

What's Happening

February 25, 2008

Briefly glancing over the past year, the most significant accomplishment was that Sociologists without Borders/Sociólogos sin Fronteras became an international NGO, [SSF-I](#), with Alberto Moncada as the president. This new organization provides for a clearer relationship among the national chapters, and each of them with the parent organization in Spain. .

SSF-US held its first conference, Sociology and Human Rights, co-sponsored with the Center for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University, on August 15th, held at Columbia University's School of Social Work, with funding from the Social Science Research Council. This conference brought together scholars in the humanities, political scientists, economists, and sociologists, reflecting the multi-disciplinary nature of the field of human rights. This past year SSF – US sponsored sessions at the Spring 2007 Southern Sociological Association meetings, the 2007 World Social Forum, 2007 US Social Forum, the 2007 meetings of the Study of Social Problems, and the 2007 meetings of the American Sociological Association meetings.

Besides the SSF webpage, which Gerald Lackey maintains, Ali Tayefi, President of SSF-Iran has created a lively blog, [SSF Updates](#), and, in addition, SSF supports three blogs, one maintained by Amir Marvasti, [Iranian Human Rights Consortium](#), another by Mark Frezzo, [Envisioning Democracy](#), and a third by Judith Blau, [Human Rights Now](#).

The journal, *Societies without Borders*, is doing amazingly well for a new journal. The February 2008 issue features 12 articles on the World Social Forum and the US Social Forum. A companion book volume co-edited by Marina Karides has 14 chapters. Brill will publish the book in summer 2008.

This past year the Brazil Fellowship was awarded to Tiffany Joseph, a graduate student from the University of Michigan. She worked on an international migration project with SSF member, Professor Dimitri Fazito of the University of Minas Gerais, Brazil. We had some funds left in the account to make another competitive award to Molly Talcott, graduate student from the University of California at Santa Barbara to work with an indigenous network in Oaxaca on a community radio project.

SSF has played a central role in establishing a Thematic Group on Human Rights and Global Justice within the International Sociological Association and a Section-in-Formation on Human Rights within the American Sociological Association. The latter is still in process.

Judith Blau continues to participate in conferences on human rights. She and Alberto Moncada presented at a small conference on Sociology and Human Rights in Oñati Spain and both have published articles together on human rights. This past year their book *Freedoms and Solidarities: The Pursuit of Human Rights* was published by Rowman &

Littlefield. They have a book in progress with Paradigm Press, along with a coedited volume (together with Dave Brunson and Catherine Zimmer), titled *The Leading Rogue State: The US and Human Rights*.

Judith Blau