

THE HUMANIST SOCIOLOGIST

Newsletter of the Association for Humanist Sociology

Summer, 2009

An Introduction to This Issue

Jim Wolfe, THS Editor

In this issue, Tim Maher introduces us to New Orleans, site of our next AHS annual meeting, and Jim Pennell features its music and its hotels followed by a Note from Greta Pennell as Program Chair. Next comes my rendering of highlights from the Spring 2009 AHS Board meeting followed by the draft of a motion to set up an Organizational Affiliates category (which has been circulating in one form or another since November 2008) and an explanation of our restored tax-exempt status by Treasurer Mary Chayko. Werner Lange makes a case for an academic and cultural boycott of Israel in his article. The issue concludes with a dialogue between me and Alan Spector and others culled from AHS-Talk on whether working with the Obama Administration is politically effective or potentially a sell-out if the price is silence about our unmet concerns.

New Orleans and the Future of Sociology

Tim Maher, University of Indianapolis

New Orleans, by any measure, is a unique city. Katrina, its aftermath, and recovery are additional strata of devastation and resiliency overlaid on the existing landscape of music, poverty, arts, pollution, culture, and crime. It is a fun city. It is a sad city. It is Blues and festivals galore.

While there is always a “party” on Bourbon Street, I have seldom visited New Orleans when there was not a festival of some sort. Some are small neighborhood affairs, others are city-wide events. Regardless of size and location, they serve to bring residents together and make outsiders like myself feel welcome.

Katrina, of course, is the big before/after line in people’s lives and communities. It is easy to find, 4 years later, plenty of devastation—but you will have to leave the tourist areas. Those areas appear in better shape in many ways than before the hurricane. The oldest areas, like the French Quarter, are relatively higher than the more outlying parts of the city and suffered less from the hurricane induced flooding.

The French Quarter, the Central Business District (CBG), the Warehouse District (where the hotel is located), the Garden District, and Uptown, while suffering widespread damage, were not as devastated as Mid-City, Lakeview, Gentilly, New Orleans East, Bywater, the 9th Ward or many other areas.

The French Quarter is the oldest part of New Orleans, the Vieux Carre, and the city’s cultural and civic center. Jackson Square is a beautifully designed area that incorporates many aspects of cultural and social life. Situated in the middle of the French Quarter and opening to the Mississippi River, the square is a fine place to relax and let the world “parade” by. While much of the Quarter is tourist oriented, and overpriced, there are still many places worth checking out. Crescent City Brew Pub, Café

Du Monde, the Napoleon House, Royal Street art galleries, the bar at the Hotel Monteleone—so many great places, so little time.

Bourbon Street is a social arrangement of its own that probably cannot be adequately described, at least by me. Two good literary descriptions of New Orleans (and Bourbon St.) are worth checking out. *The Confederacy of Dunces* by John Kennedy Toole (1980) is a brilliant Pulitzer Prize winning novel that captures the spirit of New Orleans. *New Orleans, Mon Amour* by Andrei Codrescu (2006) is the more recent of the two. Listeners of NPR will already be familiar with his quirky affection for the city.

While Bourbon Street is the touted tourist destination, the Faubourg Marigny district, just northeast of the French Quarter, is home to some of the city’s best music venues and eating places. There is a more local, less touristy, feel in Marigny.

Canal Street is the main street of the CBD, running north from the Mississippi River, the Riverview Mall, Harrods Casino, and on to some of the areas hard hit by the floods. The first mile looks like any other main street in an urban area (except for the street-cars) but as you move further away from the river the combined legacy of racism, long-term poverty, and Katrina conspire to create a patchwork of decay, destruction, and occasional rebuilding projects.

The Warehouse District (WD), where the Hampton Inn Convention Center is located, is home to several arts and cultural organizations including the Contemporary Arts Center, the National World War II Museum, the Ogden Museum of Southern Art, the Louisiana Children’s Museum, and the IDEA Village (a community economic development group). There appears to be a city-encouraged effort to stimulate the development of nightlife activities in the area. Near the casino and convention center, the WD now includes many new hotels, restaurants, pubs, clubs and other entertainment venues.

Outside of these areas, the devastation from Katrina is still quite evident. Much work has been done, including projects like Musicians Village and the “green” houses being built in the 9th Ward. But there is still a lot of hurt in much of the city.

New Orleans provides sociologists with opportunities to envision different futures for urban America. It invites us to see beyond the past mistakes and disasters, and it demands that we act. Katrina caused serious physical problems in New Orleans and uncovered many social problems that contributed to the scale of the disaster. Some movement is being made on bringing the physical city back. The social response is still being drafted.

With many of America’s communities “under water” in a financial sense, lessons learned from New Orleans are broadly applicable as we work to bail out cities and communities across the land. The sociological imagination has never been more important.

During the AHS conference, I am planning on leading a walking tour, focusing on the social and historical development of New Orleans as a major American city. Look for details in the upcoming conference program.

visit us at: www.humanistsociology.org

The Music of New Orleans: A Mighty Fine Gumbo

Jim Pennell, University of Indianapolis

New Orleans is probably best known for its Mardi Gras. Although many people often confuse Mardi Gras with Fat Tuesday, the parades and parties and balls go on for weeks and finish on Fat Tuesday. But what makes New Orleans so special any day of the year is music and food. If you don't know much about the styles and contemporary artists, hopefully I will give you enough of a framework to add a little spice to your CD collection or downloads.

New Orleans Music Is About As American as You Can Get, Whatever That Means

What we think of as American music today mostly originated—or maybe more accurately, percolated—in the Mississippi Delta and Southeastern Appalachian regions of the U.S. A wide variety of styles found their way to the port of New Orleans—songs and rhythms from Africa, Acadian fiddle songs, and other European folk styles found their way into gospel, blues, jazz, Cajun, zydeco, and rock'n'roll. I won't spend much time on the history, because that ground has been covered by others in much more depth and detail. There is so much going on with New Orleans' music today that I want to focus on that. But the second line beat, the syncopated rhythm heard in many New Orleans styles from Dixieland jazz to funk (and the one Bo Diddley borrowed) can be heard across the many styles.

Blues in the Swamps and on the Streets

Blues is the foundation for jazz, rhythm & blues, and rock 'n' roll. Although many of the great blues players are associated with Mississippi, the river of the same name flows through New Orleans, of course, and many blues players migrated there. Chicago is the city of blues for most people, with Memphis a close second, but New Orleans has a bevy of fine blues artists. Tab Benoit puts a little swamp in his blues, and his close connection to life on the bayou is featured in the film *Hurricane on the Bayou*. John Mooney is a regular at Tipitinas and around town, with some heavy electric slide guitar playing. Some of the best blues I have heard in New Orleans is often performed by street musicians. I happened across 19th Street Red playing on Royal St. on a Saturday morning my last visit. His voice reminded me of Howlin' Wolf, but his slide guitar playing was extra special as his foot kept the beat on a bass drum. You may have a chance to hear Red yourself at the annual meeting. I'm just saying it is very possible.

New Orleans and Jazz

Probably the first musician people associate with New Orleans is Louie Armstrong, and rightly so. Armstrong's work spanned five decades. Although by the 1960s about all you would typically here were "Hello Dolly" or "When the Saints Go Marching In," if you watched Ken Burns' wonderful documentary on jazz, you know Louis Armstrong was the man who most likely made jazz happen for us all. But other musicians from the Big Easy have made their way into the national consciousness. When I was a child, my musical mother had LPs by Al Hirt, the trumpeter, and Pete Fountain, the clarinetist, both whom owned clubs in the city and gained national attention. I play clarinet. Hmmm. Although the center of jazz has probably moved to New York, a lot of great jazz musicians still live and work in New Orleans. The first fam-

ily of jazz is the Marsalis family. Wynton and Branford have headed for the brighter lights of New York, but at least one night a week, you can hear their father, Ellis Marsalis, tinkle the ivories at Snug Harbor. New Orleans seems to breed families of musicians, and there are other Marsalis family members who are carrying on the family tradition. Dixieland is probably the style most associated with New Orleans, and there are some great bands, including the Dirty Dozen Brass Band and Preservation Hall Band. The Recovery Brass Band came together out of the Katrina aftermath. These bands are a lot of fun, and you can often find a street band down on Jackson Square in the French Quarter playing for change and putting on a great show. But there are outstanding contemporary jazz musicians playing regularly around town. One of my favorites is Rob Wagner, who plays a variety of saxophones and clarinet in a trio format with only bass and drums as accompaniment. Some of it is pretty wild—along the lines of hard bop—but those who like Coltrane or Sonny Rollins will appreciate what Wagner does. I first heard him one Sunday afternoon playing for a benefit at Café Brasil, on Frenchman St., in Faubourg Marigny, and was blown away by the level of talent one can find just wandering the streets of New Orleans and walking in a door by chance. For me, jazz is a saxophone. But Nicholas Payton is a great jazz trumpet player who continues to live and perform in New Orleans while touring nationally. He made a stop at the Indy Jazz Fest a few years ago and was the best jazz act there. In short, if you like jazz, New Orleans has all kinds.

Cajun Music: Jambalaya and a Crawfish Pie

Jambalaya was written by Hank Williams, an Alabamian, but someone who spent a fair amount of his career playing in Louisiana and was obviously inspired by the local sounds. Cajun music is basically folk music that came from France via Acadia—an area of Nova Scotia settled by the French in the early 1600s. The British ran the Acadians off in 1755, and many eventually settled in the swamps of Louisiana, where the French word *Acadienne* became Cajun. The music is primarily fiddle music that today is accompanied by accordion, guitar, triangle, and other acoustic instruments. It sounds like traditional European folk or country (because it is), with waltz and polka-type beats, but it is commonly sung in Cajun French or a mix of French and English. The first Cajun performer I remember is Doug Kershaw. Kershaw performed with his brother Rusty early on, but gained some national attention as a solo performer with his song "Louisiana Man," and Hank's "Jambalaya." I first saw him in the early 1960s on the Porter Wagoner show. He was this wild haired, bug-eyed, lanky Louisianan who was all knees and elbows when he played the fiddle in a classically unconventional manner. Michael Doucet and his band BeauSoleil are probably the best known keepers of the Cajun tradition today. But if you are interested in learning more about this style music, there are great collections, and I suggest starting there (see more on this below). You will find the Balfa Brothers, and a bunch of other keepers of the tradition, as well as a few violators who keep it interesting.

