



Newsletter

— Southwestern Sociological Association

A Message from the Past President

As the Southwestern Sociological Association's outgoing President (and I try to be outgoing), I would like to report on the state of the association. This will be important to those for whom the SSA is a professional home because, frankly, we're just coming out of some hard times. This has been quite an experience for an association that has existed since 1937 and is part of an umbrella organization (the Southwestern Social Science Association) that has been around since 1919.

What happened?

From the mid-1990s through about 2003, SSA lost membership and lost participants at the annual meetings. This was a sizable drop. The largest registration was 521 in 1979, just as the entire discipline of sociology began a contraction from which it has not, yet, completely recovered. Across this past decade, though, our largest registration was 421 in 1996. Then the bottom fell out. Our lowest registration was 223 in 1998. We have been slowly working our way back ever since. We weren't alone, if that helps. The entire SSSA experienced declining membership and meeting attendance in that period, as did the Southern Sociological Society. This may have been a common experience of regional associations.

We addressed this problem by advertising the meetings more extensively, mostly via email, and by increasing our outreach to students. Among other things, we now have three separate student paper competitions, each of

which awards a \$200 prize. Those go along with our Distinguished Paper Competition, which now awards a \$500 prize. We have organized student social events for the entire SSSA, the past two years, and have worked to implement student poster sessions.

The geographic scope of the association is expanding as well. Aside from two Presidents from Memphis State, now the University of Memphis (Rex Enoch and Jerry Michel), all SSA Presidents before 2002 lived in the five-state region, mostly in Texas and Louisiana. In the past two years Tracy Dietz (Central Florida, 2003-2004) and I (Winthrop, South Carolina, 2004-2005) have served.

The SSSA is expanding its boundaries as well. The current SSSA President, for example, has moved from New Mexico to Clemson. After next year's annual meeting in our old stomping grounds of San Antonio, the following two meetings will be in Albuquerque (2007) and Las Vegas (2008).

In the past two years, the indicators of meeting attendance have rebounded. We have had comfortably over 300 participants two years in a row. *Social Science Quarterly*, our journal, is profitable. However, we aren't out of the woods. Actual membership has lagged, for reasons that are not entirely clear.

Geographic expansion is probably necessary for the association's continued well being. It

does, though, raise questions about the regional nature of the SSA, and about the roles of "regional" associations in general. We, and other regional associations need to address these and plan for the future accordingly.

Douglas Eckberg

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Current Officers and Chairs of Standing Committees

Executive Committee for 2005-2006:

President	W. Allen Martin, University of Texas, Tyler; Allen_Martin@mail.uttyl.edu
First Vice-President	Cherylon Robinson, University of Texas, San Antonio; crobinson@utsa.edu
Second Vice-President	Rbbyn Bateman, Baylor University; Robyn_Bateman@baylor.edu
Secretary-Treasurer	Ed Rossman, US Army Corps of Engineers, Edwin.J.Rossman@usace.army.mil
Past President (2005-06)	Douglas Eckberg, Winthrop U; eckberg@winthrop.edu
Executive Council	Karen Manges Douglas, Prairie View A&M University; kmdouglas@sbcglobal.net; 2004-2006 Shana Miller, Xavier University of Louisiana; smiller@xula.edu ; 2004-2006 J. Michael Cruz, jmcruz@usm.maine.edu; 2005-2007 Ignacio Luis Ramirez, 2005-2007
Student Members	Page Oliver, page.oliver@ttu.edu; 2005-2006

Other Officers and Committee Chairs for 2005-2006:

Program Chair	Cherylon Robinson, University of Texas, San Antonio; crobinson@utsa.edu
Membership Chair	Robyn Bateman, Baylor University; Robyn_Bateman@baylor.edu
Nominations	Douglas Eckberg, Winthrop U; eckberg@winthrop.edu
Elections	Beverly Stiles, Midwestern State University; Beverly.stiles@mwsu.edu
Silent Auction	Robyn Bateman, Baylor University; Robyn_Bateman@baylor.edu
Student Awards	Nadine Barrett; nbarrett@mail.twu.edu
Distinguished Paper & Department Awards	Douglas Eckberg, Winthrop U; eckberg@winthrop.edu
Historian	Robert Beckley, West Texas A&M; rbeckley@mail.wtamu.edu
Editor, SSA Newsletter	Tracy Dietz, University of Central Florida; tdietz@mail.ucf.edu
Association Home Page:	http://www.cas.ucf.edu/soc_anthro/ssa — be on the look-out for a new location!
Webmaster:	Emily Labeff, Midwestern State University; Emily.labeff@mwsu.edu

Newsletter Submissions

This newsletter is meant to provide information that is timely and of interest to our members.

