

## CUSS Sessions for 2009 ASA Meetings

1. **Open Paper Session 1: “Cities, Communities, and Immigration”** (This session is sponsored jointly by CUSS and the Immigration Section)

Session Description:

The topic of cities, communities, and immigration has been of major interest to generations of sociologists. Recent developments such as growing racial and ethnic diversity among immigrants, emergence of high-tech industries, and the consolidation of trans-national linkages among immigrants have challenged our conventional understanding of how immigration shapes urban structures and processes as well as how existing urban structures and processes affect the integration of immigrants. This session seeks to assemble papers that will shed new light on the new dynamics between immigration and urban and community structures and processes. We expect the session to specifically explore new urban forms, such as multi-group residential patterns and suburban immigrant clustering, as well as new urban processes, such as immigrant adaptation in small towns and middle class immigrant communities.

Organizer:

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2. **Open Paper Session 2: “Cities, Communities, and Disaster”**

Session Description:

Disasters happen when hazardous events, natural or man-made, cross path with vulnerable populations. Throughout recent years, economic and spatial inequalities in the United States have intensified. Globally, climate change has been linked to an increase in extreme weather patterns; pollution and industrialization threaten our remaining natural resources; and many world regions continue to suffer from political instability. The combination of these and other trends arguably contributes to an increase in the frequency and intensity of disasters, in the United States and abroad. Scholars of communities and environments (whether urban, suburban, or rural) can provide key insights to investigations of hazards. A comprehensive account of communities and environments is crucial to fully understand, and hopefully mitigate the impacts of disasters. Many important questions can be asked about cities, communities and disasters. How do social environments interact with natural and built environments? How do community resources affect levels of vulnerability and resilience among their members? Which roles do communities play during post-disaster recovery? How are urban and community environments redeveloped and changed following a disaster? This session invites papers that empirically and conceptually investigate these and other questions at the intersection of disasters, cities and communities.

Organizer:

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3. **Open Paper Session 3: “Formal Organizations and Urban Transformations”**

*Session Description:*

In recent years, there has been a resurgence in urban sociologists’ interest in the role of formal organizations in cities. In contrast to William Julius Wilson’s much-cited thesis that cities, especially their poor neighborhoods, have become characterized by a vast lack of formal organizational resources, in the last ten years a growing number of urban sociologists has produced empirical work that takes formal organizations as their central object of inquiry. This work has included ethnographic studies of organizations in urban environments (e.g., McRoberts 2004, Marwell 2007), quantitative analyses of the variations in organizational density across neighborhoods (e.g., Rankin & Quane 2000, Small 2006), and historical discussions of urban organizational environments (e.g., McQuarrie 2007). Organizations are key holders and distributors of resources to individuals, families, and communities. Organizations also participate in the structuring of opportunity at the meso and macro levels, through their interactions with other organizations in neighborhoods, cities, and beyond. For both these reasons, urban scholars are increasingly documenting the role that organizations play in urban economic, political, and social realms. This session aims at bringing together a set of papers by scholars doing cutting-edge research on the intersection of organizations and various urban issues and transformations.

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4. **Open Paper Session 4: “Leisure Practices and Urban Community Building”**

*Session Description*

While cities have historically been viewed as places for work and commerce, they are also places for leisure and recreation. Urban sociologists, recognizing cities as both places of production and as places of consumption, have recently sought to uncover the symbolic economy of cities by looking toward cultural amenities such as art galleries, sports arenas, and nightclubs. The social significance of leisure necessarily moves our attention toward the realm of civic culture and community relations. The papers sought for this session will analyze and elucidate the connection between leisure activities and community-building practices. What roles does leisure play in the hard work of building urban communities? Does focusing on or attending to leisure take away from persons’ abilities to foster healthy communities or can leisure be a catalyst for the construction of strong social relations? Are some leisure activities more conducive to community-

building than others, and, if so, why? These questions are increasingly important as cities remain playgrounds for some and detention halls for others. The purpose of this session, then, is to explore the varied ways that leisure practices are related to the development and sustainability of urban communities.

Organizer:

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5. **Referred Roundtables**

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Some suggested Roundtables: These are based on proposals by CUSS members. The purpose of listing them here is to signal section members of the possibility of having roundtable paper or panel discussions on these topics if there is sufficient interest in them by other section members.

- “Dynamics of Urban Neighborhood Change: Emerging Patterns” (Discussion of current understanding of neighborhood change in American cities) Proposed by Rachael Woldoff, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV 26506 ([Rachael.woldoff@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:Rachael.woldoff@mail.wvu.edu))
- “Market-centered Growth and the Right to the City” (Discussion of the contemporary trend towards ‘market-centered’ urban development, including its economic dynamics, social impacts, and new political responses to it) Proposed by Miriam Greenberg, Department of Sociology, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA 95064 ([miriam@ucsc.edu](mailto:miriam@ucsc.edu))
- “The Gentrifier in the Mirror” (Discussion of urban researchers position in their neighborhoods and how that influences or reflects on their work and the broader gentrification literature) Proposed by John Joe Schlichtman, Department of Sociology, University of San Diego, San Diego, CA 92110 ([jjschlichtman@sandiego.edu](mailto:jjschlichtman@sandiego.edu)) and Jason Patch, Feinstein College of Arts and Sciences, Roger Williams University, Bristol, RI 02809 ([jpatch@rwu.edu](mailto:jpatch@rwu.edu))
- “The Ghetto and Social Exclusion” (Ongoing discussion of “the ghetto” and the knowledge base for relevant theorization) Proposed by Ray Hutchison, Urban and Regional Studies, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, Green Bay, WI 54311 ([hutchr@uwgb.edu](mailto:hutchr@uwgb.edu))