

# The Southern Sociologist

Volume 47

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Spring 2016



## From the President: Barbara Risman

This is my final column as the president of our Society. And yet the major work of my presidency has yet to see the light of day, and that is the exciting meetings we have planned for Atlanta. Do join us!

But before we talk more about the meetings, I want to take this opportunity to thank Bob Freymeyer for the wonderful job he's done editing our newsletter. As with all the work it takes to run a Society, much is invisible, and it's all volunteer. We couldn't be the wonderful Society we are without members like Bob giving so freely of their time and expertise. Thank him when you see him. And let me welcome our new newsletter editor James Maples! And we also have a new editor for "The Teaching Corner," Sarah E. Cribbs. I thank both of them for being willing to step into leadership roles for the Society.

The incredibly labor (of love) that goes into creating these meetings often goes unnoticed because it all happens in advance. Indeed if we have done a good job, the work itself is invisible. These meetings had particular challenges because the hotel is far too small for the Society we have become! That's a good thing in principle, but very hard on the ground. The program co-chairs this year, Patricia Warren (Florida State University) and Adia Harvey Wingfield (Washington University) worked magic to fit our growing Society into a space negotiated years

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before. We expect more members at these meetings than any time in our history, outside of New Orleans. The jigsaw puzzle they had to create to make this work is so complicated, I stopped trying to understand it. What I do understand is that each and every one of you should thank these two amazing scholars when you see them in Atlanta. I try to thank them every day.

Professors Warren and Wingfield had a great team to work with. As always our Executive Officer provided the infrastructure and institutional memory. Slade Lellock provided quick and effective technological assistance, and my presidential Aide Buddy Scarborough was instantaneous in his help, supporting myself and the program co-chairs. Thank these folks as well!

Before I go further with my excitement for the wonderful meeting coming up in Atlanta, I need to let you all know about the politics of marriage happening in Georgia today. As I write this, on February 24<sup>th</sup>, we do not know if the Governor of Georgia will sign HB 757, a bill that allows discrimination against gays and lesbians. We won't know soon enough to move this meeting, and by now, I hope this is ancient history, another failed attempt at discrimination. But if the bill passes, we will not come back to Atlanta as long as discrimination is legal. And if the bill passes, we will organize some event in Atlanta to show our solidarity with the LGBT community. Stay tuned.

Whatever happens with the politics of marriage in Georgia, I'm still excited to see you all in Atlanta. We have a wide diversity of member submitted and invited sessions. The theme of these meetings, *The Politics of Marriage: From Intimacy to Public Policy*, could not be more timely! There will be two mini-conferences that flesh out that theme. One is organized by Linda Burton, Andrew Cherlin, and Kevin Roy, and it will focus on *Re-thinking Marriage: Class, Race and Public Policy*. The other mini-conference organized by Wendy Manning will focus on *Marriage Equality: Evolving Family Policies for Same-Sex Couples*. Both of these mini-conferences have invited and member submitted sessions. We also have a mini-conference on Teaching Multiple Publics. I was particularly thrilled at how many members of our Society submitted papers for this mini-conference. We will have flyers to help you identify the sessions in each mini-conference so that, if you so desire, you can follow the mini-conference just like a stream in a European conference, and get to know the people who care about the same issues as you. I have organized Presidential Panels on the topics of each mini-conference. I also have invited panels that focus on Gender Politics in Marriage, Families as They Really Are, and Black Lives Matter.

Don't forget to party! We will have a member jam session at the opening of our registration on Wednesday night. As always, we will have a graduate student mixer, off-site. Watch for details! This year we will also have a ticketed fundraiser for the ASA Minority Fellows Program. And we will end with a bang; after my presidential speech, get ready to dance. We will have a reception with a band. I firmly believe that the Society that plays together, stays together...

See you in Atlanta!

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## Get Excited for SSS 2016! Information From Program Chairs

Exciting news! We are happy to announce that the final program will be ready for your review in early March. The program looks great! You'll see plenaries like *Rethinking Marriage: Race, Class and Public Policy*; *Gender Politics in Marriage*; and *Marriage Equality*. Some of the plenary speakers include Wendy Manning, Frank Furstenburg, ASA President Ruth Milkman, and economist Glenn Loury. In addition, we will have several author meets critics sessions and mini-conferences on marriage and public policy; teaching multiple publics; and more. Furthermore, we are proud to feature a special session on the Black Lives Matter movement. We think you'll agree that it's going to be an invigorating, intellectually engaging conference.

Please note that session presiders were generally selected from a list of participants indicating their willingness to preside (either via email or in the submission system). For sessions where there were no volunteers, session participants were assigned to serve as presiders for their sessions. If you were designated as your session's presider, this means that you should bring a laptop for use during the session, begin the session when it's time to do so, and let each panelist know when they are out of time to speak. It's a simple but efficient way to keep the program running smoothly!

