



SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Community Research and Development Division
Summer 2017 Newsletter

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Message from the Chair

By Jess Lucero, Utah State University

Dear Community Research and Development Colleagues,

I am looking forward to connecting with you at this year's meeting in Montreal. This year's theme, "Narratives in the World of Social Problems: Power, Resistance, Transformation," is incredibly timely and will create important dialogue within the division in our themed sessions that focus on urban and rural narratives of belonging, redevelopment, gentrification, resistance, and innovative participatory action research methods. Take a look at page 4 in the newsletter for a full listing of our division-sponsored sessions.

I have thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to serve as your Division Chair over the past 2 years. I am thrilled to welcome Dr. Meghan Rich as our incoming Division Chair – she brings a long commitment to our division, the society, and the pursuit of social justice through community-engaged scholarship. Please find time to attend our Division Business meeting where we will be discussing a proposal to host a community-based research workshop in 2018 among other business items. In addition, I hope you can attend the Award's Ceremony where we will be honoring our student paper award winner, Abby Templer.

Our Spring Newsletter contains important information thanks to our dedicated newsletter editor, Gabriela Palomino. Gaby has compiled a list of all of our Division sessions at this year's meeting, division member spotlights, and the usual information about member accomplishments and job opportunities.

I look forward to discussing and celebrating the important community-engaged work you all have been committed to in the last year and hearing about your activist-scholar efforts!

Warm Regards,

Jessica Lucero
Assistant Professor of Social Work
Department of Sociology, Social Work, and Anthropology
Utah State University



Message from the Incoming Chair

By Meghan Ashlin Rich, University of Scranton

Hello Division of Community Research and Development members!

I am delighted to be elected Chair of the Division of Community Research and Development, which has served as a welcoming home for me since attending my first SSSP Annual Meeting. To introduce myself: this fall I am beginning my 11th year at the University of Scranton, where I am Associate Professor of Sociology and Women's Studies. While the U of Scranton is one of 28 Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States, I have been wholly educated by public schools, attending University of Maryland for undergraduate school and University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and University of Delaware for graduate studies. At my current university, I am active in the Sociology/Criminal Justice department, Women's Studies program, and Community-based Learning Board. I also teach undergraduate courses on social stratification, urban sociology, race and ethnic relations, and sociological theory.



My research focuses on race, class, and urban social change, as well as arts and culture-based strategies to revitalize neighborhoods. I am currently working on a manuscript investigating strategies that artists and other marginalized groups use to maintain their presence in gentrifying neighborhoods. Also, this summer and fall I will be collecting survey data with a group of university students in a Scranton neighborhood. This research seeks to understand inter-ethnic relations and group social capital within a rapidly changing immigrant enclave.

The Division of Community Research and Development (CRD) has given me the opportunity to organize, preside over, and present my research for CRD-sponsored annual conference sessions and serve as chair of the CRD Graduate Student Paper Competition Committee. I have also served as a member of the SSSP Racial and Ethnic Minority Graduate Student Racial/Ethnic Minority Graduate Scholarship Committee. Beyond my work with SSSP, I am a long-standing member of the Eastern Sociological Society Committee on the Status of Women, and have organized conference sessions on community-based learning and research, as well as research paper, professional development, and teaching sessions related to gender, race, and class-based inequality in academia and society.

Focus on social justice in communities is an integral part of my vision for the future of CRD. Now, more than ever, it is important that our research on communities not only reveals the complexity of lived experiences within urban and rural regions, but works to ameliorate social problems and place-based inequality. Collaborations between CRD and other SSSP divisions can help accomplish this goal, as the work done by our division members crosses thematic boundaries. I hope to continue making this division a welcoming home for those who do social science research in and on communities.

On a personal note, I'm a longtime resident of Baltimore City and live there with my daughter, husband, and three cats. I have previously lived in the Washington, DC area, Chicago, Milwaukee, and Scranton, but always find myself coming back to "Charm City."

I look forward to seeing you in Montréal!

2017 Annual Meeting Program Theme

By Donileen R. Loseke, University of South Florida

Our globalized, cyber-mediated world characterized by extraordinary social, political, economic, and moral fragmentation raises a variety of questions about social problems, including: How do people who experience the consequences of social problems understand the causes of their misery? How do people not suffering understand the experiences of those who do? How do activists convince others to work toward social change? The answer to a variety of such questions is the same: Narratives, or what simply are called “stories” in daily life. Social problem narratives create meaning from the buzzing confusion of practical experience, they convey complex experiences to others, they motivate, they shape public opinion and social action.



