



FALL 2015 ISSUE

FORUM: The Voice of The Mid-South Sociological Association



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FORUM: The Voice of The Mid-South Sociological

Introduction

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The purpose of this edition is to give voice to our members, honoring those who have passed and are still with us by learning from their experiences and celebrating their accomplishments.

This issue features important information about the upcoming meeting in Lafayette, LA (October 21-24), (please note you still have time for a last minute submission see page 5), and also tips on free and cheap things to do in Lafayette, interviews, submissions and in memoriam from members, as well as member congratulations and opportunities.

I'm especially honored in this edition to feature Dr. Caroline S. Westerhoff and her insightful musings on the state of sociology as well as Dr. Charles E. Palmer and Kim Davies for contributing to the member memories section. This endeavor especially has allowed me to realize just how privileged I am to be a part of the MSSA family. I invite you to join me in that realization and laud our members both past and present.

The next edition of Forum will cover meeting highlights, MSSA member congratulations and opportunities as well as member interviews. I'll see you in Lafayette and don't be surprised when I ask about YOUR favorite MSSA memory. Please send any and all submissions and suggestions to: Forum Editor Tina Deshotels at tdeshotels@jsu.edu





MSSA Forum:

The Voice of the Mid-South Sociological Association

Fall 2015

Message From the President

41st Annual Meeting of the Mid-South Sociological Association



Greetings Members and Friends of MSSA:

We are quickly approaching the 41 st Annual Meeting of the Mid-South Sociological Association from October 21- October 24 in Lafayette, LA. I am elated to announce that we have two distinguished colleagues who will receive the 2015 MSSA Distinguish Member Award, Dr. Thomas Durant and Dr. Dennis McSeveney. These two veteran members have worked tirelessly over their career to keep MSSA a place where budding and seasoned scholars can create “conversation circles” that have served as a catalyst towards fostering an environment that we can call our professional home. The 41 st Mid-South Sociological Annual Meeting constitutes a plethora of diverse sessions, roundtables, and workshops for seasoned and emerging professionals, as well as graduate and undergraduate students. The 41 st annual meeting, “On the Edge of Theory and Practice: Sociology Without Borders ” will take the city of Lafayette by storm. As President of MSSA, I invite each of you to join us (the MSSA family) in Lafayette to dialogue with our scholars, explore publishing opportunities with our editors, and to create engaging conversation circles with the Executive Council and membership at –large as we continue to promote excellence in teaching, research, and service.

Yours Truly,

Anita Bledsoe-Gardner, Ph.D
President, MidSouth Sociological Association

For more information, see the MidSouth Sociological Association’s website at::

www.midsouthsoc.org



Dr. Anita Bledsoe-Gardner 41st President of MSSA

About Our President

“Dr. Anita Bledsoe-Gardner is an Assistant Professor of Criminology at Johnson C. Smith University (Charlotte, North Carolina). Bledsoe-Gardner has worked as principal investigator and co-principal investigator to facilitate research projects in the substantive areas of community safety (in concert with Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department), victimology, and juvenile delinquency. With her educational experiences and business acumen, she also currently serves as a consultant for the United States Department of Justice, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Department of Education. Notwithstanding, Dr. Bledsoe-Gardner has served as a research consultant for the Minister of Education in St. Kitts, Basseterre, West Indies. In 2002, she developed and implemented an international mentoring program for the Minister of Education of St. Kitts, Basseterre. Her work with youth is also underscored by serving as a School Crisis Counselor for Gwinnett, Rockdale and Union Counties where she served as court liaison for a tri-county area. While serving as a School Crisis Counselor, Dr. Bledsoe-Gardner developed enrichment and anger management programs for teens.”

“Dr. Bledsoe Gardner has presented and published several professional papers during her tenure as a university professor; recent examples of such work found in *Community Disasters and Community Disaster Recovery and Resiliency: Exploring Global Opportunities and Challenges*, *Journal of Faculty Development*, Sage Publications, and *The Researcher*. She has also secured grant funding ranging over 3 million dollars for non-profit organizations. She serves as a faculty research mentor to several undergraduate students. Additionally, Anita is the 2013 recipient of the Social Scientist of the Year Award from Brookhaven Mississippi Alumni Association, Incorporated. Dr. Bledsoe-Gardner is also a member of several professional and social organizations, including but not limited to, American Criminal Justice Association, Southern Sociological Association, Mid-South Association, and South Carolina Probation and Parole Association. She also serves on the Executive Board for Give and Go, North Carolina Public Safety Advisory Board, and Les Gemmes, Incorporated—nonprofit organizations.”

