Inside this Issue

The Editors (2)

Nightclubs, Generalized Exchange in Women, and the Causal Effects of Gender Bias: Two Researchers Talk about Their Work on Gender Dynamics and Its Applicability to Academia (4)

How Political Scientists are Tackling Gender Inequality (8)

Socio-Economics in a Digital World (10)

SASE Network C (Gender, Work and Family) On the Gender Question in Academia (12)

Reflecting on Gender Inequalities in Socio-Economics (14)

On the Bookshelf (18)

SASE Networks Spotlight (21)
E: Political Economy of Industrial Relations and Welfare States
I: Alternatives to Capitalism

PhDs in Socio-Economics: New Research Paths (25)
Call for PhD project abstracts

Odds and Ends (30)

SASE 2018 Author-Meets-Critics Books (31)

Recent Publications (31)
Meet the Editors

The SASE Newsletter is created by a dynamic group of graduate students and post-doctoral researchers from both sides of the Atlantic, aided and abetted by the SASE staff. We are pleased to introduce its 2018 editors:

Emma Greeson is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Sociology at the University of California, San Diego. Her dissertation is a multi-sited ethnography along the value chain for used clothing between the United Kingdom and Poland that examines how value is produced for a highly heterogeneous product. The research examines where value is produced (in which spaces and social configurations), what exactly is being valued in various socio-material relations (the material and symbolic transformations accompanying valuation), and how the value chain is made and maintained (through which material, moral, and relational practices). This dissertation contextualizes existing accounts of valuation, offers a material and pragmatic account of valuation that can account for valuation of highly heterogeneous goods, and proposes a relational ontology of economic processes. Emma holds an MA in Central and Eastern European Studies from the Jagiellonian University (Krakow, Poland); her earlier research dealt with language policy and nationalism in Europe.

Georg Rilinger is a PhD student in the Department of Sociology at the University of Chicago. His dissertation combines archival research with in-depth interviews and network analysis to study the processes surrounding the creation of electricity markets in California and the PJM regions. The project seeks to understand under what political, regulatory, and material conditions the market designs provided by economists can be implemented successfully and under what conditions they fail. While the California markets became susceptible to gaming and failed catastrophically in 2001, the PJM markets continue to operate effectively. What explains the successful design and implementation in one case and failure in the other? In pursuing this question, Georg is particularly interested in explaining how the structural conditions for systemic market 'gaming' emerged and persisted in California while PJM managed to resolve them. The project speaks to recent debates in economic sociology that examine the role of economic knowledge in regulatory and political processes as well as debates in criminology that discuss the conditions under which 'criminogenic environments' emerge. His earlier research utilized network analysis and archival research to examine the structure and perception of a corporate conspiracy in 1930s Chicago.

Ruggero Gambacurta-Scopello is a PhD candidate in Political Science at Sciences Po - Paris, under the supervision of professor Patrick Le Galès. His PhD dissertation, entitled The State and the Politics of Economic Emergence in Brazil: The Case of BNDES (1985-2016), deals with the transformations of Brazilian capitalism in the last 30 years. His research uses mixed methods to focus on the activities of the Brazilian Development Bank. Ruggero had professional experiences at the Directorate for Education and Skills at the OECD, and also at UNESCO and Le Monde. He earned a Master's degree in Political Science at Sciences Po Paris in 2014.
**Agatha Anna Slupek** is a doctoral student in Political Science at the University of Chicago. She holds a BA (Hons) in Philosophy from McGill University. Her research interests are in feminist theory, critical social theory, the political economy of advanced industrial societies, and the rhetorical dimensions of political discourse. Her dissertation, tentatively entitled "The Political Futures of Feminism, Work, and Welfare," will consider the impact of gender inequalities and 20th century economic and institutional changes on the liberal ideal of democratic citizenship. She is currently a Doctoral Exchange Fellow at Sciences Po - Paris.

**Anne EA van der Graaf** is a Doctoral Fellow at MaxPo, specializing in financial risk management by insurance companies and banks. Her dissertation, entitled *Framing Financial Risk: What Does Risk Management Manage?*, is based on ethnographic fieldwork in finance. She has carried out two participant observations, one in the market risk management of a European bank in long term liquidation, and another in the life and financial risk department of a large European insurance company. Aside from her research on finance, she is interested in gender studies, the relationship between state and economic actors, accounting, and organization studies. Before joining MaxPo in 2013 she finished her MSc in Research Sociology at the University of Edinburgh. She has two Bachelors' degrees from Erasmus University Rotterdam, one in sociology and another in econometrics and operational research.
Nightclubs, Generalized Exchange in Women, and the Causal Effects of Gender Bias: Two Researchers Talk about Their Work on Gender Dynamics and Its Applicability to Academia

Prof. Ashley Mears studies the intersections of culture and markets. She received her PhD from New York University and is an Associate Professor of Sociology at Boston University. In her teaching and research, she explores how people assign value to things, and focuses on how gender, race, and class inequalities inform the production and change of culture. Her first book, Pricing Beauty: The Making of a Fashion Model, examines the production of value in fashion modeling markets. Building from this work, she has been researching the global context of culture and beauty, based on the case of the global fashion model scouting industry. Currently she is working on a book project that examines how women produce status distinctions for men in the global VIP leisure and party scene. This research fills gaps in knowledge on contemporary elites with rare ethnographic insights to analyze culture and stratification dynamics among the global “one percent,” and shows how elite men’s mobility projects strategically employ women’s bodies to climb up elite hierarchies.

SASE: In an Op-Ed for the New York Times, you compare the V.I.P. nightlife industry’s treatment of women with exchange mechanisms in the tribal kinship systems studied by Claude Levi Strauss. Can you introduce your research on the V.I.P. world of fashion models to us and explain this comparison?

Mears: Since grad school, I’ve been tremendously inspired by the anthropologist Gayle Rubins’ seminal essay in feminist theory, “The Traffic in Women” (1974), in which she draws from Levi Strauss’ model of kinship tie formation through strategic marriage to explain how women are exchanged in networks controlled by men, generating capital and alliances for men. As we know from Mauss, gift giving is a means of establishing social obligations and relations; in anthropologies of kinship systems, we see that women are exchanged among men. Women are the gift. They are conduits of men’s power.

Rubin used classical anthropology to propose this social process of traffic in women to explain the near universal oppression of women, but she never thought that the story was antiquated; to the contrary, we see traffic systems of women all the time today. I don’t mean trafficking women in the way the U.S. State Department uses it, as in sex trafficking (and Rubin herself was surprised her essay was interpreted as being about prostitution; she wrote the essay about traditional marriage!). But the traffic in women describes any system of power in which men control and reap benefits from the circulation of women. Women enable men’s exchanges but are cut out of the profits they generate. Think about Greek life on American college campuses, where every Fall, new pledges “rush,” or join frats, and a hierarchy of frat houses is determined in part by how good their Fall parties are, which are determined in large part by how many attractive young women are in attendance. Laura Hamilton and Elizabeth Armstrong documented this brilliantly in Paying for the Party, observing how fraternity men pick up young women from their dorms with one-way rides in their SUVs to frat parties every weekend. They even call it “dorm storming.” Likewise, the presence of women is central to greasing the wheels of men’s business dealings throughout Asian cities. Most recently we see this in Hoang’s ethnography of Vietnamese foreign direct investment deals; decades ago, Anne Alison also documented the importance of hostess clubs, and the women employed within, for sustaining salarymen in Japanese capitalism.

So, when I joined the VIP club circuit as “girl” and became a regular guest of club promoters, men who are hired to bring a
high quantity of so-called “quality” young women to the club every night, I found myself in a high-end system of traffic of women, generating huge profits in the form of financial, social and symbolic capital for mostly male promoters and male-owned nightclubs and male clientele. Girls are almost entirely cut out from these profits.

**To what extent, if any, do you think it is possible to draw a similar comparison for academia?**

Haha, that’s a funny question! Well, one of the arguments I’ve made about the VIP club world is that club owners and promoters generate huge sums of financial capital while relying on the unpaid “free” labor of “girls,” who go out in part for the symbolic benefits of being included in an exclusive world. Girls actually preferred not to be paid, lest they be on the wrong side of a symbolic boundary separating them from other women who do work for payment in the club, namely cocktail waitresses and sex workers, both stigmatized categories of women.

