Newsletter
RC04 Sociology of Education

December 2009

Editor:
A. Gary Dworkin
Secretary ISA-RC04
Department of Sociology
The University of Houston
4800 Calhoun Road
Houston, Texas 77204-3012 USA
Email: gdworkin@mail.uh.edu

Contents:
From the Editor ........................................... Page 2
From the President ...................................... Page 3
Global Exchange .......................................... Page 3
New Books from RC04 ................................. Page 5
Call for Journal Submissions ....................... Page 6
The Program for the World Congress of Sociology .................................................. Page 7
RC04 Board .................................................. Page 12
Dear Colleagues,

The membership response to the call for papers for the RC04 sessions and joint sessions for the XVII World Congress of Sociology to be held in Gothenburg, Sweden from 11-17 July, 2010 has been spectacular. Session chairs report that they have received more excellent abstracts than likely can be handled. However, Ari and I have urged session chairs to accept as many papers as they think that they can offer in a session, given that some members will not be able to attend the conference. If there are numerous papers per session the chairs will shorten the time allotted to each presenter, thereby giving more a chance to participate. Additionally, ISA has agreed to provide two extra sessions to each of the largest RCs. Since RC04 is among the largest in ISA, we now have two more sessions to fill. Ari Antikainen and I have asked session chairs to provide us with the abstracts that they cannot accommodate, as we intend to include as many as possible in the two new sessions. We have entitled the new sessions “Issues in the Sociology of Education I and II” and are considering making at least one of the sessions a poster session, which can include still more papers. As I mentioned in a recent e-mail the ISA has awarded us an “Integrative Session” on the theme of “Rational choice approaches to educational inequality and social stratification.” The session integrates the contributions of RC04, RC28 (Social Stratification) and RC45 (Rational Choice). Additionally, we have three joint-session co-sponsored by RC04 and RC13 (Sociology of Leisure) and RC23 (Science and Technology).

The Newsletter continues the Global Exchange section, intended to promote not only information exchanges, but also to facilitate collaboration among colleagues, especially collaboration that crosses national boundaries. Three new research topics and issues are presented in the current issue. Members are asked to submit 100-150 word synopses of their on-going or planned research in which member in-put, idea exchanges, and actual research collaboration are encouraged. It is hoped that members will submit descriptions of their research projects to be included in future issues of the Newsletter.

RC04 also continues a section we inaugurated in July: a feature entitled “New Books from RC04” that includes brief announcements (and very brief synopses) of recent books published by RC04 members. This issue features three new books by our colleagues. If you have had a book published this year or about to be published in 2010 please send me an e-mail (gdworkin@mail.uh.edu) that includes the title, publisher, date and a 100-word synopsis of the book so that I can announce it in the next issue. In addition, this issue of the Newsletter features a call for manuscripts from three journal editors.

Finally, I am continuing to assemble a research interest directory that can be sent to journal editors looking for individuals to review books or manuscripts. This is likely to be most helpful to young colleagues who may not yet be known by journal editors, but it may be of help to all of our colleagues. If you are interested in being listed in this research interest directory please send me your contact information, including your name, affiliation and address, e-mail address, and a very brief statement of your areas of research and scholarship. Please send to gdworkin@mail.uh.edu and note that it is for the RC04 Research Interest Directory.

Gary Dworkin
Secretary, RC04
gdworkin@mail.uh.edu
Dear Colleagues,

The intensive preparation for the next World Congress in July 2010 in Gothenburg is underway. The general theme is ‘Sociology on the Move’. The Congress could not take place at a more critical moment of the current global economic crisis.

Thanks to active session organizers and our Secretary Gary Dworkin the comprehensive program for the RC04 is presented in this issue of Newsletter. The session organizers are now reviewing the submitted abstracts and looking forward to receiving papers from all parts of the globe.

I look forward to seeing you all in Gothenburg!

