

Footnotes

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ASA President Arne Kalleberg Prepares for "Worlds of Work"

by Peter V. Marsden, Harvard University

In early 1971, at the age of 22, Arne Kalleberg was mismatched. About to graduate from Brooklyn College, the first member of his immigrant family to earn a college degree, he experienced some difficulty entering the labor market for his "first real job." In a clerical position at an insurance agency, his primary responsibilities were to retrieve claim files, many of which had not been consulted in years. The job demanded little of his education. Indeed, since Arne's supervisors had long since lost track of where the old files were and could not gauge the amount of time tasks required, the job made very few performance demands. He recalls that the primary job challenges were to constantly "look busy" and to find out-of-the way places to solve crossword puzzles in an effort to counter the mind-numbing boredom.

Arne did not remain mismatched for long. He soon left that position for graduate study in sociology, which led to his distinguished career as one of the foremost sociologists of work. Arne's scholarship is devoted to understanding how work structures and institutions—nation-states, industries, firms/organizations, unions, classes, occupations, and jobs—shape individual work lives, rewards, and experiences. Today, he would describe his situation in 1971 as an "overqualification mismatch," one of at least seven forms of disjuncture between people in the workforce and workplace policies and institutions (Kalleberg, 2007). Paralleling his academic career is Arne's sustained record of service to the discipline, which culminates in 2007-08 with his term as the 99th President of the American Sociological Association.

In the Beginning

Arne's brief personal experience with overqualification, together with his observations of the work lives of others around him, left a lasting mark on his scholarship. Until that point, Arne, in many respects, had lived an immigrant version of the American Dream. He was born in Larvik, Norway (about two hours south of Oslo), in 1949. Jobs then were scarce in that part of Norway, so—after relatives sent word of opportunities in the United States—his family emigrated by ship when he was five. He

still recalls seeing the Statue of Liberty and Manhattan on the horizon as his family neared New York Harbor, and thinking that America did not seem to be the large place he had been told about. His ship was likely docked by Fred Johansen, a harbor pilot who had emigrated from Norway years earlier with his Norwegian-born wife. Arne later would meet their daughter, Judith, at church; they would marry in 1972.

The Kalleberg family—Arne, his parents Theodor and Solveig, and his brother Paul—settled in Brooklyn, where Arne remained until 1971 when he began

graduate studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He describes his parents as somewhat overtrained for their clerical and supervisory jobs in grocery stores and delicatessens, as well as overworked. His

father Theodor's plans to attend business school had been curtailed by the Nazi occupation of Norway during World War II, and his job opportunities in the United States were correspondingly limited. Arne recalls his childhood and adolescence in essentially assimilationist

terms. His parents stressed the virtues of hard work. While much Norwegian was spoken in their home, his parents helped their two children adapt to and succeed in U.S. society. Arne graduated from Stuyvesant High School, one of New York City's superb public institutions specializing in science and technology education.

During high school and college, Arne held a variety of short-term jobs—a cashier in the grocery store his father then managed, a warehouse worker, a camp counselor, and he sold newspapers on the ferry between Staten Island and Brooklyn, until the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge eliminated the ferry and hence his job. He even obtained a taxi license!

Drawn to Sociology

That Arne would spend his work life as a sociologist—or even as an academic—was not foreordained. He considered many futures, including a career in the ministry. He was drawn to his college major in sociology because it provided him a perspective for understanding the volatile social world of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Most of

Arne's undergraduate sociology term papers centered on work, and he recognized that his experience with overtraining was far from unique. After his college graduation he opted to continue his studies at Madison—with the firm goal of studying overtraining.

At Wisconsin, Arne learned much through his interactions with a faculty and graduate student body active in research on education, inequality, and stratification. Three sociologists—only one of them then at Madison—had especially formative influences on him: Ivar Berg, C. Wright Mills, and Aage B. Sørensen. Berg's *Education and Jobs: The Great Training Robbery* held immense substantive resonance. Mills's writings—notably *The Sociological Imagination* and *White Collar*—encouraged Arne's impulse to examine critically the intersection of individual lives with societal structures. Sørensen, who became Arne's advisor—and later his long-term collaborator and mentor—reinforced Arne's inclination to emphasize the structural side of the micro-macro puzzles that captured his interest.