For more information, see the MidSouth Sociological Association’s website at:

www.midsouthsoc.org



**On the Edge of Theory and Practice:
Sociology without Borders
October 21-24, 2015 Lafayette, LA**

Call for Papers and Participation



Extended deadline for submissions is September 25, 2015

Program Co-Chairs:

Dr. Shelly McGrath, *University of Alabama – Birmingham*

Dr. DeMond Miller, *Rowan University*



We invite paper submissions for the 2015 Mid-South Sociological Association meeting. This year's conference explores the nexus between the production of academic knowledge and the application of that knowledge in our communities. This "scholar-activist" model promotes agency of community members through the assistance of social science data and activism by academics dedicated to engaging in practical change. In addition to papers centering on this theme submissions on traditional topical and pedagogical substantive areas, and poster presentations areas are welcomed!

**FORWARD ALL QUESTIONS AND SUBMISSIONS TO
DEMOND MILLER AT MILLERD@ROWAN.EDU**

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL Presenters, Presiders, Discussants, and Session Organizers must be current members of MSSA and must pre-register for the conference by October 10, 2015. Individuals not pre-registered for the conference by this date will not have their name or presentation information included in the final program.

For more information, see the MidSouth Sociological Association's website at: www.midsouthsoc.org



41st Annual MSSA Conference Hotel

On the Edge of Theory and Practice: A Sociology Without Borders

October 21-21, 2015 Lafayette, LA

Hotel Fact Sheet

Double Tree by Hilton Hotel Lafayette
1521 West Pinhook Road
Lafayette, Louisiana 70503

\$142 per night for Two Double Beds
\$152 per night for One King Bed
\$172 per night for Executive Level with Two Doubles
\$182 per night with Executive Level with One King

For Reservations: When making your reservation be sure to identify yourself as a member of MSSA in order to receive the conference rate

By phone: You may also make your reservation by calling 800-222-TREE (8733) and use the group code MDS to get the conference hotel rate and to make sure MSSA gets credit for your reservation.

You may also make your reservation online at:

http://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/L/LFTLDDT-MDS-20151020/index.ihtml?WT.mc_id=POG

The last day to make reservations and the receive conference rate is **Monday, September 29, 2015**

Parking: Parking is complimentary Valet parking is not offered

Transportation to/from airport:

3 miles from Lafayette Regional Airport to Hotel. **Courtesy bus is provided by hotel ONLY for transportation to and from Lafayette Regional Airport.** Transportation by taxi to/from the airport is estimated by the Hotel (not MSSA) to be around \$10.

64 miles from Baton Rouge Metropolitan/Ryan Field to Hotel. NO courtesy bus is provided by hotel for transportation to and from Baton Rouge Metropolitan/Ryan Field. Transportation by taxi to/from the airport is estimated by the Hotel (not MSSA) to be around \$118.

127 miles from New Orleans International Airport to Hotel. NO courtesy bus is provided by hotel for transportation to and from New Orleans International Airport. Transportation by taxi to/from the airport is estimated by the Hotel (not MSSA) to be around \$218.

(REMINDER: THE AVERAGE TAXI FEE IS PROVIDED BY THE HOTEL, NOT MSSA, AND PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE)



Free Things to Do in Lafayette, LA

Compiled By: Tina Hebert Deshotels

Public Art: See Murals scattered though out down town (page 1 and 5) When passing through downtown Lafayette, it is nearly impossible to not encounter at least one of the city's magnificent pieces of outdoor public art. Jefferson Street alone is home to three murals and two sculptures. There are also many other pieces of public art that are not but a couple of blocks off from Jefferson Street. Indeed, some of the works are little more tucked away, and not as easily noticeable to a quick passerby. Take the "Public Art of Lafayette" tour to discover works that you may not have known existed,

or to reveal the artists' insights and other intriguing facts about the pieces of art you think you are already familiar with. This tour will leave you with an understanding of the cultural and historical significance of Lafayette's public art. <http://www.acadianahistorical.org/tours/show/5>



Public Music: While you're down town, examining the wonderful murals check out Down Town Alive FREE musical performances from 6:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m. Concession sales help keep DTA! free, so don't be a mooch and buy DTA! hootch. October 23rd in Parc Sans Souci The Charmain Neville Band on is sure to light up the stage with her rich vocals and smooth R&B rhythms and make it a night to remember. Charmaine Neville is the daughter to one of the highly acclaimed Neville Brothers. Her musical heritage and New Orleans roots mix together to form an electrifying sound that cannot be ignored. Charmaine has music in her soul and loves to share her passion with the world.

<http://w.downtownlafayette.org/events/downtown-alive.html>




Free and Cheap Things to Do in Lafayette, LA

By: Tina Hebert Deshotels

Visit a swamp. There are multiple swamps within the Greater Lafayette area. There is even one in the middle of Lafayette at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, which is the only on-campus swamp in the United States.

