



2005 Conference held in Sacramento, California



From the President's Corner by Charles Varano

From all accounts, last year's conference in Sacramento, California, was a success!

The California Sociological Association offered up one of its strongest programs in years, and all of the session organizers and participants are to be congratulated for making this happen. The CSA is a small organization, but its faculty and student members have played a big role in keeping us growing and developing into a significant state sociological association. As we look forward to our 2006 meetings at the Mission Inn in Riverside, California, I urge our membership to get the word out and recruit new faculty and students to join the CSA and participate in this upcoming conference. The Mission Inn is a wonderful venue and we have always enjoyed first class accommodations and service when our conference has been held here.

The Sacramento meetings were also special because of Dr. Michael Burawoy from the University of California, Berkeley, who gave a California version of his "public sociology" lecture originally presented at the 2004 American Sociological Association meetings. Dr. Burawoy not only gave an inspiring talk in his typically sophisticated style, but he also joined CSA members and conference attendees for the catered reception that followed the address, graciously moving from table to table talking with people and having a good time. He then stayed the evening and attended a few of

the Saturday morning sessions. True to his commitment towards public sociology, Dr. Burawoy refused to accept an honorarium normally given to, and accepted, by keynote speakers, and he insisted that the CSA not reimburse him for his travel expenses. The CSA board decided to make Dr. Burawoy a lifetime CSA member, and the money intended for his expenses was placed in our student award fund.

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President's Corner (continued...)

I also want to take this opportunity to extend one more time my deepest gratitude to my colleagues on the CSA board who helped me organize last year's meetings. Gary Cretser from Cal Poly Pomona was with me every step of the way, offering advice and taking care of important responsibilities. Ed Nelson from CSU Fresno stepped in to oversee the financial, membership, and registration records. And Shoon Lio and Louis Tuthill took important time off from their graduate studies to help keep our website and newsletter up to date.

The success of the CSA lies with people like the folks I've noted above, people who find the time and give the effort to help this organization thrive. We've recently elected some new board members, and I'm very pleased to welcome them. Beth Hartung from CSU Channel Islands will be serving as President Elect and will be lead organizer of the 2006 conference in Riverside, California. Scott Coltrane from UC Riverside will serve as Vice-President South, and Judith Little from Humboldt State University will serve as Vice-President North. Jessie Fletcher from CSU Northridge will serve as graduate student representative, and Zachary Mariscal from Santa Clara University will serve as undergraduate representatives. Along with our continuing governing council members, this is an energetic and dedicated group of sociologists from throughout California and I'm excited about next year's meetings and the future of the CSA.

I'm also excited about the future of sociology as a discipline and I'm optimistic about its role in public affairs. In my department at CSU Sacramento, our number of majors has been growing the past several years and our graduate program is larger and stronger than ever. I suspect this is also the case in other sociology departments in California and throughout the country. Perhaps students are returning to recapture the sociological imagination that C. Wright Mills argued was our best hope for a reasoned life in contemporary society? Or perhaps they sense (through their parents' experiences) a volatile job market with fewer financial rewards or stable employment, thus turning to sociology as interesting, meaningful, and more beneficial for career versatility? Or perhaps they're just curious about how humans live under conditions they seldom choose, seeking a better grasp of how to negotiate the pathways and barriers through (post) modernity? Whatever the reasons, and as sociologists we ought to be offering persuasive explanations, we must embrace this opportunity to challenge and nurture our students and the public in understanding their lives sociologically.

I'm currently analyzing over 70 presidential addresses given for the Pacific Sociological Association meetings since 1929. As a window through which to explore our discipline, these speeches reveal a central tension that sociologists such as Max Weber, Robert Lynd, Alvin Gouldner, and yes, Michael Burawoy, among others have addressed. Simply put, there are those who hold that sociology is a scientific practice seeking knowledge for its own sake, or at least knowledge that ultimately will contribute to human progress in an historical sense, and those who argue that sociology must direct its research and theorizing to ameliorating social ills and injustice, and thus must take a stand on questions of values and morality. Many might argue (convincingly) that these two directions are neither distinct nor incompatible, though others would (soberly) remind us that when trying to pursue both simultaneously, one always suffers at the expense of the other. Exactly how sociology proceeds through this unfolding century will be up to all of us who study society and consider ourselves sociologists. The California Sociological Association is poised to make important contributions to this process, and I look forward to participating with our membership in the years ahead. See you all in Riverside!