One doesn’t have to look far to see a lot of free labor academics perform, labor which boosts the image of the university but comes at tremendous expense of time and energy — putting on events, doing reviews, applying for awards, and so on. Of course, doing these kinds of unpaid jobs also marks status hierarchies among tenured professors as well as between those on the tenure track and those in precarious lower-status lectureships, so prevalent now with the casualization of the academic labor force.

**Your more recent work develops theories of gendered ‘display work’. Can you give us an overview of this work and tell us more about the observed ‘reverse wage gap’ between female and male performers?**

With my colleague Cati Connell, we developed one of the lingering threads from my first book, *Pricing Beauty*, which explains the social mechanisms that lead to a large and consistent wage gap between men and women, a reversal of the typical pattern of gender wage gap. We thought about other cases in which women earn consistently and considerably more than men, and theorized the conditions under which this can happen. This led us to map out the field of display work occupations, where displaying the body is a primary part of the job. Some display workers — art models, athletes, ballet dancers — are highly trained and skilled bodies, while others — porn actors, fashion models, strippers — are lower skilled and perceived as unskilled in popular imagination. Some display workers like retail workers and to an extent, some athletes, work with standard organizational contacts or union rules for payment, while others like fashion models are completely free agents without labor protections or organizational oversight of their payment structures. Our resulting theory paper in *Signs: A Journal of Women in Culture and Society* proposes that lacking these two factors, the degree of perceived skill and the existence of organizational protections, can result in inverted wage gaps. It’s a theory paper based on a lot of compared case studies, but we don’t have the jobs data to make stronger claims. We are hopeful though that someone will put our theory to the test someday.

**To what extent are gendered dynamics that are associated with ‘display work’ a factor in the world of academic research?**
Not much overlap here, actually. At least for tenured and tenure track faculty, working in academia is the structural opposite of the fashion model or strippers’ precarious display work. Professors are amazingly secure in their jobs, we almost cannot be let go after getting tenure, while as a fashion model, I was literally worried every day that I might get dropped from the agency that I technically hired (and to which I paid commissions) to help me get work in the New York and London fashion industries. And we see standard and predictable wage gaps between men and women in academia which remains sex segregated both horizontally (compare even within sociology the gender distributions of the ASA Economic Sociology section and the Sex and Gender section, for instance) and vertically. It is interesting to think about teaching professors as display workers, and we know that looks matter in students’ evaluations of faculty (and they matter disproportionately more for women than for men), but given the structure of academia as a labor market, I would expect the kinds of typical gender inequities in pay and prestige that we have.

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Prof. Anne Boring is an Assistant Professor of Economics at Erasmus University Rotterdam, and a research affiliate at Sciences Po (LIEPP & PRESAGE), where she heads the Women in Business Chair. She studies the impact of gender biases and stereotypes in higher education. Her research focuses more specifically on student evaluations of teaching, students’ higher educational choices, and students’ access to the labor market following graduation. In her current work, she is interested in testing and measuring the impact of interventions designed to reduce the impact of gender stereotypes and biases in higher education and the labor market.

**Teaching evaluations are an important tool in career advancement, yet they have been proven to be sites for the expression of gender biases. In your research on gender inequality in higher education, what mechanisms have you identified to explain differences in the evaluation of researcher excellence?**

**Boring:** The goal of evaluations is to try to measure the performance of academics in each of the different tasks they must achieve, mainly research and teaching. These evaluations serve both as a feedback and as an incentive mechanism. My work has been mainly on student evaluations of teaching (SETs). I have found two main problems with SETs. First, the numbers they generate give an air of objectivity, but they are in fact largely subjective. Second, they generate strategic behaviors that may be counterproductive from a quality perspective. As a result, SETs tend to be unrelated to actual teaching effectiveness.

Regarding the first point, research suggests that people evaluate others based not only on what the evaluated person does, but also on the evaluators’ expectations. In particular, stereotypes matter. I have found that students’ ratings correlate with gender.
stereotypes. Female professors tend to receive higher ratings on criteria that are more closely related to female stereotypes, and male professors on criteria that are more closely related to male stereotypes. This is in line with shifting standards and role congruity theories. Students may expect female professors to behave like stereotypical women, but academia is still stereotypically male. As a result, it may be harder for women to prove their excellence in academia.

**To what extent have you observed these mechanisms at work with female scholars in your field?**

A lot of the research conducted on biases relies on correlations. Very few study contexts can actually answer the question: what score would this female professor have obtained had she been male, all other things remaining equal? Only well-designed controlled experiments or natural experiments can provide evidence to show causality. The few studies that satisfy a rigorous setting have provided evidence that female professors may be receiving lower SET scores due to gender biases.

One possible consequence of these gender biases is that women may spend more time on teaching-related activities to try to meet student expectations, especially regarding their availability, including outside class. However, in most academic fields, research tends to have a larger weight in promotion decisions. Women may be sacrificing their research time, which in turn may lead to lower promotion rates for women. For adjuncts, this extra time spent on each class means that women may earn lower income. Indeed, they may take fewer classes because of the time they have to spend to meet student expectations.

One important comment regarding these biases: they are context-dependent. So finding gender biases in one setting or not finding them in another does not imply that gender biases exist in all settings or that they do not exist in all settings. Furthermore, SETs are biased on many other dimensions that are unrelated to teacher characteristics, such as the time of day a class is taught, class size, whether the course is mandatory or chosen, etc. Universities cannot simply assume that SET scores are objective.

**You show that women are underrepresented in economics and adjacent disciplines. As a teacher, how do you see your role in the perpetuation or reduction of gender differences in students' trajectories, for instance in the development of entrepreneurial interests?**

Economics is a social sciences field in which women are indeed largely underrepresented. Female students may choose to major in fields other than economics because of the low number of female professors. Indeed, research suggests that role models are a determinant of students’ academic performance and choices. I think it is important for economics departments to make sure that they have a diverse faculty, so that all kinds of interested students keep their interest and motivation for this field.

As a teacher, I hope to fill part of that role with my students. I also want to make sure that students are well prepared for the labor market. Given my research interests, I want for students to understand how biases and stereotypes influence their higher educational and career development choices. I believe that a better understanding of these
influences can help students develop the skills they will need to fulfill their true ambitions. This is the case for instance for entrepreneurial interests: I have met many female students who were interested in becoming entrepreneurs, but were less likely to actually launch their project compared to male students, in part because of gender biases and stereotypes. I think it is possible to lift the barriers that prevent these ambitions from becoming reality, through better information and training.

Interview conducted by
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How Political Scientists are Tackling Gender Inequality

The American Political Science Association (APSA) has a standing Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession that will be of interest to members of the SASE community [...] their website features a ‘Graphs to Make You Gasp’ page documenting inequalities between genders in work/life balance and more.

By means of its national and regional professional associations, the discipline of Political Science has established issues of gender equality and representation as an area of concern. The American Political Science Association (APSA) has a standing Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession that will be of interest to members of the SASE community. At the 2017 annual meeting of APSA, the Committee organized two panels: “Gender in the Journals: Exploring Potential Biases in Editorial Processes” and “The Sexual Division of Labor in the Profession.” The Committee’s new website is a useful platform for consulting news and scholarship on gender bias, as well as articles on gender-based wage gaps across professions and disciplines. The Committee also provides resources for increasing gender justice at conferences, helping to organize political scientists’ increasingly vocal denunciation of all-male panels – “manels” – at major disciplinary conferences. In addition, their website features a ‘Graphs to Make You Gasp’ page documenting inequalities between genders in work/life balance and more. The Committee’s new blog tackles the role of hierarchy in preventing greater gender equality in the discipline, demonstrating the limits of framing conversations about gender disparity without introducing hierarchy and power as an analytic category. The Committee thus engages with discussions about gender injustice in academia more broadly, engaging with opinion pieces in Times Higher Ed and similar platforms.

