

EAST COAST CONFERENCE OF SOCIALIST SOCIOLOGISTS

SUMMER NEWSLETTER 1976

This newsletter is brought to you by a collective of Buffalo sociologists. At the May conference of the ECCSS, we offered to take responsibility for running the organization and planning next year's conference, and this newsletter is our first public step in that direction. As you will see as you read on, we have a lot of ideas about how and where and when that conference could be run, but none of them is fixed and all are open to change. If you're coming to the ASA meetings in N.Y.C. this August, we hope you will come to the ECCSS planning meeting, the purpose of which is to allow as many people as possible to contribute to conference planning, and to (continue to) clarify all of our political perspectives. The newsletter will be the basis for our discussion, so please bring it with you. If you're not coming to the ASA, please write and let us know your ideas about theme, plenaries, structure, time, and place, etc. We're looking forward to meeting and hearing from all of you, and to a productive year together in the ECCSS.

Buffalo collective: Roz Cohen, Barry Cohen, Jean Dowdall, George Dowdall,
Eric Swanson, Gene Grabiner, Virginia Grabiner, Sid
Harring, Lorraine McMullin, Gary Welborn
And friends: Maria Brown, Don Wallace

THE HUDSON GUILD CONFERENCE May 21-3, 1976

Lengthy Notes on a Lengthy Business Meeting

Friday evening the conference participants convened to plan the weekend's activities. In view of the need felt for attending to organizational concerns of the ECCSS, a sizeable amount of time was apportioned for business considerations Saturday afternoon. Lately the organization has had increasing difficulty generating interest and energy for organizing conferences; more important, we have failed to establish real political direction and engage in collective work. In light of this, consideration of the organization's future was the prime item on the agenda for consideration. Additionally, however, attention was to be directed to possible radical activities at the upcoming ASA national meetings, to the status of the referendum of procedures for nominating slates for ASA offices.

Saturday following lunch, the business meeting opened. It was decided that the three smaller items of business would first be attended to before proceeding to discuss the future of the ECCSS.

ASA Activities:

1. Consideration of procedures for nominating slates for ASA offices was deferred to Sunday following lunch for those interested.

2. Next Al Lee reported on the member's petition submitted to the ASA which calls for various revisions in the ASA constitution aimed at achieving more representativeness and responsiveness in the elected bodies of the ASA. The petition and the proposals involved have been reviewed and soundly rejected by the present ("self-perpetuating elite") Council of the ASA by a vote of 16 to 1. The Council is now urging ASA members to vote to defeat the referendum. Discussion of the pros and cons of the issues involved can be found in the April 1976 issue of Footnotes. All ASA members are encouraged to read up. The May issue of Footnotes carried letters from the membership in reaction and the general mailing for voting went out sometime in June. All ASA members are encouraged to vote and urge fellow members to vote too.

3. Ted Goertzel next spoke, soliciting suggestions and commitments for radical activity at the upcoming national meetings of the ASA in New York. As he pointed up, the West Coast radicals last year successfully organized a full range of programs and attracted many participants. The "radical caucus" of the ASA this year can again count on a hotel meeting room for their use. Dan Cohen agreed to coordinate the organization of mini-courses. If you want to do a mini-course or help Dan to organize those being offered, write to:

Dan Cohen
163 E. 89th Street
New York, New York 10028

Maria Brown volunteered to put together showings of political films. Anyone interested in helping to organize, or having suggestions regarding good films to show can write to:

Maria Brown
2704 Brown Street
Phila., Pa. 19130

Any other suggestions for programs or commitments to help organize and offer a radical presence at the ASA meetings are invited.

Organization of ECCSS:

The meeting next turned to considering the present organizational situation of the ECCSS as well as considering where the organization could and should be going. A number of persons (Eleanor Horowitz, Evan Stark, and others) spoke to the lack of real political discussion and work they felt had characterized the ECCSS's existence to date. Also, Evan pointed to the implicit decision-making he felt had been involved in much of the conference planning to date. He argued that much more open planning and decision-making he felt had been involved in much of the conference planning to date. He argued that much more open planning and decision-making which seeks deliberately to structure in and stimulate political debate in the conference program is necessary.