DEADLINE for submitting material for the next issue of the newsletter is one month before the next issue, i.e., April 1st, August 1st, and December 1st—the earlier, the better.

California Sociological Association Newsletter

Co-Editors

Siobhán Caruso-Tuthill
(Cultural) History, UC Irvine
440 Dale St.
Perris, CA 92571
951-940-9767 slvtuthill@gmail.com

and

Elizabeth Nelson
Professor Emerita, CSU Fresno
1142 E. Menlo
Fresno, CA 93710
559-431-2630 elizn@csufresno.edu

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The California Sociological Association Newsletter is distributed to all members who are in good standing with the association. Unsolicited articles, book reviews, and letters are invited and should be mailed to the editor.

Officers of the California Sociological Association

President (2005-06)
Charles Varano
CSU Sacramento
cvarano@csus.edu

President Elect (2005-06)
Elizabeth (Beth) Hartung
CSU Channel Islands
Elizabeth.Hartung@csuci.edu

VP--South (2005-06)
Scott Coltrane
UC Riverside
coltrane@ucr.edu

VP--North (2005-06)
Judith Little
Humboldt State University
jkl1@humboldt.edu

The Disastrous Dialectic of Nature and Society

Kevin Wehr

Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath provide us with an exceptional window through which to view society's relationship with nature, a relationship properly viewed as a dialectical one. While society certainly uses natural resources like water, air, timber, and minerals, we also consume natural areas either as development or as parks for human recreation. Nature, on the other hand, poses challenges to society with its barriers to construction, its inhibiting effect on capital and the economy, and as a direct risk to human life and the entire social fabric in the face of storms, earthquakes, floods, and fires. The relationship between nature and society is a complex, intertwined dialectic of use and abuse, dependence and destruction. What does Katrina tell us about this relationship?

First, some observations on the causes of Hurricane Katrina and its damage. In and around New Orleans and other southern cities, suburban development filled in wetlands which reduced the natural capacity to absorb storm surges, increasing the flooding caused by Katrina. Offshore drilling and pipelines required changing the delta channels that reduced the natural ability to absorb storm surges, also increasing the flooding. Furthermore, global climate change warms ocean waters, which increases the power and severity of storms, which is one reason why Katrina was so strong.

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There are both natural and social factors in this scenario. It was the requirement of a fossil fuel-based economy that led to the dredging and canal construction. It was the public planning (or lack of planning!) that led to development of wetlands--a process that is not innocent of race and poverty since it was largely white flight that pushed suburban development. Lastly, the current administration's unwillingness to address global warming has been slapped in the face by this storm. Global warming--based in part on human contributions of carbon to the atmosphere--will continue so long as our economy is based on fossil fuels and politicians ignore pro-active approaches like the Kyoto Accord. Kyoto, however, does not go far enough in weaning society's addiction to fossil fuels. It is, however, a step in the right direction.

What has the wrath of Katrina wrought? More than 500 sewage plants were destroyed; more than 170 leakages of gasoline, oil, or natural gas; more than 2000 gas stations submerged. The Agriculture Street landfill, a superfund site with homes built on it, was submerged. DuPont chemical plants and eight oil refineries were submerged. Toxic materials from all of the above seeped into flood-

waters, creating a toxic brew spread through much of the city.

And what were the social effects? For one, race played a crucial role in who got out and how they got out. A report from two paramedics, Larry Bradshaw and Lorrie Beth Slonsky, at a conference in New Orleans had this to say about trying to leave the city: As we approached the bridge, armed Gretna sheriffs formed a line across the foot of the bridge. Before we were close enough to speak, they began firing their weapons over our heads. As the crowd scattered and dissipated, a few of us inched forward and managed to engage some of the sheriffs in conversation. They responded that the West Bank was not going to become New Orleans and there would be no Superdomes in their City. These were code words for if you are poor and black, you are not crossing the Mississippi River, and you were not getting out of New Orleans.

Another person, Denise Moore, trapped in the Ernest Morial Convention Center saw young armed men organize the crowd so that there would be some order when the busses arrived to rescue them. She said that these men were protecting the others, "looting" food and water for the crowd when no one else offered any help. "If it wasn't for them," she said, "we wouldn't have had the little water and food they had found. I will never look at thugs and gangsters the same way again."

What happened in New Orleans was a social, not a natural disaster. The strength of the hurricane was due in part to global warming. The development of wetlands and the dredging of canals exacerbated the flooding. And the evacuation was tinged with racism, classism, and yet also with the hopeful ability of people to organize themselves. When faced with chaos and death, people organized for themselves, without the help--indeed, in spite of--the state, the police, or other authorities.

