Dear DREM members,

We hope you are all keeping as well as possible in these times. Before we offer some reflections over recent and relevant events, we’d first like to extend our deepest gratitude to outgoing DREM co-chair Felicia Arriaga for her steadfast leadership over the past two years. Most who assume this role know that it is a labor of love and Felicia has consistently shown so much love to countless friends, colleagues and comrades. We appreciate you!

Our division is comprised of scholars, activists, and concerned individuals who desire to see the eradication of racism and all other types of discrimination and oppression. The events of the past few years underscore the urgent need for scholarship and activism in the face of capitalist, white supremacist, patriarchal, anti-semitic, Islamophobic, nativist, ableist, and transphobic violence.
Across the United States, from school boards to state governments, laws are being passed to ensure that children do not learn about racist and transphobic oppression. This is part of a broader effort to limit accurate teaching of United States history and just curriculums. For example, the death of Queen Elizabeth requires an examination of the white supremacist, colonialist legacy of the British monarchy. This point was further underscored by the racist backlash Professor Uju Anya faced for highlighting the effects of this legacy. Prior to this incident, Florida Governor, Ron DeSantis and Texas Governor, Greg Abbott began passing laws to regulate coursework in schools. In March 2022, DeSantis signed a law that prohibited discussion of sexual orientation or gender identity. Later that year, he passed a law that prohibited teaching about institutional racism and patriarchy. In Texas, Abbott signed a law that would consider gender affirming care a form of child abuse. In addition, several states have banned the teaching of Nikole Hannah Jones’ 1619 project in school classrooms. As Michel-Rolph Troullot (1995) reminds us, “At best, history is a story about power, a story about those who won.” We must then ask, “If history is merely the story told by those who won, how did they win in the first place?”. The rationale for these bills use neutral language to obscure underlying racist, homophobic, transphobic logics. Relatedly, racist voter suppression efforts have resurfaced with the intent to make it harder for communities of color to vote. Georgia, Florida, and Alabama have each passed voting legislation that intentionally creates voting barriers. These tactics cannot be disentangled from the white vigilantism we see at polling places and predominantly African American neighborhoods. This is a consequence of deputized whites emboldened by the far-right to engage in vigilante violence with impunity. In Arizona, armed civilians stationed themselves outside of polling stations in a blatant act of voter intimidation. Buffalo’s mass shooting was perpetrated by a young white man from
Conklin, New York. He traveled hundreds of miles to Buffalo to commit a mass shooting targeting African Americans. He spent weeks researching and casing the neighborhood prior to the shooting. It can also not be overlooked that the shooting took place in a segregated neighborhood created by federal policy.

We know that the Supreme Court has been a key arbiter racial inequality. Once again, debates around the use of race in college admission procedures are back on the Supreme Court’s docket. Political conservative legal strategist, Edward Blum, is attempting to use Asian and Pacific Islanders as a wedge by esteeming them over Black, Indigenous, and Latinx students. Perhaps it would be worth reminding the Supreme Court and “Students for Fair Admissions” that affirmative action is not “reverse racism” - it’s an acknowledgment that racism in admission procedures exists (Moore and Bell 2011).