See Kalleberg, page 6



Arne Kalleberg

The Biggest Meeting Happened in the Big Apple

In addition to sociologist attendees, the 102nd ASA Annual Meeting drew record-breaking media numbers in New York City

by Sujata Sinha and Johanna Olexy,
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"It couldn't have happened anywhere but in little old New York." ~ O. Henry

By all measures, the 2007 American Sociological Association Annual Meeting was a huge triumph. In the city that never sleeps the sessions never stopped and neither did attendance. With registration for the ASA Annual Meeting in New York at an all-time high, the numbers speak for themselves. When registration closed on August 14, attendee numbers were at 6,025, setting a new record and breaking the 6,000 mark for the first time in the Association's 102-year history. The second largest meeting was the 2004 Annual Meeting in San Francisco where the attendance was about 5,600. With guests and exhibitors added in, on-site attendance at the meeting soared to more than 7,000.

Of course, as researchers know, numbers alone do not tell the whole story. The theme, "Is Another World Possible?," was both exciting and relevant, which contributed to the large attendance. The plenaries drew in speakers on a variety of topics—from visions of economic globalism and the future of American politics to the critique of popular culture and the erosion of American democracy.

Lights! Camera! Sociology!

Attendance in New York broke records across the board, including media attendance. ASA attendees may have seen more red on name badges at this year's Annual Meeting (journalists attending the meeting were identifiable by their red "Press" ribbons). That is because more than 30 print and broadcast journalists covered the 102nd Annual Meeting resulting in positive television, print, and radio news coverage throughout the meeting. If past media coverage is any indication, coverage will continue as reporters tap their new-found sociology contacts and refer to their notes for research topics. While acquiring a precise count of the coverage of sessions and papers at the meeting is difficult, ASA had identified several dozen by the end of the meeting.

Sociologists were heard on New York City's WBAI Radio. President Frances Piven was interviewed on Bill DiFazio's *City Watch* show on August 8. Past-President Troy Duster was a guest on the station's *Equal Time for Free Thought* show on August 12 where he discussed

sociology as a science. Sally O'Brien from WBAI's monthly magazine show *Cuba on Focus*, covered the panel "The Future of Cuba," which aired on August 27, 2007. The producers look forward to future interview opportunities with sociologists.

Tackling the Controversial

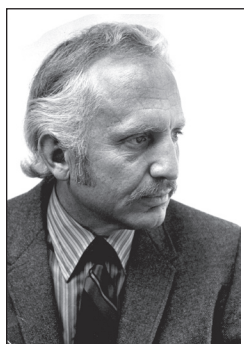
Among the extensive press coverage of the meeting, *InsideHigherEd.com*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, and *Democracy Now* covered the U.S. government's denial of South African scholar Adam Habib's entry visa, which prevented him from speaking at the

Annual Meeting. *Inside Higher Ed* also reported on several sessions, including the session on "Challenges Facing

Sexualities Researchers"; the Presidential panel, "Academic Freedom Under Attack"; and the workshop on "Guidelines for Tenure and Promotion Reviews of Public Sociology." *The Chronicle of Higher Education* also published an article on ASA President Frances Fox Piven's Presidential Address, "Can Power from Below Change the World?"

Local print media left their stamp on the meeting. Gary Shapiro from *The New York Sun* wrote a piece on the panel, "Why Did Crime Decline in New York City?" and Albor Ruiz from *The New York Daily News* covered "The Future of Cuba."

See Meeting, page 6



Otto Larsen (1922–2007)

On May 20, 2007, former ASA Executive Officer Otto N. Larsen passed away peacefully at his home on Maui, HI. He was 85.

See his obituary on p. 15.

Kalleberg, from page 1

After his youth in Brooklyn, Arne has spent his adulthood in comparatively sparsely populated places. After four years in Madison, he earned his first academic appointment in Sociology at Indiana University-Bloomington in 1975. There Arne and Judy had their three children: Kathryn born in 1976, Jonathan in 1978, and Kari in 1981. In 1986, Arne moved to his current position in Sociology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is now a Kenan Distinguished Professor there, with an adjunct appointment in Management. Judy teaches high school social science and directs an international studies program in the Chapel Hill-Carrboro public schools. Their three children—now grown and launching their own careers—often return home to visit Arne, Judy, their dog, and two cats.