Zydeco: Made for Dancing

Zydeco is a blend of Cajun with blues and R & B. It is my favorite of the Louisiana styles because it blends European and African influences in a way that makes everyone move. If you aren't moving, you must be dead, and the bass will probably make you bounce anyway. Clifton Chenier was the "king of zydeco." It is amazing what he could do with just his accordion and a drummer. Most zydeco bands today are guitar, bass, and drums, with an accordion, a washboard player, and often a saxophone.

Clifton's son C.J. Chenier does contemporary zydeco that really rocks. You may have heard Rockin' Dopsie's hit "My Toot Toot," which was probably the biggest zydeco song to make it up the pop charts, but I'd rather hear Boozoo Chavis, whose salty lyrics probably reflect what you would hear at the local watering hole on a sweaty Saturday night down in the swamps. Zachary Richard is one of my favorite contemporary zydeco performers, and is probably better known in France than in the U.S. Beau Jocque, who recently died, added a slight hip-hop element that has an infectious beat with his band the Zydeco Rollers. Thursday night is zydeco night at the Rock 'n' Bowl in Mid-City, and you will dance to some of the best bands in the region, saving you the trip to the swamps. A number of bands blend Cajun and zydeco styles, and zydeco bands always play some Cajun numbers as slow songs. One of my favorite Louisiana bands, Steve Riley and the Mamou Playboys, plays both styles. The song every Cajun and zydeco performer is required to know is "Jolie Blonde," which I think would make a better state song for Louisiana than "You Are My Sunshine." But the latter was written by a governor who hailed from Northern Louisiana, so those might be fighting words, I'm guessing. If you would like a great introduction to both styles, check out the Rhino Records collections *Alligator Stomp*, Vols. 1-5. I especially recommend Volume 1 or 2. They will give you an earful of the real thing.

Rock 'n'Roll and Its Many Variants

New Orleans has many artists that blend the boogie of the late, great Professor Longhair with R & B, steamy funk rivaling James Brown, and the second line beat that is the signature of New Orleans. Fats Domino caught my ear as a child, but the first group that got a fair share of my paycheck in the late 1970s was Little Feat. As I got to know New Orleans better, I found they shared musical influences with the Neville Brothers and the Meters, rivals for the funkier bands in New Orleans. Neville Brother Aaron is probably best known for his falsetto and duets with Linda Ronstadt, but the family is the total package. And keeping with New Orleans' tradition, there is a second generation of Nevilles. Ivan Neville and his Dumpstaphunk band, with two bass players, was playing free in Lafayette Park on my most recent visit—on a Wednesday at 5:00PM no less. And the place was packed. Irma Thomas is the queen of R & B in New Orleans, and rightly so. But I love the boogie piano and boozy voice of Marcia Ball, probably because her style reminds me of that other great boogie-woogie player in my life, my Mom. Ball has moved to Austin, but can still be heard regularly in New Orleans. When she plays live, she crosses her leg, gets it swinging, and the band rocks along. Thanks to Tony Ladd for turning me on to Marcia Ball, as well as a number of the acts mentioned above and below. Ball's show is well worth going to bed and getting up late for—or living on Ladd time. Tony introduced us to Joe Krown one evening at dBA, another place in the Marigny. Krown plays his Hammond organ all over town, and will take you back to Booker T. and the MGs with his smooth style. Check out his CD *Buckle Up* (2000), which includes the Booker T song "Hip Hug Her." You will feel the groove. It is extremely hard to say exactly what label best captures Dr. John's music. He had one of the biggest hits of any New Orleans musician in the mid-1970s with "Right Place, Wrong Time," a funky, close-to-novelty song that reflects the humor that is often a part of New Orleans music. But he does jazz and blues as well. He really defies labeling, and pretty much seems to play whatever captures his fancy, which is usually a good thing. Sonny Landreth's finger-picked electric slide guitar playing can be heard on recordings by John Hiatt and Jimmy Buffett, but I like him best when he is doing his own thing. Check

out *South of I-10* (1995) or *The Road We're On* (2003), two strong albums that showcase his unique playing style. Probably my favorite New Orleans act in recent years is the subdudes. They have a street-band style, with the percussionist playing a tambourine with a stick in innovative ways, and blend blues, R & B, and gospel sounds with three-part harmonies and a progressive political conscience. If you like rock 'n' roll sprinkled with R & B and soul, and don't have their CD *Annunciation* (1994), then you probably should. Unfortunately, the band has moved away from New Orleans, but they didn't get the city out of their music, and continue to put out strong albums and put on great shows across the country. In 2007, many New Orleanians picked the Iguanas' *Plastic Silver 9 Volt Heart* as the best local album of the year, and I concur. If you like Los Lobos, you will like these guys, who bring in some of the Spanish heritage that is part of New Orleans. 2008 was the year of Theresa Andersson, a super-talented Swedish singer and violinist who moved to New Orleans in the early '90s with Anders Osborne. I saw them together at Tipitinas in the mid-1990s and said to anyone interested that she was the show and would leave him far behind. She did. Her earlier album, *No Regrets* (2002), was mostly New Orleans funk. But the 2008 release, *Hummingbird Go!*, is an imaginative set of songs that seems more like Iron and Wine or other freak folk bands. As one person I talked to recently said, "I'm not sure what is New Orleans about it," but with something this good, who cares? I have left out many excellent musicians and bands from this brief account, but a decent overview of the range of Louisiana's musical styles is Rounder Records' *Louisiana Spice* (1995). As is the case with many typologies, the reality doesn't always quite fit the labels. Most New Orleans musicians play a real gumbo of styles. And in my opinion, New Orleans is Music City, USA. Screw Nashville. I'm guessing more musicians are playing in New Orleans on a given night than any other city but maybe New York City, and I wouldn't bet on the latter. Music is one of the key elements that makes New Orleans what it is. A common weekend event is a street party or festival with a band, some food, and some beer. As they commonly say, *laissez les bon ton roulette*, or let the good times roll. They aren't kidding about that! If you are interested in buying the music of local artists while in New Orleans, please be sure to visit the Louisiana Music Factory, at 210 Decatur St., in the French Quarter just across the street from the House of Blues. And while in New Orleans, listen to WWOZ, 90.1, New Orleans' Jazz & Heritage station that plays the music of local musicians.



This is a photo of Michael Weinstein with Paule Verdet (PhD from Everett Hughes at the U of Chicago), one of his (and Jerry Starr's) first sociology professors, from back at Monteith College at Wayne StateU, in 1959! She is retired from Boston U, is living in the area, and was eager to attend a couple of AHS sessions; she still offers a sociology seminar at a local prison. AHS meetings are often opportunities to experience sociology history as well as make new sociology history.

An Update on Hotel Accommodations for the 2009 Annual Meeting

Jim Pennell, AHS President

While attending another conference in New Orleans in April, Greta and I had the opportunity to stay at the Hampton Inn & Suites Convention Center, where our annual meeting will be held November 12-15. As Tim Maher notes in his article, the hotel is in an area of the Warehouse District very near the Central Business District (CBD). The hotel is literally right across the street from the New Orleans Convention Center, and just a few-minute walk to the Mississippi River and the Riverwalk Marketplace. A ten to fifteen minute walk will put you on Canal St. (depending on how fast you walk), which divides the Central Business District and the French Quarter. There is also a riverfront street car that can take you to Canal St. and the Quarter during the day and early evening hours. The best walks to and from the CBD and French Quarter are up South Peters, which borders the west side of the hotel away from the river, or Tchoupitoulas, which is another block over from Peters.

Our conference hotel has two buildings that are joined by an enclosed walkway. One used to be a cotton factory, and the other is newer construction and houses the conference space. The conference space is ideally suited to the size of our meeting. What I like the most about the hotel is its very large lobby, with multiple seating areas that will accommodate the kind of informal congregating and conversations we AHSers like.

The hotel has given us some different room options. For \$140, you can either have a room with a king-sized bed, or two double beds. A continental breakfast is included for all guests. There is no additional charge for up to four people in a room. Rooms are nicely furnished, and have amenities such as refrigerator, coffee maker, and iron/ironing board. If you are bringing the family and/or would like a larger space, there are suites available for \$190.

Check the hotel's website www.neworleanshamptoninns.com for the various types of rooms available. Most of the rooms reserved for our meeting will be in the newer building. But if you are interested in larger rooms with high ceilings, you can ask about availability in the older building. You can make your reservations at the toll free number: (866) 311-1200, or at: www.hamptoninns.com. Be sure to mention that you are attending "AHS" (the conference code).

The hotel does not have food service beyond breakfast, except for complimentary coffee, which is always available, afternoon cookies, and a snack canteen. However, the NOLA Grocery is nearby, has an interesting menu, and delivers to the hotel. We will include their menu in the conference materials, along with a bar and restaurant guide compiled by our local arrangements coordinator, Tony Ladd. Our lunches and receptions will be catered by a popular local caterer, Joel's, that will provide us with a variety of New Orleans-flavored fare. The hotel also has a bar, but its hours are limited. Remember though, this is one of the best, if not the best, cities for eating and drinking in the world. There are numerous bars and restaurants within a few blocks of the hotel. In the next newsletter, I'll share more of what Greta and I discovered in our exploration of establishments near the hotel.

**If you missed the submission deadline,
please contact Greta right away to see about
submitting a proposal: gpennell@uindy.edu,
Phone: 317-788-3365, FAX: 317-788-2131**

A Note from the Program Chair *Greta Pennell*

When Jim asked me to be his program chair, I thought, "Sure, I've done it before, it was fun, and this is a guy I'm pretty sure I can work with." After all, over the years we've put together a lot of different things (old houses, college courses, a family, citizen's summit, bountiful gardens, etc.). So, I didn't think getting the annual meeting together for AHS would be too tough.

Then came Boston. As I went from session to session, was well-nourished (both literally and figuratively) at the Salon, Activist Café and other events, and took in the sights and sounds (despite the rain) of the area, it hit me. I was the program chair for our 2009 meeting. How would I ever put together a meeting that would even approach meeting the high standard Corey and Dan had set? Boston was a fabulous meeting; clearly I had my work ahead of me.