Cypress Lake is a 2-acre (0.8 ha) swamp-like lake in the heart of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette campus that started as a buffalo wallow. Today it is a unique university landmark that is a habitat for native irises, alligators, turtles, birds and fish, as well as a hangout for students and a point of interest for tourists visiting Lafayette, Louisiana. Cypress Lake is casually called "The Swamp," which is also the nickname of the Louisiana-Lafayette Ragin' Cajuns stadium, named Cajun Field. Check this website for other free and cheap outings:





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www.oldetymegrocery.com

Business Hours
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Saturday 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Sunday - closed

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POOR BOYS

MEATS Whole \$8.75 Half \$6.50

- Ham
- Roast Beef
- BBQ Ham or Beef
- Pastrami
- Corn Beef
- Turkey
- Sausage
- Meatball

CHEESE

American
Cheddar
Mozzarella

Pepper Jack
Provolone
Swiss

An additional .60 cents

SEAFOOD Whole Half

- Shrimp \$9.50 \$6.95
- Oyster MARKET PRICE
- Catfish (Friday Only) \$9.50 \$6.95

SPECIALTY POOR BOYS Whole \$9.50 Half \$6.95

- Olde Tyme Special (Ham/ Turkey/ Roast Beef/ Swiss)
- Two Meat Combo (Ham/ Roast Beef/ Swiss)

SALADS

- Meat Salad.....\$6.75
(Choice of Sliced Meats)
- Fried Shrimp Salad.....\$7.25

LAGNIAPPE

- Sliced Bread Sandwich..... \$3.95
- Kids Sliced Bread Ham and Cheese... \$2.50
- Seafood Plate (Friday Only)..... \$11.95
- French Fries..... \$1.95

PHONE IN ORDERS
(337) 235-8165
CALL IN ADVANCE FOR LARGE ORDERS

Within walking distance of Cypress Lake on the ULL campus you can swing by Olde Tyme Grocery and enjoy one of the best poor-boys you'll ever have!! Olde Tyme Grocery has become a favorite establishment for many locals and a great find for tourists! <http://www.oldetymegrocery.com/>

Check this website for other free and cheap things to do in Lafayette <http://www.backpackingdiplomacy.com/32-things-to-do-in-lafayette-louisiana/>



Free and Cheap Things to Do in Lafayette, LA

By: Tina Hebert Deshotels

Take a swamp tour Lake Martin, just 15 minutes from the hotel known for the roseate spoon bill and alligator nesting grounds (seasonal) Tours Champagne's Cajun Swamp Tours guided eco boat tours offer insight into Lake Martin's swamp ecology, St. Martin Parish's hidden jewel. This professionally guided swamp tour will take you safely through Cypress trees and Tupelo gum trees draped in Spanish moss. This Louisiana swamp lake is home to 205 different species of birds and is home to some of the largest alligators you will ever see up close and personal! We are open year round, 7 days a week. We can accommodate small & large groups, RV parking is available. Photographers, bring your cameras! Please email or call to make a reservation. 337-230-4068 www.champagnesswamptours.com



Or, just take a walk on the board walk around Lake Martin:





And Don't Forget to Eat!! Lafayette: Voted Tastiest Town

By: Tina Hebert Deshotels

Southern Living voted Lafayette, LA the Tastiest Town in 2012. "Lafayette's distinct culinary identity as the capital of Cajun country, its spicy, sausage-laden roots, and a new generation of locals devoted to preserving their heritage while putting a fresh spin on tradition have made it an incredibly satisfying place to eat," writes Senior Editor Paula Disbrowe in Southern Living.

Southern Living's Perfect Eating Day in Lafayette:

- Line up for lemon-filled glazed donuts at Meche's Donut King (337-981-4918).
- Start your smoked-meat marathon at The French Press with a Sweet Baby Breesus (buttermilk biscuit slider with bacon, fried boudin balls, and Steen's cane syrup from Abbeville) and a pint of Bayou Teche Brewing's LA-31 Bière Pâle ale, made by brewers so devoted to their Acadian background that there are local organizations that promote Creole culture listed on every bottle.
- Roll up your sleeves for slow-smoked, countrystyle barbecue ribs served with sticky jambalaya at Johnson's Boucanière. Lori Walls' restaurant is an homage to Johnson's Grocery, the market her family ran for 60-plus years.
- Finish with duck confit with braised white beans, sausage, mizuna, and satsumas at Cochon Lafayette, Donald Link and Stephen Stryjewski's stunning restaurant on the Vermilion River.

<http://www.lafayettetravel.com/eat/tastiest-town>



MSSA IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE – INDIA AND GEOPOLITICS

Caroline s. Westerhof, Ph.D.

I joined MSSA when I had received a Retirement Research foundation grant with two other persons. We were to set up an Alzheimer training program for caregivers who serve patients who have Alzheimer's and are required to have official training. If a facility advertises that it serves patients who have dementia, caregivers must officially have training. I and several others became certified trainers for several facilities in the state of Florida.

