

RC41 NEWSLETTER 2_2016

Research Committee on Sociology of Population

International Sociological Association

Editor: Walter Bartl

RC41 Newsletter is published semi-annually by the Research Committee on Sociology of Population (RC41) of the International Sociological Association (ISA), and mailed electronically to all RC41 members. Please, send contributions to walter.bartl@soziologie.uni-halle.de.

Article submissions are limited to 1,000 words, will be reviewed by the RC41 officers for possible publication, and may be edited for clarity or space.

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EDITORIAL

Dear Members of RC41,

This year many of you contributed to the success of the Third ISA Forum of Sociology in Vienna out of which grew the idea to publish an edited volume containing some of the best RC41 papers presented at the Forum. The planned book will be edited by Jon Anson, Andrzej Kulczycki and myself. Right now we are still in the review and revision process but we hope to get the manuscript ready for publication by mid 2017.

There are some events coming up, one is the ISA World Congress in Canada in 2018 (see the conferences-section below) and in September 2017 there will be a workshop on indicators and politics in Halle, Germany. The CfP on the latter will be distributed in January through the mailinglist of RC41.

I hope you enjoy the newsletter and I wish you all the best for the holidays!

Best regards,

Walter Bartl

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFERENCES

XIX ISA WORLD CONGRESS OF SOCIOLOGY. POWER, VIOLENCE AND JUSTICE:
REFLECTIONS, RESPONSES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
TORONTO, CANADA, JULY 15-21, 2018

Applications for Integrative Sessions, Ad-hoc Sessions or Author-Meets-Critics-Sessions may be submitted until January 15, 2017:

<http://www.isa-sociology.org/en/conferences/world-congress/toronto-2018/call-for-sessions/>

Proposals for regular sessions can be uploaded via the Confex site between 2 February and 15 March 2017. For details see <http://www.isa-sociology.org/en/conferences/world-congress/toronto-2018/guidelines-for-program-coordinators/>. If you are interested in organising a session, please contact Ofra Anson, our Secretary and Programme Coordinator for the Toronto meeting, at ofra@bgu.ac.il.

Abstracts submission will open from April 25 to September 30, 2017 24:00 GMT.

PEOPLE

Jon Anson retired from formal teaching at the beginning of the current academic year. Of course, retirement does not mean sitting around doing nothing. He is continuing with academic work (writing, editing, supervising students...) and just to make sure the days stay just that little bit too short, he has also started a very demanding course for tourist guides. This involves becoming acquainted with Isreal in a way he has never done in the past, writing up site reports and much more. In short, he can thoroughly recommend retirement. However, if you want to relax, a sabbatical might be more promising.

Guillermina Jasso is a member of the team that submitted one of the two rotating modules selected for Round 9 of the European Social Survey (ESS-9). The module is titled "Justice and Fairness in Europe: Coping with Growing Inequalities and Heterogeneities."

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

TWO-YEAR POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITY – TO BEGIN FALL 2017 OR
JANUARY 2018

The Prentice Institute for Global Population and Economy is seeking applicants for a two-year post-doctoral fellowship opportunity beginning in Fall 2017 into January 2018, or whenever suitable applicants are selected.

Requirements:

- Must have research interests and expertise in an area related to global population
- Must have a publication profile and evidence of research skills
- Quantitative and longitudinal analytical skills are important
- Should have a recently completed Ph.D. in a social science discipline (Sociology, Demography, Economics, Geography, etc)

Willingness to work as part of a research team is an asset.

The Prentice Institute for Global Population and Economy was created in 2006 with a generous endowment from the late Dr. John Prentice, an agri-business entrepreneur. It became operational in mid-2009 with its capacity for research and outreach growing exponentially since. We have 27 Research Affiliates from every Faculty at the University of Lethbridge and our contingent of national and international Research Affiliates is rapidly growing. The Prentice Institute is a world-class global research institute focussing on big-picture issues in global population and economy. It is multi-disciplinary in the development of new knowledge.

Researchers affiliated with the Prentice Institute supervise Ph.D. student in two Ph.D. programs: Demography and Population Studies in Health, as well as a growing number of Masters students. We have access to the University of Lethbridge Statistics Canada Research Data Centre and numerous international datasets that enable comparative analyses.

The University of Lethbridge is rapidly growing into a comprehensive university with a strong research focus. It is located in a highly livable city in southern Alberta with a relatively mild climate, a vibrant cultural community, and proximity to the Rocky Mountain national parks for outdoor activities and vistas.

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RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Bartl, Walter; Sackmann, Reinhold (2016): Indicators and Responsiveness to Population Decline: School Closure as Practice and Discourse in Saxony-Anhalt. In Comparative Population Studies, Preprint. DOI: 10.12765/CPoS-2016-09en.

The subject of this analysis is the practice of school closures, since it constitutes a key response to demographic decline and is usually hotly disputed in regional discussions on demographic change. Our research is guided by two questions: *How do political and administrative responses to demographic decline emerge? How is the practice of school closure publicly portrayed and discussed in the newspapers?* We assume that in democratic welfare regimes, the spatial allocation of school infrastructures is mediated by the use of key administrative indicators allowing the calculation and public deliberation of questions related to education infrastructure policy. However, in transformation societies, a democratic political culture of “governing by numbers” only develops as a result of collective learning processes in which the participants acquire what we refer to as “democratic numeracy”. In the stratified German school system, social prestige is conferred unequally among the different school types, with the grammar school (*Gymnasium*) being the most prestigious school type. It is therefore likely that the elements of the school system are not affected equally by policy responses to demographic decline and public attention, which results in spatial inequalities. Empirically, the article follows a mixed-methods approach, whilst emphasising a quantitative and qualitative content analysis of school closures in the regional press of Saxony-Anhalt from 1990 to 2014. The results show that, in the transformation process, the relevance of indicator-based governance of the school infrastructure increases both in practice and in discourse. However, as the participants gain in democratic numeracy, the use of numbers becomes politicised. With respect to the pattern of school closures, grammar schools receive a disproportionately large share of public attention. This has a positive effect on their survival chances and diminishes differences in spatial distances between grammar schools and integrated secondary schools.

Jasso, Guillermina. 2016. “(In)Equality and (In)Justice.” *Civitas – Revista de Ciências Sociais* 16(2):189-217. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15448/1984-7289.2016.2.23118>

Understanding the connection between inequality and justice is important because justice is classically regarded as the first line of defense against self-interest and inequality. Absent a strong and clear link between inequality and justice, the sense of justice would not awaken to exert its moral suasion, no matter how great the inequality or how fast its increase. We obtain exact links between economic inequality and three parameters of the justice evaluation distribution – the mean, median, and variance – across a comprehensive set of inequality measures and a substantial starter set of just reward scenarios. This work shows that there is no general necessary connection between inequality and justice. There is, however, a striking pattern in some situations: as economic inequality increases, the average of the justice evaluations moves deeper into the territory of unjust underreward, and the distribution stretches outward, increasing the gulf between underrewarded and overrewarded and hollowing out the middle class.

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