



Introducing M. Bodiment

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ASA Body and Embodiment Outgoing-Chair

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In August 2015, the Body & Embodiment section adopted a body-shaped soft-sculpture for its gavel/mascot. Then we had a contest to name it. In fall 2015, our very creative section members submitted 37 candidate names for the gavel. In spring 2016, the B&E Council chose six of those names to put to a vote by the full section membership. Ninety-one section members voted, and the winner was... M. Bodiment, with 33 votes! Thanks to Elise Paradis for suggesting the name, and to

Sharon Preves, who suggested the close variant M. Body. Gavel/mascot M. Bodiment was formally christened at the section's August 2016 business meeting. M. Bodiment is currently enjoying its new residence in new section Chair Maxine Craig's office, and looking forward to visiting Montreal in August 2017.

Laura

Thanks--and See you in Seattle!

by Laura M. Carpenter, PhD

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ASA Section on Body and Embodiment Chair

Summer 2016

Dear Members of the Body & Embodiment Section,

I've been thinking a lot this summer about the vulnerability of the human body. It would be hard not to, when almost every day brings news of people bullied, assaulted, and murdered; fleeing floods, wildfires, and wars; and desperately in need of safe water, wholesome food, and affordable housing. All bodies are vulnerable, of course—that's part and parcel of the human condition. But all too often, the threats and dangers arise precisely because of the kinds of bodies people inhabit, as with Black men who are disproportionately targeted by police brutality; or because of the ways they present or alter their bodies, as with women who wear hijab or trans* people who seek to use public restrooms that fit their gender; or because of the kinds of bodies they choose to love, as with the many LGBTQ victims of the attack on Pulse nightclub in Orlando. Yet, throughout this harrowing summer we have also seen countless signs of the strength and resilience of human bodies, from the embodied courage of grassroots protesters and first responders to the breath-taking bodily skills and elegance of Olympic and Paralympic athletes competing this week in Rio.

Embodiment scholars are at the forefront of studying, illuminating, and explaining phenomena like these. The Body & Embodiment Section was created to be a home base for sociologists like us, who are concerned with the bodily aspects of life. As the section's soon-to-be former chair, I am pleased to report that we have had a productive and exciting year. Let me share a few highlights:

We have enjoyed a year's worth of thought-provoking blog posts published on our website (<http://sectionbodyembodiment.weebly.com/blog>) and timely, intriguing content on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/227366640757073/>) and Twitter (#ASA_Bodies). Many thanks to our excellent social media and Web team, Dan Fielding, Erick Toothman, and Anne Marie Champagne; to our expert blog curator Heather Laine Talley; and especially to our brilliant and generous contributors. If you're looking for an online outlet for your embodiment research this coming year, please send us a note at asabodynews@gmail.com.

This year the B&E Section also revised its bylaws, chiefly in order to ensure that we have enough people in leadership positions to accomplish our goals efficiently and effectively; introduced a new gavel/mascot, whose name (submitted by a section member and chosen by your votes) will be revealed at the August 23rd business meeting; and continued to grow our mentorship program and membership. Speaking of the mentoring program, if you haven't yet been involved as a mentor or mentee, please consider signing up! It's an easy and rewarding way to make new professional connections.

In just a few days, we will be treated to outstanding body-related programming at the ASA annual meeting in Seattle! (Our section day is Tuesday, August 23.) In addition to sponsoring an exciting open session and enticing set of roundtables, the B&E Section has been fortunate once again to partner with several other sections. Two terrific joint sessions are on the docket: “Embodiment and Social Movements,” co-sponsored with the Section on Collective Behavior & Social Movements, and “Embodiment, Science, and Technology,” co-sponsored with the Section on Science, Knowledge & Technology. We are also co-sponsoring our section reception with the Sexualities Section. The reception is a wonderful time to socialize and (re)connect with colleagues, so make sure to stop by! And don’t forget to attend our section’s Business Meeting at 3:30 p.m. on August 23 to learn about opportunities to get more involved in our section and (drum roll, please) to win a door prize! See:

<http://sectionbodyembodiment.weebly.com/asa2016bodies.html>.