I met Dr. Shanta Sharma at my first annual conference many years ago. Dr. Sharma always recognized new members, and reached out to make us feel at home. Much of her work dealt with statistics and data among the elderly in India, her native home. She was a tenured full professor at Henderson State University in Arkansas, but would visit family at least once a year in New Delhi

We each recognized our professionalism within gerontology and in our hobbies. Dr. Sharma was always the scholar to whom I looked up to and admired. She organized and developed many panels wherein she would invite me to become a panelist. Our professionalism extended to our profession and externally to our respect for higher consciousness – intuition, channeling in gerontology. This gave us greater insight for our professional perspectives.

Dr. SHARMA was a scholar, listener and organizer. My favorite memories were when she would gather her panelists, either at tea or meals in the hotel, or at nearby ethnic restaurants. Shanta would lead the discussion, analyzing the following year's potential panels, and the newest developments and articles on the future of gerontology. She thought she might retire in 2015, and we discussed her unique ability and knowledge of global issues in gerontology, wherein she would serve as a consultant for various institutions located within the United States and globally.



MSSA IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE – INDIA AND GEOPOLITICS

Caroline s. Westerhof, Ph.D.

Dr. Sharma was also particularly close to the aging populations in India. She spoke at many international institutions, including at Oxford University. In the last year we spoke almost every evening. One Thursday night in October I had spoken to her, and she had said she was very tired. The next day she had not showed up for her class, and the school asked the police to go to her home. She was found on the kitchen floor and had had a stroke. She never fully awakened. Her brother immediately came in from Washington, D.C and was with her every moment. Many of the nurses were devoted to her, for they had been her students in previous years.

I still feel, from an earthly perspective, “I never said ‘good-bye.’” “Shalom, peace be with you, my dearest Shanta.”

Through the lasting benefits of MSSA, WE HAVE INCREASED OUR FRIENDSHIPS AND SHARED KNOWLEDGE. We recognize the following:

- Increase of practical and technical knowledge of gerontology
- Protect, enhance and serve those who are elderly, and their caregivers
- Create new dimensions - Develop awareness for all in acknowledging, serving and recognizing the wisdom and gifts of clientele who have achieved increased physical years ...

It was President Harry Truman who once told me, “Age is not a criteria for success.” I looked upon United States First Lady and Diplomat Eleanor Roosevelt as my mentor when I was a student and graduated from Brandeis University.



MSSA IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE – INDIA AND GEOPOLITICS

Caroline s. Westerhof, Ph.D.

I chose to run for the state senate in a southern state. I always felt politics was the door one could open in a democratic society and ask, “May I help you?” Politics is all-encompassing in serving “We the People...all humanity.” I initiated the ouster of a state senator who had been in the state senate for some twenty years; he had said on the then McNeil-Lehrer television show, “He was comfortable with segregation.”

My best friend had been ambassador to Gambia, Ruth V. Washington. Ambassador Washington had always said, “Go where you are wanted.” She had been the first African American magistrate in New York City. One of her prosecuting cases had been the Tylenol deaths, wherein she had put a five million dollar bond on the perpetrator. Following her advice I chose to run in the same district as that legislator, which included Selma, Alabama.

I spoke in many of the churches where the congregants were African-American. Many of the voters switched their chosen political party because of my engagement with them. It was a three-way primary –I lost, but a good person who had integrity, morals and ethics won. This is what mattered to me, so I considered this race a success.

The person whose ouster I had initiated and I did speak at the same political gathering. I considered his remarks “off-color,” so I decided to write a Letter to the Editor of the local newspaper suggesting the incumbent “buy a bar of soap.” It was an exhilarating experience; I had fulfilled my dream to run for office in the spirit of Eleanor Roosevelt’s compassion, philosophy and integrity. The wisdom in aging is understanding “one is where they are supposed to be.” Rather than asking, “Why,” the question is “What am I supposed to be learning from this?”



MSSA IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE – INDIA AND GEOPOLITICS

Caroline s. Westerhof, Ph.D.

I had been a tenured full professor within The City University of New York, and set up the first two year degree program in public administration on the east coast. I am presently an online adjunct professor for several universities. I have written, edited books including some annual editions for McGraw Hill Publishing.

The newspapers of today are the textbooks of tomorrow. Towards that end my courses are geared towards the practicality of what is happening today and then blending with the theories and practices of yesteryears.

I have spoken on “the Zen of Online Learning.” It is a ministry in teaching as compared to a land campus. My students share – no one makes judgments – some are single moms, homeless, in prison and other factors – from the United States to Afghanistan to Iran, to the Islands, to South America – what a blessed gift!

