

What to do, what to do -



how can social science better engage on current events? by Christopher Brown

President, WSSA

As we keep up with current events, we cannot turn on the TV news,

listen to the radio, engage on social media, or read newspaper stories without being bombarded by news of major regional, national, or global challenges and problems. It can get downright depressing; I apologize quite regularly to my children about what a mess we are leaving them!

What to do, what to do? I see three options on how to deal with the barrage of challenges and problems :

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Featured Article

Welcome to San Diego's Most Notorious Tourist Attraction: **The Border Wall**

by Joan Anderson University of San Diego



& Steve Mumme Colorado State University



San Diego's many

allures are well known: the San Diego Zoo, its beaches, the Pacific Fleet HQ, the San Diego Padres, fine dining *a la Mexicana*, and proximity to Tijuana and its storied *Avenida de la Revolucion*. This past year, however, no single local attraction, arguably, has drawn as much national notoriety as the President's much ballyhooed Border Wall.

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- Drop out of society, move to the woods, and hope for the best – some folks see this as "not a bad idea," but I don't think this helps solve the problems we face.
- Engage personally in efforts to help make a difference – campaign and vote for leaders you trust, volunteer, or do both and work to make a difference.
- Engage within our community of social scientists and scholars to work together studying the issues in play, developing ideas to address these issues, and helping inform the attendant debate.

In this soapbox column, I focus on the last option, "doing more good social science to make a difference." I posit that all of our serious problems and challenges are driven by human agency and the actions of human beings, hence social science can make a meaningful contribution to understanding the variables involved and doing something positive about them. Such research is exactly what Paul Roemer does that has led to his recent Nobel Prize in Economics.

Where to start? Below, I explore three specific challenges we can examine, "unpack" each of them, and explore ideas to better understand them.

Climate change, energy use, and "the environment"

In the last few years, we have seen several very major hurricanes battering coastal areas, absolutely horrific wildfires destroying communities and taking the lives of the people living there, and deepening drought negatively impacting entire regions. I realize the connection between climate change and these events has not been 100% proven, but the most recent report by the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) sounds a clear and present alarm about the dangers that we face. Put simply, if

¹Please see <u>https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2018/10/roles-ideas-and-climate-growth-earn-duo-economics-nobel-prize</u> for details of Dr. Romer's work and the award.

² Please see <u>https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/</u> oct/08/global- warming-must-not-exceed-15c-warns-landmark-unreport for details of the IPCC report and its predictions.

Featured Article

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San Diego is ground zero for the Border Wall—a controversial, and for many locals, unwanted distinction that dates back 20 years, to passage of the Illegal Immigration and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996. That law, aimed at deterring and punishing unauthorized migration to the United States, provides the original legal authority for federal wall building along the boundary with Mexico. Congress elaborated this authority in 2006 with the Secure Fence Act, which authorized triple layer boundary fencing for nearly 700 miles—toned down in 2008 by Texas Senator Kay Bailey Hutchinson's amendment that placed a final determination on the type of boundary impediments deemed necessary for operational control of the border in the hands of the Department of Homeland Security.

The original segment of triple barrier fence was, however, erected along a 14 mile stretch of the international boundary just south of San Diego County's Dairy Mart Road, extending southeast from the Pacific Ocean through Otay Mesa in the direction of the border community of Tecate. Since 2006, the entire border between Mexico and California has been walled, mostly with metal sheets recycled from Iraq landing strips. The walls between Tijuana and San Diego are all double or triple walls with foliage bare land between walls, lights and heavy surveillance.

The prototypes for Trumps bigger better wall are east of the Otay border crossing. These prototypes, towering 30 feet in the air, at first glance appear as garishly linear Stonehenge abutting the existing segment of fence, a cult-like celebration of concrete created for some incomprehensible purpose. At this writing the winner of this bizarre competition has not yet been announced, but whichever version prevails, if it should replace frontline fencing, it will be turned to art by the vibrant Mexican communities living immediately south of the boundary. As it is, the existing frontline boundary fence has been richly decorated on the Mexican side with representational and symbolic imagery capturing the pain and travails of migrants and the absurdity of this outlandish monument to the notion of a Fortress America.

For social scientists participating in the 2018 edition of WSSA's annual meeting, a visit to this open-air museum of the absurd can be had either by driving to the Otay border crossing, where there are several

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Viewing the Journa

Membership in the Western Social Science Association includes a subscription to The Social Science Journal. Members have always received their printed copy of the *Journal* at the address they gave when registering for the conference or paying annual dues.

