

THE SOAP DISPENSER

The Official ASGS Newsletter: Stanford University Sociology Department

A Note from the Editor

By Jane Ohgami

A New Year – a time of new beginnings. Yes, the winter term is here (well, almost over really) and with it another glorious edition of your favorite Stanford sociology newsletter, published by yours truly and supported, of course, by your charitable intellectual contributions ☺. As I've been sitting here pondering how to fill at least six pages of white empty paper, I thought I might finally get down to reading those postcards which were returned to me last quarter and respond to the nagging questions that have plagued all three of my devoted readers for the past few months. So here goes:

1) *The layout wasn't bad but why didn't you print in color?* Well, that's simple. I don't have a budget. If you would like to donate to this newsletter, I would be more than happy to accept checks, money orders, or cash (sorry, no credit cards). I can assure you that the funds will be directed to where they are most needed.

2) *Why do you call the newsletter the Soap Dispenser?* Gosh darn it— that's a tough one. I suppose I could do some research, but I'm too lazy. Maybe because the news we print is so clean and wholesome? Perhaps we should think about a new name. . . hmm.. sounds like another contest! (See the postcard –back page).

3) *Why weren't there more pictures and why were they so tiny?* Unfortunately, that's because I was one

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of the primary photographers and what can I say? I like small photos. They are easier to airbrush so that you all look your beautiful, shiny best.

4) *How come I didn't win a fabulous prize and why were there only two winners?* Did you remember to send me your birthday? If so, see question 1. Besides, I thought having two winners was generous. Well, I'll see what I can do for the spring issue.

5) *I'd like to write something but I'm afraid it may be stupid and not very funny.* Come on — it can't be worse than this! Consider: I'm no comedian, but our three readers are like a captive audience. In fact, I'm almost willing to bet \$100 that no one else ever scans past this front page. So just submit something— anything. Please.

Ok. I think I've done my duty for now. If you have any other comments, I'm sorry but you'll have to wait for the next edition. Until then, amuse yourselves with the following and have a great quarter!

The Sociology Snitch



You never know where she/he(?) may be lurking, bringing us all the latest dish about our department's sordid little secrets....

Member alert: Some time ago a member of our sociology community (let's call him Mr X) was enjoying a moment of solitude in a local gym sauna when he had an unexpected encounter with a professor that left him rather bemused. Apparently the esteemed professor (Mr Y) likes to take his saunas au naturel, and decided to strike up a conversation

with Mr. X whilst cleansing his pores. Mr X told the Snitch he had to channel help from a higher power to keep a straight face whilst averting his eyes from his fellow member's member.

Summer lovers: The sociology department has become a whole lot more social of late. Two of our colleagues have set a new standard for collegial relations with fish tacos in Cabo San Lucas and sunsets in Guadeloupe. Others have stepped it up a notch with offshore nuptials. One couple high-tailed it to Finland for a winter wedding followed by a Hawaiian honeymoon, while another headed south for a remote wedding on a South Pacific island. With department romances heating up, the Snitch wonders who will be next.

Gals Gals Gals: Last summer it was all about the Brazilians (the girls, not the wax), but apparently the department's resident "prince of darkness" has moved his affections of late from the ice queens of Ipanema to freaky fräuleins. Apparently shimmering tans and teeny thongs are soooooo last season.

Goo Goo Gaa: The word on the street is that the department's ever-expanding menagerie of babies is about to get even bigger with a couple of new additions on the way from the 3rd and 6th year cohorts. Mum's the word.

Livin the life: Rumor has it that if you are lucky enough to be invited to a certain professor's salubrious abode, you might get a tour of the

establishment which includes a walk-in safe large enough to house at least a couple of starving students. Apparently our prof purchased the house from an art dealer who required the safe for stashing his valuables - which would explain the left-over ammunition. Clearly "art dealing" in Palo Alto involves more than just quaffing Dom and fleeing clients. It's a jungle out there.