My students are told, “they can go further than I ...I was groping my way along the high climbing wires, and maybe some broken branches. “ They are already on their way.

As faculty, we need to respect compassion, flexibility, life’s jigsaw patterns of survival for many. Planes run late – planes sadly can be in devastating crashes. If so is life, how can we not be flexible in sharing, understanding and being committed to our students. For after all, we are still students, we continue to learn from each other, now and forever.

Caroline S. Westerhof, Ph.D.
Editor, Author, Online adjunct professor



A LOOK AT OUR HISTORY

FEATURING

Charles E. Palmer, Ph.D.

What is the history of the MSSA?

The MSSA was founded by Dr. Russell H. Meier and several of his colleagues at [then] Northeast Louisiana University (NLU) along with planning assistance from a couple of Meier's colleagues at Arkansas State University. (See Roebuck, Julian B., 1978. "Where do we go from here? Sociology in the Mid-South." *Sociological Forum* 1: 83-86.) The organizing meeting was called to order by Dr. Meier 6 November 1975, in the Union Ballroom on the NLU campus. Professor Meier presented a temporary working constitution for the MSSA and, after several amendments were offered, the working constitution was passed and was to remain in force for a period of one year. (See Waxman, Jerry J. 1975. "Minutes of the first organizational meeting, Mid-South Sociological Association." Monroe, Louisiana.) A prime motivation for founding the MSSA was to expand opportunities for those working at smaller colleges and universities to present and publish their research. (See Ferriss, Abbott L. 2004. "A footnote from the MSSA archives: The beginning of MSSA's contributions to published sociological research." *Sociological Spectrum* 24: 3-10.)

What was the first meeting like?

I remember, first of all, the enthusiasm shown by my department chair at Texas Tech University, Dr. H. Paul Chalfant, when he received the call for papers for the first MSSA meeting to be held 6-7 November 1975 at NLU in Monroe, Louisiana. The department at Texas Tech was in a growth mode with several new members being recently added to the ranks. The timing of the first meeting was perfect because it offered another venue for sociologists to gather and, being in the fall, did not compete with the spring meeting times for the Southern Sociological Society or the Southwestern Sociological Association. Even though we traveled hundreds of miles roundtrip from Lubbock, Texas, to the MSSA meetings, often in a multi-passenger van, we used the travel experience to bond with new colleagues (and to escape for a day or two the isolation of living on the staked plains of West Texas!). In Monroe, we secured our own hotel rooms, ate at cafes close to the NLU campus, and became familiar with the NLU student union building.



A LOOK AT OUR HISTORY

FEATURING

Charles E. Palmer, Ph.D.

I remember the excitement surrounding the possibility of being in on the ground floor of a new organization and welcoming the opportunity to see old friends and make new ones. In addition to presenting papers in organized sessions with chairs, presenters, and discussants, we were offered the opportunity to have our papers appear in the Proceedings of the First Annual Meeting of the Mid-South Sociological Association. This was in line with the primary goals of the new organization, to expand opportunities to publish papers and become more professionally active. The organizational meeting (reminiscent of a town hall meeting) was chaired by Dr. Russ Meier. We sat on bleacher-like seating in the NLU student union. Conversations had already taken place by some about who should become officers of the new organization. The group voted to have nominations come from the floor. (Minutes of that first meeting show the largest number of people voting on any item to be 36). The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m. with Dr. Julian Roebuck elected first MSSA President and Dr. Donald Allen President-Elect along with a full complement of other officers and committee chairs. The MSSA was off and running and I, along with others, were extremely proud of this new organization and its promise to expand opportunities for professional growth.

What is/are your favorite MSSA memory(ies)?

I have many favorable memories of activities taking place at MSSA meetings. After the first meeting of the MSSA at the NLU student Union the meetings were moved to the Ramada Inn in Monroe. Parties were held and I believe there was at least one person pulled from the pool fully clothed. The topics of papers presented were wide and divergent. Some of the titles of papers reflected possibly irreverent attitudes of some of the MSSA members and I remember scanning the programs for interesting titles. I remember listening to and participating in energetic discussions about deviant behavior, qualitative versus quantitative methods, and conflict theory versus structural-functionalism. I also remember the issues surrounding the merging of the journals Sociological Forum and Sociological Symposium into Sociological Spectrum and the efforts of several early leaders to ensure that the MSSA remain true to the goal of providing an additional publishing for sociologists. I remember being proud that compromise won out and that the



A LOOK AT OUR HISTORY

FEATURING

Charles E. Palmer, Ph.D.

the journal was saved. In a flashback, I also remember when at one of the annual meetings a plenary speaker bowed out at the last minute and, frantically wondering what to do, the organizers were approached on the floor by Dr. Stanford Lyman who offered to present on the spur of the moment an unpublished paper he just happened to have with him in his briefcase. He saved the day to the relief of the organizers of that section of the conference.

