

A Quarterly Review of Social Reports and Research on Social Indicators, Social Trends, and the Quality-of-Life.  
*News Included of Research Committee 55 on Social Indicators and Social Reporting of the International Sociological Association.*

## USING TIME AS A SOCIAL INDICATOR

John P. Robinson, University of Maryland

Time has figured prominently as a social indicator, historically in terms of the increased years of life expectancy, the decreased hours in the workweek and the decreased days of work layoffs and strikes that analysts have used to document the increased quality of life (QOL) in society over the last 100 years. This article examines various ways that time enters into such quality-of-life concerns, but unlike the above aggregate indicators, it focuses on the lives of individuals -- usually in the form of time diaries collected from nationally representative samples. Thus, this article examines the first of two basic areas of time use:

*1. Objective time:* Simple documentation and accounting of the hours and minutes spent on various daily activities, like paid work TV viewing and time alone. This has become more prominent as more government agencies conduct time-diary surveys, as in the comprehensive American Time-Use Survey (ATUS) that is now the standardized source as described below.

*2. Subjective time:* Survey questions on how people perceive their time use and how they feel about and value the way they spend their time. Since most government agencies shy away from using subjective questions, most data here come from time studies done in academic settings. These are examined in a separate follow-up article.

Simple diary figures by themselves generally do not have immediate QOL implications, in that analysts cannot assume a person's QOL would rise or fall if they spend more time eating or traveling. In contrast, analysts generally seem more ready to draw such QOL implications when parents spend more time with their children or people have more free time available. (Support for some such conclu-

sions is provided in the second part of this review on subjective indicators).

While most of the data cited in this review refer to U.S. data, it is also the case that time-use data are now collected routinely by central statistical offices in most European and other Western countries. The most comprehensive archive of multinational diary data and articles is located at the University of Oxford, and can be accessed via its website [www.timeuse.org](http://www.timeuse.org). Table 2 below illustrates of the types of multinational output possible from this data archive (Gershuny 1990).

### Objective Time

There are several ways of objectively measuring people's use of time and the time spent on various activities. The most common, until recently, was to ask survey respondents directly in the form of "stylized" time estimate questions, such as "How many hours did you spend working at your job last week?" or "How many hours a day do you watch television?". These have the advantage of being simple, direct and relatively inexpensive to ask, with respondents providing answers in a few seconds. Examples include time spent working (from the Current Population Survey (CPS 2011), doing volunteer work, traveling and watching television. Putnam (2000), for instance, drew on trends from several activity or time-estimate questions to support his argument about declining social capital in America.

However, evidence described below indicates such time-estimate questions may not provide valid estimates of actual time spent (e.g., Chase and Godbey 1983), and when aggregated across all activities add up to more than the 168 hours available (Hawes et al. 1975; Verbrugge and Gruber-Baldine 1993).

### Time-Diary Methodology

The time diary is a micro-behavioral tech-

nique for collecting self-reports of an individual's daily behavior in an open-ended fashion on an activity-by-activity basis. Individual respondents keep or report these activity accounts for a short, manageable period, such as a day or a week—usually across the full 24 hours of a single day. In that way, the technique capitalizes on the most attractive measurement properties of the time variable, namely:

- All 24 hours of daily activity is potentially recorded, including activities in the early morning hours, when few respondents are awake.
- The 1,440 minutes of the day are equally distributed across respon-

*(Continued on next page.)*

## In this Issue...

### SOCIAL REPORTS - REVIEWS:

Using Time as a Social Indicator ..... 1-7

### Conferences in 2013:

"Long-term trends in Quality of Life" Mid-term conference of the ISA Research Committee 55 on Social Indicators. .... 8-9

### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Postdoctoral Studies in Quality of Life, Research Program in Quality of Life ..... 10

Call For Papers Applied *Research in Quality of Life*, The Official Journal of the International Society for Quality-of-Life Studies .. 11

THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR QUALITY-OF-LIFE STUDIES: Headquarters and WWW Homepage ..... 11

SINET World Wide Web Homepage ..... 12

### Editor's Note:

*This issue of SINET features a review essay by John Robinson on time use data from sample surveys and time use diaries as a social indicator. John long has been associated with time use studies in the United States and in cross-national comparisons. Readers will find the review quite useful.*

# SINET

Social Indicators Network News

**EDITOR EMERITUS:**

Abbott L. Ferriss,  
Atlanta, GA

**COORDINATING EDITOR/PUBLISHER:**

Kenneth C. Land,  
Duke University, Durham, NC

**MANAGING EDITOR:**

Rob Marks,  
Duke University, Durham, NC

**CORRESPONDING EDITORS:**

**Children, Youth and Education:**

Donald J. Hernandez  
Bureau of the Census,  
Washington, DC

**Health and Aging:**

Linda K. George and  
Deborah T. Gold,  
Duke University, Durham, NC

**General Social and Cultural Trends:**

James A. Davis,  
National Opinion Research Center,  
Chicago, IL

John P. Robinson,  
University of Maryland,  
College Park, MD

**Marketing/Quality of Life  
Research:**

M. Joseph Sirgy,  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute  
& State University

**Social Forecasting/Futurology**

Joseph Coates,  
Coates and Jarratt, Inc.  
Washington, DC

**Subjective Well-Being and the Quality  
of Life:**

Ed Diener,  
University of Illinois  
at Urbana-Champaign

**International Correspondents:**

**Asia and the Pacific:**

Mahar Mangahas, Philippines,  
Social Weather Stations,  
Quezon City, The Philippines

Dudley L. Poston  
Texas A&M University,  
College Station, TX

**Europe:**

Maria Ciechocinska,  
University of Agriculture & Education,  
Zytni, Poland

Lief Gouiedo  
Stockholm, Sweden

Wolfgang Glatzer  
Frankfurt, Germany

Zsolt Speder

(Continued from previous page.)

dents, thereby preserving the “zero sum” property of time that allows various trade-offs between activities to be examined—that is, if time on one activity increases, it must be zeroed out by decreases in some other activity.

