



SSSP
Section on
**ENVIRONMENT
& TECHNOLOGY**

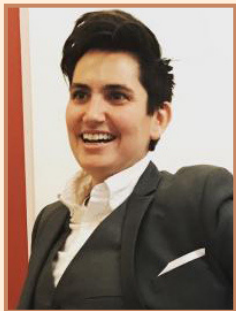
FALL 2021
NEWSLETTER



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

CLARE CANNON

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-DAVIS

Dear E&T Community,

I write to you amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic with devastating surges across the U.S. and the globe. Probably many of us thought, with the vaccine development and dissemination this Spring, that we would be in a safer place come fall and on more familiar terrain.

And, if you are anything like me, the continued disruptions and fear where there was to be an end in sight has only increased the stress and anxiety of living and working through the pandemic.

Such stress and anxiety are even further compounded as many of us return to the classroom for the first time in more than 1.5 years amidst the latest surge.

Multiply again the stress, anxiety, and loss from ongoing disasters stemming from climate change including Hurricanes Ida and Henry, flooding across the Northeast, Midwest, Tennessee and the South, and rampant wildfires and drought across the West. We are living and working to educate future generations, conduct life-altering research, and continue to support and advance the functioning of our institutions in these extraordinary times under impossible circumstances.

We are not where we thought we would be.

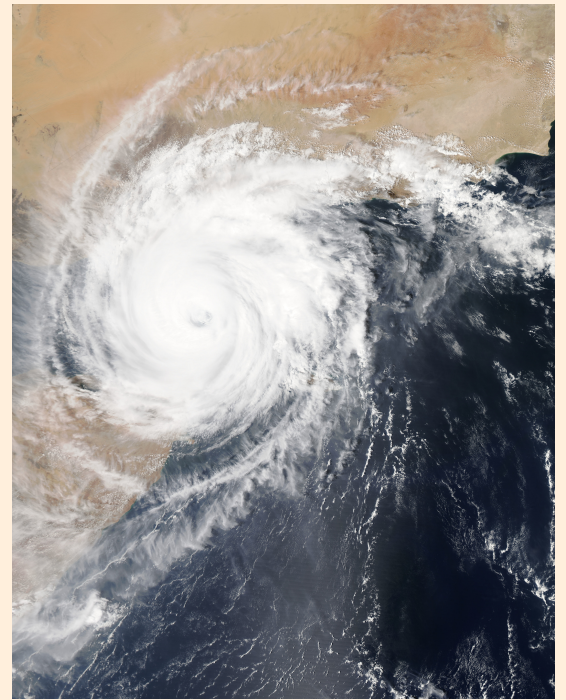
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And all I can really think to say is that we as a community are here for one another; that we acknowledge the difficulties, the pain, the stress, and the triumphs; that at some point the pandemic will end. Now more than ever the theme of next year's annual meeting – The Sociological Reimagination: From moments to momentum – is more relevant than ever.

In the spirit of this theme, I hope each of you can take a moment of reflection or celebration for making it through so far.

Take care,
Clare E. B. Cannon



2022 BRENT K. MARSHALL GRADUATE STUDENT PAPER AWARD

The Environment and Technology Division is pleased to announce its 2021 Brent K. Marshall Graduate Student Paper Award. This award honors the late Brent Marshall's (1965-2008) personal and professional commitment to the Division and encouragement of student engagement in academic scholarship and research. Papers will be considered in the areas of environmental sociology, including, but not limited to political economy of the environment, global environmental issues, social movements and the environment, technology and society, natural disasters and society, and risk perception.

The winner of the Brent K. Marshall Graduate Student Paper Award will receive a plaque, a complimentary SSSP student membership, SSSP conference registration, and a cash award.

To be eligible, the paper must meet the following criteria: 1) the paper must have been written in 2020; 2) the paper must be authored by one or more students and not co-authored by faculty or a colleague who is not a student; 3) manuscripts should be limited to fewer than 10,000 words (inclusive of notes, references, and tables) and 4) the paper must not be published or accepted for publication.

