

Spring 2012



**Society for the Study of Social Problems**  
COMMUNITY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

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### **Division Chair:**

Shelley McDonough  
Kimelberg,  
Northeastern University

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## Message from the Division Chair

Shelley McDonough Kimelberg,  
Northeastern University

Greetings, members and friends of the Community Research and Development Division of SSSP! In this edition of the CRD newsletter, you'll find several calls for papers, a book review, and lots of news and updates from CRD members. Be sure to also check out the winner (and honorable mention) from the 2012 graduate student paper competition! We received numerous excellent submissions, so it was a difficult decision. Congratulations are due to all.

As the academic year winds down, I want to remind you to start planning for the annual meeting in Denver (August 16-18). The registration deadline for program participants is May 31, 2012!

Many thanks to all who contributed content for the newsletter. If you have suggestions or ideas for future newsletters, please email me at: [s.kimelberg@neu.edu](mailto:s.kimelberg@neu.edu)

## 2012 Annual Meeting Paper Sessions

### Division Sessions

1. Anti-Immigrant Sentiment, Social Movements, and the Shifting Boundaries of Community
2. Non-profits, Community Organizations, and Activism: Seeking Change in Local Communities (THEMATIC)
3. Papers in the Round: Communities as the Focus of Social Inquiry

### Co-sponsored Sessions

4. Schools, Community, and Inequality
5. Gentrification and Urban Redevelopment: Conflict, Opportunity, and Inequality
6. Segregated Communities: Questions, Trends, and Policies
7. Community Gardens, Parks, and Public Places: Inclusion and Exclusion and the Meaning of Space
8. Social Media, Flash Mobs, and the Relationship between Technology and Community
9. Revisiting the Economic Crisis: Housing, Employment, and Crime
10. Elder-Friendly Communities, Housing Policy, and Community Development



## Resources

## From the Blogosphere

*a selection of interesting finds*

### This Big City

<http://thisbigcity.net/>

"This Big City is an award winning sustainable cities blog exploring innovations in urban design, architecture, culture, technology, transport and the bicycle. Founded in September 2009 by Joe Peach, This Big City now publishes content from writers and organizations all over the world."

### Sociological Images

<http://thesocietypages.org/socimages/>

"Sociological Images: Seeing is Believing is designed to encourage all kinds of people to exercise and develop their sociological imagination by presenting brief sociological discussions of compelling and timely imagery that spans the breadth of sociological inquiry."

### Book Review

## The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness, by Michelle Alexander

*Reviewed by Jessica M. Fitzpatrick, SUNY at Buffalo*

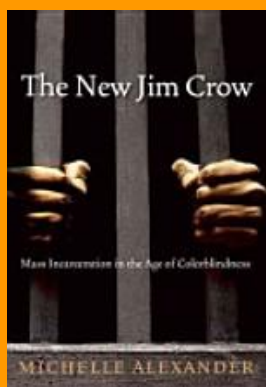
Michelle Alexander makes a convincing argument in *The New Jim Crow (The New Press, 2012)* that a caste system divided by race is ever-present in the US today. Alexander, a civil rights attorney and law professor, examines mass incarceration, comparing it to slavery and the Jim Crow laws of the past. She demonstrates that facially neutral policies, specifically in regards to the War on Drugs, are insidious and perhaps more dangerous because the underlying racism is *not* obvious.

Alexander provides a historical overview of racially-motivated laws in this country, beginning with pre-slavery times, and continuing through slavery, emancipation, and Reconstruction. While acknowledging progress, she is quick to point out the backlash that also occurred. This backlash was often legal, or legalized, as the black codes, vagrancy laws, and convict laws that led to the Jim Crow era demonstrate. The prison population not only increased dramatically during Jim Crow, but also became younger and blacker. By the end of the 1940's several institutions, along with the general public, began to question the legitimacy of Jim Crow, culminating in the Civil Rights Movement. Given that blatant discrimination on the basis of skin color was no longer socially acceptable in the post-Civil Rights era, any future institutionalized backlash would need to be much more collusive.