The word “affirm” is in “affirmative action” for a reason - namely to affirm the existence of structural inequalities built into allegedly race-neutral practices and policies. It is cases like these that push us to shift from theories of “race relations” toward theorizing race relationally. Racial formation does not occur in a vacuum. As Natalia Molina, Daniel Martinez Hosang, and Ramón Gutiérrez (2019) remind us, racial formation is a relational process. We cannot understand the experiences of racialized groups in isolation. To that end, we also see how the Brackeen v. Haaland case threatens Native American tribal sovereignty. In this case, white parents are suing to overturn the Indian Child Welfare Act, which prevented further family separation within Native American communities. On June 24th, 2022, the Supreme Court struck down Roe v. Wade in a 6-3 ruling. This terminated the legal right to an abortion in the United States. Several states’ trigger laws went into effect preventing women from obtaining abortions even in cases where the health of the mother and fetus are in jeopardy. This ruling is a form of violence orchestrated by the patriarchal, white supremacist state. This has particular effects on women of color as they are more likely to live in states that lack access to contraception and have harsher abortion laws. Given the Court’s conservative track record, many migrant justice activists fear that Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) will likely meet a similar fate as Roe v. Wade.
Still, we cannot forget that the “A” in “DACA” stands for “action” - a metonym for detention, deportation or other forms of anti-migrant violence. Justice for migrants does not come through deferred violence/action. The call is clear, Abolish Border Imperialism (Walia 2013). As Alessandra Moctezuma and the late Mike Davis remind us, “All borders are acts of state violence inscribed in landscape.” As the governors of Texas and Florida conspire to bus migrants to “sanctuary” cities, migrants themselves consistently remind this country and its leaders that “We are here, because you (U.S. imperialism) are there (the places we call ‘home’).” The racist violence visited on these communities by the state are extensions of the United States’ long history of white supremacist immigration policy and enforcement.

In theorizing race relationally, we cannot ignore the consequences of neoliberal multicultural logics that selectively recognize difference, while simultaneously legitimating violence against other racialized groups. We are referring to the anti-Black and anti-Indigenous remarks espoused by Los Angeles city council members. Such reprehensible comments should remind us of the woefully adequate goals of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives, which tend to legitimize the same kinds of racialized violence they claim to be seeking to dismantle. By definition, inclusion requires exclusion. Cosmetic diversity via neoliberal multiculturalism can never be a site of liberation. There is a need to continuously question “neoliberal politics that do not negate but selectively recognize ethnic claims in order to safeguard dominant relations in the nation and manage difference” (Ramos-Zayas 2012). Jodi Melamed (2011) makes this point exceptionally clear when exposing the logics of neoliberal multiculturalism: “Esteeming some people of color of the same race, according to conventional categories, makes it easier to accept that others of that same race may be systematically treated unequally.” In short, DEI regimes function as vehicles toward post-raciality via the incorporation of minoritized difference within existing institutions of power and domination (Embrick 2011; Mayorga-Gallo 2014). DEI regimes are a distraction from the substantive work of organizers and activists committed to affecting change from outside the ideological and material parameters of the status quo.

Theorizing race relationally is not limited to the United States. To develop an expansive understanding of the struggles of racialized and subaltern subjects globally, we must provincialize the canon, while encouraging interdisciplinarity. The decentering and deterritorializing of US empire makes it hard to locate. Still, we need only look to the global south to see the continuity of imperialism. Consider how U.S Africa Command (or AFRICOM) functions as a counterpart to the U.S. domestic 1033 program that militarizes local police departments to repress Black and brown communities in the US. We also acknowledge the violence committed against the Uighyr and Rohingya Muslim populations in China and Myanmar. Reports this year have indicated that genocide is being committed against both groups. In Xinjiang, Uighyr populations are being interned in “re-education camps.” The military takeover in Myanmar has resulted in the death of Rohingya populations.
We cannot ignore the ongoing struggles for Palestinian liberation. This year, Israeli forces have killed at least 130 Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Jerusalem. Benjamin Netanyahu’s return to power has intensified fears that this number will increase significantly.

Global heating remains in full effect. And yet still, the wrong ice is melting and the wrong Amazon is burning. Climate catastrophe in the United States and around the world remind us of the importance of what David Pellow describes as “racial sociological indispensability” which emphasizes that “excluded, marginalized, and othered populations, beings, and things - both human and more-than-human - must be viewed not as expendable but rather as indispensable to our collective futures.” Flooding as a result of global heating created environmental disasters in Florida, Mississippi, and Puerto Rico. In Jackson, Mississippi an already dysfunctional watering system was overwhelmed by flooding in September. Thousands of residents were without water. Hurricane Ian killed over 100 people in Florida. In Puerto Rico, Hurricane Fiona devastated communities still recovering from Hurricane Maria. Thousands were left without water or power. These phenomena cannot be examined without considering how racial inequality renders communities of color vulnerable to global heating and environmental disasters.

