

NEWSLETTER OF THE
ALTRUISM & SOCIAL SOLIDARITY

SECTION-IN-FORMATION OF THE AMERICAN SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

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DECEMBER 2009

**TO BE OR
 NOT TO BE**

A few years ago we collectively embarked on an important mission: to form and establish a section on Altruism and Social Solidarity within the American Sociological Association. We have completed a part of this mission: we are now recognized as a Section in Formation. We have also composed a Mission Statement, published our section proposal to ASA as an article in *The American Sociologist*, and completed two editions of our Section Newsletter, under the editorship of Matthew T. Lee. It is appropriate for us to congratulate ourselves.

But our mission is just beginning. We must all be aware that we stand at a crucial stage in our development.

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**STUDIES OF ALTRUISM AND SOLIDARITY IN
 RUSSIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE**

—*Dmitry Efremenko and Yaroslava Evseeva*

Studies of altruism and solidarity in contemporary Russian sociology represent a developing trend. Several scholars are now making efforts to study this problem field in various contexts. However, this research area is not a fully formed specialized direction of sociological research, institutionalized within the Russian sociological community. For instance, at the latest All-Russia Sociological Congress (October 2008) a number of papers were presented on various facets of solidarity, but there was no special session or round table on the topic, nor were there any on social altruism.

Russian philosophers and social thinkers of the second half of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century discussed a variety of aspects of social solidarity and altruism. In particular, the eminent Russian philosopher Vladimir Solovyov wrote in his article titled "Pity and altruism" (1895; English transl. 1918) that "the altruistic principle in morality... is deeply rooted in our being in the form of the feeling of pity which man has in common with other living creatures."¹ Ethical foundations of altruism and solidarity were paid attention to by P. Kropotkin and A. Yarotsky. Priority in the studies of altruism and solidarity within the Russian sociological tradition belongs to P. Sorokin. Sorokin's personality and sociological legacy, though, also unites Russian sociologists with their American

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COOLEY-MEAD PRESENTATION FOCUSES ON ALTRUISM

Jane Allyn Piliavin's Cooley-Mead Presentation to the Social Psychology Section at the 2008 meetings of the American Sociological Association was recently published in *Social Psychology Quarterly* (Vol. 72, No. 3). Piliavin is Professor of Sociology and Women's Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and has made a major contribution to the literature on altruism, as well as many other areas of study, over the course of her distinguished career. The title of her address is "Altruism and Helping: The Evolution of a Field." In this lecture, she addresses definitional issues surrounding "altruism" and "prosocial behavior" while offering a helpful history of this field of study. She notes that, "many people believe that there is no such thing as altruism" (p. 211). This is indeed a challenge that many of us in the Altruism & Social Solidarity Section-Information continue to confront. Fortunately, her own work and the research that she reviews clearly demonstrates the utility of altruism as a concept. Her remarks are organized around a series of questions, such as: "Why do people help?" "What are the origins of helping and altruism?" "Can altruism be trained?" and "How are organizations related to prosocial behavior?" Whether you are just getting started in this field of study, or you are a seasoned veteran, Piliavin's address provides an essential overview of sociological answers to these important questions.

—Editor

FROM THE EDITOR

As this newsletter demonstrates, members of the Altruism & Social Solidarity Section-Information have been busy since the publication of our previous issue. Highlights include the international perspectives of Dmitry Efremenko and Yaroslava Evseeva of the *Institute for Scientific Information on Social Sciences* at the Russian Academy of Sciences on page 1 and Pavel Krotov at the *Sorokin Research Center* in the Republic of Komi, Russian Federation on page 4. It is encouraging to see this newsletter serve as a forum for international social networking

among scholars of altruism and social solidarity.

This is one of the reasons why we need to transform our Section-Information into a regular Section of the ASA. Vincent Jeffries' call-to-action on page 1 ("To Be or Not to Be") should provide additional motivation and I urge you to consider it carefully and then recruit new members for our section. We are indeed at a crossroads. Our Section has great potential for national and international field-building. But in order to achieve our collective goals, we will need to build our membership sooner rather than later.

I am grateful for the high-quality contributions that I received for this issue. Your hard work has made my job as editor much easier. Please continue to send me essays, research updates, book reviews, announcements, etc. for future issues.

One final note: our members are diverse, but the vast majority of the submissions for the first two issues of this newsletter have been authored by white men. I will attempt to expand the diversity of perspectives in subsequent issues and I would appreciate your help with this effort.

—Matthew T. Lee



**HELP US
BECOME A
REGULAR
SECTION OF
THE ASA...
JOIN THE
ALTRUISM &
SOCIAL
SOLIDARITY
SECTION-IN-
FORMATION
TODAY!**

INTERNET RESOURCES FOR THE STUDY OF ALTRUISM AND SOCIAL SOLIDARITY



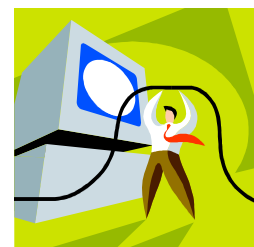
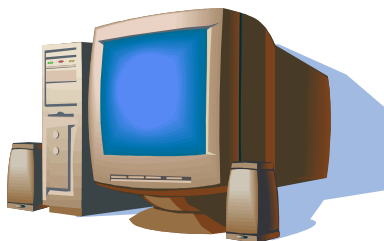
SCIENCE OF GENEROSITY ELECTRONIC LIBRARY: A WEB-BASED RESOURCE FOR SCHOLARSHIP ON GENEROSITY

The University of Notre Dame's Science of Generosity Initiative has established a website with literature reviews, bibliographies, book summaries, working papers, and abstracts on altruism and related topics (see <http://generosityresearch.nd.edu/publications-2>).

Sample topics include: altruism and reciprocity, philanthropy, gift-giving, volunteering, religious giving, and organizational citizenship.

For abstracts of recent articles on altruism and reciprocity, click on this link: <http://generosityresearch.nd.edu/publications-2/literature-reviews/addendum>. For more details about the \$5 million Science of Generosity Initiative, check out the article in the previous issue of the newsletter of the Altruism & Social Solidarity Section-in-Formation.

—Editor



THE SOROKIN ARCHIVE AND LECTURE SERIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

In 1968, the University of Saskatchewan obtained part of the personal library of Professor Pitirim Sorokin. The materials included letters, notebooks, photographs, books, original and revised manuscripts, his works in all other translations, and book reviews. As part of the arrangement for receiving this unique research resource, the University of Saskatchewan agreed to hold an annual lecture in Professor Sorokin's honor. Since that time the Sorokin Lecture has been part of the University of Saskatchewan lecture series. The Department of Sociology has had the responsibility for organizing this lecture series since its inception. Most Sorokin lectures have been published by the University. Many of them can be purchased from the Department of Sociology for \$7.50. The availability of this collection has made it possible for researchers to visit the campus to use the collection for research purposes.

The 40th Annual Sorokin Lecture was presented by Dr. Peter Jarvis in March 2009. The title of the lecture was "The End of a Sensate Age — What Next?" Prominent sociologists who have delivered the Sorokin lecture include Dorothy E. Smith and Craig Calhoun. For more information, visit <http://www.arts.usask.ca/sociology/department/sorokin.php>.

—Editor

THE PITIRIM SOROKIN RESEARCH CENTER: FOUNDATION AND GOALS

—Pavel Krotov, Director, Sorokin Research Center

The Pitirim Sorokin Research Center was established in 2009 at Syktyvkar State University (Republic of Komi, Russian Federation). The Center is an outcome of a long-standing joint effort involving the Komi Government, academics, and community activists to foster studies of this prominent sociologist in the land of his birth.

Such diverse interest in Pitirim Sorokin coming from this part of the Russian Federation was not an accident. The government of Komi has recognized the possibility that his example could provide a new "role model" for the Komi people, especially by raising the interest of the younger generation in education. Since the fall of Communism, the absence of new moral leadership has become one of the main reasons for social and ethical erosion affecting all of Russian society, including Komi society. In this respect, reintroducing the name of Pitirim Sorokin to the community, not permitted during Soviet times, might help societal reintegration. If his Komi origin makes Pitirim Sorokin a role model for the local population, his thoroughgoing analyses of societies in crisis, as well as his pioneering studies of amitology, have attracted the government's attention as it tries to respond to current instabilities. His religious and ethnic tolerance, ideas of altruism, and of solidarity in today's highly divided and fragmented society, are no less important than those for achieving economic growth. Twenty years of illusory attempts to improve the society solely by economic means have finally forced authorities to realize the importance of non-economic factors, or so-called "externalities," and to move this "moral" aspect up in the list of governmental priorities.

