



HONG KONG SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
11TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

5 | 12 | 2009

Organized by Department of Sociology, The University of Hong Kong

CALL FOR PAPERS

Conference Theme:

Envisioning the World City

The world city is usually seen as a major financial and metropolitan centre, a key cultural hub, and even a global icon of success. Yet there has been a sharpening inequality in the concentration of resources and activities within world cities and between them and other cities in the global economy. So what are the challenges and opportunities of a world city? What are the implications for a world city, with the recent worldwide financial crisis and health threats? What are some of the consequences of the increasingly intense global integration and disintegration of flows of people, capital, goods, technologies and ideas? What are the linkages that bind people to world cities? To what extent have those linkages produced new processes of identity formation and new notions of community, of membership, and of entitlement?

This conference seeks to examine the world city, with a particular focus on the relationship between local and global contexts. Issues to be examined include:

- What are the characteristics of a world city?
- Is Hong Kong a world city? What does the HKSAR government's positioning of Hong Kong as "Asia's World City" mean?
- What are the geo-politics among world cities, and between them and other cities?
- What are the social, political, economic and cultural impacts of globalization on a city like Hong Kong?

The conference serves as a major networking event and a forum for sociologists and colleagues in the social sciences to reflect on our research processes, to present current work, and to receive feedback. We encourage presentations that explore the conference theme, but papers that do not explicitly address it are also welcome.

The 2009 annual conference will be hosted by the Department of Sociology, the University of Hong Kong. Whether you are studying, teaching or researching, this conference is not to be missed! Prospective participants can apply to:

- a. present a paper
- b. organize a panel
- c. attend the conference

Please send an abstract of paper or panel of 250 words, along with the abstract submission form (downloadable at [Abstract Submission Form](#)), to Dr. Travis Kong at hksa2009@hku.hk, by fax (852) 2559 8044, or by post to: Department of Sociology, KK Leung Building, the University of Hong Kong, Pokfulam Road, Hong Kong, **no later than September 10, 2009**. Proposals will be peer reviewed and results announced by the end of September, 2009.

Registration Fee

Members*	Free
Non-members:	HK\$300
Students:	HK\$150

*Annual Membership fee is HK\$400; Life Membership fee is HK\$4,000. Please fill out the membership form (downloadable at [Membership Form](#)) if you would like to join The Hong Kong Sociological Association.

The fee includes a lunch.

Enquires:

For further enquiries, please contact Dr. Travis Kong at hksa2009@hku.hk.

Keynote Speaker: Prof Henry Pontell
Global Meltdown: Fraud and Financial Crises

Abstract

The financial crisis which began in the United States with the collapse of the housing market and related mortgage-backed securities, has resulted in the largest global economic recession in history. Explanations have typically focused on inadequate regulatory structures, lax enforcement, greed in the financial and banking industries, and the otherwise “risky business” inherent in the competitive marketplace. This presentation discusses these issues in the context of sociological and criminological research and theory that highlight the role and significance of fraud in major financial debacles. It has four foci. First, it examines the worldwide effects of the crisis with particular attention to Hong Kong as a major international financial center. Second, it makes a case for prioritizing the concept of white-collar crime in debates regarding effective causes and responses. Third, it reviews salient sociological and criminological work that bears on the theoretical trivializing of the term white-collar crime itself. Fourth, it examines how the impacts of white-collar crime are made to appear less important in practice, and how this leads to fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of financial crises, and correspondingly misguided efforts to deal with them. It concludes that any proposals for reform, whether aimed at finance, banking, accounting, or corporate governance must seriously consider the potential for fraud if massive financial meltdowns are to be avoided in the future.

Henry N. Pontell is Professor of Criminology, Law and Society in the School of Social Ecology and of Sociology in the School of Social Sciences at the University of California, Irvine. His research interests include white-collar and corporate crime, deviance and social control, and comparative criminology. He is a Fellow and former Vice-President of the American Society of Criminology, and a Fellow and former President of the Western Society of Criminology. In 2001 he received the Donald R. Cressey Award from the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, and the Albert J. Reiss, Jr. Distinguished Scholarship Award from the American Sociological Association.