Strong Ties: The Snitch was skulking the corridors in search of sleaze and innuendo when she overheard a couple of graduates in the powder room gushing about the aesthetic qualities of a certain young professor with good shoe sense. Apparently he's the professor they'd most like to form strong ties with.

Dr Doolittle in the house: For years we thought the Cat in the Hat, Garfield, and Wilbur the Pig were just figments of some cracked-out writers' imaginations but it seems that they may in fact be based on real life characters. And the proof exists in our very own department. Evidently a certain feline member of the sociology community is able to verbally communicate with her owner on a daily basis. The truth is indeed stranger than fiction.

Former Lives: In a former life, which one of our graduate students was:

- 1) a competitive ballroom dance
- 2) a bouncer
- 3) the best bagel maker in Chicago
- 4) the receptionist in a Gentleman's club
- 5) the chairperson of the local Communist party

"Winter is the time of promise because there is so little to do - or because you can now and then permit yourself the luxury of thinking so."

-- Stanley Crawford

FREE speaking help available
Need some help with job talks, oral exams, conference presentations etc? Then make an appointment:

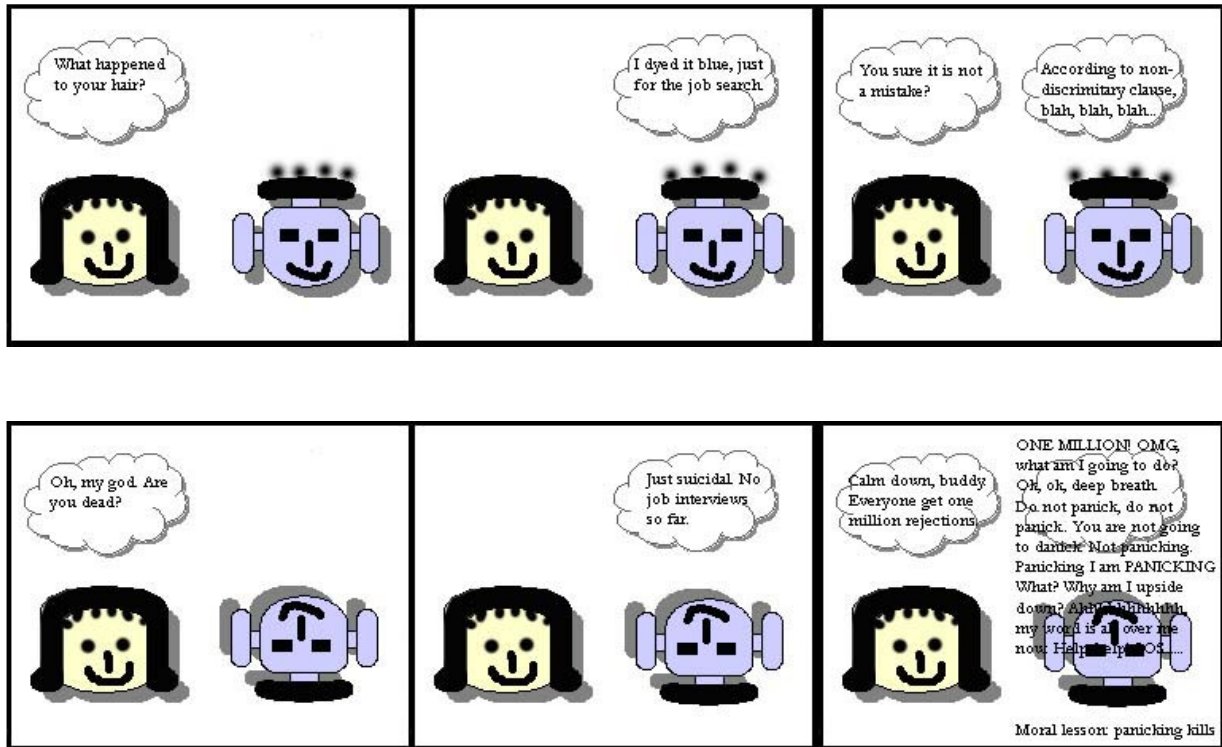
<http://speakinghelp.stanford.edu>

-Ongoing through the semester!

