

Teaching Social Problems Division Newsletter

Society for the Study of Social Problems

Winter 2009-2010

As the fall term comes to an end, it is time to think about coming together next August, this time in Atlanta, to share teaching ideas with each other and to reinvigorate ourselves.

Please read the newsletter to see the theme for the annual meeting, our division's sessions for Atlanta, how to submit abstracts to session organizers, and to learn about how to help our division thrive.

See you in Atlanta,
Kathe Lowney
Division Chair
E-mail: klowney@valdosta.edu



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SOCIAL JUSTICE WORK

JoAnne L. Miller, SSSP President

SSSP members engage in social justice work. The interdisciplinary perspectives and methods that activist scholars use to pursue social justice is the theme of the 2010 annual meeting in Atlanta, Georgia.

Social justice work is problem-driven scholarship that employs rigorous theory and research methods. Examples include work on human rights and civil rights; action research focused on injustices on the factory floor or in the courtroom; and the study of discrimination or violence which is directed at groups or individuals in local communities in the United States and throughout the wider world.

Explanation and understanding are the starting points, not the results, of social justice work. The most urgent and persistent social problems – war and violence, economic distress and poverty, inequalities, and unfair treatment of social groups – initiate social justice work, which changes the value or utility attributed to mainstream scholarship within the social sciences. Practitioners, all types of scholar activists, are not blinded by a favorite framework or the desire to produce papers directed only to academic specialists. Social justice and ways to achieve it, rather than intellectual struggles, are deemed to be the worthy battles.

Social justice workers are engaged within the community, whether local or global, yet they bring new ideas and new perspectives into the academy. Theory and practice are linked. The linkage occurs when scholars

decide to understand why immigrant workers are forced to do ‘dirty work’ to care for their families, or when they struggle to understand militarism, or how diplomacy gone wrong can provoke a nuclear threat or interpersonal violence.

The 2010 meeting of the Society for the Study of Social Problems will feature presentations and thematic sessions on the work of social justice practitioners – those who organize or study social movements, those who look within and across organizations to see how community problems can be ameliorated, those who talk to persons who fight wars in other nations or wars within themselves. A number of workshops and panels on the scholarship of engagement and the classroom practices introducing students to social justice work are planned.

The many forms of social justice work will be featured. Protest movements, community studies, social change projects from within organizations, social action research, institutional ethnographies, comparative studies, and policy studies are examples. We will challenge social science dogma and celebrate the possibilities of a just world.

**August 13-15, 2010
The Sheraton Atlanta Hotel
165 Courtland Street NE
Atlanta, GA**

Teaching Social Problems Division's Sessions for 2010 Atlanta Meeting

A. Thematic Session Title: "Teaching Social Problems *IS* Doing Social Problems Work"

SSSP Session #128

Session Co-organizers: Daina Harvey
54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue
Lucy Stone Hall
Department of Sociology
Rutgers University
Piscataway, NJ 08854
dharvey@sociology.rutgers.edu

AND

Marni Alyson Kahn
Teaching Associate
Georgia State University
Department of Sociology
University Plaza, P. O. Box 5020
Atlanta, GA 30302-5020
marnialyson@aol.com

B. Session Title: "Managing Technology in the Classroom: From Chalk to Clickers and Beyond"

SSSP Session #126

Session Co-organizers: Leslie Elrod
Behavioral Sciences
University of Cincinnati, RWC
9555 Plainfield Road
Cincinnati, OH 45236
Leslie.Elrod@uc.edu

AND

Melinda Messineo
Department of Sociology
Ball State University
Muncie, IN 47306
mmessine@bsu.edu

C. Session Title: "Reflections on the First Year of Teaching: Lessons Learned"

****Invited Session****

Session Organizer: Kris Macomber
Address: North Carolina State University
334 1911 Building, Campus Box 81077
Raleigh, NC 27695-8107
krismacomber@yahoo.com

Co-Sponsored Sessions with Other SSSP Divisions:

D. **Session Title:** Theory in the Social Problems Classroom

SSSP Session #118

Session Organizer: Sara Towe Horsfall

shorsfall@txwes.edu

E. **Session Title:** Teaching Institutional Ethnography

SSSP Session #87

Session Organizer: Michael K. Corman

MKCORMAN@UCALGARY.CA

Call for Papers - Directions for Submitting Abstracts

Go to this link to see the sessions and to submit an abstract:

<http://www.sssp1.org/index.cfm/m/374/fuseaction/ssspsession2.publicView>

You will see the following set of directions once you arrive at that web page:

Listed below are the 2010 Annual Meeting Sessions.

[Click here](#) to submit an extended abstract and paper. NOTE: if you are already a SSSP member, please use your SSSP login information. If you are not a SSSP member, you will be asked to create an account. Your personal information will **not** be shared with any other organization without your consent. Please see the SSSP [Privacy Policy](#) for more information.

For assistance with the 2010 Call for Papers process, read our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) (link will open in a new window).

**All papers must be submitted by midnight (EST) on
January 31, 2010 in order to be considered.**

We Need You and You and You. . . To Volunteer!!!

In the upcoming year, we will need people to do the following things – will you help our division to succeed?

1. **Run for Division Chair.** In the spring, our division will have an online election for Division Chair. We need at least two individuals willing to run. **We need at least one more volunteer!** The Division Chair:
 - A. Oversees the organization of sessions for the annual meeting
 - B. Manages the Division's budget
 - C. Attends the Division Chairs' meetings at the annual meeting
 - D. Produces (or gets someone to produce) at least two newsletters per year so can maintain our status as an active division and receive three sessions at the annual meeting

Interested? Have questions? Please contact me by January 15th at klowney@valdosta.edu

2. **We need help announcing our Graduate Student Paper competition.** For the last few years, we have had no papers submitted...we want to change that this year. If you teach at a graduate-degree granting institution, please help to announce this competition:

The Teaching Social Problems Division announces its 2010 Graduate Student Paper Competition. Papers may be on any aspect of teaching about social problems. Topics for papers can include “best practices” in the classroom, service-learning courses, using technology, using media, assessment of learning, and other areas. The winner will receive a stipend of \$100 plus a ticket to the 2010 SSSP awards banquet, and a one year membership to SSSP. The winner will be offered an opportunity to present this paper at one of the Teaching Social Problems Division sessions being held as part of the 2010 SSSP meeting. To be eligible, a paper must meet the following criteria: 1) The paper must have been written between January 2009 and February 2010; 2) The paper may not have been submitted or accepted for publication (papers that have been presented at a professional meeting or that have been submitted for presentation at a professional meeting are eligible); 3) The paper must be authored by one or more students, and not co-authored with a faculty member or colleague who is not a student; 4) The paper must be 25 pages or less, including notes, references, and tables; and, 5) The paper must be accompanied by a letter from a faculty member at the student’s college/university nominating the paper for the Teaching Social Problems Division Student Paper Competition. Students should send three copies of their paper, accompanied by a letter of nomination from a faculty member to the Student Paper Competition Chair: Dr. Brian Monohan Department of Sociology, 203C East Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011, 515-294-8379, e-mail: bmonahan@iastate.edu. The winner will be announced prior to the 2010 SSSP Annual Meeting in Atlanta.

See you in Atlanta!