Students should send their submissions to each member of the award committee: June Jeon (ijeon24@wisc.edu), Victor Perez, (victorp@udel.edu), and Ben Manski (bmanski@gmu.edu).

Please note that students may submit to only one Division for a student paper award. Authors should ensure that they receive a confirmation of receipt for their submission. In order to be considered for the Brent K. Marshall Graduate Student Paper Award, applicants are required to submit their papers through the Annual Meeting Call for Papers. **The extended deadline is 1/31/22.**

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Clare Cannon (cebcanon@ucdavis.edu).

WHY NOT US, TOO? MENTAL HEALTH FOR ACADEMICS WHO CARE TOO MUCH

NELS PAULSON

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-STOUT

I am now a middle-aged man. That much is true. These decades have culminated in knee surgeries, a penchant for beer and bourbon, and a lot of time playing the role of That Guy to the public. These façades-attempting to present myself as smart and charming- and a disregard for healthy life choices have taken a toll. Perhaps some of you resonate with this, and perhaps some are in the middle of wrecking your body and mind and soul. Either way, we have a collective problem with authenticity, I believe, and we need to recognize a way forward.

Simone Biles bravely stepped aside when she experienced the “twisties” at the Olympics. This was extraordinary. She is indisputably the Greatest Of All Time (i.e. The GOAT) in gymnastics and was expected to dominate in Tokyo. She observed, rightly, that no matter the pressure on her to bring home the expected gold medals, her safety must come first. Similarly, Naomi Osaka bravely stood up this summer to the powers and norms in tennis (in France and England of all places) when her anxiety was supercharged by expectations and media commitments. These athletes emphasized “It’s okay to not be okay” in a very prominent manner.

Mental health is firmly headed toward the “we do care about this” camp and away from the “toughen up and stop whining” norm. But do you need to be the GOAT to push back?

As academics, we are expected to publish extraordinary scholarship if our hopes of a job (or tenure) are to be realized. Beyond that, most of us really do care. This is especially in SSSP, where we expect praxis to be at the core of why we research what we do. But what do we lose with such pressure? What do we miss out on doing? What should we ask for, and from whom?

My wife is a physician - an exceptional rural internal medicine hospitalist. This pandemic has been brutal to health care personnel, and it’s getting worse as I write this on the Ides of September. She gave a presentation to the Wisconsin Chapter of the American College of Physicians (ACP) last week on mental health. In it, she highlighted the institutional changes that need to be made to help reduce the massive burnout among physicians. While far from the norm yet, ACP and health care institutions are at least recognizing they will continue to lose quality labor unless their mental health is prioritized.



We worked on that presentation together. We sat in our room full of books, nostalgic family pictures, dimly lit seated areas, and a coffee table with a half-finished puzzle of indigenous people’s original places. As we discussed that presentation, I was left wondering about my own colleagues. SSSP truly has righteous goals and people who care to do good. But how many of us are burned out trying to play the game, perhaps trying to posture or grind our way into a space that is quite difficult to pursue as a career? How many of us let that puzzle honoring indigenous people sit unfinished on that table for months in order to trudge through the academic landscape?

“But how many of us are burned out trying to play the game, perhaps trying to posture or grind our way into a space that is quite difficult to pursue as a career?”

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In Environment & Technology, many of us identify injustices that afflict our social world. Thank you for your dedication to making our world a better place. Your gifts are truly amazing. That said, we must ask ourselves what our calling has become in our lives. What should it look like? And, in a space that is increasingly filled with positions of tenuous stability and adjunct status, how much do we need to expand the space within it to include more solid careers and support for those people? What would that look like, and what kind of world could that help build? What would it look like for your institution to prioritize mental health for your department?

Maybe these questions are too big within this one corner of academia. But if we - among the more privileged in the world - cannot ask them, then who can? That is what I kept coming back to, as I helped my partner with her presentation. Doctors, of all people, are somewhat like the superstar athletes - they have the benefit of power and influence in society. Of course, we are not physicians or Simone Biles, but don't we have a platform, too? If we ask these questions, could we normalize doing so for our colleagues who feel disempowered or disenfranchised?