It has been a privilege and pleasure to serve this dynamic section alongside so many superb scholars of embodiment, including incoming Chair, Maxine Leeds Craig; immediate past chair, Sharon Preves; graduate student representative, Gemma Mangione; faculty council members, Joanna Kempner, Kate Mason, Heather Laine Talley, Rene Almeling, and Miliann Kang; and last but far from least, our incredibly capable and generous Secretary/Treasurer, Carla Pfeffer.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve as your section chair. It has been a fun, educational, and deeply rewarding experience. I look forward to continuing to do what I can to help the Body & Embodiment section grow and thrive in the years to come!

All my best,

Laura Carpenter

Where are the Sociologists of Embodiment?

by Laura M. Carpenter, PhD

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ASA Section on Body and Embodiment Chair

Spring 2016

Where Are the Sociologists of Embodiment? (Almost) Everywhere!

Like most of you, I recently renewed my ASA membership, including my membership in the section on Body & Embodiment—as well as four other sections. That fairly mundane annual action got me wondering: What specific constellations of sections do other sociologists belong to? Where do other members of the B&E section spend their “disembodied” time?

Arguably, scholars from every other sociological subfield ought to belong to B&E. Bodies are everywhere, after all—they are inextricably involved in every aspect of social life. Yet, I suspected that membership in B&E would overlap considerably with certain other sections and (sadly) not with others.

To satisfy my curiosity, I contacted ASA Central. They graciously sent me a matrix showing how many members from each section belong to every other section. It looks like one of those city-to-city mileage tables you find tucked away in the back pages of a road atlas

The ASA section matrix tells a story that mostly confirmed my hypotheses, though there were a few surprises. I am delighted to report that B&E shares members with 51 of the 52 current

	Code1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Teaching and Learning	01	675	20	73	39	71	81	59	41	138	31	62	23	34	16	58	18
Methodology	02	20	409	67	31	55	51	71	50	31	31	53	10	17	9	25	87
Medical Sociology	03	73	67	1036	34	35	116	109	52	167	36	100	7	27	21	52	116
Crime, Law, & Deviance	04	39	31	34	576	19	32	23	44	69	46	61	29	11	8	19	13
Sociology of Education	05	71	55	35	19	772	75	97	38	64	41	67	6	6	17	31	39
Family	06	81	51	116	32	75	799	77	21	235	32	71	6	12	2	19	203
Orgs, Occupation and Work	07	59	71	109	23	97	77	1007	124	161	50	77	18	39	25	37	41
Theory	08	41	50	52	44	38	21	124	835	74	63	94	46	47	52	30	7
Sex and Gender	09	138	31	167	69	64	235	161	74	1176	35	95	25	33	25	43	48
Community & Urban Sociology	10	31	31	36	46	41	32	50	63	35	575	23	9	48	22	50	58
Social Psychology	11	62	53	100	61	67	71	77	94	95	23	633	17	22	9	20	19
Peace, War, & Social Conflict	12	23	10	7	29	6	6	18	46	25	9	17	256	18	16	11	4
Environment & Technology	13	34	17	27	11	6	12	39	47	33	48	22	18	487	59	29	14
Marxist Sociology	14	16	9	21	8	17	2	25	52	25	22	9	16	59	307	17	5
Soc Practice & Public Soc	15	58	25	52	19	31	19	37	30	43	50	20	11	29	17	317	15
Sociology of Population	16	18	87	116	13	39	203	41	7	48	58	19	4	14	5	15	549
Pol Econ of World-System	17	19	19	11	11	9	6	32	58	31	29	11	33	74	95	21	6
Aging and the Life Course	18	39	55	230	25	35	186	48	18	91	19	62	6	4	6	19	149
Sociology of Mental Health	19	15	17	192	24	14	41	20	13	30	17	82	5	4	4	17	24
Coll Behavior/Soc Movements	20	71	26	41	45	32	10	96	134	130	51	42	101	90	66	47	9
Racial & Ethnic Minorities	21	53	20	72	61	97	66	52	60	99	131	58	15	16	39	32	58

sections! Nearly three-fifths (57%) of B&E members also belong to the section on Sex & Gender, and one third belong to Sexualities (34%) and/or Medical Sociology (32%). These intersections stand to reason, given those fields' enduring interest in various aspects of bodies and embodiment. About one fifth of B&E members additionally belong to the sections on Race, Gender & Class (22%), Science, Knowledge, & Technology (SKAT) (20%), and/or Sociology of Culture (18%). These intersections, too, are not big surprises.