In tandem with this SASE newsletter feature on gender inequality, the most recent newsletter of the Organized Section of Comparative Politics – an APSA subsection – puts women and gender in the spotlight, as well. It features articles on women in the profession, as well as comparative political studies of women’s political participation and organization. Of particular interest to the SASE community is a report from the APSA Committee on the Status of Women in
the Profession and the Thelen Presidential Taskforce. It shows from data collected from the largest 20 departments, women make up about half of the Ph.D. students (42% of all Ph.D.s received in 2012, according to the last NSF statistics) and nearly half of assistant professors; but on average they make up only one in five full professors. Women are also disproportionately represented in the ranks of precarious, non-tenure track faculty. Nadia Brown (Purdue), Mala Htun (UNM), Frances Rosenbluth (Yale), Kathleen Thelen (MIT), and Denise Walsh (UVA) report that APSA has begun to collect data on PWAM (Pipeline for Women and Minorities) in political science, tackling issues of departmental practices and publications. In addition to continued work with the Taskforce, Professor Thelen was in attendance at the Western Political Science Association (WPSA)’s annual conference in San Francisco, where she delivered a presidential address not on gender justice per se, but on the challenges posed to democracies by non-standard and precarious work arrangements. Her talk entitled "The New Precariat: American Capitalism in Comparative Perspective" drew comparisons between precarious labor in blue-collar work with trends toward adjunctification in academia. Professor Thelen also discussed how stratification along the tenure/non-tenure divide often follow gendered patterns.

The WPSA annual conference is known by scholars in Political Science and associated fields to attract scholars working on topics in gender and sexuality studies. It hosts an annual Feminist Theory Pre-Conference, a meeting of the Association’s Caucus for Women and Gender Justice, and a reception for scholars of Women in Politics. These events and institutional spaces increase the visibility of those working on issues of gender inequity in the discipline, pushing against their perception as “peripheral” to the “real stuff” of politics.

Despite recent high-profile allegations of sexual misconduct on the part of political scientists, the discipline demonstrates a commitment to improving gender justice. The group Women Also Know Stuff has sought to publicize and promote the work of women in the discipline to increase inclusion: active on Twitter, they help scholars to find women with expertise in various sub-disciplines. Indeed, many political scientists have begun to use Twitter in order not only to promote their research, but further to call for accountability and change. The so-called “watershed” #MeToo moment has made itself felt as a powerful intervention in the discipline, calling attention to long-standing disparities and institutional practices that disadvantage women. As a female graduate student in Political Science, I am encouraged by the efforts being made by the discipline’s national and subnational associations, as well as by colleagues, junior and senior.

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Socio-Economics in a Digital World

Peer-reviewed journals are the bread and butter of the academic conversation. But in today’s highly connected world, there are ways to circulate ideas and sustain conversations that do not involve highly formal review processes and months—if not years—of waiting to publish. The online spaces discussed below represent the breadth of socio-economic study, offering perspectives from the disciplines of economics, sociology, anthropology, political science, management, and more. Not all of them are exclusively, or at all, academic spaces: some feature the voices of policy-makers, activists, organizers, or simply an engaged community of commentators.

Institutions
Some of the organizations and institutions doing work on socio-economic matters have blogs and websites that can serve as reference points for what is happening in the world of social studies of the economy. The Economic Sociology Section of the American Sociological Association keeps a blog, publishing commentaries by members on the issues of the moment. The Centre de Sociologie des Organisations de Sciences Po maintains a page with newly published pieces by its members, news, and relevant media mentions. The Observatory for Responsible Innovation is a think tank based at Mines ParisTech that publishes occasional reports from its Working Groups (including the Working Group for Responsible Innovation in Finance, which was active some years ago). The website of the Institute for New Economic Thinking gathers recent work by scholars working on themes relevant to the Institute’s mission of moving beyond traditional economics to meet the challenges of the 21st century, including working papers, commentary, and information about upcoming events. The Foundation for European Economic Development is a charity based in England and Wales whose aim is to build on the work of classical economists to move beyond mainstream economics; their website provides information about grants and prizes available for advancing study in this area.

Blogs of Journals
The London-based Marxist journal Historical Materialism maintains an active blog, publishing short essays, interviews, book reviews, and other pieces. Jacobin Magazine, a quarterly journal of politics, economics, and culture with a socialist perspective, also runs a blog where additional pieces are published. The Real-World Economic Review is a journal dedicated to heterodox economics which runs a blog publishing pieces by authors who’ve published articles in the journals, and open to comments from anyone.

Broad-Focus Websites
Socio-economics topics are part of broader conversations on political, social, economic, and cultural matters. Social Europe is a London-based website publishing reports and commentary on employment, labor, politics, and more. The New School for Social Research runs the Public Seminar website, which publishes original essays, open letters, and book reviews, as well as videos and a podcast series.

Collectives Organized Around a Theme
There are also a number of collectives that operate online, bringing together a number of scholars around a common theme. Though often not formally tied to an organization or institution, these collectives are important spaces for dialogue and community building in their own right. The largest of these is the Economic Sociology and Political Economy community, which reports about 50,000 members from around 130 countries, and serves to consolidate and
disseminate a wide range of relevant content, including blog entries, articles, book announcements, calls for papers, employment listings, and media mentions. *Estudios de la Economía* is a platform for Spanish-language research and discussion (though some items do appear in English as well) on matters related to the study of the economy spanning social scientific disciplines. The blog currently lists 45 active contributors, and regularly publishes four types of original content: work in progress; interviews; conference or book reviews; and opinion. It also gathers notices of news, conferences, and calls, and puts a spotlight onto new publications of members of the network. A multidisciplinary heterodox challenge to the discipline of economics is presented on the *Evonomics* platform, which reaches hundreds of thousands of readers monthly through its website, newsletter, Facebook, and Twitter presence.

For those interested in the social studies of finance in particular, six scholars come together on *Socializing Finance* to write about this theme, as well as they publish guest posts and calls for upcoming conferences and opportunities. Scholars researching transnational governance come together on the *Governance Across Borders* blog, whose members are largely members of the research group “Institution Building Across Borders” at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies in Cologne. In addition to original blog pieces, this blog offers a bibliography of relevant work. A new collective of *Scholars for Social Justice*, formed just a year ago in the summer of 2017, brings together scholars from inside and outside the academy to coalesce around a number of political issues that deal with economic, racial, and gender injustices, as well as trans-national solidarity and resistance to state violence.

*Crooked Timber* is a blog with 20 active contributors from multiple disciplines, including sociology, political science, and philosophy, who write on politics, economics, and more. *Org Theory* is a blog that mainly features the work of sociologists on the themes of public sociology, organizations, social theory, and current events.

Outside of academia proper is *Naked Capitalism*, a finance and economics blog that features original posts from regular contributors as well as a regular news digest, where an active commentariat weighs in on the news of the day.

**Personal Webpages/Blogs**
And of course, there are a variety of personal webpages run by individual scholars offering commentary, theory, and analysis. These include those of Kieran Healy, sociologist; Daniel Little, philosopher; Dan Hirschman, economic sociologist; Lane Kenworthy, sociologist; and Phil Pilkington, economist.

Finally, for those interested, a list of the top 100 economics blogs of 2017 has been compiled [here](#).

The SASE website has recently updated its *Digital Resources* section to reflect some of the diversity of socio-economic work and ideas online.

Do you follow other blogs, websites, or accounts that you consider essential to your professional and/or intellectual development? Would you like us to add your blog or website to our list of resources? Do you use Facebook or Twitter instead of or in addition to blogs? Let us know how we can adapt the *Digital Resources* section to be more useful to you.

*The editors*
Within SASE, the Network on Gender, Work and Family (Network C) is particularly active in examining the relationships between gender, scientific research, and the academy. At the past three meetings—from 2015 to 2017—the network has organized several sessions on these topics.

Bernard Fusulier, research director (National Fund for Scientific Research - FNRS) and Professor of Sociology at Université Catholique de Louvain and co-organizer, alongside Diane-Gabrielle Tremblay, of the Gender, Work and Family Network (Network C) explained how the network has approached this issue in recent SASE meetings. The network’s sessions have brought together critical conceptual work and case studies that cover a range of regional differences in gender regimes, political and economic demands, and organizational cultures. From these studies it is clear that the issue of work/life balance in academia is “highly ambiguous”.

For instance, although policies meant to promote work/life balance have been introduced into the institutional spaces of the university, their influence meets the countervailing force of institutional policy logics, in particular the “greedy” logics of work organization. Professor Fusulier points out that these logics, still aligned to the masculine organizational culture of work, are outdated, “because men too are suffering the effects, and because the academic environment is feminized.”

Gender stereotypes also continue to be an issue. Professor Fusulier explains that the lingering idea that women are expected to fulfill home and work duties—and the value assigned to these duties—is still “having a significant impact upon women’s professional and private spheres and experiences in academic work.” Work presented at recent SASE meetings speaks to this issue, showing how university institutions have a long way to go in addressing the core issues undermining women’s career advancement. The logic and organization of academic membership (meaning the ways that scholars are selected and progress along a career path) and leadership do not take into account the parenthood, family, or personal spheres of life that women—and their male counterparts—may want to pursue.