What do you see as the benefits and contributions of the MSSA?

The benefits and contributions of the MSSA are many. As reflected in the comments above, the organization was prompted by a perceived need to expand the opportunities for sociologists to present and publish the results of their research. By establishing and sustaining an official journal, the MSSA has met that goal. Dr. Russell H. Meier, writing as the Executive Editor of *Sociological Forum* in the first issue (See Russell H. Meier, 1978. "Editor's foreword." *Sociological Forum* 1:3), mentioned that the journal would seek "diversity in perspectives and content...from professional sociologists... whatever their academic or agency affiliation...*Sociological Forum* is committed to a philosophy of service to its regional sponsors as well as to the discipline as a whole."

Membership and participation in the MSSA prompts professional development by allowing service at annual meetings as session organizer, discussant, panelist, as well as presenter, or co-presenter. Serving as an officer of the association and/or filling many of the roles presented by service on standing or ad hoc committees offers beneficial and personally rewarding experience that can be included on one's resume. Editorship of the Association's journals and newsletters has over the years challenged many to hone their organizing, writing, editing, negotiating, and oversight skills.



A LOOK AT OUR HISTORY FEATURING **Charles E. Palmer, Ph.D.**

Serving as a manuscript reviewer for the journal allows one to develop a better appreciation for the intricacies of systematic research and of the hurdles inherent in getting published. Service to the Association translates to items to be included on merit evaluations at one's college, university, or agency. Career development/enhancement is reflected in the mirror of one's CV. Networking, job searching, collaborating, honing skills—these are offered by the MSSA. Advancing knowledge about human behavior is at the core of our research and the MSSA provides an outlet and a platform for dissemination of our research findings. And let us not forget, though a fully formal organization, the MSSA has been the seedbed for many lasting friendships and satisfying informal ties to others. Many members of the MSSA began their professional paths while students and have continued their membership as they join and move through the ranks at colleges and agencies. The playing field for professional growth and development increased considerably when the MSSA was created. The MSSA continues to offer expanded opportunities. Hats off to the MSSA!

C. Eddie Palmer, PhD, CCS
Professor Emeritus (Sociology)
University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Lafayette, Louisiana 70504



Member Memories

Dr. Kim Davies

When did you attend your first MSSA meeting?

1998 in Lafayette Louisiana Lori Holyfield got me to go and I went steady every year after that until I had some family members get sick and that prevented me from going a couple of years.

Why do you continue your membership/attendance?

When I was able to continue, I went because of the diversity at MSSA. We have faculty mostly from the Mid-South but from farther; we have faculty and students at all types of schools with all types of interest and we have racial and gender and sexual diversity too. I think this is important ALWAYS but particularly for sociology and MSSA has it. Additionally from early on, I found it welcoming, the Women's Caucus in particular was a place that felt very inclusive for me.

What is your favorite MSSA memory(ies)?

That's a hard one because there have been many Gender in Progress sessions that have been illuminating and supportive/supporting. The women's caucuses have often been very good though sometimes we have really pushed each other and that has been good too. This has also been the case at some executive meetings – we have struggled with low membership and budget crises as travel for academics has been limited but the MSSA has pushed on and is surviving. Some of my memories also are tied to where we have held our meetings. I am from the Midwest and would never have seen some of the places we have been and I always try to see some local culture and I am better for it.

Any additional comments?

I have met some outstanding colleagues from across the U.S. who I admire not just for their academic scholarship or for their dedication to teaching but for their integrity. Too many to name and I wouldn't want to leave anyone off but there are many who I know are trustworthy and honorable because I have seen them work tirelessly to do what is right.

Kim Davies, PhD

**Kim Davies, PhD Professor & Chair
Georgia Regents University Sociology, Criminal Justice, and Social Work**



IN MEMORIAM

Dr. Samuel E. Wallace (1935-2015)

Sam Wallace was born in Grand View, MO, and grew up in Kansas City, MO. He attended William Jewell College for his undergraduate degree and earned his PhD from the University of Minnesota in 1959 at age 24 under Theodore Caplow. He was the first in his family to attend college. He did his post-doctoral education at a research institute in Puerto Rico. He had a research position at the Harvard School of Medicine, taught at Columbia University, Brandeis, Queens College, and NYU before taking a faculty position in the Department of Sociology at the University of Tennessee in 1974, from which he retired in 2007.

He authored and edited many books, including *Skid Row as a Way of Life* (1964); *Total Institutions* (editor) (1971); *After Suicide* (1973); *New Englanders: Their Eyes, and Those Who Profess to Care for Them* (1974); *The Urban Environment* (1980); *Suicide and Euthanasia* (1982); *A Sociologist At Large in South America* (1988) (self-published); *The Ecology of Social Problems* (1996); and *Social Problems: An Ecological Prospective* (2002).

