

RC 32 November 2009 News



*Wishing you peace and laughter
and many shared moments with your near and dear
ones.*

*Wishing you blue skies, tranquil waters, green glades,
and time,
to breathe in tune with the universe.*

Co-Presidents Report: Margaret Abraham and Esther Ngan-Ling Chow

It is almost the end of 2009 and we are well on our way to preparing the RC32 program for the 2010 for the XVII ISA World Congress of Sociology in Gothenburg, Sweden from 11 through 17 July, 2010. With successful RC32 interims in Athens (2007), Madrid (2008), and Barcelona (2008) behind us, the primary goal in 2009 for us as co-presidents was to try and develop with the RC32 Board a strong program for the 2010 World Congress. The RC32 deadline for submissions to call for papers closed on Nov. 1st 2009. We have had an overwhelmingly positive response of submissions to the RC 32 and to our joint session with our partners in other RCs. Session organizers are busy with the review process and we will report on the preliminary program in our next newsletter.

This year on August 10th 2009, RC32 board members met informally for a one hour meeting during the 104th Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association held in San Francisco, California. Our meeting was devoted to discussing the RC32 program for the upcoming ISA World Congress of Sociology. Some of the issues covered included the roles and responsibilities of RC32 board members for a strong and diverse program. We discussed ways to encourage submissions for panel sessions; to outreach to ensure diversity in submissions, including regional representation; timely process of letters and supporting material for obtaining visas; and outreach for the “Essay Competition for New Scholars”.

An important part of our discussion was the importance of funding of RC 32 participants from the Global South. It was noted that in the past, lack of representation of the Global South at the ISA World Congress has been very noticeable, with the exception of the World Congress in Durban, South Africa (where there was a relatively substantial representation of participants from African countries unlike in the past). Concerns were expressed by members that that this time too getting participants from the Global South to participate in this World Congress would be challenging without some financial support. We discussed strategies for sources of possible funding. These included: ISA Financial support to attend ISA World Congress of Sociology, Gothenburg 2010 through (1) ISA Travel grant and (2) ISA registration grants. Use of RC 32 funds: This should include (1) an appropriate amount from the existing RC 32 balance in the RC 32 funds, (2) from RC32 membership dues, and (3) solidarity fund. The need for individual board members to raise money from their respective institutions, governments, personal pledges and other appropriate funding from other sources was also seen as a way to increase the pool. RC32 accepts contributions to the solidarity fund to financially support our members from the Global South. We also discussed the possibility of support from ASA/SWS or other such associations. We hope that our goals for a strong program will

be brought to fruition and that many RC32 members will participate in XVII ISA World Congress of Sociology in Gothenburg, Sweden. For more details on the conference and important deadlines including ISA funding, check the ISA website: <http://www.isa-sociology.org/congress2010/>

A brief word about RC32 Board elections: We will be holding the RC32 Board elections early next year and encourage you to give some thought to the upcoming election. An election committee will be responsible for soliciting nominations for positions on the RC 32 Board (2010-2014) and for conducting the RC 32 Board elections.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to thank the RC32 Board, RC 32 members and organizational partners for the many ways that you individually and collectively support the goals of RC 32. We hope that you will encourage your colleagues and friends to become members of ISA-RC32.

Please send your materials for the spring newsletter by March 15th, 2010, to bandanapurkayastha@yahoo.com. Thanks.

I apologize for the delay in sending this newsletter. I was hoping we would get some more material, but it is a busy time of the year for everyone. Best, Bandana.

PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS

Ann Denis & Devorah Kalekin -Fishman (eds). 2009. *The ISA Handbook in Contemporary Sociology: Conflict, Cooperation and Competition*. London : Sage.

(NB ISA members receive a 45% discount on all Sage Publications books.)

A thirty-chapter volume in which an international selection of authors from the North and South examine contemporary developments in subfields of sociology from the theoretical perspectives of conflict, cooperation and/or competition.

Eva Alterman Blay- *Assassinato de Mulheres e Direitos Humanos (Murder of Women and Human Rights)* . São Paulo. Editora 34. 2008.248 p. ISBN 978-85-7326-394-7, has received very favorable reviews.

SPECIAL ISSUES -

- ❖ *Alpha Possamai-Inesedy* was the guest Editor of a Special Issue ‘Religion, Spirituality and Birthing’ for *Australian Religion Studies Review* 22.2 (2009). The special issue includes her article ‘The Silence of Spirituality within Sociology of Childbirth: Epistemological and Methodological Considerations.’
- ❖ Sirma Bilge & Ann Denis (eds). 2010. Special Issue – ‘Women, Intersectionality and Diasporas’, *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 31, 1. This special issue, which draws from papers presented at the joint RC05-RC32 sessions on ‘Women, Intersectionality and Diasporas’ at the Barcelona ISA Forum, is dedicated to the late Helen Ralston, a long-time, and active member of both these RCs. The theme of the sessions and the papers selected for inclusion in the special issue were informed by Helen’s research interests.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Analia Torres:

Dear All

I am sorry to communicate so late this news. But I think you would like to know that I was elected **President of the European Sociological Association** in the largest ESA Conference ever, a meeting in Lisboa 2-5 September 2009. See please for further information www.analiatorres.net.