If you would like to submit something to be included in the next newsletter, please send an e-mail to the newsletter editor, Tracy Dietz at tdietz@mail.ucf.edu.

We are also pleased to now welcome advertisements. If you would like to advertise a position announcement, your graduate program, or a service, please contact me at the above e-mail for more information.

In the next edition:

In the next edition of the newsletter, look for important information about paper submissions for the 2006 annual meetings that will be held April 11-15 at the St. Anthony and Gunter Hotels in San Antonio, TX.

Nominations Needed

If you or someone you know is interested in serving as an officer of the Southwestern Sociological Association, we would like to know.

Each year, we are pleased to have such a fine group of candidates for important positions in our organization. Douglas Eckberg is our Nominations chair this year and is anxious to begin the process of putting together the slate of candidates. We will need to elect a 2nd Vice President to serve a 6 year term, Executive Council Members and a Student Member. Please contact him to nominate yourself or someone else at (803) 323-4654 or eck-

Preliminary Call for Papers for the 2006 SSA Meeting

Make sure to attend the 2006 annual meeting of the Southwestern Sociological Association. The meetings will be held April 11-15 at the St. Anthony and Gunter Hotels in San Antonio, TX.

If you are interested in submitting a paper for presentation or organizing a panel or session, you are urged to contact the 2006 program chair as soon as possible.

Students are especially encouraged to participate. The SSA prides itself on be-

ing supportive for students as well as new and established faculty members. The meetings are professional and maintain a high degree of academic integrity but are also friendly and a good place to get started on a career.

For more information, contact Cheryl Robinson at the Department of Sociology at the University of Texas at San Antonio, 6900 W Loop 1604 West, San Antonio, TX. 78249. Or, e-mail her at crobinson@utsa.edu.



Texas Bluebonnets bloom in the spring and you may just be lucky enough to see some while at the 2006 annual meeting in San Antonio — don't miss the meetings or the Bluebonnets as both are sure to be worth the trip.

Paper Submission Guidelines

Although completed papers are preferred, abstracts are acceptable. **Send these as attachments to an e-mail.** We will accept submissions in any word processing system that organizers' computers can read. Word (.doc), Plain Text (.txt.), or Rich Text (.rtf) documents are safe bets. The abstract should be 250-500 words and should summarize the main ideas of the paper. We will accept "works-in-progress."

If you do not have access to reliable e-mail, you can mail your submission to the Program Chair or a Session Organizer.

Submissions must include: the names of all authors, their institutional affiliations, complete mailing addresses, daytime

telephone numbers, and **e-mail addresses** (if at all possible) Indicate the status of each author: as a professor, a sociologist outside of traditional academia, a student (specify undergraduate, masters level, or doctoral level), or other status (please specify).

Finally, state if an overhead projector is needed for the paper.

You will receive pre-registration materials shortly after we receive your submission. The Southwestern Sociological Association's pre-registration deadline is late-November (note that this is earlier than the Southwestern Social Science Association's deadline). All participants

must pre-register to appear on the program. Our policy is to accept most submissions. If a submission is rejected, the pre-registration cost will be refunded. A person who misses the pre-registration deadline risks being removed from the program.

The SSA has six awards for outstanding papers written by students (the award is \$100 each), and one Distinguished Paper Award for the best paper written by a practicing sociologist (the award is \$500). Submission requirements are as stated above, but to take part in the competition a completed paper will be due by mid-January. Details can be found in the announcement of the paper competitions.

SSA on the Web

The Southwestern Sociological Association will have a new webpage. Make sure to visit the SSA's new home page at http://www.cas.ucf.edu/soc_anthro/ssa.

You will find important news and information, including contact information for officers and committees as well as archives of old newsletters.

We appreciate hearing from our members and look forward to putting exciting information about our members and member departments on the webpage.

Please submit any news that you would like to have appear on the webpage to webmaster: Dr. Emily Labeff at Emily.labeff@mwsu.edu.