Building upon a generally agreement as to the political and organizational weaknesses of the ECCSS, several suggestions were made. Concentration on regional and workshop development was proposed. It was felt that if collective political work could be encouraged and generated out of some of the continuing workshops of the conference as well as out of some of different regional groupings, the organization could achieve real rooting. It was also agreed that the Steering Committee structure that we have employed in the past should not be continued, and that we should not hold two conferences a year. In view of this, a formal proposal was put forward and accepted stating that in the future the task of organizing a yearly conference would be delegated to a particular regional or workshop group within the ECCSS which would be charged with the overall planning and coordination of the conference but which would also have the responsibility of soliciting and incorporating the reactions and input of the broader membership of the ECCSS with regard to the design of the conference. It was suggested that smaller one-day regional conferences be encouraged in place of the usual second large conference. Again, Evan suggested an addendum to the endorsed proposal favoring the structuring of the conference program in such a way that political debate would be stimulated. After some discussion, this suggestion seemed to be generally accepted.

Having reformulated the ECCSS's mode of operation, an invitation was extended to the Buffalo area collective to organize a conference sometime (of their choosing) in the coming year. After some reaction and discussion of the invitation, the Buffalo collective agreed to take it under consideration and provide a reply to the Conference Sunday. It was agreed then that the business meeting should adjourn and continue again following Sunday breakfast.

Following breakfast Sunday, the business meeting opened again and some new items of business in addition to Buffalo's reply were placed on the agenda.

A Coleman Report:

Al Lee began by calling the membership's attention to recent developments surrounding James Coleman. As Al pointed out, over the last year reaction has been mounting within and beyond the field, to Coleman's opportunistic turnabout in regard to the busing issue. Al himself has proposed censuring Coleman to the ASA Council, which has refused to take up the matter. As a result, Lee as President of the ASA, has invited Coleman to participate in an open discussion of his position as part of the upcoming national ASA program. Al invites support of his efforts against Coleman in New York and any other suggestions as to actions in reaction which ECCSS members may be able to muster.

1977 Conference:

Buffalo, having considered the invitation extended to them, formally accepted the task of organizing the next conference in the Spring of 1977. A very grateful and warm acknowledgement of Buffalo's acceptance was made by the conference participants. Buffalo, after providing the conference with a

short background on itself and its political work and interests, announced that a planning meeting would be held at the ASA meetings where the possible plans for the upcoming conference would be reviewed and new input solicited.

Three short final pieces of business concluded the business meeting:

1. A vote of thanks was extended to the Division of Social Sciences at SUNY, Purchase, for its past generous financial support of the ECCSS Newsletter.
 2. Thanks were offered to Ted Goertzel and Maria Brown for organizational work done in regard to the Hudson-Guild conference.
 3. A suggestion was put forward that the ECCSS consider structuring some kinds of process evaluation features into the sessions of upcoming conferences.
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Notes on the Criminology Workshop

ECCSS members with interests in criminology met at the Criminology Workshop on Saturday morning, May 22. A brief, and inexhaustive list of topics which were discussed included:

The process by which methadone "patients" enter treatment was examined from the point of view of opiate addicts' social power to resist intake into methadone programs, which require that each patient be listed in a U.S. Government case registry (ostensibly for research purposes), be "stabilized" (e.g., addicted) to methadone, under the intense scrutiny of "counselors" and other practitioners, while giving weekly urinalysis samples to measure the patients' use of opiates and other "illicit" substances during methadone maintenance. It was noted that the early evaluations of methadone's effectiveness in "blockading" heroin craving, and preventing illicit drug seeking behavior (e.g., burglary) were done at Rockefeller University. These evaluations have since been shown to be invalid by virtue of using selected patients.