Whether told as stories about unique people facing specific troubles or about types of people—the abused child, the terrorist, the welfare mother—in types of situations, social problem narratives are pervasive in daily life. Individuals tell stories to make sense of their troubling experiences, politicians tell stories to sell themselves and their policies; teachers, preachers and parents use stories to convey moral lessons; courts work through the telling and evaluating of stories. Narratives about social problems are pervasive because they are persuasive. Unlike statistics or research, stories can appeal to minds and to hearts: The story of the “Migrant Mother” told through the photographs of depression-era photographer, Dorothea Lange, for example, remains to this day a compelling testimony of the human tragedy created by economic collapse. Regardless of the extent to which images in a story match indicators of empirical reality, social problem narratives can be personally, socially, and politically consequential. These narratives are about power: Those told by people in privileged positions are assumed to be believable and important, while those told by others are routinely challenged, if not completely silenced; stories whose plots, characters, and morals reflect the status quo are more likely to be positively evaluated than those challenging entrenched power and privilege. Stories become material power when they shape public opinion and social policy. Yet social actors most certainly are not cultural robots who simply accept whatever images of them circulate in the social world. On the contrary: Narratives can be a site of resistance as individuals and groups challenge the truth of those offering ideological support for oppression. Resistance, in turn, can lead to authoring and promoting new stories that foster equality and thus are transformative.

In order to understand public reactions toward social problems and, in order to do something about these conditions causing so much human misery, we need to know much more about the work of social problem narratives. In a world of countless competing stories, we need to know how some—and only some—stories achieve widespread cognitive and emotional appeal and go on to influence public opinion and social policy; how different stories appeal to people in different social positions. We need to know how stories promoting particular images of social problems reflect and challenge and/or perpetuate existing inequalities and structures of power, and how stories encourage or discourage social change. We need to more fully understand how story contents and meanings change as they circulate through particular societies and throughout the globe.

The power and workings of social problems narratives will be the focus of our conversations at the 2017 meetings of the Society for the Study of Social Problems to be held in the fascinating, beautiful, bi-lingual, multi-cultural city of Montreal. I look forward to seeing you there.

Bon voyage!

CRD Sessions at 2017 SSSP Annual Conference

Session #	Session Title	Sponsor(s)	Organizer(s)
1	Suburbs in Society	Community Research and Development	Date: Friday, August 11, 2017 Time: 10:30AM-12:10PM
2	Urban Redevelopment, Gentrification, and Resistance-THEMATIC	Community Research and Development	Date: Saturday August 12, 2017 Time: 2:30PM-4:10PM
3	PAPERS IN THE ROUND: Communities and Neighborhoods in Poverty	Community Research and Development	Date: Friday, August 11, 2017 Time: 2:30PM-4:10PM
4	Urban and Rural Narratives of Belonging-THEMATIC	Community Research and Development & Conflict, Social Action, and Change	Date: Saturday August 12, 2017 Time: 12:30PM-2:10PM
5	Non-Academic Jobs and How To Get Them	Community Research and Development & Disability & Drinking and Drugs	Date: Sunday, August 13, 2017 Time: 10:30AM-12:10PM
6	Education and the Significance of Place: Urban, Suburban, and Rural Contexts	Community Research and Development & Educational Problems	Date: Sunday, August 13, 2017 Time: 2:30PM-4:10PM
7	Community Development and Local Food Systems	Community Research and Development & Environment and Technology	Date: Saturday August 12, 2017 Time: 10:30AM-12:10PM
8	Research Challenges and Dilemmas in Community-Based Participatory Research	Community Research and Development & Health, Health Policy, and Health Services	Date: Saturday August 12, 2017 Time: 8:30AM-10:10AM
9	Policy, Action, and Research in Housing and Homelessness	Community Research and Development & Poverty, Class, and Inequality & Sociology and Social Welfare	Date: Sunday, August 13, 2017 Time: 12:30PM-2:10PM
10	Using Photos and other Visual Media in Community Research and Action-THEMATIC	Community Research and Development & Youth, Aging, and the Life Course	Date: Friday, August 11, 2017 Time: 4:30PM-6:10PM

Summer 2017 Division Member Spotlight

Can you tell us a bit about yourself and what brought you to your graduate studies?