The political context mentioned favors development in the Komi Republic of academic curricular and research interest in Sorokin's work more than elsewhere in Russia. The Center has three main objectives: (1) To address an important

cultural agenda for the region; (2) To conduct specific research on Sorokin and his writings; and (3) To apply his ideas and concepts to the analysis of social phenomena. A research project on survival mechanisms in household economy will serve as an example of the latter: For nearly twenty years a team of Komi sociologists headed by Dr. Pavel Krotov studied differences among various sectors of the economy undergoing transition from the Communist system. Their various effects on social institutions were studied, applying the theory of economic involution, elements of institutional analysis, and in some instances, a "commodity-based" approach. Through close collaboration with professor Michael Burawoy (University of California, Berkeley) and professor Simon Clark (Warwick University) the research team learned international patterns of conducting sociological research and obtained invaluable theoretical and practical experience. Current investigations will shift the focus to the role of altruism and solidarity in enabling households to cope with economic hardships. This factor was not considered previously. Consequently more comprehensive results are expected once the data collected over the years are re-examined from the new perspective.

Although the Center's sociological research is at an early stage of development, other research projects related to Sorokin, and to exposure of his personality and ideas to a broad public, have already been completed. The most significant of these is the first-time publication of selected correspondence obtained from the Sorokin family archive in Winchester (USA) and from the Sorokin archive held within special collections of the library at the University of Saskatchewan (Canada). The forthcoming book (in Russian) is edited by Pavel Krotov and is structured around three themes: (1) the 1963 Presidential

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RESEARCH UPDATES

ALTRUISM, INTERGROUP APOLOGY, FORGIVENESS, AND RECONCILIATION

The literature shows that many people and groups have been hurt psychologically, emotionally, and physically, and carry grievance against the harm doer. This is evident in an interpersonal level and a number of people are seeking help from psychologist and other healers. My interest in apology focuses on intergroup apology and forgiveness that leads to reconciliation. I am aware that this is not the only approach to healing hurt between groups and nations, but it is a factor that helps the healing process. An antidote to intergroup grievance that is important is restorative justice. Nondiscrimination, and providing an atmosphere of equality and equal opportunity must be included, in order to bring about a more harmonious society.

I am continuing in this area of research focusing on the nature of good and evil. My recent publications are titled: *Altruism, Intergroup Apology, Forgiveness and Reconciliation* (2008 St. Paul, Minnesota: Paragon House) and “Altruism, Apology, Forgiveness, and Reconciliation as Public Sociology” in *The Handbook of Public Sociology* edited by Vincent Jeffries (2009 Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers).

—Samuel P. Oliner, Director
Altruistic Personality and Prosocial Behavior Institute
Humboldt State University

FLAME OF LOVE PROJECT RECEIVES INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

The Flame of Love Project, co-directed by Stephen G. Post, Margaret M. Poloma, and Matthew T. Lee, was the subject of feature articles in two Korean publications:

- 1) Jong Hyun Jung. 2009. “Godly Love Project: Can Godly Love Change the Society?” *Church Growth Journal* 196:136-141
- 2) Jong Hyun Jung and Sung-Gun Kim. 2009. “The Social Consequences of Religious Experience: Focusing on Pentecostal Spiritual Experience.” *Discourse* 201, 12(3,4): 117-136.

The readership of *Church Growth Journal* is primarily church pastors in Korea and that article is the latest example of how the scholarship produced by the Flame of Love Project is being applied in ways that can foster positive social change both in the U.S. and abroad.

In related news, Margaret Poloma’s work was recently translated into German in a recent issue of *Evangelische Theologie* (see Margaret M. Poloma. 2009. “Die Zukunft der amerikanischen Pfingstidentität: Die Assemblies of God am Scheideweg,” *Evangelische Theologie* 69:270-285). This article focuses on Poloma’s research into the institutional dilemmas facing the Assemblies of God, the largest Pentecostal denomination in the world. For more details about the Flame of Love Project, see the previous issue of this Newsletter or visit www.godlyloveproject.org.

—Editor

RESEARCH UPDATES CONTINUED

CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY RECEIVES \$1 MILLION GRANT TO STUDY THE BENEFITS OF AA'S 12TH STEP (HELPING OTHERS)

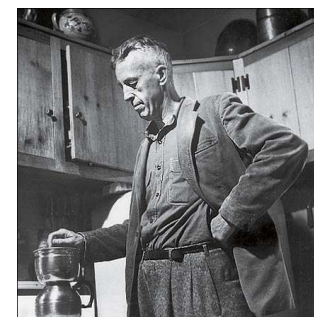
The John Templeton Foundation recently awarded Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine a \$942,307 grant to support the work of Maria E. Pagano, Ph.D., assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry (see <http://blog.case.edu/support/2009/05/20/templeton>). Pagano's research focuses on the recovery process of youth and adults afflicted with the disease of addiction. Her primary research interest centers on the role of altruistic service to others in addiction recovery, particularly with regard to the 12th step of twelve-step programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous. The 12th step requires beneficiaries of the AA program to reach out to other alcoholics with the message of AA in order to help them achieve sobriety. Pagano's research has shown that adult alcoholics who help others with their struggles with addiction were twice as likely to be sober in the year following treatment as compared with non-helpers. With the support of the John Templeton Foundation (www.templeton.org), her three-year investigation will expand her work with adults to explore how helping others assists the adolescent helper in staying sober. "My work thus far suggests that even those very early in recovery can benefit from being active in service," Pagano said. Twelve-step programs like AA provide much food for thought for sociologists interested in practical models for institutionalizing altruism, especially because the AA process ends up benefiting both self and other.

The Templeton Foundation serves as a philanthropic catalyst for research and discoveries relating to what scientists and philosophers call the Big Questions, in areas such as human sciences, natural sciences and character development. Since 1998, the John Templeton Foundation has supported initiatives at Case Western Reserve University, specifically those that aim to explore concepts and realities such as love, gratitude, forgiveness and creativity. In 2001, the John Templeton Foundation made a catalytic founding grant for the Institute for Research on Unlimited Love (IRUL), led by then-Case Western Reserve faculty member, Dr. Stephen Post. The Institute is a leading force in helping the world to better understand the universal phenomenon of unselfish love (see <http://unlimitedloveinstitute.org>). Through continued partnership, the university and the foundation share a commitment to on-going research in areas such as character development. For more information about AA and the efficacy of the 12th step, see the co-authored paper by Drs. Pagano and Post published in *Alcoholism Treatment Quarterly*, (Vol. 27, pp. 38–50, 2009). For resources related to altruism and unlimited love, including funding opportunities, members of the ASA's Section on Altruism & Social Solidarity would be well-served by exploring the websites of the Templeton Foundation and IRUL.

—Editor



Dr. Bob Smith, AA Co-Founder



Bill Wilson, AA Co-Founder

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE ALTRUISM & SOCIAL SOLIDARITY SECTION-IN-FORMATION

The purpose of the section is to promote theoretical development and empirical research pertaining to altruism and social solidarity. In the broadest sense, this subject matter consists of activities intended to benefit the welfare of others. These activities span the micro-macro continuum, from individual, to interpersonal, to organizational, to global, in all their forms and processes. Attention is given to the cultural and structural sources of altruism and social solidarity, and both their anticipated and unanticipated consequences. In today's world beset with individual and intergroup discord and violence, the intrinsic scientific, policy, and public relevance of this subject in helping the human community to construct "good societies" is unquestionable. The work of the section promotes understanding of the conditions necessary for a broad vision of the common good that includes all individuals and groups.

Section activities are directed towards establishing the discipline of sociology in the forefront of theoretical development and

empirical testing in this essential interdisciplinary area of scientific investigation. These activities include the following: to provide for periodic regular exchanges of information at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association; to formally recognize outstanding theoretical, empirical, and applied work in the field of altruism and social solidarity through annual awards; to link with other scientific groups working on psychological, cultural, and genetic aspects of altruism and solidarity; to develop and augment a community of scholars dedicated to the study of altruism and social solidarity; to provide an ongoing social context and support system for efforts to gain greater knowledge and understanding of the nature, sources, and effects of altruism and social solidarity; to encourage the investigation of the policy implications of this knowledge; and to facilitate the dissemination of information to publics regarding aspects of altruism and social solidarity that will benefit individual lives and the social organization of modern society.

WHAT DO WE THINK WE'RE DOING? A NOTE ON ALTRUISM AND COGNITIVE SOCIOLOGY

—Stephen Vaisey, University of California (Berkeley)

In the first section of *Economy and Society*, Weber (1978:6) argues that “[f]or the purposes of a typological scientific analysis it is convenient to treat all irrational, affectually determined elements of behavior as factors of deviation from a conceptually pure type of rational action.” By comparing observed action to an “ideal type” of, say, economically rational action, Weber continues, it becomes “possible to understand the ways in which actual action is influenced by irrational factors of all sorts ... in that they account for the deviation of the line of conduct which would be expected on the hypothesis that the action were purely rational.”

Something like this logic underlies a great deal of the research on altruism. Researchers have shown people in many situations cooperate and share much more than we would expect based on standard economic models (see e.g., Fehr and Gintis 2007; Simpson and Willer 2008). Though sociologists who use such findings as a basis for claiming disciplinary superiority are (to put it charitably) overreaching, it is true that a more sustained engagement with altruistic “departures from rationality” provides us with a welcome opening to influence the thinking of our extra-disciplinary neighbors.