Distinguished Paper Award Given

The SSA also honors papers submitted by non-student participants in the annual meeting. Those papers considered for the award MUST be accepted for presentation at the meeting, presented at the meeting, and not under consideration for any other award sponsored by a SSSA affiliate.

This year several excellent papers were submitted to the committee and we are pleased to announce that the paper, "Civic Engagement and County Economic Growth in Appalachia during the 1990s" by Carson Mencken and Christopher Bader from the Department of Sociology, Baylor University received the award.

If you are interested in being considered for next year's award, you must write and submit a full paper that will be presented at the annual meeting and submit the paper to Douglas Eckberg, the Distinguished Paper Award Committee Chair. Contact him at eckbergd@winthrop.edu for more details.



The Alamo is only one of many interesting places to visit while you are in San Antonio. Consider staying a day or two longer to enjoy the sites and the many cultures that have created the great city.

Student Paper Awards

The Southwestern Sociological Association encourages student participation and actively seeks to help defray the cost of travel to the conference by making the Student Paper Award available to students at the Undergraduate, Master's, and Ph.D. level. The award is 200.00 in each category. Awards are made to papers that are meritorious. The SSA may award this to more than 1 paper in a particular category, should the committee deem papers worthy. Winners are announced at the General Business Meeting of the SSA.

Paper Submission Guidelines for Student Paper Award:

1) Papers should be authored by students.

2) The paper must be accepted for presentation in the Sociology program (or in a session that is cross listed with Sociology) at the annual Southwestern Social Science Association meeting.

3) The paper may not exceed 25 pages (not including tables/graphs/charts or references).

4) Students must provide contact information in a cover letter, including a working email address, and must state the competition category (Undergraduate, Master's, or Ph.D. level).

5) Papers should be ready for "blind review" by committee members, so that all identifying information must be removed

from/left out of headers and footers within the document.

6) Because the award is designed to encourage participation at the annual meeting and help defray the cost of travel, the paper and the author must attend the annual meeting. The author must be present to deliver the paper at the meeting.

For more information, contact Nadine Barrett at Nbarrett@mail.twu.edu

Student Award Recipients

Three students were awarded outstanding paper awards for their scholarship at the 2004 annual meeting. Each year, the SSA is pleased to review scholarly papers that have been submitted and accepted for presentation at the annual meeting by students.

The committee elected to make awards to three students at this year's annual meeting. Each recipient was recognized at the business meeting and presented with certificates and \$200 each.

Outstanding PhD-level Paper:

"Beyond the Castro: Examining Gay and Lesbian Enclaves in the San Francisco Bay Area," by Amanda K. Baumle, and D'Lane Compton, Texas A&M University

Outstanding MA-level Paper (tie):

"Residential Segregation by Race, Poverty Status, and Household Type: Findings from Houston, Texas," by Lindsay Howden, Texas A&M University

Outstanding Undergraduate Paper

"Homosexuality in Postcolonial Delirium: Critically Revisiting the Politics of Cultural Relativism," by Ajnesh Prasad, Queen's University

Awards are given only to presenters who will be presenting at the annual meeting and who submit the completed paper to the committee by the deadline.

“Silent Auction” helps American Sociological Association Minority Fellows

The “Silent Auction,” which has been a vehicle for earning money for the ASA’s Minority Fellowship Program since the late-1980s, earned \$563 at the 2005 Annual Meeting. We are grateful to all the individuals who made this possible.

The auction is an annual event and Robyn Bateman will be in charge in 2006. Make sure to contact her if you would like to make a tax deductible donation to next year’s auction. Or, plan to bring the item with you to San Antonio. Keep in mind

that regional items from your hometown are always popular. Dr. Bateman can be reached at Robyn_Bateman@baylor.edu.

Also, Robyn may be needing help with the table. If you or someone you know would like to volunteer to watch the table during the meetings, please contact her. Students are especially encouraged to volunteer. There may be some monetary incentive for student volunteers.

On a side note, Cherylon accidentally printed receipts with the wrong year on them. Please e-mail her for a new copy. She can be reached at crobin-

Proposed Constitutional Amendment

At the 2004 General Business Meeting, an amendment to the SSA Constitution was proposed. The amendment would change two titles. The office currently named “Second Vice-President” would become “Vice President,” and the office currently named “First Vice-President”

would become “President-Elect.” This will make our titles consistent with those of elected officials in the SSSA. The change will receive a final vote at the 2005 General Business Meeting.