Members will continue to receive their printed copies, as usual. However, our publisher, Elsevier, gives members another option.

Members can log into Elsevier's website and view The Social Science *Journal* for free, using their Western Social Science Association member ID number.

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WESTERN SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION is a professional educational organization committed to multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary scholarship, service, and collegiality. The Association's mission is to foster professional study, to advance research, and to promote the teaching of the social sciences, as well as to promote social justice, equitable treatment, and the application of due process for all peoples. Founded in 1958 as the Rocky Mountain Social Science Association, WSSA now draws on scholars and others in over 30 disciplines, or 'sections," from all over the world. WSSA convenes an annual conference, publishes the Social Science Journal, a juried quarterly research journal, and the WSSA News, the association's newsletters. WSSA annual membership dues are included in the annual conference registration. For those who will not be joining us at the conference, but would still like to be voting members and to receive the publications, subscription-only memberships can be purchased from our website. Prices are \$45 (individual); \$60 (includes spouse); \$35 (student); \$30 (retired). For further information, contact Larry Gould, Executive Director, WSSA, 2307 Chof Trail, Flagstaff, AZ 86005, phone: 928-606-2248, e-mail: larry.gould@nau.edu

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humans don't alter our energy use to reduce the rate of global warming, we can expect to see coastal areas permanently inundated by rising sea levels, an even greater risk of major weather events, and wildfire activity growing to the point of year-round wildfires in some regions.

Ok, back to the title of the article ... what to do, what to do? Having organized the program for the 2018 conference, I was reminded of the breadth and depth of the science we do and the value of our work. I can see areas of research that we currently do that could be leveraged into interdisciplinary working groups to continue to unpack the climate change, energy use, and environmental issues that we face.

The UN has recently advised that "today, 55% of the world's population lives in urban areas, a proportion that is expected to increase to 68% by 2050." Given our energy use is driven by people, many living in urban areas, I argue that understanding the juxtaposition of urban and transportation planning, environmental and natural resource policy, political science and public policy, and the economics and geographies of cities has a rich potential to increase our understanding of the variables in play and guide future policy. As a geographer who researches and teaches urban geography, I am keen to better understand how the structure of cities and our related human agency interact to drive energy use and resulting impacts. I invite anyone with a similar interest to connect with me in San Diego to start this dialogue.

Migration issues and international refuge crises

A vast amount of social science research has been done that examines both the drivers and impacts of international migration that lead to refuge crises. Much of this research is set in a framework of negative push factors that push people to migrate from their origin, and positive pull factors that pull them to their destination. Push factors include violence, political and religious instability and persecution, and lack of economic opportunity; pull factors include both perceived and real employment opportunities, better social services, and the potential for people to carve out a decent quality of life and provide for their families.

Back to the question of "what to do, what to do?" In a manner similar to the above proposal dealing with climate change, energy use, and environmental issues, I invite people doing work in sociology, America Indian studies, Latin American studies, and borderland studies to seek opportunities to collaborate (or further collaborate) on research that examines the push and pull factors that drive international migration, the impacts that unfold in receiving regions, and the pathways by which people migrate. Such research can provide science-based understanding of relevant issues that can (and I **argue**) <u>should</u> inform the political debate and resulting public policy of how best to meet the challenges related to migration issues and international refuge crises.

The collapse of respectful political discourse

We need only open the paper, tap in to social media postings, or turn on radio or TV news to be bombarded by an increasingly vitriolic political debate in many regions of the world. Yes, we can all hold very strong views and opinions on pressing contemporary issues that are in total disagreement with others. What happened to the ability of people on different sides of issues to have civil conversations that <u>might</u>, <u>just might</u>, lead to an enhanced understanding of the issues in play and ideas to resolve them?

But first a short story I grew up in a workingclass neighborhood in the suburbs of Chicago, and my mother and her best friend, Ruth, were among a small number of moms that worked outside the home during what I will call the "Leave it to Beaver Years." My mother was a Barry Goldwater Republican, and Ruth was a Lyndon Baines Johnson Democrat; one was hard pressed at the time to find 2 ends of the political spectrum farther apart. They would spend hours and hours, discussing, no, arguing about the issues of the day. Passions ran high and the volume got a bit rowdy at times, but at the end of the day (or night), they respected each other as the very best friends they were. They may have even agreed about a few things! What has happened to the ability of people with widely divergent ideas to have an intelligent discussion and listen to each other?