I'm finally at a point in my life where I have enough comfort with myself to say how much I don't know the answers to those questions. Thank God for that, as middle age and bad decisions have forced me to become comfortable with who I am, step back, and stop projecting some kind of idyllic image to the world. As a consequence, I feel my scholarship is finally going to be worthwhile, perhaps even more than I pretended it was before. More importantly, I am a better teacher, and I spend a lot more time with my kids now. I have some semblance of what the podcast hosts and self-help books call "balance".

My hope is we can take this fall to reflect on what we are now seeing normalized by the GOATs regarding mental health. Perhaps, in doing so, we may take heed from those reflections and not merely take note for the sake of scholarship.

Cheers.

“Perhaps, in doing so, we may take heed from those reflections and not merely take note for the sake of scholarship.”



SSSP E&T SOLICITING CHAIR NOMINATIONS FOR ELECTION THIS FALL

Accepting nominations for the next Chair of E&T! This term will run from 2023-2025. Self-nominations are welcomed and encouraged. Nominees must be current division members to accept the nomination. **To nominate, send an email to the Chair, Clare Cannon, (ceb Cannon@ucdavis.edu) with the subject line: SSSP E&T Chair Nomination with your name, title, affiliation and email address. Nominations are due by October 11th 5 pm PST.** For more information on the Chair's roles and responsibilities, please visit [this website](#).

There must be at least two nominees for each division office. Graduate students are eligible to run for and occupy the Chair position. Once nominated the SSSP Home Office will reach out to each nominee and ask candidates to complete an online candidate form which includes biographical information that appears on the ballot under his, her, or their name. Candidates will be given two weeks to complete this task. If a candidate fails to submit this information in a timely manner, his, her, or their name will appear on the ballot with the following notation: Candidate did not provide biographical information. The SSSP Home Office will run the election via email. All SSSP members are eligible to vote. For more information on the election process please visit [this website](#).

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Clare Cannon (ceb Cannon@ucdavis.edu).

SEARCH FOR THE NEXT SSSP EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The Society for the Study of Social Problems seeks applications for the position of Executive Officer to begin at the conclusion of the Society's August 2022 Annual Meeting.

Interested SSSP members in good standing may apply. **Applications must be sent to the SSSP's Administrative Officer and Meeting Manager, Michele Koontz (mkoontz3@utk.edu). Applications received by December 15, 2021 will receive full consideration.**

If you or your division members have questions about the position, please contact Dr. Gillian Niebrugge-Brantley, Chair, Permanent Organization and Strategic Planning Committee (niebran@attglobal.net) and/or Michele Koontz (mkoontz3@utk.edu).

As a social justice organization, the SSSP seeks a diverse applicant pool for the position. Applicants must be a current member of the Society.

You can find the posting [here](#).

2022 ANNUAL MEETING

ENVIRONMENT & TECHNOLOGY SESSIONS

AUGUST 5-7, 2022

SSSP ANNUAL MEETING

LOS ANGELES, CA

SESSION TITLE: RACE, ETHNICITY, INDIGENEITY: NEW APPROACHES TO THE ENVIRONMENT

ORGANIZER: MARKO SALVAGGIO, TULANE UNIVERSITY

SESSION TITLE: REIMAGINING THE RURAL: QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

ORGANIZER: CLARE CANNON, UC DAVIS

SESSION TITLE: ENVIRONMENTALLY JUST FUTURES: NEW AVENUES OF JUSTICE TO CONSIDER

ORGANIZER: ALEX MCINTURFF, UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

