



Society for the Study  
of Social Problems  
*In Pursuit of Social Justice*

## Educational Problems Newsletter Summer 2019

Chair – A. Fiona Pearson – [pearsonaf@ccsu.edu](mailto:pearsonaf@ccsu.edu)  
Chair-Elect – Linda Waldron - [lwaldron@cnu.edu](mailto:lwaldron@cnu.edu)

### **Educational Problems Division Business Meeting**

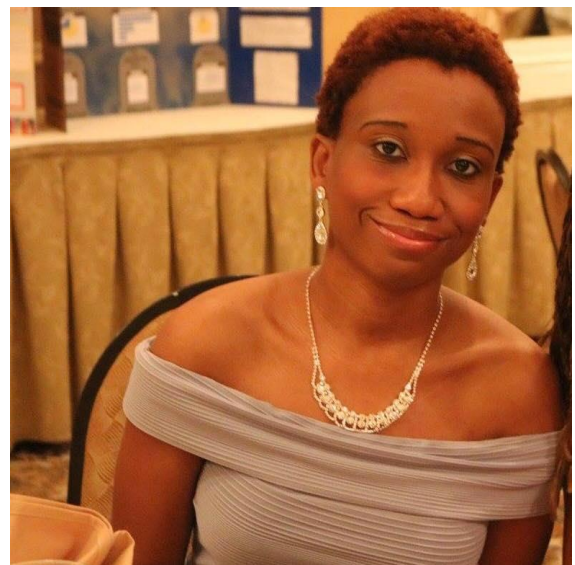
Time & Location: Friday, August 9 - 4:30-6:10pm, Grand Ballroom

Do you have ideas for sessions or division sponsored projects for the 2020 SSSP Annual Meeting in San Francisco? Do you want to become more involved in SSSP? If yes, please join us for spirited conversation and sharing during our annual Educational Problems Division business meeting.

### **Educational Division Social Media Coordinator**

Patricia Morency has an MSW and M.Ed in Human Sexuality Studies from Widener University. She currently works as a Mental Health Clinician at the University of Arkansas and an Adjunct Professor in Social Work at Laramie County Community College. Her background is in community

mental health and school counseling. She has worked with clients from diverse communities and low-income backgrounds. She specializes in working with the LGBTQ+ population, sexual health education, sex therapy, and social justice education through the lens of intersectionality. She has been involved in SSSP for the past 3 years as a session participant and organizer.





## **DIVISION MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS**



### **Odis Johnson Jr., PhD**

- Promoted to Full Professor, Washington University in St. Louis
- Outstanding Faculty Mentor of Graduate Students
- Spencer Grant Award – “Suburban Schools, Urban Realities Conference w/L’Heureux Lewis, NYU

### **Kyla Walters, PhD**

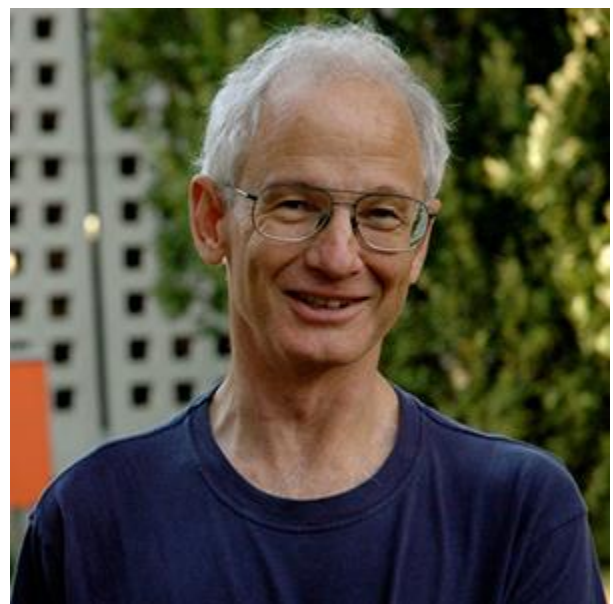
Kyla Walters has completed her Ph.D., under the spirited guidance of the recently departed Dan Clawson at University of Massachusetts-Amherst, and will begin a tenure-track assistant professorship in the Department of Sociology at Sonoma State University in the fall.