All the best to everyone.

Analia (Analia Torres). (note: this was sent in October 09)

Dear All,

Thank you a lot for all your warm and kind congratulations.

I am in the middle of our meeting but I do not resist to tell you something just to open your "apetite".

For our 9th Conference in Lisboa - the largest ever that joined more than 2600 sociologists from 55 countries...! - a group of colleagues, that I joined and supported very strongly, constituted for the first time our **Research Network 33 Women and Gender Studies**. And guess what? We had more than one hundred abstract proposals... we were all very happy and the papers and discussions that I attended to were all very interesting. Networking really works!!!

Hope to see you all in Goteborg if not before!

All the best

Analia

Margaret Abraham

Margaret Abraham was honored on October 22, 2009 at the Celebration of Suburban Diversity, hosted by National Center for Suburban Studies, Hofstra University for her work on the Provost's Taskforce on faculty diversity and for her active role in promoting diversity initiatives on campus.

(Picture on next page)



Ann Denis has been named Professor Emerita at the University of Ottawa , effective January 1, 2010.

Bandana Purkayastha was awarded the 2009 Asia and Asian American teaching award at the American Sociological Association Annual Meeting in San Francisco in August this year.

Doing Public Sociologies:

Margaret Abraham has had a long term commitment to linking activism and research in ending violence against women. This year she was invited by Sakhi for South Asian women, a community based organization in New York, that works to end to end violence against women (and an organization with which she has been involved in research and activism) to co-chair the Sakhi's benefit event to celebrate the organization's 20 years of work towards ending violence against women . The event held on October 2nd 2009, was attended by 280 people, highlighted the importance of working together in ending violence against women, and helped raise over \$150, 000 to support the invaluable work that Sakhi does to bring about change. To learn about Sakhi for South Asian Women, see: <http://www.sakhi.org> and for the 20th anniversary event see <http://sakhi.org/change/Gala2009.php>

CONFERENCES organized by members:

International Gender Conference in Beijing, China

By Esther Ngan-ling Chow

An international conference, “Gender and Social Transformation: Global, Transnational and Local Realities and Perspectives” was held on July 17-19, 2009 in Beijing, China. It was a conference three years in the making organized by Esther Ngan-ling Chow and Tan Lin, both members of RC32, was finally taken place in the glamorous capital of Beijing. It was attended by over 200 conference participants, among which 75 of them were international participants from 24 countries. In our midst, there are about 18 of ISA-RC32 members participated.

The goal of the conference was to provide an international forum in which to examine how women and gender relations are shaped by societal transformation economically, politically, socially and culturally in the global, transnational and local contexts and processes. The conference explored how dynamics process of globalization and transnationalism had impacted on women’s lives, as it had challenged even altered gender relations on the ground. Using a kaleidoscopic gender lens, the meeting examined how women and men in different locations around the world experienced societal transformation and how they responded to and challenge transnational and global processes of changes. Intersectionality of race, ethnicity, class, gender, nationality and other dimensions were emphasized in the conference program.

In addition we promoted the development of theory, method, and practice by emphasizing how theory and research on women and gender informed public debates, policy, and praxis, contributed to empirically grounded research, advanced feminist scholarship, inspired collective action by empowering women as well as men, locally, transnationally and globally. To do so, the conference offered a medium through which scholars, researchers, practitioners, policy-makers, civil society actors and grassroots activists could engage in meaningful dialogue for positive social change in various contexts.

The conference covered a plethora of themes and subthemes from theorizing globalization and transnationalism to women’s agency, activism and social movements. The keynote speakers—Sylvia Walby, Judith Lorber, Myra Ferree and Peggy Levitt--shared their assessments of gender and global transformations and problematized current theoretical debates relating to intersectionality, transnationalism, and gender inequality. This was followed by two plenary sessions that focused exclusively on the latest developments in gender scholarship in the context of China.

One highlight of the China gender conference was that it generated transnational networks and interaction for gender research promoting the sharing and exchange of knowledge and research experience regarding women’s human rights, full citizenship, empowerment, and equality. The conference participants gave special attention to structures and processes impacting women and men nationally, transnationally and globally, by offering case and comparative studies across national, cultural and

disciplinary borders. The similarities and differences of women's struggles and inequalities manifested at three levels were reflected clearly in some of the conference presentations such as nexus between the global and the local, transnational migration, gendered impact of economy crisis, patriarchy, women's agency, gender justice, gendered occupational segregation, gender mainstreaming and women's movements.

Ann Denis, Marilyn Porter, Tan Lin and I consulted each other to organize a special session to gather all the RC32 and/or ISA members and invited other interested participants to join us at the conference. About 30 attended this one and a half hour session. We introduce the attendees to RC32 and to encourage and instruct them how to participate in the upcoming ISA World Congress of sociology to be held in Sweden in 2010.

To sum up the conference experience, Laura Toussaint remarks, "The conference was buzzing with the excitement of scholars sharing their work and establishing new connections with others. It was the result of the hard work and dedication of the organizing committee from inside and outside of China that put into place the vision for a gathering where scholars could share their work and passion for global transformations from diverse perspectives. Old friendships were renewed, new ones were made, and the possibilities for the future of global feminist sociology seemed limitless."