Ari Antikainen
President, RC04
ari.antikainen@joensuu.fi

The Newsletter continues its feature entitled Global Exchange, which affords the membership the opportunity to describe one of their current or pending research projects and seek suggestions, ideas for future directions, as well as possible collaboration with other RC04 members. The abstracts of approximately 100-150 words presented below represent examples of the kinds of project descriptions the RC04 board hopes will be sent to the editor by e-mail for inclusion in future issues of the Newsletter. It is our thought that most projects can benefit from discussion and collaboration and we hope that this column in the Newsletter may stimulate the kind of responses that will enhance research and lead to topical panels for future ISA and RC04 conferences. Please consider submitting a description of your project to the editor for inclusion in future issues of the Newsletter. It is hoped that RC04 members will contact the researchers whose projects are listed below with suggestions, commentary, and even offers to collaborate or share reports and publications. Please send your submissions for the next issue of Global Exchange to gdworkin@mail.uh.edu. The three new projects and two announcements include:

“Gender and Class Inequalities in Buenos Aires, Argentina.”

The project is supported by a post doctoral fellowship at the Institute of Education (University of London) (grant number: PTA-026-27-2053) and explores social class, gender and educational inequalities in secondary schooling in the City of Buenos Aires, Argentina. Focal points of the investigator’s research include: 1) schools’ roles in the production of circuits of schooling; 2) the views and practices of teachers with regard to their professional identities; 3) the perspectives, practices and identities of young people from different social groups with regard to educational participation and performance; and iv) the ways in which these students produce their class and gender identities.
through schooling and peer cultures. Evidence is analyzed from two qualitative research projects (one individual and the other collective) carried out in four state secondary schools in the City of Buenos Aires (Argentina).

Analía Meo, ESRC postdoctoral fellow at the Institute of Education (University of London) and Researcher at the Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (CONICET), Argentina. analiameo@googlemail.com

“Two Projects from the University of Debrecen, Hungary”

Project TERD (The Impact of Tertiary Education on Regional Development) has been in operation between 2007 and 2010 at CHERD Center for Higher Education Research and Development (at the University of Debrecen, Hungary). The project is a comparative scientific investigation that analyses the cross border region of Hungary, Romania and the Ukraine, which is called „Partium“. The guidelines of the analysis are the following: the claims and regional effects of tertiary education, contact between higher education and rationality, a local-level research of public education, contact between higher education and labor market, and the networks of higher educational institutes. During the research period we have been using the technique of network-analysis and the analysis of statistical data. Case studies have been made about single scenes.

CHERD Center for Higher Education Research and Development (at the University of Debrecen, Hungary) took part in a project named NESOR (New Social Risk in the European Knowledge Society) which came into existence in the scope of international cooperation. The research dealt with the formation of the European knowledge society, emphasizing the importance of local and regional consequences and the risk in labor market. In the first phase of the research we closely examined the relevant articles of six Hungarian periodicals and dailies (from 2005 to 2007). We analyzed the frequency of relevant theme mentioning and naturally the differences of contextual environment. In the second phase interviews with experts and curators in higher education were analyzed. The interviews dealt with the contact between higher education and the world of work, the judgment of Bologna-process and the questions of modernization.

Veronika Bosci, Ph.D.
Senior Lecturer
University of Debrecen
Faculty of Child and Adult Education
Department of Sociology
bocsiveron@gmail.com

“Report of a Conference in Moscow, Russia”

Russian Sociological Conference “Education and Society” took place in Moscow, Russia at the 20-22d of October. Organizers: Russian Society of Sociologists, Institute of Sociology of Russian Academy of Sciences, Academy of Labor and Social Relations (University). Financial support: Russian Humanitarian Foundation. A head of the Programme Committee – David Konstantinovskiy, Vice-President of ISA RC04 Sociology of Education. It was 428 participants from 55 regions of Russia and from Czech Republic, Serbia, Ukraine, Byelorussia, Kazakhstan. There was 15 sessions, 7 round tables plus lectures. Ari Antikainen, President of ISA RC04 Sociology of Education, have sent a message of greetings to the participants of the conference.

David Konstantinovskiy
Sociology of Education Department
Institute of Sociology, RAS,
Moscow, Russia
dav.konstant@gmail.com
“A new Thematic Group in the Australian Sociological Association”

At the December 2009 annual meeting of the Australian Sociological Association, the membership established a new Thematic Group of the Sociology of Education. For information, contact Dr. Julie Matthews, University of the Sunshine Coast, Queensland, Australia. jmatthew@usc.edu.au

New Books from RC04

RC04 members continue to be productive scholars. In order to disseminate information about the productivity of our membership the Newsletter has initiated a new feature called “New Books from RC04.” Members are encouraged to send me e-mails (gdworkin@mail.uh.edu) announcing their latest book publications. Please include reference information and a very brief (100-word) synopsis of the book. Listed below are titles that have been published since the distribution of the previous Newsletter. Members are encouraged to locate and read these new titles. The three books listed below represent a portion of the productivity of our membership.

