Call for Organizers and Papers for 2016 Meeting

Theme: Social Change(s) n Era of Global Interconnectedness

Dates: September 29th/30th 2016

Location: St. Cloud State University

Our conference theme this year is “Social Change(s) n Era of Global Interconnectedness.” We seek to have an active dialogue about the issues facing society due to social change(s) happening at all levels of society and continue our conversation about empowering the disempowered from last year’s conference that was so energizing. We welcome presentations about practice issues arising from social change, pedagogical tools to teach about all aspects of global social change and research presentations. We welcome presentations from faculty, students, applied sociologists, and those who use sociology in other settings. Be creative and submit a paper or organize a session to:

Program Organizer, Sudarshana Bordoloi at bordoloi.sudarshana@gmail.com

To become a member of Sociologists of Minnesota or to renew your membership:

1. Download and complete the Membership Form.

2. Complete a personal check or Money Order addressed to SOM.

3. Mail your Check or Money Order and Completed Membership Form to:

   Sadie Pendaz, SOM Treasurer
   5035 Vera Cruz Ave N
   Crystal, M 55429
Caroline Rose Annual Student Paper Competition

The Caroline Rose Student Paper Competition is a great opportunity for students to compete and present their work. The Sociologists of Minnesota is offering two cash prizes (first and second place) within each of the two divisions. All winners receive free conference registration, meals, and membership in SOM. Winners can inquire about assistance toward accommodations and travel for Annual Conference of SOM held in October where paper winners are expected to present on their winning papers.

**Faculty**, we encourage you to invite your students to enter their papers in recognition of their outstanding work under your guidance.

**Students**, we welcome you to submit one or more papers. Such a submission (and win) looks good on your resume, graduate school application, and recognizes your outstanding engagement as a student sociologist. Now is the time to remind your outstanding students to submit their papers to the SOM Student Paper Competition.

**Rules of the Competition**

1. The competition is open to any student who has written a paper while enrolled in a college or university in Minnesota during the 2015-2016 academic year. Only single-authored papers will be accepted.
2. The paper should not exceed 20 double-spaced pages, excluding appendices and references, and should also include a brief abstract. Please number the pages.
3. The student’s name or institutional affiliation of the author must not appear in the text or in the abstract. The title of the paper should be included at the top of the first page of the text.
4. The names, telephone numbers, and email addresses of both the student and the faculty sponsor should be included in a separate cover page with the title of the paper.
5. Students who submit papers to this competition are encouraged to submit the same paper to sessions at the annual meetings of the Midwest Sociological Society or the American Sociological Association.
6. The winning authors are expected to be available to present their papers at the annual conference in September 29-30, 2016.
7. Papers involving human subjects must have Institutional Review Board (or its equivalent) approval, and must note the receipt of approval in the methodology section of the paper.

Please submit an electronic version (Word or PDF) of the paper to:

Professor Thomas A. Hanson
Anoka Ramsey Community College
thomas.hanson@anokaramsey.edu

Please contact Professor Hanson with any questions.

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**Distinguished Service Award**

Distinguished Service Award Since 1982, the Board of Directors of the SOM has been “authorized to extend special recognition on behalf of the membership, in an appropriate manner during each annual meeting, to one or more sociologists who have contributed significantly to the discipline as an educator, researcher, published scholar or applied practitioner of Sociology during their careers in Minnesota...” It will be offered for contributions in one or more of the following areas: "1" For pursuing an extended line of inquiry over time involving faculty and students in Minnesota; "1" For contributions to a program of sociology instruction in Minnesota;!! "1" For facilitating programs relevant to the application of sociology in Minnesota.
From the devastating loss of Freddie Gray in Boston, MA to the tragic death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO, this year marked several high profile cases of racial bias and bigotry towards communities of color. These instances highlighted the reality that, despite rhetoric that declares that peace, fairness, and tolerance are the norm for our society, what is actually occurring is the continuance of segregationist practice, overt and subtle bigotry, and the ugliness of violence.

In this light, the 2015 Empowering The Disempowered Conference was held October 1-2 at UW River Falls, with a focus on promoting scholarship and practice that engages with issues of oppression and exploitation of disempowered peoples. Collaboration was at the heart of this conference, as this was a joint meeting between the Sociologists of Minnesota and Wisconsin Sociological Association.

This unique meeting included excellent presentations, roundtables, and workshops centered on issues confronting oppressed and marginalized peoples, ranging from international exploitation to bias in criminal convictions. The two-day event was a time of meaningful discourse and exploration of sociological content.

This year’s conference balanced student and professional scholarship throughout, with dozens of presentations from sociologists and students from across Minnesota and Wisconsin. One standout feature was the significant number of student papers submitted to the Caroline Rose Paper competition. While all the papers were excellent, the judges worked hard to identify the first and second place graduate and undergraduate winners. Special thanks go out to the contest judges for their hard work in facilitating the event and identifying the winning papers.

As the conference theme surrounded the tragic events, and subsequent social action, in Ferguson, MO, several workshops and lectures were provided with an emphasis on confronting topics such as: bias in policing, police training and culture, and teaching about bias in the classroom. These discussions were not only informative, but addressed how communities can collaborate towards ensuring the end to such tragedies in the future.

The marquee event for the conference was the presentation by Dr. Artika Tyner, a law professor from the University of St. Thomas. Her keynote address, entitled Inroads to Justice and Freedom: The Impact of Incarceration on Families, Communities, and Offenders, provided a glimpse of how social systems can oppress and disempower communities. Ultimately, Dr. Tyner provided a message of hope, encouraging sociologists and non-sociologists alike to engage in direct legal and community actions to remedy injustice, wherever it may be.

Among those who attended, the response was extremely positive, with many folks remarking on the great presentations, strong student papers, and the timely and important theme. As current president of the Sociologists of Minnesota, I was honored to be present alongside so many people who are committed to the field of sociology, and the values and principles that serve as its foundation. Each year brings new opportunities to connect all things sociological to the events affecting society. Looking forward to seeing all of you at the conference next year!

Dr. Ronald Ferguson, Ph.D.
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