Criminology, it was suggested, can be considered to be the "queen of sciences," since capitalism is the most straightforward example of a "system crime." Thus, criminology is readily within the domain of socialist sociology and a conflict mode of analysis.

The criminal justice system in Cuba, the Peoples' Republic of China, and the Soviet Union, in varying degrees, is organized along lines of a peer adjudication model. First and second offenders are understood to require integration into the community, not stigma and exclusion from the community, as is the case with capitalist punitive approaches to controlling those who possess only a marginal relationship to stable employment and to the capitalist ideological hegemony. In this regard a "prison" model is useful as a device to understand social control in capitalist societies. In understanding the differences between criminal justice systems in socialist and capitalist societies. In understanding the differences between criminal justice systems in socialist and capitalist societies, it is necessary to keep in

mind the revolutionary nature of socialist societies, where institutions are accountable to the people and not to an economic elite. Thus, the peer adjudication model is employed in socialist societies; in the U.S. we have seen the use of "arbitration" courts whose function is to clear court backlogs for more "serious" cases - potentially revolutionary changes are subverted into mechanisms to rationalize the system.

Theories of crime in socialist societies tend to emphasize the role of the "infrastructure" (e.g., educational and socialization institutions), and "capitalist residuals," since it is difficult to fault socialism, as a system. However, economic individualism, in capitalism, serves the function of fixing blame on the "victim".

ECCSS planning meeting at the ASA is scheduled for:

DATE: Tuesday, August 31
 TIME: 9.30 a.m. to noon
 PLACE: Radical Caucus Room

Check program at the meetings for the latest information.

MAY 1977 CONFERENCE:

Suggested Theme--Labor and Monopoly Capital

The Buffalo members of the ECCSS have been meeting to plan the next conference. We have discussed a number of possible themes, including labor and monopoly capital, the urban fiscal crisis, clarification of ECCSS politics, and socialist feminism. We found ourselves repeatedly returning to the theme of labor and monopoly capital, in part because it seemed that many of the important aspects of the other themes could be discussed within it.

Tying the conference together around the nature of labor in monopoly capitalist society seemed useful in making many desired connections--between various types of labor, problems endemic to each or common to all, and between various labor and political movements. We discussed such things as academic labor (students, faculty, non-teaching labor), housework for pay, Third World and Puerto Rican labor. Labor's relationship to management, to labor, to products or to clients could be explored. We might, also, look to political activity as it has grown out of various labor relations.

Suggested Topics for Plenary Session

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|---|--|
| 1. Labor and Monopoly Capital | 8. Unions and the University; UUP, GSEU, other academic unions |
| 2. Socialist Academics and Labor | 9. Labor that educates |
| 3. Women and Labor History | 10. Organizing Office Workers |
| 4. Women, Labor, and CLUW | 11. Third World Labor |
| 5. Rank-and-File Movements and Union Reform | 12. Puerto Rican Labor |
| 6. Labor and the Economic Crisis | 13. URPE presentation |
| 7. Left Political Organizations and Labor | 14. Presentations by Left political organizations. |

Other titles are welcome, as are the names of potential speakers. Perhaps other groups (e.g. ongoing workshops) could take responsibility for planning a plenary.

We have been in contact with Judy Rubin of the Monthly Review Press about the possibility of having Harry Braverman (author of the justly acclaimed Labor and Monopoly Capital) participating in the conference. Unfortunately he has been ill lately so that no speaking commitments can be made for him. Ms. Rubin indicated his interest in discussion of this issue with us. We will be in touch with her later this year.