SESSION TITLE: ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM

ORGANIZER: ANGUS NURSE, NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY

SESSION TITLE: SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE & RACE IN A CHANGING CLIMATE

ORGANIZERS: GREER HAMILTON, BOSTON UNIVERSITY; CLARE CANNON, UC DAVIS

SESSION TITLE: INSTITUTIONAL COMPLEXITIES AND RESPONSES TO CRISES

ORGANIZER: JUNE JEON, CHUNGNAM NATIONAL UNIVERSITY (CNU), SOUTH KOREA

SESSION TITLE: GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM & SOCIAL CHANGE

ORGANIZERS: LAUREN EASTWOOD, SUNY COLLEGE AT PLATTSBURGH; KELSEY RYAN-SIMKINS, THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

SESSION TITLE: TECHNOLOGY AND THE FUTURE OF WORK AND WORKERS

ORGANIZERS: ALEXIS ECONIE, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON; TODD VACHON, RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

SESSION TITLE: REIMAGINING HEALTH CARE: EXPLORATIONS IN TELEHEALTH, TECHNOLOGY, AND INEQUALITY

ORGANIZER: NELS PAULSON, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-STOUT

SESSION TITLE: DISABILITY, TECHNOLOGY, & ACCESSIBILITY

ORGANIZER: LAURA MAULDIN, UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

EMILY BURKE

PH.D. STUDENT IN SOCIOLOGY AND COMMUNITY &
ENVIRONMENTAL SOCIOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



It's great to be here! I am a first year Ph.D. student in the joint Sociology and Community & Environmental Sociology program at University of Wisconsin-Madison. I just moved to Madison after graduating with a B.S. in Sociology from Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska.

My research interests are broadly environmental sociology, climate change communications, and denialism. I am interested in the ways that science is understood and interpreted in the context of social issues like climate change, and have found that a particularly fascinating way to study this is as it intersects with religion.

During my time at Creighton, I worked on an interdisciplinary project that assessed U.S. Catholic bishops' engagement with climate change, or lack thereof. For this project my co-authors and I compiled a unique dataset of over 12,000 columns written by bishops to qualitatively and quantitatively evaluate the treatment of climate change by Catholic leaders relative to other social issues. This article has been accepted by the interdisciplinary environmental science journal *Environmental Research Letters*.

With this same dataset of 12,000+ bishops' columns, I am working on my own independent project that asks whether and how U.S. Catholic bishops engage in climate change denial. Using an existing framework of literal and ideological denialism, I find that the bishops do in fact engage in denialism. With this evidence, I explore the ways that, due to their leadership role in the church, this denial may be inhibiting the mobilization of broader Catholic climate action.

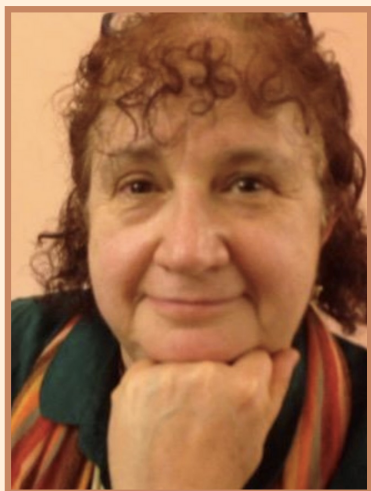
Outside of my academic interests, I love spending time outside, thrifting, and coffee. As an undergraduate, I was a leader of the fossil fuel divestment student movement that successfully pressured Creighton University's administration and Board of Trustees to commit to full divestment last December. I am a first-generation college student, native of Milwaukee, and a houseplant enthusiast.

I look forward to my role as the new E&T Newsletter Editor and getting to know this community!



To have your or your student's work featured, contact Emily at eeburke3@wisc.edu

LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU NEXT YEAR!



NOREEN M. SUGRUE

*SSSP PRESIDENT
(2021-2022)*

In 2001, Robert Perrucci articulated a vision of SSSP and its membership whereby both become consequential actors in public discussions and policy debates. Two decades later, the work and activism of SSSP and its members is needed more than ever.

