

Sociation Today®

ISSN 1542-6300

The Official Journal of the
North Carolina Sociological Association

A Peer-Reviewed
Refereed Web-Based
Publication

Fall/Winter 2016
Volume 14, Issue 2

Abstracts of Articles for the Fall/Winter 2016 Issue of Sociation Today

1. [The Role of Civil Religion in Choosing a President](#)

by Donald Woolley and Ronald Wimberley

This study attempts to help determine civil religion's impact on the choices Americans make among candidates for U.S. president. The variables of interest in this analysis are the civil religiosity of the respondents themselves, the respondents' perceptions of the civil religiosity of the candidates, and the congruence between a respondent's civil religion and his or her perceived civil religiosity of each candidate. Measures representing other religious and political behaviors and beliefs that previous studies have associated with candidate choice are used here as controls. We find that—along with liberal-conservative political ideology and political party identification—the respondents' perceptions of each candidate's civil religiosity are a significant predictor of voting preferences, and are more important than church-religious beliefs and behaviors. Furthermore, we find that when a person perceives one presidential candidate to be more civil religious, he or she is very likely to prefer that candidate regardless of one's own level of civil religiosity. In other words, people want a president to be civil religious regardless of whether they are very civil religious themselves.

2. [Support for Gun Permits of Young Adults: A Cohort Comparison](#)

by Alexis Yohros, Jessica Valentin, Dana Rosenfeld and David Gay

This research compares birth cohort differences in attitudes towards gun permits across three birth cohorts in the same age category. Using the GSS, we are able to examine whether birth cohorts from the 1970s (Baby boomers), 1990s (Generation X), and the 2010s (Millennials) differ in their attitudes. That is, have attitudes changed over time for young adults? The

research delves into the question of whether they favor or oppose a law that would require a person to obtain a police permit before purchasing a gun. By looking at attitudes towards gun permits, we are able to see whether young adults today support gun permit control at a higher rate than the young adults that came before. We compare gun permit attitudes between the Baby Boomer, Generation X, and Millennial cohorts. Overall, the purpose of this study is to provide more accurate information concerning differing attitudes towards gun permits between the Millennial cohort, Generation X, and the Baby Boom cohort when each cohort was 18 to 33 years old. In addition, we analyze attitudinal and sociodemographic determinants of these outlooks, as well as compare the impact of these determinants across cohorts. Results indicate significant differences, with the Generation X cohort being most supportive of gun permit laws. Specific differences within each cohort are also addressed.

3. [**The Relationship between Social Capital and the Quality of Life: A Case Study from Iran**](#)

by Jahangir Jahangiri, Saeed Moghadas and Sadegh Panahinasab

The authors argue that the concept of quality of life is a relatively new concept in social research. The issue must be considered also as an aspect of economic development. Using questionnaires, it is found that higher incomes result in a better perceived quality of life. Also, the quality of life increases with with more involvement in community, neighborhood and work environment.

4. [**Paved with Good Intentions: Individualism and the Cultural Reproduction of Poverty and Inequality**](#)

by Lawrence M. Eppard

This paper examines the poverty/inequality ideologies of a group of undergraduate social work students in the U.S. The students are asked about the causes of poverty and other issues relating to economic deprivation in the U.S. What is surprising is that most students are very conservative and individualistic in their responses, tending to believe that the poor are mostly to blame for their problems and that the U.S. is a meritocracy. These findings support previous research that suggests individualism is the dominant poverty/inequality ideology in the U.S., helping to reproduce poverty and inequality at levels not seen in many other wealthy nations. The author provides an extensive discussion of the results given him by students who would normally be expected to be advocates for the poor and more sympathetic to more structurally-oriented poverty/inequality arguments.

5. [**Framing Negotiations and Negotiating Frame: The Case of Vendors and Security Personnel at Grateful Dead Concerts**](#)

by Matthew P. Sheptoski

Encounters which took place between vendors, generally Deadheads, who sold goods in the parking lots of venues at which the Grateful Dead performed, and security personnel are analyzed. Combining Goffman's notion of frame with Strauss's concept of the negotiated order, I identify and describe an 'accommodation frame,' including the negotiative work involved in its achievement, maintenance, and, as occasionally needed, repair. This negotiated frame enabled vendors and security personnel to achieve their purposive behavior despite their seemingly incongruous goals: vendors were able to vend and security personnel were able to maintain a sense of order and authority.

6. [Book Review of *Hillbilly Elegy* by J. D. Vance](#)
by Lawrence M. Eppard

D. Vance's *Hillbilly Elegy* is a 2016 version of a Horatio Alger story which serves as somewhat of a Rorschach test for readers. For some, his book will confirm their individualistic and/or culture of poverty assumptions about economic disadvantage in our country. For others, reading from a more structural perspective, Vance's attention to larger economic forces will resonate. While Vance highlights individualistic, subcultural, and structural explanations of Appalachian poverty, he clearly prefers individualistic and culture of poverty arguments. The likely message that most readers will take away from *Elegy* is that subcultures and the social structure are not connected and the white working class has only themselves to blame for their problems. This is unfortunate.

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Abstracted in Sociological Abstracts