I believe that sociology could make a substantial contribution to the study of altruism if we moved beyond the tendency to consider it an “orientation,” “inclination,” or “disposition” that some people simply possess to a greater degree than others. Though descriptively useful, it isn’t enough, in my view, to show that “social preferences” are heterogeneous and that different people act as though they are maximizing different “objective functions” (Fehr and Gintis 2007:60). We also need to know the *content* of these “functions.” That is, we must ask *why* some people (rather than others) in some situations (rather than others) engage in altruistic action. Because we all share the same human nature, the answers to such questions might come from greater atten-

tion to the cognitive schemas and cultural worldviews that underlie different degrees and “styles” of altruism.

Why does this matter? Weber (1978:9) argues that “explanation requires a grasp of the complex of meaning in which an actual course of understandable action ... belongs.” He was right. We don’t simply “act”; rather, we act in the context of valued identities (Hitlin 2003), rely on culturally-acquired models of how the world works (D’Andrade and Strauss 1992), and situate ourselves relative to moral horizons and meaningful relationships that give our lives purpose and direction (Taylor 1989; Smith 2003). And because no identities, models, or horizons are purely our own, but rather variations on the “first draft” provided by nature and revised by (sub)culture, we would do well to look at the substantive contents of the major cultural-cognitive “styles” that exist in our societies.

In my own work, for example, I have used survey data to show that those who endorse more community-centered and theistic worldviews are more likely than individualists to help others informally and to volunteer (Vaisey 2009). But my more recent look at the in-depth interviews with these respondents shows that this is not due to a generic disposition to be “other-regarding.” Instead, many reject the idea of acting solely in their own interests precisely because, they say, it would fail to make them happy (Vaisey in preparation). Such findings—and others I don’t have the space to outline here—suggest that what differentiates individualists from others is not an “inclination” or “tendency” but an implicit cultural model of what makes a good life. Those who take others—parents, teachers, God, strangers, spouses—into account when they make decisions seem to do so, not because they are compelled to, but rather because they believe it is a vital part of their personal flourishing as a human being.

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ALTRUISTIC SOCIOLOGY: PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

—David Boyns, California State University (Northridge)

I have learned a very important lesson this year about altruism and sociological practice. This lesson began with an email that I received several months ago from a residential, correctional center in Los Angeles that works to support at-risk youth. The center was looking for someone to teach a “Sociology of Gangs” course on-site to their young, male residents. Most of the young-men residing in this facility are meeting terms of probation for gang-related activities. The idea behind instituting this course was to bring a broader sense of awareness about gangs, their activities, culture and social organization, to the residents in this program. While I profess no special expertise in the sociology of gangs, I do know something about teaching sociology and how to cultivate the sociological imagination among the minds of young people. I suggested that we teach the course in an “introduction to sociology” format, addressing issues related specifically to gangs and gang-life, but also tackling concerns related to the broader social context that circumscribes gangs. Working with the center, we outlined a four-month curriculum built around films and guest speakers of sociological relevance. We started up weekly class meetings; I would volunteer my time, and the young-men would attend on a voluntary basis. I was not prepared for the chain-reaction of altruism that this class would generate.

The first week that the class met, we watched “Quiet Rage,” the film about Philip Zimbardo’s Stanford Prison Experiment. I selected the film because I thought it would provide a fertile introduction to the sociological perspective, and highlight the power of social influence, and of the potency of social situations in shaping individual behavior and the unanticipated consequences of adopting unusual social roles. I also thought that the young men would relate to a study of power-relations in a correctional setting. During the discussion after the screening, it was clear that the young-men could clearly relate to the film, and were able bring a sociological consciousness to

this study based upon their personal experience. I knew right away that a class like this would be beneficial for the residents of the center, and that I would also grow personally and professionally from the experience. What I didn’t anticipate, however, is that the center itself would grow as a result of the class, as would the students I teach at the university.

When I started talking about my experiences with the young-men and the staff at the center, I was astonished about the amount of interest my university students had in this sociology class. Some of my students wanted to help out with the class, others had ideas about films and speakers, still others wondered if there might be other ways for them to get involved with the center. I was overwhelmed by the interest that my students had in the center and the kind of contributions they wanted to pursue. I knew I had an opening to expand the scope of my engagement with the center, to provide greater opportunities for an interface between the center and the university. Like links in a chain, the center, its residents, and the university students all could benefit from this arrangement. In some cases, the links fell naturally into place – students with experience in art could teach art classes, others with interests in gardening or sports could develop programs in those areas. In other cases, developing the links would take some concerted effort – like organizing tutoring in math and reading, or establishing training in computer skills. In still other cases, gaps within the center could be engaged, particularly those that could benefit from the expertise that the sociological practice can provide – like program evaluation, data-base management and community outreach. Beginning in early 2010, and building off these initial sparks of interest, a more concerted relationship will be established between this center and my university, with internships established at the center for students of sociology.

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ALTRUISM AND SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP: ITS LEISURE BASE

—Robert A. Stebbins, University of Calgary

If articles in the mass print media and on some of the Internet websites are any indication, social entrepreneurship has become something of a modern-day hit among morally conscious people itching to solve a particular social problem and possibly make money in the process. Social entrepreneurship is an altruistic undertaking. These entrepreneurs execute innovative solutions to what they define as social problems, be they local, national, or international. In social entrepreneurship people use the principles of enterprise to foster social change, which they do by establishing and managing a venture. Some of them set up small, medium, or large non-profit groups designed to ameliorate a difficult situation threatening certain people, flora, or fauna or a certain aspect of the environment, if not a combination of these. Others are profit-seekers. They work to establish a money-making enterprise that will also improve such a situation in one of these four areas.

There is, however, much more to being a social entrepreneur than wanting to do something beneficial for other people or for the flora, fauna, and natural environments of this world. In the case of the for-profit enterprise, there is more to it than finding a livelihood and wanting to do something beneficial at the same time. To be sure, these are real motives and as such they help explain social entrepreneurship. But they are also incomplete as explanations.

These explanations, taken alone, simplify a complex activity and its impact in an age when existing governmental and non-governmental organizations are either unable or unwilling to solve crucial problems. Mark Durieux and I (Durieux and Stebbins, 2010) will publish shortly a manual on the subject in which we use the serious leisure perspective as theoretic background to further explain this kind of altruism. In conceptualizing social entrepreneurship this way (which includes what I have dubbed “devotee work”), we have added another level of explanation: how social entrepreneurs are affected by their search for per-

sonal and social rewards, experience in the core entrepreneurial activities, and the society (culture and history) in which they live.

The serious leisure perspective (Stebbins, 2007) offers a two-pronged explanation: pursuit of non-profit entrepreneurship is a serious leisure undertaking of the career volunteer kind, whereas pursuit of for-profit entrepreneurship is a variety of devotee work. Career volunteering is one of three types of serious leisure. *Serious leisure* is the systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist, or volunteer activity that people find so substantial, interesting, and fulfilling that, in the typical case, they launch themselves on a (leisure) career centered on acquiring and expressing a combination of its special skills, knowledge, and experience. It takes considerable commitment to stay with an activity like developing a social enterprise, and to stay long enough to acquire the special skills, knowledge, and experience needed to succeed. A sense of career emerges from acquiring these skills, knowledge, and so on. The serious leisure that social entrepreneurs pursue is that of the career volunteer.

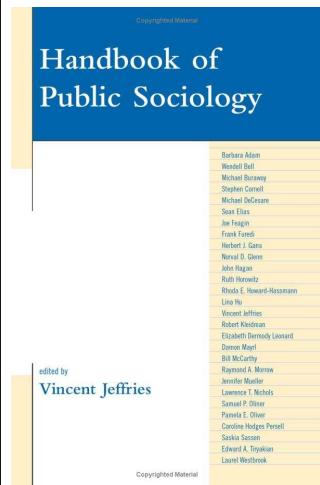
Working as an occupational devotee is, in many ways, serious leisure (Stebbins, 2004). *Occupational devotion* refers to a strong, positive attachment to a form of self-enhancing work, where the senses of achievement and fulfillment are high and the core activity (set of tasks) is endowed with such intense appeal that the line between this work and leisure is virtually erased. An *occupational devotee* is someone inspired by occupational devotion. *Devotee work* is the core activity of the occupation. It is capable of inspiring occupational devotion, itself a major force spurring on for-profit social entrepreneurs.

Social entrepreneurship presents a textbook case of *relative* altruism. Here altruistic people, based on significant self-interest, gain self-fulfillment from altruistic acts by (a) feeling good (fulfilled) about being altruistic (socially valued action);

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BOOKS OF INTEREST

Handbook of Public Sociology (Vincent Jeffries [ed.]. 2009. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.)