Yokoyama, K. (forthcoming) Government, Policy and Ideology: Higher Education’s Changing Boundaries in Two Island Kingdoms - Japan and England. Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America. ISBN: 978-0-7618-4957-5. This book analyzes the transformation of the university systems of England and Japan since the early 1980s, with particular reference to the changing modalities of university autonomy and the power relationships between central authorities, the universities, and the market. The analysis compares the various policy positions of the relevant stakeholders in the two countries, highlighting the ideologies of neo-liberalism, university autonomy, and new managerialism. These ideologies coexist in both the English and the Japanese university systems. However, the interpretations of these ideologies made by stakeholders, the patterns of the interrelations between them, and their contextualization as elements in the policy and stance of each stakeholder, differ between England and Japan. The book argues that convergence between the English and Japanese university systems are, to a large extent, explained in the 1980s transformation of the university system in England, and the continuity of the Ministerial jurisdictional mechanism in Japan.

Jarmo Houtsonen, Jarmo & Wärvik, Gun-Britt (Eds.). European Nurses’ Live and Work Under Restructuring. The book examines nurses’ professional work and life in the context of the ongoing institutional restructuring of health care systems in seven European counties, England, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Spain and Sweden. The main idea has been to discuss professional experience and expertise from below, i.e. from the perspective of the nurses and focuses on how they deal with restructuring measures caused by changes in policy and administration. This is not, however, a book about policy implementation and new managerial ideas. Its goal is to examine the complexities and ambiguities in nurses’ work from different theoretical viewpoints. The book also describes both the unique situations and larger societal patterns in which these complexities and ambiguities are embedded. It is intended to contribute to the discussion of and research on nurses as European welfare state professionals.

Call for Journal Submissions

As the new editor of Sociology of Education, I recently took the opportunity to read the excellent RC04 newsletters that are posted on-line. It took me some time to do this, because I kept being distracted by links or references to other interesting sites that I felt I had to check out. One thing I learned from all of this is that there are sociologists of education all over the world who are doing great research on interesting and important topics, and submitting far too little of it to Sociology of Education. I would like to see this change, and I encourage RC04 members to consider Sociology of Education as a publication outlet for their research. I would also welcome any offers from RC04 members to serve as manuscript reviewers, and invite you to send your name and description of your research interests to me. Very soon Sociology of Education will have an on-line submission system up and running, but for now you can submit manuscripts to me at edu-soe-uiowa.edu. I am very interested in broadening the international scope and appeal of Sociology of Education, and hope to receive good research papers from many of you.

David B. Bills
Editor, Sociology of Education
University of Iowa, USA
David-bills@uiowa.edu

International Education Studies follows APA format and welcomes the submission of papers in the fields of education, training and educational administration. Please find the journal’s profile at: http://www.ccsenet.org/ies/ and submit your manuscripts online or send your manuscripts to ies@ccsenet.org . If you have any questions, please contact me at ies@ccsenet.org . It is appreciated if you could share this information with your colleagues and associates.

Cindy Xu, Editor
International Education Studies
Canadian Center of Science and Education
Address: 4915 Bathurst St., Unit #209-309
Toronto, Ontario, M2R 1X9 Canada
E-mail: ies@ccsenet.org
Website: www.ccsenet.org

Submissions are invited for the Social Psychology of Education: An International Journal. The journal, which is published quarterly, reports research on education from a social psychological perspective, and is open to all theoretical perspectives and research methods. Social Psychology of Education is fully refereed and is truly international. In recent years the journal has received manuscripts from authors in over 20 countries, and has reported a broad range of topics. Social Psychology of Education is published by Springer Publishers. In addition to traditional hard-copy format, the journal is available on-line to institutional and individual subscribers. Its wide visibility is not only reflected in its inclusion in a range of indexing services, but also in the large number of downloads which regularly occur from the on-line version. An added feature of the journal is that authors automatically receive 25 free off-prints. Additional information about the journal can be obtained from the Springer website: www.Springerlink.com or http://www.springer.com/education/journal/11218 .