Sociology of Law	411	6	21	32	61	7	37	12	63	20	5	13	6	9		
Rationality and Society	6	205	14	6	9	81	15	9	34	5	2	4	15	4		
Sociology of Religion	21	14	605	46	47	9	30	26	25	15	2	8	11	7		
International Migration	32	6	46	625	106	6	14	7	38	43	3	1	6	2		
Race, Gender, and Class	61	9	47	106	930	11	124	14	56	59	9	12	7	23		
Mathematical Sociology	7	81	9	6	11	214	3	5	47	2	1	4	23	1		
Sociology of Sexualities	37	15	30	14	124	3	580	8	15	12	8	6	7	20		
History of Sociology	12	9	26	7	14	5	8	194	16	8	1	8	7	3		
Economic Sociology	63	34	25	38	56	47	15	16	748	85	6	6	10	1		
Labor and Labor Movements	20	5	15	43	59	2	12	8	85	409	5	2	2	2		
Animals and Society	5	2	2	3	9	1	8	1	6	5	141	4	4	8		
Ethnomethodology/Conv Analys	13	4	8	1	12	4	6	8	6	2	4	129	4	5		
Evolution, Biology and Society	6	15	11	6	7	23	7	7	10	2	4	4	136	1		
Disability and Society	9	4	7	2	23	1	20	3	1	2	8	5	1	202		
Human Rights	55	11	27	38	45	3	23	10	20	23	7	6	4	5		
Altruism, Morality and Social So	22	26	77	9	29	20	13	20	35	8	5	8	18	8		
Body and Embodiment	22	7	13	6	70	0	110	3	7	15	11	5	6	32		
Global & Transnational Soc	58	17	56	132	98	8	36	19	123	75	8	6	7	6		

Indeed, 2016 marks the second year in which B&E and SKAT are co-sponsoring a paper session at ASA, and the first year in which we'll co-sponsor a paper session with the section on Collective

Behavior & Social Movements (CBSM). (We'll be sharing program details soon.) I'm really excited about both sessions, and also rather surprised—given the myriad ways bodies are implicated in social movements, not to mention the rich papers received by the session organizers—that only 7% of B&E members also belong to CBSM. B&E has also co-sponsored thought-provoking, well-attended paper sessions with the section on Consumers & Consumption, to which just 6% of B&E members belong. (Granted, several of them are especially hard-working and enthusiastic members!)

Ten percent of B&E members belong to the brand-new section on Disability & Society—a number I suspect will increase as that section becomes more established. A similar proportion of B&E members also belong to Theory (13%) and/or Teaching & Learning (11%), which makes sense given those sections' broad scope. I'm surprised, though, that relatively few B&E members belong to the sections on Racial & Ethnic Minorities (7%), Aging & the Life Course (7%), Crime, Law, & Deviance (6%), Children & Youth (4%), Environment & Technology (3%), Drugs, Alcohol & Tobacco (3%), International Migration (2%), and Community & Urban Sociology (2%). Bodies seem so integral to the practices and processes studied by scholars in each of those subfields.

Perhaps I'm biased, but really, why isn't every ASA member also a member of the section on Body & Embodiment?

In a recent blog post (<http://sectionbodyembodiment.weebly.com/blog/bodily-capital-and-everyday-life-escaping-embodied-elitism>), B&E member David Hutson reminisced about the early days of our section, when then-Chair Salvador Vidal-Ortiz encouraged B&E members “to find ways that their research on the body might connect with existing sociological areas in the ASA,” not only to “help increase awareness of the section and promote it more widely,” but also as a way of “showing that the body was always already important sociologically.” Hutson posits that “Expanding the study of bodily capital to everyday life” is one way these connections have been, and will continue to be, made.

I agree—and I think it's high time we again take a look around us and encourage our colleagues and friends in other sections to think about how bodies and embodiment influence, and are influenced by, the phenomena they address in their research. I'd love to see our section enriched through the participation of the widest, most diverse group of members possible.

Oh, before I forget: What's the one section to which no B&E members belong? Mathematical Sociology. I guess I'm not too shocked by that one. But if you happen to know a mathematical sociologist who shares your interest in bodies and embodiment, please encourage them to join us!