- Respondents are allowed to use a time frame and an accounting variable that is highly familiar and understandable to them and accessible to the way they probably store their daily events in memory.

The open-ended nature of activity reporting means that these activity reports are automatically geared to detecting new and unanticipated activities (for example, in past decades, new activity codes had to be developed to accommodate aerobic exercises, use of E-mail, I-pods and other new communications technologies)

The measurement logic behind the time-diary approach follows that employed in the first American diary study, conducted as part of the most extensive and well-known of diary studies—the 1965 Multinational Time Budget Study of Szalai (1972). In that study, about 2000 respondents aged 19–65 in urban employed households from each of 12 different countries kept a diary account of a single day. The same diary procedures and activity codes were employed in each country. Respondents were chosen in such a way that each day of the week was equivalently represented, but usually only in one season (mainly the Fall of 1965); in subsequent U.S. studies all seasons of the year were covered as well (Robinson and Godbey 1999).

In each of the U.S. time-diary studies, a standard series of questions has been used by sequentially “walking” respondents through a 24-hour period. Starting at some point in the diary day (usually midnight or 4 AM of the diary day), the respondent is asked “What were you doing?” Responses to this query are commonly known as “primary” activities because they are thought to be the most salient or determining activity for respondents at the time. Respondents may be also asked, “Did you do anything else?” at the same time you did each “primary activity.” These “anything else” reports are referred to as “secondary” activities. For example, respondents might report getting a child dressed for school (primary activity) while also listening to the radio (secondary). Respondents also report the location of each activity and

identify the other people present during the primary activity. *Activity Coding*: The largely open-ended diary reports are coded using a basic activity coding scheme like that developed for the 1965 Multinational Time Budget Research Project (by Szalai 1972).

As shown in outline form in Figure 1, the Szalai code first divides activities into non free-time activities (codes 00–54,59) and free-time activities (codes 55–58, 60–99); non free-time activities are further subdivided into paid work (including commuting, which is usually referred to as “contracted time” in the time-diary literature), into three categories of family care (housework, childcare, and obtaining goods and services, or unpaid work that is often referred to as “committed time” in the literature), the three basic aspects of personal care (sleeping, eating, and grooming), and educational activities. The remaining free-time activities are coded under the five general headings of 1) information seeking (including the Internet); 2) organizational activity; 3) entertainment and socializing; 4) recreation; and 5) communications. The main value of the open-ended diary approach is that activities can be recorded or recombined, depending on the analyst’s unique assumptions or purposes.

Activity categories are typically coded in minutes per day and then converted into hours per week after ensuring that all days of the week were equally represented. In other words, the sampling units are person-days rather than persons, since the latter were only interviewed about a single day’s activities. The diary data in these studies are usually weighted by demographic variables to match the Current Population Survey (CPS) characteristics on gender, age, education, employment status and the like and to provide equal representation of all seven days of the week.

**See Figure 1 on next Page**

(Continued on next page.)

(Continued from previous page.)

Moreover, the ten main headings can also be conveniently split into the four “super categories” identified by Aas (1979):

- 1) Paid work (codes 01-09)
- 2) Unpaid work (10-19,20-29,30-39)
- 3) Personal care (40-49)
- 4) Free time (codes 60-69,70-79,80-89,90-99)

Under nine of these ten main headings in Figure 1, there is a second \_9 code to capture the travel associated with each category, so that it can be added together to total all travel during the day. It can also be added to the activity group (shopping, socializing) to give a fuller measure of the total time spent for that purpose.

When aggregated, then, activity-diary data have been used to provide generalizable national estimates of the full range of alternative daily activities in a society, from contracted paid work time for an employer, to the committed time for unpaid housework and family caregiving, to personal care for body and mind, and to all the types of activities that take place in free time. The multiple uses and perspectives afforded by time-diary data have led to a recent proliferation of research and literature in this field. Comparable national time-diary data have been collected in more than 40 countries over the last two decades, including virtually all Eastern and Western European countries.

The first US national diary study was conducted in 1965, and it has then been replicated every decade in 1975, 1985, 1995, and 1998-2001. Since 2003, the American Time-Use Survey (ATUS) has been collecting “yesterday” diary data continuously by US Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) – with samples of more than 12,000 respondents per year leading to a cumulative sample base of more than 100,000 respondents since 2003. The ATUS has expanded the list of activity categories to more than 400, although not directly compatible to the simpler Szalai scheme. The detailed set of activity categories are described at [www.bls/tus.gov](http://www.bls/tus.gov) and the data archived for direct use at [www.atus-x](http://www.atus-x).

### Methodological Evidence on the Accuracy of Time Diaries

#### Reliability-Validity

Two important properties of social-science measures are reliability and validity. Reliability refers to the ability of a measurement instrument to provide consistent results from study to study or under different conditions (telephone vs. mail; open code vs. closed code); that is, do we get similar results using the same diary approach? Validity refers to the ability of an instrument to provide data that agree with estimates provided by other methods (such as observation or beepers). Robinson and Godbey (1999) and Michelson (2006) provide considerable evidence on the reliability of the diary method (as dramatically evidenced by the ATUS data

(Continued on next page.)