### *APP for #SSS2016*

#SSS2016 App! We are thrilled that the SSS Annual Meeting program will be available via an interactive app for those who would like an alternative to a paper program—more details about the App coming very soon! If you prefer a paper program you will need to pre-register by March 1<sup>st</sup>.

### *Welcome Reception!*

Wednesday night will feature the Welcome Reception from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Catch up with old friends, meet the candidates for our upcoming election, mingle with other attendees, and officially kick off #SSS2016! A cash bar will be available and, if you are musically inclined, bring an instrument or your voice to join in the open mic/jam.

### *Meet the Candidates!*

We'll be offering two opportunities to meet the candidates running for SSS offices. The first will be at the opening reception on Wednesday evening from 7:0-8:00 and the second will be at the Student Mixer. There will be more details about the day, time and location of the student

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The preliminary program is available at  
<http://www.southernsociologicalsociety.org/annual.html>

## Information From Program Chairs

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mixer in follow-up communications. We encourage you to take both opportunities to meet the candidates and hear about their plans for SSS office!

### *Gender-Neutral Restrooms!*

We are pleased to announce that #SSS2016 will offer gender-neutral restrooms for meeting participants. These will be marked with appropriate signage. Many thanks to the Ritz-Carlton for working with the program team to make this possible.

### *Information About Meeting Room Technology*

All paper session rooms will be equipped with LCD projectors. Presenters and/or presiders will need to furnish laptops. PLEASE NOTE: the LCD projectors have VGA connections only. Those needing other connection options will need to bring their own adapters. If you have adapters you would like to donate, please bring them to the registration desk when you arrive at the meeting.

Adia Harvey Wingfield and Patricia Warren

## Calling all Graduate Programs in Sociology!

On Thursday night of the conference, from 5:15-6:30, three rooms will be available for Graduate Directors, Department Chairs, and Other Representatives to bring their information for prospective students and other interested parties. Easels, poster boards, and clips will be available for participating Graduate Programs. If you would like to participate, please send Executive Officer, David L. Brunσμα, an email ([brunsmad@vt.edu](mailto:brunsmad@vt.edu)) to reserve a space.

## Showcasing Your Book(s) at #SSS 2016: Meet the Authors and Combined Book Exhibit

As in previous years, we will again have two ways for you to showcase your book: 1) in a Meet the Authors moment during the conference, and 2) in the Combined Book Exhibit.

If you have published a book (or books) in the past several years (2013-2016) please contact Executive Officer, David L. Brunσμα ([brunsmad@vt.edu](mailto:brunsmad@vt.edu)), soon about your recent publications—he will be more than happy to work with you to have a presence at #SSS2016.

The Meet the Authors session will be on Thursday of the meeting, from 12:00-12:45 in the Registration Area (called the “Prefunction Area”). The Combined Book Exhibit allows members to peruse SSS member books throughout the conference period.

# Spring 2016 SSS Meetings

Marni Brown  
Chair, Local Arrangements

Greetings SSS participants! As we get closer and closer to the SSS meetings, I wanted to remind you of some of the wonderful events and accommodations organized by the Local Arrangements committee.

1. Childcare is being provided by Nannypoppinz (<http://www.nannypoppinz.com/>) This is the first time SSS is providing such services, and we hope that it helps members that have signed up and registered for such care that it will enable you to participate more easily in SSS activities.
2. We will also be offering delicious sweets from a local bakery (<http://www.highlandbakery.com/>) at the Minority Fundraiser.
3. Along with delicious appetizers and cocktails, we have a five-piece band playing after President Risman's address.
4. A local feminist bookstore (<http://www.charisbooksandmore.com/>) will be sponsoring our Author Meets Critic sessions (AMC).
5. Lastly, we will be providing detailed information on how to access two popular tours in downtown Atlanta.



**Atlanta  
BeltLine**

a.. Atlanta Belt Line (<http://beltline.org/>) If visiting the belt line interests you, we will have information on how to access the beltline from the hotel. It is a wonderful place to visit for a variety of reasons, particularly for the examination of gentrification and urban renewal.

- b. Center for Human and Civil Rights (<https://www.civilandhumanrights.org/>) If visiting this new center is of interest to you, we will provide detailed information on how to access the center.



6. We will also be providing a detailed dining guide; a plethora of delicious restaurants can be found around our hotel, including in two big malls with food courts.

## Welcome Reception and Open Mic/Jam (Bring your instruments!)

The SSS is having an open mic at the Welcome Reception hosted by Bill Danaher and Jason Eastman. There will be a sign up sheet at the reception. Signees will be called up in order of their place on the list. Bring your instruments, come sing a song, all are welcome!