This essay represents a review of selective aspects of the "Handbook of Public Sociology" that I edited (2009 Rowman & Littlefield Publishers). I believe the book will be of interest to altruism and social solidarity section members for three general reasons: it provides a detailed analysis of public sociology in relation to other forms of practice; a number of chapters consider altruism and closely related phenomena such as forgiveness and human rights; several chapters focus on the sociology of Pitirim A. Sorokin, his integral perspective, and his writings on altruism.

The book's chapters provide a comprehensive explication and varied analysis of Michael Burawoy's holistic model of sociology: professional, policy, critical, and public. Their central theme is the interdependence of these four forms of sociological practice and their synergies and problematics. The authors of different chapters explore and elaborate this holistic model of public sociology from a number of perspectives: basic theoretical issues; development of the potential of public sociology; high school and university teaching; case studies of organic public sociology, in which sociologists become engaged with publics of various types; applications of the holistic model to fields of sociology; and current perspectives and future directions. Another theme that emerges from many chapters is that Burawoy's model is a vision of the discipline of sociology that has the potential to increase disciplinary unity, scientific productivity, creativity, and contributions to society.

A second feature of the volume is the attention devoted to various aspects of altruism, social solidarity, and related phenomena, such as forgiveness and human rights. These topics are identified as important components of new perspectives and fields of investigation in sociology. The introductory chapter considers the possibility of a positive critical sociology that examines the nature of the good that would encompass these and other topics.

In a chapter by Edward A. Tiryakian global altruism is proposed as a focus of future study. Global altruism is defined as an orientation directed toward improving the conditions of those most disadvantaged by poverty and powerlessness within the global community. Examples are given of this orientation at the micro, or individual level, the meso, or organizational level, and the macro level of countries. At each of these levels agents active in increasing altruism on a global scale are identified and described.

In another chapter Samuel P. Oliner presents an overview of the study of interpersonal and intergroup forgiveness as a field of study. Altruistic love is identified as one of the primary factors giving impetus to the process of forgiveness, which also involves both apology and reconciliation. Case studies of intergroup forgiveness are presented. The implications of the study of forgiveness for a more caring society are considered.

The sociological study of human rights can be regarded as a field of investigation that has close affinity to that of altruism and social solidarity. In a chapter on this topic, Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann defines the nature and scope of human rights. The basic principles of human rights as they are expressed in philosophical conceptions and international human rights law are reviewed. The potential of human rights standards to generate theoretical development and empirical research are considered, as are the contributions that sociological analysis can make to the understanding and furthering of human rights.

Two chapters devoted to the system of sociology of Pitirim A. Sorokin are also of potential interest to section members. Lawrence T. Nichols describes Sorokin's ideas as they evolved in the course of

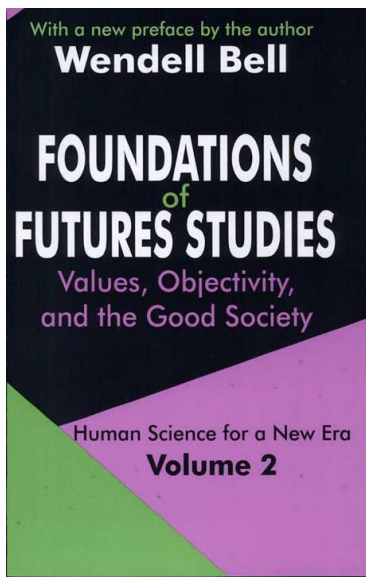
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BOOKS OF INTEREST, CONTINUED

his scholarly explorations and the influence of historical events. The integral sociology advocated by Sorokin is summarized according to seven dimensions: ontology, epistemology, philosophy of life, general sociology, sociological methods, historical sociology, and ethics. These characteristics form the basis of an insightful imaginary exchange between Burawoy and Sorokin regarding their respective sociological perspectives. In another chapter Vincent Jeffries proposes Sorokin's system of sociology as an exemplar of Burawoy's holistic fourfold model. The interdependencies and positive contributions of the forms of practice to each other in Sorokin's works are described. Both of these chapters include extensive bibliographies of Sorokin's writings.

—Vincent Jeffries, California State University (Northridge)

Values, Objectivity, and the Good Society (Volume 2 of *Foundations of Futures Studies*, Wendell Bell. 2004. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.)



Summary: In this book, Bell gives a sociological approach to ethics, morality, and human values, focusing on the nature of the good society and the standards of evaluation that define it. Also, he gives objective procedures by which norms and values themselves can be evaluated.

Applied or policy scientists face the question of the validity of value judgments, because they are concerned with social action and the human goals and values that are served by such action. For example, research directed at reducing unemployment, crime, racial discrimination, poverty, mental illness, or inequality of educational opportunity assumes that such reductions are desirable. Most of us may think so, but how do we really know? This is one of the questions Bell answers in this book.

Bell begins with a survey of the values used by utopian writers from Thomas More to Karl Marx to define their images of the good society and the justifications that they give for them. Among other things, he shows the shift in justification of values from God to Nature to Reason to Human Nature and to a lesser extent to Society and Science. And he shows how the location of utopia shifted from a different place in geographic space to a

different location in time, the future.

He contends that the dogma that value judgments cannot be objectively assessed is questionable and he gives three models for the objective assessment of human values, the last of which, he argues, deserves to be a widely used tool since it is based on empirical evidence.

He evaluates several strategies for judging the preferable, such as religion, law, and the collective judgments of group members, which are widely used now, showing how each ultimately fails, with the exception of some aspects of the law.

He proceeds to show that cultural relativism is a false doctrine. Rather, he shows that many universal or near-universal cultural values and practices exist, giving a list of core values that are largely the same in all societies and cultures. Moreover, he explains why this is so by tracing the origins and development of values in the similar nature of all humans as biopsychological beings, in the preconditions of social life, and in the universal features of the natural world.

Continued on next page....

BOOKS OF INTEREST, CONTINUED

Altruism, he says, is as ubiquitous as egoism. He discusses its motivations and causes from far-seeing self-interest, the desire for respect and admiration, and a consequence of empathy to social evolutionary processes and the reward of acquiring power over another (“No good deed ever goes unpunished,” as Dorothy Parker said, may have a grain of truth in it.)

He devotes a chapter to a discussion of the most important of all human values, human life itself. He shows how the quantity and quality of individual human lives may change in the future and how they relate to the effort to control population growth, economic development, social inequality and justice, the debate about abortion, and the value of nonhuman forms of life.

Finally, he concludes with a discussion of the coming global society of the future and how some human values ought to be changed in order for human society to thrive under the new conditions it may bring. He discusses changes in the value of human life, reproductive values, the value of sufficiency, the value of women’s lives, the value of peace, the value of a world moral community, and the value of caring about future generations.

Bell is not proposing some absolute set of everlasting standards that permit no disagreement; rather, he gives reasons to support contentions of desirability, reasons that others can test. Bell’s major conclusion is that, for their own well-being, people ought to care about the freedom and welfare of all living human beings on Earth and of future generations of people as yet unborn.

Review of Values, Objectivity, and the Good Society

This is an important book that should interest all members of the Altruism & Social Solidarity Section. It is not specifically focused on altruism or solidarity *per se*, although pages 197-200 feature a helpful discussion of altruism, while issues related to solidarity (such as “group living,” p. 193) are addressed throughout. Its major concepts such as values, morality, objectivity, and the “good society” are clearly an essential part of any thoughtful discussion of altruism or solidarity. In fact, this book could encourage an expansion of how we frame altruism and solidarity to include features of the larger social context that might foster a better future for all humanity (and all living creatures). For example, Bell (p. 252) writes that we are denying life throughout the world “unnecessarily” because “we already have the technical knowledge to increase life expectancies dramatically in less developed societies where life expectancies at birth are relatively low. We could add as many as thirty years to the average longevity in the worst-off societies by eliminating famine (there is plenty of food on Earth to feed everyone but it is maldistributed...).” Can social scientific scholarship and popular discourse on altruism/solidarity be considered “progressive” if it continues to focus on primarily interpersonal exchanges, such as giving a few dollars to a person in need, while ignoring the global context? Bell’s book is especially useful in placing debates about altruism/solidarity in the broader context of universal values and global needs (see also Edward Tiryakian’s essay on global altruism, which is featured in the *Handbook of Public Sociology* reviewed in this issue on page 11).

I am not suggesting that the existing body of research on altruism/solidarity is inherently conservative or unhelpful. Instead, my point is that additional assessment of our current state of knowledge in terms of the “good society” and global well-being is warranted. This book points the way to develop such an assessment. Is our research on solidarity framed primarily around “in-groups” and how they foster what Sorokin referred to as the “tragedy of tribal altruism”? Would our understanding of altruism benefit from attention to the “Epistemic Implication Model” (p. 87) and its process of making value judgments objectively? Will we have to “stand against the dominant views of our own groups” (p. xvii) if we are

Continued on next page....

BOOKS OF INTEREST, CONTINUED

interested in improving the human condition and fostering higher levels of genuine other-regard? These are important questions for our emerging field to consider. What are the ultimate values upon which our research agendas are based? As Bell points out, there is no “value-free” position: “Academics, even those who reject the possibility of supporting ‘ought’ statements by ‘is’ statements, of course, engage in such behavior themselves all the time” (p. 92).

