

\*\*\*CUSS NEWS\*\*\*

Newsletter of the Community and Urban Sociology Section  
Fall/Winter, 2005-06

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CO-EDITORS' NOTE

CUSS membership continues to rise. As of September, 2005 (the closing date for 2005 section membership), membership stands at 721. The Fall/Winter edition contains some reflections about the natural disasters and responses on the Gulf Coast. This edition includes information about participation opportunities for the 2006 ASA Conference in Montreal as well as calls for submissions for section awards. The edition has nine new book announcements and two dissertation profiles.

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CHAIR'S MESSAGE

New Orleans and Katrina: A powerful new sociological metaphor for the impacts of systemic inequality and racism  
Richard Alba  
The University at Albany, SUNY

Our subject matter is rather consistently appearing in the headlines of late, though I wish I could add that our voices are being heard as well. The catastrophe in New Orleans before, during, and after hurricane Katrina is one example. (The riots shaking French society, which originate in the suburban concentrations of post-colonial immigrants, are another; but I'll save that subject for another occasion.) Having just participated in a teach-in at Albany, where several urban planners with first-hand knowledge of the New

Orleans region spoke, I now have deeper insights into how the catastrophe continues to wreak massive damage on what had been a unique social and cultural world. New Orleans is almost certain to be transformed beyond recognition.

New Orleans and Katrina have created a powerful new sociological metaphor for the workings of systemic inequality and racism. By a metaphor, I mean here a set of images that render in very concrete terms sociological phenomena that otherwise are abstractly described. Students of stratification have long used the sinking of the Titanic in this way, pointing to the strong correlation between survival and class of berth. But New Orleans and Katrina hold much greater power as a metaphor for inequality. It may seem curious to non-sociologists that we use disaster as an instrument for stripping bare the workings of inequality, since disasters like hurricanes and earthquakes seem on the surface to strike everyone with equal force. However, sociological analysis is able to reveal how: groups with more resources are able to position themselves to be less vulnerable to potential disaster; when a disaster strikes, they are frequently able to escape its worst effects; and after a disaster, these groups are better able to recover their former position

The sociological aspects of the New Orleans catastrophe reprise a story very familiar to us, though not, it seems, to most Americans. The disproportionate impact of the disaster on poor African Americans, such as the residents of the Lower Ninth Ward (the Dantesque resonance of the name is uncanny) and the nearby North Bywater neighborhood, is demonstrably the consequence of systemic inequalities and racism. The segregation in the city of New Orleans was about average in 2000 for an American city: the index of dissimilarity between whites and blacks was 65.9 (according to the data available through John Logan's American Community Project). However, since two-thirds of the city's population was African American, this value of the index implies that most African Americans were living in heavily black neighborhoods. New Orleans was also a city with a relatively high poverty level: nearly 30 percent; and that poverty was concentrated in the African-American population. Hence, there were many micro-neighborhoods—measurable as census block groups—where the poverty rate exceeded 40, even 50 and 60, percent, the lower figure the usual standard for measuring a pocket of deep poverty. As has been widely noted, many poor black households lacked access to automobiles. So, when the order for evacuation went out just before the storm hit, they could not respond, having the means neither to leave the city, nor to find shelter somewhere else if they could.

Segregation typically is a means of imposing place-based disadvantages on an excluded group, and these play a central role in the story. Many of the areas of African-American concentration were quite vulnerable to a major storm. A map of the projected impact of the hurricane, published in *The New York Times* just before Katrina hit the Gulf Coast, showed that flooding was expected to affect the Ninth Ward and North Bywater—vulnerable not only because of their low elevation but also because of the placement of the industrial canal—but the heavily white neighborhoods to the north and west of the city were expected to escape. In fact, the flooding was more extensive, but for the most part middle-class whites had cleared out of the city with some essential belongings beforehand, while poor African Americans were trapped by the rising waters. As we

know, the desperate scenes that played out at venues like the Superdome gave many Americans a shocking view of realities that they would like to think are exceptional.

