



Sharon Erickson Nepstad  
Assuming the Section Chair Position

### **Robin Williams Distinguished Career Award to Paul Wehr**

At the section's business meeting in San Francisco, out-going chair Meyer Kestnbaum announced that Paul Wehr is this year's recipient of the Robin Williams Distinguished Career Award. This award honors an individual who has achieved excellence in teaching and/or scholarship in the study of peace, war, genocide, military institutions or social conflict. It also recognizes those with outstanding service to the ASA section on Peace, War, and Social Conflict.

Professor Wehr's service to the field of Peace and Conflict Studies is extensive. His contributions to the ASA Peace, War, and Social Conflict section date back to its beginnings since he was one of the founding members. He was actively involved in the section as program chair, newsletter editor, and a member of the nominating committee. Wehr also helped to create COPRED (now the Peace and Justice Studies Association), the International Peace Research Association (IPRA), and the Conflict Research Consortium. Additionally, he served as executive editor for the highly respected journal *Peace and Change* for seven years.

Wehr is perhaps best known, however, for his long career of productive scholarship on the topics of conflict analysis and management, nonviolence, social

movements, and peace. Some of his earlier books include *Peace and World Order Systems* (Sage, 1976) and *Conflict Regulation* (Westview Press, 1979). More recently, he has published *Justice Without Violence* (with Guy and Heidi Burgess, Lynne Reinner Publishers, 1994), *The Persistent Activist* (with James Downton, Westview Press, 1997), and *Using Conflict Theory* (with Otomar Bartos, Cambridge University Press, 2002). In addition, he has published dozens of articles.

Although Professor Wehr was unable to attend the ASA meetings in San Francisco, he sent the following message:

Dear Section Friends and Colleagues,

I accept the Robin Williams award with deep appreciation. As a graduate student, I drew heavily on his pioneering work for my study of the southern sit-in movement of the 1960s.

Conflict knowledge has grown considerably since the section's founding 30 some years ago in the tragic shadow of the Vietnam War. It is sobering, even aggravating, that the US government is once again intervening militarily elsewhere in the world, with similarly flimsy pretexts, wrong-headed means and bloody consequences... ignoring the substantial peace-supportive practice produced over those decades.

Yet, while it may seem from such destructive intervention that peace and conflict scholarship has had little influence on the behavior of rogue governments, we can take heart from some positive developments. In good dialectical fashion, movements protesting military adventurism have mobilized ever more quickly to illuminate and resist such aggressive policy. Responsible governments oppose it with strengthened resolve. And within many societies, the knowledge and practice of cooperation and doing conflict without harm has expanded at all levels. So there is sufficient evidence of irreversible forward movement in the science and art of peacemaking to energize us.

One caution for how we go about our work. We should acknowledge and celebrate our modest yet significant role in the expanding intellectual infrastructure of peace development. But the value of our teaching and research flows largely from its practical consequences... the keen observation and

engagement of our students, the violence-reducing utility of our ideas, and no less important, how well we learn and practice in our personal lives what we teach about creative conflict in our writing and classrooms. We can do our necessary work best as whole and healthy persons. The balanced and integrated life is an elusive goal since the voracious organizations we work within demand more than total commitment. Yet personal balance and life integrity are possible. Our study of long-time peace activists (Downton and Wehr, 1997) revealed how single-minded pursuit of a mission can be built at the center of an intellectually, spiritually, and socially complete life. We peace scholar-activists can survive and prosper only if we learn and practice the skills of life integration. Building the organizational infrastructure of peacemaking is essential but we cannot let it devour the builders.

Resisting the professorial inclination to go on too long, let me say then, that I am enjoying retirement immensely. I am thoroughly engaged in distilling concepts from my written work for practical utility, and creating and publishing animated children's books. Fun indeed! Those wishing to learn something of where I have been on life's journey may check me out at [socsci.colorado.edu/~wehr/index.html](http://socsci.colorado.edu/~wehr/index.html). And for a peek at where I have yet to go, visit [www.wehranimations.com](http://www.wehranimations.com).

Again, my heartfelt thanks for this recognition. May our work be inspired, appreciated and above all, useful!

### **Elise Boulding Graduate Student Paper Award**

The Peace, War, and Social Conflict Section of the American Sociological Association invited undergraduate and graduate students to submit a paper on any topic related to the sociology of peace, war, military institutions, or social conflict for the 2004 Elise M. Boulding Student Paper Award competition. The first place award for the best graduate student paper went to Clayton Peoples a Ph.D. student at Ohio State University. His paper is titled: "How Discriminatory Policies Impact Interethnic Violence: A Cross-National, Group-Level Analysis." The paper empirically examines how different forms of discriminatory policies established by government entities impact interethnic violence. The undergraduate paper award went to Natassia Pura, a

junior at Tufts University. Her paper is titled "Framing Empire: A Case Study" and focuses on transnational social movements and the American Friends Service Committee. The contest continues to be open to any student or former student (within two years) with a high quality paper dealing with the sociology of peace, war, military institutions, or social conflict. The award committee is made-up of 4-5 members of the ASA Section on Peace, War, and Social Conflict including the graduate student winner of the previous year.



Morten Ender Presenting the Elise Boulding Graduate Student Paper Award to Clayton Peoples

### **The War in Iraq and the Peace of San Francisco: Breaking the Code of Public Sociology**

By Mathieu Deflem, University of South Carolina

Now that the ASA meeting on public sociology that was held in San Francisco in August is over, it may not be unwise to reflect on the enduring legacy of the meeting and its impact for the role and position of sociologists, especially those interested in the study of war, peace, conflict, and other highly contentious aspects of society. With some 5,560 people attending, the San Francisco meeting was the most popular ever. It may also have been the one that did least to advance the field and most to destroy the vision of sociology as an academic discipline. As these perversions of our discipline by the invasion of so-called public sociology have been most clearly revealed since the Association in 2003 passed a resolution against the War in Iraq, fellow members in the Peace, War and Social Conflict section will be particularly well placed to address some of the scholarly and professional concerns that arise from these developments. I here offer a position that can and hopefully will be discussed.