FIGURE 1: THE SZALAI 1965 TWO-DIGIT ACTIVITY CODE

#### 00-49 Nonfree Time

##### 00-09 Paid Work

- 00 (Not Used)
- 01 Main Job
- 02 Unemployment
- 03 (Not Used)
- 04 (Not Used)
- 05 Second Job
- 06 Eating at work
- 07 Before/after work
- 08 Breaks
- 09 Travel/to-from work

##### 10-19 Household Work

- 10 Food Preparation
- 11 Meal Cleanup
- 12 Cleaning House
- 13 Outdoor Cleaning
- 14 Clothes Care
- 15 Car repair
- 16 Other Repairs
- 17 Plant care, gardening
- 18 Pet care
- 19 Other Household

##### 20-29 Child Care

- 20 Baby care
- 21 Child care
- 22 Helping/teaching
- 23 Talking/reading
- 24 Indoor playing
- 25 Outdoor playing
- 26 Medical care-child
- 27 Other child care
- 28 (Not used)
- 29 Travel/child care

##### 30-39 Obtaining Goods/Service

- 30 Everyday (food) shopping
- 31 Durable/house shop
- 32 Personal services
- 33 Medical appointments
- 34 Govt/financial services
- 35 Repair services
- 36 (Not Used)
- 37 Other services
- 38 Errands
- 39 Travel/goods and services

##### 40-49 Personal Needs and Care

- 40 Washing, hygiene, etc.
- 41 Medical care
- 42 Help and care to others
- 43 Meals at home
- 44 Meals out
- 45 Night sleep
- 46 Naps/day sleep
- 47 Dressing/grooming etc.
- 48 Private, no report (sex)
- 49 Travel/Personal care

#### 50-99 Free Time

##### 50-59 Educational

- 50 Students classes
- 51 Other classes
- 52 Homework
- 53 Internet (WWW) use
- 54 Library use
- 55 Other education
- 56 Email /IM
- 57 Computer games
- 58 Other computer use
- 59 Travel/education

##### 60-69 Organizational

- Professional/Union
- Special interest
- Political/civic
- Volunteer helping
- Religious groups
- Religious practice
- Fraternal
- Child/youth/family
- Other organizations
- Travel/organizational

##### 70-79 Entertainment/social

- 70 Sports events
- 71 Entertainment
- 72 Movies (not videos)
- 73 Theater
- 74 Museums
- 75 Visiting
- 76 Parties
- 77 Bars/lounges
- 78 Telephone/Cell phone
- 79 Travel/social

##### 80-89 Recreation

- 80 Active Sports
- 81 Outdoor
- 82 Walking/hiking
- 83 Hobbies
- 84 Domestic crafts
- 85 Art
- 86 Music/drama/dance
- 87 Games
- 88 Other recreation
- 89 Travel/recreation

##### 90-99 Communications

- 90 Radio
- 91 TV + videos
- 92 Records/tapes
- 93 Read Books
- 94 Read Magazines/etc
- 95 Reading newspaper
- 96 Conversations (face-to-face)
- 97 Writing letters
- 98 Think/relax
- 99 Travel/communication

(Continued from previous page.)

in Table 1). Support for diary validity is far less definitive, and would be a welcome addition to the literature, given the growing dependence on the ATUS data.

#### *Sample Bias*

One of the controversies surrounding time-diary data collections is whether certain types of individuals (e.g., busy people) fail to respond to the diary. Gershuny (2000) has noted how participating in a time-diary survey requires more time and effort of respondents compared to participation in other types of surveys and time-diary surveys in general have higher non-response rates than other survey types. However, Gershuny (2000: 268) concluded that nonresponse was not associated with an individual's activity patterns, "in particular the general state of busyness or otherwise – of sampled individuals." Along the same line is Abraham and Bianchi's (2008) finding that ATUS diary keepers did not differ markedly from non-keepers on various demographic factors obtained earlier from both groups.

#### *Diary-Estimate Comparisons*

Given the extensive prior reliance on time-estimate questions ("How many hours did you spend \_\_\_\_\_?") prior to the greater availability of diary data, the question arises about how well the two compare on a side-by-side basis. Taken together, these diary-estimate comparisons suggest a familiar pattern to survey methodologists, one of "social desirability". In America, as well as other societies, where keeping busy is a "badge of honor" (Social Research 2005), one might expect survey respondents to self-report higher levels of their work, housework, religious attendance and volunteering hours (for the Gallup questions) and to underestimate their sleep and free time. The case of TV viewing (and volunteering for the two BLS studies) provide notable exceptions. Again, more detailed evidence will also be needed to examine this hypothesis more definitively.

#### **Trends and Patterns in Time Use**

There have been roughly decade-interval (1965, 1975, 1985, 1992–1995, 1998–2001) national time-diary surveys by academic survey firms from which to make trend comparisons with the current American Time-Use Survey (ATUS). The ATUS has also moved completely telephone interviews, and from "tomorrow" diaries and from "tomorrow" diaries to "yesterday" diaries based on the recall of what respon-

dents did on the previous day.

In terms of the main trends in U.S. time use since 1965 (the "year" variable), most notable overall activity increases are found in childcare, TV viewing and fitness activities. The most notable decreases are found in paid work for men, housework for women (men's housework, by contrast, has nearly doubled), eating, and reading (mainly of newspapers). The main shifts in housework occurred between 1965 and 1975 (Gershuny and Robinson 1987; Bianchi et al. 2000).

There is little evidence in these diaries of other expected changes—even those considered to be "common knowledge", such as historical increases in average paid work hours or decreases in free time, childcare, social visiting, relaxing, or (non-newspaper) reading—or of age per se as a major predictor of time.

#### *2003-11 ATUS Trends*

More recent trends from 2003–2011 in weekly hours for those aged 15 and older from the ATUS news releases are shown in Table 1, and these can be considered as more precise than for earlier trends since they have been collected using a common measurement and coding strategy designed by the BLS for long-term comparability. A quick surmise of Table 1 shows how consistent the year-to-year averages are, attesting to its basic reliability, stability and intransigence.

Table 1 (next page) shows about a 5% decline in paid work hours (from its high of 23.8 hours in 2005), mainly of course beginning with the economic crisis of 2007. At the same time, there has been a slight increase in commuting and other associated work-related hours (such as looking for work). Hours spent on educational activity, on the other hand, have shown no basic change.

Total time on family care has shown some declines since 2003, about 10% in child care, shopping and services—but no change in basic home chores and food preparation. A larger decline – about 30% -- is found for care time devoted to non-household children and adults. Perhaps as a result of the decline in work hours, sleep hours have risen an hour a week, although no change is found for the other personal care activities of eating and grooming.