Defining the Work World

True to his intentions, Arne's first published article (Kalleberg and Sørensen, 1973) examined consequences of overtraining. Both job satisfaction and job involvement, he reported, fall when the educational attainments of persons differ from the educational requirements of their jobs. This article contains many of the hallmarks of subsequent Kalleberg scholarship: Its focus on individual work lives in structural context; its central concern with the quality of individual-structural matches; and its reliance on social survey data that offer a representative portrait of people and structures alike. Its dependent variables—subjective work orientations—were less objects of inquiry in and of themselves than diagnostic indicators of how well persons and jobs are matched.

From this initial foray into research on persons, jobs, and job satisfaction/involvement, Arne's approach to the sociology of work has expanded to examine other forms that mismatches take, larger-scale work structures, and consequences that extend beyond work orientations. He characterizes his research as somewhat eclectic "problem-focused, multivariate structuralism" grounded on work, constantly in dialog with contemporary problems and innovations in labor markets.

Overtraining was Arne's point of departure, but his work also examines

temporal mismatches, mismatches between the location of persons and suitable jobs, jobs in which earnings fall short of individual needs, and undertraining—a second skills mismatch—in which people lack the requisite skills to perform their jobs. During recent decades, he observes, the salience of work-family mismatches has risen, as work responsibilities and schedules grow increasingly incompatible with the behavior patterns and time commitments that a healthy family life demands.

The structural focus of Kalleberg's sociology now extends well beyond job design, stressing the different levels of analysis that structure work roles (Kalleberg, 1989). Among his 1980s contributions to analyses of labor market segmentation is an emphasis on job structures, particularly internal labor markets (ILMs) found within occupations as well as firms. With the decline of many ILMs during the late 20th century, Arne's attention was drawn to then-emerging templates for the organization of work. Among these, he highlights two forms of innovation that make workplaces more flexible: "High performance work systems" that seek increased functional flexibility by broadening worker skill sets and expanding opportunities for participation, and "nonstandard employment relations" (including part-time, temporary, and contract work) that provide increased numerical flexibility for employers. Here Arne presses scholars to devote greater attention to the relationships among these still-developing workplace practices, and to undertake more serious analyses of their distributional consequences (Kalleberg, 2001).

His observations on trends in the economic and social organization of work have led Arne to conclude that in parallel with the increased income inequality of recent decades, a growing polarization in U.S. job quality is underway. It is evident especially in a rise in "bad jobs" (Kalleberg, Reskin, and Hudson, 2000), which pay low wages and provide neither health insurance nor pension coverage. Rises in nonstandard work arrangements are among the culprits here—but Arne traces these to larger-scale structural changes including the removal of legal regulations and the decline in union penetration.

Going International

With the expansion of Arne's structural lens came growth in the geographic scope of his research. Because he traces the roots of many work-related structural arrangements to macroscopic forces, such as legal regimes and historical legacies, he regards comparative research as essential. Following his early-career studies centered on the United States, Arne collaborated on a major project that compared work structures and work orientations across U.S. and Japanese manufacturing firms, seeking the consequences of "welfare corporatist" organization in Japan for job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Lincoln and Kalleberg, 1990). Subsequently, his research has drawn on data from countries including Canada, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Norway, Sweden, and Vietnam, among others.

His comparative research led Arne to develop and maintain renewed ties to his native Norway. He had returned there only two or three times for short summer visits since emigrating in 1954. A Guggenheim Fellowship allowed him to spend much of the 1985-86 academic year in Norway, accompanied by his family. Arne and Judy rediscovered their Norwegian roots, and their children learned Norwegian and went to school on cross-country skis. Since then, he has visited Norway—especially Oslo and Bergen—regularly as a guest professor and visiting researcher. At least a dozen of his research articles present Norwegian data. A serendipitous discovery for him was that Ivar Berg—one of Arne's graduate school heroes, with whom he has since co-authored one book and co-edited a second—not only shared his Norwegian heritage, but also had family connections to his birthplace.

Back in the United States, Arne has been active in administration and governance at Chapel Hill. With his good humor, exceptional patience, and superb organization, he chaired his department there for more than 10 years and has served on most major University committees. For the past seven years Arne has held University-level administrative positions in the Graduate School and in the College of Arts and Sciences, with responsibility for the social sciences and international programs.