Perhaps the biggest impact of Bell’s work on the field of altruism/solidarity relates to a shift from merely describing and explaining “what is” to a consideration of “what ought to be.” This is where his attempt to provide a “foundation” for “futures studies” is especially helpful. In my educational background (kindergarten through Ph.D.), I cannot recall a single instance of serious attention to the issue of how to create a better future. This was often implicit, but never explicit. In this regard, Bell’s book could serve as a foundation for a paradigm shift in how the sociology of altruism/solidarity is practiced. Once again, the *Handbook of Public Sociology* (reviewed on page 11 of this newsletter) can be constructively paired with Bell’s work to help us imagine a way forward. Instead of simply describing patterns of altruism/solidarity and discussing causes, we might consider assessing these patterns in terms of objective values and inquiring about how to change them in ways that might foster a more desirable future. As the description of Bell’s book on page 13 of this newsletter explains, “Bell is not proposing some absolute set of everlasting standards that permit no disagreement; rather, he gives reasons to support contentions of desirability, reasons that others can test.” The tone of Bell’s arguments about objectivity and universal values suggest an open-minded willingness to experiment with truth, rather than an attempt to develop rigid dogma. Although the mention of objectivity and universal values can provoke much hostility among a generation of sociologists raised on a steady diet of cultural relativism and postmodern epistemology, there is really no good reason for this kind of knee-jerk reaction. By “universal values” Bell really means “near universal” (p. 177) and he devotes an entire chapter to the question of, “what human values ought to be changed” (p. 280).

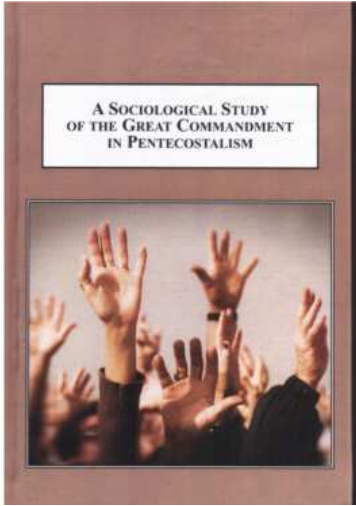
In the final analysis, Bell’s “critical realism” (p. 5) leads to the conclusion that, in the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., “we are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny” (p. 290). Many of the great altruists of history would agree. And even if some nonviolent visionaries—perhaps including King himself—might not agree with all of Bell’s value positions, including the “realistic” approval of the use of violence to achieve desired ends, such as controlling “sociopaths” (“if force is required... so be it,” p. 291), most will probably agree that Bell has identified useful objective criteria and processes for debating the merits of such issues. As an aside, Bell’s realism is shared by President Obama, who also defended violence in his recent Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, arguing, “A nonviolent movement could not have halted Hitler’s armies. Negotiations cannot convince al-Qaida’s leaders to lay down their arms. To say that force is sometimes necessary is not a call to cynicism, it is a recognition of history.” (Source: http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/eu_obama_nobel.) Not everyone will share Bell’s standpoint (or Obama’s for that matter), which is rooted squarely in the Enlightenment hope that reason, logic, and empirical data can point the way to the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people. One can find many exemplars of altruism who have little interest in logic or utility and are guided instead by religious or moral absolutes (e.g., Thou shall not kill). But in an era of fractured social discourse and “culture wars,” my own critical realism leads me to conclude that Bell’s book should be required reading for anyone interested in the possibility of a better future.

—Matthew T. Lee, University of Akron

Books of Interest continues on next page....

BOOKS OF INTEREST, CONTINUED

A Sociological Study of the Great Commandment in Pentecostalism: The Practice of Godly Love as Benevolent Service (Matthew T. Lee and Margaret M. Poloma. 2009. Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press.)



Summary: This book is an early product of the Flame of Love Project (see page 5 of this newsletter). It is based on 101 face-to-face interviews with pentecostal Christians across the United States who have been selected by their communities as exemplars of “Godly Love” (defined as the perceived interaction between divine and human love that enlivens and expands benevolence). It documents dramatic stories of the transforming power of an ongoing relationship with a loving God that teaches individuals to “see beyond their circumstances” and respond to an incessant call to benevolent service that is both self-sacrificial and self-affirming at the same time. In other words, spiritually powerful experiences redefine the costs and benefits of helping others in a way that blurs the boundary between egoism and altruism. Self-giving love paradoxically ends up being self-affirming in the sense that doing for others over a lifetime of benevolence in the service of a higher cause—even to the extent of risking one’s personal safety—can generate a sense of meaning and purpose that otherwise seems difficult to attain.

These findings challenge conventional understandings of altruism based on cost/benefit imagery and demonstrate one pathway to increasing compassionate love in our society and beyond.

Review of A Sociological Study of the Great Commandment in Pentecostalism

This short book offers an unusual and important perspective on the phenomenon known to sociologists as *altruism* or *pro-social behavior*. It is well-written, well organized, and well documented. The authors clearly know their subject and are strongly – one might say “passionately” – engaged with the issues they discuss. The use of in-depth interviews as a primary data source is appropriate and well executed.

The organizing principle of the book is the variety (and limits) of selfless behavior. The subtext consists of a narrative on religious experience and the people who have such experience among followers of Pentecostal Christianity. A focus on religion and “Godly Love” is not entirely unknown in the sociological study of altruism. As the authors indicate, this theme characterizes the work of Pitirim A. Sorokin, especially during the later years when he was Director of the Harvard Center for the Study of Creative Altruism.

The book is important, in large part, because it is timely. The social scientific study of selfless behavior, which essentially ceased after the death of Sorokin in 1968, is now experiencing a revival in sociology and related disciplines. Major funding for research on the subject has been made available by the Fetzer Foundation, The John Templeton Foundation (which indirectly supported the study by Lee and Poloma through the Flame of Love Research Project), the Eli Lilly Foundation (which sponsored Sorokin’s pioneering work), and other organizations. Books and articles on the subject, including articles in major professional journals, now abound. And in 2009, some four decades after Sorokin served as President of the American Sociological Association, the organization has recognized a new section-in-formation on “Altruism and Social Solidarity.” In short, the time is right for a discussion like this of the religious dimensions of the phenomenon.

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BOOKS OF INTEREST, CONTINUED

The concept of “Godly Love” – defined as the “dynamic interaction between divine and human love that enlivens and expands benevolence” (p. 7) – is indicative of the ways in which the authors merge theological and social scientific concerns. The concept is associated with the Great Commandment in Pentecostal Christianity: to love God and to love one’s neighbor. (Incidentally, this Commandment is part of most of the world’s major religions and ethical systems, as the authors acknowledge, e.g., in their reference to Spinoza.). According to this doctrine – as explicated by the authors – to love God unconditionally entails an appreciation that such a commitment is unconditionally reciprocated and fosters benevolence towards others. But the expression of this benevolence is shaped by social forces: “In this way, individuals are ‘social filters’ of God’s love who reproduce structure through their interactions with others” (p. 10). This role extends beyond individuals: “The central theme of this book is that people, institutions, and cultural resources are all social filters of Godly Love” (p. 140).

Another point at which theology and sociology intersect is in the authors’ use of “Exemplars and Collaborators of Godly Love” as their interview subjects. In more mundane terms, the first group might be referred to as role models. “Their status as exemplars was ascertained by reviewing local and national news sources for feature stories, public recognition for benevolent service, and through the [Institute Core Research Group’s] extensive connections with the Pentecostal community” (p. 69; this can be compared with Sorokin’s interviews with “Good Neighbors”). Collaborators were identified by the Exemplars as people who closely follow their example (although many candidates for Collaborator status turned out to be Exemplars). Whereas at first these labels might seem contrived, when understood in context they forge an important linkage between the religious and the sociological understanding of altruistic behavior as a variable.

To reiterate, this is a nicely constructed book that is well worth reading. I strongly recommend it.

—Jay Weinstein, Eastern Michigan University

ALTRUISM, SOLIDARITY AND ASA

—Lawrence T. Nichols, West Virginia University

Vince Jeffries has asked me to share with colleagues in our section-in-formation some reflections that I had initially circulated last August, along with further thoughts. So please take what follows "for whatever it's worth."

Sociology as a field has long faced accusations of seeking utopias (a word made famous by Sir Thomas More that means, approximately, "nowhere"). There is indeed some basis for this view, since it is a matter of historical record that early modern figures in the field, including Comte, Saint Simon and Marx, were linked with contemporary visionary movements to transform government and build communal ways of living. And we are only a few decades removed from the rediscovery of Marx and Engels by U.S. sociologists, the outpouring of books on "radical sociology" and the publication of a journal called *The Insurgent Sociologist*.

Continued on page 28....