Lawrence J. Saha, Editor
Australian National University
Lawrence_Saha@anu.edu.au.
Program Coordinators
Ari Antikainen, University of Joensuu, Finland, ari.antikainen@joensuu.fi
A. Gary Dworkin, University of Houston, USA, gdworkin@mail.uh.edu

Note: A listing of accepted abstracts will be sent in January, once the program is submitted to ISA.

Session 1: Global agendas and national and regional configurations: New ways of regulation in education policies
Additional session on the Congress theme
Organizer: António Teodoro, Universidade Lusófona de Humanidades e Tecnologias, Portugal, a.teodoro@netvisao.pt
Globalization has imposed new rules, expectations, and challenges to educational systems. Local and regional educational needs and programs to meet those needs are being reconfigured in light of international pressures. Papers will examine how globalization has impacted schooling, as well as national education policies and practices. Attention will be paid to the roles of sociologist in understanding these new forms of regulation.

Session 2: Sociology of adult education
Organizer: Ari Antikainen, University of Joensuu, Finland, ari.antikainen@joensuu.fi & Raj P. Mohan, Auburn University, USA., mohanrp@auburn.edu
Adult education is a product of social change and usually aimed at social transformation. In present adult education policy discourse the slogans of ‘education/lifelong learning for all’ and the transformation towards ‘knowledge based economy’ and ‘learning society’ are the major policy goals. Adult education is, however, connected at least with the civil society, the state, and the market. Papers can examine for instance the position of adult education in different socio-historical contexts, patterns of participation, restructuring processes going on, narratives of adult learning and – of course – the state of sociology of adult education.

Session 3: The meanings of schooling
Organizer: Maria-Ligia Barbosa, Universidade Federal de Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, mligia@ifcs.ufrj.br
The purpose of the session is to examine how this specific trait of modernization—the value of schooling—was (or is being) developed in the world outside Europe and North America and what are its consequences for the structure of social inequalities in those countries. Is schooling perceived as the most important factor (vis-à-vis other eventually relevant factors) of success on the job market? Is schooling perceived as factor of personal attainment? In the case that they truly make a difference, do school systems develop policies that take advantage (to improve learning) from parents—involvement and valuation of schooling?

Session 4: Transitions from school to work
Organizers: Jeanne Ballantine, Wright State University, USA, jeanne.ballantine@gmail.com and Silvia Y. Llomovatte, University of Buenos Aires, Argentina, sllomovatte@uolsinectis.com.ar
Many developed nations are now thought of as “credentialist societies,” in which the completion of high school or even of college does not guarantee a graduate access to a job, needless to say one that is commensurate with the educational attainments. In developing and under-developed nations high unemployment and underemployment rates result in graduates not finding meaningful work. The session will explore the myriad implications of the transition from student to employee. The employment problems of school dropouts will also be examined.
Session 5: A Critique of educational reforms at the dawn of the 21st century in developing, under-developed, and non-western societies: Theoretical and empirical implications
Organizer: Shaheeda Essack, National Department of Education, Pretoria, Republic of South Africa, Essack.S@doe.gov.za
Education and development in under-developed, developing and non-western societies is measured against what is set and defined by Western, First World, Anglo-Saxon countries – a consequence of the 21st century converged global society. Freire’s pedagogy of the oppressed, Nyere’s/Ghandi’s emphasis on basic education/ productive work/ people’s active participation and al-Qabbani’s reforms at modernizing education in Egypt provide interesting points of reference on the claims made about education and development. Papers address:
- Educational reforms vis-à-vis democracy, human rights, rights of women, the subaltern and religion.
- Theoretical/practical significance of Western and non-Western models of education.
- Peace education and global citizenship.

Session 6: Educational accountability in global perspective: Challenges for developed nations.
Organizer: A. Gary Dworkin, University of Houston, USA, gdworkin@mail.uh.edu
Neo-liberal approaches to education have heightened the focus on a “standards-based accountability approach,” which makes standardized test results the measure of school effectiveness. Nations compare their scores on international tests such as PISA or TIMSS to determine whether their educational systems are successful. RC04 began a dialogue on accountability, standards, and testing during the 1st ISA Forum of Sociology in Barcelona in 2008. This session focuses on Developed Nations, while Session 5 (above) focuses on Developing Nations.