Oral Communication Program: Meyer 12

SOC 101

Artist: Songhua Hu



Bumper Stickers for Sociologists

☀ Compiled by Yan Li

Faculty contributors: Michele Dauber, Matt Snipp;
 Graduate contributors: Colin Beck, Wade Cole, Tahu Kukutai, Yan Li;
 Alumnus contributor: Chris Bourg

☐ Thanks to everyone who responded to my request for wisdom donations, I finally have a "collection" of bumper stickers for sociologists! Humble as it is, I think this collection actually has something to offer to everybody. For example, to the young and uninitiated, the mantra that's sister to "Publish or perish":

○ The best dissertation is a done dissertation.

And to the perfectionist in all of us, a seeming contradiction to the above:

○ There are two kinds of work: published and unpublished. Nothing is ever finished.

○ To the guilt-ridden procrastinator, for the purpose of regaining inner peace:

○ If you leave it to the last minute, it only takes a minute.

○ To thesis and prospectus writers, remember: It is only a lot of writing if you do it.

○ Inside every big fat thesis there is a small elegant thesis struggling to escape.

○ The average Ph.D. thesis is nothing but the transference of bones from one graveyard to another.

○ For the public sociologists—those who value dialogue with the layman:

Sociologists do it with groups.

Bumper Madness Continued...

○ Embarrassed parent of an ill-conceived thesis.

○ Support sociologists: Stop being so damn unpredictable!

And the secret we never let out to graduate applicants or my proud parents in China:

○ A Ph.D. means you've learned more and more about less and less until you know everything there is to know about nothing.

Finally, when your theory disagrees with your numbers, take consolation from this proverb:

○ There's no such thing as a stupid theory, only stupid results.

Of course, you can also choose to be romantic about it:

♥ It is better to have loved and lost (your theory), than never to have lost at all.

○ *Better yet, why not just see it as what it is—a pure accident:*

My karma ran over my dogma.

□ Thanks again to all contributors! If this has inspired you, send more bumper stickers to me or your Soap Dispenser editor. Who knows, if someday my karma indeed ran over my dogma and made me jobless, I might trade these in for food for my stomach... □



Stanford Symposium, Events and Other Announcements

The following are a small sample of events open to the public.

The Wesson Lectures in Problems of Democracy.

The guest speaker is Professor Nancy Rosenblum, the Senator Joseph S. Clark Professor of Ethics in Politics and Government in the Department of Government at Harvard University. Thursday, March 9, 2006 5:30 PM.

For more information about the series: <http://ethicsinsociety.stanford.edu>.

Asian Exclusion in the United States and the Pacific in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries

Dr. Erika Lee, Associate Professor of History, University of Minnesota, explores the history of Asian migration and exclusion as a central component in the making of the Pacific World, focusing on the campaigns to exclude Chinese and Japanese immigrants in the U.S., Canada, and Hawaii. Tuesday, March 14, 2006. 12:00 PM. Building 200, Room 307. For more information:

<http://west.stanford.edu>.

Stanford School of Education Cubberley Lecture Series Presents: Alan Bersin, California Secretary of Education

California Secretary of Education Alan Bersin will describe the structural, instructional, policy, and political obstacles to high school reform. He will also analyze the prospects for significant change in meeting this crucial challenge.

Wednesday, April 5, 2006. 5:00 PM. Location: Cubberley Auditorium, School of Education Building.