The War on Drugs, according to Alexander, provided the perfect opportunity to maintain the racial status quo. Despite equal or higher rates of drug use and sales by whites, blacks have been disproportionately targeted in the criminal justice system. Discriminatory treatment has been demonstrated at every step in the criminal justice process: arrest, legal representation, and sentencing. Even more devastating is the fact that the Supreme Court has continuously erred on the side of the legal process, essentially ignoring clear patterns of constitutional rights violations such as search and seizures and racial profiling. Alexander's first-hand knowledge as a lawyer helps the reader understand how the legal process operates in practice, not just 'on the books.' She is also able to provide a wealth of court case examples of the misapplication of justice regarding these issues. (*Continued on page 3.*)




Inspiring Sociological Imaginations Everywhere





## 2012 Graduate Student Paper Competition

### Congratulations to the winners!



Lindsay Owens  
Stanford University

Winner

**Lindsay Owens, Stanford University**

**Getting a Workout: Mortgage Modification, Social Class, and Shifting Financial Institutions**

The housing crisis of the “Great Recession” has left millions of homeowners with mortgages they can no longer afford. I combine in-depth interviews with homeowners at risk of foreclosure with an institutional ethnography of a foreclosure prevention help center in “Santa Victoria” to examine how homeowners try to avoid foreclosure. I find that working class homeowners, located in the neighborhoods, social networks and occupations at the epicenter of the economic downturn, reached out to peers in similar circumstances. Middle class homeowners, who were relatively isolated from peers in similar circumstances and ashamed of their financial troubles, relied on impersonal sources of information. The working class strategy was not only more efficient, it also resulted in three pieces of valuable information the middle class strategy did not obtain: servicers work with delinquent borrowers first; third-parties offering foreclosure prevention services for upfront fees are scams; and, the probability of procuring a mortgage workout is slim. Though this information did not guarantee success, it did convey tangible financial and social advantages.



Anjanette Chan Tack  
University of Chicago

Honorable Mention

**Anjanette Chan Tack, University of Chicago**

**The Geography of Retail Inequality: Race, Class, Stasis, and Change in Access to Supermarkets across Chicago’s Neighborhoods, 1970-2000**

The study of neighborhood effects has recently taken an organizational turn, with increasing interest in assessing the role that organizational amenities play as mediators between neighborhood characteristics and individual outcomes. These studies are grounded in two theories – Wilson’s (1987) “declining significance of race” model and Massey and Denton’s (1993) “residential segregation” thesis – that make competing claims about the role of race and class composition in determining a neighborhood’s access to desirable social goods. Although these theories are explicitly spatial, they have rarely been tested using spatial methods. This paper uses the case of Chicago to trace the changing demographics of access to supermarkets – an essential, daily-use, desirable social good – using an original data-set of address-specific grocery store locations gathered over four decades, between 1970 and 2000. The analysis is the first to use spatial measures and methods to appraise the relative explanatory merits of Wilson (1987) and Massey and Denton (1993)’s theories as applied to organizational amenities.



## Member News

### **New Books:**

**Democracy Deferred: Civic Leadership after 9/11.** (2012). By David W. Woods. Palgrave Macmillan. \$85.

On September 11, 2001, Al Qaeda terrorists deliberately flew two jumbo jets into the two main towers of the World Trade Center, which in turn motivated a group of middle class professional planners, sociologists, architects to invest their time and expertise in developing a civic renewal social movement to give a voice to ordinary citizens in the rebuilding of Lower Manhattan. In addition to strengthening the spirits and hopes for the future of all involved, they believed that such a citizen role would contribute significant benefits to redesigning the physical and social architecture of the World Trade Center's "16-acres and beyond." These civic renewal leaders were highly successful in meeting their goals during the first year after 9/11. However, in subsequent years, they turned their attention to providing more technical advice to government officials and away from engaging the wider public. Thus, the potential opportunity to institutionalize these practices of participatory democracy was deferred to other times and places. The successes and failures of these middle class professional leaders in raising and gaining a hearing for the voices of ordinary citizens have taught and will continue to teach important lessons for other civic renewal efforts, in times of crisis and in ordinary times.

*Democracy Deferred* contributes to our understanding of the successes and limitations of middle class leaders of civic renewal coalitions in influencing powerful decision-makers in civic renewal processes, as well as our understanding of the motivations of such leaders and the challenges they face in expanding such opportunities for democratic participation to diverse others.

