

Child & Youth News

A Message from the Chair

Dear Child and Youth
Section members,

This has been an energetic year for our section. To name two exciting news items, membership is increasing despite the current economic difficulties and our newsletter has become quarterly. Hearty thanks to our membership and publication committees' extraordinary efforts. Member participation is growing as well. At the upcoming ASA Annual Meeting we will have four sessions, including two joint sessions, and 14 roundtables. One of the roundtables will experiment with a new format of research working group, whose purpose is to foster inter-university collaborations around a single theme.

To continue this momentum I encourage everyone to use the Annual Meeting as an

opportunity to participate and propose additional Section actions. Attendance at our sessions, roundtables, and the Section reception on August 8th (6:30-8:30 pm at Ponzu) are good ways to keep up with our colleagues and their new work. The Annual Business Meeting on August 9th (11:30-12:10 am) offers everyone a chance to propose new directions and activities for our Section and to take on a role in carrying them out. I look forward to seeing everyone, hearing about their latest work, and discussing how our Section can better contribute to our members' needs and to the field.

—Lingxin Hao
*Children and Youth
Section Chair*

See you in San Francisco!!!

We are very excited for the upcoming Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association this August in San Francisco.

See **page 5** for events, or view the program schedule at:

http://www.asanet.org/cs/root/leftnav/meetings/2009_preliminary_program_schedule

Please join us for our reception on August 8th from 6:30-8:30 pm at Ponzu Restaurant, 401 Taylor Street.

Council Members: Please save the date (Sunday 8/9) and the very early time 7-8:15 am for the annual Council Meeting of the Section on Childhood and Youth. The meeting will take place in Parc 55 (the room TBA).

The Newsletter of the
American Sociological
Association Section on
Children & Youth

Summer 2009

SECTION OFFICERS 2008-2009

CHAIR:

Lingxin Hao,
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CHAIR-ELECT:

Sampson Lee Blair
SUNY Buffalo

PAST CHAIR:

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Penn State University

FOUNDING CHAIR:

Gertrud Lenzer
*Brooklyn College and the
Graduate Center, CUNY*

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Margaret Hagerman
Emory University

Meet Gertrud Lenzer, Founding Chair

Gertrud Lenzer, Founding Chair of the ASA Section on Children and Youth, is a passionate scholar and researcher of children's studies, as well as a dedicated child advocate. She is the Founder and Director of *Children's Studies*, a program and research center, as well as a Professor of Sociology at both Brooklyn College and the CUNY Graduate Center.

In 1991, she led Brooklyn College's efforts to become the first academic institution to develop an interdisciplinary liberal arts Children's Studies Program. Under her leadership, a minor in Children's Studies was established in 1994 for all liberal arts majors. In 2001, a 30-credit interdisciplinary children's studies concentration for majors in early childhood education teacher and childhood education teacher programs was introduced in cooperation with the Brooklyn College School of Education.

Professor Lenzer also founded the Sociology of Children as a new field and Section of the American Sociological Association in 1991 and was designated its Founding Chairperson. (See page 3 for details.)

Gertrud Lenzer has been honored multiple times for her work with children. She received the national 1997 Lewis Hine Award in Honor of Outstanding Service on Behalf of Children and Youth of the National Child Labor Committee, founded by an Act of Congress in 1904. Professor Lenzer has also received a number of distinguished fellowships during her career, among them the American Council of Learned Societies Fellowship, a Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship in the Humanities with a

residency at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, a fellowship at the National Humanities Center, and a Research Fellowship at the Rockefeller Bellagio Center, Italy.

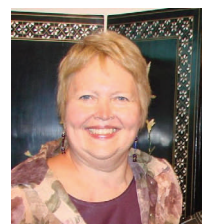
In addition to these accomplishments, Professor Lenzer was selected as the first American scholar and the first woman to deliver the Auguste Comte Memorial Lecture at the London School of Economics. Most recently, she has worked closely with legislators to spearhead legislation for an independent Office of the Child Advocate for New York.



Gertrud Lenzer serves as the Director of the Children's Studies Program and Center as well as Professor of Sociology and Children's Studies at Brooklyn College and the CUNY Graduate Center.