Sam was a member of and participant in several professional organizations, including the American Sociological Association and the Southern Sociological Society. He served as President of the Mid-South Sociological Association.

During his long tenure at the University of Tennessee, Sam was an active participant in the broad missions of research, service, and teaching. He was a staunch advocate for academic freedom, a practitioner of participatory research, and a dedicated and tireless teacher. Sam's self-depiction as a "cantankerous sociology professor" touched on how he viewed his role as an academic. In his research and writings, in his teaching, and in his professional affiliations, Sam sought to bring fresh insight and vision, to entertain the possibility of a better way of seeing the world. He sought to keep our minds baffled.



IN MEMORIAM (cont.)

Dr. Samuel E. Wallace (1935-2015)

(cont.)

In his words, penned for his obituary as he prepared for the end of life, Sam described himself as a “lifelong ecologist who tried to live its principles in every aspect of his life...” He demonstrated that conviction far beyond the confines of academia. He embraced his Scottish heritage and his beloved kilt. Sam was active in the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalistic Church, where he served as President of the Congregation.

Sam was an energetic man who fully lived life with a pervasive attitude of joy and gratitude. He had many adventures, including living on skid row in Minneapolis; participating in civil rights marches on Washington (including the one made famous by MLK); protesting the Vietnam War in New York City.

He had a great appreciation for fine food; Mont Gay rum; well-written literature; jazz and classical music; the company of friends, family, and students; and the beauty of nature.

Sam’s family requests that memorial donations should be made to the “Sam Wallace Fund” at Narrow Ridge Earth Literary Center, 1936 Liberty Hill Road, Washburn, TN, 37888, where trees will be planted in Sam’s memory.



IN MEMORIAM

Dr. Lena Wright Myers

Dr. Lena Wright Myers, Emeritus Professor of Sociology at Ohio University died on Saturday, August 8, 2015 at the Harmony Assisted Living Center in Jackson, Mississippi. Dr. Myers was a native of Hattiesburg, Mississippi. The prominent sociologist, whose specialty was social psychology, received the Bachelor of Arts Degree in sociology from Tougaloo College, the Master of Arts Degree in sociology and Cultural Anthropology and the Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Sociology from Michigan State University. She completed Post Doctoral work at the University of Michigan.

The professional career of Dr. Myers included positions at Utica Junior College, Michigan State University, Washtenaw Community College, Mississippi Valley State University, Tougaloo College, Jackson State University, and Ohio University. Honors and awards included Outstanding Young Women of America; Personalities of the South; American Men and Women of Science; Woman of the Year; Distinguished American Award; Personalities of America; Spotlight on Scholars Award; the World Who's Who of Women Award -Sixth Edition, 1981; and the state of Mississippi House of Representatives Concurrent Resolution No. 70, Commendation for her book, *Black Women: Do They Cope Better?*, March 11, 1981, commonly referred to as the "Classics" by some critics; *Who's Who Among Black Americans*, 1985; outstanding Research and Scholarship Award, Mississippi State University, 1986; and Recognition for Scholarship and Service to the Profession, Association of Black Sociologists, 1990.



IN MEMORIAM

Dr. Lena Wright Myers

Research by Dr. Myers resulted in many articles published in professional journals. She was a contributing author to: *Another Voice: Feminist Perspectives on Social Life and Social Science*, (Doubleday); *The Black Woman*, (Sage); *Violence in the Black Family: Correlates and Consequences*, (D.C. Heath and Company). *Black Women: Do They Cope Better?* In its revised edition was released in March 1991 and her last work, *Early Socialization and Latter Life Experiences of Black Men*, was also published in 1991. Dr. Myers was a member of ASBS for more than 30 years. She was the organization's second female president (1977), served as a Board Member, Program Chair, coordinator of local arrangements' committees, and in various other capacities. This trail blazing extended into her research and academic pursuits. She laid the groundwork for research in the tradition of social change. Not only did this professor, widow, and mother, develop some unprecedented research designs which have contributed to the body of knowledge about African Americans, but she made significant research and literary contributions to the discipline of Sociology; much of which is often cited in existing literature.

In 2010, the Association of Social and Behavioral Scientists, Inc. recognized Dr. Myers along with other ASBS colleagues with its prestigious Trailblazer Award which acknowledged service, commitment, and dedication to the organization. Dr. Lena Wright Myers was Emeritus Professor of Sociology in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Ohio University. Her areas of specialization were Social Psychology, Theory, and Deviant Behavior. Selected publications of Dr. Myers



Message From our Secretary-Treasurer (cont.)

Dr. Ruth Chananie

Sponsor an advertisement in our program. Every year, we offer ad space for undergraduate and graduate sociology programs and other relevant organizations in our annual meeting program. Please consider asking your department or organization to become a sponsor this year! For details, please contact our president .