Conference Mechanics: Time and Place

There are several possibilities for the conference with regard to its duration, location, and timing. First, there are the questions of location. Essentially, there are three options: (1) somewhere near New York City (i.e. within two hour's drive), (2) somewhere near Buffalo, or (3) somewhere in between. The advantage of having the conference near the coast is, of course, the ease with which the many ECCSS members living there could get to the conference. The disadvantages are that it would be difficult to attract people from the western and southern parts of the region, and it would be somewhat more difficult for the Buffalo collective to arrange various logistic details. It would necessitate some other group handling local arrangements. If the conference were held near Buffalo, of course, it would be easier for us to handle those matters; in addition, it would facilitate our inviting some resource people from the Buffalo area who couldn't be expected to travel a great distance. Another consideration is that having the conference further West might make it possible for people west of Buffalo to attend. That leaves the third possibility, having the conference somewhere in between. That would mean about a 4 hour drive for those who would be coming from the far East, but it would shorten the drive for those coming from the West. It still might make it possible for the Buffalo group to invite local resource people, though it would be more difficult. It would also be possible to arrange the conference ourselves, or perhaps a local group could take on all or some portion of that. And, last but not least, there is some lovely terrain between Buffalo and New York.

What about setting? There seem to be several options there. The conference could be held at a camp. That might mean more "roughing it" (though we would not expect to have to do cooking), but might provide a lovely setting and cut costs considerably. One of our problems has been the expense involved in coming to a conference of several days. This has been especially troublesome for students, thus de facto limiting the number and type of individuals who have been able to come. On the other hand, a commodious environment means that less effort must be put into problems of living and more time is available for conferring. It is also easier for parents who wish to bring their children. Such places can be conference grounds or fancier camps. They often do not present such majestic scenery. The third option is a college campus. While dorm life may not be as exciting as camp life, it is often much easier to arrange for food and it is often less expensive (though not always). Also, a campus is likely to have facilities such as movie projectors, classrooms, and large meeting halls which make a conference easier to orchestrate, especially if a large number of people attend. All three settings tend to keep people together, unless the college campus is an urban one, which we don't anticipate after the problems encountered in New York City with that kind of arrangement. At this point, all of the different kinds of settings have been attempted in some form or another with varying degrees of success.

Next, there is the issue of when to have the conference. Memorial Day weekend has been considered the most likely time, but it presents some problems. Many families want that long weekend for family excursions. This is especially true of people whose employment requires their working a 9:00 to 5:00 routine virtually all year. Academics have less trouble getting away, but we might find that our hopes for expansion somewhat limited by planning the conference during that particular weekend. On the other hand, it might be possible to make enough recreational activity available that those with families would feel comfortable bringing them. This would be important in the event that community resource people were invited to the conference. Another weekend during the Spring might be an alternative to Memorial Day. But that presents some difficulties too. It would affect the length of the conference, and if people were planning to travel during Memorial Day weekend, they may be reluctant to take another weekend away from home very near to that time. We are reasonably certain that Spring is the best time given Buffalo weather, the fact that so many other conferences are held in the Fall, and the fact that people do like some outdoor recreation during our conferences. But we don't want to have the conference too near to examination, or too far into the summer.

Finally, there is the question of duration. As mentioned, that would largely depend on the time available. A long weekend would make a longer conference possible. Also, the length of travel time would be a factor; people don't want to travel a long distance for a very short conference and then have to drive a long way home. On the other hand, a long conference is a more expensive one. The last conference was essentially two nights, and a day and a half. A longer version would possibly mean three nights (Fri., Sat., Sun.) and two and a half days.

Well, those seem to be the logistical options. We feel that, all things considered, the best of the alternatives is a conference somewhere near Binghamton, Memorial Day weekend, Friday night, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday morning. We are looking forward to hearing your opinions and preferences in August.

Workshops at the 1977 Conference

We have written to all the workshop coordinators we know of, asking what their group might want to plan for next spring. The response has been meager so far, but we will print later replies in future newsletters.

Power Structure Workshop:

I would appreciate hearing from anyone interested in presenting a paper, discussing research or holding a roundtable at the next ECCSS Conference. Anyone who would like to suggest a theme for the workshop is also invited to write. Because of some last minute scheduling changes the Power Structure Workshop never got off the ground at the Winter meeting; I apologize for that. However, if we are to have future workshops I need to hear from interested persons who have something to talk about. Please write to me:

Peter Freitag
Dept. of Social Sciences
Clarkson College
Potsdam, New York 13676

Thanks.