Kevin Wehr
Assistant Professor
Department of Sociology
California State University, Sacramento
kwehr@csus.edu
www.csus.edu/soc/kwehr

Have news or information to
announce?

Contact
Elizabeth Nelson at
elizn@csufresno.edu for
inclusion in the next
newsletter.

The city of Sacramento as dusk carries on.



The Sacramento Conference

Gary A. Cretser

The 17th Annual CSA meetings in Sacramento, California's Faultlines: Sexual, Immigration, Class and Race, Public Education, held November 11-12, proved to be a very successful event indeed. Over 130 people registered for the conference and attended a total of 31 very diverse sessions. There were sessions on the "Sociological Study of the Sacramento Region" to "Sociology of Outer Space" and many things in between. There were sessions for undergraduate students, graduate students, college and university faculty, and sociological practitioners. A highlight of the conference was the keynote address on Public Sociology for California by Michael Burawoy. The reception that followed at the top of the Holiday Inn Capitol Plaza with its panoramic views of the Sacramento skyline, turned out to be an all-you-could-eat affair.

Once again, many thanks go to Charles Varano and his colleagues

at Sacramento State University for all of the work they did in organizing the program and making the local arrangements. I also want to thank all of you who organized sessions, presented papers, and attended other sessions during the conference. Your participation is what made the 17th annual meetings memorable.

It has been an honor to serve as President this year and I look forward to seeing everyone in Riverside at the Mission Inn in 2006.

Gary A. Cretser
Professor and Chair
Psychology and Sociology Dept.
California State Polytechnic
University, Pomona
gacretser@csupomona.edu

Conferences of Interest

Pacific Sociological Association 2006

The Pacific Sociological Association will meet April 20-23, 2006 at the Hilton Hotel, Universal City/Hollywood Hills. The theme is "Playing with Sociology: Pedagogy, Postmodernism and Pop Culture." For more information,

<http://www.csus.edu/psa/meeting06.html>.

American Sociological Association 2006

The American Sociological Association will meet August 11-14, in Montreal. The convention theme, "Great Divides: Transgressing Boundaries," explores the complex processes and institutional underpinnings that create boundaries. For more information,

www.asanet.org/page.wv?section=Meetings&name=Convention+Home

Membership Information

Total Paid Registrations for Sacramento Conference	131
Membership Dues Paid for at Sacramento Conference	122
Lifetime Memberships	8
Total Paid Memberships for 2005-06 year	130

A Public Sociologist: Q & A with Elizabeth Dermody Leonard

Elizabeth Dermody Leonard's work on "convicted survivors" had figured prominently in Michael Burawoy's keynote address on a public sociology for California. We decided to talk to Dr. Leonard about her work on "convicted survivors."

Q: How did you begin studying women incarcerated for killing their abusers?

I encountered the issue in 1993 when serving as research assistant for Dr. Barbara Bloom (we had both just completed an MA at UCR) and Dr. Barbara Owen who were developing a statewide profile of California's female inmates and an inventory of their correctional programs. While observing an educational program at the Central California Women's Facility I listened to three lifers enlighten their sister inmates on the dangers of abusive relationships by describing years of being terrorized, violated, and humiliated by husbands. Each woman recounted failed escape attempts, failures of family, clergy, mental health professionals, and the criminal justice system. Finally, the seemingly inevitable moment arrives when someone is going to die and she, rather than he, manages to survive the final lethal assault. The outcome? Life in prison. This repeated scenario begged for deeper examination and it became the subject of my dissertation (UCR 1997).

Q: It is rare that sociological research is presented through theater. How did you come up with the idea to transform your academic work into a play?

I interviewed 42 women serving long prison terms for the death of their abusers. Every story is compelling, full of tragedy and pain, courage and hope, as well as clear injustice (e.g., evidence of abuse disallowed in trials—pre-1992). Whenever I share my research and quote interviewees, listeners often are deeply moved by the women's articulate narratives. My husband was the first to suggest the research material would be effective in the form of a play, and this idea was strongly supported by an Irish poet/playwright friend, Brendan Kennelly. So I approached a faculty colleague in Vanguard's English Department, Warren Doody, who seemed attuned to my work and the surrounding issues. He read the book, *Convicted Survivors*, and quickly committed himself to bringing convicted survivors' voices out from behind bars and into the public sphere by authoring a play, which he entitled "Life Without Parole."