In terms of free-time activities, the major increase is found for the increased 0.6 hour for TV viewing (again probably due to the

decrease in work hours) and religious activity. On the other hand, this has been offset about a half hour decrease in socializing and telephone/IT communication.

#### *Adults, Aged 18-64*

Even less change is found when restricting the analysis to focus on the active labor-force population aged 18–64, using downloaded data from the ATUS-X website. Here the decline in work hours is less than 3% (despite the 50+% hike in the unemployment rate), while commute times (by themselves) remain unchanged. Education times again are also unchanged, as are times spent on housework and child care; shopping time is still down by 10% or more. Sleep is still up, but by less than an hour a week.

Overall free time among those 18–64 remains unchanged at 35 hours a week over the last decade, the one-hour gain in TV largely offset by declines in socializing and attending movies, sports and other social events. Total travel time (not reported in Table 1) is down from 9.5 hours in 2003 to 9.0 hours in 2011.

In terms of gender differences among those 18–64, men showed more of a decline than women in paid work hours, while women showed more of a decline in housework and shopping than men. Otherwise, no trends in gender differences were apparent.

#### *Results of Cross-National Comparisons*

Finally, multinational research reveals surprising convergences across most of the 20+ countries studied (as identified in Figure 2 below), although most of them are developed, Western societies in Europe (which can afford to conduct expensive time-diary surveys). For example, Bittman (2000) found similar increases in free time since the 1960s in other countries, much as in the United States. In an analysis of all productive activity (contracted and committed time together) in 12 countries, Goldschmidt-Claremont (1995) found the same basic equality of men and women in overall hours spent on such activities. Another study found the same pattern of increased father childcare across six Western countries since 1990 (France being a notable exception), much as was reported in a 2004 study (Gauthier, Smeeding, & Furstenberg 2004) for many other countries over this period. Robinson and Godbey (1999) found many similarities in both the trends and predictors of time use in Japan, Russia, and Canada. Gershuny (2000) has

(Continued on next page.)

TABLE 1		HOURS PER WEEK ON DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES (ATUS)								
2003	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
25.8	25.6	25.9	26.3	26.0	26.1	24.7	24.5	25.0		PAID WORK
23.3	23.3	23.5	23.8	24.3	23.7	22.3	22.0	22.4		WORK
2.5	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.6		COMMUTE
3.3	3.4	2.9	3.4	3.0	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.3		EDUC
2.0	2.0	1.8	2.1	1.8	1.9	1.8	2.0	2.0		CLASSES
1.3	1.3	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.3		HOMEWORK +
24.4	24.2	23.9	23.4	23.5	22.8	23.2	22.8	22.5		FAMILY
4.3	4.1	4.3	4.3	4.5	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.1		HOUSEWORK
3.3	3.4	2.9	3.4	3.0	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.3		EDUC
2.0	2.0	1.8	2.1	1.8	1.9	1.8	2.0	2.0		CLASSES
1.3	1.3	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.3		HOMEWORK +
24.4	24.2	23.9	23.4	23.5	22.8	23.2	22.8	22.5		FAMILY
4.3	4.1	4.3	4.3	4.5	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.1		HOUSEWORK
3.7	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.8	3.9	3.8		COOK
1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.3		LAWN, ETC.
0.9	1.0	1.1	0.9	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.8		MANAGE
2.5	2.5	2.5	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.3		OTHER HW
2.8	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6		SHOPPING
2.9	2.9	2.7	2.9	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.5		SERVICES
2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.0	2.8	2.7		CHILD CARE
1.0	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8		HH ADULT CARE
2.0	1.9	1.7	1.5	1.4	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.5		NON-HH CARE
73.9	73.9	74.7	74.5	74.0	74.3	74.7	75.0	75.1		PERSONAL
60.0	59.9	60.3	60.4	60.0	60.2	60.7	60.7	61.0		SLEEP
8.5	8.6	8.7	8.6	8.7	8.6	8.5	8.8	8.7		EAT
5.4	5.5	5.7	5.5	5.3	5.5	5.5	5.6	5.5		GROOM
40.7	40.9	40.7	40.5	40.9	41.4	42.2	42.4	42.1		FREE TIME
1.0	0.8	0.9	0.8	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.1		RELIGION
1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4		CLUB,ORG
5.5	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.1	5.0	4.9	4.9	4.9		SOCIALIZE
1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.1		TELEPHONE
2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.2	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.1		FITNESS
18.1	18.6	18.1	18.1	18.3	19.4	19.7	19.1	19.3		TV
10.2	10.4	10.6	10.3	10.1	9.8	9.9	10.2	10.2		OTHER FREE
1.3	1.1	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.7	2.3	2.1		OTHER
168.0	168.0	168	168	168	168	168	168	168		TOTAL