As soon as we were home, Jim and I went to work. Corey and Rueben sent us the first session proposal less than a week later. So we were off and running. Thanks to Jim's diligence making sure an announcement always appeared in *Footnotes*, proposals started coming in. Essya Nabbali submitted our first paper presentation proposal, "Mad Pride, Toward a Democratic Utopia." Essya's work draws on ethnographic and historical data of the "Mad Pride" movement and looks to be a very interesting and powerful presentation. Right on the heels of Essya's submission came proposals from three more people new to AHS, Werner Lange, Andre Arceneaux and Austin Matthews. Then came proposals from long-time AHSers like Robert Hironimus-Wendt, Jerry Lembcke and Kathy Tiemann.

As the submission deadline neared, I received over 100 more proposals over a 72-hour period. It was then that my initial worries and concerns about the program began to subside. What a relief, I realized I didn't have to come up with all the ingredients for a great meeting, because it is all of you that make the annual meeting interesting, energizing and just generally a great time. I've decided that being program chair is more like a cook than a gardener. I don't have to grow the ingredients, just put them together, allow them to simmer a bit, check to see if a little something needs added, and then serve it up hot.

So, thanks to all of you who have submitted proposals for papers, workshops, panels, film screenings, walking tours, performances, debates, and plenary sessions. We certainly have the makings for a mighty fine gumbo of Activism, Humanism, & Scholarship. But like all good gumbos, there is always room for a dash more spice, a few more shrimp and a final pinch of file'. So, if you missed the deadline or a new idea has developed, please contact me. I'll be putting the preliminary program together over the next few weeks. I am specifically looking for additional presentations on race, academic freedom & faculty governance, and teaching peace to round out sessions in those areas. I'm also looking for folks who have worked on issues related last year's flooding in Iowa as well as the ongoing recovery from Katrina in areas beyond New Orleans.

The meeting is coming together. Ellis Jones, co-author of *The Better World Handbook* (2007) and author of *The Better World Shopping Guide* (2008) is one of our plenary speakers. We have a couple of surprises in store for other plenary sessions, Dennis Kalob is organizing some pre-conference service opportunities on Wednesday, and some touring options are shaping up for Thursday morning—so watch the website for updates. This year the many paths to peace, equality, and justice lead us to New Orleans and I look forward to seeing you there.

Peace, Love, & Zydeco,
Greta

Highlights of AHS Board Meeting, Spring 2009

Jim Wolfe, THS Editor

The AHS board met June 1-3 in Indianapolis. Participants included Chris Dale, Mary Chayko, Alan Spector, Corey Dolgon, Jim and Greta Pennell, Emma Bailey, Dennis Kalob, Jim Wolfe, and Kathie Gaianguet (from the Constitution Committee). Here are highlights of those meetings. For details, you can read the Minutes on our AHS website.

Annual Meetings: Learning from the Past

Corey noted that except for the expense of taxes, we would have almost broken even in Boston. Presidents need to pass on what they know about ordering food and supplies, fundraising, etc. Kathie said once there was a Guide for planning conferences. Mary suggested putting such a Guide on the website. Newsletter reports from previous presidents can be helpful to the current president. Future president and program director could benefit from knowledge of past experience when negotiating with hotels. The past president could serve as a consultant for the annual meetings. Greta noted that there have been three-way huddles of past, current, and president-elect after the board meeting on Sunday at the annual meeting. Emma said that passing along electronic files was very useful.

Jim Pennell reported that he has one keynote speaker lined up for the annual meeting in New Orleans, Ellis Jones, who has written the "Making a Better World" Handbook. He would like an additional keynote with consideration for gender balance and local talent. Greta is working on the Activist Café. Though the meeting is outside the French Quarter, there are lots of attractions near the hotel, a park across the streets, and a great lobby for hanging out. The theme of this annual meeting, Nov. 12-15, 2009, is "Doing Change: Many paths to peace, equality, and justice."

Emma is planning the following annual meeting for November 3-7, 2010, at the restored Lodge in Santa Fe, run by Heritage Hotels and Resorts. The room rate is \$105 per night. Meeting space is free. The Lodge is not on the Plaza, but there is a shuttle to the Plaza. There is rail service from Albuquerque to Santa Fe. Steven McGuire will be program chair. The annual meeting will tie in with a local sustainability theme, a slow money movement, food security, one of the oldest farmers' markets, Navaho and Mexican-American cultures. The minimum room quota is 150 nights (spread over four days) and \$5000 minimum in food and beverages. Elevation in Santa Fe is 6-7,000 feet; temperature is mild in the day and plummets at night so one should wear layers.

For 2011, Dennis announced that we will be back in the mid-west in Chicagoland with its history of industrialization and de-industrialization and Jane Addams' fame. Program chair will be Chris. The date is not yet set but could be in mid-October. There have been two dozen hotel proposals. Downtown seems too pricey. Chris said we have a choice between a downtown large-city location, which attracts people, or going farther out at a lower cost, such as choosing Evanston over Chicago, where a hotel farther out may not charge for meeting rooms. Jim mentioned that the hotel in New Orleans is just charging a daily set-up fee for meeting rooms of about \$150. The audio-visual charge can be huge. In Henderson, Emma brought her own equipment, borrowed from a local university and put forward as presenters bringing their own. Corey recommended not only going to big cities. Boston had a \$4000 shortfall but also a \$3200 gain in new memberships. Chris suggested that we do a cost-benefit analysis that would take both sides of this equation

into account and was impressed by our having more young grad students than usual in Boston.

Goals and Mission

Possible goals discussed were:

- Recruiting new members (how many members is our goal?)
- Retaining members
- Maintaining member database
- Increasing diversity
- Maintaining the AHS ethos and member participation, integration into that ethos
- Membership participation in the functioning of the organization

We have Purpose, History, and Philosophy statements, including a paragraph on our website. Objectives are in the Constitution. While a charity needs to serve the public primarily, our statements talk about taking care of ourselves and supporting one another. The IRS wanted to see our Mission Statement, but we have none. We need someone to take the lead on this. Tom Arcaro and Jim Gallagher said yes to being on the Mission Statement committee, but neither want to chair. Was Michael Weinstein asked? Jim said he would check. Vickie Rader was suggested. Chet Ballard is on the Constitution committee, but also might be asked to work on this.

Regional Meetings: Ours and Theirs

After discussion, *the board voted to affirm the Regional Workshop idea as a good one that should be piloted next year (Spring, 2010).* Alan Spector will develop a procedure for developing the workshop and identify the resources the association needs to supply to support it. Regional Workshops would occur between annual meetings because a year between meetings seems too long and sometimes distance is too far for people to travel. As a result, some of our members have to go 2-3 years between opportunities for face-to-face interaction with other AHSers. Face-to-Face creates vision and networking. The model for these workshops would be 1.5-2 day workshops, where people would arrive on Friday night and hang out then have a morning session on Saturday, Lunch, and an afternoon session. The focus could be teaching sociology: what you do in the classroom, or how do you teach about subjects. These regional workshops could reflect geographical regions like mid-Atlantic, New England, Midwest, Mid-south, etc. The challenge is finding a good time for them so as to not compete with regional meetings or the annual AHS meeting. Corey agreed that in the abstract it is a great idea. What we need is for someone to take the initiative to do it and for AHS to pay for a reception for it.

In terms of recruiting at regional meetings, Emma said that 10-15 people, especially grad students, showed up at hospitality room at Pacific Sociological Association. She had a cash bar. She is going to do a session at the next meeting followed by a reception. Corey hosted an AHS session in Baltimore for a meeting of Eastern Sociological Association. He had the authors of "The Engaged Sociologist" (Kathleen Corrigan and Jonathan White) plus Amy Best, who came to Boston thereafter. The reception had at least 40 visiting it; there is some continuity since this is his fourth time at ESA. Corey could be a regional rep. The cost was under \$500 and could be seen as an investment in outreach for AHS. The ESA executive helped get the session and reception arranged so that the session easily fed into the reception so people would still be there. Corey wrote a column in the ESA newsletter. A signup sheet or registration forms can be made available at session and reception. A regional rep needs a "package" of materials and procedures. Trifold brochures are recommended and a regional rep section in the Handbook.

Leadership Recruitment

Jim made a motion that Stephen Adair be invited to become Secretary and that Mary Chayko, who is in the middle of negotiations with the IRS concerning our text-exempt status, be invited to continue as treasurer.

Motion passed unanimously. Jim will ask Rick Eckstein to serve as co-chair of Nominations for the coming meeting. The President appoints the Nominations Committee chair, who should have experience on the committee. It's best to have two co-chairs, one to lead it now and one who will serve at least another year on it. Greta recommends that the Nominations Committee meet before the Friday business meeting at the annual meeting. A proposed slate of candidates should be assembled by the end of the annual meeting. Recruiting next year's nominees should begin on Thursday, should not be directed mostly to new people, should tap people with organizational skills not just folk who have been around. Emma said the term for Nominations Committee should begin at the start of the annual meeting. The board should not confirm the slate until bios have been received. It has been said that an independent Nominations Committee insures that there is no continuing oligarchy. Kathie said we should include the job description for the Nominations Committee in the Handbook and suggested a standard notice in the fall newsletter prior to the annual meeting asking people to nominate themselves or others. The Nominations Committee should also know what appointed offices are coming open in the next year or two, so they can also assist the board in identifying potential candidates.

There are positions specified in the Constitution whose duties are unclear and which have not been filled recently. These include regional representatives, a national liaison (who would connect with national organizations, etc.) and a media relations position. Concern was voiced that these not be treated as consolation prizes for losing an election, which is what the Constitution states.

The length of officer terms and holding several non-simultaneous offices was discussed. The prohibition on serving more than six years might be modified by the word "consecutively." If so, we might require a span of years away from an office.

There was consensus that a person should be President only once though perhaps double-dipping could be allowed if there is a span of years between. Woody provides a good example as he has taken lots of jobs, steps away at times, and comes back as needed.

