



## **SSSP Poverty, Class, and Inequality Division**

### **Summer 2023 Newsletter**

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## Message from the Chair

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Dear Poverty, Class, and Inequality Division members,

This has been a wonderful newsletter to prepare as it is filled with good news and congratulations to members of our division.

I want to congratulate Sara Maani on being elected to serve as the division's next chair, for a two year term. I couldn't be passing the torch to a better person, especially someone who will bring new perspectives and ideas to the division and help it grow a more global vision of Poverty, Class, and Inequality.

I'm also pleased to formally share news about the winners of our division's awards. Bobby Cervantes has won the Graduate Student Paper award, Junia Howell has won the Michael Harrington Award, and we have a trio of papers selected for the newly formed Outstanding Scholarship Award. Congratulations to Teresa Irene Gonzales, Elizabeth M. Thissell, Soumitra Thorat, Anthony Abraham Jack, Zennon Black, Sarah Mayorga, Megan Underhill, and Lauren Crosser on winning this award for your scholarship. Below you will find more information about all the award winners, and I encourage you to check out their work.

I also want to give you a heads up about some upcoming items to be aware of:

There is a possibility that we will need to hold our division's business meeting virtually before the annual meeting. If so, we'll send information about it in advance.

At that meeting, we'll be soliciting your ideas for paper sessions at the 2024 conference. So please start thinking about sessions you'd like to see. This is a particularly good way for graduate students to participate in shaping the conference.

After the conference, the division will be soliciting volunteers for a number of tasks, including organizing sessions (ie: deciding which papers are accepted), presiding over panels, and volunteering to serve on award committees. Please keep these opportunities in mind as your participation is crucial to the division's continuing function.

Finally, as this is my last message as the chair of the division, I want to thank you all for volunteering in so many capacities within the division. I also want to thank you for your patience with me, and to ask your forgiveness for the mistakes and errors I have made during my term. It's been wonderful to connect with so many of you, and I've learned so much through this role.

Warmly,  
Rahim Kurwa

## Congratulations to the New Chair of SSSP PCID!

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Sara Maani is a researcher at the College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC).

Her research interests revolve around the questions concerning collective organizing and solidarity, in order to understand how the different struggles organized across differences can connect in solidarity.

Her Ph.D. dissertation, *Refugee, Agency, City*, examines encounters between migrants and self-organizing solidarity groups in Milan, Italy. Focusing on the years following the 2015 so-called European refugee crisis, it utilizes a

framework at the intersection of migration, social movements, and critical governance theories.

She has degrees in sculpture; architecture and urban design; critical theory of society; and urban studies, the latter based in a sociology department.

She has lived, studied and worked in Iran, Italy, Germany, South Africa, and the United States.

For more information, please email her at [smaani2@uic.edu](mailto:smaani2@uic.edu).

## **Congratulations to the SSSP Student Paper Award Winner!**

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### **“‘From the Dark Side of the Valley’: Making Power in Las Colonias in the Era of New Federalism”**

Bobby Cervantes

Ph.D. candidate

Department of American Studies at the University of Kansas

#### **Abstract:**

“‘From the Dark Side of the Valley’: Making Power in Las Colonias in the Era of New Federalism,” reveals how residents of South Texas border colonias—unincorporated, rural, and poor Latino communities—met the challenges of late-twentieth-century political transformations. It traces the ways they used their newfound clout to secure unprecedented funding for infrastructure projects and other needs at the dawn of the neoliberal age. From the 1960s to the 1980s, they marshalled their growing numbers into grassroots community organizations that marked the heyday of their influence. Volunteer-led groups like Colonias Del Valle and Valley Interfaith were comprised nearly entirely of colonia residents, and they became powerhouses in the waning days of a largely Democratic Texas. Another organization, Amigos Unidos Federal Credit Union, became the chief banking institution where colonia residents took out loans and built savings in an era of booming Latino entrepreneurship. Whether securing public grants for water lines or private loans for home renovations, they invested in their future and ushered in new possibilities for their colonias. As this essay shows, their activism elevated their visions while transforming their communities into a veritable American institution.

## Congratulations to the SSSP Michael Harrington Award Winner!

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**Junia Howell**

Sociologist, University of Illinois Chicago  
Director, eruka

Junia Howell is an urban sociologist and race scholar whose works identifies housing and disaster relief policies, processes, and practices that uphold White supremacy.