## 2016 Meeting Registration

To renew/pay membership dues, go to your SSS portal at: <http://portal.southernsociologicalsociety.org>. A 2015-16 membership in the SSS runs July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2016, and includes a subscription to the SSS peer-reviewed journal, *Social Currents*

To register for #SSS2016, go to <http://www.southernsociologicalsociety.org/annual.html>. Those who PreRegistered by March 1, 2016, paid lower fees than those who waited to register after this date or OnSite.

With the addition of new technologies, including a state-of-the-art mobile APP, the SSS is moving away physical programs at the annual meeting as well as tote bags. The vast majority of members are opting out of physical programs and tote bags. This decision is good for the Society and the environment.

Please Note: *Members and conference attendees who did not PreRegister by March 1<sup>st</sup> will not be able to receive a physical program or a tote bag at the annual meeting.*

## 2016 SSS Hotel Information

### **SECOND Overflow Hotel: The Atlanta Marriott Buckhead**

At this time the Ritz Carlton **is sold out** as is the first overflow hotel, the Mandarin Oriental. Rooms sold out in less than a week at the first overflow hotel.

Rooms are available at \$189/night at the SECOND overflow hotel, the Atlanta Marriott Buckhead!

Watch your email for information about booking at the Atlanta Marriott Buckhead.

## ATTENTION FIRST-TIMERS:

**Are you attending the 2016 Southern Sociological Society meeting?**



If it is your first time—or if you just find academic meetings daunting or unfriendly—let **SWS- South** lend you a **SOUTHERN HAND!**

Sociologists for Women in Society–South organizes the annual Southern Hand Program to provide assistance to new SSS attendees. SWS-South members will act as mentors for those attending the SSS meeting who could use a hand, especially graduate students.

- Talk to your mentor before you leave for advice on which receptions to attend; what to wear to your presentation; navigating the sessions; and how to meet people who share your interests.
- Meet with your mentor after you arrive to ask questions about the program, or get explanations for conference lingo (What's a plenary?) and symbols (Just what *do* those ribbons mean?).
- Or just arrange to meet your mentor for a meal or coffee to see a friendly face during the hustle and bustle of the busy meeting.

**Your Southern Hand Program mentor will reach out and help you make the most of your SSS meeting!**

To participate in the Southern Hand Program contact Shannon K. Carter at [skcarter@ucf.edu](mailto:skcarter@ucf.edu) by April 11th.



# Candidates for 2018-2019 SSS Officer Elections Announced!

The following individuals will appear on the ballot in early May for the SSS 2016 election. SSS members will get a chance to meet with the nominees from 7-8 p.m. during the Welcoming Party on the opening night (April 13) of the SSS conference in Atlanta.

## President

Toni Calasanti (Virginia Tech)

George Wilson (University of Miami)

## Vice President

Anthony Peguero (Virginia Tech)

Earl Wright (University of Cincinnati)

## Executive Committee

Marni Brown (Georgia Gwinnet College)

Barbara Combs (Clark Atlanta University)

Nicholas Guittar (Valdosta State University)

Julie Wiest (West Chester University)

## Publications Committee

Amanda Anthony (University of Central Florida)

Patti Giuffre (Texas State University)

Susan Hinze (Case Western Reserve University)

Toby Parcel (North Carolina State University)

Linda Renzulli (University of Georgia)

The Nominations Committee consists of Steve McDonald (Chair), Bette Dickerson, Sinikka Elliott, Diane Everett, Brandon Jackson, Kecia Johnson, John Shefner, Tom Shriver, Will Tyson, and Angela Wadsworth.

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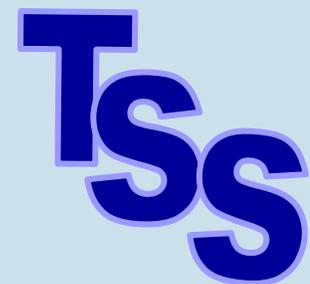
## James Maples Named New Editor of *The Southern Sociologist*

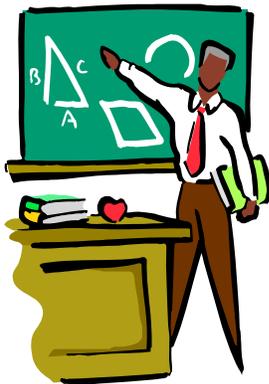
I am pleased to announce that James Maples, Assistant Professor at Eastern Kentucky University, has been selected as the next editor of *The Southern Sociologist* by the Publication Committee with the approval of the Executive Committee. James has long contributed to the activities of the Southern Sociological Society. For the past two years he has edited “The Teaching Corner,” a regular feature of *TSS*. He also served the Society as Webmaster and Assistant to the Secretary-Treasurer, as well as being a member of several Society committees (executive, small colleges, publications, and elections). James has other publication experience from his work as an associate editor of the *Kentucky Journal of Undergraduate Scholarship* and as a reviewer for several academic journals.