Syllabus for Matthew T. Lee's Altruism Course: "Sociology of Love"

Sociology of Love

Instructor: Dr. Matthew T. Lee, Department of Sociology, University of Akron, Akron, OH

Required Readings

- A) Bell Hooks. 2001. *All About Love: New Visions*. New York: Harper Paperbacks.
- B) Chapters and articles on Web CT (<https://webct.uakron.edu/>).
- C) Read one of the following books:
- 1) Eknath Easwaran. 1997. *Gandhi, the Man: The Story of His Transformation*. 3rd ed. Tomales, CA: Nilgiri Press. Available at Bierce Library (DS481.G3 E19 1997)
 - 2) Eknath Easwaran. 1999. *Nonviolent Soldier of Islam: Badshah Khan, a Man to Match his Mountains*. Tomales, CA: Nilgiri Press. Available through Ohiolink.
 - 3) Clayborne Carson (ed.). 1998. *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.* New York: Warner Books. Available at Bierce Library (E185.97.K5 A52 1998)
 - 4) Claude Anshin Thomas. 2004. *At Hell's Gate: A Soldier's Journey from War to Peace*. Boston: Shambhala. Available through Ohiolink.

Course Objective

The major objective of this senior-level course is to critically assess the relation of diverse types of love to the social order.

Course Requirements

- 1) **QUIZZES** There will be no mid-term or final exams in this class. Instead, your learning will be assessed by your performance on 5 quizzes (20 points each), two written assignments, and class participation. Questions for the quizzes will be in the multiple choice format and will be based on the assigned readings and the material presented in class. The quiz schedule is listed in the Class Schedule below.
- 2) **WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT #1** – For this assignment, you will write a reflective review of the book that you chose from Section B of the required readings. Each of these books recounts the life of an “exemplar” of altruism who was deeply engaged with one of the major world religious traditions (i.e., Hinduism, Islam, Judeo-Christianity, Buddhism). If you would like to propose an alternative book linked to another tradition, discuss this with the instructor early in the semester.

Continued on next page....

Your book review will contain two parts. In the first part, you will review the influences that shaped the altruism of the subject featured in the book. What social circumstances were important? What role did specific life events play? To what extent are personality traits relevant? What about spiritual experiences? In the second part, you will offer your own assessment of the subject's altruism. In what ways (if any) did you find it inspiring (or discouraging)? What lessons might you apply to your own life? What are the limitations of the subject's thoughts and actions? This paper is due on April 3rd. More details will be provided in class.

3) **WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT #2** – Some writers argue that love is a state of being, a feeling, or a relationship with another person that arises involuntarily and cannot be controlled. Others disagree, including Bell Hooks in *All About Love* (pp. 171-2). Quoting psychologists Erich Fromm and M. Scott Peck, Hooks argues that love is not an involuntary feeling or spontaneously arising relationship, but rather an “act of will” which implies that “we choose to love.” Your assignment is to reflect on these competing claims by conducting interviews with two friends, relatives, or acquaintances in order to assess their perspective on love as voluntary and reflective, or involuntary and unreflective (or both). You will then compare and contrast the views of your interviewees with your own understanding of love in a reflective paper. One goal of this paper is to increase your understanding of the structural and cultural basis of your beliefs about love. You may focus on any (or all) of the types of love discussed in class: storge, philia, eros, or agape. Your analysis must be grounded in course material – the selection from Ann Swidler's book assigned for Feb. 22nd is especially relevant. This paper is due on May 3rd. More details will be provided in class.

4) **PARTICIPATION** For this course to work it is important that we all attend class, arriving on time, well-prepared to be active participants in class discussions. If you are unwilling to participate in class discussions, you should consider dropping the class. Participation points will be awarded according to the quality and quantity of your participation. Simply attending class will not earn participation points.

Grading Scale

Quizzes (5)	20 points each	100 points total	33%
Written Assignment #1	70	70	23%
Written Assignment #2	100	100	33%
Participation	NA	<u>30</u>	<u>10%</u>
TOTAL:		300	100%

LETTER GRADE:	A	93-100	C+	77-79	D-	60-62
	A-	90-92	C	73-76	F	Below 60
	B+	87-89	C-	70-72		
	B	83-86	D+	67-69		
	B-	80-82	D	63-66		

Continued on next page....

CLASS SCHEDULE

Introduction

T 1/16

Introduction to the Course and Discussion of Syllabus

TH 1/18

What is Love?

Hooks, Bell. 2001. *All About Love: New Visions*. NY: Harper Paperbacks. Pp. xv-xxix (“Introduction”) and pp. 1-14 (“Clarity: Give Love Words”).

T 1/23

The Many Faces of Love

- 1) Slater, Lauren. 2006(February). “True Love.” *National Geographic*. Pp. 34-49.
- 2) Barasch, Marc Ian. 2005. “The Giveaway.” Pp. 147-169 in *Field Notes on the Compassionate Life: A Search for the Soul of Kindness*. Emmaus, PA: Rodale.

Love and its Discontents

TH 1/25

Pseudo Love I

Fromm, Erich. 1956. “Love and its Disintegration in Contemporary Western Society.” Pp. 77-98 in *The Art of Loving*. NY: Harper and Row.

T 1/30

Pseudo Love II

- 1) Lewis, C.S. 1988[1960]. “Affection.” Pp. 31-56 in *The Four Loves*. NY: Harcourt.
- 2) Hitchens, Christopher. 1995. “Good Works and Heroic Virtues.” Pp. 37-50 in *The Missionary Position: Mother Teresa in Theory and Practice*. London: Verso.

TH 2/1 *Quiz 1*

Pseudo Love III

Ehrenreich, Barbara. 1986. “Beatlemania: Girls Just Want to Have Fun.” Pp. 10-32 in *Re-Making Love: The Feminization of Sex*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday.

T 2/6

The Dark Side of Love I

- 1) Wood, Julia T. 2001. “The Normalization of Violence in Heterosexual Romantic Relationships: Women's Narratives of Love and Violence.” *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*. 18:239-261.
- 2) Morman, Mark. 1998. “I Love You, Man’: Overt Expressions of Affection in Male-Male Interaction.” *Sex Roles*. 38:871-881.

Continued on next page....

TH 2/8

The Dark Side of Love II

Goldman, Emma. 1996[1934]. "What We Did About the Slaughter at Homestead." Pp. 280-293 in *Red Emma Speaks: An Emma Goldman Reader*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International.

T 2/13

The Dark Side of Love III

- 1) Furfey, Paul Hanly. 1966. "The Respectable Murderers." Pp. 17-27 in *The Respectable Murderers: Social Evil and Christian Conscience*. NY: Herder and Herder.
- 2) Gareau, Frederick H. 2004. "The Roots of the War on Terrorism: Washington's Policies in the Middle East." Pp. 172-181 in *State Terrorism and the United States: From Counterinsurgency to the War on Terrorism*. Atlanta: Clarity Press.

TH 2/15

Loveless Work

Hooks, Bell. 2001. "Greed: Simply Love" Pp. 103-125 in *All About Love: New Visions*. NY: Harper Paperbacks.

Romantic Love

T 2/20

President's Day – Class Cancelled

TH 2/22

*Introduction *Quiz 2**

- 1) Hooks, Bell. 2001. "Romance: Sweet Love." Pp. 167-188 in *All About Love: New Visions*. NY: Harper Paperbacks.
- 2) Swidler, Ann. 2001. "Settled and Unsettled Lives." Pp. 89-107 in *Talk of Love: How Culture Matters*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

T 2/27

The Social Meaning of Romance

Jackson, Stevi. 1993. "Even Sociologists Fall in Love: An Exploration in the Sociology of Emotions." *Sociology*. 27:201-220.

TH 3/1

Consuming the Romantic Utopia

Illouz, Eva. 1997. "The Class of Love." Pp. 247-287 in *Consuming the Romantic Utopia: Love and the Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Continued on next page....

T 3/6

The Social Control of Romantic Love

- 1) Goode, William J. 1959. "The Theoretical Importance of Love." *American Sociological Review*. 24:38-47.
- 2) Goozner, Merrill. 1996. "Private Lives." Pp. 194-197 in Garth Massey (ed.). *Readings for Sociology* (2/e). NY: W.W. Norton.

TH 3/8

Love and Marriage

Coontz, Stephanie. 2005. *Marriage, a History: How Love Conquered Marriage*. NY: Penguin. Pp. 1-12 ("Introduction") and pp. 15-23 ("The Radical Idea of Marrying for Love").

New Visions of Love

T 3/13

Spirituality and Love *Quiz 3*

Hooks, Bell. 2001. "Spirituality." Pp. 51-83 in *All About Love: New Visions*. NY: Harper Paperbacks.

T 3/20

Spring Break – Class Cancelled

TH 3/22

Spring Break – Class Cancelled

T 3/27

Mutuality

Fellman, Gordon. 1998. *Rambo and the Dalai Lama: The Compulsion to Win and Its Threat to Human Survival*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press. Pp. 23-36 ("Two Paradigms") and pp. 131-144 ("The Other as Compliment Rather than Threat").