Session 7: Old and new conflicts in education
Organizer: David Konstantinovskiy, Institute of Sociology, the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia, dav.konstant@gmail.com
The institution of education is closely connected with functioning of the society and therefore it can not be free from conflicts. Parts of these conflicts are a reflection of contradictions taking place in society: e.g. the differences in values and requirements of the actors (pupils, parents, teachers etc.), the rivalry of groups (social, religious etc.). Other conflicts are generated by the specifics of the education sphere itself: e.g. some measures of management. Papers can focus on the theoretical and empirical research for discussions on reasons of present and incipient conflicts, methods of overcoming or softening conflicts.

Session 8: Educational futures: Lessons from the sociology of knowledge
Organizers: Michael Young, Institute of Education, University of London, UK, M_Young@ioe.ac.uk and Johan Muller, University of Cape Town, Republic of South Africa, johan.muller@uct.ac.za
In this seminar we hope to address questions about the nature of educational knowledge raised by the global expansion of post-compulsory public education. We welcome contributions from those working on (a) the sociology of upper secondary, higher and professional curricula and (b) theoretical work in the sociology of knowledge, particularly those working in the tradition initiated by Emile Durkheim and continued by Basil Bernstein and Randall Collins.

Session 9: Leading society to a sustainable future: Education and the crisis of sustainability
Organizer: Julie Matthews, University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia, jmatthew@usc.edu.au
In the contemporary climate of global urgency concerning the need to address unsustainable development, ecological illiteracy, global technocracy and civil insecurity, this session will address the contribution of education in particular and the sociology of education in general to stimulating new ways of conceptualizing and addressing complex social, environmental, economic and political issues. The session will include contributions from environmental sociology, education for sustainability, environmental education, greening movements, eco-literacy and eco-philosophy as
well as problematic managerial, marketing and entrepreneurial directions in education. It seeks presentations which show how education can take the lead to generate critical debate and innovative solutions required to sustain both ecological and social systems.

**Session 10: Accountability and consequences for funding higher education**
Organizer: Dionysios Gouvias, University of the Aegean, Greece, dgouvias@rhodes.aegean.gr
In recent years, academic institutions across the globe, are called on to set-up ‘quality -assurance’ mechanisms and promote ‘international competitiveness’ and ‘economic prosperity’. The ascendancy of ‘product-based’ assessment in Higher Education, whereby what is evaluated is the accomplishment of certain pre-determined targets (‘technocratic-reductionist’ approach) and not the context in which learning takes place (‘professional-contextualist’ approach) is evident, not only in the Anglo-Saxon world, but in an increasing number of E.U. countries, especially after the road to the Bologna’s ‘Common European Higher Education Area’ was mapped (1999), and the Lisbon targets were set (2000).

**Session 11: Civics and citizenship education in a globalizing world**
Organizer: Lawrence J. Saha, Australian National University, Australia, Lawrence.Saha@anu.edu.au
This session will focus on aspects of education, political socialization, and political behavior. Topics can focus on the formal school curriculum (such as civics or citizenship courses) or the “hidden” curriculum, such as school elections, school political or patriotic activities (flag raising, singing the national anthem, etc). The link between school administrative style, such as democratic or authoritarian, can also be included as can questions relating the school to the pressures of local and global citizenship. Finally, papers which examine education and other political outcomes, such as voting behaviour, participation in politics, political values, or political activism will be welcome.

**Session 12: Paulo Freire and the sociology of education: Contributions and issues**
Organizer: Carlos Alberto Torres, University of California, Los Angeles, USA & Argentina, catnova@aol.com
The focus of this panel will be an in-depth analysis of the work of political philosopher of education Paulo Freire and his epistemological, theoretical and educational insights. A discussion of the complexities of education and politics in the work of Freire will facilitate a theoretical introduction to key problematic elements of contemporary public policy. We hope in this dialogue to work towards reinventing Paulo Freire’s perspective.

**Session 13: Development of sociology in higher education**
Organizer: Keiko Yokoyama, Pennsylvania State University, USA, kuy5@psu.edu
The purpose of the session is to review the past and present status of the sociology of higher education and offer some prospects for the future as a scholarly rigorous field. Concern will be with both US and non-US perspectives and the format will be a panel discussion that will include a brief presentation of a position paper by each panelist. Panel members will be selected from among the positions papers that are openly submitted to the session.