Finally, we acknowledge the neglect of black women murdered and kidnapped by a serial killer in Kansas City. This is an example of what Prowse, Meares, and Weaver (2020) call distorted responsiveness and Rios (2011) calls the over-policing/under-policing paradox. These concepts highlight the result of a broken windows system of policing that involves targeting communities of color rather than serving them.

While there is always plenty to fear, given the limits of politics to produce social change, there are also countless reasons to be courageous. Just as race is relational, so are these struggles against all forms of racialized violence. We are heartened by comrades who know the difference between solidarity and charity, and those who show solidarity without expectation for reciprocity. When we say “in solidarity,” we don’t take this term lightly. Our solidarity is rooted in a recognition that our liberation is inextricably linked to the liberation of so many others. On this note, we will end with the words of Aboriginal elder, Lilla Watson: ‘If you have come to help me you are wasting your time. If you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.’
Congratulations to Dr. Shirley A. Jackson (Portland State University) on becoming SSSP President (2022-2023)!

The 2023 Annual Meeting will be held August 18-20, 2023 in Philadelphia, PA. This year’s theme is: “Same Problem, Different Day: Recognizing and Responding to Recurring Social Problems”.

Call for Papers is available online. Deadline for submissions is 11:59 p.m. (Eastern Time) on January 15, 2023.

View the Student Paper Competitions and Outstanding Scholarship Awards announcement to submit a paper or nominate a book, article, or scholar.
The Editorial and Publications Committee of the Society for the Study of Social Problems is soliciting applications for the position of Editor of the Society’s flagship journal, Social Problems.

The Editor’s three-year term will begin with the operation of the new editorial office at mid-year 2024. The new editor will be responsible for editing and promoting Volumes 72-74 (years 2025-2027). An editor may be reappointed to a second and final term not to exceed three years with the recommendation of the Editorial and Publications Committee and approval of the Board of Directors. Applicants must be members of the SSSP by the time of their application and throughout their tenure as editor.

The Editor is responsible for managing the peer review process for approximately 400-500 submitted manuscripts per year, and preparing four issues of the journal (approximately 800 printed pages) annually. The journal’s Production/Copy Editor service is provided by our publisher, Oxford University Press (OUP). OUP will provide as well the services of one of its Managing Editors, unless the new editor chooses to use their own Managing Editor. The editor will also work with relevant individuals and committees to promote the journal.

The committee seeks a diverse pool of editorial candidates with strong scholarly records, previous editorial experience (e.g., service as journal editor or associate editor, editor of scholarly editions, etc.), and strong organizational and management skills. A familiarity with and commitment to Social Problems and the SSSP are required.

The SSSP supports the operation of the editorial office with an annual budget and provides a stipend and travel expenses for the Editor. While the Society encourages applicants to secure additional support from their respective institutions, the amount and nature of that support will not be a decisive factor in the selection of the new editor. The final decision will be based principally on the strength of the complete application. Support from the host institution may include office space, utilities, the use of computers and other office equipment, tuition waivers for office personnel (if appropriate), and faculty release time. Each year the Editor will submit a budget to SSSP to cover operating expenses that the host institution does not support.

Individuals interested in applying for the editorship should submit a letter of interest, curriculum vitae, a proposed budget for the operation of the Editorial Office, and a letter of support from their Department Chair, corresponding Dean of the prospective host institution, or appropriate official with budgetary authority. Guidance in the preparation of applications is available from the Editorial and Publications Committee as well as the current Social Problems Editor, the Executive Officer, and the Administrative Officer, if necessary.

Please direct all questions, inquiries, nominations, expressions of interest, and application materials to: Dr. Yvonne Braun, Chair, SSSP Editorial and Publications Committee, Work: 541-346-5752, E-mail: ybraun@uoregon.edu.

For more information on the position, please see Section V. and Section VIII. B. 2. A. of the SSSP Operations Manual.