TH 3/29

Masculinity and Love

Thompson, Cooper. 1992[1986]. "A New Vision of Masculinity." Pp. 77-83 in Melita Schaum and Connie Glanagan (eds.) *Gender Images: Readings for Composition*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

T 4/3

Exemplars of Altruism

Read one book from Section B in "Required Readings"

Written Assignment #1 Due

Continued on next page....

Compassionate Love

T 4/10

Introduction

Matthew T. Lee and Margaret M. Poloma. 2007. *Altruism, Compassion, and Unlimited Love in Theory and Practice: A Social Science Approach to the Interdisciplinary Literature*. "Chapter 1." Unpublished manuscript.

TH 4/12

Social Science I *Quiz 4*

Lee and Poloma, first half of Chapter 2 (pp. 1-21)

T 4/17

Social Science II

Lee and Poloma, second half of Chapter 2 ("Cultures of Altruism" to the end)

TH 4/19

Religion I

Lee and Poloma, first half of Chapter 3 (pp. 1-18)

T 4/24

Religion II

Lee and Poloma, second half of Chapter 3 ("Religious Cultures and Altruism" to the end)

TH 4/26

Humanities I

Lee and Poloma, first half of Chapter 4 (pp. 1-16)

T 5/1

Humanities II *Quiz 5*

Lee and Poloma, second half of Chapter 4 ("The Duty to Go Beyond the Call of Duty" to the end)

TH 5/3

Summary and Discussion of Student Papers

Written Assignment #2 Due

*****Editor's Note: I was asked to include this syllabus in the newsletter shortly before the distribution deadline. This is an old version of a syllabus that I am currently revising for Spring 2010.*****

colleagues.

In Soviet times the official Communist ideology prescribed that solidarity be considered through the prism of class conflict, mainly as workers' solidarity in their struggle against the exploiting classes. From that perspective altruism was commonly dealt with as a "bourgeois concept" leading one away from the goals of class struggle. Nevertheless, the Soviet era saw serious research on altruism as well. For instance, at the beginning of the 1970s V. Efroimson issued a work in which he, advancing A. Comte's approach, regarded altruism as "the group of emotions which prompts one to commit deeds unprofitable and even dangerous for one, but useful for other people."²

It should be stressed that solidarism was the ideology of the National Alliance of Russian Solidarists (known by its Russian abbreviation "NTS"), a Russian patriotic anticommunist organization founded in 1930 by a group of young Russian White emigres in the former Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The ideology of NTS was built on the Christian understanding of people's collective social responsibility for each other's welfare, and the voluntary cooperation between the different layers (as opposed to Marxist concept of classes) of society. It also believed strongly in the "sanctity of the individual," in contrast to Marxist collectivism. From a 1967 English language NTS pamphlet: "Unlike Communism, Solidarism provides a twentieth-century basis for dealing with present day issues. It rejects a purely materialistic approach to social, economic and political problems. It postulates that man, rather than matter, is the chief problem today. It rejects the concept of class warfare and hatred, and seeks to replace this dubious principle with the idea of co-operation (solidarity), brotherhood, Christian tolerance and charity. Solidarism believes in the innate dignity of the individual and seeks to safeguard as inalienable rights his freedom of speech, conscience and political organization. Solidarists in no way claim that their ideas represent the final answer to all problems, but they believe that man who is master of the atom bomb must also become master of himself and his destiny."³ The most important theorist of Russian solidarism was Sergei Levitsky (1908-1983).⁴ The ideas of Solidarists have important implications for the future theoretical and research agenda of sociology.

After the fall of the Communist regime in 1991 Russian sociology was set free from ideological pressure. That created necessary prerequisites for the exploration of the Western tradition of sociological research on solidarity and altruism, above all E. Durkheim's legacy. V. Yadov, who was head of the Institute of Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences in the 1990s, paid particular attention to theoretical and empirical studies of solidarity. Among other scholars who study various aspects of social solidarity, altruism, empathy and the embeddedness of the given phenomena in Russian society we can name A. Gofman, A. Samarin, N. Tikhonova, L. Drobizheva, S. Patrushev, O. Yanitsky, A. Zdravomyslov (1928-2009) and others. In general, however, studies of social solidarity and altruism in Russia are still quite varied in character. Thus the need to form a corresponding thematically oriented research community is becoming more and more evident.

The authors of the present article are participating in a new project of issuing a "Sociological Yearbook" ("Sotsiologicheskii Ezhegodnik"). Taking into account the aforementioned need, they intend to contribute to the consolidation of the given currents of sociological research by means of publishing respective thematic sections in the yearbook. Moreover, we plan to organize a special session on social solidarity at the next All-Russia Sociological Congress.

We would be grateful to our colleagues in the USA, who make still greater efforts to institutionalize solidarity and altruism research within the American Sociological Association, for advice and shar-

ing of experience. We would also be grateful if they would send us literature on the topics in question.

Footnotes

1. Solovyov V. S. Zhalost i altruism (Pity and altruism) // Knizhka nedeli (Book of the week). – Moscow: 1895, March (in Russian); in English: Solovyov V.S. Pity and altruism // Solovyov V.S. The justification of the good: An essay on moral philosophy. – Grand Rapids (MI): Eerdmans, 2005. – P. 53–54. – (1st ed. 1918).
2. Efroimson V.P. Rodoslovnaya altruizma: Altruism genealogy // Novy mir (New world). – Moscow, 1971. – N 10. – P. 199. – (In Russian).
3. Mode of access: [http://www.absoluteastronomy.com/topics/National Alliance of Russian Solidarists](http://www.absoluteastronomy.com/topics/National_Alliance_of_Russian_Solidarists)
4. Levitsky S. The Ideology of NTS // Russian Review, vol. 31, No. 4 (Oct. 1972).



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Documentary in the Spotlight: “I Am Because We Are”

For several decades, the pop-star, diva Madonna has provided a fertile ground for sociological and cultural investigation. From postmodern icon to feminist nouveau, her music, image and persona have tantalized global, popular culture. Her latest endeavor, however, is a surprising twist on her controversial and provocative cultural legacy. With the documentary film, “I Am Because We Are,” Madonna takes us on a powerful and personal journey into the African country of Malawi where millions of young children have become orphaned as a result of famine, HIV/AIDS, and the simple post-colonial neglect of the industrialized and Western world. The film features interviews with President Bill Clinton and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, among others, who outline the history of Malawi, express their compassionate concern over the plight of its people and culture, and outline strategies for intervention and Malawian self-sufficiency. The title of the film is a translation of the Bantu term “Ubuntu,” which expresses the interconnectedness of human beings, a message that is certainly central to sociological practice and perspective. While one may not be a fan of Madonna’s music or its message, the film “I Am Because We Are” has a strong message of compassion that may be of interest to sociologists interested in the study of altruism. It is ideal for use in the classroom in addressing issues related to inequality, globalization, political sociology, and community. The film can be streamed for free on-line here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KamKXZHXMUA>; <http://www.hulu.com/watch/64450/i-am-because-we-are>.

—David Boyns, California State University (Northridge)

Sorokin Research Center, *continued from page 4*

Election that elected Pitirim Sorokin as President of the American Sociological Association; (2) The last year of Pitirim Sorokin's life (1967/68) and the beginnings of "Sorokiniana;" (3) Correspondence over many years with prominent world figures of the mid-twentieth century. This section presents unpublished letters of famous sociologists such as Florian Znaniecki, Robert Merton, Talcott Parsons, and Abraham Maslow; politicians such as Presidents Herbert Hoover, John F. Kennedy, and the Head of the Russian Provisional Government, Alexander Kerenski; scientists and public figures such as Albert Einstein, Albert Schweitzer, and others.

As part of an effort to educate a wide public about Pitirim Sorokin's contributions to social science and the relevance of his ideas today, the Center coordinated an International Sociological Conference devoted to his intellectual legacy (February 2009, Syktyvkar). In addition two web-sites have been designed (in English: www.pavelkrotov.com and Russian: www.pitirimsorokin.org) to present full and accurate information on Sorokin's life and writings. These sites are not fully completed as yet but are accessible and already contain much material. This work is being coordinated with an ongoing digitizing project for materials at the University of Saskatchewan. The web sites are also intended to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas among intellectuals the world over who may be interested in the legacy of this prominent thinker. Two themes deserving early discussion are those of Altruism and the philosophy of Integralism, and how these concepts of Sorokin are relevant for the modern world.

The Pitirim Sorokin Research Center in Komi emerged at a time when Russia like other countries of the world was stricken by new fiscal and social challenges. Unlike societies in many of the other countries, Russian society still has a vivid memory of catastrophic side-effects from the "shock therapy" remedies used during the 1990s to adjust the country away from Communism. Today, authorities realize that similar approaches will not be tolerated by the people. Thus the time has come to turn to other remedies that incorporate a more thorough understanding of human nature and creativity and are guided by the wisdom of thinkers who spent their lives looking for effective solutions to social crises.