Of course, it is important to remember the larger context. Professor Fusulier points out that these phenomena are “reinforced by the ideological leitmotiv of excellence in times of neoliberal transformations and globalization.”

There are no sessions on this topic currently planned for the upcoming SASE meeting in Kyoto, but Professor Fusulier is organizing several sessions for the World Congress of Sociology (ISA) in Toronto this July.

**Recent work**

The recent book *Failing Families, Failing Science: Work-Family Conflict in Academic Science* by sociologists Elaine Howard Ecklund and Anne E. Lincoln uses more than 2,000 surveys of junior and senior scientists at top research universities in the US, as well as in-depth interviews, to explore the difficulties both men and women face in finding a work-family balance.


A double special issue of the European Educational Research Journal, comprising 14 research articles focusing on single or comparative cases across European states
The issue of gender inequalities in academia was the focus of the European Research Project: “Gendering the Academy and Research: combating Career Instability and Asymmetries (GARCIA)”. The GARCIA Project is concerned with the implementation of actions in European Universities and research centers to promote a gender culture and combat gender stereotypes and discriminations. The project ran from February 2014 to January 2017. See http://garciaproject.eu/

### Sessions and papers at previous SASE conferences

#### London 2015

**Gender and Work/Life Interferences in Scientific Careers Part 1**

**Session Organizers**

Bernard Fusulier and Farah Dubois-Shaik, Université Catholique de Louvain

**Papers**

- New Trends, Old Asymmetries: Gender Implications for the Emerging Generation of Researchers in Italy
  
  Rossella Bozzon, Annalisa Murgia, and Barbara Poggio - University of Trento, Department of Sociology and Social Research

- Work-Family Interference and Scientific Career Experience: The Case of Postdoctoral Research Fellows
  
  Bernard Fusulier, University of Louvain; Pascal Barbier, University Paris 1 Sorbonne

- Academic Work, Gender and Family in Brazil: Time Experience Among Social Scientists
  
  Marina Cordeiro, Federal University from Rio de Janeiro / Cardiff University

**Gender and Work/Life Interferences in Scientific Careers Part 2**

**Session Organizers**

Bernard Fusulier and Farah Dubois-Shaik, Université Catholique de Louvain

**Papers**

- Bridging the Gap Between Life and Work for Female Academics: The Role of Leadership
  
  Gulsun Saglamer, Istanbul Technical University

- Scientific Careers and Work-Life Balance: Striking a Balance Between Services (Inadequate) and Family Life (Asymmetric)
  
  Silvia Cervia and Rita Biancheri - Pisa University

- Gender, Work and Family in French Academia: A Case Study
  
  Viviane Albenga, Sciences Po

- Gender, Work and Flexible Careers Across the Life Course
  
  Jennifer Tomlinson, University of Leeds

**Gender and Work/Life Interferences in Scientific Careers Part 3**

**Session Organizers**

Bernard Fusulier and Farah Dubois-Shaik, Université Catholique de Louvain

**Papers**

- Gendertime; Impact Evaluation as Part of the Learning Process
  
  Karin Siebenhandl, Donau-Universität Krems

- Teleworking as a Measure of Work-Life Balance and a Factor of Quality at the University of Padua
  
  Marina De Rossi, University of Padua

- About Glass Ceiling Index GCI
  
  Silvana Badaloni, University of Padova
Berkeley 2016

Work-Life Interference in Academic Careers
Session Organizer
Bernard Fusulier, Université Catholique de Louvain

Papers
Scientific Careers and Work/Life Interference
Bernard Fusulier, Université Catholique de Louvain
Dual Career Couples in Academia, International Mobility and Dual Career Services
Charikleia Tzanakou, University of Warwick
Karin Helgesson, Stockholm School of Economics

Lyon 2017

Gender, Work & Family in Scientific and Academic Careers
Session Organizer
Nicky Le Feuvre, University of Lausanne

Papers
A Typology of Gendered Pipelines: Reconfiguring the Approach to Researching Gender (in)Equality in Academic/Research Careers and Organizations
Farah Dubois-Shaik and Bernard Fusulier, Université catholique de Louvain
On the Leaky Pipeline in Italy: Gender Asymmetries in the Early Stages of Academic Careers
Rossella Bozzon, Annalisa Murgia, and Barbara Poggio - University of Trento, Department of Sociology and Social Research
Domestic Labor and Spousal Effects on Female Scientists’ Success
Francine Deutsch, Mount Holyoke College
The Gendered Temporalities of Academic Work: The Case of Early-Career Researchers in Switzerland
Nicky Le Feuvre, University of Lausanne
Work-Life Balance and International Mobility of Female and Male Researchers: A Case of Squaring the Circle?
Marie Sautier, University of Lausanne

Reflecting on Gender Inequalities in Socio-Economics

The Weinstein affair and the MeToo movement have put sexual harassment and violence in the spotlight worldwide. Women from around the world have spoken up about their experiences, including those in academia. The SASE newsletter editors have turned our attention to gender imbalances in our own field.

In this article, we focus on the different social mechanisms that create gender divides, beyond personal choices: obstacles in career paths, gendered expectations in the creation of academic knowledge, and sexual violence and harassment are discussed. Our objective is not scientific, nor does our analysis purport to be exhaustive. This article reflects on the gender inequalities in socio-economics with the hope that the situation will improve – it is therefore not neutral. We start from the premise that gender inequalities in academia need to be corrected.

As SASE is about the inclusive exploration of all types of mechanisms that influence economic behavior, this inquiry into gender also crosses disciplinary boundaries. By looking at academia in general and specifically three of the academic disciplines in which socio-economics is embedded – sociology, political science and economics – we can also reflect on the imbalances in our own interdisciplinary field.
Divergent Careers

First, let’s discuss the gendered aspect of career paths. In sociology, economics and political science, the higher you look on the career ladder, the fewer women there are to be found. Take the data Boring and Zignagno (2018) put forward in a blog entry for the Banque de France, where the number of French female economists is related to their position in the hierarchy. Women make up over 40% of assistant/associate professors (maître de conférence, MCF), whereas the number drops to 24% for full professorships. For sociology the drop is from 51% to 36%. In French political science, 42% of the MCF and only 22% of full professors are women. Boring and Zignagno also turn their sights on US the discipline of economics in the US, where women make up 29% of assistant professors and 24% of full professors.

Over-representation of male students has long been seen as the reason for the gender disparities in academia. However, as Weeden and co-authors (2017) note, the social sciences do have female students, yet continue to have an under-representation of female scholars in positions higher up on the career ladder. Not only do men occupy the majority of full professorships, they are also over-represented in the so-called prestigious academic programs. The lower an institution is situated on the 'prestige scale', the more women there are. There are multiple reasons for this.

One of the first causes of this under-representation of women can be found in the allocation of care work both inside and outside the university. In an extensive study of one university, Misra, Lundquist, and Templer (2012) show how female faculty encounter more pressure from family. Even though women and men seem to take on the same amount of teaching hours, female faculty encounter extra pressure to take care of young children and elderly parents. This time spent on care work takes away from their potential to carry out research. Work for the institution (service work) and teaching can take up time and attention at the expense of longer-term research goals. Yet, service work and teaching are not as emphasized in academic job evaluations as research and publishing. As a consequence, female faculty lose out when it comes to promotions and prestige.

Weisshaar (2017) shows that productivity, under-representation, and particularities of departments do not explain the gender difference. Firstly, she shows that in US sociology, women are significantly less likely to obtain tenure than men. Even though it may be tempting to explain this disparity based on the quality and quantity of publications that men and women produce, this type of explanation is lacking. Weisshaar finds that the career divergence mainly comes from systematically biased evaluations, including both formal evaluations and opinions formed over time. Female academics find themselves under more scrutiny than their male counterparts, making it more difficult for them to access better positions.

The results of Weisshaar’s research relate to the work of Van den Brink and Benschop (2012) on the question of academic excellence. They analyzed the Dutch academic evaluation framework and found the system to be set up under a biased male gaze. Since the evaluators themselves were mostly male, they saw their bias as neutral. What they did not realize was that they structurally favored male candidates, irrespective of the quality of the female candidates’ research. The authors conclude that academic excellence is a gendered notion that privileges male researchers.
Gendered Production of Knowledge

In 1993, Rossiter coined ‘the Matilda effect’. She explained how female researchers are easily overlooked in comparison to their male colleagues. They do not receive the credit they deserve for the work they carry out. If a male scholar publishes on the same topic, their work is more easily taken into account than the work of a female scholar on the same topic. Rossiter describes many known cases of female researchers overlooked for their discoveries and innovations. The most notorious example is Rosalind Franklin, who helped discover DNA. After her death by radiation due to her role in the experiments, her crucial contribution in the discovery of the double helix was strategically omitted from accounts of its discovery.

