

The Sociology Department:

SOAP DISPENSER

Winter 2002-03

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The Editor gets the First Word!

By Brian Colwell

I find that there are certain times when I'm a particularly good listener. If you ever want to tell me something the best times to catch me are when I'm either swallowing food, inhaling, or taking a nap. Normally, people don't take

advantage of these windows of opportunity but lately they have, and the result is an interview with my daughter in this issue. People seem to have been mightily disappointed that I didn't follow-up on the success of Elaine Colburn's chat with Chris Bourg's daughter Kaitlen. I enjoyed it a great deal as well, but thought it might have been a "parent thing" that most childless grad students didn't appreciate. It seems I misjudged. But don't blame me. . . blame anybody else.

In case anyone is wondering, there is no "Dear Faculty" this issue because it seems us graduate students have it all figured out and don't need any advice. Or so we think. We'll see if this sentiment changes by next issue.

Enough from me. I hope you enjoy this issue. Thanks to all the contributors that, without exception, stepped forward to make this worth reading.

Notes: For ease of reading (and since there are no advertisers to please) all contents are continued on successive pages.

I'm more a "producer" or "facilitator" rather than an "editor". Typos are the flatu of the author (or Microsoft). Authors are also responsible for the content under their name. Views are not necessarily those of the editor and definitely not the ASGS.

I Have Career Options!

By Colin J Beck

One of the things about sociology that initially sparked my interest in getting a Ph.D. in the discipline is its diversity. The broad array of

possible focuses also leads to numerous career options. As we all know, it isn't uncommon for sociologists to end up at B-schools, other social

science departments, or pursue research positions outside of academia. John Meyer once told me about a student who ended up working for the Central Intelligence Agency; apparently the man hasn't been heard of since. But recently, I've learned of an even more exciting thing I can do with my anticipated doctorate.

In November, *The New York Times* ran a story about an Afghan sociologist who has become a warlord. I am not making this up. Hakim Taniwal, a sociology professor who had been in exile, returned to Afghanistan last year to take up the governorship of his native Khost province. Unfortunately, the new central government hadn't bothered to inform the local warlord, who was, understandably, a little pissed about being passed over. Taniwal, a true practitioner of the sociological method, decided that negotiations were the best way to deal with this awkward situation. When the peaceful path proved fruitless, he got some financial backers, raised a militia and kicked the warlord out of the provincial capital Gardez. It truly is a dangerous world when sociologists start raising armies.

Warlord is an interesting career option I hadn't considered before. I think Stanford sociology has, so far, done a good job of preparing me for it, too. I've learned about social organization, the importance of networks, and how to construct a hegemonic ideology—all good things when running a lawless country. On the downside, I can't see my knowledge of Stata

being much use and I have yet to learn much about military tactics, but I suppose that some tasks are just meant to be delegated.

Other mentions of sociology abroad by the press have become more frequent in the past months, as well. For instance, Egyptian sociologist Saad Eddin Ibrahim was recently freed from prison when Egypt's appeals court ordered a new trial. According to the latest issue of *Footnotes*, ASA has coordinated a letter-writing campaign in support of Ibrahim's democracy mongering. It's good to know that ASA endeavors to protect sociologists worldwide. Perhaps the next step is to enlist the support of Taniwal's militia. What is the point of having an army unless you can use it to free colleagues and get larger NSF grants?

This approach, however, will not work for every situation. Hashem Aghajari, the Iranian academic sentenced to death for his criticism of the Islamic Republic, will have to go it alone. He is, tragically, a professor of history and not covered by the mutual self-defense treaty that could be the new face of sociology. And who ever heard of an historian with an army? The idea is just preposterous.

Since coming to Stanford, I've sometimes wondered how I will do on the job market. But that doesn't seem like such a big concern anymore. If ASR won't publish me, I can always just become an Afghan warlord. -END-

Interviewing in Istanbul

by Gabe Ignatow

Having given job talks at three Turkish universities over the winter break, I thought I might share some of my experiences with my fellow graduate students, particularly those who, like me, are interested in teaching abroad. In my particular case, I will be heading to Turkey next year because my wife Neva is a Turkish citizen and has a J-1 visa (if you don't know what that is, consider yourself lucky!). I interviewed at what are basically the top three schools in Turkey: Bosphorous University, Koç University, and

Sabancı University. There's also the Middle East Technical University in Ankara, but it wasn't on my list. Below I've outline what I think are the most important, though perhaps obvious, things for Stanford sociologists to know about interviewing in Turkey, and I assume that these points are relevant for other countries as well.