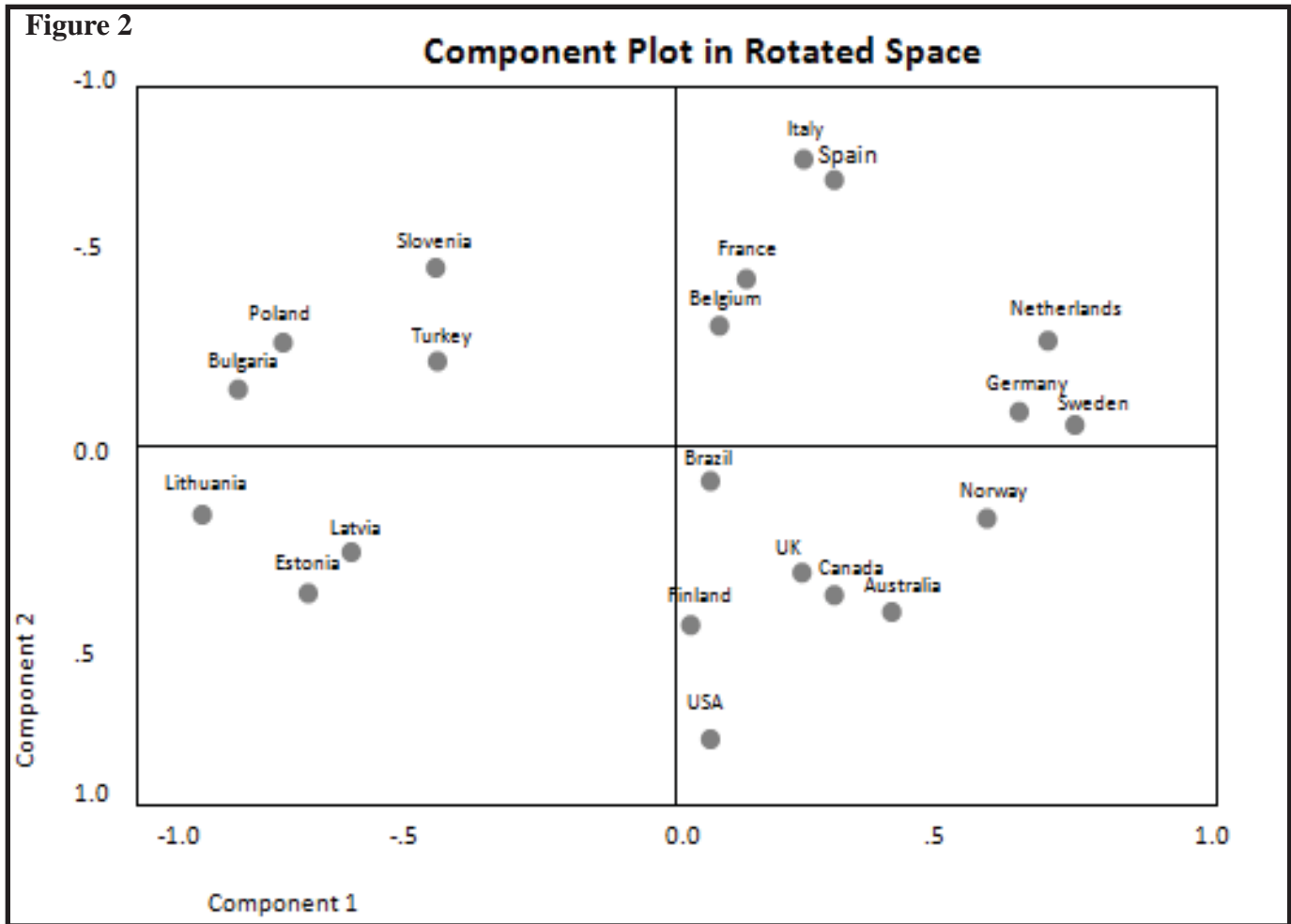
(Continued from previous page.)

extended these results to more than 15 other countries.

These national differences are summarized for 23 countries from the Oxford University archive in Table 2 to illustrate the extent to which multinational cooperation is now possible (Fisher and Robinson 2011). A simplified way of summarizing these multinational data is provided by the Multidimensional Scaling (MDS) program in SPSS (Arthur 2004) as illustrated in Figure 2 (Robinson and Gershuny 2011). Here, it can be seen that the Table 2 time-use differences indicate a notable stamp of geographical and cultural similarities on daily life, much as Converse (1972:150) concluded in his earlier application of MDS to 1965 multinational diary data:

All that entered the computer were 455 proportions indicating how people at 15 anonymous sites distributed their 24-hour day across 37 disparate and unidentified activity categories. It is remarkable that statistical compression of these raw data yields anything resembling a physical map.

(Continued on next page.)



(Continued from previous page.)

The 10+ hours a week in TV viewing in most countries in Table 2 also reinforce the conclusion that TV has had a greater impact on daily use of time than any other household technology, and that it continues to dominate free time around the world. The much lower time spent with IT suggests that TV use in Table 2 has not been greatly displaced by the Internet and personal computers (Robinson and Martin 2008). Main gains in viewing time occurred in the United States in the 1970s, coincident with the arrival of color TV, and it has made persistent but smaller inroads on free time since then. As was true 40 years ago, these diary studies show that lower TV time is correlated with more time at work and more travel and that TV is viewed more by people who are at home and who have more free time and sleep. Early casualties of TV, such as sleep and reading, are now correlated with more viewing.

**Summary and Conclusions**

While the diary is one of many options in ways to measure how people spend time

objectively, research with time diaries thus far has produced a rich body of insightful results. That promises to increase in the future given the availability of continuous, large-sample and high-quality government data, as in the many and varied applications of ATUS studies as described in Robinson (2009).

Diary data have raised serious issues about the accuracy of data obtained by more traditional “time estimate” questions, both in terms of simple amounts levels of time spent and in trends in these amounts across recent decades. Research done with diaries supports the conclusion that the time estimates are open to the common survey problem of social desirability (Krosnick 1998). While more definitive methodological research is needed as these ATUS data are more widely used, the diary method has showed promising results in terms of the major criteria of reliability and validity.

Diary trends since the first national US diary study in 1965 indicate a number of surprising societal changes, particularly in the converging lifestyles of men and women, who are now doing more equal amounts of not just paid work and housework, but most personal and free time activities as well.

Diary trends also indicate more TV viewing, child care and fitness activity, which has been offset by decreases in housework, eating meals and newspaper reading. There also appears to be a notable increase in secondary activities, with evidence of increased multitasking (mainly involving TV, radio and other newer media). This is reflected as well in the 20 percentage point increase in the proportion of respondents who say they are often doing two or more activities at once (Bianchi, Robinson and Milkie 2006).

The exclusion of secondary activities is a major problem with the present ATUS data collection. However, perhaps its major limitation is its obvious failure to capture much of the revolution brought about by the bewildering diffusion of cell phones, social media and other IT. The ATUS data indicate that just over an hour a week is spent using these devices, or less than 10% of the time devoted to TV. This oversight will become more problematic as IT becomes the means by which people watch TV.

(Continued on next page.)

(Continued from previous page.)

