

INTERNATIONAL SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Research Committee on Social Psychology

RC42 NEWSLETTER

December 2008

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1 Objectives of RC42

Since RC42 was established in 1988 its key objectives have been to contribute to the development of theory and research in social psychology on an international level, uniting professional and scientific interests of its members to work together on a local, regional, and international level.

2 Office bearers

The Board of RC42 elected for the term 2006 to 2010 is:

President

Cecilia Ridgeway, Stanford University, USA

ridgeway@stanford.edu

Secretary-Treasurer

Robert Shelly, Ohio University, USA, shelly@ohio.edu

Board Members

Charles Bernard Kinghombe, Université de Kinshasa, Congo

Dahlia Moore, College of Management, Israel

Indrek Tart, Tallinn University, Estonia

Deepak Kumar Verma, India

Newsletter Editor

Charles Puttergill, University of Pretoria, South Africa

charles.puttergill@up.ac.za

Past President

Tina Uys, University of Johannesburg, South Africa

3 Editorial

RC42 was formally established in 1988. It has been operating for twenty full years. This provides us with the opportunity to reflect on what has been achieved institutionally and to assess the extent to which we have been able to meet our objective of developing theory and promoting sound research as well as fostering dialogue between academics across the globe.

A number of RC42 members had the opportunity to meet earlier this year in June at sessions held at the 38th World Congress of the International Institute of Sociology in Budapest, Hungary. RC42 members will recall that this Congress was initially scheduled for 2007 and identified as the venue of the interim conference for RC42. The RC42 interim conference was subsequently changed to coincide with the First ISA World Forum.

This issue of the RC42 newsletter reflects on the First ISA World Forum held between the 5th and 8th of September 2008 in Barcelona, Spain. RC42 held its main interim conference, scheduled between the XVI and XVII World Congress of Sociology, at the First ISA World Forum. The Programme Co-ordinators of RC42 chose the theme “Social Psychological research and social inequality” which articulated well with the broader theme of the Forum “Sociological Research and Public Debate”. Six sessions were arranged in three broad themes dealing with Citizenship and social exclusion, Identity and social inequality as well as Groups, individuals and inequality. A seventh session was reserved for open topics. A total of 33 papers were accepted and 29 were eventually presented in these sessions. The papers elicited a fair amount of discussion and showcased the richness and variety in conceptual and empirical work within the field as presenters and participants where from five continents allowing a fair degree of exchange and sharing of perspectives on different contexts. The papers on these crucial topics illustrated that social psychologists are still deeply concerned about key questions facing the societies they live in. The sessions were productive and we will keep you posted on the outcomes that flow from these sessions.

The RC42 Board intends to publish three newsletters during 2009 after a brief hiatus. We would like to use these newsletters as a build-up to the XVII World Congress of Sociology in Gothenburg. In order for us to get to know each other better we appeal to members to send us contributions for inclusion in the planned issues. A vibrant RC is built on such exchange. Let us make this our newsletter. To facilitate the publishing of the newsletter we have drawn up the following table:

Issue Date	Submissions
End of April/Beginning of May	January to mid-April
End of August/Beginning of September	May to mid-August
End of November/Beginning of December	September to mid November

Please send your contributions to charles.puttergill@up.ac.za

We would like to use the opportunity to thank the outgoing Newsletter Editor for her dedication and service to RC42 from 2002 to 2008. A career change has necessitated her to resign from this position.

4 Comments from the President

RC42 had a great interim meeting in Barcelona that reaffirmed for all of us there the importance of maintaining a vigorous dialogue among social psychologists from all parts of the world. The paper discussions sparked stimulating conversations in which social psychologists from Latin America, Africa, Europe, Asia, and North America brought their knowledge of their disparate societies to bear on common social psychological concerns with groups, social identity, citizenship, and inequality. If you weren't there, you should have been. It was invigorating.

With the vigor of the Barcelona meeting in mind, it is time to start planning for RC42's activities at the upcoming ISA XVII World Congress in Gothenburg, Sweden in July 2010. The overall theme of the World Congress will be "Sociology on the Move." It is not too soon to start thinking about a session you might want to organize (send your proposal to me by Jan 5, 2009) or a paper you would wish to present (deadlines in the fall of 2009). We will have a variety of session topics, including some "open topic" sessions, in order to accommodate the diversity of social psychological research. We expect to have 14 to 16 RC42 sessions.

Some of our members who wanted to attend the Barcelona meeting had difficulty doing so because of problems they encountered obtaining the proper visas. In Barcelona the ISA Research Committee Council had a lengthy discussion of this problem and committed itself to ensuring that these problems do not occur for the upcoming meeting in Sweden. Please do not let past visa problems discourage you from taking part in our upcoming meeting.