In one of the few recent investigations of the Matilda effect, Knobloch-Westerwick, Glynn and Huge (2013) show the persistence of gender inequality. They tested the theory by presenting abstracts to the International Communication Association congress to young communication scholars. If an abstract came from a female scholar or related to an aspect of the field perceived to be more feminine, research participants rated the abstract lower than when it had a male author or related to a topic perceived as masculine. In cases of collaboration, the participants focused on the male scholar rather than their female co-authors. Participants had a clear positive bias for research with a ‘male’ connotation, overwhelmingly judging it more favorably.

Judy Nelson (1996), a feminist economist, theorizes the masculinity of the current economics discipline. She states that by putting stock in neo-classical economics and econometrics, economists have tried to create what they see as a better, more rational view of the world by relying on numbers rather than interpretation. This economic knowledge is inherently linked to the masculine order of rationality and objectivity. In modern western societies, the female has been seen as the guardian of the natural and the emotional; her reproductive organs supposedly prevent her from breaking loose from nature's irrational chains. The male, on the other hand, is expected to be able to break away from this ‘savage’ background. Ideas of the male as rational and female as irrational shape our judgments concerning legitimacy and authority in knowledge production.

The male and the female relate to different connotations in social science research. In 2017, an undergraduate thesis in economics defended by Alice Wu scraped data from a popular economists’ website, Economics Job Market Rumors. She looked for the semantic field related to male and female. The website Wu studied is a forum frequently used by economic scholars and students. They go there to learn more about what is going on in their field. The language used on the site can thus be understood as reflecting informal gender expectations in economics. The terms employed for men were more positive than those employed for women. Even more so, the terms associated with women directly related to sexuality. They included pregnant, tits, bang and horny. Men had associations of philosopher and keen. According to Wu's findings, the female did thus not relate to knowledge production, whereas the male did. Wu's results corroborate research on gender in the creation of economic academic knowledge, like the representations of gender that Nelson identifies.

Nelson argues that other fields in the social sciences encounter less masculine domination in the production of knowledge. Sociology and political science seem to give female researchers more legitimacy. Nelson notes that these fields often explicitly counter the knowledge created by the discipline of economics, and for this reason can often be seen as subordinate to the 'objective' knowledge creation of economics, just as the female irrational is subordinate to the male rational. If Nelson's thesis of the masculine domination of economics over the other
social sciences holds, socio-economics could be understood as the feminine counterpart of economics. However, neither sociology nor political science can claim gender equality. As the combination of these and other related fields in the social sciences, socio-economics can most likely not claim gender equality either.

**Sexual Harassment and Violence**

Finally, we need to discuss sexual violence and intimidation in academia. Cortina, Swan, Fitzgerald, and Waldo showed as early as 1998 the widespread nature of harassment in academia. The exact proportion of women in academia who were harassed is unclear, but in a sample of students at two US universities, the authors found that at least 50% of women had encountered harassment.

Harassment has a negative impact on the output of female scholars. Zepeda, in a piece for *Science* magazine, writes about the harassment tax. Women have to spend energy on dealing with unwanted advances from colleagues. Zepeda recounts how one of her former colleagues accepted a job with the knowledge that her next boss had a reputation for crossing the line. She preferred to accept the job nevertheless, how could she say no? The situation directly relates to academia’s selective job market where any job is better than none, even if the person hiring you might harass you.

We cannot say that sexual harassment does not happen between academics in socio-economics. We can even expect socio-economists to have encountered sexual harassment. What’s more, scholars in our field are also susceptible to other forms of sexual harassment and violence. Namely, while carrying out qualitative research in ethnographic work and interviews, the researchers themselves are the research tool, making them relatively vulnerable to the dynamics of the situations they are studying.

Researchers in the field lack the institutional protection afforded by the world of academia. If an interviewee treats a researcher inappropriately or even violently, generally the researcher's only recourse is the justice system. When a colleague, student, or superior treats a researcher badly, they can go to superiors, unions, trusted confidants, or ombudspersons. In other words, researchers who do fieldwork encounter less protection than those who carry out their research from the confines of their academic institution.

Fieldwork is not free from gender issues. Researchers can easily encounter sexual harassment in the field (Sharp and Kramer 2005, Kloß 2017). Different forms of sexual harassment are present, including rape (Moreno 1995). The field thus brings an extra dimension of gender inequality. Those in subordinate gender roles can easily find themselves in dangerous situations.

**Concluding Reflections**

The career difficulties, gendered knowledge production and sexual harassment discussed above all show that our academic world contains gender bias. The disciplines that contribute to the academic study of socio-economics are all marked by gender inequalities. Though the taken-for-granted practices and assumptions that shape academia have come under increasing scrutiny in recent decades, there remains much work to do if we want to see socio-economics open to all, regardless of gender.

*Anne EA van der Graaf and Ruggero Gambacurta-Scopello*
Selected References


On the Bookshelf

In this feature, we ask the voracious readers that make up SASE to recommend a few books they are reading (or re-reading) and to tell us a bit about them.

**Barry Eidlin**, Assistant Professor of Sociology at McGill University


While political sociology is supposed to be about state-society relations, the reality is that most scholarship focuses on one side or the other of that equation. Some focus on state bureaucracies and executives, while others focus on social movements or civic associations. However, in recent years more scholarship has started paying attention to the organizations that straddle state and society, particularly political parties and labor unions. Lee’s book is a great example of this new scholarship, showing the key role that parties and unions have played in shaping welfare states in newly industrialized countries. I wanted to read it because I’ve been thinking a lot about the social and political roles of parties and

When Kim Moody comes out with a new book, it automatically goes to the top of my reading list. Few people have as deep and sophisticated an understanding of labor, class, and capital as he does. His 1988 book *An Injury to All* had a formative influence on how I think about the world, and I’ve continued to follow his work.

In this latest book, Moody takes on much of the conventional wisdom about the modern economy and the changing world of work. Arguing against the idea that globalization, technological change, and the growth of the “gig economy” are fragmenting the working class and limiting its capacity to resist, he shows how increasing capital concentration and global production chains are creating new possibilities for workers to exert power. At the same time, the shifting political terrain, where money and capital have vastly increased their influence, makes it difficult for ordinary people to make their voices heard. However, as Moody shows, geographic political polarization, which has turned most US regions into de facto one-party states, has created new opportunities for progressive political challengers to mobilize.

There is no shortage of bad news these days for workers, and plenty of analysis arguing that forces beyond our control are reshaping our world in disturbing ways, whether we like it or not. Moody’s book is a firmly grounded, yet resolutely hopeful counter to these analyses. Those looking for a thoughtful, provocative take on the economic and political changes of the past several decades would be well served to read this book.
Elizabeth Popp-Berman, Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Albany, SUNY

**Julian Go,** *Postcolonial Thought and Social Theory* (Oxford University Press, 2016)

I teach in the graduate theory rotation in my (sociology) department, and am persistently frustrated at the dead white maleness of the syllabus, even when I put it together myself. Last time I included a week on postcolonial theory, and we read Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, and Gayatri Spivak. But while it felt productive to open up the theoretical conversation beyond North America and Europe, it was also hard to use postcolonial theory as more than a counterpoint to the rest of the semester, highlighting the embeddedness of sociology in empire and its tendency to ignore the rest of the world. So I was excited to add Go’s book, unread, to my syllabus this time, and when we got to it recently, I was not disappointed. Not only does Go usefully recap major strands of postcolonial thought, but he uses them to advance positive arguments about what a sociology that takes them seriously should look like, and how the sociological project can engage with, rather than simply be undermined by, postcolonial arguments about the situatedness of knowledge and the limits of theoretical claims.