She has published broadly on topics related to racial capitalism, housing markets, disasters, and the home appraisal industry. Her award-winning scholarship has made critical theoretical and empirical advances in the study of racial inequality in housing markets, and helped to direct that field towards a stronger analysis of the forces that make these inequalities so enduring. Her research has been widely cited in news media, legislative hearings, and federal and local bills.

Importantly, emerging from and alongside this important academic work, she has also worked to translate the knowledge generated in this scholarship into public policy. Dr. Howell recently founded a nonprofit, [eruka](#), aimed at cultivating a just economy by providing alternative housing and finance services based on her research. In 2022, Junia authored and eruka published a major report on neighborhood racial inequality in appraised home values using newly released, unprecedented appraisal data from across the U.S. Her academic and policy work is a perfect exemplar of the Harrington Award's mission to recognize scholars who, by both thought and action, aim to confront poverty and build a better society.

## Congratulations to the SSSP Outstanding Scholarship Award Winners!

		
<p><b>The Stories We Tell: Colorblind Racism, Classblindness, and Narrative Framing in the Rural Midwest</b></p>	<p><b>Belonging and Boundaries at an Elite University</b></p>	<p><b>“I Hate That Food Lion”: Grocery Shopping, Racial Capitalism, and Everyday Disinvestment</b></p>
<p>Teresa Irene Gonzales (pictured), Elizabeth M. Thissell, Soumitra Thorat</p>	<p>Anthony Abraham Jack (pictured) and Zennon Black</p>	<p>Sarah Mayorga (pictured), Megan Underhill, Lauren Crosser</p>
<p>The stories we tell about ourselves and our communities have the power to impact perceptions of marginalized communities, both positively and negatively. Narratives affect how people view themselves, their town, and other members of their community and thus shape personal interactions, local culture, social situations, and even decisions about allocation of resources. When those stories are rooted in discursive frames—what we can understand as the links between ideology and narrative—they can also perpetuate and reify power inequities. Within rural America, local elites and residents alike use narratives and discursive framing to erase or exclude communities of color and, at times, poor whites in unique ways. This happens through explicit and willful ignorance of narratives of difference that could both complicate normative assumptions and highlight histories of dispossession within rural towns. Drawing on 30 interviews and 12 months of ethnography in the midwestern town of Moses, we provide a case study that demonstrates how narratives perpetuated by both decision makers and residents, across racial and class backgrounds, are rooted in colorblind racism and classblindness regarding African Americans, Mexican Americans, and poor whites. These narratives frame perceptions of residents and neighborhoods, influence town-level decisions, and erase local histories.</p>	<p>Scholars posit that lower-income undergraduates experience “cultural mismatch,” which undermines their sense of belonging, promotes withdrawal from campus, and limits mobility upon graduation. Drawing on in-depth interviews with 103 undergraduates at an elite university, we examine how students’ diverse trajectories to college affect how they identify as members of the community and modulate the relationship between social class and sense of belonging. While upper-income undergraduates find commonalities between themselves and college peers and integrate into the community, lower-income students offer divergent accounts. The doubly disadvantaged—lower-income undergraduates who attended local, typically distressed public high schools—felt a heightened sense of difference, drew moral boundaries, and withdrew from campus life. Alternatively, the privileged poor—lower-income undergraduates who attended boarding, day, and preparatory high schools—adopted a cosmopolitan approach focused on continued expansion of horizons and integrated into campus. Through detailing this overlooked diversity among lower-income undergraduates, our findings expand theoretical frameworks for examining sense of belonging to include boundary work that shapes students’ agendas, thereby deepening our understanding of the reproduction of inequality in college.</p>	<p>Using interview data from three mixed-income neighborhoods—one predominantly white and two multiracial neighborhoods—we find that an overwhelming majority of white, middle-class respondents did not shop in their local grocery store (n = 68). To explain this phenomenon, we propose a concept of everyday disinvestment to capture the interplay between individual-level decision-making and structural-level disinvestment under racial capitalism. We identify three practices of everyday disinvestment—avoidance, distancing, and selective engagement—as well as the rationalizations residents present for their behaviors. We argue racial capitalist ideologies of antiblackness and consumption as freedom are foundational to residents’ justifications of disinvestment from grocery stores in mixed-income communities. Everyday disinvestment not only expands our understanding of disinvestment as a mechanism of racial capitalism, but it deepens our understanding of food apartheid as a relational process.</p>