Q: The play, "Life Without Parole," has been presented at the California Institution for Women and Vanguard University of Southern California. How have the audiences reacted to the play?

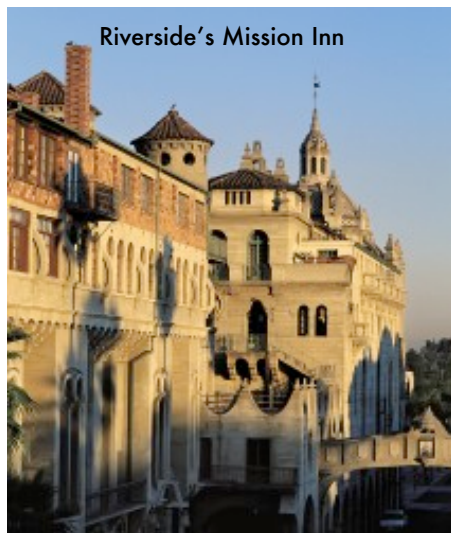
Riveted is the best way to describe the audience reaction during the play—you can hear the proverbial pin drop. Afterward, audience members express myriad emotions, from anger to inspiration. And always, there are a few who share their own experiences, confessing how closely their own lives parallel those reflected on stage. When we presented the play to inmates in the battered women's group where I began my research in 1995, I was equally riveted—but my focus was on the women's reactions. This was the true test of the play's effectiveness and authenticity. The women cried, even laughed in recognition, later expressing profound hope that the play might help others learn that all abusive relationships are potentially lethal.

Q: How do you see your work as public sociology?

Sociology provides a framework for understanding what has happened to convicted survivors and their families. When the research was re-presented to the original subjects they could reflect on their own experiences and gain self-understanding. This understanding emerges as they view sociology-as-drama, locating their experiences in the broader social context. Audience members are educated about domestic violence, adjudication processes, and parole hearings. Further, when sociological research morphs into a stage play that travels beyond professional meetings and academic settings, it has the opportunity to affect individuals and institutions in creative ways. Apart from the play, the research has been used to effect legislation, open new investigations into battered women's cases, and bring attention to the nearly invisible women who have much to teach us. Their voices are valuable for illustrating the reality of domestic violence and the institutionalized sexism battered women face in their daily lives.

If you would like to learn more, check out *Convicted Survivors: The Imprisonment of Battered Women Who Kill* (2002, State University of New York Press). Also, Dr. Leonard will be presenting "Re-Presenting Sociological Research to Prisoners: The Play is the Thing" at the Pacific Sociological Association's annual meeting in April.

Kate Luther and Shoon Lio
University of California, Riverside
Shoon@sbcglobal.net



Riverside's Mission Inn

2006 Annual Meeting at the Mission Inn, Riverside

Scott Coltrane and Shoon Lio
with material from

<http://www.missioninn.com/hotel.php>

The 2006 CSA Annual Meeting will take place at the beautiful and historic Mission Inn located in downtown Riverside at 3649 Mission Inn Avenue. The hotel's rich history and unique architecture led to its designation as a National Historic Landmark. The Inn began as the Glenwood, a two-story 12-room adobe boarding house, built in 1876 by Christopher Columbus Miller on land deeded to him by the city as payment for his services as a civil engineer. His son, Frank Augustus Miller, later bought the property, improved and enlarged it, and by 1903 opened the first wing of the current Mission Inn building. The building grew in several stages and now fills an entire block with gardens and towers, arches and stairways. Throughout the site, visitors are able to view paintings, sculpture and furnishings from the Mission Inn collections.

The Mission Inn is the region's grandest hotel, and has hosted many reknown people, including the royal houses of Sweden, Russia, and Japan and several U.S. Presidents. President Theodore Roosevelt stayed at the Inn soon after the 1903 Mission Wing was built and took part in the cere-

monial replanting of one of Riverside's two parent navel orange trees in the courtyard of the hotel. Andrew Carnegie and David Starr Jordan encouraged Frank Miller's participation in the international peace movement that inspired annual conferences at the Inn. Maude Adams, Sarah Bernhardt, and Madame Modjeska, all played to Riverside audiences in the Loring Opera House (managed by Miller), and retired after performances to rooms at the Inn. Hamlin Garland, Pulitzer Prize winning author, wrote portions of his latest works in the Inn's Alhambra Suite.