Bureaucracy Workshop:

There are at least three possibilities for next year's conference:

1. a mini-course, presenting some of the interesting developments in the Marxian study of bureaucracy;
2. a session in which several people present their current work;
3. an informal session to discuss each others work and help resolve the various problems encountered.

If you are interested in working on these or other activities with the Bureaucracy Workshop, contact:

Ted Reed
Dept. of Sociology
Temple University
Philadelphia, PA. 19122

Health Workshop:

Evan Stark and other have suggested several possible programs on health for the conference. More will be in the next newsletter about this. Evan can be reached at:

Evan Stark
13 Elder Street
New Haven, Conn. 06511

Midyear Regional Conferences

At the May conference this year, it was decided that we would hold general meetings only once a year. However, many people felt that the workshops or regional groups should be encouraged to function between conferences, perhaps by organizing their own smaller or shorter meetings (e.g., a day-long conference for Philadelphia area people in the fall). The newsletter will include notices of these conferences if organizers let us know about them in time. The following list represents the best information we could get as to who those people are. (Please send us additions or corrections for this list.) Contact these people for further information on regional or workshop activities.

Evan Stark (Health)
New Haven, Conn.

Ted Goertzel (Labor)
Haddonfield, N.J.

Jeff Halley (Culture)
Box 346
Pine Bush, N.Y.

John Houghton (Imperialism)
Soc/ Temple University
Philadelphia, Pa. 19122

Sally Luther (Mid-Hudson region)
Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

Maria Brown (Delaware Valley region)
Philadelphia, Pa.

Dan Cohen (Education)
New York, N.Y.

Ted Reed (Bureaucracy)
Philadelphia, Pa.

Roger Mack (Urban)
School of Metro+Commun. Studies
Ramapo College
P.O. Box 542
Mahawah, N.J. 07430

Peter Freitag (Power Structure)
Dept. of Social Sciences
Clarkson College
Potsdam, N.Y. 13676

Barbara Page (New Paltz)
New School for Social Research
SUNY
New Paltz, New York 12561

Henry Etzkowitz (NYC)
SUNY
Purchase, N.Y. 10577

Sharon Stichter (Boston)
Dept. of Soc.
College II
Univ. of Massachusetts/Boston
Boston, Mass. 02125

Roz Cohen (Women)
Soc. Dept. SUCB
1300 Elmwood Ave.
Buffalo, N.Y. 14222

Any announcements or contributions to the newsletter can be sent to:

Jean Dowdall
Sociology Dept.
SUCB
1300 Elmwood Ave.
Buffalo, N.Y. 14222

As this newsletter was going to press, we received a packet of materials about the firing of Paul Nyden at the University of Pittsburgh. Nyden, an Assistant Professor, alleges that the Sociology Department's senior faculty voted to fire him for political reasons. Further information about the case, which is under investigation by the Committee on Freedom of Research and Teaching of the American Sociological Association, can be obtained from Paul Nyden at _____ or James Murphy at _____.

RADICAL ACTIVITIES DURING NEW YORK MEETINGS

Many sessions of interest to Marxist Sociologists will be offered during the August meetings of the ASA and SSSP, either as part of the official or of the "radical caucus" programs. Anyone wishing to present something of interest to radicals as part of the unofficial "radical caucus" program should contact Ted Goertzel, ., Haddonfield, N.J. . Items already scheduled include:

Saturday, August 28

- 8:30 a.m. Roosevelt Hotel (SSSP) "Imperialism and Social Classes"
- 10:30 a.m. Roosevelt Hotel. "The Political Economy of the Labor Movement"
- 3:30 p.m. Roosevelt. "The Organization and Production of Working Class Consciousness" and "New York: Political Economy of a City in Crisis"
- 8:00 p.m. Roosevelt. "Alternative Structures for Working-Class Needs" and "Social Problems and Socialist Transformation"