Deadline for Applications is January 15, 2023
2022 Meeting Highlights

DREM-SPONSORED AND COSPONSORED SESSIONS

Cross-racial and Cross-movement Solidarities

CRITICAL DIALOGUE: We Do This 'Til We FreeUs
CRITICAL DIALOGUE: Critical Race Theory: Politics, Myths, and Reality
CRITICAL DIALOGUE: 50th "Anniversary" of the Racist War on Drugs

Reproductive Justice: Race, Intersectionality, and Health

NothingAboutUsWithoutUs: Intersections of Disability, Race and Ethnicity

Author Meets Critics/Educator: hephzibah v. strmic-pawl, Understanding Racism: Theories of Oppression and Discrimination

STUDENT PAPER AWARD

Brandon Allston - “The Camera is my Weapon: How Black Men Use Cellphones to Negotiate Safety and Status Amid Police Surveillance”

EDUARDO BONILLA-SILVA OUTSTANDING BOOK AWARD

B. Brian Foster - I Don’t Like the Blues: Race, Place and the Backbeat of Black Life

KIMBERLÉ CRENSHAW OUTSTANDING ARTICLE AWARD CO-WINNERS

PROPOSAL TO CHANGE DIVISION NAME

Discourse shapes/is action. Discourse also has great potential to be hegemonic. Hence, we refuse to give consent to reproduce solecism related to the study of race and ethnicity. We propose a new name for the Division of Racial and Ethnic Minorities (DREM). We see a need for a more relevant and less problematic description of the mission and vision of our Division. The term “minorities” reeks of positivist social science predicated on quantification and statistics as evidence. Theorizing race critically, though, requires an appreciation of the many aspects of race, racialization and racism that belie quantification, including experiential evidence.

We cannot talk about minorities until we acknowledge what many critical ethnic studies describe as processes of “minoritization.” It is largely those with the capacity to minoritize that construct nonwhite groups as “minorities” in the first place. It is then worth considering the extent to which “minorities,” as a term, is rooted in a white logic. “Minorities” gains coherence within a primarily US-centered perspective, while ignoring the non-minoritized status of many nonwhite people around the world, particularly in the global south. We are also wary of

“We will prevail because we have proven to the world and to ourselves that we are not ‘fringe elements’ or ‘special interest groups’ or so called ‘minorities’. Without us there is no legitimate majority. We are the mainstream.”

June Jordan
Poet, Essayist, Teacher, Activist
flattening difference and creating a false equivalence between already differentiated categories. For example, we recognize that the term “minorities” has the capacity to obscure the unique processes of racialization between racialized groups, as well as/including Indigenous populations.

As an association that prides itself on a commitment to social justice, we believe that our Division must be intentional about not reproducing the many structures and logics that we are committed to dismantling. We propose that the current Division name be changed to the “Division of Critical Race and Ethnic Study.” We believe this revised title is more inclusive and representative of the wide range of research and scholarship produced by members of this Division. As a descriptor, “minorities,” obscures the wealth of scholarship that does not center a particular racialized group, but focuses more on theories of race and racism, including questions of ontology and the human. The use of “critical” in our Division, does not limit the targeted audience of this Division to critical race theorists. Critical Race Theory is a subfield that emerged from Critical Legal Theory. There is, however, a difference between CRT as a paradigm and theorizing race critically. There is a wealth of scholarship produced within critical ethnic studies that often exceed the conceptual limits of CRT. Hence, our hope is that scholars from various ethnic studies fields including Black studies, Indigenous studies, Chicana/x/Latina/x studies, and Asian American studies feel affirmed by this name change and feel compelled to steer the Division in new and generative directions. We choose “study” over “studies” to signal our engagement with fields like Black Studies. SSSP’s commitment to liberatory work inside and outside the university coincides with the conceptualization of Black “study.” As Stefano Harney and Fred Moten note, study is done with and for the people. Study exceeds the spatial boundaries and epistemological limits of the university. The diverse range of professional backgrounds of our members is a testament to the fact that university is not the only site of knowledge production, nor the only home of knowledge producers.