I am a PhD candidate in the Department of Sociology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst and a Visiting Assistant Professor of Sociology at Lycoming College in Williamsport, PA.

I view teaching and research as a way of addressing social justice. Graduate work allowed me to delve deeper into the intersectional nature of inequalities. It also provided the opportunity to introduce undergraduate students to the sociological imagination as a tool for understanding and engaging the world around them.



What is the focus of your current research?

My dissertation studies the creative economy from the perspective of feminist political economy. I trace the connections and disconnections between artistic economic activity, creativity-based economic development, and gentrification. Specifically, I explore the economic practices and values of artists and artisans in a rural county in western Massachusetts where a creativity-based development model is being introduced. The data were collected as part of a participatory action research project in which artists and artisans were hired from the region to conduct interviews about the economic lives of their peers. This project was funded by a Creative Economy Grant of \$32,200 from the President of the University of Massachusetts.

My research makes intellectual contributions to two sociological literatures. First, I contribute to the sociology of cultural production by illustrating how the non-market values of artists and artisans, which give rise to heterogeneous economic practices, are largely ignored within widely used entrepreneurial initiatives to support the arts. Within the already precarious situations of professional artists, I also find that these conventional initiatives intensify economic vulnerability for women artists, artists of color, and artists from working class backgrounds. Second, my research deepens understandings of community-based research methods. In particular, I extend the discussion of peer interviewing beyond how interviews are conducted to developing new ways to analyze the data produced by this method. I also illustrate the micro-political effects of conducting participatory action research on its subjects, arguing that this method offers an innovative model for transformative social change.

What are the practical and policy implications of your work?

My findings related to the economic values and practices of artists and artisans could be utilized in crafting place-specific, inclusive creativity-based development policies.

The findings related to community based research practices have practical implications for researchers in terms of research design and implementation and in terms of data analysis.

Where do you see your work going in the future?

I would like to further study the experiences of women artists. While gender inequality in artistic occupations is noted in the cultural production literature, its mechanisms, contours, and intersectional dimensions are understudied. I would like to conduct a study utilizing peer interviewing to tease out the professional challenges and possible supports specific to women artists, attending to racial, ethnic, and class differences and to differences based on caregiving responsibilities. Understanding the lives of women artists, in all of their diversity, is one step in generating more inclusive creativity-based development policies.

Do you have any advice for fellow graduate students?

Graduate school requires a two-pronged approach to keep you moving forward. With one foot you pursue your personal professional goals—be they teaching, research, and or social justice related. In my case, that was conducting community-based research. With the other foot, you pursue the professional development skills that allow to you attain your employment goal—publishing, grant writing, etc. It is important to find faculty and colleagues who can provide support on both fronts. I had the hardest time with the professional side of the equation, and the following resources were invaluable:

The Professor Is In: The Essential Guide to Turning Your Ph.D. Into a Job, by Karen Kelsky and Writing your Journal Article in Twelve Weeks: A Guide to Academic Publishing Success, by Wendy Belcher.

Anything else you'd like to share with the division?

Thank you Community Research and Development Division members for this lively venue through which to further community based research methodologies.

SSSP CRD Member Accomplishments:

Publications

Dolgon, C., Mitchell, T., & Eatman, T. (Eds.). (2017). The Cambridge Handbook of Service Learning and Community Engagement (Cambridge Handbooks in Psychology). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/9781316650011

Dolgon, C. (2017). Kill it to save it: an autopsy of capitalisms triumph over democracy. Bristol, UK: Policy Press.

Special Calls, Ongoing Calls, Invitations, & Announcements

Media Review Submissions

Recognizing the multiple modalities of communication and how presentations enhance our sociological understanding of the complex realities of the 21st century, the journal *Humanity & Society* (<http://has.sagepub.com/>) seeks authors for Media Reviews. We invite reviewers of critical messages in popular films, television shows, documentaries, multimedia presentations, video games, and other forms of media. Written submissions should be approximately 1,000 words and are accepted on a rolling basis. The journal welcomes reviewers from diverse backgrounds and with diverse perspectives, including activists, graduate students, and practitioners in fields other than sociology. To review for *Humanity & Society*, please contact the Media Review Editor, Bhoomi K. Thakore, at bhoomi.thakore@elmhurst.edu with your background information and suggested review topic.