More info at: <http://us.macmillan.com/democracydeferred/DavidWWoods>

**Social Problems: An Advocate Group Approach.** (2012). By Sara Towe Horsfall. Westview Press. \$37.

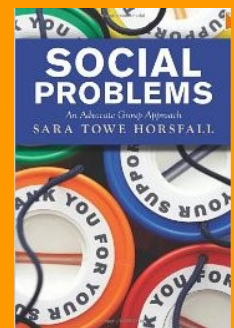
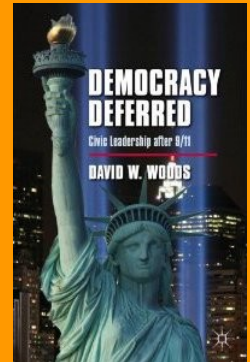
It is unique in several ways. First, I incorporate material from several other areas, such as social change, groups, social movements, Secondly, I include advocate groups in the discussion of all the problems addressed, which makes it very current and contemporary. Solutions to each problem are addressed by means of advocate groups, as well. This gives students a lot of material for discussion and exploration. I have abandoned the traditional organization of problems by means of sociological areas. Instead each problem is included on its own basis. And there is quite a lot of theory which prefaces the study of problems. All in all, I think this presentation of the subject gives social problems a place of its own in the collection of sociological areas of study.

More info at: <http://www.westviewpress.com/Horsfall/>

**Where the Waters Divide: Neoliberalism, White Privilege, and Environmental Racism in Canada.** (2012). By Michael Mascarenhas. Lexington Books. \$60.

This timely and important scholarship advances an empirical understanding of Canada's contemporary "Indian" problem. *Where the Waters Divide* is one of the few book monographs that analyze how contemporary neoliberal reforms (in the manner of de-regulation, austerity measures, common sense policies, privatization, etc.) are woven through and shape contemporary racial inequality in Canadian society. Using recent controversies in drinking water contamination and solid waste and sewage pollution, *Where the Waters Divide* illustrates in concrete ways how cherished notions of liberalism and common sense reform—neoliberalism—also constitute a particular form of racial oppression and white privilege.

More info at: <https://rowman.com/ISBN/9780739168271>





## Announcements and Opportunities

### Call for Proposals: 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Urban Affairs Association Urban Communication Foundation White Paper Project



The Urban Communication Foundation (UCF) has been a leader in promoting scholarship in this general area. The Foundation has funded dozens of research projects and acknowledged dozens of scholars that have advanced the field of study. We now seek to extend this influence by focusing in on particular issues or areas of research. As such, we will be soliciting public research reports on issues that have a direct bearing on public policy and/or the everyday life for people within cities. The UCF is proud to announce the first call for research reports on the topic of Digital Networks and Urban Public Space. Interested researchers should submit a proposal outlining the research problem and how it intersects with established urban questions or problems that have yet to be adequately addressed.

Topics might include but are not limited to:

- *How urban architecture can use digital scaffolding to enhance public spaces*
- *How Federal or municipal communication policies can positively impact municipal governments or civic life*
- *The relationship between open data, communication infrastructures, and better government*
- *Communication technology-focused citizen engagement*
- *How digital networks alter sense of place and change the shape and role of cities*

For more information visit: <http://urbanaffairsassociation.org/2012/03/15/urban-communication-foundation-white-paper-project/>

### Call for Proposals: Urban Studies Foundation and Urban Studies Journal Seminar Series Competition



The Urban Studies Foundation and the Urban Studies Journal Ltd are pleased to announce that they are funding the second round of a competition to host an urban research seminar series. Submissions are invited for seminar or conference events to be held during the 12 months following the closing date for applications (15th of June, 2012).

The seminars should be academically excellent, international events that will produce demonstrable academic outputs. They will advance knowledge in any area of urban studies' definition of relevant research areas in the Urban Studies journal rules for article submission.

The Urban Studies Journal Limited will fund up to £20,000 of reasonable costs and expenses for the running of the event. A panel of senior editors of the Urban Studies journal will select the best application for the competition and disseminate the outcome within six weeks of the closing date. Last year we funded two seminar series competitions but anticipate funding one this year.

Please see further details (attached) on the rules, criteria and purpose of the seminar series competition, as well as the application form template. For further information please contact us at the dedicated email for the seminar series competition at the Urban Studies journal [socpol-usjseminarseries@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:socpol-usjseminarseries@glasgow.ac.uk)





### Call for Applications: Urban Photography Summer School 2012 Goldsmiths, University of London

Designed for photographers, artists and urbanists whose work addresses notions of urban space and culture the international Summer School provides a highly intensive two week practical and theoretical training in key aspects of urban visual practice. The course aims to offer participants a wide range of relevant skills resulting in the production of a photography portfolio drawn from London's urban environments combined with a collective final exhibition.

