

RC04 & RC 34 CONFERENCE ON “TRANSITIONS”

CALL FOR PAPERS

RC04, ISA Research Committee on Sociology of Education, is joining with RC34, ISA Research Committee on the Sociology of Youth, to co-sponsor an ISA Interim Conference on “Transitions” to be held in Tampa, Florida on January 13-15, 2012. Transitions between social statuses and institutions have interested scholars from around the world and raise critical issues regarding the roles of governments and businesses in providing resources to construct institutional bridges and to promote successful transitions. The conference will review models of age-status and educational transitions in different societies; discuss problems, such as gaps and difficulties in transitions; and propose policy recommendations at the national, regional, and global levels.

The conference will be held in Tampa, Florida, from Friday afternoon, January 13 to Sunday, January 15, 2012, with an optional tour Friday morning.

Proposal Submission Guidelines:

Submissions of proposed papers should be by electronic mail and must include:

- (a). The title of the proposed paper and session preference;
- (b). Names [beginning with the first author], affiliations, mailing addresses, e-mail addresses of all authors; and
- (c) An abstract of a maximum length of 250 words.

Deadline for proposals to organizers/chairs: **October 1, 2011** should be sent to the session organizer/chair as well as to the appropriate member of the conference organizing committee. If your session is in RC34 (Sociology of Youth) the organizing committee member is Jeylan Mortimer (morti002@umn.edu). If your session is in RC04 (Sociology of Education) the conference organizing committee members are Jeanne Ballantine (jeanne.ballantine@gmail.com) or Gary Dworkin (gworkin@mail.uh.edu).

Additional Information:

Information regarding registration, registration fees, accommodations, and possible travel grants for individuals from Currency B and C nations will be provided in the newsletters of RC04 and RC34 closer to the end of November, 2011. Individuals who are not members of either RC whose papers have been accepted will be provided that information by the conference organizers. Individual participants will be responsible for making their own travel and accommodations arrangements, although a list of nearby accommodations will be provided by the conference organizers.

**“Transitions” Conference, Sponsored by RC04 and RC34, ISA
University of South Florida-Tampa
January 13-15, 2012**

Sessions for RC34 Research Committee on the Sociology of Youth

1. Transitions to Citizenship (Darcie Vandegrift, Drake University, Iowa USA, darcie.vandegrift@drake.edu)

How do youth transition to citizenship? This panel explores how youth and emergent adults become enmeshed in a system of rights and duties conferred on members of a political body. What do youth do to perform and inhabit citizenship categories? Within societies in transition to democratic traditions, young adults have been the catalyst demanding increased participation. As they progress through educational systems that seek to produce citizens, curriculum present youth with frameworks for performing citizenship, which students actively interpret and engage. As they reach majority age, youth also receive diverse messages about invitation to citizenship, which they accept or reject through various acts of participation, apathy, and resistance. Becoming a full citizen, the category that connects individuals with social and political incorporation, is a distinct transition for youth depending on social, temporal, and spatial location. This panel will be in paper presentation format, although participants are warmly invited to present scholarship drawing from visual or participant action data.

2. Youth and state policies in the global context (Elizabeth Boyle, University of Minnesota, USA, boyle014@umn.edu)

The state has manifold consequences for youth and their pace of transition from adolescence to adulthood. This session will consider how state policies, laws and resulting institutional structures influence transitions to adulthood in the developing and developed worlds.

3. Curriculum Obsolescence and the Crisis of University-to-Work Transition in the Contemporary World (Nwabueze Ndukaeze, University of Lagos, Nigeria nwabueze1955@yahoo.com)

College and university graduates are experiencing unprecedented rates of unemployment in both developed and developing countries. This session will explore the consequences of obsolete college curricula on the transition from university to work.

4. Difficulties in Transitions to Adulthood during the Great Recession: Cross National Variation (Jeylan Mortimer, University of Minnesota, USA, mort02@umn.edu)

The present Great Recession has caused high rates of youth unemployment and underemployment, the intervention of parents as “safety nets” to provide economic and residential support, and the disruption of normative transitions to adulthood. Little is known, however, about how institutional differences across countries, including distinct educational systems, school to work transition bridges, and labor market dynamics, mitigate or exacerbate

the problems of youth and young adults in the present economic climate as they attempt to transition into adult roles.

5. Precariousness and Uncertainty in Entry to Working Life (Takumi Arikai, Hamagin Research Institute, Yokohama Japan, arikai@yokohama-ri.co.jp)

The session will examine the increasingly diverse and precarious patterns of youth transition to work in late modern societies, changes in youth working conditions and trajectories, and their implications for youth consciousness and orientations to the future.

6. Potpourri Session (James Cote, University of Western Ontario, Canada, cote@uwo.ca)

Invited Panels

7. How Financial Constraints Affect the Transition to College (Sara Goldrick-Rab, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, srab@education.wisc.edu)

At this symposium researchers from the Wisconsin Scholars Longitudinal Study will discuss findings from a randomized trial of need-based financial aid. Drawing on three years of data from administrative records, surveys, and in-depth interviews, we will describe effects of aid on the educational attainment, decision-making, and psychosocial well-being of low-income undergraduates enrolled in 42 public institutions of higher education across Wisconsin. The role of family relationships and social capital in mediating effects of aid will be a particular focus.