## References

- Aas, D. (1978) Studies of time use: problems and prospects *Acta Sociologica*, 2, 123-141
- Abraham, K., K. Maitland and S. Bianchi (2006) Nonresponders to the ATUS Public Opinion Quarterly 70(5): 676-703
- Aguiar, Mark, and Erik Hurst. (2009) "A Summary of Trends in American Time Allocation" *Social Indicators Research* 92:70-80.
- American Time-Use Survey (ATUS) [www.bls.gov/atus](http://www.bls.gov/atus)
- Arthur, M. (2004) *SPSS Handbook* New York: Research Methods
- Bianchi, S., J. Robinson and M. Milkie (2006) *Changing Rhythms of American Family Life*. New York: Russell Sage
- Bittman, M. 1998. "The Land of the Long Lost Weekend: Trends in Free Time Among Working Age Australians, 1974-1992." *Society and Leisure* 21, no.2:353-79.
- Bittman, M. (2000). Now it's 2000: Trends in doing and being in the new millennium. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 7, 108-117.
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (2009) [www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov)
- Chase, D., and G. Godbey. 1983. "The Accuracy of Self-Reported Participation Rates: A Research Note." *Leisure Studies* 2:231-33.
- Converse P. (1972) "Country Differences in Time Use" in A. Szalai *The Use of Time* The Hague: Mouton pp145-178
- CPS: Current Population Survey [www.census.gov/cps](http://www.census.gov/cps)
- DeGrazia, S. 1962. *Of Time, Work, and Leisure*. New York: Twentieth Century Fund.
- Fisher, K., M. Egerton, J. Gershuny and J. Robinson (2006) "Gender Convergence in the American Heritage Time-Use Survey". *Social Indicators Research*
- Fisher, K., and J. Robinson, (2011) "Daily Life in 23 Countries" *Social Indicators Research* 101: 195-204
- Gauthier, A. H., Smeeding, T. M., & Furstenberg, F. F. Jr. (2004). Are parents investing less time in children? Trends in selected industrialized countries. *Population and Development Review*, 30, 647-671.
- Gershuny, J. (2000). *Changing times: Work and leisure in postindustrial society*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Gershuny, J. 1990. "The Multinational Longitudinal Time Budget Data Archive." European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, Dublin.
- Gershuny, J., and J. Robinson. 1988. "Historical Changes in the Household Division of Labor." *Demography* 25, no. 47: 537-53
- Goldschmidt-Claremont (1995) *Measures of Unrecorded Activities in Fourteen Countries* Human Development Report #20 New York: United Nations
- Hawes, D., Talarzyk, W., & Blackwell, R. (1975). Consumer satisfactions from leisure time pursuits. In M. Schlinger (Ed.), *Advances in consumer research*. Chicago: Association for Consumer Research.
- Juster, F. T. , H. Ono and F. Stafford (2003) "An Assessment of Alternative Measures of Time Use" *Sociological Methodology* 33:19-54
- Juster, F. T., & Stafford, F. P. (1985). *Time, goods, and well-being*. Ann Arbor: Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan.
- Juster, F. T. 1985. "The Validity and Quality of Time Use Estimates Obtained from Recall Diaries." In F. T. Juster and F. P. Stafford, eds., *Time, Goods, and Well-Being*, 63-92. Ann Arbor: Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan.
- Krosnick, J. (1999) "Question Framing in J. Robinson et al. (eds.) *Measures of Political Attitudes*. San Diego CA: Academic Press
- Kubey, R., and M. Csikszentmihalyi. 1990. *Television and the Quality of Life*. Hillsdale, N.J.: Erlbaum.
- Lawrence, W. 1978. *Public Policy in Temporal Perspective*. The Hague: Mouton.
- Michelson, W. (2006) *Time Use: Explanations and Explorations in the Social Sciences* New York; Pergamon
- Press, J., and K. Townsley (1998) "Work and Housework among Husbands and Wives" *Gender and Society* 42(2) 188-218
- Presser, S., and L. Stinson. 1998. "Estimating the Bias in Survey Reports of Religious Attendance." *American Sociological Review* 63 1 136-152
- Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Robinson, J. P. (1985). The validity and reliability of diaries versus alternative time use measures. In F. T. Juster & F. P. Stafford (Eds.), *Time, goods, and well-being* (pp. 33-62). Ann Arbor: Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan.
- Robinson, J. (2009) *Time Use and Qualities of Life* (ed.) *Social Indicators Research Special Issue* 93
- Robinson, J. P., & Gershuny, J. I. (1994). Measuring hours of paid work: Time diary versus estimate questions. In *Bulletin of Labor Statistics* (pp. xi-xvii). Geneva, Switzerland: International Labor Office.
- Robinson, J. P., & Gershuny, J. I. (2011) "Visualizing Multinational Differences in Daily Life" *Futuribles*
- Robinson, J. P., & Godbey, G. (1999). *Time for life: The surprising ways Americans use their time* (2nd ed.). University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Robinson, J. and S. Martin (2009) "Of Time and Television" *The Annals of Social and Political Science (The End of Television)*. 265 September: 74-87
- Schor, J. 1991. *The Overworked American*. New York: Basic Books.
- Szalai, A., 1972. *The Use of Time*. The Hague: Mouton.

# “Long-term trends in Quality of Life”

Mid-term conference of the  
ISA Research Committee 55 on Social Indicators  
The Hague, The Netherlands  
Thursday 12th and Friday 13th of September, 2013

- Objectives of the conference:

This conference will explore the long-term developments in quality of life in societies. Both methodological issues – how to measure longitudinally progress in quality in life – as well as the results of this research – what got better and what got worse for whom – will be discussed. Special attention will be given to the relationship between research and policy making. How can results from quality of life research be made (more) applicable and (more) relevant for decision making on national or local level? How should politicians take into account quality of life research next to economic data? An intriguing question in this respect is why generally pessimism is prevailing in the public debate on the progress of societies?

- Conference themes:

- How to measure the progress in QoL? Applicability of QoL data for policy makers and the general public.
- What got better what got worse? Who are the winners and losers of societal development?
- Why does progress pessimism prevail in public opinion?

