career I might have chosen. I never could think of an alternative.

Do you know something today you wish you had known when you started in sociology? What is it?

No.

What one piece of advice would give a graduate student? What about an assistant professor?

The best advice I have given--and still give--to students whenever I have the chance, stems from what I know as Schuessler's Law. (Karl Schuessler was my mentor and friend at Indiana who arrived there a few years ahead of me.) Schuessler's Law is "sociology must be fun." Translating that maxim to advice, what I would tell students, simply put, is if you don't really like what you are doing, get out! There are easier ways of making a living. I tell young Assistant Professors the same thing. I also advise the latter to keep themselves open to opportunities to go in new directions that will arise along the way. Taking one (or more) of these may well invigorate your professional performance.

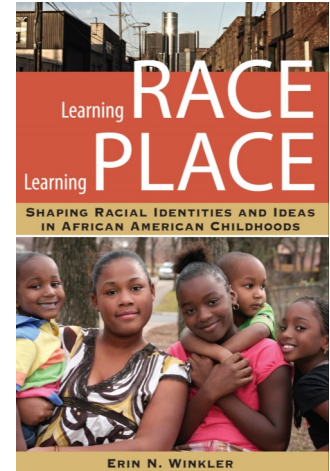
Book Notes

Learning Race, Learning Place: Shaping Identities and Ideas in African American Childhoods

Erin N. Winkler

Rutgers University Press, Series in Childhood Studies, 2012

How do children negotiate and make meaning of multiple and conflicting messages to develop their own ideas about race? *Learning Race, Learning Place* engages this question using in-depth interviews with an economically diverse group of African American children and their mothers. Through these rich narratives, Erin N. Winkler seeks to reorient the way we look at how children develop their ideas about race through the introduction of a new framework—comprehensive racial learning—that shows the importance of considering this process from children’s points of view and listening to their interpretations of their experiences, which are often quite different from what the adults around them expect or intend. Winkler examines the roles of multiple actors and influences, including gender, skin tone, colorblind rhetoric, peers, family, media, school, and, especially, place. She brings to the fore the complex and understudied power of place, positing that while children’s racial identities and experiences are shaped by a national construction of race, they are also specific to a particular place that exerts both direct and indirect influence on their racial identities and ideas.



How to Critique Journal Articles in the Social Sciences

Scott R. Harris

Sage Publications 2013

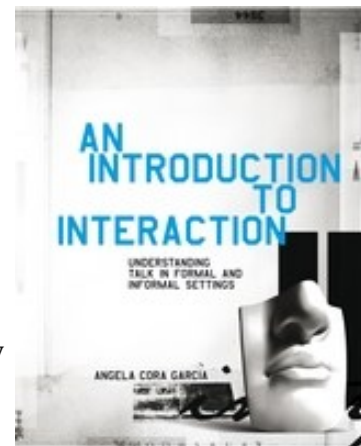
This brief, introductory book provides readers with a step-by-step guide to reading and understanding a social science research article. The author demonstrates the many strengths of social research, including its advantages over ordinary ways of knowing things, and, at the same time, points out that research is inevitably flawed. Rather than naively assuming that good research simply produces “The Truth” or cynically asserting that research is hopelessly biased and futile, this book instills in readers a critical perspective—one that appreciates the strengths and weaknesses of any piece of scholarship.

An Introduction to Interaction: Understanding Talk in Formal and Informal Settings

Angela Cora Garcia

Bloomsbury Academic 2013

This textbook provides an in-depth introduction to the theoretical perspectives and methods of doing conversation analysis, an approach to the study of talk in interaction which grew out of the work of Garfinkel, Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson. This book is unique in that it provides comprehensive instruction in both interaction in ordinary conversations in everyday life as well as talk in institutional settings and a wide range of workplace and business interactions, while teaching both major research findings and how to conduct conversation analytic research.



Discussions, Chats, Brags

& Other Randomness for Social Psychology Researchers on Facebook

Our section's Facebook group has been up for less than 3 months. The great news is that in that time we have acquired over 100 friends and shared some good information. To date most posts have been job announcements or resource sharing related.

We also want to encourage you to post more discussions, brags, SP humor, and other contribution of interest—anything that helps stimulate micro-creativity and general productivity.

Less formal and faster than peer review and cheaper than flying to a conference, Facebook groups are a great way for junior and senior scholars to share ideas and access quick feedback. Please consider contributing.

Crowd source questions for immediate help or share some insights on a current event or resource. Our hope is that the group will become a lively community.