The Mission Inn is an oddly integrated assemblage of arcades and gardens, turrets and domes, flying buttresses and spiraling staircases, catacombs and carillon towers. It is also home to collections of fine art and Spanish cannons, stained glass and ceramic tile, saints and dragons, bells and wrought iron, lacquered Asian temple guardians, and life-size papal court figures. The chapel was designed specifically to accommodate a massive Eighteenth Century gold-leafed cedar altar from Mexico and seven equally impressive Louis C. Tiffany stained glass windows. Special rates make the hotel affordable for small conferences and the CSA has been proud to hold several of its annual meetings at the Mission Inn.

The Mission Inn is located about 30 minutes from the Ontario International Airport. The hotel provides a courtesy shuttle for all registered guests to and from the airport. For more information about the Mission Inn, please visit their website at <http://www.missioninn.com>

Scott Coltrane
Assoc. Dean for Graduate Studies
and Research, CHASS
Professor of Sociology
University of California, Riverside
coltrane@ucr.edu

Call For Session Proposals 2006 Annual Meeting

Then next annual meeting will be held November 10-11, 2006 at the Mission Inn in Riverside. The theme will be "Dreaming California: the Image, the Myth and the Possibilities of the California Dream." Of course, the conference theme is intended to provide a focus rather than to be limiting. Feel free to organize sessions, suggest panels, and/or present research results whether or not they are related to the theme. The meetings provide a wonderful opportunity to interact with sociologists from all over California. Because the gathering is smaller than the ASA or regional conferences, there is more discussion in more informal settings.

The CSA has a strong tradition of student involvement. There will be sessions for undergraduate and graduate student presentations. Students are encouraged to volunteer to work at the registration desk and otherwise. Registration fees are waived for student volunteers.

The costs of participation are modest. Membership for regular members is only \$25 a year and the conference registration is only \$20. (Membership for less than full-time employed members and students is \$10. Lifetime membership is \$250.) For more information on joining the CSA, contact Ed Nelson, Department of Sociology, 5340 N. Campus Drive--SS 97, Fresno, California 93740-8019. (559) 278-2275, or ednelson@csufresno.edu.

Plan to attend the annual CSA conference and encourage your colleagues and students to participate. For more information on the 2006 program or to propose a session, contact:

Elizabeth Hartung'
Professor of Sociology
One University Drive
CSU, Channel Islands
Camarillo, CA 93012
(805)437-3274

California Sociological Association

New Officers for 2005-2006

Elections are held each year to maintain an orderly pattern of leadership in the Association. Midway through the business meeting at the end of the annual conference, the President Elect, who has been program chair for the conference, becomes the president for the next academic year. So last November, Charlie Varano became the president for 2005-06.

This year Elizabeth Hartung became president elect and will serve as the program chair for the 2006 annual meeting and succeeds as president the following year.

Two regional vice-presidents are elected for two-year terms. One is elected to represent members Kern county and south, and the other represents the northern region. The vice-president assists the program chair when the annual conference is held in his/her region, and then serves as secretary for the organization the next year. (Vice Presidents' terms usually start in different years, but last year the Vice President-North moved south in the middle of her term, so we elected a new Vice President-North and have both vice presidents starting their terms in 2005-2006.) Scott Coltrane was elected Vice President-South, and Judith Little is Vice President-North.

The Executive Director is the crucial position in the organization, and since Val Callanan's resignation in 2003, we have had none. The Executive Director maintains membership files and is responsible for accounting and financial records. (Ed Nelson is now handling these duties as temporary Treasurer-Membership chair.) The Executive Director is also responsible for making arrangements for the annual meetings, for example, hotels for the conferences. (This year volunteers are checking on possible locations for the 2007 meeting in the north—maybe San Jose or Sacramento.) We definitely need someone to take on the official position as Executive Director. Nominations, including self-nominations, are encouraged.

In addition to these officers, a seven-member Governing Council is elected to three-year terms to represent the constituency groups in the association: undergraduate students, graduate students, practitioners, community colleges, private colleges and universities, the California State University System, and the University of California.

Some of the functions of the Executive Director are delegated to others. These include the webmaster, the newsletter editor, and the archivist.