### **Dan Clawson (1948-2019)**

The Labor Center joins the department of sociology, UMass Amherst, and the entire labor movement in grieving the loss of one of our own: Dan Clawson. Dan’s professional reputation was as a scholar of work, the corporate elite, and organized labor. His research was foundational and hugely influential in sociology and labor studies. But Dan was first and foremost an organizer. He was president of the faculty and librarians’ union at UMass Amherst and

served in the leadership of the Massachusetts Teachers Association. In a meeting, Dan always took the principled stance without exception, anchored in the progressive values we hold so dear. Dan was a staunch advocate of the Labor Center. He was central to our survival through many administrations and successive struggles. He recruited our faculty, served on our committees, and worked with our students. He taught courses in both the residential and ULA programs. Although Dan was not hired in Labor Studies, he did as much for the Labor Center as any of our core faculty. His support for us was total and unwavering.

We will miss Dan’s voice, friendship, and integrity. From now on, whenever we face an uncertain future, the Labor Center community will first ask, WWDD: What would Dan do? So long, brother.



## Educational Problems Division

### Conference Sessions & Division Sponsored Projects

**Session 25** – Friday, August 9 - 10:30am-12:10pm – York Suite

“Action and Change Strategies in Education” - Session Organizer: Brittany Gatewood [brittany.gatewood@bison.howard.edu](mailto:brittany.gatewood@bison.howard.edu) Co-sponsored w/ Poverty, Class, and Inequality

**Session 27** - Friday, August 9 – 12:30-2:10pm – Promenade Suite - (Critical Dialogue)

“‘Me Too’ in Academia” – Session Organizer: Lanysha Adams, Edlinguist Solutions LLC [lanysha@edlinguist.com](mailto:lanysha@edlinguist.com) and Kristin Kalangis, University of New Mexico [kkalangis@gmail.com](mailto:kkalangis@gmail.com)

**Session 43** – Friday, August 9 – 2:30-4:10 – Fashion Suite

“Illuminating the Social in Higher Education I” – Session Organizer: Patricia Morency [pmorency821@gmail.com](mailto:pmorency821@gmail.com)

**Session 72** – Saturday, August 10 – 8:30am-10:10am – York Suite

“Illuminating the Social in Higher Education II” – Session Organizer: Patricia Morency [pmorency821@gmail.com](mailto:pmorency821@gmail.com) Presider: Linda Waldron [lwaldron@cnu.edu](mailto:lwaldron@cnu.edu)

**Session 74** – Saturday, August 10 10:30am-12:10pm – Plaza Suite

“Education, Community, and Place” – Session Organizer: Julia Miller [jmimi245@g.uky.edu](mailto:jmimi245@g.uky.edu) Co-sponsored w/ Community Research and Development

**Session 85** – Saturday, August 10 – 12:30-2:10pm – Grand Ballroom

“Teachers on the Rise: How Educators Mobilized their Communities” – Session Organizers: John O’Connor [connorjohn@ccsu.edu](mailto:connorjohn@ccsu.edu) and A. Fiona Pearson [pearsonaf@ccsu.edu](mailto:pearsonaf@ccsu.edu) Moderator: Eric Blanc; Sponsors: Educational Problems; Global; Labor Studies; Sociology and Social Welfare; Sport, Leisure, and the Body; Teaching Social Problems; and Youth, Aging and the Life Course

**Session 117** – Sunday, August 11 – 8:30–10:10am – State Suite

“Restorative Justice, Education, and Schools” – Session Organizer: Mollie Gambone; Presider: Odis Johnson [o.johnson@wustl.edu](mailto:o.johnson@wustl.edu) Co-sponsored w/Law and Society

**Session 128** – Sunday, August 11 – 10:30am-12:10pm – State Suite

“Issues of Gender and Sexuality in Higher Education” – Session Organizer: Kristopher Oliveira, University of South Florida [KAoliveira@mail.usf.edu](mailto:KAoliveira@mail.usf.edu)

**Session 141** – Sunday, August 11 – 12:30-2:20pm – Promenade Suite - (Critical Dialogue)

“Surviving the Academy as a Marginalized Academic” – Session Organizer: Anthony Jackson, Howard University, [anthony.jackson@bison.howard.edu](mailto:anthony.jackson@bison.howard.edu) Co-sponsored with Conflict, Social Action, and Change

**Session 154** – Sunday, August 11 – 2:30-4:10pm – State Suite

“Issues of Identity and Inequality in Higher Education.” – Session Organizers: Maralee Mayberry [mayberry@usf.edu](mailto:mayberry@usf.edu) and Nancy Mezey [nmezey@monmouth.edu](mailto:nmezey@monmouth.edu); Presider: Mayberry, Maralee; Discussant: Hannah Liebreich - Co-sponsored w/Family

**Session 167** – Sunday, August 11 – 4:30-6:10pm – East End Suite - “Pathways to Social Mobility”  
Session Organizer: Kevin McElrath, Stony Brook University [kevin.mcelrath@stonybrook.edu](mailto:kevin.mcelrath@stonybrook.edu)  
Co-sponsored w/ Poverty, Class, and Inequality