**Session 14: Europeanization and governance of higher education: Evidence and challenges**
Organizer: António Teodoro, Universidade Lusófona de Humanidades e Tecnologias, Portugal, a.teodoro@netvisao.pt
The Bologna process is certainly the most extensive process of change carried out in European universities since its modernization in the nineteenth century, with profound implications in other areas of the world system, particularly in Latin America, Africa and Asia. The objectives identified for the so-called Bologna process have several formulations that support the hypothesis that we are witnessing a transformation of the University of its original European Humanist tradition for the current utilitarian orientation. What is the meaning of the next evolution of educational issues in the EU?

**Session 15: The condition of teaching: Teachers as workers, teachers as professionals**
Organizers: A. Gary Dworkin, University of Houston, USA, gdworkin@mail.uh.edu and Shaheeda Essack, National Department of Education, Pretoria, Republic of South Africa, Essack.S@doe.gov.za
Teaching is usually seen as a “semi-profession” in that teachers, especially in the developed world, are accorded less respect and granted less autonomy than practitioners in other professions. In
developing nations they may receive more respect than in the developed world, but are still offered little control over their work. Teachers report higher levels of job stress and burnout than do many other human service professionals and their turnover rates often are quite high. Efforts by teachers to unionize and strike for better working conditions and salaries are frequently seen as threats to the welfare of their students and the public good.

Session 16: Vocational education
Organizer: Jeanne Ballantine, Wright State University, USA, jeanne.ballantine@gmail.com
A university education is not always the solution for individuals seeking to acquire the necessary technical skills to obtain meaningful employment. In many instances a vocational or technical school can afford the student an education that better fits the needs of students and employers. However, the quality of that education can be variable and some skills taught may be out of date when compared with employer expectations. Papers addressing the intended and unintended outcomes of vocational education are presented in this session.

Session 17: Education, stratification and poverty: Manifest and latent inequalities
Organizers/Chairs: Lawrence J. Saha, Australian National University, Australia, Lawrence.Saha@anu.edu.au and David Konstantinovskiy, Institute of Sociology, the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia, dav.konstant@gmail.com
New methodologies and the availability of large comparative data sets (e.g., PISA and TIMSS) have made possible the investigation of education and stratification with new theoretical perspectives and empirical models. Recent research has reopened discussions about how education may assist the poor and disadvantaged, with factors apparent at the individual, school and country levels. In spite of egalitarian policies, there remain tendencies for education systems to openly or covertly reproduce the social order. Papers can focus on the effects of gender, social class, race/ethnicity, or other cultural and structural factors, including the culture of poverty and levels of socioeconomic development.

Session: 18: Business meeting
Chair: Ari Antikainen, President, RC04, University of Joensuu, Finland, ari.antikainen@joensuu.fi

Joint Sessions Co-hosted by other RCs and RC04:

RC04/RC13 [host committee]
Leisure and education
Organizers: Ishwar Modi, India International Institute of Social Sciences, India, iiiss2005modi@yahoo.co.in and Kankanala Narsimha Reddy, Osmania University, India, nrkankanala@lycos.com
The interface between leisure and education can hardly be overemphasized, more so in a fast moving world where there is no time for reflection. For improving the quality of life, leisure education is essential. Leisure modes themselves can become a medium of education, leading to excellence and innovation in performance. As such should leisure be left to evolve and manifest on its own or should it be subtly guided? Need for active interface between leisure organizations and educational institutions requires exploration.