It is possible that other sociologists have longer records of service to the ASA than does Arne Kalleberg, but that list cannot be very long. He has twice (1989-90 and 2000-01) chaired what is now the Section on Organizations, Occupations and Work. He was a member of the Association's Nominations Committee (1987-88), and an elected member of its Publications Committee (1993-96). From 2001 until 2004, Arne served in the vital role of Secretary, which he relished because it allowed him to see and understand the scope of ASA operations. As the 2008 ASA President, he is enthusiastic about expanding the ASA's efforts to bring the fruits of sociological scholarship to the attention of the policy community.

Looking Forward to 2008

In designating "Worlds of Work" as the 2008 ASA Annual Meeting theme, Arne likely surprised no one who knows him or his work. He speaks of the theme as "a topic, rather than a point of view." By selecting it, Arne underlines his views that the institutions surrounding and shaping work are central in social life, and that comparative institutional analysis is essential to understanding contemporary work. The 103rd meeting in Boston will provide an occasion for critical inquiry and debate about work, and its scope promises to exceed even that of Arne's own broad-shouldered scholarship. Planned feature sessions will engage issues of employment policy, the fate of the U.S. labor movement, and the impacts of globalization on migration and work.

Going forward, Arne Kalleberg hopes to further engage public issues through his academic and professional activities. *Ending Poverty in America: How to Restore the American Dream*, his most recent book (co-edited with John Edwards and Marion Crain, 2007), represents one step in this direction. His aspirations include using a sociological perspective on the institutions of work to improve our understanding of issues of globalization, immigration, and un-/underemployment. While long appreciating the important insights offered by other disciplines into the consequences of work arrangements, Arne firmly maintains that sociological analysis provides a unique, indispensable structural understanding of individual work experience and inequality. His enthusiasm for sociology's vital role in comprehending and interpreting 21st-century worlds of work remains as strong as it was when Arne began his journey in Brooklyn over 35 years ago. ●

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Meeting, from page 1

Plenaries and Beyond

International broadcast media covered two plenary sessions. The New Tang Dynasty Network, a global news channel that broadcasts to 200 million Chinese viewers, covered former Chilean President Ricardo Lagos' plenary on "Democratic Transition: The Example of Chile." They also interviewed incoming President Arne Kalleberg on his upcoming trip to China. In addition, Radio Free Asia covered Congressman John Conyers' plenary on "The Future of American Politics," and *Democracy Now* covered Naomi Klein's plenary "Competing Paths to Another World: Strategies and Visions."

In addition to the sessions and plenaries, several papers presented at the meeting received a variety of press coverage. Several media, including the wire service Health Day News, *The Washington Post*, and *Forbes.com*, reported on Scott Akins' (Oregon State University) paper, "The Effect of Linguistic Isolation on Hispanic Substance Use in Washington State." Paul von Hippel's (Ohio State

University) paper, "What Happens to Summer Learning in a Year-Round School Year?" was covered by United Press International and CTV, Canada.

Other media in attendance were four reporters and a photographer from *The New York Times* and journalists from *Live Science*, *Self Magazine*, *Time Magazine*, *Conde Nast Portfolio*, *EFE Spanish News Services*, *ShelterForce*, *Science magazine*, *El Economista*, *Commonwealth News Network*, *Discoveries and Breakthroughs Inside Science*, and *Forbes* magazine.

Looking Ahead

The glorious success of the meetings was in large part due to the diverse research presented and the planning by ASA President Frances Fox Piven and the members of the 2007 Program Committee. They, as well as section chairs

and session organizers, deserve congratulations on their excellent work in planning this year's program. Also, congratulations are due to the ASA staff for planning an efficient and organized meeting. The ASA looks forward to making the 2008 meeting an even greater overall success.

As we in the ASA Executive Office well know: It is time to start looking ahead to next year's meeting in Boston and to think about proposing sessions for the 2009 meeting in San Francisco (yes, we are returning to the West Coast). See page 5 of this issue for more details on the 2009 meeting. Next year's Annual

Meeting is August 1-4, 2008, so start planning early. The 2008 Call for Papers will be posted by the end of October, and the online paper submission site will open around Thanksgiving. ●



President Piven gives her presidential speech, following the awards ceremony, on "Can Power from Below Change the World?"