And don't forget our own **Sociology Colloquium Series**: Thursdays at noon in Room 215. Free food, good company. Upcoming speakers include:

April 6, 2006 Anthony Heath, Oxford

May 4, 2006 Meindert Fennema,
Universiteit van Amsterdam

May 18, 2006 Steven Ruggles, University of
Minnesota

☞ The Soap would also like to congratulate Tahu Kukutai winner of the 2006 Cilker Teaching Award! ☞

Shopping Around for a Bargain

Find yourself in the city (SF) looking for a few discounts? The following might be of interest to you bargain hunters

Attic Shop

Where treasure hunters go for rare collectibles and unique objects. All proceeds benefit the cancer research center at St. Francis. Tuesday–Saturday, 10am–4:30pm, 1040 Hyde Street. (415) 474–3498.

Repeat Performance

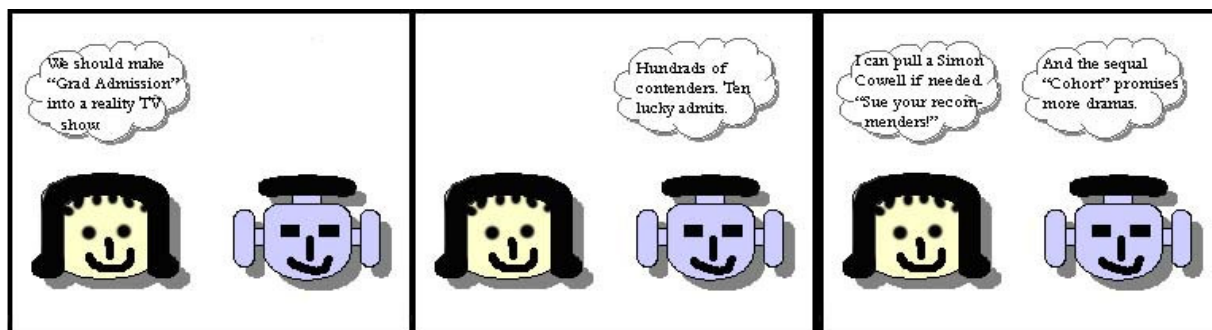
Classy posters and oil paintings, designer men's and women's clothing, fine collectibles, and jewelry. Benefits the San Francisco Symphony. Monday–Saturday, 10am–4pm; Friday from 10am–6pm, 2223 Fillmore. (415) 563–3123.

St. Vincent de Paul

A warehouse full of furnishings, plus books and clothes. Monday–Friday 9:30am–4:30pm; Saturday from 9am–4pm, 1745 Folsom. (415) 626–1515.

SOC 101

Artist Songhua Hu



Winter Quarter Birthdays

Thanks again to all those who kindly sent their birthdays and **CONGRATULATIONS** to our winners (yes, it seems the precedent has been set) of the second newsletter prize drawing: **Emily Shafer** and **Amanda Sharkey!**

And to those who still haven't sent in their birthdays, you have one last chance to enter for another chance to win!

JANUARY:

Kristen Backor *January 2*
Alex Makarevich *January 3*

Heili Pals *January 12*
Amanda Sharkey *January 23*
Brandy Aven *January 29*

FEBRUARY

Yan Li *February* ☺
Yujia Liu *February* ☺
Laura Lopez–Sanders *February 1*

MARCH:

Stefanie Mollborn *March 18*
Tahu Kukutai *March 26*



*“Birthdays are good for you. The more you have, the longer you live”
- Anonymous*

The Soap Dispenser


And now for two cute photos:



<<<< ● >>>>

Keep sending in the pictures! *The Soap Dispenser* aims to be a family friendly newsletter.



 *Mark your calendars:* Admit Weekend commences **Friday, March 10** with our department luncheon and the annual Putnam Classic at the Palo Alto Bowl: 4329 El Camino Real, Palo Alto at 7pm (650-948-1031). Brought to you care of your friendly

Social Committee: socactivities@gmail.com



Yeah— another contest! Do you have an idea for a new name for the newsletter? Send me your suggestions and be a *winner!*

We're still on the Web in color!

Visit us at:

Web site address:

<http://www.stanford.edu/dept/soc/>.

Click on the ASGS link



The Soap Dispenser (?)

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