The *Journal of Applied Social Science* publishes original research articles, project reports, teaching notes, and book reviews on a wide range of topics of interest to social scientists in applied, public, clinical, and practice contexts. All submissions are processed electronically. Send your submission to our editor at jammieprice@gmail.com.

A Special Issue of Signs

Gender and the Rise of the Global Right

Special Issue Editors: Agnieszka Graff, Ratna Kapur, and Suzanna Danuta Walters.

As political events across the world have made clear, the right wing is ascendant: from the election of Donald J. Trump in the United States; to the Brexit victory in the United Kingdom; to the rise of rightist, nationalist, anti-immigrant, and neo-Nazi parties across Europe; to the election of the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party in India; to the Philippine president's professed admiration for Adolf Hitler; to the impeachment of a democratically elected woman leader in Brazil; to the military coup and gendered crackdown in Egypt; to the virulently antigay legislation in Uganda, in which US-based Christian evangelicals played no small role. Far less studied are the myriad ways in which the global Right represents a particular politics of gender. Indeed, backlash against perceived shifts in gender and sexual norms may have partly spurred the Right's rise. And right-wing movements have often justified themselves by invoking gender and sexuality—whether through a desire to return to or preserve “tradition” and “shared values” or by stoking anxieties about the sexual threats represented by racial, foreign, or religious others.

These developments present an urgent need for feminist theorizing, across regions and disciplines. It is of critical importance that the central role of gender and sexuality in the rise of the Right be recognized and that the voices of critique be feminist ones, including investigations of the Rights' representational politics, its workings in discourse, mass media, human rights, law, and culture broadly conceived. We welcome submissions from all disciplines, and especially submissions that are engaging across disciplines and that are themselves inter- or transdisciplinary.

Possible areas of focus might include:

- The gender politics of local right-wing resurgences, the transnational linkages among them, and comparative critiques of their cultures, discourses, and modes of organizing, funding, coordination, and transmission.
- Comparisons of the present moment with past historical shifts, such as the colonial encounter, and their gendered implications for the postcolonial present.
- The fault lines within right-wing gender politics, in which racialization determines which women are to be protected and which are threats, to be deported, jailed, or “liberated.”

- The role of religion and religious actors in right-wing politics, and the gendered agendas they advance.
- The Right's use of the language of women's rights, human rights, LGBT rights, or other rights discourses; the role of right-wing women in dignifying, legitimating, and speaking for their movements.
- Right-wing attacks on women's and gender studies; efforts to discredit the field and establish right-wing ideologues in academic settings.
- Gendered life under repressive regimes; the role of networks, undergrounds, and samizdat.
- The media politics and cyberpolitics of the Right; the discursive structures of mainstream and social media; the gendered phenomenon of the internet troll.
- The interrelations between various gender-related crusades (e.g., the transnational antichoice movement, resistance against LGBT rights, the introduction of transphobic policies, efforts to stop antiviolence legislation).
- Right-wing masculinities (e.g., fathers' movements, men's-rights movements, militarist gender ideologies, and constructions of boyhood).
- Links between the gendered effects of global economic crises or structural adjustments and the rise of the Right.
- The representational politics of the global Right, in literature, film, music, art, and popular culture; representations and works of literature that resist, subvert, and push back against the arguments of the new Right and its normalizers.

Signs particularly encourages transdisciplinary and transnational essays that address substantive feminist questions, debates, and controversies without employing disciplinary or academic jargon. We welcome essays that make a forceful case for why the global rise of the Right demands a specific and thoughtfully formulated interdisciplinary feminist analysis and why it demands our attention now. We seek essays that are passionate, strongly argued, and willing to take risks. The issue will be coedited by Agnieszka Graff, assistant professor at the Center for American Studies at the University of Warsaw; Ratna Kapur, visiting professor of law at Queen Mary University of London; and Suzanna Danuta Walters, Signs editor in chief and professor of sociology and women's, gender, and sexuality studies at Northeastern University.

The deadline for submissions is September 15, 2017.

Please submit full manuscripts electronically through Signs' Editorial Manager system at <http://signs.edmgr.com>. Manuscripts must conform to the guidelines for submission available at <http://www.journals.uchicago.edu/Signs/instruct.html>.

If you have a publication, special call, invitation or announcement not listed, we would love to include it in the Fall 2017 issue. Please contact our Chair, Meghab Ashlin Rich at meghan.rich@scranton.edu

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