The MSSA prides itself on providing a welcoming and safe space for students to gain presentation experience and network with other academics. Membership in the MSSA includes a year's subscription to our journal, *Sociological Spectrum*. We hope that the 2015 year brings even more members!

Our membership for 2015 includes 51 student members and 115 regular active members.

Our membership in 2014 included 62 student members and 138 regular active members.

Last year, we initiated an online registration system for the convenience of our members. So far, it has been very well received! Although it costs the organization a bit for the transactions and site maintenance, we are very pleased to be able to offer a payment option for credit/debit card users. We are hopeful that this option will increase membership and registration numbers overall. You can access the online payment site through the MSSA website, www.midsouthsoc.org. We still accept paper checks and money orders – the membership and registration hard copy forms are also available on our site. Thank you for your patronage, and we look forward to seeing you in Lafayette! If you have questions, please contact me at mssa.sec.treasurer@gmail.com.

Respectfully submitted by Ruth Chananie, MSSA Secretary-Treasurer

For more information, see the MidSouth Sociological Association's website at::

www.midsouthsoc.org



THE CONGRATULATION STATION MSSA MEMBERS

Member Accomplishments:

Dr. Ray Von Robertson is now an associate professor of sociology and criminal justice at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University in Tallahassee, FL.

Dr. Jason Ulsperger, associate professor of sociology, won the 2015 Arkansas Tech Faculty Award of Excellence in the teaching category.

Earl Wright II recently published a co-edited book (with Edward V. Wallace) titled, *Ashgate Research Companion to Black Sociology: Contemporary Issues and Future Directions* (2015 Ashgate Publishing Company)

Dr. Earl Wright II, will be awarded the Charles S. Johnson Award by the Southern Sociological Society. Professor of Africana Studies and affiliate faculty of Sociology at the University of Cincinnati. He has spent the majority of his career engaged in research on the contributions of Black sociologists to the development of the discipline in the United States. Specifically, his more than fifteen year research agenda has centered on the W. E. B. Du Bois led Atlanta Sociological Laboratory – the moniker bestowed on scholars engaged in sociological inquiry at Atlanta University (now called Clark Atlanta University) between 1895 and 1917. It is because of his excellence over the course of his career in “research on race and the South” that he will be awarded the Charles S. Johnson Award by the Southern Sociological Society in April 2016. Earl’s groundbreaking research has altered our understanding of the discipline’s formative years in this nation. Specifically, his research brought to our attention that the first American school of sociology was established at Atlanta University (1895-1917), not the University of Chicago (1915-1930). Also, he proved that the Atlanta Sociological Laboratory was the first American sociological unit to 1) institutionalize the use of insider researchers; 2) institutionalize the public acknowledgement of the limitations of one’s research; and 3) institutionalize method triangulation (or mixed methods). Despite these accomplishments the Atlanta Sociological Laboratory remains largely unknown by most American sociologists.



OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS Will You Answer?

The Virtual Pan African Cultural Heritage Institute, Inc. is interested in recruiting a diverse group of individuals to become members of the institute and to participate in the institute's Leadership Academy and Speakers Bureau. If interested, please contact Dr. Phyllis Gray-Ray, phyllis.grayray@gmail.com for more information.

The University of Southern Mississippi's Department of Anthropology and Sociology invites applications for a tenure-track assistant professor of sociology to join our active and collegial sociology program in August 2016. Position is contingent on funding. Applicants must complete an employment application form located on The University of Southern Mississippi Human Resources website at www.usm.edu/hr. For more information see: www.usm.edu

If you have exciting opportunities within your department (i.e., new or existing graduate programs, job postings, recruitment of new students, etc....), the MSSA meeting program is the perfect platform to advertise. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our president, Dr. Anita Bledsoe-Gardner, at abgardner@jcsu.edu.



OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS Will You Answer?

Do you enjoy reading books in economics, social science, humanities? Join our community of book reviewers! Vernon Press - a small independent publisher committed to excellence in scholarship - is seeking experts to join its community of book reviewers.

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Opportunity Knocks Will You Answer?

CALL FOR PAPERS

Sociological Spectrum publishes papers on theoretical, methodological, quantitative and qualitative research, and applied research in areas of sociology, social psychology, anthropology, criminology and political science. The journal's impact factor for 2013 was .379 with a five-year impact factor of .690. For calendar year 2014 Spectrum received 119 original manuscripts with an acceptance percentage of 14.4. Spectrum's average turnaround time from original submission to final editorial decision is approximately 38 days. The Spectrum editorial staff invites authors to submit original papers through the newly implemented Scholar One system accessible at <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/sociologicalspectrum>.

The journal is always looking for new, interesting, and innovative paper of contemporary relevance, so please consider submitting your work.