RC04/RC23 [host committee]
Changing forms of university-society relationship
Organizers: RC23 Juha Tuunainen, Department of Sociology, University of Helsinki, Finland, juha.tuunainen@helsinki.fi and RC04 Raj P. Mohan, Auburn University, USA, mohanrp@auburn.edu
The latter part of the 20th century witnessed a radical transformation in the ways in which the relationship between science, university and society was understood. The linear model of innovation and the related traditional contract between science and society was challenged. Global economic competition, increasingly complex societal problems and changes in public policy-making have all contributed to alterations in the social roles and responsibilities of academics, universities and science. In science and technology studies, for instance, the increasingly important role of science in economy has been discussed in terms of commercialization of research results, changing norms of
science and emergence of the so-called entrepreneurial university. Another line of research has attempted to redefine the nature and types of contemporary scientific research under such headings as Mode 2 knowledge production and post-normal science. In addition, some scholars have paid attention to the changes in public-policy making, or focused on technological risks and ethical issues that are becoming increasingly important topics in societal decision-making. Still another group has addressed the role of scientists as advisors and experts in the context of jurisdiction and other forums of public policy formation. Finally, within the sphere of public understanding of science, the focus of study has shifted towards democracy of science and the increasing importance of citizens. From the public policy perspective, universities have been regarded as central contributors in innovation, economic growth and competitiveness of nations. Simultaneously, social accountability pressures towards science and universities have mounted. An example of this trend is the introduction of the so-called third mission of the university into the university law, as well as development of related systems of indicators by which the social impact of university activities are measured. The aim of this session is to uncover the variety of mechanisms and institutions through which university-society interaction takes place in different disciplines and fields of research activity. By so doing, the session seeks to contribute to our understanding of the democracy of science, the societal role of university research as well as evaluation of the university’s third mission activities.

RC04/RC23 [host committee]
Pure vs applied research? Challenges confronted by higher education institutions and research centers

Joint Session of RC04 Sociology of Education and RC23 Sociology of Science and Technology
Organizers: RC23 Rosalba Casas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México, rcasas@servidor.unam.mx, and RC04 A. Gary Dworkin, University of Houston, USA, gdworkin@mail.uh.edu Although the question may address mostly Third World countries it also concerns the more advanced nations. Evidently, countries not well developed have fundamental problems related to basic needs that industrialized countries have reasonably solved. Applied science in food, health, education, water supply, energy, low cost housing, agriculture, forestry and others help release the population from extreme poverty. Is it appropriate for Third World countries to finance pure research, when requirements for other matters need to be addressed urgently? How should advanced countries face the dilemma of where to put public funds for science? How should developing countries define their research agendas and research problems to contribute to solve social problems? Competition for global economic markets has become an issue of paramount importance in the formulation of scientific policy. What is the proper balance between competition and the orientation to social problems? Is it different from countries that “have” to countries that “have not”? A wide range of questions may be addressed regarding these matters. Colleagues are invited to participate in the discussion of this exciting topic.

Integrative Session

RC04 Sociology of Education, RC28 Social Stratification) and RC45 Rational Choice have Integrative session 5: Rational choice approaches to educational inequality and social stratification Integrative session of Research Committees RC04 Sociology of Education, RC28 Social Stratification and RC45 Rational Choice

This integrative session fills the gap between statistical analysis and formal models in the study of educational inequality and social stratification. Research on educational attainment, transition from school to work, and status attainment has accumulated a wealth of empirical findings based on rigorous statistical analysis. However, the research has not fully contributed to the grounding of formal models that explain these findings. Rational choice theory could solve this problem because the educational and status attainment processes are conceptualized as the processes in which individuals try to maximize returns under structural constraints such as social origin, education, and their locations in the labor market. Rational choice theory, among other theoretical models, could be one of the promising tools which offer an explanation of the processes.

Some excellent models based on rational choice theory have been proposed such as Breen and Goldthorpe’s on educational inequality and Bruch and Mare’s on residential segregation. Founded on
these theoretical developments, this integrative session invites papers that advance the frontiers of research on educational inequality and social stratification by enhancing dialogue between three research areas—education, social stratification, and rational choice.

The three research committees have established and endorsed this session and will form a task force to organize the session. With the cooperation of the three research committees, this session will be a wonderful opportunity to advance our understanding of not only the educational and status attainment processes but also general social mechanisms that generate inequality.

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**Research Committee on Sociology of Education RC04**

Established in 1971

- **Objectives**
  RC04 is an active group with annual or bi-annual meetings on sociology of education topics. Regular meetings are held at the World Congress of Sociology (every four years) and at the RC's Midterm Conferences (in-between world congresses); in addition, meetings on special topics are held.

- **Board 2006-2010**
  
  **President:** Ari Antikainen (Finland) ari.antikainen@joensuu.fi
  **Secretary:** A. Gary Dworkin (USA) gdworkin@mail.uh.edu
  **Vice-Presidents:**
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  **Past-President:** Carlos A. Torres (USA/Argentina)
  A. Gary Dworkin (USA) will also continue as **Special Adviser for Membership Affairs**

- **Newsletter**
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