

To: Board of Directors, The Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP)

From: Dr. Ruth Thompson-Miller

Re: 2022 Joseph B. Gittler Award Committee Report

July 8, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

This is a summary of activities for the 2022 Joseph B. Gittler Award Committee. This award was established in 2007 through a bequest by Joseph B. Gittler in recognition of a SSSP member for significant scholarly achievements on the ethical resolution of social problems. Nominations were due in April 2022. The committee received nominations for one individual, Dr. Rodney Coates. “According to the guidelines, all nominees must have been an active member of the Society for the Study of Social Problems for at least three years prior to receiving the award.” The nominee met this criterion.

Dr. Coates was nominated by Dr. Corey Dolgon, with supporting letters from Christopher Miller, Senior Director of Education and Community Engagement, Michelle E. Novak, Grants Manager Urban League of Greater Southwestern Ohio, and Dr. Celeste R. Didlick-Davis, President of NAACP in Middletown, Ohio were able to provide supporting letters, which is consistent with the nomination process. These were then circulated to the committee members for consideration alongside the nomination materials for Dr. Coates and the nomination letter from Dr. Dolgon.

The committee found the candidate to be an exceptional scholar and active in public sociology, doing important and timely work to bring ethical solutions to pressing social problems to which they have been committed scholar-activists. The committee unanimously selected Dr. Coates, in part, due to the longevity of his career and his ongoing, outstanding contributions to sociology, to SSSP, to scholar activism, and to the ethical resolution of social issues. We noted his commitment and dedication to the organization and scholar activism, and especially his constant presence in the communities—both local and now virtual—offering his time, ideas and support of education and social justice. The workshops Dr. Coates provides on microaggressions in local schools, churches, and community organizations has been invaluable for marginalized communities. All of these things, plus his many publications and academic honors, his significant mentoring work with undergraduate and graduate students, junior colleagues, and his mentorship to scholars across the country is commendable. Dr. Coates commitment to the Miami Cincinnati Scholars program which provides full scholarships to underrepresented students going into STEM fields and his support of student athletes is central to their success. In addition, his efforts to bring students, faculty, and independent scholars to SSSP’s doors and other scholarly organizations—including his ABS listserv, where Dr. Coates offers scholars his social networks as if they were family leads us to the conclusion that he has all the attributes that makes him an overwhelming choice for the 2022 award.

I would like to thank the members of the committee for their service:

Max Besbris University of Wisconsin-Madison

Giovani Burgos Adelphi University

Dana M. Greene University of North Carolina

Sincerely,
Ruth Thompson-Miller
Vassar College
Chair, 2022 Joseph B. Gittler Award Committee