Executive Director

Corey moved that a committee be formed to put together a job description and structure for a paid AHS administrative position to present at the Thursday, November 12, 2009 board meeting in New Orleans. Motion passes with the provision that a call for volunteers to serve on this committee appear in the next newsletter. The committee will be chaired by Corey Dolgon.

Corey suggested that we might look at Jessica Sherwood at SWS as a model, someone who would do the day-to-day operations work for AHS. This person would work 5-10 hours/wk (at \$20-25/hr will requiring an investment of \$5,200-13,000 per year) handling day-to-day matters, doing advance work (such as setting up ASA sessions), maintaining a central database, keeping in contact with programs (e.g., biennial messages to grad programs), keeping track of some financial things, overseeing our website. The position would have to be created to ensure regular contact with elected officers of AHS, fitting in with its participatory democratic feel rather than dominating. Chris agreed that we don't have the funds for such a position right now and said that we shouldn't commit to something we can't afford three years down the road. Corey suggested making it a 3-year position or some other kind of time/term limits to it. He suggested that first we should decide if we want it and if yes, then figure out how to do it. Kathie suggested going through the list of retirees and see if

someone has the *skills* to do this role, which needs to be spelled out clearly in relation to elected offices.

Constitution and Bylaws

Members of the Constitutional Committee are Chet Ballard, Kathie Guianguest, Gina Petonito, Greta Pennell, and Steve McGuire. Revisions or interpretations might undergird the formation of ad hoc committees and construing communication on-line as equivalent to meetings. Emma suggested that we need bylaws in addition to the constitution. Bylaws outline the procedures and should be more easily amended than a constitution. The distinction between constitution and bylaws is that the constitution is the form of the organization the bylaws describe how it functions in a fashion that is more nimble and mutable.

Handbook and Archives

Corey suggested that the Handbook, which should be interesting and readable. It could include a history of AHS such as one of Chet Ballard's pieces from the American Sociologist, or the first intro to the double issue. It could include a process flowchart, timeline, offices, dates. Mary suggested that the handbook could be put up on line.

Archives: Do we need an AHS archivist? For archives, we need someone in charge who would work with Miami U. Talk to Gina about ideas. Should we put a position in the Constitution? It could be a board-appointed position and could have an indefinite term or renewable terms. Would this person or Miami U create an index? Jim will contact Gina about this, and provide an update at the board meeting.

Organizational Affiliates

The idea of having Organizational Affiliates should go into the Newsletter soliciting member comments. It might require a constitutional change, but this would not be necessary if they have no voting rights but simply swap ads and offer meeting registration fees at a reduced organizational affiliate rate. Article 10 says we can affiliate. Continuing relationships with people who have led Activist Cafes should be encouraged, including inviting them to submit article to our Newsletter. Chris will resend an email about membership. What should be the benefits of affiliation? Greta said we want to be careful that we don't undermine individual memberships. Dennis and Chris will resend their organizational affiliates proposal.

Publications

In terms of publications, it was reported that Kathleen Tiemann is almost caught up in putting out issues of "Humanity and Society." There are three groups which take care of obtaining institutional subscriptions contractually and non-exclusively: EBSCI, HW Wilson, and SWETS. SWETS said we had not sent pdfs so we did. "The Humanist Sociologist" newsletter can aid our institutional memory.

Money, Ballots, and Membership

Mary noted a budget shortfall in the past year and last few years. The treasurer needs either to receive the registration forms so she can sort out the various categories or a spreadsheet showing who registered and paid what, and this is needed also by next year's program chair. Emma suggested that program director, who ends up with the registration forms, should send these records to that year's president. It was agreed that the President is ultimately responsible for providing records and for the money collected at the annual meeting.

Mary mentioned that the treasury needs more organization of cash flow and clarification of membership payments. There is a problem of money flow to different places. Big packets are sent to her and could get lost in the mail. Checks arrive from lots of people related

to the Journal plus non-financial information about it, including not receiving an issue.

We might want to change the journal subscription information. The subscription form could have Kathy Tiemann's mail address. The problem is on the subscription end. Different people are contacted about back issues, money issues. We need to spell out in the handbook what an officer should do if information goes to the wrong office. Best procedures could go in the Handbook.

There was discussion of the association providing funding for officers to support or otherwise defray costs of attending the annual meeting and the spring board meeting. Several people have declined running for offices because they lack institutional support to defray the costs of attending meetings. Providing such support might help diversify the board. Any action on this would have to be considered in relation to establishment of an executive director type position for the association. Consensus was that if such a model was developed it should be a set stipend, that would be the same amount for each office/position, and then if someone didn't need the support they could decline it privately. This will also be discussed with the membership at the next meeting.

Greta, filling in for the Secretary, noted that she has mailed out the ballots (which are cheaper if flatter) and that they are due back by July 15 to Joti Sekhon.

As membership co-chair, Dennis reported that he and Chris had sent out letters seeking membership renewal and letters to newcomers plus follow-up emails and another snail mailing. More encouragement is needed for people to make contact information corrections when signing in at the registration desk and again at the business meeting. Corey had made a tri-fold flyer that was helpful in recruiting new members.

Future Spring Board Meetings

After considerable discussion, *Jim made a motion and Mary seconded that the board have a spring meeting next year; it passed unanimously.* Emma endorsed having future spring board meetings. Corey sees it more as a retreat with the time to do long-term planning. Kathie said it shouldn't be a meeting, but a retreat for the board to discuss issues and problems. Jim said if it isn't an official meeting, formal actions couldn't be taken until the fall meeting. Emma said that newer members expect boards to meet more than once a year. Kathie noted that we have not had a budget that allowed this in the past because our membership was low. Most organizations have a five-year plan (could be a 3 or 4 year plan) and add to it each year. Spending under \$3,000, which was under budget, on the spring retreat is not much in a \$45,000 budget. A committee might be invited to report at a spring board meeting. Chris said this meeting has been incredibly valuable; the annual meeting he ran in Tampa was frantic with no space for reflection. Kathie noted that major decisions would still be made at the annual meeting. Jim saw the spring board gathering as being enough of a meeting that the board could make or propose policies. The problem with a former journal editor was handled well in Henderson but would have been smoother if addressed by the board at midyear. The next spring meeting will focus on developing a 3-5 year plan. Emma suggested we consider using an outside facilitator, though this could be costly. Emma will explore getting a facilitator for that. Location should partly be determined by cost. Jim mentioned that it was an asset to have Jim Wolfe attending as Newsletter editor, which was no trouble at an Indy meeting since he lives here. He suggested that Newsletter and Journal editors be invited for future spring meetings since they are on the board and important to the association's well being. Jim and Greta said they would be willing to host in Indianapolis again if that is cheapest. The question of whether the spring board meeting should be institutionalized. will be raised at the New Orleans annual meeting.

Past President of AHS, Corey Dolgon, is leading a committee to look into the costs, job responsibilities, and other issues related to the organization's possible hiring of an executive assistant or some form of clerical/logistical support person. The committee will collect data on similar-sized organizations to see what they do and how they do it. If anyone is interested in serving on the committee with me, my goal would be to identify issues and determine some tasks to collect data in time to meet at the November meetings and draft some recommendations for the Board. Please let me know by July 1st if you are interested. Email: Corey.Dolgon@worchester.edu.

Draft of Motion to Establish an Institutional Membership Category for AHS *Dennis Kalob and Chris Dale*

It is proposed that AHS creates a category of supporters known as "Organizational Affiliates." The details are as follows:

Grassroots action / advocacy organizations that share AHS's commitment to peace, justice and progressive social change may join us as "organizational affiliates." The annual fee for such organizations to affiliate with the AHS is \$50 - \$250. Academic departments, research institutes, and businesses that share AHS's value commitments may also join as affiliates for an annual fee of \$250-\$500. Determinations regarding the appropriateness of particular organizations connecting with AHS as affiliates will be decided by the Board. The exact fee is voluntarily set, based on the ability to pay.

The benefits of affiliation are:

- A presence on our website, including a link to the organization's home page.
- Recognition in our newsletter, *The Humanist Sociologist*.
- A journal subscription.
- The organization's members may attend the AHS annual meeting at AHS member fees.
- Networking possibilities, which may include the sharing of membership lists.

**Note from Emma Bailey:
Come to the Land of Enchantment in 2010!
The AHS Annual Meeting will
be held November 3-7, 2010 at
the Lodge at Santa Fe. Come discover
the history and culture of New Mexico.**

AHS Tax-Exempt Status Restored

Mary Chayko, AHS Treasurer

I am pleased to report that the AHS has had its non-profit tax-exempt status restored by the IRS. However, please note that the IRS has classified us as a 501c(6) association as opposed to a 501c(3).

With the assistance of an accounting firm, I appealed this designation, but the IRS is standing firm, citing the following two reasons: (1) A professional association is now most appropriately classified as a c(6) when one of its key activities is to provide a strong internal support network for members whose common interest is not necessarily shared in the mainstream. Many organizations do this, of course, but those in which the creation of this internal support network is an explicitly defined central purpose of the group are now typically being categorized as 501c(6) (and indeed, most professional organizations now fall into this category). And (2) although both 501c(3) and c(6) organizations can be educationally oriented, when a substantial amount of political interest, action, advocacy and activism is also espoused and encouraged by the organization, it is now most properly classified a 501c(6). The organization does not have to formally lobby for specific candidates or legislation, but if political, indeed partisan, views are regularly communicated, especially by officers, and grassroots advocacy is encouraged, such an organization now typically falls into the category of the c(6).

Examples of 501c(6) organizations include the Commission on Applied and Clinical Sociology (CACs), the International Society for Language Studies (ISLS), and the National Association of Social Work and Social Workers (NASW).

How it affects you: Though 501c(6) organizations are non-profit and federally tax-exempt, they are not considered charities, so your annual dues payment to the AHS is not deductible as a charitable contribution. It should still be deductible as a business expense, along with your expenses related to attending the annual meeting, but you should verify that according to your individual tax/business situation with a professional. That is the only major difference between 501c(3) and 501c(6) for regular, ordinary deductibility.