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*This issue of Child & Youth News is dedicated to **Carla B. Howery** In Memoriam and with the gratitude of all Section members, past and present, for her major and instrumental support in helping to establish the Section of Children and Youth. Without her intellectual openness to new ideas and courage to promote them, the section might not have come into existence. Thank you, Professor Howery.*



Our Section's Origins: In Memory of Carla B. Howery

As current members of the ASA Section on Children and Youth, we are greatly indebted to Gertrud Lenzer, Founding Chair of our section, for her significant efforts in organizing and formalizing this ASA section. Lenzer, an advocate for the interdisciplinary and comprehensive approach to the study of children, began the Section on Children and Youth in 1991 with national and international support and membership. She began this section as a result of firsthand experiences in which she noticed the struggles and hardships faced by a class of human beings lacking the ability to legally represent themselves. From 1991 forward, **Carla B. Howery**, ASA Deputy Executive Officer, was most receptive to starting the Sociology of Children as a new field and ASA section and actively collaborated with Gertrud Lenzer in bringing about the section.

At Howery's suggestion, Lenzer began this endeavor by publishing an article in ASA's publication, *Footnotes* posing the question, "Is There Sufficient Interest to Establish a Sociology of Children?" as well as receiving the support of 1991 ASA President, James B. Coleman. Following this issue of *Footnotes*, Lenzer received an abundance of letters from ASA members including Bill Corsaro and Peter Adler, among others, in support of creating the new field and section of

the Sociology of Children. Despite some critics claims that this section was unnecessary since children were included in sections such as the Sociology of Education and Sociology of the Family, by January 1992, Lenzer was able to gather enough member signatures with Barrie Thorne's help in particular during the ASA meetings of 1991 to establish the section as "in-formation". In April, a Business Meeting at the ASA Annual Meeting in Pittsburg was scheduled for August 21, 1992, and the section was officially the 31st Section of the American Sociological Association with 300 members. Lenzer also wrote and published later in 1992, with the help of Donald J. Hernandez, then at the U.S. Bureau of the Census, the first issue of the section's newsletter, which she entitled, *ChildNews*. Carla B. Howery and Don Hernandez were both extremely helpful to Lenzer during this entire process.

Professor Lenzer, then Acting Chair of the Section, was able to add over 400 members to the section over the next two years, which was clearly, a major accomplishment. Since then, the field of the Sociology of Children or of Childhood – as some of our European colleagues preferred to call it -- has proliferated across the globe, and as we all can appreciate as members, the ASA section continues to remain active and enthusiastic.

In Honor of the Section on Children and Youth's First Officers!

In addition to Gertrud Lenzer, and at her gracious request, Child & Youth News would like to honor our additional colleagues who served as initial officers of the Section.

William J. (Beau) Weston
Sandra L. Hofferth
Peter Adler
Harriette Pipes McAdoo
Elizabeth G. Menaghan
Angela Aidala
Donna Lee King
Judith D. Auerbach
Julie Gricar Beshers

Glen H. Elder, Jr.
Doris R. Entwisle
Debra Friedman
Karen Mundy
Richard K. Scotch
Donald J. Hernandez
Maureen Kelleher
Sue Wright
-Section Officers 1992

CUNY's Children's Studies Program and Center *Founded by Gertrud Lenzer*

In the fall semester of 1991, while organizing the Sociology of Children Section, Gertrud Lenzer realized that we were adding another specialized field of the study of children. In order to begin to integrate the diverse disciplinary perspectives dealing with separate aspects of children and young people, Professor Lenzer founded the interdisciplinary field of Children's Studies as a comprehensive field of study. Lenzer believes that in order to truly study the child, the whole child, scholars ought to take an interdisciplinary approach rather than merely "taking the child apart," or only studying children from very specific, limited angles.

As a result of this comprehensive perspective, *Children's Studies* incorporates a variety of scholarship on children including contributions from Sociology, History, Education, Health and Nutritional Sciences, Psychology, Africana Studies, English, Puerto Rican and Latino Studies, and Speech Communication Arts, Economics, and Sciences, among others. From 1991, Gertrud Lenzer advocated this holistic, scholarly approach of Children's Studies to colleagues here and at meetings with colleagues abroad, and the field has proliferated widely since.

At Brooklyn College, CUNY, the Children Studies Program and Center have "numerous ongoing projects and continue to provide cutting-edge, innovative leadership in the development of new courses, child policy research, pedagogy, and public service on behalf of children and youth" (Website). Please visit the center's website for exciting news and upcoming events as well as this center's public policy work and research initiatives. Also note that Children's Studies has its own publication, *New Horizons*, that is of interest to child advocates and scholars.

<http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/pub/pdf/NewHorizonsNo.1June2008.pdf>
<http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/pub/departments/childrenstudies/index.htm>

***Child & Youth News* is currently looking to feature scholars, students and research centers in future newsletter issues. If you have any suggestions or would like to be featured yourself, please contact Maggie Hagerman at Margaret.Hagerman@emory.edu.**