I began my tenure as editor of *The Southern Sociologist* with the Fall 2002 edition, the first edition published electronically. I have enjoyed editing the newsletter and appreciate the help and support that so many have offered to me over the past fourteen years, especially my wife, Barb Johnson who so often waited patiently while I fixed just one more thing. I also want to thank all of the Presidents who have served during this time period and appreciate their patience when I have sent them reminders that their Presidential Columns were due (or overdue). Furthermore, Executive Officer David Brunsma and his assistant Slade Lellock have been invaluable as were their predecessors Martin Levin, Stephanie Bohon, and James Maples. Finally, I want to thank all of the members of the Society for your kind words over the years. Editing *The Southern Sociologist* has been a pleasure for me, and I look forward to seeing the improvements that James Maples makes to this newsletter. Please send material for future editions to James at [James.Maples@eku.edu](mailto:James.Maples@eku.edu).

Bob Freymeyer  
Editor, *The Southern Sociologist*

Send your comments, suggestions,  
or materials for *The Southern Sociologist* to the (new) editor James  
Maples at [James.Maples@eku.edu](mailto:James.Maples@eku.edu).

The logo for The Southern Sociological Society (TSS) consists of the letters 'T', 'S', and 'S' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The 'T' is positioned above the first 'S', and the second 'S' is positioned to the right of the first 'S', creating a stylized 'TSS' monogram.



# The Teaching Corner



James N. Maples, Editor  
Eastern Kentucky University  
[james.maples@eku.edu](mailto:james.maples@eku.edu)

Braylon Gillespie, Graduate Student Editor  
University of Kentucky  
[braylon.gillespie@uky.edu](mailto:braylon.gillespie@uky.edu)

## Committee on Sociology in Community and Small Colleges

Kimberly Lancaster (Committee Chair), Coastal Carolina Community College

Susan Ambler, Maryville College

Kris De Welde, Florida Gulf Coast University

Jason Eastman, Coastal Carolina University

DeAnna Gore, University of South Carolina Aiken

Jake Milne, Longwood University

Letter from Committee Chair, Kimberley Lancaster ([LancasterK@CoastalCarolina.edu](mailto:LancasterK@CoastalCarolina.edu)):

The 2016 meetings in Atlanta are approaching quickly, and the Committee on Sociology in Community and Small Colleges (CSCSC) is excited to be participating in some great sessions. Our committee is co-sponsoring the *Mini-Conference: Teaching Multiple Publics* as well as sponsoring and co-sponsoring several panels and workshops (one related to the conference theme and the remainder relating to teaching and the job market) that we believe should spark your interest. In addition to our sessions, we hope that you will join us for lunch on Thursday afternoon (4/14). Plan to meet us near the check-in desk at the Ritz-Carlton no later than 11:55 a.m. and we will take about a 5 minute walk as a group to The Tavern at Phipps. This will be a great time to get to socialize with one another while enjoying a delicious lunch.

The following is a brief list of our sponsored and co-sponsored events (by day/time)

### Thursday, April 14, 2016

#### 11:55 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

- Lunch Meet and Greet – All SSS attendees are encouraged to meet us in the lobby of the Ritz-Carlton for a brief walk to The Tavern at Phipps. We will leave the hotel at 11:55 a.m.

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and return by 2:00 p.m. If you happen to miss us, you can still join us; the address is 3500 Peachtree Road.

**2:15 – 3:30 p.m.**

- Undergraduate Mentoring: Formal and Informal Mentoring of Sociology Students (Co-Sponsored by Sociologists for Women in Society-South and Committee on Sociology in Community and Small Colleges) Panel

**Friday, April 15, 2016**

**12:45 – 2:00 p.m.**

- So You Want to Teach? What to Expect at a Teaching Focused Institution (Sponsored by the Committee on Sociology in Community and Small College) Panel

**Saturday, April 16, 2016**

**9:00 – 10:15 a.m.**

- Partners in Academia (Sponsored by the Committee on Sociology in Community and Small Colleges) Panel
- Getting Them Ready for the Trenches: Preparing Graduate Students to Teach Sociology (Co-sponsored by Norton and the Committee on Sociology in Community and Small Colleges) Presidential Plenary Presider

**10:30 – 11:45 a.m.**

- Using Games to Teach Sociology (Sponsored by the Committee on Sociology in Community and Small Colleges) Panel
- Research and Teaching About Relationship Trauma: A “Write Where It Hurts” Panel (Sponsored by the Committee on Sociology in Community and Small Colleges) Panel

**12:45 – 2:00 p.m.**

- Using TRAILS as a Teaching Resource (Sponsored by the Committee on Sociology in Community and Small PLAZA 2 Colleges) Workshop

**2:15 – 3:30 p.m.**

- Teaching to Diverse Student Population (Sponsored by the Committee for Sociology in Community and Small Colleges) Panel

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# The Teaching Corner

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## Teaching Note Katherine Gerlaugh

### *“This class will be boring and hard”: Peaking Student Interest in Social Research Methods*

The dreaded methodology course is often the last course sociology majors will take to fulfill the requirements for graduation. Every semester I teach this course, students file in on the first day with long faces, and a collective air fills the room as if they are all saying in unison, “Let’s get this over with!” Social Research Methods is notoriously “boring” and “hard” (both words commonly used by students to describe this course) whether the stigma is justified or not, and I have yet to have a student who did not express these sentiments as part of his/her initial expectations for the course.