Sunday, August 29

- 10:30 a.m. Roosevelt Hotel. "Imperialism and Social Classes, Part II"
- 3:00 p.m. Roosevelt Hotel. "Perspectives on Working-Class Women"

Monday, August 30

- 7:30-10:30 a.m. (breakfast roundtable) "Criticisms of Mainstream Sociological Analysis of Social Problems: Views from the Bottom-Up" (Roosevelt Hotel)
- 9:00 a.m. (Roosevelt Hotel) "White Collar Workers"
- 8:30 a.m. (New York Hilton, or other ASA Hotel) "Sociology for Whom?: The Privileged"
- 1:30 p.m. (Radical Caucus Room, Hilton or other ASA Hotel) Radical Caucus: Business Meeting to consider resolutions for ASA Business Meeting.
- 3:00 p.m. (Roosevelt Hotel) "Capitalism and the Patriarchy"
- 8:30 p.m. Plenary Address by Alfred McClung Lee, promises to be a strong radical critique of establishment sociology!
- 10:30 p.m. to whenever. Party in Radical Caucus room, ASA Hotel. BYOB.

Tuesday, August 31

- 9:30 to 12:00 a.m. (ASA Hotel, Radical Caucus Rm.) Meeting of all members of ECCSS interested in helping to plan program for next meeting!
- 4:30 p.m. Second business meeting of radical caucus, to approve resolutions, etc.
- 8:30 p.m. ASA Plenary Session on role of sociology, with radical perspective.
- 10:30 p.m. to whenever. Party in Radical Caucus room, ASA Hotel. BYOB.

Wednesday, September 1

- 10:30 p.m. ASA Business Meeting. At least 250 radical votes needed!!
- 2:30 p.m. Session on "Radical Sociology: Marxist"
- 4:30 p.m. (Radical Caucus Room) Session on "Samir Amin and Proletarian Science"
- 9:00 p.m. ASA Plenary on "The Controversy Over School Busing" possible non-disruptive demonstration by civil rights groups.
- 10:30 p.m. on - Party in Radical Caucus Room, BYOB.

Thursday, September 2

- 8:30 a.m. Continuation of ASA Business Meeting (if business remains)
- 10:30 a.m. Marxist session on "Crisis of Monopoly Capitalism"
- 2:30 p.m. Section on Marxist Sociology "Roundtable Discussions" (12 topics)
- 4:40 p.m. Section on Marxist Sociology, Council Meeting (newly elected members)
- 5:30 p.m. Section On Marxist Sociology, Business Meeting & Social Hour
- 10:30 p.m. - Party in Radical Caucus Room

Friday, September 3

- 10:30 a.m. Organizational Meeting of the Section on the Political Economy of World Systems
- 2:30 p.m. "Sociology of Development: Latin America"
- 4:30 p.m. "Creating New Societies: Cuba, China and Portugal" and "Problems of the Working Class"

Note: This is a selection of sessions with a predominately radical focus; there are also radical perspectives presented at many other sessions, round-table discussions led by radicals, etc.

DUES NOTICE

Most people to whom this newsletter is being mailed have not paid their dues. Dues are very low but are essential to keeping the organization running. This is the last issue of the newsletter that will be sent to people who have not paid up. (This time we mean it.)

Dues will be due each summer at the conference.

NAME _____

Mailing Address _____

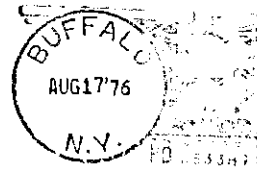
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ZIP _____

Make checks payable to the East Coast Conference of Socialist Sociologists and mail to:

Lorraine McMullin
Dept. of Sociology SUCB
1300 Elmwood Ave.
Buffalo, N.Y. 14222

Jean Dowdall
Sociology Dept. SUCB
1300 Elmwood Ave.
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