There are numerous different 501c- type designations. They have become more strictly regulated and enforced, and organizations more strictly classified, by the IRS in recent years. Although not every organization considered to be 501c(3) in the past is being reclassified as a c(6) even if its current activities increasingly reflect a commitment to advocacy and the internal professional support of members, as do ours, the requirement that our organization be formally evaluated to restore its tax-exempt status opened us up to renewed scrutiny. It was a close, thorough and lengthy process in which our stated purposes, practices, writings and finances were all examined. The time spent preparing, evaluating, arguing and eventually appealing this application has been in excess of two years. The decision that we may once again consider ourselves a non-profit, tax-exempt organization in good standing is critical, indeed indispensable, for the future of AHS. And one positive by-product of the 501c(6) designation is that we may now more legitimately, openly engage in political advocacy as we see fit.

The AHS is exploring setting up a 501c(3) foundation that would be a component of the organization for those who want to make larger donations to AHS and have them be tax-deductible or in the event that we want to apply for educational grants. This foundation would need to be directed solely toward education and not advocacy or professional support of members, and would

steer clear of politics except in very specific, narrowly defined ways. For example, the American Library Association and American Psychological Association, among many professional organizations, have both 501 c(3) and c(6) components, so that the c(6) can legally be more politically active and action-oriented on behalf of their membership and the general public. If and when it is determined that this would be feasible and cost-efficient for AHS, a formal proposal will be made to the membership.

The Case for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel

by Werner Lange
Edinboro University of Pennsylvania

As sociologists, we all know that facts are a ventriloquist's dummy and we have all presented facts to students and others as part of an interpretative process designed to persuade and enlighten as well as inform and inspire. I will do the same here. The facts and argument I present are intended to persuade the AHS as an organization and members as individuals to formally, publicly and actively support the worldwide BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanction) campaign against apartheid Israel.

That is the first fact: Israel is a racist society based upon the principles and practices of apartheid, the official policy of racial segregation and racist repression, once operational in the USA for almost a century and formally adopted by South Africa in the same year the State of Israel was formed. Not only are current racist policies in Israel similar to those practiced previously in Jim Crow America and Apartheid South Africa, they are worse. That was the general assessment in a major speech on May 29 in London delivered to over 1,000 persons, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, by none other than Nobel Peace Prize recipient and ardent anti-apartheid hero, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who singled out collective punishment as one of the things happening in Israel that never took place in apartheid South Africa; Tutu also stated that passing through the myriad checkpoints in the Occupied Territories "brought back memories of what things had been like at home."¹ The South African Intelligence Minister, Ronnie Kasrils, was more explicit: "The analogy between apartheid and Israel's occupation of Palestine is often made. It is not the same thing. The occupation is absolutely worse."² Similarly, as another world leader intimately familiar with racism as public policy, President Jimmy Carter stated in his much acclaimed (and assailed) book *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*: "When Israel does occupy this territory deep within the West Bank and connects the 200-or-so settlements with each other, with a road, and then prohibits the Palestinians from using that road, or in many cases even crossing the road, this perpetrates even worse instances of apartness, or apartheid, in South Africa."³ Others have pointed out that South Africa never bombed its Bantustans with F-16s.

Institutionalized double standards based on ethnicity abound in Israel. Israeli citizens are registered as Jews or Arabs making a Jewish Arab an administrative oxymoron much like a Black Afrikaaner was. Israel, which is officially declared to be a Jewish state, still has some 1.4 million Arab citizens, 20% of the population, who are defined and treated as second-class citizens or worse. Most Israelis consider them to be a "demographic threat", a pervasive mindset of anti-Arab prejudice and Jewish angst that recently catapulted the vehemently nationalistic

Yisrael Beiteinu party and its racist leader, Avignor Lieberman, currently Israel's Foreign Minister, into prominence and unprecedented power. In late May, Israel's third largest party introduced legislation that requires citizens to swear a loyalty oath to "the State of Israel as a Jewish, Zionist and democratic state" and that criminalizes the denial of Israel's right to exist as an exclusively Jewish state.⁴

Such virulent anti-Arab attitudes and actions are not new. Ever since the *Nakba* ("catastrophe" in Arabic) in 1948, the amount of land owned by Palestinians in Israel has steadily diminished to negligible levels. In order to diminish the number of Arab Israeli citizens, the 2003 Citizenship and Entry Into Israel law forbids citizenship to Palestinians from the Occupied Territories who marry Israelis; on the other hand, a Jew from anywhere in the world can receive Israeli citizenship upon request. The Incitement Law forbids Israeli Arabs from supporting Palestinian resistance in the Occupied Territories and imposes a 5-year prison term on violators. More recently, all Arab members of the Knesset are forbidden from visiting any "enemy state", a designation that covers all Arab states with the exceptions of Egypt and Jordan and, in effect, criminalizes extended family reunions for Arab Israeli leaders. This discriminatory provision may become moot since Israel banned Arab political parties from participation in the last national election, one which brought to power a Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, who once publicly declared an intent "to carry out mass expulsion among Arabs of the territories."⁵

Ethnic cleansing, a process started even before 1948, continues to this day. In an operation known as Negev 2015, some 42,000 homes of Bedouin Palestinians, people whose ancestors have lived in this area for centuries, are targeted for destruction since these villages have not yet gained official recognition by the Israeli government. Removing Palestinians from their land is one half of the longstanding ethnic cleansing policy; illegal settlements exclusively reserved for Jews constitute the other half. Illegal Jewish settlements abound in the West Bank as do some 450 miles of roads for use by Jews only connecting them. As of 2007, over 287,000 Jewish settlers occupied 142 illegal Jewish settlements in the West Bank alone with an additional 200,000 or so Israelis illegally residing in neighborhoods reserved for Jews alone in and around occupied East Jerusalem. These settlers consume around twenty times the water indigenous Palestinians do; some 200 Palestinian communities have no access to a clean water supply. Travel for Arabs from one Palestinian community to another in the West Bank is rendered exceedingly difficult by over 700 Israeli military checkpoints. A trip from Ramallah to Hebron, for instance, takes less than one hour under normal conditions; under Israeli occupation, that same trip typically consumes 12 hours or more. Added to this conflagration is the erection of an apartheid wall, euphemistically called a "fence" or "security wall" by Israel, along the entire western perimeter of the West Bank; the wall, in places, is twice as high as the Berlin Wall was, and the "fence" is a double electrified one with a patrol road in the middle taking up Palestinian land. Much of this wall is not in Israel (which has no formally identified borders adjoining Palestine) and extends beyond the 1967 "Green Line" into Palestinian territory rendering some 10% of the West Bank as annexed Israeli land. Furthermore, the wall cuts off several villages from arable land and water resources as well as cutting off parts of East Jerusalem from the West Bank.

Then there is Gaza, the world's largest open-air prison. As ruthless and oppressive as Israel's military occupation of Gaza has been for decades, conditions markedly deteriorated since Israel imposed a blockade upon this isolated Palestinian territory in early 2007. According to a recent report, "the situation for 1.5

million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip is worse now that it has ever been since the start of military occupation in 1967".⁶ Among the clear indicators of this dire and deteriorating situation and economic collapse are the following: as of 2008, prior to the invasion, 80% of families, compared to 63% in 2006, relied on humanitarian aid to meet basic survival needs; on average, households now spend about 62% of their total income on food, compared to 37% in 2004; unemployment in Gaza is over 50%; 95% of Gaza's industrial operations are currently suspended; basic essential foods like wheat flour, baby milk and rice are increasingly scarce and costly; disposing trash has become increasingly problematic; in September 2000, some 24,000 Palestinians left Gaza for work in Israel every day; today that number is zero; from June to September 2007, the number of households in Gaza living on less than \$1.2 per day soared from 55% to 70%; in the first six months of 2008, the majority of private businesses have shut down; due to Israeli restrictions on industrial fuel supplies, Gaza's power plant only generates about 50% of its capacity undermining health care and educational operations; the education system and standards are collapsing; almost 2000 children have dropped out of school in Gaza during the first five months of 2008 and, by Sept. 2007, the failure rate among grades 4-9 was nearly 80%; health has drastically deteriorated due to denial of emergency treatment outside Gaza and failure to provide sufficient power to operate hospitals. Then, starting in late 2008, came the bloody 22-day bombardment and occupation of Gaza by the IDF which left the population utterly devastated. Over 1,400 defenseless Palestinians were killed, hundreds of them children, and some 60,000 homes were either completely or partially destroyed by Israeli forces. Despite the enormity of the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, the blockade continues; the borders remain closed; and innocent people continue to suffer and die through collective punishment for expressing a political will undesired by Israel and the USA.

Such blatant racism, which is literally expanding on the ground and in the institutions, stands in direct contradiction to humanist values and richly deserves the firm condemnation of all fair-minded individuals and organizations. For the racist and militaristic practices of Israel are not just a problem for Palestinians; they are a growing problem for all people, especially Americans in academe. We, in American social sciences, are increasingly placed on the front lines of a well-organized campaign of intimidation and denunciation by apologists for Israeli regimes who are passionately intent upon preserving and expanding massive US support for Israel at all costs. Evidently, sensing or even fearing the arrival of a paradigm shift in attitudes and support regarding Israel, Zionists—both Christian and Jewish—have refocused their energies and devoted considerable resources to stemming and, if possible, obliterating the rising tide of criticism of Israel and carte blanche US support for Israel coming out of the academic community, particularly in the wake of the mass slaughter in Gaza.

In addition to AIPAC, the most powerful lobby in America, a number of other like-minded Zionist organizations have emerged to take their propaganda machine to every American campus and community. Among the most active of these ideological battalions are Campus Watch, CAMERA (Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America), FLAME (Facts and Logic About the Middle East) and CUFI (Christian United For Israel). Their stated purpose is, as FLAME, in a classic projection manner, puts it, "to expose false propaganda".⁷ According to CAMERA, "increasingly, campuses have been the source of propagandistic assaults on Israel... This hostile environment can be intimidating to students seeking fair and objective information on Middle East issues."⁸ Students are openly recruited by Campus

Watch to become informants on American campuses and are urged to “contact Campus Watch with reports on Middle East-related scholarship, lectures, classes, demonstrations and other activities relevant to Campus Watch.”⁹ Another arm of this attack upon critics of Israel and unabashed support for Israeli militarism comes from Christian Zionism. Christians United for Israel (CUFI) is one of the most influential parts of the “Armageddon Lobby”, a group of right-wing Christians who sincerely believe that a third world war, one that pits Israel and the USA against the world, is absolutely necessary, as God’s will, to hasten the return of Jesus Christ and cleanse the world of evil. The group’s founder is TV evangelist John Hagee, whose rabid sermons go out to millions of listeners through some 162 television and radio stations. “The sleeping giant of Christian Zionism has awakened”, bellowed Hagee before AIPAC in 2007, “there are 50 million Christians standing up and applauding the State of Israel...Think of our potential future together—50 million evangelicals joining in common cause with five million Jewish people in America on behalf of Israel is a match made in heaven.”¹⁰ Make no mistake about it; there are plenty of American students, some of them in our classes, who subscribe to this bizarre Christian Zionist ideology and who are more than willing to comply with Campus Watch directives to be informants on campus.