Often, instructors will argue that it is not their job to entertain students or make the subject matter accessible and relatable to students and their real world experiences. Although I agree that not all of the details of social scientific methodology are going to be riveting to all students, I consider sparking at least most students’ interest in the subject as a whole an important indicator of whether I have done my job well. Below, I share some tips for keeping students engaged throughout a semester of Social Research Methods based on my own reflections and observations in the classroom.

I have found that keeping the subject matter fairly broad is best. Most students in the course have little to no experience with data collection or the theories behind empirical methods of inquiry, and they should not be expected to understand every detail of all methods in just 16 weeks. For example, when covering quantitative data analysis, I do not make students learn statistical equations from the textbook, but point out that a social statistics course will cover that area of study. If I try to cover too much too quickly, students become overwhelmed by the amount of information and consequently underwhelmed by the subject as a whole. As I point out to my undergraduate students, each 30-page chapter of the text is a basis for its own *graduate* level course!

To orient students to the course on the first day of class, I go all the way back to the beginning of introductory sociology. We read an excerpt from C. Wright Mills’ *The Sociological Imagination*, Chapter 1 “The Promise of Sociology” and discuss the relationships between demographic characteristics and social institutions. This is a jumping off point for a discussion about research topics for the end of term project. Furthermore, I cannot assume that all students understand the sociological imagination or how to define or provide examples of demographic characteristics and social institutions. Thus, starting the first day back at the very beginning provides an opportunity to make sure everyone is at the same starting point.

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# The Teaching Corner

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Linking research to theory is arguably one of the most difficult tasks sociologists face. Therefore, early in the semester, I include a lecture on the three predominant theoretical perspectives and refer back to theory when examining real world examples of research projects and their findings. In addition to forging the link between the empirical and the theoretical, I find that students in this course benefit from learning about experiments, survey

research, and field research that specifically teach them findings about race, gender, and class issues. For many students, this class provides the last formal opportunity within academia to find out what sociologists know about social inequality, as well as how they know it.

Students stay actively engaged during lectures when they are asked to interpret research data presented in the form of graphs and charts. This engagement can be done in several steps. They describe the data, explain what they mean, and then link the data to broader theoretical and methodological concepts learned earlier in the semester. The last step is often particularly engaging as students discuss and debate what conclusions can be drawn from the data.

For their end of term project, I have students develop a research proposal. I give plenty of opportunity during classes to discuss and work on elements of the proposal addressed during the day's lecture/discussion. For example, a discussion of ontological and epistemological assumptions of the main social science methodologies provides an opportunity for students to think about the assumptions of their own project in order to better state the links between theory and research. To aid the process, students write four reflection papers throughout the term, three of which deal specifically with issues they need to confront for the final proposal. When students take the opportunity to do a good job on these reflections, they have a much easier time completing the proposal and dealing with all of the issues they need to address. A rubric further aids the process by providing a checklist of the necessary elements of the paper for students, as well as a clear understanding of the expectations for successful completion of the assignment

Students also write an assessment of a popular documentary chosen from a list of 20 or so films. By providing guidelines for the assessment that help them focus on the research strategies and ethical concerns within the film, students become more attuned to recognizing the purposes and uses (and at times abuses) of research in practice. Moreover, many students are not used to watching documentaries on their own, but later express gratitude for being exposed to these kinds of films, going on to watch others and sharing them with friends and family.

Finally, while teaching the subject matter in and of itself is important to the perpetuation and development of the field of sociology, recognizing the likely trajectory of most of the students is useful as is teaching in a way that makes sense for their practical purposes. Will having some knowledge of writing a literature review or a grant proposal help them down the line? Possessing this knowledge very well could. Some will go on to graduate programs where this knowl-

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# The Teaching Corner

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edge will not be assumed, and so they may be slightly ahead of the curve. Others may go to work for non-profits or businesses in which knowing how to bring in funding is a sought after ability. When students feel that their instructor *cares* about how what they teach relates to students' lives, students are more eager to participate and absorb the information presented.