Constitution Changes and other News

During the 2005 annual meeting, the membership voted to change the SSA constitution. To be more consistent with the office names of the Southwestern Social Science Association, the Executive Council Proposed at the 2004 annual meeting to rename the office of the First Vice-President to President-Elect and to rename the office of Second Vice-President to Vice-President. This motion was passed at the 2005 annual meeting by those members in attendance at the annual meeting.

In addition to this very exciting change, those individuals who may have been

hesitant to run for office in the past because of the six-year commitment that was expected, will be happy to know that the executive committee also voted to collapse the duties of the past presidents into one year. Thus, the previous six-year commitment is now a four-year commitment. So, all of you who have been considering becoming more involved in SSA, now is the time to take the plunge! Go ahead and write that e-mail to Doug today to let him know that you are interested in running for office. As a past president myself, I can say that while it is not an easy job, it is definitely a rewarding one!

The executive committee has also decided to develop an award to memorialize the dedication of Norma Williams. Norma, for those who never had the opportunity to know her, gave tirelessly to this organization and especially to student members of the organization. She passed away on September 11, 2004. We were very fortunate to have been able to have a memorial service for her at the annual meetings and I would like to thank Jane Sell on behalf of the Executive Committee for making those arrangements and for doing such a beautiful job.

Looking for Ideas to Increase Membership

As you read in Doug’s address, SSA has witnessed a decline in membership. The cause, or causes, of this decline are not know. However, the organization is looking for ways to increase our membership. At this point, we would like to encourage each of you to encourage non-member colleagues to join SSA.

If each of you could think of three characteristics of SSA that make it attractive to you and then sharing those with your

colleagues. SSA was the first professional organization that I joined and I have continued to come to meetings and belong even while living in New Hampshire and Florida. Why — mostly because of the people, because it is not as pretentious as even some of the other regional organizations, and I like that SSA is an interdisciplinary organization. Those are my reasons and certainly each of you have your own reasons. Share them with your colleagues and bring them to San Antonio!

San Antonio is known for it fabulous Tex-Mex cuisine. Start making plans this summer to present a paper at the meeting so you can reward yourself with a refreshing MARGARITA on the riverwalk.



Southwestern Sociological Association

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Don't forget to select sociology as your affiliate when you renew your membership. Please remind colleagues that this is important.



Call for Help to Keep Meeting Costs Down!

The introduction of the many internet travel agencies and programs that allow you to bid for lower room rates or book room rates in hotels near the conference hotel may seem like a blessing.

However, it is important for you to realize that the contracts that are negotiated by SSSA require that the organization promise to fill a specified block of rooms for a specified period of time during the conference.

The price for the conference meeting rooms is part of this negotiation and dependent upon the organization meeting those room obligations. If we do not fill the rooms that we promise to fill, the organization must pay a fee for not fulfilling the contract requirements.

In turn, this will increase meeting registration fees for future meetings as well as room rental rates. So, please help the organization and ultimately yourself by fighting that urge to book a room at a hotel near the conference hotel next year.

We're going paperless

To keep our mailing costs down and to help to protect just a few trees, the SSA has decided to move to an electronic newsletter.

By sending the newsletter electronically, members will not only be able to receive the newsletter quicker, but it will save the organization \$500-\$600 per year, not to mention the extra time, blood, sweat and tears that the paper version costs (those are donated by me)

Plus, you will be able to forward the electronic copy to colleagues and students who might like to read their own copies.

The new paperless newsletter will be sent to all SSA members whose e-mail addresses are on file. If you would prefer that a paper version be sent to you, please send me an e-mail indicating this and I will mail you a paper copy.

Also, you will be able to access the newsletter on the SSA website

Keeping your e-mail address current

We have always had a lot of trouble with out-of-date mailing addresses and it is likely that especially for students that the e-mail addresses that we will be using to distribute the newsletters will be even more problematic.

I would like to remind you to let me know that your e-mail address has changed by sending me an e-mail with the following in the reference line: SSA new E-mail Address. I will then be able to keep your e-mail address up-to-date and you will not miss anything.

And, as a reminder for those who have SPAM blockers enabled, you will need to allow e-mail from my e-mail account to get the newsletter.