Our entry into a post-pandemic world provides us with an opportunity to recalibrate our priorities as scholars, policy analysts, teachers, and activists. We are being given an opportunity to embrace this period, with a clear sense of needed pathways toward change. Addressing and redressing today's problems requires the full and central participation of SSSP members. SSSP scholars, be they in the academy, government, or the private sector, are uniquely qualified to play a formative role in defining, designing, and implementing the policies required for a new beginning, a new hope, and a new and fairer social order.

In his widely acclaimed book *Capitalism in the 21st Century*, Thomas Piketty contends that in order to address one of this century's greatest threats - growing inequality - more than economists are required at the "solutions table". This expanded solutions table is necessary if policy solutions to inequities, inequalities, and injustices are to be based on a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the social world in all its dimensions. And who better to provide such descriptions and prescriptive policy actions than sociologists, especially those of us in SSSP?

However, we also must recognize that as sociologists we will not be spontaneously invited to the solutions table. In order to secure a seat at that table, we must deploy our research findings along salient avenues of public discussion and debate. We are called to translate our research findings into concrete prescriptions for change, and thereby infuse the public process with the results of our research. But sitting at the solutions table is one thing; we also must ensure that we have a suitable microphone in order to amplify our voice. Our unique voice can illuminate the issues and problems, as well as provide solutions aimed at both rectifying problems and guiding the reimagination of how a more equitable social order can be achieved. We seek our seat and our microphone not for our own careers but rather for the sake of the country and the world.

In many ways, the 2022 meeting is a new beginning. COVID recently has dominated the social landscape, but we now hope to enter a post-pandemic world. It is a world in which a virus exacerbated and exposed the issues and problems that we all know need to be fixed. It is a world in which some communities are far more broken than before the pandemic, and where the endemic inequities and injustices have been laid bare for all to see.

Recently, we have experienced moments that vividly illustrated the inequities and injustices we know all too well. The examples also are all too familiar: COVID, gun violence, attacks on the rights of women and LGBTQIA persons, anti-Semitism, structural racism, inhumane treatment of immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, as well as inequitable access to health care, poverty, the killings of George Floyd, Adam Toledo, and countless other Blacks and Latinos at the hands of law enforcement, and climate change, in addition to the ever growing inter- and intra-country inequities.

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Find this message and more information on the [SSSP main website](#).

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Our experiences with these moments and our entry into the post-pandemic world provide us with an opportunity to recalibrate our priorities as scholars, policy analysts, teachers, and activists. As we enter this period, there is a clear sense that this is the time for change. There is a willingness on the part of many, particularly younger people, to realign our priorities and social structures, re-prioritize how we spend resources, re-define what it means to identify a society as just, re-distribute goods and services with a commitment to equity, and re-evaluate our programs and policies through an intersectional lens.

I invite each of you to join us in Los Angeles – the city of angels – in order to further a dialogue aimed at social change and action rooted in data and theory. The 2022 meeting also provides opportunities to define, energize, and commit to concrete social actions and policy work.

72ND ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS

THE SOCIOLOGICAL REIMAGINATION: FROM MOMENTS TO MOMENTUM

WHEN: AUGUST 5-7, 2022

**WHERE: OMNI LOS ANGELES HOTEL AT
CALIFORNIA PLAZA, LOS ANGELES**

**THE 2022 CALL FOR PAPERS WILL BE
IN MID-OCTOBER.**

MORE INFORMATION [HERE](#).

**"IT IS THE TIME TO TURN THE MULTIPLE MOMENTS ON OUR
SOCIAL LANDSCAPE INTO MOMENTUM – MOMENTUM FOR SOCIAL
JUSTICE, MOMENTUM FOR CHANGE, MOMENTUM FOR SSSP
SCHOLARS TO MOVE FROM ANALYSIS TO ACTION, AND
MOMENTUM TO MAKE SSSP NOT SIMPLY THE SOCIETY FOR THE
STUDY OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS, BUT ALSO INTO A SOCIETY THAT
DESIGNS SOLUTIONS."**

- NOREEN M. SUGRUE, SSSP PRESIDENT