Race and class are playing predictable roles in the city's recovery. As I write this letter, about 80 percent of the city's original residents are scattered across forty-four states, according to the planners who spoke at the teach-in. The residents of areas like the Ninth Ward cannot come back because the neighborhood is uninhabitable, and many of them have lost everything. The Ninth Ward was a neighborhood of homeowners, where homes had been passed down within families. Since they were owned outright, without mortgages, many of them probably were inadequately insured, leaving their owners with little or no capital to rebuild. Moreover, the group of politicians and business figures who are currently shaping the city's future are dropping strong hints that they do want these residents to return in large numbers. Thus, there is discussion of razing the Ninth Ward, although, according to the planners, there is just as much logic in razing the middle-class, white Lakeview neighborhood, where many homes are also irreparable; but there is no public discussion of that idea. Even more disastrously for poor and working-class families, most of the city's public school system has shut down for the year; and many of the teachers have been let go. Before the storm, the public school system served mainly the city's black population. Today the only families with school-age children who can live in New Orleans are affluent ones, who can send their children to private schools, many of them parochial.

Unless the trajectory of redevelopment now being defined by those who now hold power in New Orleans is reoriented, the city that will arise from the toxic muck left behind by Katrina will have lost the creole cultural world that made it unique. We will all be poorer as a result.

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#### COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

##### \*\*\*Nominations Committee

Hilary Silver, chair  
Robert Adelman  
Jennifer Lee  
Mary Pattillo

##### \*\*\*Lynd Award Committee

Roger Waldinger, chair  
Angela Aidala  
Omar McRoberts  
Robert Sampson

##### \*\*\*Park Award Committee

Book: Cynthia Duncan, chair  
Terry Clark  
Maria Kefalas

Article: Kee Warner, chair  
Susan Brown  
Regina Bures  
Nicole Marwell

\*\*\*Student Paper AwardD  
Angie Chung, chair  
Michael Ian Borer  
Jerome Hodos

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#### CALL for 2006 SECTION AWARDS

##### \*\*\*The Robert and Helen Lynd Award

This award recognizes distinguished career achievements in community and urban sociology. Nominations should consist of: (a) a brief letter summarizing the nominee's contributions to the field, including scholarship and engagement in applied sociology and social change, and (b) supplementary materials such as a curriculum vitae, biographical sketch, or additional letters of support. Do not submit copies of the nominee's publications. Please send nominations by January 31, 2006 to Roger Waldinger, Department of Sociology, UCLA, Haines Hall 264, Box 951551, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1551 or to [waldinge@soc.ucla.edu](mailto:waldinge@soc.ucla.edu).

##### \*\*\*The Robert E. Park Award

This award goes to the authors of the best book-length research monograph or the best scholarly article in community and urban sociology published in the past two years. Nominations are now being sought for books and articles that appeared in 2004 or 2005. Nominations should include standard bibliographic information about the work and a brief comment on its merits. Please send BOOK nominations by January 31, 2006, to Cynthia Mildred Duncan, Director, The Carsey Institute, University of New Hampshire, Huddleston Hall, Main Street, Durham, NH 03824 or to [Mil.Duncan@unh.edu](mailto:Mil.Duncan@unh.edu). Please send ARTICLE nominations by January 31, 2006, to Kee Warner, Dept. of Sociology, CoH 4, University of Colorado-Colorado Springs, Colorado Springs, CO 80933-7150 or to [kwarner@uccs.edu](mailto:kwarner@uccs.edu).

##### \*\*\*The CUSS Student Paper Award

The CUSS Student Paper Award invites submissions for the 2006 best student paper in community and urban sociology. The competition is open to both published and unpublished article-length papers written by a graduate student in the last two years (2004 or 2005). The committee will accept sole-authored and multiple-authored papers, but no student-faculty collaborations. All submissions must be received by January 31, 2006. The committee strongly prefers electronic submissions, which should be sent to Angie Y. Chung at [aychung@albany.edu](mailto:aychung@albany.edu). Alternatively, four hard copies of the paper may be mailed to: Angie Y. Chung, University at Albany, Department of Sociology, 1400 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12222

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ASA CONFERENCE Call for Participation  
August 11-14, 2006  
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Deadline for Paper Submission: January 18, 2006  
CUSS Section Day: Monday, August 15