Several of our colleagues in academe, some of the finest scholars in America today, have already been victimized by this renewal of intellectual McCarthyism in our times, and many more are targeted for similar character assassination, career ruination, and/or employment termination. Campus Watch and CAMERA routinely blacklist and attack outspoken college professors such as John Esposito of Georgetown; Rashid Khalidi of Columbia; Sherman Jackson of the University of Michigan; George Bishart of the University of California-Hastings; and especially Prof. Norman Finkelstein, formerly of DePaul University. The case of Finkelstein, whose parents both suffered in Nazi concentration camps, is particularly instructive. An outspoken critic of Israeli racism and the holocaust industry, Finkelstein attempted to secure tenure at DePaul but ran into a Zionist roadblock erected by one of America’s foremost apologists for Israel and the use of torture, Harvard’s Alan Dershowitz and his like-minded associates. With a vote of 9-3 and 5-0, respectively, both DePaul’s Political Science Department and the College of Liberal Arts approved Finkelstein’s tenure application. However, after interference and pressure from Zionist outfits (which allegedly had no influence on the final vote), DePaul’s university-wide Board of Promotion and Tenure voted 4-3 to deny him tenure, a denial approved by both the Dean of Liberal Arts and the President of the University. In May of 2008, Finkelstein was not only denied entry into Israel and deported, but he was also banned from entering “the Jewish state” for 10 years. In April of 2009, Clark University cancelled his appearance to speak on “The Gaza Massacre” during its Holocaust commemoration.

Similar violations of academic freedom and free speech were experienced at Columbia University by Joseph Massad, Assistant Professor of Modern Arab Politics, and Rashid Khalidi, Professor of Modern Arab Studies. Prof. Massad, a Christian Palestinian highly critical of the “racist Jewish state” (as he identifies Israel), was a victim of false charges of intimidation filed by Zionist students; although no disciplinary action was ultimately taken against him by Columbia, a NYC Council member demanded he be fired for his views. Prof. Khalidi was not so fortunate. In 2005, NYC school Chancellor, Joel Klein, terminated Khalidi’s participation in the city’s teacher training program for his critical views on Israel. In an attempt to smear Barack Obama and derail his presidential bid, Zionists injected Prof. Khalidi and his

allegedly anti-Israel stances into the 2008 election campaign since Obama had attended a farewell dinner for Prof. Khalidi upon his leaving the University of Chicago in 2003. The attempt to stop an Obama presidency failed; but ongoing ones to prevent any critics of Israel from being part of the Obama Administration have not. Charles Freeman is a good case in point. Freeman, a veteran diplomat was slated to chair the National Intelligence Council beginning this year. His longstanding criticism of Israel, however, mobilized the Zionist community to sabotage his nomination and Freeman reluctantly withdrew his name from nomination in early March. In a public letter explaining his forced withdrawal, Freeman castigates the character assassination tactics of the “Israel Lobby” and exposes its aim as one of “control of the policy process through the exercise of a veto over the appointment of people who dispute the wisdom of its views, the substitution of political correctness for analysis, and the exclusion of any and all options for decision by Americans and our government other than those it favors.”¹¹

As humanist sociologists we must take a stance against these contemporary forces of racism, militarism and McCarthyism. Similarly, we are morally compelled to demonstrate solidarity with their countless victims, both here and abroad. We can and should do both by joining the Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel and by active involvement in the BDS campaign. This historic call, first issued by a broad coalition of Palestinian organizations in 2004, has received widespread support in the U.K. and elsewhere, but only comparatively modest support, to date, in the U.S. Nevertheless, the BDS movement is growing steadily, despite enormous resistance, in the USA. Among the individual endorsers of the US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel are the Jewish poet, Adrienne Rich, and the African-American editor of *Black Agenda Report*, Glen Ford, as well as some 284 college educators. Among its organizational endorsers are the Green Party of the United States; the National Council of Arab Americans; the Los Angeles Chapter of the International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network; and Campaign to End Israeli Apartheid, Southern California. The Association for Humanist Sociology should add its name to this growing list of organizational endorsers. Such an endorsement gives concrete expression to our stated organizational purpose “to be an active support network for sociologists and other scholars committed to humanist values”.

We, as individuals and as an organization, need to answer the age-old question of “which side are you on?” and we all will, one way or another. However, in this as in all other critical social issues, inaction and neutrality are the voices of complicity. All that is necessary for this social evil of our times to triumph, is for good people and good organizations to do nothing. As Naomi Klein, the leading critic of disaster capitalism, recently explained in *The Nation*: “The best strategy to end the increasingly bloody occupation is for Israel to become the target of the kind of global movement that put an end to apartheid in South Africa”.¹² Amen.

Endnotes

¹“Hay Festival: Tutu calls for urgent solution to Israel-Palestine conflict” *The Guardian*, May 28, 2009. Editor’s Note: Tutu does not use the word “racist” here.

²“Kasrils says Israel’s behaviour worse than apartheid” *The Citizen*, May 10, 2007.

³Carter, Jimmy (2006) *Palestine: Peace not Apartheid*. Simon and Schuster, publishers.

⁴Zarchin, Tomer “Yisrael Beiteinu to advance bill on loyalty oath” *Haaretz*, May 28, 2009.

⁵Netanyahu, Benjamin in a 1989 lecture at Bar-Ilan University; cited in a 9/29/08 article on “Benjamin Netanyahu” from the Institute for Middle East

Understanding (<http://imeu.net>)

⁶Oxfam, et. al. *The Gaza Strip: A Humanitarian Implosion*, March 2008.

⁷www.factsandlogic.org

⁸www.camera.org

⁹www.campus-watch.org

¹⁰Hagee, John "Speech to AIPAC" found on the website of Christians United For Israel, www.cufi.org.

¹¹"Charles Freeman's Statement in Wake of Withdrawal from Intelligence Post" *Wall Street Journal*; March 10, 2009.

¹²Klein, Naomi "Israel: Boycott, Divest, Sanction" *The Nation*; January 26, 2009.

For further information about the BDS campaign, please see:

1. www.paci.org Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel.
2. www.usacbi.wordpress.com US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel.
3. www.bdsmovement.org Boycott, Divestment and Sanction Movement.
4. www.endtheoccupation.org US Campaign to End the Occupation.
5. www.cnionline.org Council for the National Interest.
6. <http://electronicintifada.net> The Electronic Intifada.
7. "Boycott Work: An Interview with Omar Barghoutti" by Ali Mustafa of The Electronic Intifada; June 1, 2009
8. "Why Support the US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel" by Adrienne Rich, *Monthly Review*, Volume 60, Number 9; February 3, 2009.

**Readers are invited to respond to this article and to the prospect of AHS taking a stand. Email responses to THS editor Jim Wolfe by August 7 for inclusion in the next issue.
Email: jwolfe@uindy.edu**

A Dialogue about Working with Obama Jim Wolfe and Alan Spector (and others)

Jim Wolfe:

It would also be good to have some short articles expressing opinions about the war in Afghanistan or obstacles to closing Guantanamo or the push for a nuclear-free world or the usefulness of single-payer or a public option in universal health care. It's great to have a president who is taking good positions or is not there yet on some issues but can be nudged perhaps.

Alan Spector:

There is a particular kind of political line which I personally find appalling. The greatest compliment someone can give someone else is to try to "tell it like it is," and the worst insult is to fake agreement in order to have peace among friends who have differences. So here goes....

The argument goes like this: "Obama isn't perfect. We should not insist that he meet all our demands. In order to gain some benefits, such as health care, etc., environmental rules, etc., we might have to make some sacrifices and go along with his war plans."

How "nice" ----- "we" will have to sacrifice some of "our" demands -- namely, we can't touch the military, but at least "we" can get some other reforms.....so, sorry to a few

hundred thousand people in Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, and other places---YOU GONNA HAFTA DIE -- it's terribly sad that "WE" have to make the sacrifice of YOU dying.....but it's a sacrifice that "WE" are prepared to make.....

Gina Petonito:

We always knew Obama was a hawk. He said as much during his campaign. But look at the paucity of choices in the recent campaign. Cynthia McKinney would have been great, but she didn't stand a chance to win.

So, what to do? I say don't "settle" and continue to press forward. I never considered myself a "liberal" anyway.

AS: It's not my interest to tell people whom to vote for or against. It is my interest, and I hope the interest of all others, to continue to press for open, honest criticism of militarist, racist, anti-working class policies and to build a movement. It's not the voting that bothers me so much as the SILENCE and the imploring that we should silence ourselves....while the killing of others goes on.

GP: We should not "settle" and continue to press forward. What I meant was continue to raise our voices against militarism, racism, classism and all the rest.

George Snedeker:

I think that many people have almost a religious faith in Obama. He is their savior. This religious view may very well lead people to overlook a few things, like waging a couple of wars against "barbarians"!

KO: We are giving world leaders way too much credit. By and large they are the puppets and mouthpieces of power elites, regimes, and so is Obama. Obama is a silver-tongued, orating stuffed shirt.