## 2023 Conference Sessions

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### Friday, August 18

12:30 PM - 2:10 PM

*Session 012: Social Safety Net Programs*

Room: Freedom E

*Papers:*

- “Boarding Schools to Brackeen: Do Child Welfare Policies Reduce or Induce Trauma in Indigenous Children?” Paul D. Steele, Native American Children’s Alliance, University of New Mexico
- “Our Renewable Safety Net Programs: The Demands of Continual Renewal,” Anne A. Statham, University of Southern Indiana
- “Social Safety Nets: The Silent and Stifled Voices of Older People in Sub-Saharan Africa,” Temitayo O. Akinpelu, Osun State University and Ojo Melvin Agunbiade, Obafemi Awolowo University
- “What Most Affects the Probability of Receiving Public Assistance? Examining the Effect of Family Background and Educational Attainment on Receiving Public Assistance with Multivariate Regression Analysis,” Patricia I. Vargas, Independent Scholar
- “Who Responded to the Inconsistency of Welfare Attitudes and Tax Intentions?” Jaehyun Kim, Yonsei University

### Saturday, August 19

8:30 AM - 10:10 AM

*Session 040: CRITICAL DIALOGUE: Challenges in Poverty and Inequality Research*

Room: Freedom E

*Papers:*

- “Effects of Income Tax Policy on Income Inequality in the U.S.,” Zehra Sahin Ilkorkor, Virginia Commonwealth University
- “Fragmented Analyses: Understanding the Nexus of Racism, Capitalism, and Militarism,” Vince Montes, Northeastern University
- “Pedestrian Deaths and the Sociology of Accidents: Implications for Social Change,” Richard Neil Greene, The University of New Mexico
- “Resiliency and Perseverance,” Giovanna Follo, Wright State University
- “Meritocracy as Disenchantment: Labor Formalization and Social Movement Unionism in the Subway Systems of South Korea,” Youbin Kang, University of Wisconsin-Madison

## Sunday, August 20

8:30 AM - 10:10 AM

### *THEMATIC Session 085: Racial Reparations at Community Level*

Room: Salon 3 & 4

#### *Papers:*

- “Anti-Asian Racism: Selective Inattention,” Cynthia Baiqing Zhang, Evergreen Campus LLC and Rafia Javaid Mallick, Georgia State University
- “Heirs’ Property and the Racial Wealth Gap,” Natasha Moodie, Keith Wiley and Lance George, Housing Assistance Council
- “Preference Policies as Community Reparations: Lessons Learned from Portland, OR,” Amie Thurber, Susan M. Halverson and Keisha Marie Muia, Portland State University
- “Reparations and Violence: Confronting Structural, Physical, and Bureaucratic Violence against BIPOC Land Stewards,” Sarah E. Stanlick and Katherine Foo, Worcester Polytechnic Institute

12:30 PM - 2:10 PM

### *Session 108: Policing and Poverty*

Room: Philadelphia Ballroom South

#### *Papers:*

- “‘Por Eso Los Matan Como a Perros’: Violence Management and State Violence in Marginalized Urban Communities,” Andrea Román Alfaro, University of Toronto
- “Pulling the Strings: The Influence of Police Officers on Sanitation Workers and Community Resistance during Homeless Encampment Sweeps,” Nicolas Gutierrez III, San Diego State University
- “The ‘Adjacency Hypothesis’: Racial Threat and Criminal Justice Policy,” Caylin Louis Moore, Stanford University, Co-Winner of the Crime and Juvenile Delinquency Division’s Student Paper Competition
- “The Police Made Me Homeless--Policing People Experiencing Homelessness,” Stephanie Southworth and Sara Brallier, Coastal Carolina University

2:30 PM - 4:10 PM

### *Session 111: Housing, Evictions, and Displacement of People Who Use Drugs*

Room: Independence C

#### *Papers:*

- “‘They Shut off the Electricity and Took My Daughter’ – The Effect of Housing on Parenting in a Sample of Mothers Who Use Opioids,” Aukje



Lamonica and Angela Corsino, Southern Connecticut State University  
and Benjamin Godlewski, APT Foundation

- “Disparities in Health among Deported Americans in Mexico City,” Alice Cepeda and Avelardo Valdez, University of Southern California
- “Housing First, Now What?” Sarah Cullingham and Naomi Nichols, Trent University
- “Housing Programs, Drug-Use, the Failures of the Market and the Pretense of Free Will,” Naomi Nichols, Sam Blondeau, Thamer Linklater, Mary Anne Martin and Will Pearson, Trent University
- “Locked Out: An Intersectional Gender Analysis of Residential Attainment and the Feminization of Housing Insecurity among Low-income Women in the U.S.,” Patricia C. Lewis, Sacred Heart University