Participants: Sara Goldrick-Rab, Peter Kinsley, and Jesus Renteria (University of Wisconsin)

8. Canadian dialogues on youth transitions and youth policy (Marc Molgat, University of Ottawa)

In the fields of youth research and youth policy, the concept of “transitions” is questioned in terms of its usefulness for understanding youth and young adulthood and developing programs to support young people. On the one hand, youth transitions are increasingly described by researchers as “reversible”, “desynchronized”, “put off into the future”, leading some to doubt whether they are still helpful in defining what it means to reach adulthood. On the other hand, in the policy arena, increasing preoccupations about the health and well-being of young people tend to contribute to prevention focussed policies, whether these concern “risk behaviours” or “at-risk” youth. In Canada, consideration is also being given to how to further integrate the private sector in policies and programs aimed at supporting young people. By drawing on recent efforts in Canada to set up frameworks, policies and action plans for youth, as well as on researchers’ work on transitions and the ways young people define adulthood, this panel will identify and discuss some of the challenges that changes in youth transitions pose for youth policy development. It will also critically examine how existing policy directions support young

people's more problematic transitions to adulthood, including transitions from school to work, from dependent living to independent housing, and from being single to partnership and the beginning of family life. Following presentations from researchers and policy makers, a discussion among the panellists will focus on the content and quality of current dialogues between researchers and policymakers by addressing some key questions: Does research on transitions reflect the interests of policy makers? How do researchers address the link between their work and policy considerations? What future, if any, does the concept of "transitions" hold for government policy aiming to support young people?

Participants:

Sandra Franke, Research Manager, Youth and Labour Market Programs for Persons with Disabilities; Active Employment Measures, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Government of Canada.

Martin Goyette, associate professor, École nationale d'administration publique (Montreal); Canada Research Chair on the Evaluation of public actions directed at youth and vulnerable populations.

Marc Molgat, professor and director, School of Social Work, University of Ottawa; Director, Research laboratory on Childhood, Youth, Families and Social intervention, Faculty of Social Sciences.

July 27, 2011

**RC04 Sessions for the *Transitions* Conference, University of South Florida, Miami, Florida,
January 13-15, 2012**

**1. “Transitions from School to Work in the Developed Countries.” Jeanne Ballantine
(Wright State University, USA jeanne.ballantine@gmail.com).**

Many developed nations are now thought of as “credentialist societies,” in which the completion of high school or even of college does not guarantee a graduate access to a job, needless to say one that is commensurate with the educational attainments. In developed nations high unemployment and underemployment rates result in graduates not finding meaningful work. The session will explore the myriad implications of the transition from student to employee, with the focus on the Global North. The employment problems of school dropouts will also be examined.

2. “Gender and Education—the Value of Educating Girls (World Perspective).” Joan Spade (State University of New York, Brockport, USA jspade@brockport.edu)

The focus of the session is on the extent to which girls have been excluded from schooling in many developing countries and have experienced limits to their educational aspirations in many developed nations. Not only are women and girls being deprived of their rights, the world is being deprived of their talents.

**3. “From School to the Barricades: Transition from Education to Political Activism.”
Lawrence J. Saha (The Australian National University, Lawrence.Saha@anu.edu.au)**

This section is open to papers which examine the link between education and political activism. The level of education can include both school and university, and the type of activism can include everything from peaceful behaviours such as signing petitions, to forms of violent demonstrations and even terrorism. The purpose is to examine the role that education can play, in a positive or negative manner, in the socialization into a politically active person. This can include a study of civics education or other overt or covert curriculum components. It can also investigate alienation from school, or even the impact of dropping out. The recent revolutions and uprisings in the North African and Middle Eastern countries, as well as the various political demonstrations in many Western and other countries, pose questions about whether the experiences in school or university had an impact on the propensity to participate in public politics. Theoretical as well as empirical studies are welcome.

4. “Youth in Transition: the role of Lifelong Learning Opportunities.” Dionysios Gouvias (University of the Aegean, Greece, dgouvias@rhodes.aegean.gr)

Policy initiatives across the globe (e.g. the so-called ‘Lisbon Strategy’, according to which the EU should become ‘the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world’), promote the enhancement of the employability and mobility of citizens, especially the younger

ones. A crucial element of these initiatives is the concept of Lifelong Learning (LLL), which is connected both to the *improvement* of individual knowledge, skills and abilities, within a framework of personal development and engagement in a highly volatile, competitive and increasingly ‘globalized’ labour market, on the one hand, and to the alleviation of the danger of *social exclusion*, on the other. However, many critics argue that core dimensions of the new LLL strategies, so far implemented, is the increasing cultivation of the idea of ‘personal responsibility’ and the ‘marketization’ of educational provision, even that provided by the state and funded by public money. In a world of spreading global financial crisis, increasing ‘downsizing’ of the Welfare State and decreasing public spending on education and training, what is the influence of new initiatives in What kind of barriers and inequalities in access to LLL do exist, in what ways are those manifested? How adult learners perceive their potentials and future educational and occupational prospects within this framework of opportunities?the way young people perceive their learning needs and are actively engaged in LLL structures?