Images of Pitirim Sorokin

To Be or Not To Be, *continued from page 1*

At the end of the 2009 ASA membership year on September 30th we had 145 members. We need to raise our numbers to a minimum of 300, more if possible. Until we do this we are not an established section, our privileges within ASA are limited, and our continued existence remains in jeopardy.

Once we have 300 members we will become an established section. Then, and only then, will we be able to have such activities as: at least one session at the annual ASA Meetings, or more if our membership is sufficient; regularly elected Section Officers; awards for scholarly work on altruism and social solidarity that are formally recognized by the ASA; and a stable context to develop a community of scholars dedicated to studying these topics.

Our mission involves a great and noble task: to provide knowledge and understanding about altruism and social solidarity. The phenomena we study range from the micro to the meso to the macro: from individuals, to groups of various sizes, to countries, and to the globe. Because of its diversity and complexity, many terms have been used to indicate particular aspects of our subject matter: altruism, unlimited love, cooperation, morality, benevolent love, universalizing solidarity, global altruism, charity, altruistic love, caring, true friendship, compassionate love, generosity, social solidarity, familialistic relationships, to name several. Clarifying and focusing this terminology and conceptualization, and in so doing identifying our subject matter, is one of the tasks we must address in the future.

For now, the important point is the central characteristic of our subject matter: the attempt to benefit the other, to do good to them, to freely give to them for their welfare. In this sense our subject matter is a fundamental aspect of individual life and of sociocultural processes and structures. Its variation from low to high, in all its manifestations and contexts, is of profound sociological and practical significance. This significance encompasses our scholarly endeavors with great responsibility, both to the profession and to the general society.

Yet sociology has largely ignored this topic. Because of this our task is heightened: we have to create interest in a topical area and systematically identify and explicate its subject matter. As we progress in doing this we can more effectively work together to firmly establish altruism and social solidarity as one of the primary fields of scholarly endeavor in our discipline. This will be a long term and difficult task. Two articles in this Newsletter, by Efremenko and Evseeva, and by Krotov, show that sociologists in Russia are working on a similar project. We have a unique opportunity to learn from and support each other in this international endeavor.

For the present, let's begin to develop a sense of common purpose and collective identity. Let's take our first concerted and decisive act as a community of scholars and obtain the needed membership to establish a Section on Altruism and Social Solidarity within the American Sociological Association.

For those who were members last year, please do join again for 2010; for 2008 signers of the original petition that made possible our becoming a section in formation, please do rejoin; for those just learning of our section, we invite you to join us.

For all, and particularly those who are committed to this section, please try to convince others to join. The most effective way to do this is by direct interpersonal contact. When this isn't possible, circulating the Mission Statement (see page 7) and copies of the Newsletter along with a personal invitation

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To Be or Not To Be, *Continued from page 26*

to join can reach others through the internet.

Timing may be important. I believe most send in their yearly renewal to ASA in December or the first part of January. Whatever you can do in this time period would be particularly effective.

As always, many thanks to each of you, and to all of you, for your efforts. Because of your efforts, we will succeed.

—Vincent Jeffries, *California State University (Northridge)*
Acting Chairperson, Altruism & Social Solidarity Section-in-Formation

ALTRUISM AND COGNITIVE SOCIOLOGY, *Continued from page 8*

More generally, this implies that we might gain a much improved understanding of altruism if we uncover how specific cultural-cognitive models interact with specific situations to give rise (or not) to altruistic conduct. In reality, there is probably not one “altruism,” but many, each major type supported by a different cultural “complex of meaning” (Weber 1978:9) and possessing different implications for different situations. For instance, an altruism motivated by concerns about harm and fairness might manifest itself very differently than an altruism motivated by concerns of ingroup solidarity or spiritual purity, though both might depart significantly from pure economic self-interest (see Haidt and Bjorklund 2008).

None of this requires adopting unrealistic cognitive assumptions about our reliance on conscious cultural “rules.” Even more than a century ago, Weber knew that “[i]n the great majority of cases actual action goes on in a state of inarticulate half-consciousness or actual unconsciousness of its subjective meaning” (1978:21; see also Vaisey 2009). But the meanings are there. Finding them and understanding their implications will take all of our theoretical and methodological ingenuity, but I believe the effort will be worth it. Establishing that altruism is “more than a feeling” would constitute an important contribution to a more complete understanding of the human experience.

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ALTRUISTIC SOCIOLOGY, *Continued from page 9*

My experiences in working with the young-men in this residential program have given me a new-found interest in the sociology of altruism, and have shown me how important an altruistic sociology can be not only for our sociological practice, but for the broader societal community. Academic sociology and sociological practice can intersect in important and invigorating ways, as the principles of sociology are applied toward engaging and improving the surrounding social world. While, for some, this lesson may seem self-evident, for others, like me, it has taken on new and more personal meaning. Our social world(s) can benefit a great deal from what we do, and what we know, as sociologists. Sometimes it just takes a simple sociology class and a little compassion.

ALTRUISM AND SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP, *Continued from page 10*

(b) enjoying the satisfaction of the person, group, or other target of benefits being helped (if the target seems satisfied by the altruistic act); and sometimes (c) enjoying the gratitude expressed by the target of benefits or representatives of it. Nonetheless this is altruism, the attitude disposing a person to help others, because of concern for their welfare or satisfaction or both.

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ALTRUISM, SOLIDARITY AND ASA, *Continued from page 16*

If sociologists generally can be labeled as utopians, then it would seem that the enterprise of creating a section on altruism and social solidarity might be considered at the far end of a far-out field--all the more so as the section's vision owes so much to the work of Pitirim A. Sorokin, who came to be seen as a popular prophet and apostate scientist. Could there have been anything less realistic than Sorokin's project of launching "amitology," a "science of love," in the early years of the Cold War and the nuclear arms race?

As Ed Tiryakian showed in the *festschrift* volume he organized, Sorokin's sociology was focused on values and their historical fluctuations. Interestingly, Sorokin's rival at Harvard, Talcott Parsons, likewise emphasized values and raised especially the issue of "ultimate values." In this connection we might ask, What are the ultimate values of sociology, and, more specifically the ultimate values of professional associations such as ASA?

From one perspective, we might say that there has long been a dialectical struggle between the values of scientific knowledge and political activism, without a final victory to either faction. Many early sociologists in the U.S. were Progressives, or "settlement house" social scientists (e.g., the Jane Addams/Hull House circle), as well as "muckrakers" (e.g., Edward A. Ross and his oracles against "the criminaloids" of the business class).

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ALTRUISM, SOLIDARITY AND ASA, *Continued from page 28*

They were sometimes also Christian ministers or the children of ministers, and some taught in departments of social ethics. Their successors, however, turned to the project of science-building in a more dispassionate sense, under pressure from universities (including peer departments) to emulate the natural sciences. We recall here especially such figures as Robert E. Park, William Ogburn and F. Stuart Chapin. With the advent of the turbulent 1960s there was again a turn toward politics, which has been reflected in the past decade in the movement for a "public sociology."

It seems to me fair to say that, within the heavily politicized atmosphere of ASA, justice has become the apparent "ultimate value." Despite occasional revolutionary rhetoric, the characteristic posture of ASA sociologists has been reformist and has, I think, reflected the strong influence of the African-American Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. And justice has been further defined as "distributive" justice (with a relative neglect of its other aspects).

My point is this: the vision of our section-information goes beyond justice, though without ever denigrating or dismissing it. The perspective of compassion, solidarity and unlimited love offers a larger "sacred canopy" (in Peter Berger's memorable phrase) within which justice can be located and accorded an appropriate place of honor.

However, to quote Berger again (from *An Invitation to Sociology*), this perspective might well be regarded as "subversive," especially by colleagues who believe that the central issue is--and must always be--power, including domination, resistance and empowerment of the op-

pressed. Indeed, one can make a good case that this outlook is largely institutionalized within ASA, as reflected not only in the Marxist section, but more revealingly in the combined section on race, gender and class. Within the past decade, an annual ASA conference was explicitly organized around this theme, and recent presidential addresses have also echoed it.

We might therefore draw the conclusion that our section-information is not only utopian but also politically incorrect, and we might anticipate that some colleagues could regard the project as a manifestation of "false consciousness" and even a threat to sociology's proper purpose of creating knowledge that leads to a more just social order.

My own view is this: justice cannot be regarded as an isolated absolute, but must always be understood within the larger context of a set of ideals, where it must be subordinate to the values of compassion and unlimited love. Otherwise, a commitment to justice easily degenerates into a permanent state of suspicion (even a paranoid enemies mentality), hostility, hatred and tendencies toward violence (beginning with attitudes of harsh condemnation). The work that we and others do on altruism and social solidarity could therefore nurture a broader vision of the common good and serve as an invitation to sociology to aim higher, perhaps even to the point of a paradigm shift in which forgiveness, reconciliation and the production of love energy (in Sorokin's phrase) would be fundamental. Like Gandhi, we could still work for change, but with what some have called Gandhi's "Franciscan gaiety." And sociology might rediscover a revivifying joy. How utopian is that?



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