Community and Urban Sociology Section  
Program Sessions and Organizers, ASA Meetings, 2006  
Organized by Anne B. Shlay, Chair Elect  
[ashlay@temple.edu](mailto:ashlay@temple.edu)  
215-204-7931

\*\*\*Referred Roundtables

Organizers  
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\*\*\*Session 1: Open Paper Session

Regional Dynamics: City and Suburb  
Bonnie Lindstrom  
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1810 Chicago Ave  
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Email: [b-lindstrom@northwestern.edu](mailto:b-lindstrom@northwestern.edu)

\*\*\*Session 2: Open Paper Session

Communities and Behavior  
Kyle Crowder  
Department of Sociology  
Arntzen Hall 510, MS 9081  
Western Washington University  
516 High Street  
Bellingham, WA 98225-9081  
Voice: 360-650-7213  
Fax: 360-650-7295  
Email: [kyle.crowder@wwu.edu](mailto:kyle.crowder@wwu.edu)

\*\*\*Session 3: Closed/Invited Paper Session  
People Versus Place: Tackling Ghetto Poverty  
Xavier de Souza Briggs  
Department of Urban Studies and Planning  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
77 Massachusetts Avenue, Room 9-521  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
Voice: 617-253-7956  
Fax: 617-258-8594  
Email: [xbriggs@mit.edu](mailto:xbriggs@mit.edu)

\*\*\*Session 4: Open Paper Session  
Co-sponsored with the Section on Political Economy of the World-System  
Cities in the Political Economy of Global Capitalism  
Michael Timberlake  
Department of Sociology  
University of Utah  
380 S. 1530 East, Room 301  
Salt Lake City, UT 84112  
Voice: 801-581-8132  
Fax: 801-585-3784  
Email: [timber@soc.utah.edu](mailto:timber@soc.utah.edu)

#### ASA REGULAR SESSIONS ON COMMUNITY AND URBAN SOCIOLOGY

This is a list of regular sessions and their organizers that are on topics of interest to members of the Community and Urban Sociology Section. Shown are the topics and the program organizer:

Communities and Community Development  
Keith Hampton, University of Pennsylvania

Comparative Urban Development  
Sean-Shong Hwang, University of Alabama, Birmingham

Homelessness  
Dan Cress, Western State College of Colorado

Housing  
Krista Paulsen, University of North Florida

Immigrant Communities  
James R. Elliott, Tulane University

Rural Sociology  
Robert Mazur, Iowa State University

Space and Place  
Margarethe Kusenbach, University of South Florida

Urban Sociology  
David Halle, University of California, Los Angeles

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FEATURE ARTICLE  
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New Orleans: The Obvious Unseen Disaster  
William Holt  
University of Connecticut  
Lieutenant Donald Celmer  
New Haven Police Department, retired

To comprehend the disaster that happened this fall, one would first have to understand New Orleans itself. The city is an exceptional melting pot of cultures, religions, races, and economic classes combined with physical uniqueness. New Orleans' culture breeds a lackadaisical attitude which often results in many major issues being placed at the back of the Big Easy's priority list including the updating and upkeep of the levee system. The city's location below sea level in a crescent of the Mississippi River and adjacent to Lake Pontchartrain made it a perfect location for this national disaster to occur.

The French, Spanish, and English coupled with Afro-Caribbeans left their marks on New Orleans. Unlike other regions of the American South, New Orleans is a Catholic city with overtones of voodooism. The French and Spanish developed an urbane city center while the Anglos moved outward into the Garden District, one of the country's first suburban-style developments. As a port city, New Orleans had a large number of immigrants from Germany, Ireland, and Italy during the 1800's. The intertwining of race and class is unique in New Orleans. White plantation owners forced unions with slaves produced a free people of color class from which many of New Orleans black leadership originates. Today, many elites refuse to acknowledge their cousins.

Velvet Rot describes the process by which wealthy family estates are divided over generations while not producing new capital resulting in the old monies inability to

replace the mildewed curtains hanging in the deteriorating abodes. Unlike southern boomtowns like Dallas and Atlanta, New Orleans elites discouraged growth and development as well as newcomers to their insular system. More concerned with being the next Mardi Gras king or getting their children in the right debutant society or family into the correct country club, the elites desire the status quo circa 1950. Rocking the boat means being shunned by this system. In this leadership vacuum, the private and parochial education systems drain the struggling New Orleans Public Schools. Scandals have plagued the New Orleans Police Department.