5. “Transitions Into and Out of Teaching in an Era of School Accountability” A. Gary Dworkin & Pamela F. Tobe, (The University of Houston, USA, gdworkin@mail.uh.edu, ptobe@Central.UH.EDU).

Research on the turnover of the American public school teaching population portrayed over the past 80 years has suggested that the contradiction in the role contribute to instability. Portraits from Waller (1932) through LeCompte and Dworkin (1991) focus on the contradictions and role expectations and status anomalies that depress teacher morale. An abundance of research on teacher burnout target the linkages between contested statuses and teachers attitudes toward their roles. Lortie (1975:10) expressed it best by noting that teaching is a “...special but shadowed occupation...It is honored and disdained, praised as ‘dedicated service’ and lampooned as ‘easy work.’ It is permeated by the rhetoric of professionalism, yet features incomes below those earned by workers with considerably less education.” This characterization of teaching all occurred prior to the advent of high-stakes testing and enhanced teacher accountability systems, especially those following *The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, which has depressed teacher morale and threatened teachers’ job security. Currently, states and school districts are facing budgetary crises which have resulted in the reduction in force of many teachers. State governments have also challenged the collective bargaining rights of teachers and other public sector employees, further contributing to the instability of the teaching occupation. This session seeks papers to address teacher recruitment, morale, burnout, and turnover in time of enhanced accountability, public distrust of the public sector, and calls for greater fiscal conservatism.

6. “Educational transitions of Immigrants” Greg Misiaszek (University of California, Los Angeles, USA, gmisiaszek@yahoo.com)

Rather the constructing immigration and immigrant education as an asset, many view the education of immigrants as a drain on the State’s resources. This negative neoconservative viewpoint has been recently amplified by the economic downturn. Beyond the oppressive entrenchment of the classic assimilation model rather than multiculturalism in education, teaching immigrants is often seen as valueless. This session will focus on the oppressions in education

that result from this framing of immigrant education and the oppressions that result from the lack of equality in education at different levels. Oppressions from both inside and outside the classroom will be discussed that results from the transitions that immigrants coming to the U.S. or other developed nations face when entering the country. Examples of these oppressions include securing employment and housing and the registration of their children in schools.

Issues of the rights and opportunities of immigrant children will be discussed, including the human and societal costs of the failure to pass the “DREAM Act.” Undocumented immigrants have the right to attend primary and secondary school but are forgotten after high school by regulations that reduce their eligibility to pay state residency rates and to receive financial aid. Providing access to higher education for Students of Color through Affirmative Action policies and undocumented students is often viewed more often as charity than fulfillment of one’s right to higher education and the State’s obligation to provide it. Immigrants and Students of Color are subconsciously, and sometimes consciously, viewed as academically inferior with higher education attendance as an anomaly or a result of special access and priority due to “reversal racism.” These and other challenges of immigration and education will be critically deconstruction and reconstructed in this session.

7. “Dropping Out of School: The Costly Transition.” A. Gary Dworkin (The University of Houston, USA, gdworkin@mail.uh.edu).

Once upon a time in American society graduation from high school, or even attendance in high school, was not necessary in order for people to secure the kinds of jobs that paid them well enough to be able to support their families. The American economy was labor intensive and work principally required physical strength, endurance, and a modicum of native intelligence. American society in the current century and during more than the latter third of the past century does not have a labor intensive economy, with the result that dropping out of school sentences young people to a lifetime of exacerbated personal disadvantage, which adversely affects their communities and the nation as a whole. High school dropouts are more likely than high school graduates to be unemployed and under-employed. Dropouts are also more likely to suffer from poor health, experience divorce or never marry, serve time in prison, and have children who drop out of school and reenact their parents’ hardships than do high school completers.

8. “Experiments to Ease the High School Transition Process.” Barbara Schneider, (Michigan State University, USA, bschneid@msu.edu)

There has been considerable controversy regarding whether high schools should take a more active role in preparing students for college. In response to multiple critiques, various experiments have been implemented in high schools designed to assist young people in forming their future plans after high school graduation. Some of these experiments include large institutional initiatives, such as restructuring the schools to become more college focused; and smaller interventions that provide information, strengthen ties with parents, assist in the application process to college including

financial aid, and promote strategic planning. This session will critique some of these programs using national longitudinal and state data bases as well as smaller experiments in selected schools. The focus of the session will be on studies of the benefits and costs of these programs --including labor market opportunities-- that use cutting edge statistical techniques.

9. Potpourri Session (Kathryn M. Borman, University of South Florida, borman@cas.usf.edu).

10. “Transitions in Education: A Panel Discussion” Jeanne Ballantine (Wright State University), Kathryn Borman (University of South Florida), Lawrence J. Saha (Australian National University), and A. Gary Dworkin (The University of Houston).