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EDUCATION

- Current Ph.D. Candidate in Sociology, degree expected Spring 2010
 Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois
- 2006 M.A. (Sociology)
 Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois
- 1996 B.S., Education and Social Policy, Honors
 Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Race/Identity, Political Sociology, Culture, Microsociology/Social Psychology, Gender and Sexualities, Qualitative Methods

DISSERTATION

Black Elephants in the Living Room: The Complexities of Black Identity and the Unexpected Politics of African-American Republicans.

Abstract: Departing from a social determinism that assumes a naturalized, almost essential relationship, between racial identity and political decisions, I use the case of African-American Republicans to posit a variable and historically contingent relationship between black racial identity and political behavior. Drawing from multiple conceptualizations of race, the research attempts to better specify the dynamic relationship between race and politics in the “post-racial” context of contemporary US politics. The dissertation focuses on three different articulations of “race”: (1) race as a subjective sense of identity felt by political actors; (2) race as a cultural object indicative of a system of meanings and beliefs about “black people”; and (3) race as performance – including dress, talk, and interaction. Employing a mixed-method approach, I show how race, in all its manifestations, simultaneously enables and constrains the political activity of African-American Republicans. The project advances existing research on race and politics by moving beyond considering race as a static characteristic of individuals, and instead shows how the meanings attached to racial identity have implications for how political behavior is structured. Furthermore, the research examines the way political location shapes how actors understand and deploy their racial identity. Making theoretical and empirical contributions to a range of sociological subfields, the research illustrates how the recursive, dynamic, and variable processes of identity construction shape – and, in turn, are shaped by – broader political processes.

Committee: Wendy N. Espeland (Chair), Wendy Griswold, Gary Alan Fine, Monica Prasad, and Reuel Rogers

PUBLICATIONS – ARTICLES

Fields, Corey D. Forthcoming (2009). “Multicultural Conservatives.” in *Culture Wars: An Encyclopedia of Issues, Voices, and Viewpoints*. Edited by Roger Chapman. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe Inc.

Fine, Gary Alan and Corey D. Fields. 2008. “Culture and Microsociology: The Anthill and the Veldt.” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* 619(1): 130-148.

DeSoucey, Michaela, Jo-Ellen Pozner, Corey D. Fields, Kerry Dobransky, and Gary Alan Fine. 2008 “Memory and Sacrifice: An Embodied Theory of Martyrdom.” *Cultural Sociology* 2(1): 99-121.

Fields, Corey D. 2007. “Sociometry, 1937.” *Social Psychology Quarterly* 70(4): 326-329.

Anderson, Elisabeth, Michaela DeSoucey, Corey D. Fields, and Chris Yenky, eds. 2006. *Economic Sociology: Syllabi & Instructional Materials*, 3rd Edition. American Sociological Association.

PUBLICATIONS – UNDER REVIEW

“I’m Nobody’s Uncle Tom’: Racial Orientation and the Unexpected Politics of African-American Republicans.” Article under review at *American Sociological Review*.

“Not Your Grandma’s Knitting: Identity Work and Cultural Change.” Article under review at *Cultural Sociology*.

PAPERS IN PROGRESS (FOR PUBLICATION)

“Divided Reactions: Contestation over the Meaning and Memory of the Dawson Family.” Article in preparation.

ONGOING RESEARCH

Legaltainment as a Source of Legal Consciousness

Given the presumption, in America, that rights are pursued through the courts, both the sources and nature of legal consciousness are central to the study of the law and American society. Scholars have noted that people find commonsense understandings of the law in everyday settings. Television viewing is a key “everyday setting” where legal knowledge is transmitted. Since reality-based court programming provides an everyday contact point with the legal system, these “legaltainment” programs are critical to understanding how people come to their legal consciousness as well as how they make sense of the functioning of the legal system. Data consists of content analysis of two weeks of cases from seven reality-based court shows. Currently, all data has been collected and is in the process of being analyzed.

Co-Investigator: Professor Laura Beth Nielsen

PAPERS PRESENTED AT PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS

2009. “Doing This for My People: African-American Republicans and the Construction of ‘Black Interests.’” Society for the Study of Social Problems annual meeting, San Francisco, CA.

2009. “How Does Meaning Matter? Moving Beyond Identification as a Predictor of African American Political Behavior.” GLASS AGEP Research Conference, Chicago, IL.

2008. "Beyond Uncle Tom: Racial Identification and Partisan Choice among African Americans." Political Sociology Panel, American Sociological Association annual meeting, Boston, MA.

2007. "Unexpected Politics: Identity and Politics among African American Republicans." Political Sociology Panel, American Sociological Association annual meeting, New York, NY.

2007. "Unexpected Politics: Identity and Politics among African American Republicans." Mellon Dissertation Forum: An Interdisciplinary Presentation and Discussion of Doctoral Projects.

2006. "Divided Reactions: Collective Memory, Crime, and Social Policy in Baltimore" Collective Memory Panel, Society for the Study of Social Problems annual meeting, Montreal, Canada.

2005. "Divided Reactions: Contestation over the Meaning of the Dawson Family" Collective Memory Panel, American Sociological Association annual meeting, Philadelphia, PA.

2005. "A Circle of Friends?: Identity and Friendship in Two Knitting Circles," Invited panel at the Midwest Sociological Association annual meeting, Minneapolis, MN.

2004. "Throwing 'Em for a Loop: Young Women's Knitting Circles," Culture Roundtables, American Sociological Association annual meeting, San Francisco, CA.

2003. "Observations on the Popularity of Knitting among Young Women," Chicago Ethnography Conference, Chicago, IL.

EDITORIAL/TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2006-Present	Graduate Editorial Assistant, <i>Social Psychology Quarterly</i>
2003-2006	Teaching Assistant. Department of Sociology, Northwestern University. Plan and facilitate discussion sections, advise students on research papers, maintain student course records, assist professors with course administrative duties, and grade class assignments. Courses include: Introduction to Sociology, Problem of Cities, Social Movements of the 1960's, Economic Sociology, Classical Sociological Theory

AWARDS/FELLOWSHIPS

Summer 2008	Karpf Peace Award, Northwestern University MacArthur Foundation Collaborative Research Grant, Northwestern University, with Professor Laura Beth Neilson
Winter 2008	Frisen Grant, Sociology Department Northwestern University (Declined)
Fall 2007	Research Grant, African American Studies Department, Northwestern University
Fall 2007	Graduate Student Research Grant, Northwestern University
Spring 2007	Graduate Student Research Grant, Northwestern University
Fall 2006	Finalist, Northwestern University Presidential Fellowship
Fall 2006	Robert F. Winch Memorial Teaching Award, Department of Sociology, Northwestern University
Fall 2005	University Fellowship

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

2007-2008	Graduate Student Representative, Faculty Recruitment Committee, Department of
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Sociology, Northwestern University
2005-2006 Graduate Admissions Committee, Department of Sociology, Northwestern University
2003-2004 Program Committee, Sixth Annual Chicago Ethnography Conference
2003-2004 Coordinator, Ethnography Workshop, Northwestern University

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

American Sociological Association
Association of Black Sociologists
Society for the Study of Social Problems

REFERENCES

Professor Wendy N. Espeland (Dissertation Chair)
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