Prior to the American Civil War, New Orleans was America's second largest banking center and a major shipping hub between the Midwest and Caribbean. Replaced by railroads and racial violence during Reconstruction in the 1870's, the city's growth slowed. In the 1920's early historic preservationists found a tomb-like concentration of structures that form the base of the city's tourism industry. Ironically, most of the famed cuisine originates from the working classes. From the lured history of the Storyville District where every vice was available to today's strip clubs and wild Mardi Gras celebrations, New Orleans attracts pleasure seeking tourists. Although, the desire to create a tourist city may not be compatible with the needs of residents for quality housing, schools, and jobs.

The present levee system developed after Hurricane Camille destroyed the Gulf Coast in 1969 would never withstand category four or five storms. Leaders ignored the faults that emerged in the system. Only a few spoke about it and even less took a serious approach to the financial aspects. When Hurricane Katrina hit, the government agencies at the federal, state, and local levels were unprepared especially in their abilities to help the poorest and most vulnerable residents. The world watched FEMA's feeble attempts to aid the city in a timely fashion as all government officials at all levels spent time on the cable news programs praising and bickering with each other. When the first monies arrived, the usual suspects like Halliburton and Bechtel were on the receiving end of no-bid contracts. The Bush administration suspended the 1931 Davis-Bacon Act setting minimum pay scales for federal contracts based on the region's average or prevailing pay maintaining the South's tradition of forced and non-union labor.

While race is a major factor in New Orleans, class trumped it this time. New Orleanians were evacuated on planes in which their destinations were not known until landing in far away places like Phoenix and Salt Lake City. There are serious issues that need to be addressed from early fall 2005 plans developed by the Urban Land Institute and the American Planning Association. It will not surprise us to see that as time goes by areas lost to their original owners will be reconfigured for higher-end residences and tourist related activities. While there are major opportunities to redevelop impoverished areas and to help working class people who form the backbone of the city's tourist economy returned to homeownership, there are lots of opportunities for abuses. Even with the best intentions, plans change-look at urban renewal and Model Cities.

When many Americans saw the first shots of residents camped out at the Superdome and Morial Convention Center, they were shocked. It looked like a refugee camp in a developing nation, not a major American city. Three months after the disaster, people are forgetting. While funding for research on the American South has been limited at best, foundations initial promises of funding to study these areas never materialized. We have become so global that we are ignoring our own backyard. These intricate issues

need more than census tract regressions to understand complex problems. For those of us who have conducted ethnographic research in New Orleans, the work reveals larger problems in American society. But as 2005 comes to a close, assistance to the region is slow. Even the NFL's Saints are trying to use this disaster to leave town for Los Angeles and you know when the saints go marching out you're really in trouble.

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#### MEMBERS' NEWS

\*\*\*Professor Rachael A. Woldoff was an invited speaker at West Virginia University's Public Forum on Katrina entitled "What Will We Learn? A Political & Social Analysis" in September 2005. Her talk was called "Katrina, Race, and Place: A Sociological Look at Natural Disaster" and suggested three reasons for the assertion that racialized aspects of poverty and place played a major role in determining which American citizens would suffer the most in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Currently, Dr. Woldoff is collaborating with the Journalism School at WVU to produce a website called Starting Over, which is devoted to Katrina evacuees who have relocated to Morgantown, WV. It will be a multimedia, streaming video site and will also feature information on race and poverty. A version of her talk will be on the site. The site's launch date is November 15th.

\*\*\*Tom Gunterbock, Center for Survey Research and Department of Sociology, University of Virginia, recently co-authored "Beyond 50.05: A Report to the Nation on Livable Communities-Creating Environments for Successful Aging". This is one of a series of annual reports from AARP's Public Policy Institute. It summarizes literature on community engagement (including community attachment, neighboring, memberships, and volunteering) and ways in which these contribute to the health, well-being, and empowerment of older adults. It also includes results of the AARP national survey focused on these topics. To view highlights of the report or to order a free copy, point your browser to: [www.aarp.org/beyond50](http://www.aarp.org/beyond50).