## Faculty Spotlight

Katherine Gerlaugh is a Ph.D. Candidate at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

## 2016 Carolina Undergraduate Social Science Symposium

The 2016 Carolina Undergraduate Social Science Symposium will be held at Presbyterian College, Clinton, South Carolina. The Symposium provides undergraduate students with the opportunity to present their research at a professional meeting. Presentations in any area of Social Science are welcome. The conference will kick off with a keynote address by Aaron Johnson, an Associate Professor at Augusta University, at 7 p.m., Thursday, April 21. Students whose papers are accepted will give a 10-12 minute presentation of their research on Friday, April 22.

All presenters will receive *Certificates of Participation*. The two best papers and two best posters will receive a *Certificate for Excellence in Undergraduate Research* and a cash prize.

Interested students should email Carla Alphonso ([calphons@presby.edu](mailto:calphons@presby.edu)) the following items with the term "CUSSS" in the subject line:

1. Abstract (approximate 200 words) that reflects the general content of the paper or poster, author's name, and institutional affiliation by **Thursday, March 31, 2016**.
2. Specify the presentation format: paper session or poster session.
3. Specify the equipment that is desired for the presentation.
4. To participate in the paper competition, completed papers must be submitted electronically by **Friday, April 8, 2016**, to Carla Alphonso ([calphons@presby.edu](mailto:calphons@presby.edu)).
5. A registration fee of \$15.00 which includes lunch will be required for all participants (including accompanying professors).

# Opportunities

Association for Humanist Sociology  
2016 Annual Meetings  
Elevating Humanity: Pathways to Progressivism  
Denver, Colorado  
November 2-6, 2016

## **Conference Theme and Call for Participation**

A more progressive society: what would it look like and how do we get there from here? What are the obstacles and impediments and how can they be overcome? As there are often many paths to the top of a mountain, so too are there many ways to achieve a more humanistic world. However, unlike hikers preparing to ascend a Colorado peak, we cannot depend on a trail map to rise above the rugged and contested terrain of inequality and injustice. Instead, we must collaborate, share our knowledge and experiences, and inspire each other to learn and do more.

In support of this effort, the Association of Humanist Sociology (AHS) invites you to organize a session or submit an abstract for a paper presentation. We welcome proposals that enhance understanding of social issues and problems, but with focus or emphasis upon alternative strategies, movements, organizations, and collective efforts that strive to bring about humanistic solutions and progressive change.

The Denver area offers not only breath-taking views of the Rocky Mountains, but is an ideal location in which to gather and confront pressing and timely social issues. Many of these issues pose serious problems for Denver and the state of Colorado as well as all of humanity. These include income and wealth polarization, environmental crises, racism, xenophobia, heterosexism, anti-immigrant sentiment, and a biased criminal justice system, to name merely a few.

However, we should be encouraged by the fact that Denver has received much attention in recent years, less for its problems, and more for its ability and willingness to confront and solve them, even amidst significant opposition. Politically active and organized residents in Denver and across the state of Colorado have achieved victories in political battles that would have seemed unlikely or even impossible to win, as evidenced, for example, by the state's legalization of medical and recreational marijuana.

This energy has not been confined to Colorado. For instance, growth and momentum has recently occurred in the Black Lives Matter, Women's Rights, and Gay Rights Movements in the United States. Globally, organizations and activists are gaining ground solving a wide range of problems and nations are uniting to address increasingly urgent threats to our planet, such as climate change and nuclear arms proliferation.

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# OPPORTUNITIES

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Please join us in the “Mile High City” as we discuss successes and challenges and as we aspire to “blaze new trails” leading to peace, justice, equality, and greater life chances for all.

## **Paper and Presentation Formats**

The Association for Humanist Sociology is a community of sociologists, educators, scholars, and activists who share a commitment to using sociology to promote peace, equality, and social justice. We seek papers about any social issue that impedes progress toward a more peaceful and socially just world. However, we especially encourage the presentation of papers that describe, explain, or propose solutions to problems. Examples of topics include, but need not be limited to, descriptions of progress made by global political movements, examples of successful action within states or communities, alternative forms or models of social/economic/cultural organization, and descriptions of service learning or other transformative pedagogies used in teaching and learning.

We encourage the following types of submissions for sessions and presentations:

- Paper presentations (15-20 minute presentations, 3-4 speakers per session)
- Critical dialogues (5-8 minute presentations, 4-8 panelists per session)
- Panel sessions and Author-Meets-Critics sessions (3-4 panelists per session)
- Workshops and Film Screenings
- Poster presentations

Please visit the Association for Humanist Sociology Website ([www.humanist-sociology.org](http://www.humanist-sociology.org)) to propose sessions and complete abstracts for papers or sessions related to the conference theme or to the AHS mission of equality and social justice.