Division Co-sponsored Project:  
**Teachers on the Rise: How Educators Mobilized their Communities**

SSSP 69<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting  
Saturday 12:30-2:10pm  
Grand Ballroom

by  
**John O'Connor**  
**A. Fiona Pearson**



Eric Blanc - educator, journalist, author; Red for Ed - Arizona, 2018

This past year, we witnessed teachers across the nation standing up to governors, legislators, and union leaders, demanding better working conditions for educators, better learning conditions for their students, and more comprehensive understandings of the social and economic needs of their communities. To learn more about these social movements, we have invited four teacher activists from across the nation who served as leaders in their communities to participate in a panel discussion at the SSSP's 69<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in NYC this summer. These teachers—from Oakland, Los Angeles, West Virginia, and Arizona—will share their local concerns, national concerns, and mobilization strategies. Eric Blanc, journalist, former public school teacher, and author of the recent book *The Red State Revolt: The Teachers Strike Wave and Working Class Politics* by Verso Press (<https://www.versobooks.com/books/2955-red-state-revolt>) will serve as moderator for this discussion. Because Blanc has been traveling around the nation and has worked with many of these teacher activists, he is particularly qualified to comment on these regionally diverse movements. John O'Connor, Professor of Sociology and Labor at Central Connecticut State University will introduce the panel and will provide a contextual frame that will allow SSSP members to connect the experiences of these teachers with issues we are similarly facing in our workplaces in higher education and in our larger communities.

We would argue that this teacher insurgency, which in this past year alone has spread across states including West Virginia, Oklahoma, Arizona, Kentucky, Colorado, North Carolina, and California, has posed a number of very serious questions for sociologists examining nearly any facet of social inequality. Building on the example of the Chicago Teachers Union 2012 strike, the teachers' rebellion has been more about movement building than contract negotiation; more about changing consciousness than party politics; and, more about solidarity than bureaucracy. Compared to other labor actions of recent memory, the teacher strike wave illustrates two things: first, that the economic violence of global neoliberalism can be contested and defeated and second that top-down business unionism controls labor more than empowers it. Some of the themes we expect may be covered in the discussion are 1) the importance of independent organizing; 2) the centrality of race and gender; 3) the connection between the community and workplace; and 4) the importance of rank and file leadership.

These problems of our teachers are our problems and are shared at all levels of the educational system, from early childhood education to our colleges and universities. This panel conversation will provide us with an opportunity to engage with history that is in the making right now, and so we hope you will join us on Saturday, August 10<sup>th</sup> from 12:30-2:10 in the Grand Ballroom at the Roosevelt Hotel in NYC for what promises to be an invigorating discussion.

**Moderator:** Eric Blanc, New York University

**Panelists:**

Jenny Craig, Ohio County West Virginia Education Association

Ismael Armendariz, Oakland Educational Association

Rebecca Garelli, Arizona Educators United

Daniel Barnhart, United Teachers of Los Angeles

**Division Co-Sponsors:**

Educational Problems

Global

Labor Studies

Sociology and Social Welfare

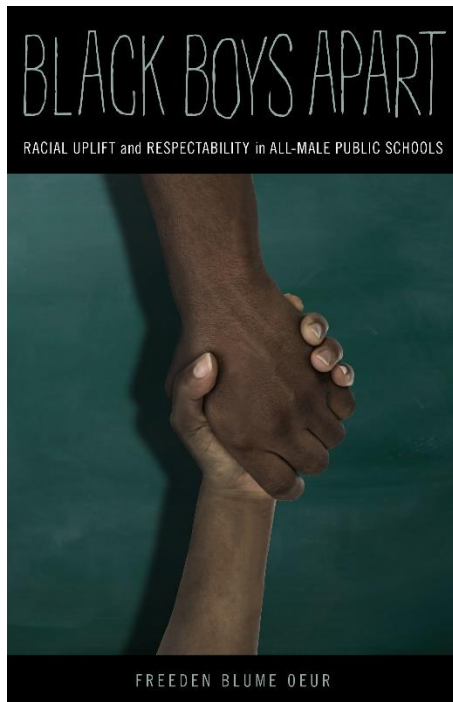
Sport, Leisure and the Body

Teaching Social Problems

Youth, Aging and the Life Course

## **DIVISION MEMBER PUBLICATIONS:**

**Blume Oeur, Freeden. *Black Boys Apart: Racial Uplift and Respectability in All-Male Public Schools*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2018.**