The Stanford Name and Reputation

The Stanford name alone can open doors for you; at the very least, coming from a place like

Stanford will guarantee that you are taken seriously. Many sociologists, economists, and political scientists I met knew Stanford well, and a surprising number had visited here as fellows or for conferences. Of course this is only good news for us! However, based on my experiences I urge graduate students to be sensitive to our sociology department's reputation for quantitative/positivistic research, and to be aware that this reputation has a negative side (and a positive side too). I think it's in our best interests to display openness to and knowledge of non-quantitative social science theory and research.

Publish!

Publications seemed to matter a lot, particularly for the two newer schools (Koç and Sabanci) because these schools are eager to establish themselves as legitimate higher education institutions, and believe that the best way to do so is to employ professors who publish in recognized journals. I even got the impression

that some schools index salaries to number of publications, although I don't know whether this practice is widespread. In any case, publications impress, period.

Teach!

At all three schools, I got numerous questions about my teaching experiences at Stanford (I've taught four classes and TA'd a bunch more), what courses I would be prepared to teach at X University, and what courses I might like to teach in the future. I assume that anyone interviewing at any college or university ought to be able to answer these kinds of questions in convincing fashion.

I suppose that's it for now. If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at ignatow@stanford.edu. I hope that none of the above was too painfully obvious, and that some of my observations will be useful to some of you at some point in your careers. —END—

Victor's Office

By Victor Thompson

Greetings from your intrepid reporter at the Soap Dispenser! Brian has somehow managed to stay on the cusp of American journalism by strong arming yet another graduate student into filling space in a new edition of our beloved Dispenser and keeping that coveted Pulitzer at arms reach. But, what possibly could one add to an already perfect publication (besides of course substance)? It may do some good to reflect on what has changed over the years, specially since I don't have anything else to talk about and Brian said if I don't write an article he will put sugar in my gas tank.

Several things seem a little different this year. For example, there seems to be food available on the occasional Thursday at 12:30 in the basement (for those of you who can't find the basement, it seems to be in the basement). There are also other members of the department eating in there but it is best to avoid conversation with them. They tend to talk about themselves.

Fortunately, there is usually a person at the head of the table putting most people into a trance and leaving the Sushi up for grabs.

I also noticed that the crane was gone this year in front of the building thereby leaving me without a landmark for triangulating my way to the office. I suppose I could use the shine from the new interior they put on the building next to ours but there will always be an emptiness inside me without the jib and winch of the beautiful tower crane. By the way, what the hell is that place next door? Walking through the halls makes me feel like I am in a high level government installation, and have you tried getting into one of the rooms. Forget it, the retinal scans are impossible to bypass.

There are many other things that have changed such as the faces in the halls. Debbie has left us for the "true" nerds in the math department. There are some new students this year who seem to avoid the department proving that they may be

the smartest cohort yet. I have seen countless numbers of babies and pregnant people in the hallways and there are probably more on the way. With all the new faces and old ones leaving I often seek refuge in the streets of Palo Alto, which reminds me about my restaurant tip of the week—Plutos. This place rocks! It may be the only place in Palo Alto that serves mashed potatoes and gravy of the non-organic type.

With this I will leave you with a few helpful tips for survival.

1. Stay out of Los Gatos—it appears to be the home of one of the biggest HumVee

dealerships in the South Bay, especially if you ride a motorcycle.

2. Don't return your library books late. Somehow they can freeze all of your assets and make your life miserable until you pay them.
3. AND THE MOST IMPORTANT ON OF ALL—Keep your arm extended and your palm down, while moving your hand rigidly right and left. You will now be doing the hand signal for an emergency stop for tower cranes. -END-

Interview with Adele

By Brian Colwell

Adele is a 3 ½ year old who currently resides at her sprawling Escondido estate where she likes to spend most of her time. She has a small but loyal fanbase. When in town she puts them up in one of her guest rooms. She is best know for her appearances in “Bing Pre-School”, “The Palo Alto Childrens Museum”, and has frequently played in “The Sandpit”. [One of the pre-conditions for the interview was an agreement that no questions directly pertaining to Sociology would be asked]

SOAP DISPENSER: So Adele, can you explain to me why you like Barbies?

ADELE COLWELL: Because I like them [inaudible]

SD: Uh, huh. When did you get your first Barbie?