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#### NEW BOOKS by SECTION MEMBERS

\*\*\*COMMUNITIES and FORESTS: Where People Meet the Land. Robert G. Lee and Donald R. Field, eds. Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2005.

This book offers a timely view of the changing face of forests and forestry in North America today. In examining interactions between people and forests, the book shows that forests are as much a social institution as they are a biological resource. The editors document the shift from scientific forestry to community forestry. They note that the traditional science-based, state-controlled model for managing forests ignores the voices of those affected by the use of forest resources. The editors suggest that science-based forestry is giving way to an alternative approach, one in which nature, economy, society, and culture are considered integral elements of the human-forest relationship. They see a

future where forestry will continue to be informed by science but shaped by community values. Contributors to this volume consider the connection between forests and communities from a variety of perspectives, including environmental history, natural resource sociology, and forest policy. The book begins with an investigation of the historical and sociological foundations of community-based forest management. Chapters in the second section highlight the diverse issues surrounding community forestry, specifically the conflicts between the management of public forestlands and the interests of various stakeholders in using forests as a public good. The final section examines urban forestry, focusing on both the importance of forestry in urban settings and the demographic shifts that have brought people with urban values and lifestyles to rural, forested settings. With its unique focus on the integration of communities into decision-making about forests, this collection of insightful essays will prove useful to public and private land managers, as well as to researchers and students in the fields of forestry, resource management, rural sociology, regional planning, environmental studies, and parks and recreation.

\*\*\*THE COST of BEING POOR: A Comparative Study of Life in Poor Urban Neighborhoods in Gary, Indiana. Sandra Barnes. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005.

This book examines non-economic as well as often-overlooked economic costs associated with life in poor urban neighborhoods in a specific urban center - Gary, Indiana. The book uses quantitative and qualitative data to examine how structural forces impact the day-to-day lives of residents such that they incur a variety of costs resulting from the "dual dilemma" of being poor or near-poor and residing in poor urban neighborhoods. The lives of residents are examined as they attempt to complete the daily round (focusing on feeding and clothing families). The book presents a comparative examination based on neighborhood residency. As such, the thesis that "neighborhood concentration effects" manifest in many poor urban areas are directly tested. Census and regional data from 1970-2000, local data as well as in-depth interviews and participant observation are used to systematically examine the lives and challenges faced by residents in and around Gary. The text compares available services and access to resources (i.e., public transportation services, and grocery stores) that help residents "negotiate" their impoverished conditions.

\*\*\*EMPIRE of SCROUNGE: Inside the Urban Underground of Dumpster Diving, Trash Picking, and Street Scavenging. Jeff Ferrell. New York: NYU Press, 2005.

This work details the author's eight-month odyssey of essentially living off of the street. This is an unusual journey into the often illicit worlds of scrounging, recycling, and second-hand living in the author's hometown of Fort Worth, Texas. Richly illustrated throughout, this book is both a personal story and a larger tale about the changing values of American society and of urban and suburban America. Perhaps nowhere else are the fault lines of inequality reflected so clearly as at the curbside trashcan where one person's garbage becomes another's bounty.

\*\*\*GLOBALIZATION, TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE and PUBLIC EDUCATION. Torin Monahan. New York: Routledge, 2005

Through detailed ethnographic research and interviews in the Los Angeles public school system, this book describes examples of "globalization on the ground." Information technologies in the public school environment have generally been seen as enabling tools to help students and nations compete in the global marketplace. Yet a closer look at the interplay of technological change and organizational restructuring suggests the emergence of new, less promising power relations. With few exceptions, information technologies are used to demand greater flexibility of students and workers to adapt to systems that are ever more rigid and controlling. Not coincidentally, the training of flexible students accustomed to instability may be exactly what globalization requires.