- Aim and format of the conference

- Number of participants : 60 - 70
- Limited number of conference themes in order to focus the conference
- Limited number of parallel sessions in order to have enough and active participation for debate in each session
- stringent selection of submitted papers to fit into the themes of the sessions and to have high quality presentations
- 2 plenary sessions with key notes and discussion with the audience
- 3 – 4 presentations per session in order to allow enough time for discussion.

- When: Thursday 12th and Friday 13th of September 2013

- Where: The Netherlands Institute for Social Research / SCP, The Hague, The Netherlands ([www.scp.nl](http://www.scp.nl))

- Preliminary programme:

Thursday 12th of September:

10.00 – Opening

10.15 – Plenary meeting, 2 keynotes , discussion with audience

Keynote 1: policy context and relevance of social indicators of quality of life

Keynote 2: methodological issues on measuring long-term trends

11.30 – coffee break

12.00 – plenary discussion, based upon discussion points from the keynotes

13.00 – 14.00 lunch

14.00 – 15.15 Two parallel sessions:

- a. Theme a.: How to measure the progress in QoL? Applicability of QoL data for policy makers and the general public

(Continued on next page.)



(Continued from previous page.)

b. Theme b. : - What got better what got worse? Who are the winners and losers of societal development?

15.15 – 15.45 coffee

15.45 – 17.00 Two parallel sessions:

c. Theme a. : How to measure the progress in QoL? Applicability of QoL data for policy makers and the general public

d. Theme c. : Why does progress pessimism prevail in public opinion?

Evening: diner in The Hague or Scheveningen (own costs)

Friday 13th of September:

9.00 – 10.20 Two parallel sessions:

e. Theme b. - What got better what got worse? Who are the winners and losers of societal development?

f. Theme a. : How to measure the progress in QoL? Applicability of QoL data for policy makers and the general public

10.20 – 10.40 Coffee break

10.40 – 12.00 Two parallel sessions:

g. Theme b. : - What got better what got worse? Who are the winners and losers of societal development?

h. Theme c. : : Why does progress pessimism prevail in public opinion?

12.10 – 12.30 Key note 3: The information needs of policy makers

12.30 – 13.15 Forum discussion

13.15 End of conference

• Abstract submissions to be sent to: [r.bijl@scp.nl](mailto:r.bijl@scp.nl)

Abstract submissions are accepted until May 15th , 2013.

Abstracts should be sent by mail including:

- Title
- Surname and Name of the author/s
- Author's Institutional Affiliation
- E-mail of the first author
- Thematic area addressed (a, b or c)
- Abstract between 200 to 300 words including objectives, methodology, results, discussion and conclusions.
- Four key words
- Abstracts should be submitted in Word, Arial letter 11, leaded of 1.5.

• Costs:

Conference fee will be about 100 Euro p.p.

Participants pay their own travel, hotel and diners. SCP will organise coffee/tea, 2 lunches (to be included in the conference fee).

• Scientific Committee:

Dr. Rob Bijl (The Netherlands Institute for Social Research / SCP, The Hague; Board member ISA Research Committee 55 on Social Indicators )

Dr. Jeroen Boelhouwer (The Netherlands Institute for Social Research / SCP, The Hague)

Prof.dr. Ruut Veenhoven (Erasmus University Rotterdam; Chair ISA Research Committee 55 on Social Indicators)

# POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES IN QUALITY OF LIFE, RESEARCH PROGRAM IN QUALITY OF LIFE, UNI-COM FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LOMAS DE ZAMORA (UNLZ), ARGENTINA

Director Dr. Graciela Tonon

The Research Program in Quality of Life , UNI-COM, Faculty of Social Sciences, Universidad Nacional de Lomas de Zamora (UNLZ), Argentina, is dedicated to research and development in the relationships university-community area, with emphasis in quality of life. In this opportunity UNI-COM presents the creation of Postdoctoral Studies in Quality of Life for doctors dedicated to Social Sciences.

UNI-COM has stable and accredited relationships with international research networks in the thematic field , particularly the International Society for Quality of Life Studies, and actively participate in the development of research and scientific publications as Applied Research in Quality of Life (ARQOL) Springer-ISQOLS. All these activities make UNI-COM an international research and development unit that makes possible the organization of postdoctoral studies that will allow the improvement of doctors that participate of the program.

## 2. Postdoctoral Studies in QOL: definition and characteristics

The postdoctoral studies demands the realization of research and transference activities for 300 hours of work. The participants have to develop different activities:

- a. Participation in one of the research projects accredited by national institutions developed by UNI-COM in the quality of life field, in which his/her individual work will be registered.
- b. A working paper that will be edited by UNI-COM.
- c. A scientific article, having as a co-author members of UNI-COM to be presented in of the Journals dedicated to the study of QOL ( Applied Research in Quality of Life, Social Indicators Research, etc.).
- d. Teaching of a postgraduate course in the Faculty of Social Sciences of UNLZ
- e. During the time of postdoctoral studies, the participant will be supervised directly by one of the members of UNI-COM group, specially designated for that considering the thematic area chosen.

## 3. Priority lines for 2013-2014

- a. Urban quality of life.
- b. Quality of life, culture and health of populations from Asia and Africa.
- c. Young people quality of life
- d. Qualitative studies in quality of life.

## 4. Presentation and approval of the candidature

To be chosen to develop the postdoctoral studies the candidate must be accepted by the Postdoctoral Evaluation Committee.

The candidature will be presented in print and digitalized versions and will have the following information and documents:

- a. Name, surname and personal data of the candidate.
- b. Information about the Doctoral degree obtained (university, title of the thesis, date of its defense, thesis director and a thesis resume of no more than two pages). It has to be attached the legalized copy of the Doctorate diploma.
- c. Proposed period for the stay.
- d. CV of no more than 5 pages in which must be shown the most important researches developed (clarifying the own role in these projects), publications with arbitration with the editorial data and scholarships that have been obtained by the candidate before.
- e. A personal letter explaining the motivation to develop the postdoctoral studies.
- f. An individual work plan, in relation with the chosen thematic area, of no more than 3 pages.