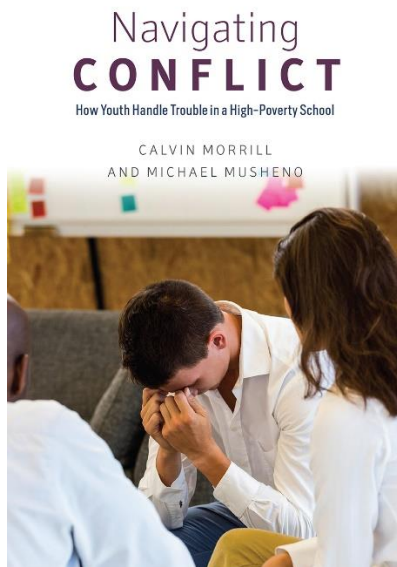
While single-sex public schools face much criticism, many Black communities see in them a great promise: that they can remedy a crisis for their young men. *Black Boys Apart* reveals triumph, hope, and heartbreak at two all-male schools, a public high school and a charter high school, drawing on Freeden Blume Oeur's ethnographic work. While the two schools have distinctive histories and ultimately charted different paths, they were both shaped by the convergence of neoliberal

ideologies and a politics of Black respectability. As Blume Oeur reveals, all-boys education is less a school reform initiative and instead joins a legacy of efforts to reform Black manhood during periods of stark racial inequality. *Black Boys Apart* shows all-boys schools to be an odd mix of democratic empowerment and market imperatives, racial segregation and intentional sex separation, strict discipline and loving care. Challenging narratives that endorse these schools for nurturing individual resilience in young Black men, this perceptive and penetrating ethnography argues for a holistic approach in which Black communities and their allies promote a collective resilience. For more information, please visit the book's website: <http://blackboysapart.com>.

**Morrill, Calvin and Michael Musheno. *Navigating Conflict: How Youth Handle Trouble in a High-Poverty School*. University of Chicago Press, 2018**

Urban schools are often associated with violence, chaos, and youth aggression. But is this reputation really the whole picture? In *Navigating Conflict*, Calvin Morrill and Michael Musheno challenge the violence-centered conventional wisdom of urban youth studies, revealing instead the social ingenuity with which teens informally and peacefully navigate strife-ridden peer trouble. Taking as their focus a multiethnic, high-poverty school in the American southwest, the authors complicate our vision of urban youth, along the way revealing the resilience of students in the face of carceral disciplinary tactics.

Grounded in sixteen years of ethnographic fieldwork, *Navigating Conflict* draws on archival and institutional evidence to locate urban schools in more than a century of local, state, and national change. Morrill and Musheno make the case for schools that work, where negative externalities are buffered and policies are adapted to ever-evolving student populations. They argue that these kinds of schools require meaningful, inclusive student organizations for sustaining social trust and collective peer dignity alongside responsive administrative leadership. Further, students must be given the freedom to associate and move among their peers, all while in the vicinity of watchful, but not intrusive, adults. Morrill and Musheno make a compelling case for these foundational conditions, arguing that only through them can schools enable a rich climate for learning, achievement, and social advancement.



“This wonderfully accessible book is a welcome alternative to gloom-and-doom

narratives of school violence. Morrill and Musheno draw upon a rich repository of detailed ethnographic stories to illustrate the potential of school environments to defuse conflict by fostering trust instead of suspicion, mobility instead of containment. It is a vital message for anyone concerned about schools and youth today.”—Torin Monahan, coeditor of *Schools under Surveillance: Cultures of Control in Public Education*

“*Navigating Conflict* provides an extremely rich qualitative case study of the routines, perspectives and concerns of lower-class predominantly Hispanic youth as they make their way into and through the challenges of an urban high school in the Southwest. Its focus is not on formal education and what happens in classrooms, but rather on how students understand, organize, and use the open areas of the campus to create, maintain, expand, and restrict relationships. The authors provide a rounded picture of the everyday, intricate peer behavior of lower-income youth, resulting in a rich and comprehensive ethnographic case study.”—Robert Emerson, UCLA

**Calvin Morrill** is the Stefan A. Riesenfeld Professor of Law, professor of sociology, and associate dean for jurisprudence and social policy in the School of Law at the University of California, Berkeley. He is the author of *The Executive Way: Conflict Management in Corporations*, also published by the University of Chicago Press. **Michael Musheno** is professor of law and faculty director of legal studies at the University of Oregon School of Law.