Laura

Body Building

by Laura M. Carpenter, PhD

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ASA Body and Embodiment Chair

September 2015



As I begin my term as Chair of the ASA Section on Body and Embodiment, I'd like to introduce you to the section's new body-shaped gavel. It doesn't have a name yet. That's where you come in—we're having a contest!

But first, a bit about the gavel's origins.

It all started during the 2014 B&E Section business meeting. Then-Chair Abigail Saguy and Chair-Elect Sharon Preves were joking about passing an invisible gavel to recognize the transfer of section leadership from Abigail to Sharon. Someone—I'm afraid it was me—said, “What we need is a homunculus.”

What's a homunculus, you ask? A miniature, fully-formed human residing in either the sperm or the egg, from which a fetus develops, of course! Or so certain scientists in the 1500s

believed.

Obviously, an actual homunculus was out of the question, insofar as they don't really exist. But what about a little model of a body to serve as the section's gavel/ mascot?

As is so often the case in academia, my mentioning the need for a body-gavel meant that I volunteered myself to create one. It's not exactly the sort of service that impresses tenure-and-promotion committees, but far be it for me to shirk a creative challenge, especially one meant to benefit the section whose proud chair-elect I'd just become.

So what kind of body should our gavel be? The delicate ivory manikins used in traditional Chinese medicine—patients would point at the doll to show which body part ailed them—came to mind, but our limited budget and the ethically questionable material stymied that option.

A clay gavel might be breakable and would certainly be too heavy to place in carry-on luggage. Mashed potatoes would be neither permanent nor sanitary. Balsa wood is light-weight and durable, but I'm way too clumsy to sculpt anything with a knife. Sewing a body from fabric scraps, though—I could do that.

In fact, I get tremendous pleasure out of the tactile, bodily experience of sewing—a pastime I learned from my home ec teacher mom. As an added bonus, my sewing projects tend to give me a sense of real accomplishment, not least because they get completed a lot faster than my scholarly projects. (For a thoughtful commentary on dance that raises some of these themes, see Danielle Antoinette Hidalgo's recent post on the B&E blog:
<http://sectionbodyembodiment.weebly.com/blog/embodiment-ballet>.

Once I'd chosen my medium, it was time to figure out what the body should look like. Given the tremendous range of bodies studied by members of the section, I wanted to make something that could resonate for everyone. To me, that meant constructing a body that didn't appear distinctly female, male, or intersex; that didn't reflect a specific ethnic or racial identity; that didn't look young or old, fat or thin, healthy or ailing; and that might or might not have a physical disability.

What I came up with, as you can see, is a multi-colored soft sculpture, about 12 inches long, that somewhat resembles the sculptures of Henry Moore and Cycladic Greeks, or the cut-out dancers that Henri Matisse started making when his mobility decreased in old age. (Those of you who were able to attend the B&E business meeting on August 24 got to see the body-gavel in person.)

One big decision remains: What should we call our new body-gavel?

My fellow Council members agreed when I proposed a naming contest. So please put on your thinking caps!

Send up to FIVE possible names to me at l.carpenter@vanderbilt.edu by Friday, October 2, 2015. The B&E Council will cull through all the suggestions to create a short list, from which

the whole section membership will be invited to vote for their favorite name. I can't wait to hear what you come up with!

I also can't wait to pick up where last year's chair, Sharon Preves, left off, and continue the important and pleasurable work of helping to make the Body and Embodiment section one of the most exciting and vital in all of ASA. This summer, Council created a membership committee to help grow the section—400 members is our goal!--and to keep our existing members excited and connected with one another. We are considering formalizing the Mentoring Committee, which plays such a vital role in linking senior and junior scholars in the section. We are also working to forge new relationships with other sections of ASA and to create a dynamic program of body-related scholarship for ASA 2016 in Seattle. I look forward to sharing news about these exciting developments in the months to come.

In closing, let me extend my heartfelt thanks to Sharon, and to Past-Chair Abigail Saguy and Council members Kristen Barber, Mary Nell Trautner, and Jennifer Haskin, whose terms just came to an end; offer a warm welcome to chair-elect Maxine Leeds Craig and to our new Council members, Rene Almeling, Miliann Kang, and Gemma Mangione; and raise a cheer of immense gratitude to the incredibly capable Carla Pfeffer, now in the final year of her term as section Secretary/Treasurer.

It's going to be a great year!

Laura