**Ludwik Fleck,** *Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact*  
Translated by Frederick Bradley and Thaddeus J. Trenn  
(University of Chicago Press, 1979)

I’ve been working on articulating the core argument of the book I’m working on, Thinking Like an Economist: How Economics Became the Language of U.S. Public Policy, more precisely. Borrowing Ian Hacking’s language, I’ve been referring to an economic “style of reasoning” that is adopted in policy circles. But Hacking uses “styles” to describe a narrower and more consistent orientation toward the world than I see, and I’ve never been quite happy with the term. Recently I finally read Fleck, and realized that his language of “thought styles” and “thought collectives” much better captures what I’m looking for. While the terms sound quite similar, Fleck places much more emphasis on how a thought style is produced by a specific intellectual community—it’s much more social than Hacking. And Fleck’s distinction between an esoteric circle, where the thought style originates, and an exoteric circle, which does not produce the thought style but is familiar with it and takes it for granted, maps extremely well onto economics, in which knowledge is produced by a core of elites, but a much wider circle adopts a popularized version of the style. It is hard to believe this book was written by a biologist thirty years before Kuhn.

**William Derringer,** *Calculated Values: Finance, Politics, and the Quantitative Age* (Harvard University Press, 2018)

This one, which just came out a couple of months ago, I’ve just started. Derringer’s book looks at how calculative reasoning emerged in the half-century after Britain’s Glorious Revolution, and became both a tool and a source of authority in the political fights of this unsettled period. It’s a sort of backstory to Porter’s Trust in Numbers that shows how a political community that trusts in numbers emerges in the first place. As Derringer points out in the preface, the politics of numbers continue to dog us, and the production of politically useful numbers is no less messy and contentious today than it was three hundred years ago. I am hoping that learning more about political battles over calculation in another, very different context will be useful for thinking about analogous battles that continue to play out today.
SASE Networks Spotlight

There has been some reorganizing of SASE’s Networks in the past year. Two new networks are making their debut in Kyoto—Network E: Political Economy of Industrial Relations and Welfare States and Network I: Alternatives to Capitalism. Their organizers tell us a little bit about the “origin stories” of their networks and what they would like the SASE community to know about the work they are doing, the disciplines they represent, and to expect in Kyoto.

- **Network E: Political Economy of Industrial Relations and Welfare States**, organized by Alexandre Afonso (University of Leiden); Sabina Avdagic (University of Sussex); Chiara Benassi (King’s College London); Aidan Regan (UCD Dublin)
  
- **Network I: Alternatives to Capitalism**, organized by Katherine K. Chen (The City College of New York and the Graduate Center, CUNY); Torsten Geelan (University of Cambridge and University of Copenhagen); Lara Monticelli (independent research fellow); Joyce Rothschild (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University)

*When was your Network founded?*

**Network E (Political Economy of Industrial Relations and Welfare States):**

Our network is the result of a fusion between the political economy and welfare network founded by Alex Hicks and the industrial relations network, which was hitherto led by Lucio Baccaro and Sabina Avdagic, who is still a network coordinator.

**Network I (Alternatives to Capitalism):**

The impetus for forming the Alternatives to Capitalism research network arose from renewed debate about the future of capitalism and its institutions. In the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, people recognize the urgent need to start and sustain prefigurative alternatives that can help tackle multiple issues: increasing inequalities of income and power, eroding democracy and citizens’ rights, irreversible environmental destruction, and a shrinking welfare state. As evidenced by the rise of new social movements such as OCCUPY and various organizations such as worker & platform cooperatives, ecovillages and mutual aid societies, a growing number of critical citizens are questioning and challenging the conventional modes of organization, production, and consumption. People are interested in connecting with others in ways that re-embed the social in the market economy and could complement or supplant conventional capitalistic and bureaucratic practices. However, much of the research literature examines dominant institutions that reinforce the status quo of inequality, oppression, and exploitation. This conveys the mistaken impression that alternatives don’t exist or are doomed. We therefore thought that it was important to create a new international and interdisciplinary forum that supports
disseminating research on emergent and long-standing groups, organizations, and communities that offer alternative ways of living, working, and associating.

The genesis of the network began in 2016, when two of the co-founders, Lara Monticelli and Torsten Geelan, together with their colleagues, Professors Paolo R. Graziano and Francesca Forno, organized their first SASE mini-conference at UC Berkeley. 28 scholars from 10 countries (Brazil, Uruguay, Italy, the UK, Germany, Mexico, USA, France, Norway, and Hungary) gathered to focus on cooperatives, political consumerism and alternative lifestyles. Continuing this successful event, Lara and Torsten organized another mini-conference in Lyon, in 2017. At this same SASE conference, Professors Joyce Rothschild and Katherine K. Chen co-organized their first mini-conference, titled "Seeking a More Just and Egalitarian Economy through Cooperatives, Communes and Other Collectives". This drew 26 presentations by scholars from institutions around the world, including India, Brazil, the US, and several European countries. Given the overlap of the two mini-conference streams, the organizers decided to join forces and form a new research network. While Joyce is unable to attend the Alternatives to Capitalism network's inaugural 2018 conference in Kyoto, she is looking forward to co-organizing the 2019 conference at the New School in New York.

What are some of the most important issues or themes that will be discussed in your network at this year's meeting? What issues do you think will be central in the next few years?

Network E (Political Economy of Industrial Relations and Welfare States): Looking at the submissions for the Kyoto conference, we have a wide variety of themes covered in the area of work, industrial relations, and welfare, including the changing nature of work, employment, and inequality. Our research area has also been touched by the "populist wave" that has affected politics, so we will have a number of panels on the radical right and its relationship to the world of work and trade unions, as well as on immigration. Another research topic that seems to be expanding is research on "growth models" and on finding new ways to understand how capitalist economies are organized and evolve.

Network I (Alternatives to Capitalism): This year's conference in Kyoto covers several topical themes and issues currently being discussed across the social sciences.

On 'Day 1,' the opening morning session begins with a theoretical panel on envisioning alternatives to contemporary capitalism through prefigurative philosophies, politics, and practices before turning to the question of how to resist and challenge the trend towards financialization of the economy in the 21st century. In the afternoon, presenters will examine the opportunities and challenges that different organizations and movements face in their attempts to shift society towards a sustainable energy future and rethink food production and consumption.

On 'Day 2,' the opening sessions explore the transformative potential and reality of alternative forms of ownership, organization, and work, and discuss how best to enhance workplace democracy and create new relations. In the afternoon, one of the sessions explores how organizations tackling social issues with unconventional practices, including democratic and egalitarian practices, can thrive, despite pressures to adopt more familiar practices.

The final sessions of the conference delve into the complexities of changing capitalism by changing everyday life. In the closing session, we will discuss publication and funding opportunities, as well as plans for the 2019 SASE meeting in New York.

Over the next five years, we expect that some of the central currents of debate in the research network will concern how different alternatives to capitalism will scale, as well as how the State and market interact with these organizations and practices through mechanisms of repression, co-optation, and facilitation. We
are particularly interested in exploring innovative ways to bridge the knowledge gap with practitioners, who may not realize how existing and ongoing research can help them think through strategies and options or manage challenges.

**What academic disciplines are most represented in your Network?**

**Network E (Political Economy of Industrial Relations and Welfare States):**
We are at the intersection of political science, sociology, and economics. We build on an established tradition of industrial relations scholarship, so many members of our network identify themselves as industrial relations scholars. After the merger, we now have many people working on the welfare state and its transformations, and we hope to find good synergies to look at the interactions between collective bargaining and welfare state reforms.

**Network I (Alternatives to Capitalism):**
Our network attracts both disciplinary specialists who span anthropology, sociology, political science, and other social sciences, as well as interdisciplinary scholars in organizations research, consumption, public policy, and urban planning.

**What do you want people to know about your network?**

**Network E (Political Economy of Industrial Relations and Welfare States):**
This is an interdisciplinary network that is driven more by the problems of the areas it studies rather than one particular theoretical or ontological worldview, so we are open to a wide variety of approaches and interested in substantive dialogue between them.

**Network I (Alternatives to Capitalism):**
We offer a prefigurative respite for those who study alternatives but yet have to make a living navigating mainstream institutions!

**What would you want people to know about your Network?**

**Network E (Political Economy of Industrial Relations and Welfare States):**
We don’t know. Caroline and I took over from the previous organizers in 2013 with some transitional help from Aaron Major. Given that it is Network B, we assume it was one of the earliest networks.

**Network I (Alternatives to Capitalism):**
We don’t know, but we have been the network’s organizers since SASE/Madrid 2011.

**What is your most recent book or publication?**

**Network E (Political Economy of Industrial Relations and Welfare States):**
- **Alexandre Afonso:** Recently I have been working on the relationship between welfare state development and immigration policy. My most recent published work in this area is a review article on “Comparative Political Economy and International Migration” co-authored with Camilla Devitt and published in *Socio-Economic Review*, SASE’s flagship journal.