JW: Okay, I will take the bait. I am a liberal and I am willing to settle for the better rather than the best. I am not a purist who is irrelevant but a pragmatist who is engaged. Politics is the art of the possible, the art of compromise. I think Obama is a whole lot better than what we had before. He is very good on torture and closing Guantanamo; he went out in front on that, got shot down by Congress, but stuck to his guns. He is very good on using the recession crisis to advance education, environment, and healthcare. I prefer single-payer universal healthcare and took part in a rally backing that, in part in order to nudge Obama to make more of the public option in his plan. I am not a pacifist but a just-war person. At a rally organized by Palestinian Americans, I gave a speech itemizing the ways in which the Israeli incursion into Gaza was unjust, and I had the speech printed in the *Indy Peace and Justice Journal* (as well as our last AHS newsletter). I believe the war on Iraq is unjust on many counts, and I am glad that Obama at least has set a deadline for withdrawal. I could see some justice in attacking Afghanistan as reprisal for 9/11, but the irony is that you don't need its special kind of terrorism schools since the Iraq War (erroneously put forth as a response to al-Qaida) did plenty to recruit people into terrorism without Afghani madrassas. One criterion for a just war is the probability of winning it. I think the chances of "winning" in Afghanistan are low and don't know how to tell that we had "won" (won what?). So I am up for lobbying the Obama folks to cool that endeavor. We on the left cannot get everything we want, but maybe we can get more than usual if we apply ourselves.

Megan Mills:

Given America's role in instigating the mess in Afghanistan, I think the USAF should remain. To withdraw from Afghanistan at this point will consign unknown numbers of ordinary people to their death and ensure the resurrection of a brutal regime. Perhaps America should cease being casualty-soft, if intent on foreign policy of particular kinds; keeping in mind that each year since 2001-2002, an average of 1,000 Afghan police, armed forces personnel and other government servants have been bumped off by the Taliban. To repeat, as many Americans seem unwilling to do, THINK on how a withdrawal will affect Other-than-American People. Wars are acceptable till casualties rise... seems OK if Other human beings are killed but the American public Not Keen on casualties though electing governments given to involvement in various wars.

AS: Jim, I have no problem with sometimes having to "settle for less". That's life. What I strongly reject are two aspects of what appear to be your argument:

First—the way you contrast YOUR choice of compromise with the supposed alternative being "an irrelevant purist". While the language you use appears to be quite polite, it is, in fact, both inaccurate and a rather harsh, erroneous criticism that borders on a kind of seemingly genteel bullying -- winning an argument by labeling opponents with a label that implies their lack of concern for "real people".

Compromise if you must, and perhaps we might agree on some compromises and disagree with others, but to label those who choose not to compromise as "irrelevant purists", with the implication that we care more for our philosophical vanity than the well-being of people is a seemingly civil sort of comment that masks an attempt to distort the motives, concerns, and strategies of those of us who care very deeply about what happens to people and simply dismiss considering the substance of our objection in favor of labeling.

Second—it is EXACTLY this kind of reasoning about which I was writing:

"We on the left cannot get everything we want...". Posing the issue this way makes those you disagree with appear to be impatiently selfish---"everything WE want". Personally, Jim, my life is not directly, in an immediate, material or financial sense, harmed when another thirty civilians in Afghanistan get killed. It trivializes our concern for building a humane world to fall back on yet another stereotyped labeling that it is **our supposed "impatience" for "things we want"** that will interfere with winning "real things" for "real people". The people in Afghanistan are quite real and so is their suffering.

As a side point, I remember how support for LBJ meant that the Vietnam anti-war movement took that much longer to get up to full steam, and that many more (real) people died. I remember people saying that support for the attack on Afghanistan will carry over to support for other wars....and that is EXACTLY what happened with the initial widespread support for the war in Iraq. And Iraq and Afghanistan are not the only military adventures and intrigues that the Democrat-Republican government is engaged in, from supporting vicious dictatorships from Ethiopia to Colombia, turning a blind eye to or even covertly funding death squads in the Philippines, Central America and other places...the list of "real people" who will suffer goes on and on.

As I said, if someone wants to support a particular reform policy—health care, environment, whatever—I'm not here to tell anyone to reject helping oppressed people get more back from the government or the capitalists. But if, in order to secure those things, someone chooses to hold back in the slightest way any criticisms—especially criticisms of the ways that certain policies are oppressing and killing poor people from other countries, then we can use all the soft language that we want, but in fact it is sacrificing the most oppressed.....once again.

I am happy to sign a petition for more fuel efficient cars. But if I choose to hold a sign that says: "Obama -- STOP the killings of innocent civilians in Afghanistan".....and someone asks me to put that sign down because it might prevent them from getting a more fuel efficient car, well, that's a compromise that has to be exposed for what it really is.

Marcy McMurphy:

Jim, how can you say Obama is "very good on torture" in light of the IRF squads and relentless, continuing torture at Guantanamo? And not releasing the torture photos? No wonder they're so afraid of these guys getting out. Stopping the torture would do a lot more for national security and the safety of our soldiers than not releasing the photos. Not to mention bringing our troops home.

Re "just war" on Afghanistan: Can we think of any other responses to Afghanistan after 911 than attacking? Who will be responsible for breaking the cycle of violence? What about the "Not in our names," sentiment/movement?

MMills: Why is the American public so concerned about torture in Gitmo when for years the School of the Americans taught assorted students from abroad how to 'turn' captives in ways less than aesthetic?? Counterinsurgency depends on intelligence and constant intelligence sifting, few Americans till now asking how intelligence tends to be obtained. Then again, if someone chooses to serve as a mercenary for Al Queda, he is definitely aware of the risk & I emphasize that the little darlings are Not following what their faith demands of them if supporting this organisation or any of its affiliates. As suggested in a previous posting, if Intervention remains the order of the day, the campaign in Afghanistan does offer hope for a very long-suffering people of which they have none should the Taliban be permitted to resume control of the country. Is there anything that can be done to inform the public that the Taliban are not indicative of Afghans, or Muslims?

AS: There is very little difference between the Taliban and those other "gangs" that the USA is supporting in opposition to the Taliban.

The real question in these debates is whether we can trust the US government to enforce "human rights" anywhere in the world.....or whether we have to take part in the long process of building a movement that is not corruptible. I know: "We can't wait"....but if we do it wrong, if we support the wrong people, it will actually take LONGER to build the kind of movement which we (meaning all oppressed people) need that can really end this misery of poverty, racism, dictatorship, ruthless suppression of women's rights, and war that seem to be endemic to the world capitalist system. But maybe..."just this one time because the situation is extraordinary--we should ask the capitalists for help?" Or maybe "just this one time" becomes again and again and again.....in my memory, going back to 1964 and LBJ...

JW: I am not seeking to label anyone as unconcerned with real people when I associate being pure with being irrelevant. I have a friend who is a Quaker, a pacifist, and a socialist. He holds a weekly protest in front of Indy's Federal Building opposing all wars in general, but especially in recent years focusing on the War on Iraq, at which I have joined him a few times. After troops start coming home from Iraq in June and even after the war ends, he will still be there. He was active with the Indianapolis Peace and Justice Center, in which pacifists and just-war people have been making common cause within the organization and in coalition with Veterans for Peace and Code Pink in trying to end the Iraq war. But now this fellow is trying to revive a chapter of Fellowship of Reconciliation because only pacifists will be involved. He always votes socialist, which is like throwing his vote away (rendering him irrelevant to the actual political struggle). Fortunately, enough of us found Obama good enough and enough better than Hillary or McCain to engage pragmatically in his campaign and carry the day. Pragmatism can be unprincipled; Obama chief of staff Rahm Emmanuel was quoted in "Time" saying "Success is our principle." But there are others advising Obama who have principled positions. It helps to have a wide spectrum of participants (as in the civil rights movement stretching from Urban League to Black Panthers); it is good that some have chosen to be the conscience of the nation and better yet if they can articulate their conscience in a way that has some appeal for middling voters. I cannot support any war, even a somewhat just one, but with a heavy heart. I am grieved when alternatives to war are inadequately explored (as Marcy suggests); after all, one of the criteria for a war being just is its being a last resort. I think every war is evil, but sometimes it can be the lesser evil.

Yes, Marcy, I still think that Obama is very good on torture. He released the memos from the previous administration justifying torture and he said we would no longer employ torture, both because it is wrong and because it sullies our name and is not effective in producing reliable information. Obama tried to close down Gitmo, perhaps too quickly to be politically palatable, but was blocked by Congress. Of course, we have long been engaged in teaching perverted methods in the SOA ("School of Assassins," as our Indy contingent to the annual protest call it), as Megan Mills points out, and the word on Taliban as twisted Islam is needed.

I am not trying to suggest that folks on the left are impatient or selfish when I say that we on the left cannot get everything we seek. Those on the right are more likely to promote self-interest and greed as part of an unchangeable human nature (even though the present recession shows where it can get us) while the left loves abstract principles and is open to a reformed society shaping a new humanity. It takes a lot of patience and perseverance to see some of our ideas finally being implemented partially and perhaps a dose of faith helps as in Martin Luther King Jr.'s assertion that "the arc of history is long, but it bends toward justice."

AS: I appreciate your sincerity, Jim. It is not about being pure. It is about debating strategies, and the rhetoric of "purist" obscures and distorts other points of view in ways that do not help the discussion of strategies.

Everything we do is a compromise. Everything. Pay taxes for war? Then let's make sure that what we do with our decision to avoid tax evasion jail is to undermine the war effort. I do not believe that Obama is being dragged into all these decisions against his will. He enthusiastically gave away trillions

of dollars to banks and we hope that some of it will trickle down to us (some of it will, but it will cost the working class more in the end).

As I write this, he continues to support the core of US foreign policy, a policy that supports big corporations and exploits the poor all over the world. He is not being dragged into war in Afghanistan/Pakistan by the Republicans. And there will be more wars to come. We cannot mute our criticisms, not in the slightest, just because we might be getting some reforms at home.

We all compromise. I give grades and teach at a state university. In doing those, I lend credibility to the status quo capitalist system, and therefore, I have to try hard to ensure that I more than make up for that in the other work I do. I do not condemn anyone for voting for Obama, nor even for working for Obama. But I retain my right, my responsibility to not only critique particular policies, but to call into question whether his loyalties are fundamentally to the subjugated 95% of the world, or the exploiting 5%.