## **Advertising in the Conference Program**

If you wish to advertise your new book, an upcoming conference, or your graduate program in the 2016 conference program, please contact [AHSDenver2016@gmail.com](mailto:AHSDenver2016@gmail.com). Half-page ads are \$75.00 and full-page ads, \$150.00 (in black and white).

## **Conference Location**

The Doubletree by Hilton Hotel and the Denver Tech Center area boasts outstanding views of the front range of the Rocky Mountains, including Pike’s Peak (south), Mount Evans (west) and Long’s Peak (north). In proximity to the hotel are the “Village Shops at Landmark,” with several nightclubs, restaurants, movie theatres, and other shopping and entertainment attractions.

Light rail transportation provides access from the hotel to many interesting stops, including Union Station in the lower downtown Denver area. From Union Station, walk or use free bus service to explore the 16<sup>th</sup> Street (pedestrian) Mall area, with its countless stores, restaurants, coffee houses, brewpubs, museums, and many other attractions. A new light rail line to and from the hotel and Denver International Airport is scheduled for completion in time to be used by conference attendees.

To learn more about Humanist Sociology, read our journal, *Humanity and Society* <http://has.sagepub.com>.

# Member News

## ConditionallyAccepted.com Now at Inside Higher Ed

The blog, ConditionallyAccepted.com, has moved to Inside Higher Ed <https://www.insidehighered.com/users/conditionally-accepted>. It is now a biweekly career advice column focusing on the experiences and needs of marginalized scholars in academe. Eric Anthony Grollman, an Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of Richmond, edits this blog.

## Changes to the SSS Constitution and Bylaws Approved

Members of the Southern Sociological Society recently voted on three changes to the SSS Constitution and Bylaws. According to the SSS Constitution, the Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the eligible voters, and the Constitution may be changed by a vote by three-quarters majority. All votes reported below were confirmed by three members of the Election Committee.

On the issue of eliminating the Associate Member category and creating an Unemployed/Contingent member category, the membership approved this change.

On the issue of changing the language in the Constitution to reflect the three-year terms of members of the Publication Committee, with two members rotating off each year, the membership voted to approve.

On the issue of including the Executive Officer, editors of *Social Currents*, the editor of *The Southern Sociologist* and the Webmaster as a non-voting ex-officio members of the Publications Committee, the membership voted to approve.

If you have any questions about these changes, please contact Stephanie Bohon at [sbohon@utk.edu](mailto:sbohon@utk.edu) or the SSS Executive Officer, Dr. David Brunisma ([brunsmad@vt.edu](mailto:brunsmad@vt.edu)).

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# Demographic Transitions

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## Gerhard Emmanuel Lenski, Jr.

1924-2015

Gerhard Lenski—"Gerry" (pronounced Gary) to his friends—died peacefully at his home in Edmonds, Washington, on December 7.

Born and raised in Washington, DC, Gerry came from a scholarly family with Polish (Prussian at the time) and German roots. His father, a Lutheran pastor, held a PhD in history and his grandfather was a distinguished New Testament scholar. His family was politically liberal—in those New Deal days his father was an admirer of the socialist Norman Thomas—and he was always concerned with social justice and racial reconciliation. An only child, he was an avid reader and freely roamed the city. (A favorite family story tells of his feeding chewing gum to the monkeys at the zoo. After running away when they heard a keeper approaching, he and his accomplice snuck back on a busy weekend and found that the monkeys had been shaved.)

Gerry entered Yale in 1941 as a scholarship student, working in a dining hall, but left in 1943 to enlist in the Army Air Corps. He served as a cryptographer at a base in England, and earned the rank of sergeant. He returned to Yale on the GI Bill, changed his major from economics to sociology, received his B.A. in 1947, and entered Yale's graduate program. His dissertation, written under the guidance of A. B. Hollingshead, dealt with social class in a small textile town.

While a graduate student, Gerry married Jean Cappelmann, whose family had attended his father's church in Washington. (He and Jean would have four children, and Jean later published two volumes of her poetry.) In 1950, Gerry went to the University of Michigan, where he became a full professor in 1963. The Detroit Area Study provided the data for his first book, *The Religious Factor: A Sociological Study of the Impact of Religion on Politics, Economics, and Family Life* (1961). His experiences with large introductory courses sparked a lifelong interest in the teaching of sociology, and his dissatisfaction with existing textbooks led him eventually to write his own.

In 1963 Gerry left Michigan for the University of North Carolina, part of an exodus that included Hubert Blalock and Amos Hawley. At Chapel Hill he published *Power and Privilege: A Theory of Social Stratification* (1966) and *Human Societies: An Introduction to Macrosociology* (1970). His three books made major contributions to three fields. *The Religious Factor* documented religion's continuing importance in American family life, politics, and economics; *Power and Privilege* offered a theory of social class and inequality, and introduced the concepts of status crystallization and status inconsistency; and *Human Societies* outlined an ecological theory of societal evolution and applied it cross-nationally.