Finally, let me comment on our newly invigorated newsletter. Kinga Wysienska, who did such a great job with our newsletter for several years, asked last year to be allowed to pass on her duties to another member. I am extremely pleased that Charles Puttergill of the University of Pretoria has now agreed to take on the role of newsletter editor for RC42. Let's help out him and ourselves by sending him information and contributions for the newsletter.

The vitality of our RC depends on us staying in touch, renewing our membership, and attending the meetings. The more you participate, the more you will see how valuable the global fellowship of social psychologists is for the quality of all our work.

5 Contributions

Our newsletter provides an opportunity for RC42 members to keep in touch with each other and with developments in the field. A key objective is to

reflect the range of interests of members from different regions. This is only possible if members send us notification of events planned and inform us about recently completed publications as well as work in progress that may be of interest to members. Short notices on research undertaken in their locales, countries and regions are particularly welcome. We appeal to members to use the newsletter as a platform where we can share ideas around research and tuition in the field. Please make this newsletter your own and contribute actively by sending contributions on a regular basis enabling a dialogue within RC42 and ensuring creative and productive cross-pollination of ideas.

As an example of contributions we would like to receive and in keeping with the reflection on the contribution and history of RC42, I thought it opportune to include a short introduction to a recent publication dealing with the history of our discipline:

Moscovici, S & Marková, I. 2006. *The making of modern Social Psychology: the hidden story of how an international social science was created*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

This book is based on archival work. It charts the establishment and functioning of the Committee on Transnational Social Psychology during the 1960s and early 1970s providing insights into the establishment and development of a discipline across national boundaries by paying attention to the quest to build the discipline on a scientific foundation through international collaboration within an institutional context whilst remaining sensitive to social and cultural diversity. The authors chart both the political and historical as well as the intellectual and scientific developments which shaped the discipline. This book confirms that Social Psychology has always engaged with a changing world. The book itself makes a strong argument for the recognition of cultural complexity rather than simplistic universal generalisations of social behaviour.

6 Announcements

The 39th IIS World Congress:

The organisers of the 39th World Congress of the International Institute of Sociology have extended the date for submissions to organise a regular session to 14 December. Session convenors will be published on the website <http://www.scasss.uu.se/iis/iis2009/index.htm> and the deadline for abstracts is 28 February 2009. The theme of the Congress scheduled for 11 to 14 June 2009 in Yerevan, Armenia is “Sociology at the Crossroads”.

Tina Uys (University of Johannesburg) is organising two regular sessions:

‘Reclaiming citizenship and new identities: views from the global South’, and ‘Social exclusion and social capital – a Southern perspective’.

The XVII ISA World Congress of Sociology

The next ISA World Congress of Sociology is scheduled for 11 to 17 July 2010 in Gothenburg, Sweden. Its theme “Sociology on the move”, echoes transition within contemporary societies as well as an increasing reflexivity within the discipline. The ISA programme committee has identified five foci – violence and war, sustainability, worlds of difference, action and imagination as well as religion and power. Social Psychology is well positioned to make a contribution to any of these broad foci. Our RC42 President has already sent out a notification inviting members by e-mail to consider session topics and to serve as organiser for such sessions, should they be approved by the RC42 Programme Coordinator. Please note that the deadline for such session proposals is 5 January 2009. The proposed title of the session and a short description of it should be sent together with the full name and e-mail contact details of the organiser to the RC42 President at ridgeway@stanford.edu

The World Congress at Gothenburg is of particular importance as the Board for the next term 2010 to 2014 is elected at the Business Meeting scheduled during this event.

Publications

There is one publication in the pipeline edited by Tina Uys, Sakhela Buhlungu and Sujata Patel titled “Citizenship, exclusion and social capital in post-apartheid South Africa” drawing on papers presented at sessions held at the 38th World Congress of the International Institute of Sociology in Budapest, Hungary as well as the First ISA World Forum in Barcelona, Spain. This initiative is reflective of the type of collaboration we are keen to foster in RC42.

7 Membership

It is imperative that you renew your membership when it lapses. The ISA secretariat sends members reminders when renewal of their membership is due. The number of sessions allotted to RC42 depends on the number of members in good standing. This is important for the RC as it provides members the opportunity to convene and chair sessions and present papers. A number of attractive sessions enable the RC to attract new membership and thereby strengthen the discipline institutionally cementing ties and exchange between academics across regions. To join and/or renew ISA and RC42 membership please complete the form available at:

http://www.isa-sociology.org/memb_i/index.htm

8 Concluding remarks

Please send in contributions to the newsletter. Its success depends on your contributions and participation. Any suggests on how this newsletter can be improved will be most welcome and can be directed to the editor.

May 2009 be a productive and successful year for all of our members.