It is the call to mute criticisms of him because they might "weaken his power" that is the cause of my objection to some of the discourse. I lived through LBJ's war that ultimately killed three million and through Carter's support for fascists like the Shah of Iran and dictators throughout Africa and Latin America, and through Clinton's abolition of public welfare and the embargo against Iraq that killed hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians. In each case, we were told to mute our criticisms or the Republicans would make it worse. And the independent, grassroots movement got weaker and weaker.

Vote if you want, but we need to build an independent, grassroots militant movement. And such a movement should not and cannot mute its criticisms of Obama or anyone else. If it does, it is not a movement. It is truly the flea on the end of the (Democratic Party) tail on the end of the (capitalist class) dog—and every time the dog wags its tail, the flea shouts with delusional pride: "I'm wagging the dog, I'm wagging the dog."

Some folks say that they are using Obama to build a movement. Maybe. Or maybe it is the other way around?

MMills: How can your 'militant grassroots movement' convince the U.S. multitudes?

AS: A good question.

How could slaves in the USA in 1820 ever expect to see freedom? How could tiny Vietnam outlast the mighty USA? How could the Soviets win at Stalingrad, or the Long March in China succeed or women in the USA get the right to vote after 150 years?

To be balanced, there were also many, many failures. We need to understand that also. But what choice do we have? Relying on politicians has never brought lasting change domestically (although mass movements have nudged politicians), and in fact, the "normal" working out of the processes of capitalism leave many in the USA worse off than fifty years ago. (Starting with nearly 2.5 million incarcerated...). And in any case, relying on politicians has never even put a crimp in the normal workings of the US capitalist-militarist empire, which selectively intervenes for so-called "human rights" when its allies are threatened and supports the worst abusers of human rights when those abusers are allies of the capitalist-militarist order. And yes, as Olaf says, we can and should name them, but we also need to understand (in my opinion) that we have

a political-economic system that rewards this destructive behavior and that therefore, those individuals would be replaced by others if they were individually forced out. When LBJ defeated Goldwater, many thought a nightmare was avoided. When Nixon was forced out, the Vietnam War was ended, and Carter replaced Nixon-Ford-Rockefeller, many thought the nightmare was over. And again when Clinton replaced Reagan-GHW Bush. And now again with Obama.

Even if, in the best case scenario, (one that I don't accept as possible) where a President truly has the best interests of the people of the world at heart, and that President acts on it and doesn't get killed or otherwise stripped of power -- even in that unlikely event, history will again zig and zag (under the pressure of the most powerful sectors of the capitalist class reacting to the inevitable crisis that they create), and we would again end up with conservatives in power. The only thing that can stop that is a mass movement. Right now its chances for success seem very slim, but the alternatives, in my opinion, have zero chance for success.

P.S.— to be a bit more optimistic, I do remember a war that the "mass movement" helped prevent. In the 1970's, President Ford was aching to send tens of thousands of troops to Angola to fight the Cubans. He and his allies tried very, very, very hard, but it couldn't get through Congress, in large part because anti-war sentiment had so permeated the US population and people would not support that. Lots of zigs and zags. We don't know what will work, I guess, but I think we can figure out what doesn't work.

Mark Weigand:

Mostly agreed, although from my study of the "just war theory" there are six conditions and ALL must be met for a war to be considered "just". In general, although the concept of a just war is sometimes referenced by politicians, it is typical for politicians to rationalize and spin the facts to claim that these conditions have been met for any particular war. Never heard of a political leader advocating war without saying it was "justified". So, is the point that the just war theory is valid in and of itself and should be applied to any war? If so I think we are hard pressed for an answer. Even during WWII, all sides committed unnecessary violence and atrocities at some point. Changes in wartime policies can make a "just" war unjust, etc.

KO: There is no such thing as a just war. Wars are invariably about material goals, not about ideas, values, etc.(Oil in Bosnia? Really!?) Frankly, for a humanist, there can only be one position: to outlaw warfare, on a global scale, period; which is only possible if the production of means of conducting warfare is outlawed as well. There you have a material and present target for a global grassroots movement. Being against war is conceptual, hypothetical, and practically meaningless as long as the means of conducting warfare (and that is not just weapons)are produced and reproduced.

If you follow current debates on the environment, you may find some urgency in this. An increasing number of environmentalists believe that we are in an irreversible feed-forward cycle of global warming that is accelerating, in the worst case scenario, the most dire consequences being at our door steps within twenty years (famine, lack of water). When the crunch comes, how do you think it will be handled—given that wars are about material things? And God will be on whose side?

JW: The US is an empire, granted (but not necessarily so, Megan), and our job is to resist empire. I take some clues (and others may not) from Jesus' non-violent resistance to the Roman Empire as well as freedom movements led by Gandhi and King. I have been active in a 'militant grassroots movement' opposing the war on Iraq, standing up for workers (especially striking janitors in Indy), seeking universal health-care, slowing global warming. For eight years we have been a voice in the wilderness. But now we have a President who may listen some. Perhaps our strategy can be more politics than protest. There were heady days of protest in February 2003 when we thought we could prevent a war on Iraq; it was even said that there are two superpowers: the US and world public opinion (which proved impotent at that time but might be more powerful now). Affecting understandings undergirding public opinion is part of our job as humanist sociologists. Going to college in the Sixties, I was part of a cohort more interested in improving the world than subsequent generations of lucrative job seekers. I was a bit amazed at the enthusiasm of students for Obama and their willingness to campaign for him, and seeing the recession that untrammelled greed got us, I would not be surprised if some alternatives surfaced.

As for just war, yes, all the criteria need to be met. The war must be just in its aims and in its methods (which would condemn unnecessary violence, atrocities). For me, I would not be making an absolute judgment of a war being just or unjust but a proximate assessment as to its being more or less just and whether it is the lesser evil compared to the status quo ante bellum. What bothers me is how rarely wars are evaluated in terms of genuine transcendent principles.

My main work is in civil religion (older and different from the ecclesiastical religion of churches, synagogues, mosques, and sanghas). I recognize and analyze three types of civil religion: archaic, historic, and modern. Archaic takes the state as divine. Modern deifies the individual. Historic subordinates society and self to transcendence (in form of God, gods, Socratic ideas, etc.). Modern pursues "wars of convenience," which are good for business or individual consumers ("What is our oil doing under their sand in Iraq?). Archaic pursues "holy wars," in which we are all good and the enemy is all evil (note Reagan's evil empire, Bush2's axis of evil). The fluctuating "reasons" for the war on Iraq varied from reprisal against an evil al-Qaida to replacing their bad dictator with our good freedom. The real danger lies in embracing a theology of war expressed in the title of Chris Hedges' book (which my Jesus seminar group read and discussed): "War is a force that gives us meaning." Because of the archaism of the US, we do not know how to stop an ill-conceived failing war because we cannot let previous soldiers die "in vain." Dead soldiers "sacrifice" (make sacred) their lives "for their Country" so we must "support our troops" and keep fighting the war through thick and thin. How archaic!

MMills: still waiting for an explanation of a grassroots militant movement to come.

AS: Local groups organize around local issues—racist discrimination, police brutality, poor housing, demanding jobs, opposing plant closings, toxic dumps closing of hospitals, racist, anti-working class policies on campus, tuition hikes, social service cutbacks, sexist abuse, war, military recruiters, sweatshops, imperialistic corporations, and on and on. And within these struggles, those who have some sort of a more comprehensive philosophy/strategy (*mine is egalitarianism*—

opposition to the profit system, capitalism, at its core) will do our best to deepen our understanding and those of others about how these local problems stem from the results of the capitalist profit system. And so we work towards building a movement to eventually eliminate capitalism from the Earth. To do that means being deeply involved in the lives of other —block clubs, unions, PTA's, campus groups, yeah, even groups like AHS (!), community centers, ESL programs, prison education programs, food pantries, women's shelters, even (I would not have said this twenty years ago....) churches, mosques, synagogues, temples building deep, real, flesh and blood relationships of trust with real people based on struggles together (*in contrast to* the old "let's have our leaders meet and form a coalition" strategy). And of course linking up these local groups with others, including internationally. It is up to the "grassroots" folks to learn through trial and error (and political debate and struggle) what to do and how to do it.

JW: I could not agree more that it is up to local groups to work things out. I have recently been involved with three different grassroots approaches to healthcare reform. First was an old-fashioned rally on Monument Circle in downtown Indy following the Anthem stockholders' meeting on May 20

protesting the current way of doing things and holding out the best plan as single-payer government-financed healthcare. Second was a Health Care Kickoff coordinated nationally by Obama folks through Organizing for America and articulating Obama's three principles for health care reform:

- 1) Reduce rising healthcare costs for families, business, government;
- 2) Allow patients choice in their own coverage and own doctor;
- 3) Ensure that quality affordable healthcare is available to all Americans.

Grassroots participation was invited as we sat at tables by township among our neighbors. Third was a coalition-building meeting of the Health Care Action Team of the newly-formed bi-partisan Greater Indianapolis for Change, billed as a grassroots effort unaffiliated with any national group but actively engaged with local and national efforts. Focus was on persuading Senator Bayh not to scotch the public option in health reform. So here we had three very different approaches, oriented to principles or to politics, more or less related to Obama, all grateful that Obama had brought healthcare reform to the table and willing both to support and to push him, and all good. I say, "Let a hundred flowers bloom."

The Association for Humanist Sociology 2009 Annual Meeting

November 12-15, 2009

**The Hampton Inn & Suites Convention Center
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Questions about accommodations and travel should be directed to:

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Who Are We The Association for Humanist Sociology

Our Past: The Association arose out of growing disenchantment with conventional sociology and a need for a more clearly value committed emphasis in sociological work. We came together in 1976, not out of shared politics or similar "schools" of sociology, which were, and still are, richly varied, but out of a common concern for "real life" problems of peace, equality, and social justice.

Our Philosophy: Humanists view people not merely as products of social forces but also as shapers of social life, capable of creating social orders in which everyone's potential can unfold.

Our Purpose: Accordingly, humanist sociologists study life with a value commitment to advance that possibility through scholarship and practice. We intend to be an active support network for sociologists committed to humanist values, as they practice sociology in institutions often hostile to such an approach. To this end, we produce a quarterly journal, *Humanity & Society*, as well as a newsletter, *The Humanist Sociologist*; we organize national meetings and have sessions at regional sociology conferences.