**Network I (Alternatives to Capitalism):**
- **Sabina Avdagic:** My research is in the area of the political economy of labor markets and the welfare state. My earlier work was focused on the effects of different labor market institutions and the political economy of labor market reforms. The latest publication from that stream of research is “Does Deregulation Work?: Reassessing the Unemployment Effects of Employment Protection” in *British Journal of Industrial Relations*. Currently, my focus is on inequality and the relationship between immigration and support for the welfare state. I am a Principal
Investigator on a British Academy project that investigates how the framing of immigration affects attitudes towards redistribution.

- **Chiara Benassi**: My main area of research is comparative employment relations. In particular, I look at how national and local institutions affect companies' human resource strategies in the areas of internal and external flexibility, outsourcing, training, and how they shape unions' responses. At the moment, I am Principal Investigator of an ESRC project on training and work organization in the European automotive industry.

- **Aidan Regan**: My research is focused on comparative political economy of European integration, with a particular focus on wage-setting, collective bargaining, labor relations and housing markets. My work has appeared in *Perspectives on Politics, Politics and Society, New Political Economy, Journal for Common Market Studies, European Journal of Industrial Relations, Comparative European Politics*, and *Socio-Economic Review*, among other outlets. You can follow me on Twitter at @aidan_regan

**Network I (Alternatives to Capitalism):**

- **Torsten Geelan** has recently published an edited collection – *From Financial Crisis to Social Change: Towards Alternative Horizons* (Palgrave, 2018) – which addresses three interrelated questions in the aftermath of the North Atlantic financial crisis: how to reclaim universities, revitalize democracy, and recast politics. His primary research focuses on the changing relationship between trade unions, the media, and power in the United Kingdom and Denmark as well as precarious work. His research has been published in the *Industrial Relations Journal, Transfer: the European Review of Labour and Research* and *Danish Sociology*.

- **Lara Monticelli** co-edited with Christian Fuchs the special issue “Marx@200. Debating Capitalism and the Future of Radical Theory” (*TripleC: Communication, Capitalism & Critique*, May 2018) – featuring contributions by the prominent critical scholars David Harvey, Michael Hardt, Antonio Negri, Silvia Federici, Slavoj Žižek, and Erik Olin Wright. From September 2018, she will join Copenhagen Business School as an Assistant Professor and Marie Skłodowska-Curie fellow. Her research focuses on the (re)emergence of community-based social movements as living laboratories experimenting with practices of resilience and resistance to environmental, economic and societal challenges. Her articles have been published in *Acta Politica, Contemporary Social Science, Partecipazione e Conflitto (PACO)*, and a number of edited volumes.

- **Katherine K. Chen**'s organizational ethnography *Enabling Creative Chaos: The Organization Behind the Burning Man Event* (University of Chicago, 2009) received the Best Book Prize for Outstanding Book in Nonprofit and Voluntary Action Research by the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA) and Honorable Mention for the Max Weber Award of the Organizations, Occupations, and Work (OOW) Section of the American Sociological Association.

**PhDs in Socio-Economics: New Research Paths**

*Find out more about the latest PhDs obtained by SASE scholars.*

In this edition, Ana Carolina Bichoffe presents her thesis on Brazil's sovereign credit risk classifications, Gorgi Krlev his dissertation on the social impact of social purpose organizations, Alejandro Marambio-Tapia his work on debt in Chilean households, and Alpen Sheth his work on weather insurance in India.

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**Metrics of the State: For a Sociology of Brazilian Sovereign Credit Risk Classification**

*Ana Carolina Bichoffe*

*Doctorate in Sociology obtained 21 September 2017 - Department of Social Sciences, Universidade Federal de São Carlos, Brazil.*
You can find a Prezi presentation of Bichoffe's dissertation here.

This thesis, defended on the 21st of September 2017 in Political Science at the Federal University of São Carlos (UFSCar) in Brazil, deals with the profound transformations that financial metrics devices and credit risk classifications have produced, at different rates, in the finances of the contemporary Brazilian state. Drawing on multiples sources of historical and multimedia materials and interviews with a former President of the Brazilian Central Bank, financial market executives and other corporate executives, I examine how the enunciation of classifications and statistical metrics became a reference for the construction and justification of realities in different scenarios in contemporary social life, reverberating even more when it comes to the economic and financial dimensions of Sovereign States. To examine the co-evolution of the credit risk narrative and the uses of these classifications devices in the Brazilian case I use a proposition based on the native justification of two orders: the objective and efficient orientation of decision-making and the minimization of the implied risks of this decision. Thus, these devices may be understood as intentional instruments of creation and implementation of cultural and political order, that is, systems of rules that facilitate the coordination and cooperation of social actors in situations of uncertainty that determine the distribution of costs and benefits of collective action. They are therefore instruments of a political order. Also based on the theoretical conceptions of governmentality and performativity, the research constructs a narrative about how an abstract and polysemic conception of the notion of risk culminates in an objective proposition of sovereign credit risk. The singular dimension addressed in the research is that the emergence of this modern notion of financial risk is simultaneously accompanied by metric devices of classification, evaluation and control. In the Brazilian case, this key convergence between the ideal of credit risk and the classification devices echoes in the tensions and disputes that arise in the political economy-financial space. So, before being a contradiction, the notion of risk is a fundamental part of the creation and establishment of a rationality that involves the economic, financial, political and legal systems. The importance of the state in the governmentality of devices is undeniable. By inducing markets to use risk rating metrics, giving them part of the regulation role, the states became targets of these same devices as they enter the sovereign bond market. Such metrologies and devices represent not only a kind of rationality, but fundamentally a new moral order, where the interaction between the parties involved is appeased, docilized, even in the case of a dispute of interests. This is the key point of the thesis: this moral order is based on relations of convincing, in feasible demonstrations. Put another way, the narrative is centered on the digression of convincing its audience, and recruiting new followers. Thus, in addition, another contribution of the study is the construction of a reference framework on the institutionalization of the (new) Public Debt Securities Market in Brazil.

A Capital-Based Approach to Social Impact

Gorgi Krlev
Doctorate in Sociology obtained 6 November 2017 - Oxford University, United Kingdom

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The question of social impact is becoming more important to society. The theoretical foundation of social impact measurement and its empirical testing is the core of my work. The subject is far from new for the social sciences, but they face different and inarguably bigger challenges than the natural sciences in proving impact achieved. I address impact on the organisational level, with a particular focus on ‘social purpose organisations’, a label referring to non-profits, social enterprises, foundations, or CSR activities.

I first review the challenges of the dominant approaches to measuring social impact: (1) cost-benefit analysis’ focus on monetisation produces a neglect of elements that are hard to monetise, such as social cohesion, justice or political participation; (2) life-satisfaction analysis, which is closely tied to ‘new’ welfare indicators at the national level, uses a highly aggregate measure, a property which makes it hard to identify intermediate outcomes and processes in the creation of social impact; (3) the Capability Approach as rooted in the evaluation of poverty alleviation, partly suffers from an indistinctness of capabilities, such as ‘leading a dignified life’, which make them hard to operationalise.

I develop an alternative approach to social impact in defining it as the targeted formation of capital assets, comprising social relationships (social capital), values and ideals (cultural capital) as well as participation and engagement (political capital). Social purpose organizations are ‘producers’ of such capitals that enable productivity in society. Macro sociology and social psychology help designing instruments to measure the capitals.

My quantitative and qualitative empirical work is composed of three empirical cases located in Germany. The studies consider multiple capitals, but focus on the main one for each intervention: (1) social capital in community-oriented housing for elderly people; (2) cultural capital in a school-based intervention on pro-sociality; (3) political capital related to an online platform for citizens and politicians.

With regard to housing, my research shows that neighbours cannot replace people’s best friends or family, but they still provide a high degree of social interaction and support. The main value of community-oriented housing lies not in an absolute higher level of social capital than found in assisted living, but rather in the fact that it leaves a significantly smaller proportion of persons excluded from the community. This is of great importance in view of individual isolation in old age and resulting negative consequences.

The analysis of the school programme reveals that it is strong at activating passive and withdrawn adolescents, but limited in its capacity to affect male adolescents with major behavioural problems. It was surprising to find that it strengthens the cohesion among pupils more than it reverts attitudes toward violence. This has significant implications for the use of the programme, depending on the needs of schools.