The acceptance depends on the evaluation of the Postdoctoral Evaluation Committee formed by three members: the Direction of UNI-COM and two experts doctors in the area: one, from the academic unit and the other one, external to it, of international character expert in QOL for the present period it will be Dr. Filomena Maggino, actual ISQOLS' president.

## 5. Approval of the postdoctoral studies

Each participant will have till 6 months after finishing the work of the postdoctoral studies in UNI-COM, to send the scientific written products to which he/she committed. Once fulfilled the mentioned conditions, the Postdoctoral Evaluation Committee has to produce an evaluation. If it is positive, it will be given the certificate of APPROVAL OF POSDOCTORAL STUDIES IN QUALITY OF LIFE with mention in the chosen thematic area. If the evaluation is not positive, the participant will have to make the suggested modifications to send the productions again in a new period of 6 months for a last consideration.

Contact Information: For further information about the program, contact: unicom.calidaddevida@gmail.com

---

**CALL FOR PAPERS**

---

---

**APPLIED RESEARCH IN QUALITY OF LIFE**

---

---

**THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR  
QUALITY-OF-LIFE STUDIES**

---

The aim of this journal is to publish conceptual, methodological and empirical papers dealing with quality-of-life studies in the applied areas of the natural and social sciences. As the official journal of ISQOLS, it is designed to attract papers that have some direct implications for or impact on practical applications of research on the quality-of-life. We welcome papers crafted from inter-disciplinary, inter-professional and international perspectives. This research should guide decision making in a variety of professions, industries, nonprofit, and government sectors such as healthcare, travel and tourism, marketing, corporate management, community planning, social work, public administration, human resource management, among others. The goal is to help decision makers apply performance measures and outcome assessment techniques based on concepts such as well-being, human satisfaction, human development, happiness, wellness and quality of life. The Editorial Review Board is divided into specific sections indicating the broad scope of practice covered by the journal, and the section editors are distinguished scholars from many countries across the globe.

Authors interested in submitting manuscripts for publication should consult the website <http://ariq.edmgr.com>. Further information may be obtained by contacting one of the journal's Co-Editors: Richard Estes, University of Pennsylvania (USA), [restes@sp2.upenn.edu](mailto:restes@sp2.upenn.edu); Alex C. Michalos, University of Northern British Columbia (Canada), [michalos@unbc.ca](mailto:michalos@unbc.ca); M. Joseph Sirgy, Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University (USA), [sirgy@vt.edu](mailto:sirgy@vt.edu).

---

**THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR QUALITY-OF-LIFE STUDIES:  
HEADQUARTERS AND WWW HOMEPAGE**

---

The International Society for Quality-of-Life Studies (ISQOLS) was formed in the mid-1990s. The objectives of ISQOLS are: 1) to stimulate interdisciplinary research in quality-of-life (QOL) studies within the managerial (policy), behavioral, social, medical, and environmental sciences; 2) to provide an organization which all academic, business, nonprofit, and government researchers who are interested in QOL studies can coordinate their efforts to advance the knowledge base and to create positive social change; and 3) to encourage closer cooperation among scholars engaged in QOL research to develop better theory, methods, measures, and intervention programs.

Denis Huschka recently has taken over the Executive Director and Treasurer for ISQOLS from Joe Sirgy, and the ISQOLS Central Office has moved from Blacksburg, Virginia, USA to Berlin, Germany. Denis's contact information: Denis Huschka, Executive Director, ISQOLS, Mohrenstrasse 58 10117 Berlin, Germany; Fax: +49-(0)3089789-263 E-Mail: [ed@isqols.org](mailto:ed@isqols.org)

The year 2012 membership fees are US\$75 for regular members and \$50 for students or retired persons. Anyone interested in knowing more about ISQOLS should contact Denis.

E-mail: [office@isqols.org](mailto:office@isqols.org)

Website: [www.isqols.org](http://www.isqols.org)

# SINET HOMEPAGE

SINET has a homepage entry on the World Wide Web. It is located on the homepage of the Department of Sociology at Duke University and thus can be accessed by clicking on Department Publications on the address of that page, namely, <http://www.soc.duke.edu> or by typing in the full address <http://www.soc.duke.edu/resources/sinet/index.html>. The homepage for SINET contains a description of the Contents of the Current Issue as well as of Previous Issues. In addition, it has Subscription Information, Editorial Information, Issue-Related Links, and a link to the homepage of ISQOLS, the International Society for Quality-of-Life Studies. The Issue-Related Links button has links to World Wide Web locations of data for the construction, study, and analysis of social and quality-of-life indicators that have been identified in previous issues of SINET. When you are surfing the Web, surf on in to our homepage.

# SINET

## Subscription Information

As a service to the world-wide social indicators community, SINET is issued quarterly (February, May, August, November). Subscribers and network participants are invited to report news of their social indicator activity, research, policy development, etc., to the Editor for publication. Deadlines are the 20th of the month prior to each issue.

Address:  
SINET, Kenneth C. Land, Editor,  
Department of Sociology, Box 90088,  
Duke University, Durham, NC 27708-0088, USA  
E-mail: [kland@soc.duke.edu](mailto:kland@soc.duke.edu)  
Telephone: 919-660-5615  
Fax: 919-660-5623

Subscriptions are on a calendar year basis; annual rates:

Libraries/Institutions ..... US\$26.00

Individual:

US & Canada ..... US\$18.00

All Others ..... US\$20.00

Sorry; credit cards are not accepted. Check must be in US dollars. Payment may be made through a wired money order; check with your financial institution for further information. Advance payments are always welcomed. Call or write for a multiple-year invoice.

Archived issues are available for purchase. Please call or write for prices and details.

# SINET

Kenneth C. Land, Editor  
Department of Sociology  
Box 90088, Duke University  
Durham, NC 27708-0088 USA  
151-1057-6936-22940