The programme has been developed in collaboration with Urban Encounters and the Centre for Urban and Community Research (CUCR). The course will be taught by tutors from Goldsmith's Sociology Department and the international MA in Photography and Urban Cultures. The programme draws on the advanced theoretical, research and practical image-making specialisms of key practitioners in the field. Summer School tutors include: Paul Halliday (MA in Photography and Urban Cultures Convener), Beatriz Véliz Argueta (Coordinator/Goldsmiths), Les Back (Goldsmiths), Caroline Knowles (CUCR Director), Mandy Lee Jandrell (Goldsmiths), Peter Coles (Oxford/Goldsmiths), Alex Rhys-Taylor (Goldsmiths), Manuel Vazquez (Goldsmiths), Michael Wayne Plant (Goldsmiths), Laura Cuch (Goldsmiths) and Jasmine Cheng (Goldsmiths).

The programme will explore how the practice of urban image making informs the development of a reflexive and critical research perspective and will include assignments and guided fieldtrips focusing on (1) urban landscape, (2) street photography and (3) material objects.

Application deadline: June 3rd, 2012

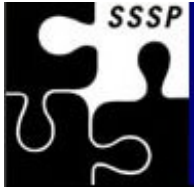
For more information: [www.gold.ac.uk/cucr/summer%20school/](http://www.gold.ac.uk/cucr/summer%20school/)

### Past Conference: A Beautiful Struggle: Transformative Black Studies in Shifting Political Landscapes

The Department of African American Studies at Northwestern University was pleased to host, "A Beautiful Struggle: Transformative Black Studies in Shifting Political Landscapes—A Summit of Doctoral Programs." The event took place April 12-14, 2012 at the Orrington Hotel, adjacent to the Northwestern University campus. Participants at the conference discussed the past contributions, current questions, and future directions of African American Studies and the state of doctoral education in the field. The conference featured keynote addresses by Jonathan Holloway, Professor of African American Studies, History, and American Studies at Yale University; Darlene Clark Hine, Board of Trustees Professor of African American Studies and History at Northwestern University; and Khalil Gibran Muhammad, Director of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture at the New York Public Library. The dissertating graduate students of Northwestern's African American Studies Department also presented at this event.

Conference website: <http://www.afam2012.northwestern.edu/>





**Community Research and  
Development Division**

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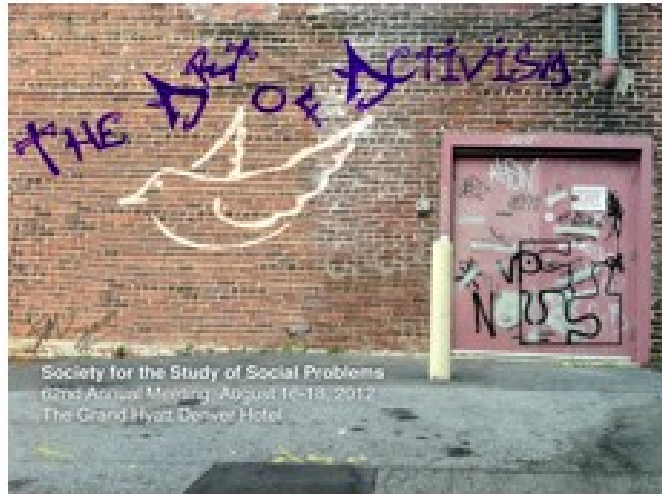
We're on the Web!

See us at:

<http://www.sssp1.org>

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**ANNOUNCING**



**Society for the Study of Social  
Problems  
62nd Annual Meeting  
August 16-18, 2012  
The Grand Hyatt Denver Hotel  
Denver, CO**

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Program planning for the 2013 annual meeting will take place during the 2012 annual meeting in Denver. If you have a suggestion for a regular paper session or roundtable, or would like to organize a session for next year's meeting, please contact Shelley Kimelberg at [s.kimelberg@neu.edu](mailto:s.kimelberg@neu.edu)

**About the Community Research and Development Division:**

The CRD Division's mission is to provide opportunities for scholars, researchers, students, activists, and others to share and discuss their scholarship and experiences in a supportive setting. In order to further the goal of a just world the Division seeks to integrate the theory, empirical findings, and practice of both scholars/researchers and grassroots activists.