AC: This Barbie. [lifting it out of the bathwater] And now I got a Beauty and the Beast doll!

SD: Yeah, they just kind of seem to multiply don't they?

AC: Yeah, but this Ariel kind of looks like that Ariel [points at two 'Little Mermaid' Barbies floating face down in the bathtub]

SD: They are kind of like fungi, huh? Kind of like mushrooms? Are Barbies like mushrooms?

AC: Alice in Wonderland likes mushrooms and she ate two pieces. When she ate big pieces it made her big and when she eats little pieces it makes her little.

SD: Right! That was Alice in Wonderland.

AC: Yeah!

SD: Great flick! You like that flick?

AC: Yeah, and the rabbit thinks she's a monster cause she's so big!

SD: Wow, that's a good movie.

AC: I like to fast forward the caterpillar parts.

SD: Why?

AC: Because the caterpillar's not very nice.

SD: What does the caterpillar do?

AC: The caterpillar says 'WHO ARE YOU!'.

SD: What are you going to be for Halloween?

AC: A ballet dancer, and princesses too.

SD: Uh-huh. Are you excited about your gymnastics class?

AC: Yeah. And I can wear this for my gymnastics class. Couldn't I?

SD: Wear that? Sure. I... I...I don't know you would have to ask your mom, because, uh, I'm not real good about cloths, ya know. I'm not a real good . . .I'm not a good judge of what to wear.

AC: Well I'm a good judge of what to wear. I'm a good judge!

SD: Well you're better than me.

AC: I'm better than you.

SD: Well, at least according to Mama. What's your favorite resteraut?

AC: Andales. Andales is my favorite restaurant.

SD: What do you get there?

AC: I get black beans and rice.

SD: Yummy huh?

AC: Yeah yummy yummy yummy in my tummy. I like beans and rice.

SD: Right, black beans and rice. Right?

AC: Yeah.

SD: And what else do you get on it.

AC: I get beans too. Beans, beans,[clapping hands] and different kinds of beans.

SD: What different kind?

AC: Brown . . .and Black!

SD: Wow, that's quite a variety.

Adele than insists on giving me a tour of her three bedroom Escondido estate, and I must say taking it all in really taxes ones senses. As we move from the servants quarters to her own private "play room" she insists I indulge her in a game of make-believe. I use this opportunity to segway into her plans for the future.

SD: What do you want to be when you grow up?

AC: I want to be Little Mermaid when I grow up. . .

SD: Really!

AC: . . .and Jasmine too.

SD: Where do you get all this stuff? [I point to the collection of props, artifacts, and gifts from her fans strewn haphazardly around the room] Where do you get all this princess stuff?

AC: I think I got it, I got it, I got it from, ya know, I got it from Wal-Mart.

SD: From Wal-Mart?! I knew it! I think it's called co-branding, or something like that. 'Disney and Wal-mart. . . Together at last'

The interview continues with Adele vacillating between the endearing charm her fans know her for and disinterest and boredom with my presence. Then unexpectedly our conversation takes a very dark turn.

SD: Adele, do you ever think about the stars and the moon?

AC: No, I don't . . .cause I can't sleep.

SD: Can't sleep? What do you mean?

Long pause as Adele collects her thoughts and chooses her words carefully.

AC: Because I have bad dreams about clams.

SD: What are the clams doing to scare you?

[barely audible]They live right next to Disneyland.

SD: Do the clams work at Disneyland?

AC: Yeah they do.

At this point Adele's handlers enter and inform me that my time is up. They quickly shuttle her out of the room to 'Brush her teeth and get her ready for bed'. I'm not sure if they were uncomfortable with my line of questions. Maybe there is something that they do not want Adele sharing with the public. There is one thing I am certain of though, Adele's life is, not unlike many of her generation, not yet completely her own and her freedom is subject to various limitations imposed by her most admiring fans. But the issue of the 'clams' at Disneyland stuck with me over the next couple weeks and I finally decided to look further into the matter. I consulted an old friend from Seattle who is a notorious fan of the Magic Kingdom. When I asked him to shed some light on what Adele could have possibly meant, I received the following story:

It seemed like a good idea at the time, three Marines, three days leave, three day pass to Disneyland, three cases of rainier and a half a gallon of tequila.