[www.press.uchicago.edu](http://www.press.uchicago.edu)



## Teaching Tip—Reading Circles

*Professor Linda M. Waldron, Department of Sociology, Social Work & Anthropology*

*Christopher Newport University, lwaldron@cnu.edu*

We often assume that because students are literate that they should be able to easily read social science research articles and as professors, we often grow frustrated when students come to class and confusingly stare at us when we ask them what we believe is a pretty simple question about the reading. To be honest though, most undergraduates will not have read an academic journal article prior to coming to campus and they actually do need some level of socialization to help them navigate these types of texts. So rather than remain frustrated, I reached out to a former colleague of mine, Dr. Stephanie Byrd, who suggested I try some reading circles and gave me a couple examples to look at. After using reading circles as a classroom exercise a couple of times, I quickly learned a few things. 1) Students are more likely to read when you give them something specific to look for. 2) Students are more likely to read when they know their colleagues are relying on them to come prepared with some information. 3) If you provide a model for how students should read an article at the beginning of the semester, they actually become much more proficient at reading them throughout the semester. 4) Reading circles provide an alternative way for students to be engaged in class, especially for ones who are not as apt at large class discussion.

Here is a handout I provide to students about this classroom exercise. It does not require them to meet with the group beforehand, just to come prepared to the next class with their part. I generally keep them in the same reading circle for 2-3 articles, making them switch roles each time. Then, I usually change the group members for another 2 articles. I find it best to do the first group of reading circles early on in the semester. This class activity tends to work best in class sizes of 15-30 students. I usually devote about 30 minutes to this activity, sitting down with each group for 5-8 minutes. I then bring the class back to a large group discussion, focusing on a couple key items from the reading.

Please feel free to borrow, modify, revise and improve this classroom activity. I have found it to be one of the most effective tools for getting students to read for class.

### Reading Circles

The class will be divided into reading circle groups with each group ideally having 5-6 members.<sup>1</sup>

#### Reading circle roles will include:

1. **Moderator/Discussion Director:** Develop a list of questions to help guide your group in a lively discussion of the reading. These questions should be broad enough to give your group a chance to talk over the big ideas in the readings and to share their reactions. Although you should not just target questions toward each role (i.e. “What concepts did you come up with?”), you should

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<sup>1</sup> If you have less than 6 members you can either combine two roles, like concept collector and passage master, or pick a role that everyone in the group will be, for example, everyone will be responsible for connecting the reading to other articles from class. If you have more than 6 members, two people will share a role. This works best for Moderator, Devil’s Advocate or Creative Connector.

make sure that when directing the discussion, you provide an opportunity for each member to contribute to the discussion *based on his/her current role*. Bring a list of discussion questions to share with the group.

2. **Passage Master:** You will be responsible for locating passages in the reading that provide key information. Think of this as those unique quotes that you would directly cite in a paper, since paraphrasing them just wouldn't be good enough. It will be your job to unpack these passages and help the group understand the significance of these passages. Please provide page numbers or type up the relevant passages and distribute this to your colleagues.
3. **Concept Collector:** You will develop and distribute a list of concepts or theories that are important to understanding the reading. Think of which concepts might be worthy of being on a study guide. Each concept should be listed with a definition/explanation and example of the concept, either from the reading or your own example. Please share these concepts and definitions with your group.
4. **Creative Connector:** Your job is to connect the contents of the reading to other readings in the class. (Think compare/contrast essay questions.) How is this reading similar or different to other things we have read in class? How does this reading add to your understanding of this course? You can also connect the readings to current or past real world events or personal life experiences. Consider writing an outline of the relevant connections to share with your colleagues.
5. **Devil's Advocate:** Your job is to confront the ideas in the reading by raising questions or arguments that challenge the point-of-view of the author (s). You may want to consider doing some background research or at least review some current news articles on recent issues, so at least some critiques are grounded in empirical evidence or real life situations. You may want to bullet-point several key critiques and share this as a handout with the group.
6. **Visualizer:** Not everyone learns through reading. Some need to see a visual representation or example to drive home the main points of a reading. Your job is to make and/or find visual illustrations that help explain or expand upon the reading. This can include graphs, charts, concept maps, photos, drawings, collages, stick figures, videos, music, news reports, etc.

We will be devoting class time to working in our reading circles, but roles should be picked early. Each group is welcome to meet before class if you find it helpful, e-mail each other just to touch base, create a Google doc to share info, or do whatever you feel is necessary to make sure each member of the group is prepared for the reading circle day.

*Handout: If you think your colleagues might benefit from a handout, please print/email copies to your group. You may also give/e-mail Professor Waldron a copy of the handout, share a link of a website, or share anything you would like the professor to take into consideration towards your participation grade.*