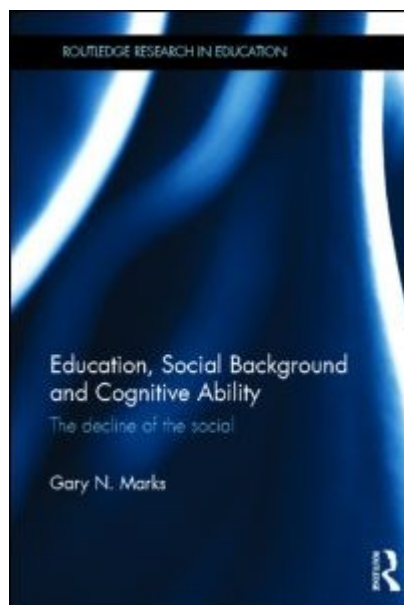
To join or lurk*, search: Social Psychological Section, American Sociological Association on Facebook or go to: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/653207201359090/>

*The Section's Facebook group is open to all, including those that do not have a FB account, however an account is needed to post and respond.

-D'Lane Compton

Book Notes

(Continued from Page 5)



Education, Social Background and Cognitive Ability

Gary N. Marks
Routledge 2014

Gary N. Marks argues that in western industrialized countries, pervasive views that socioeconomic background (or class background) has strong and unchanging relationships with education and later socioeconomic outcomes, resistant to policy and social change, are unfounded. Marks provides a large amount of evidence from many countries showing that the influence of socioeconomic background for education is

moderate and most often declining, and socioeconomic background has only very weak impacts on adults' occupation and earnings after taking into account education and cognitive ability.

Furthermore, Marks shows that cognitive ability is a more powerful influence than socioeconomic background for educational outcomes, and that in addition to its indirect effects through education has a direct effect on occupation and earnings. Its effects cannot be dismissed as simply another aspect of socioeconomic background, nor do the usual criticisms of 'cognitive ability' apply. The declining effects for socioeconomic background and the importance of cognitive ability support several of the contentions of modernization theory.

The book contributes to a variety of debates within sociology: quantitative and qualitative approaches, explanatory and non-explanatory theory, the relationship between theory and empirical research, the role of political ideology in research, sociology as a social science, and sociology's contribution to knowledge about contemporary societies. It will appeal to professionals in the fields of education and sociology as well as postgraduate students and academics involved in the debate.

Congratulations!!!

Celeste Campos-Castillo, Post-doctoral Research Fellow at Dartmouth College, has accepted an Assistant Professor position at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee. She begins August 2014 and will start a social psychology lab.

2013-2014 Social Psychology Section Officers

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Past-Chair: Jan Stets, University of California, Riverside

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- ◆ Robin W. Simon, Wake Forest University 2014
- ◆ Alison J. Bianchi, University of Iowa 2015
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Membership Committee

Stephen Bernard (chair), Nobuyuki Takahashi, D'Lane Compton, Corey Fields

Program Committee

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Call For Nominations

The Social Psychology Section of the ASA invites submissions for the 2014 Outstanding Recent Contribution in Social Psychology Award. In 2014, the award will be given to an article or chapter published between January 1, 2011 and December 31, 2013. Nominations must include a PDF copy of the article or chapter and a brief statement (1-2 paragraphs) regarding its merits. Please send submissions by February 1, 2014 to Matthew O. Hunt (m.hunt@neu.edu), Chair of committee. Nominators must be members of the ASA Social Psychology Section; self-nominations are welcome.



2014 Group Processes Mini-Conference held from April 2nd to the 5th in Charlotte, NC

Please join us in beautiful Charlotte, North Carolina during the Southern Sociological Society's Annual Meeting (April 2-5, 2014) for the:

10th Annual Groups Mini-Conference

We have a full slate of excellent papers and presenters!! (We'll post more details about the exact session times and dates soon.)

Looking forward to seeing you!

Who We Are

The Social Psychology Section of the ASA works to keep the spirit of social psychology alive in sociology. We are over 600 scholars whose interests include self-conceptions and identity, social cognition, the shaping of emotions by culture and social structure, the creation of meaning and the negotiation of social order in everyday life, small group dynamics, and the psychological consequences of inequality.

While we also identify with other areas of sociological research, we all bring to our research and teaching a special interest in the individual as both a social product and a social force. Our common desire is to understand the many connections between individuals and the groups to which they belong.

We invite all sociologists who are interested in social psychology, or who take a social-psychological approach to some other area of research, to join the Social the Social Psychology Section and to get involved in Section activities.

**For more news
and
information,
visit the section
on the web at:**

[http://www.asanet.org/
sections/
socialpsychology.cfm](http://www.asanet.org/sections/socialpsychology.cfm)

**Or join the
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on Facebook:**

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www.facebook.com/
groups/65320720135909
0/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/653207201359090/)

Social Psychology Section Membership Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

_____ I am an ASA member and want to join the Social Psychology Section. Enclosed is a check for \$12.00 for section dues this year (\$5.00 for students). Please make checks payable to the American Sociological Association.

_____ I am not an ASA member, but am interested in joining the Social Psychology Section. Please send me information about membership in the ASA.

_____ I am a Social Psychology Section member and want to pay for my student's section membership. Student Name: _____; Student Address _____; Student Email: _____. Enclosed is a check for \$5.00. Please note that your student must be an ASA member to join the section.

Mail form and check to: Membership Services

American Sociological Association

1307 New York Avenue NW, Suite 700

Washington, DC 20005-4701