As Division chairs, we do not make unilateral decisions. The proposed name change will be put to a vote. We encourage all members to participate. We realize that there may be other promising proposals for a new Division name. However, we need an alternative for a vote to occur. It’s quite possible we could create a placeholder such as: “The Division formerly known as DREM.” However, this may get a bit unwieldy.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and ongoing support of this vital community within SSSP.

Sincerely,

Rahsaan and Watoii
Division of Racial and Ethnic Minorities (DREM) co-chairs
Watoii Rabii | Oakland University

Nadia Kim | Loyola Marymount University
Recent Presentations: Organizer, moderator, and panelist for American Sociological Association panel, “30 Years After LA Burned: What Did 1992 Teach Us and Where Are We Now?” (LA regional spotlight), with attorney Angela Oh, UCLA Dean Darnell Hunt, USC’s Manuel Pastor. Los Angeles, CA.


2022 Author, Book Forum (formerly, Author Meets Critics), American Sociological Association annual meeting (Los Angeles, 2022) for Refusing Death.

Susila Gurusami | University of Illinois at Chicago

Jason Smith | George Mason University

Teresa Irene Gonzales | Loyola University Chicago


Gross, Nora, Charlotte Jacobs, Rekha Marar, and Adam Lewis. 2022. “‘This School is Too Diverse’: Fragile Feelings Among White Boys at Elite Independent Schools.” Whiteness and Education. Online first.rst. https://doi.org/10.1080/23793406.2022.2072758


Maria Duenas | University of California, Merced and University of Illinois, Springfield


Lisa Covington | The University of Arizona

Institute for Black Girls in Film & Media Launch https://www.artcenter.edu/connect/college-news/global-institute-for-black-girls-film-media.html

A Convergence Magazine Article identifying the fight for ethnic studies: https://convergencemag.com/articles/fight-for-ethnic-studies-moves-to-k-12-classrooms/
Nadia Kim
Loyola Marymount University

Distinguished Contribution to Scholarship Book Award, Section on Race, Class, Gender, American Sociological Association (Refusing Death)

Outstanding Book Award, Section on Asia and Asian America, American Sociological Association (Refusing Death)

Honorable Mention, Outstanding Recent Contribution Book Award, Section on the Sociology of Emotions, American Sociological Association (Refusing Death)

Honorable Mention, Distinguished Contribution to Research Book Award, Section on Latina/o/x Sociology, American Sociological Association (Refusing Death)

Silver Award, Nautilus Book Awards, “Social Change and Social Justice Category” (Refusing Death)

Maria Duenas
Graduate student, University of California, Merced and University of Illinois, Springfield

Maria D. Duenas was recently awarded a Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship at the University of Illinois at Springfield for the 2022-2023 academic year. She also won the 2022 Graduate Student Contributions to Teaching and Learning Award from the American Sociological Association’s Section on Teaching and Learning in Sociology for her publication, “Naming Racisms: Identifying and Responding to Biological and Colorblind Racisms.” Link to the publication: https://trails.asanet.org/article/view/naming-racisms-identifying-and-responding-to

Lisa Covington
Inaugural Presidential Postdoctoral Fellow, The University of Arizona

Scholar-in-Residence at The Institute for Black Girls in Film & Media, at ArtCenter College of Design & Inaugural Presidential Postdoctoral Fellow at The University of Arizona.
Teresa Irene Gonzales | Loyola Marymount University

Moved to Loyola University Chicago from UMass Lowell

Lisa Covington | University of Arizona

Scholar-in-Residence at The Institute for Black Girls in Film & Media, at ArtCenter College of Design & Inagural Presidential Postdoctoral Fellow at The University of Arizona

Solidarity Forever

Lisa Covington | University of Arizona

The Fight for Ethnic Studies is a public sociology article publicized in Convergence Magazine: https://convergencemag.com/articles/fight-for-ethnic-studies-moves-to-k-12-classrooms/ Members can show solidarity by reaching out to donate to ensure that youth who are impacted by ethnic studies bans and book bans will receive banned books and opportunities to learn ethnic studies. They can reach out to me via email for additional information.