\*\*\*KEEPIN' IT REAL: Success Beyond Black and White. Prudence Carter. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Common wisdom holds that racial stratification leads African American and Latino students to rebel against "acting white," thus dooming themselves to lower levels of scholastic, economic, and social achievement. Capturing the diversity of low-income African American and Latino youths' cultural identities, *Keepin' It Real* refutes facile, convenient assumptions about students' academic engagement and racial difference. Carter challenges the prevalent oppositional culture framework and maintains that for African-American and Latino students, utterances of "acting white" are not assertions of anti-achievement identities. Rather, resistance to "acting white" indicates a rejection of the generic "American," "white," middle-class styles of interaction, speech, dress, music and other practices. Carter further demonstrates why some African American and Latino students thrive academically, and others do not. The most successful negotiators of our school systems are not necessarily those who acculturate but rather those most adept at participation in multiple cultural spheres. *Keepin' It Real* maintains that intercultural communication, rather than acculturation, can help increase students' academic engagement and concludes with positive steps that both teachers and students can take to ensure that school success has no color.

\*\*\*THE NEXT LOS ANGELES: The Struggle for a Livable City. Robert Gottlieb, Mark Vallianatos, Regina M. Freer, and Peter Dreier. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.

Los Angeles's history is a story of conflicting visions. Most historians, journalists, and filmmakers have focused on L.A. as a bastion of corporate greed, business boosterism, political corruption, cheap labor, exploited immigrants, and unregulated sprawl. The Next Los Angeles tells a different story: that of the reformers and radicals who have struggled for alternative visions of social and economic justice. The authors chronicle efforts of progressive social movements that worked throughout the twentieth century to create a more livable, just, and democratic Los Angeles. These movements—what the authors call Progressive L.A.--have produced a new kind of labor movement, community-oriented environmentalism, and multi-ethnic coalition politics. This book shows how

reformers have fought to transform a city characterized by huge economic disparities, concrete-encased rivers, and an endless landscape of subdivisions, freeways, and malls into a progressive model for regions around the country. *The Next Los Angeles* includes a decade-by-decade historical snapshot of the city's progressive social movements and an in-depth exploration of key trends that are remaking L.A. at the beginning of the twenty-first century. It examines L.A.'s changing political landscape, including grassroots initiatives to construct a new agenda for social transformation. At once a history, a policy analysis, and a road map for a progressive future, this book provides an exciting portrayal of a city on the cutting edge of many of the social, economic, and environmental changes sweeping across America.

\*\*\**PLACE MATTERS: Metropolitix for the Twenty-first Century*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Peter Dreier, John Mollenkopf, and Todd Swanstrom. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004.

Recipient of the Michael Harrington Award from the American Political Science Association, *Place Matters* challenges us to put the urban crisis back on the national agenda, both as a moral challenge to our conscience and an economic challenge to America's prosperity and our families' pocketbooks. Focusing on the growing concentration of poverty in our cities and older suburbs and the mounting costs of suburban sprawl, they argue that these problems have political origins and can thus be resolved through political means--but only if we fully understand the power of place. The central thesis of *Place Matters* is that economic segregation between rich and poor and the growing sprawl of American cities and suburbs are not solely the result of individual choices in free markets. Rather, these problems have been powerfully shaped by short-sighted government policies. The first order of business must be to overhaul those policies. In the process, both urban and suburban citizens with keener awareness that they are all ultimately bound by common interests and share a common fate. Not simply another polemic on the plight of the inner-city poor, *Place Matters* provides a practical road map for reform based on penetrating analyses of economic and demographic trends, voting patterns, and congressional politics. While "sounding the alarm," it also provides guidance and hope for elected officials at local, state, and federal levels, as well as policy makers, scholars, teachers, community activists, business leaders, economists, social workers, and the urban clergy.

\*\*\**TIME USE: Expanding Explanation in the Social Sciences*. William Michelson. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2005.

Many researchers have studied people's everyday use of time. National and international agencies increasingly collect and analyze time-use data. Yet this perspective and its techniques remain a black box to most social science researchers and applied practitioners, and the potential of time-use data to expand explanation in the social sciences is not fully recognized by even most time-use researchers. Sociologist William Michelson's unique book places the study of time-use data in perspective, demystifies its collection and analytic options, and carefully examines the potential of time-use analysis for a wide range of benefits to the social sciences. These include the sampling of otherwise socially "hidden" groups, bridging the gap between qualitative and quantitative

phenomena, gender studies, family dynamics, multitasking, social networks, built environments, and risk exposure.