We got our hotel room by Walt D's and commenced to get our buzz on. I don't know exactly how we got past the front gate a Walt's in our condition, but once we did, we made a beeline toward the Pirates of the Caribbean, our favorite ride. After a couple of shots of "T" and 42 verses of 'Yo Ho Yo Ho a pirates life for me' we went to our next must see attraction; Mr. Toads wild ride. Once we got on the ride, we thought it might be fun for the other Disney guests to get a real fright from Mr. Toad. So we got out of our cars mid-ride and began to terrify unsuspecting Mousecateurs by jumping out from behind the props and screaming war cries at the top of our lungs (drunk Marines are pretty frightening without Disney props).

Once the novelty wore out, we hopped a couple of cars back out of the ride. We exited the ride only to find a couple of gentlemen eager to escort us out of the Magic Kingdom. I know I was a little buzzed, but I could have sworn an elevator popped up right in the middle of the park. We got on, it lowered into the ground, and we ended up in a

maze of long white hallways. After we were taken to the end of the corridor, our pictures were taken for future reference, and our three day passes had been reduced to the twenty minute drunken funfest we had just experienced, and that I will treasure for the rest of my life.

Clams?! Marauding Marines?! Secret elevators and long white underground hallways?! Dear reader, this is no fairy tale, and I for one will be having difficulty sleeping for some time as well. —END

Sociology Puzzle # 2: Acrostic

By Jennifer Van Stelle

First, complete the blanks to the right of statements A-J:

A	The social process through which rewards and resources (such as wealth, power, and prestige) are distributed systematically and unequally within or among societies.	— — — — — 7 30 28 21 — — — — — 17 43 — — — — — 14
B	Sociologist Robert Michels is best known for his formulation of the “_____ of oligarchy”.	— — — — — 13 — — — — — 51 — — — — — 33 1
C	Cooperation is usually analyzed in game theory by means of a non-zero-sum game called the “_____”.	— — — — — 35 6 41 — — — — — 27 — — — — — 47 — — — — — 24 11
D	The _____ hypothesis always predicts the absence of a relationship between two variables, as in “education has no effect on mobility”.	— — — — — 39 12
E	In population ecology, an organization’s position in the environment is called its _____.	— — — — — 26 — — — — — 2 23
F	American sociologist whose major contributions are to understanding the role of social movements and collective behavior in large-scale patterns of social change.	— — — — — 36 49 31 — — — — — 8 — — — — — 38 16
G	A characteristic whose value does not vary across observations is called a _____.	— — — — — 44 — — — — — 22 34 — — — — — 42 9
H	A social process through which cultural knowledge and practices, and material products, spread from one social system to another.	— — — — — 29 20 — — — — — 18 — — — — — 50 3
I	A social system in which the government assumes basic responsibility for the well-being of citizens by making sure that people have access to basic resources such as housing, health care, education, and employment.	— — — — — 4 — — — — — 46 — — — — — 25 — — — — — 19 — — — — — 48 37
J	A form of rational choice theory focusing on how people choose between cooperation, competition, and exploitation in various social situations.	— — — — — 52 — — — — — 32 15 — — — — — 45 10 — — — — — 5 40

Next, fill in the boxes below with the letters from the numbered blanks you completed on the previous page:

B 1	E 2	H 3		I 4	J 5	C 6	A 7
F 8		G 9	J 10	C 11		D 12	B 13
A 14	J 15	▪ ▪		F 16	A 17	H 18	I 19
	H 20	A 21	G 22	E 23	C 24	I 25	
E 26	C 27		A 28		H 29	A 30	F 31
J 32	B 33	G 34	C 35	F 36	I 37	F 38	D 39
J 40		C 41	G 42	A 43	G 44	J 45	I 46
C 47		I 48	F 49	H 50	B 51	J 52	?

Fill in the answer to the question here:

The answer will appear in next quarter's issue of the Sociology Newsletter.

Winter 2003 Speaker Series

Building 120, Room 21/59, in the basement.

When: Thursday from 12:30-2:00

SUBJECT TO CHANGE

16, Jan.

Paula England, Professor of Sociology at Northwestern University

"Why Are Some Academic Fields Tipping Toward Female?"

Paula England will be in the first-floor lecture hall in Wellenberg Hall (Building 160)

30, Jan

Jeff Manza, Northwestern University

13, Feb.

Frank Dobbin, Princeton University

20, Feb.

Michele Lamont, Princeton University

27, Feb.

Rob Sampson, University of Chicago

13, March

Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, Texas A&M University