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Craig Calhoun has pointed out that, although Gerry wrote innumerable articles in professional journals, his first major book was a trade publication and the next two were textbooks. Gerry believed that sociology has important things to say, and that they should be said to as wide an audience as possible. (His works have been translated into at least a half-dozen languages.)

Gerry chaired Chapel Hill's sociology department in the late '60s and early '70s, a time of campus unrest that included an attempt to burn down the building housing the sociology department. Gerry proved adroit at dealing with unruly students and junior faculty, most of whom understood that he shared their concerns. He worked for the election of Howard Lee—the first black mayor of a white-majority city in the South—and was active in opposition to the Vietnam War. He also handled the press well: of a grad student conspicuous in the protests, Gerry said only that he was “a good citizen.” As a chaired professor, he continued to teach sections of the introductory course and to think and write about pedagogy, but increasing deafness and Jean's serious health issues led him to stop teaching in 1986. He retired altogether in 1992.

Jean died in 1994. Two years later Gerry married Ann Blalock, an evaluation researcher and editor, widow of his friend and colleague “Tad” Blalock, and eventually he moved to her house on the shore of Puget Sound, where he enjoyed exploring the Pacific Northwest and became an enthusiastic fan of the Seahawks and Mariners. He continued to update *Human Societies* (latterly with Patrick Nolan) and in 2005 published *Ecological-Evolutionary Theory: Principles and Applications*, a comprehensive presentation of his theory, showing how it can be used to understand developments from the rise of ancient Israel to the failure of Communism in the Soviet Union. (Although he was not religiously observant, at least not after his parents' deaths, his early grounding in Protestant thought may have had something to do with his contention that “really existing socialist societies” were based on an unrealistically optimistic view of human nature.)

Gerry's many honors included a Guggenheim Fellowship, election to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the presidency of the Southern Sociological Society and the vice-presidency of the ASA, and the ASA's Career of Distinguished Scholarship Award. In 2004 a special edition of *Sociological Theory*, edited by Bernice McNair Barnett, was devoted to his work. (A revised edition should soon be published.)

Gerry will be remembered as a formidable scholar. Those who knew him will also remember a wise, tolerant, and good-humored friend.

John Shelton Reed,  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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## THE SOUTHERN SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIETY

<http://www.southernsociologicalsociety.org/>

The Southern Sociological Society (SSS) is a non-profit organization that seeks to promote the development of sociology as a profession and scientific discipline by the maintenance of high academic professional and ethical standards and by encouraging:

- (a) effective teaching of sociology;
- (b) valid and reliable methods of research in the study of human society;
- (c) diffusion of sociological knowledge and its application to societal problems;
- (d) cooperation with related disciplines and groups;
- (e) recruitment and training of sociologists; and
- (f) development of sociology programs in educational and other agencies.

Members receive online access to *The Southern Sociologist* and coming soon will have access to *Social Currents: The Official Journal of the Southern Sociological Society*. An annual meeting is held in the spring, usually mid-April. Membership is open to any person who can assist in promoting the objectives of

the society. Persons wishing to join SSS may send dues directly to the Executive Officer. Please include your first middle and last name, address, phone number, where employed, and gender. For statistical purposes, we also ask you to include your race and/or ethnic group and three areas of specialty.

The membership year is July 1 through June 30. Membership classes and annual dues are:

Sustaining.....	120.00
Regular .....	60.00
Emeritus.....	no cost
Student .....	25.00
Department.....	varied depending upon institution type

Dues, subscriptions, membership inquiries, and address changes should be addressed to:

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 Southern Sociological Society  
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 To pay online go to

<https://www.cart.southernsociologicalsociety.org/>

### THE SOUTHERN SOCIOLOGIST

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*The Southern Sociologist (TSS)* is the official publication of the Southern Sociological Society. It is typically published electronically four times a year in the months of May, September, January, and March. The purpose of *TSS* is to report the news, announcements, and information of interest to the profession and to serve as a medium of communication for the SSS membership on issues affecting the profession.

**INFORMATION WANTED. . .CONTRIBUTE TO TSS** To bring you the news, I need your news! Please send any news of your department and/or colleagues for possible publication in *TSS*. Articles pertaining to the state of the profession or the discipline are also welcome. To appear in the next issue, submissions must be received by the deadline below and should be sent to the new editor James Maples ([James.Maples@eku.edu](mailto:James.Maples@eku.edu)).

In addition to news and other information, I am also interested in any thoughts you may wish to suggest regarding the format and/or content of *TSS*.

**TSS**  
 The editor reserves the right to publish or not to publish any submission. Also, there may be times when submissions need to be edited. This will be done where appropriate, but in no case will the substance of any submission be changed without the prior consent of the author.

**Next Issue Deadline: May 1, 2016**