\*\*\*UP AGAINST THE SPRAWL: Public Policy and the Making of Southern California. Jennifer Wolch, Manuel Pastor Jr., and Peter Dreier, eds. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004

America's first truly twenty-first-century metropolis, Los Angeles is often depicted as diverse, fragmented, polarized, and ungovernable, a city without a unifying geographic center or civic culture. The sprawling evolution of the city and its infamous problems-traffic, pollution, growing inequality-are usually attributed to a Wild West version of capitalism-the triumph of an unregulated free market over comprehensive urban planning. But market choices and lack of planning did not set the terrain of Southern California: Los Angeles has been profoundly shaped by a wide range of local, state, and federal public policies and programs. *Up against the Sprawl* details how governmental policies and public agencies have dictated many aspects of the region's growth: infrastructure, transportation, housing, immigration, finances, civic and regional administration, the environment. The authors also argue that since public policy set the landscape, it can help forge the future. They explore countermovements by progressive activists to use innovative policies-from smart growth initiatives to the actions of living wage advocates-for greater social, economic, and environmental justice. This book is a major contribution to our understanding of past and present urban processes and policy, and highlights practical lessons for urban and regional policy makers and activists in Los Angeles and beyond. In addition to the editors, contributors include: Carolyn B. Aldana, Carol S. Armstrong, Michael Dear, Gary Dymksi, Steven P. Erie, Gregory Freeman, William Fulton, Elizabeth Gearin, Genevieve Giuliano, Pascale Joassart-Marcelli, Enrico A. Marcelli, Myra A. Marks, Juliet Musso, Stephanie Pincetl, Laura Pulido, Christine M. Ryan, John P. Wilson.

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NEW DISSERTATIONS by SECTION MEMBERS

\*\*\*NEIGHBORHOOD ATTACHMENT AS A SOURCE OF INFORMAL SOCIAL CONTROL. Keri B. Burchfield. Pennsylvania State University, 2005.

Though informal social control has been identified as a key mediator in the relationship between structural disadvantage and crime, little research has focused on neighborhood sources of informal social control. The objective of my research is to explore sources of informal social control, which is defined as the willingness of neighborhood residents to intervene in local problems. Specifically, I examine the role of neighborhood attachment, operationalized as a multidimensional construct, as a source of informal social control. The contributions of cognitive, behavioral, and affective attachment to informal social control are assessed independently and together; also, the mediating effects of attachment on the relationship between neighborhood structural conditions and informal social control are examined.

I conducted a multilevel analysis using data from the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods to obtain neighborhood-level effects while controlling for individual-level compositional differences between neighborhoods. My results indicated that: 1) several dimensions of neighborhood attachment – cognitive, behavioral, and affective – were related to informal social control; 2) behavioral and affective attachment were positively associated with neighborhood levels of informal social control; 3) neighborhood attachment explained some of the associations between neighborhood structural conditions and informal social control.

\*\*\*PLANNING for MODERN-DAY PUBLIC FORUM SPACES: New Urbanism and the Challenges of Hosting the American Public Realm. K. M. Williamson, Social Ecology, University of California, Irvine, 2005.

The conflict between Constitutionally-protected public access and use rights and private property rights to exclude persons and activity suggests that privately-owned public space will be the Twenty-First Century reality for the American public realm. New Urbanism's emphasis on the community value of attractive and inclusive public spaces unfortunately continues a privatization trend of private sector provision and management of public space assets and public activity.

This multiple-case study of nine New Urbanist mixed-use projects in Southern California investigates problematic regulations of legitimate public activity in privately-owned public spaces. Findings showed that public forum regulatory voids (excessive, ambiguous, and/or inadequate regulations) can be attributable to direct private sector control and to indirect public sector control. Additionally, certain types of spaces and commercial areas were especially vulnerable to regulatory problems. However, the existence of property-based public use rights (in the form of public access/use easements or covenants), only partially mitigated regulatory problems. The study concludes that administrative capacity to host the public realm is compromised by limited understanding of the role of interstitial public spaces, by limited municipal resources for small park spaces, by strong commercial interests with mall model development expectations, and by an entrenched property title bias concerning public space assets.

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