The study on the political web platform showed that from the viewpoint of users it levered interaction between them and politicians. It also increased political
transparency and enabled advocacy, but it did not build a bridge into existing political organisations. The study also underlines that politicians see hardly any positive effects. This difference in assessments could further enhance a perceived divide between citizens and politicians.

My capital-based approach enables unique insights into the facets of impact created by the studied interventions, as it is capable of addressing areas previously neglected in social impact measurement. I therefore hope to have significantly advanced its theory and practice.

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**living on instalments: credit and the moral economy of post-industrial working-class households in chile**

*alejandro marambio-tapia*

*doctorate in sociology obtained november 2017 - the university of manchester, uk*

Credit is ubiquitous in the life of Chilean households. It is a key feature in the budgeting, shopping, and consuming practices of families. Consequently, to be indebted is a normal expectation in Chile. Families engage with the ‘necessary evil’ of credit in different ways, showing a massive, regular use of credit as short, medium, and long-term leverage tool, with store cards being the main source of credit for families of the post-industrial working-class, and for lower and moderate-income families in general. The normalisation of credit is also enacted in the experiences of the debt careers of the families, and the meanings they attribute to their persistent encounters with credit and their debt disasters. Moral obligations, conventional and unconventional financial knowledge accompany the everyday situated economic practices of families.

This thesis addresses the processes of moral legitimation and strategic adaptation that households employ to operate and justify their economic rationality, looking at credit in a context of ordinary and everyday consumption. Quantitative structural data, semi-structured interviews with 44 heads of households, and research on the financial education landscape in Chile uncover the material practices and meanings that underpin narratives of economic struggle and moderate social aspirations. Their rationalities usually clash with those deployed by state and market agents that are aimed to educate those in a ‘healthy indebtedness’.

Households produce a re-signification of debt where debt has been ‘demoralised’, and credit moralised, making the impression that eventually ‘credit is not debt’. This research contributes to the discussion about the meaning of debt, to understand the financialisation of everyday life by looking at situated economic practices, and to the social, moral, and relational foundations of the economic practices. It also addresses the manufacturing of neoliberal subjectivities in the intermeshing of structures of capitalism and everyday practices. The ‘indebted men’ of Lazaratto and the Focauldian biopolitical domination find particular foundations in the context of the Global South, challenging their universality.

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Cultivating Risk: Weather Insurance, Technology, and Financialization in India
Alpen Sheth

Doctorate in Sociology obtained 10 August 2017 - Department of Urban Studies and Planning, MIT, United States

Since 2007, India’s weather insurance programs have become the largest in the world, offering farmers access to new financial instruments and automated technologies to manage the increasing risks of agricultural cultivation. Insurance has come to be seen as a systematic response to the increasing impacts of drought and flooding since the green revolution and an agrarian crisis that has witnessed over 300,000 farmers committing suicide between 1995 and 2015. In this dissertation, I ask how and why insurance, which did not play a significant role several decades ago, has come to be a central planning strategy for agricultural policymakers, outpacing all other government expenditure in the form of premium subsidies. I study the development of weather insurance programs in India and examine implementation across four major agricultural states—Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, and Punjab—to show how risk transfer in the agricultural sector has been increasingly financialized, with a growing dependence on new derivative instruments and the rising penetration of international reinsurance capital as suggested in recent development research.

I conducted extended interviews with over 40 insurance professionals and underwriters, 20 Indian government policymakers as well as with 60 farmers in four states. I also use spatial analysis of insurance business data to understand and explain why the implementation and outcome of the same policies varies in different regions. Based on archives and documents, I contribute new findings to show that Indian agricultural policy has witnessed a shift in focus away from the distribution of land, infrastructure, and productivity that were important in post-independence India and the Green Revolution.

My findings show that current policy approaches are based on new forms of “riskholding” in the post-Green Revolution period, in which the government manages the ways that the financial risks of agricultural producers are retained or transferred. This approach accompanies the increasing application of actuarial insurance-based systems since the 1970s. Such approaches have been used in policy around the world to address social and economic problems. In my comparative examination of the four states, I show that while insurance reduces some forms of inequality through subsidies, it increases other inequalities such as disparities in landholding and landlessness. I also show how complexities created by the growing destabilization of monsoon rain patterns make the determination of harm, loss, and risk more difficult. That has contributed to the increasing reliance on automated and index-based systems. My conclusion is that this has actually led to the disempowerment of farmers and this is further evidenced by the politicization of insurance subsidies, electoral politics, and debt-based mobilization.

I suggest that insurance is an important yet incomplete mathematical (actuarial) technology for planning. Current actuarial systems assume fixed aggregate risk and non-correlation of risks and unevenly empower risk capital through centralized, hierarchical reinsurance pools to maintain profitability at scale. This leads to the conclusion that new models for the decentralization of insurance and risk pooling through blockchain and
other distributed technologies might serve as a better instrument of risk-management than traditional insurance.

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Have you finished your PhD project? Is the end in sight? Do you want the world to know about your research? The SASE newsletter is looking for presentations of finished, or nearly finished, PhD projects on socio-economic topics. Let us know about the theoretical insights and empirical results that have resulted from those years of hard work. Wherever you come from or whatever your topic, as long as it is related to socio-economics, we would love to hear from you. Send us an abstract of approximately 400 words sketching the research and results, and we will feature it in the newsletter (space permitting).

Send submissions to saseexecutive@sase.org

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**Odds and Ends**

**SASE Women’s Forum**

SASE is pleased to launch it’s inaugural Women’s Forum (organized by Sarah Ashwin, Chiara Benassi, Virginia L Doellgast, Jacqueline O’Reilly, Caroline Ruiner, and Dorottya Sallai [chair]), which aims to improve senior representation of women in academia, to stimulate discussions about important issues, including but not limited to ‘challenges of publishing’, ‘work-life balance’, ‘leadership roles’ or ‘career progression’, as well as to facilitate networking among female scholars within SASE. The event will provide an opportunity for female SASE colleagues to share their ideas, grow their professional network, and liaise with other women within their field or more generally in academia. For more information, consult the [2018 conference program](#).

**Past ECW Winner Published in the Journal of Cultural Economy**

We are delighted to announce that a past winner of the SASE Early Career Workshop award, Theo Bourgeron, has had an updated version of his ECW paper published in the *Journal of Cultural Economy*. Read the article: “[Optimising ‘cash flows’: converting corporate finance to hard currency](#)”

**ASA’s Economic Sociology Section**

Under the direction of Frederick Wherry, the Economic Sociology section of the ASA has launched a [new site](#) that is sure to be of interest to the SASE community.
This year’s conference features over a dozen sessions in which authors of recent books of note respond to the prepared critiques of a panel of their peers. See the list here.

**Other Recent Publications**

**Welfare Democracies and Party Politics**
*Explaining Electoral Dynamics in Times of Changing Welfare Capitalism*
by Bruno Palier, Philip Manow, and Hanna Schwander (eds)
(Oxford University Press, 2018)

**From Taverns to Gastropubs: Food, Drink, and Sociality in England**
by Christel Lane
(Oxford University Press, 2018)

**California Greenin’: How the Golden State Became an Environmental Leader**
by David Vogel
(Princeton University Press, 2018)

**Marketcraft**
*How Governments Make Markets Work*
by Steven K. Vogel
(Oxford University Press, 2018)

**Marx@200: Debating Capitalism & Perspectives for the Future of Radical Theory**
by Christian Fuchs and Lara Monticelli (eds)
(Triple C, 2018)

**Happiness is the Wrong Metric: A Liberal Communitarian Response to Populism**
by Amitai Etzioni
(Springer, 2018)
Uneasy Street: The Anxieties of Affluence
by Rachel Sherman

The Politics of Shale Gas in Eastern Europe: Energy Security, Contested Technologies and the Social License to Frack
by Andreas Goldthau
(Cambridge University Press, 2018)

From Financial Crisis to Social Change: Towards Alternative Horizons
by Torsten Geelan, Marcos González Hernando, and Peter William Walsh (eds)
(Palgrave Macmillan, 2018)

The European Court of Justice and the Policy Process: The Shadow of Case Law
by Susanne K. Schmidt
(Oxford University Press, 2017)

The Political Power of Global Corporations
by John Mikler
(Policy Press, 2018)

Handbook of the International Political Economy of Energy and Natural Resources
by Andreas Goldthau, Michael F. Keating, and Caroline Kuzemko
(Edward Elgar Publishing, 2018)