Bios of newly elected Officers:

President Elect and Program Chair for 2006

Elizabeth (Beth) Hartung received her doctorate from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. She's held teaching posts at the University of Nebraska, Omaha; Southern Illinois University, Carbondale; California State University,

Fresno; and currently is launching the sociology program at California State University, Channel Islands. She's also had the opportunity to teach at the University of the Basque Country at Lejona, (Vizcaya) Spain, and through CSU, Fresno's London Semester. At CSU, Fresno, she chaired the department of sociology from 2000-2005. Her current challenge is to craft a program responsive to the mission of CSU, Channel Islands: embracing interdisciplinary study, international/global awareness, and multiculturalism and service. Her latest publication is *Intersecting Inequalities*, a stratification reader with Peter Kivisto, due in 2006 from Prentice Hall

Vice-President-South

Scott Coltrane is a sociologist whose research focuses on families, gender, and social inequality. He completed his undergraduate studies at Yale University and the University of California, Santa Cruz, and received M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in sociology from the University of California, Santa Cruz. He is Professor of Sociology and Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research in the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences at the University of California, Riverside. Coltrane is Associate Director of the UCR Center for Family Studies, recipient of the UCR Distinguished Teaching Award, and past President of the Pacific Sociological Association. Coltrane is the author of several books on families including *Family Man*, *Gender and Families*, *Families and Society*, and *Sociology of Marriage and the Family* and over fifty scholarly articles and chapters. His most recent NIH-funded research projects investigate the impact of economic stress and the meaning of fatherhood and step-fatherhood in Mexican American and European American families

Vice-President-North

Judith Little is professor and chair of the sociology department at Humboldt State University. She has B.A. from University of California, Berkeley, and received a M.A. from Humboldt State and a Ph.D. from the University of Washington. She recently assumed the director position for the Center of Applied Social Analysis and Education, a research institute affiliated with the department. Her research focus is applied, participatory, and student learning focused. Current and recent community partners include the City of Blue Lake, the North Coast Growers Association, the Humboldt Patient Resource Center, and the Humboldt County Prosperity! network. CASAE performs evaluation research for the Humboldt County Probation Department, United Indian Health Services, and virtually all of the AmeriCorps programs in Humboldt County. Judith has been a member of CSA since its beginning (or almost since its beginning).

CSA Executive Board and Governing Council

<p>President (2005-2006) Charles Varano Department of Sociology CSU Sacramento 916.278.6675 cvarano@csus.edu</p>	<p>President Elect Elizabeth (Beth) Hartung Department of Sociology CSU Channel Islands 805.437.3274 Elizabeth.Hartung@csuci.edu</p>	<p>Vice-President North Judith Little Department of Sociology Humboldt State University 707.826.4561 jkl1@humboldt.edu</p>	<p>Vice-President South Scott Coltrane Department of Sociology UC Riverside 951.827.2443 coltrane@ucr.edu</p>
<p>Treasurer/Membership Chair Ed Nelson Department of Sociology CSU Fresno 559.278.2275 ednelson@csufresno.edu</p>	<p>Archivist/Newsletter Editor Elizabeth Nelson CSU Fresno 559.431.2630 elizn@csufresno.edu</p>	<p>Newsletter Editor Siobhán Caruso-Tuthill Department of History UC Irvine 951.940.9767 stuthill@uci.edu</p>	<p>Webmasters Louis Tuthill Shoon Lio Department of Sociology UC Riverside Shoon@sbcglobal.net louis.tuthill@gmail.com</p>
<p>California State University (2005-2008) Faye Wachs Depts. of Psychology and Sociology 909.869.3903 flwachs@csupomona.edu</p>	<p>University of California (2004-2007) Shannon Gleeson Graduate Group in Soci- ology and Demography UC Berkeley 510.717.1386 sgleeson@berkeley.edu</p>	<p>Community Colleges (2004-2007) Vern Cromartie, Ed.D Dept. of Social Sciences Contra Costa College 510.235.7800, ext. 4537 j_vern_cromartie@yahoo.com</p>	<p>Private Colleges and Universities (2003-2006) Roy Childs Department of Sociology University of the Pacific 209.946.2103 rchilds@pacific.edu</p>
<p>Practitioners (2004-2007) Veronica Lynne Van Ry Research Associate Kern County Superintendent of Schools 661.636.4504 abibliophile@yahoo.com</p>	<p>Graduate Student Representative (2005-2006) Jesse Fletcher Department of Sociology CSU Northridge socalsociophile@yahoo.com</p>	<p>Undergraduate Student Representative (2005-2006) Zachary Mariscal Dept. of Anthropology and Sociology Santa Clara University zmariscal@scu.edu</p>	



ELIZABETH NELSON
SIOBHÁN CARUSO-TUTHILL
CO-EDITORS
1142 E. MENLO
FRESNO, CA 93710

Place Address Label Here