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³ Please see story in this at the Website of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, available at <u>https://</u> www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/population/2018revision-of-world-urbanization-prospects.html.



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parking lots, or by taking the San Diego Trolley, blue line, from any one of its several boarding stations in the downtown area to the Iris Avenue Station in South Chula Vista. Then take the 950 bus to the Otay border. Whether you drive or use public transit, to get to the prototypes, you must walk across the border and then hire a taxi. Just ask the driver to take you to the Trump wall prototypes. A short taxi ride will take visitors within viewing distance of the monuments. The prototypes can only be viewed on the Mexican side of the border. Viewing is blocked on the U.S. side. Once at the Prototypes to see over the wall it helps to borrow a ladder or build a stack of old tires to climb on. For the intrepid, another option is to avoid the prototypes altogether, but cross the border as San Ysidro and take a Tijuana taxi to Playas de Tijuana, roughly three miles from the San Ysidro port-of entry, to view the artistry adorning the existing stretch of fencing where it reaches the beach. In transit to Las Playas you will get a good view of the triple wall. You can also see the wall going into the Pacific from the U.S. side at Friendship Park. *If you do plan to cross the border be sure to bring your passport so you can return.*

Two photos of the wall prototypes.



Photo taken from Mexican side of the border fence.



Below are photos of the existing fence with past ABS President and University of San Diego economist emeritus, Joan Anderson, borrowing a ladder and local helpers to get a view of the prototypes from the Mexican side.





(Continued from page 4)

OK, OK, back to the question of "what to do, what to do?" I argue that social scientists are ideally trained, informed, (and I hope motivated) to ask and answer two questions – how did we get into this era of political vitriol and lack of respect, and what can people do to change the discourse to a more civil and respectful tone that might lead to resolving the issues in play? Again, I borrow from the 2 ideas proposed above and invite people from communication and mass communication studies, political science, and other areas of research relevant to the issues in play to explore opportunities to collaborate (or further collaborate) on relevant issues.

Some closing comments

I close this article with an invitation to social scientists that are members of the WSSA to think on the ideas and suggestions I propose. If you think they are at all worthy, I invite you to open a dialogue with your peers on the riddles posed above (or any other pressing issues), in the lead up to the 2019 WSSA Conference. To prime the pump, I am working on a roundtable session to do just this, and I invite anyone with shared interests to join the session.

I close this Presidential Soapbox with best regards and a hope to see you all in San Diego.

Christopher Brown Your WSSA President, honored to serve you all.

CALL FOR PAPERS : The Society for the Study of Social

Problems (SSSP) invites submissions for the 69th Annual Meeting, August 9-11, 2019, at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York City, NY. The program theme is Illuminating the SOCIAL in Social Problems; submission deadline is January 31, 2019. SSSP is an interdisciplinary community of scholars, practitioners, advocates, and students interested in the application of critical, scientific, and humanistic perspectives to the study of vital social problems. If you are involved in scholarship or action in pursuit of a just society nationally or internationally, you belong in the SSSP. You will meet others engaged in research to find the causes and consequences of social problems, as well as others seeking to apply existing scholarship to the formulation of social policies. Contact sssp@utk.edu or visit https:// www.sssp1.org/2019 Call for Papers.



Save the Date!

by Debra D. Andrist President-Elect / Program Chair

For the third—and final year of the WSSA trilogy of

conference sites paraphrasing the 1960s Burt Bacharach/Dionne Warwick song, WSSA knows the way to San . . . Diego on Apr. 24-27, 2019, as we have known the way to San . . . Francisco (2017) and San . . .Antonio (2018)!

Epicenter of fabled Southern California, San Diego combines the best of the professional opportunities and experiences via our interdisciplinary and diverse conference with the area's on-going full range of vacationconsistent sensory amenities. Featuring the legendary perfect climate for tactile pleasure and the spectacular visual scenery, including coastline, desert and mountains; from the gustatory oh-so-current food trucks to candlelight fine dining; from the auditory and visual gratifications of semi-itinerant musicians' and artists' efforts to world-class symphonies and museums; from open-air markets to high-end boutiques; San Diego offers it all!

Again from Burt and Dionne, *We Say a Little Prayer* that you find your way to join us, your WSSA friends, at the Manchester Grand Hyatt in San Diego, Apr. 24-27, 2019 (paper submissions to on-line section coordinators by Dec. 1, 2018; don't forget to check out all the WSSA competitions and awards possible)!

http://www.wssaweb.com/conferenceoverview.html

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https://www.sandiego.gov/

Fake Conferences/Fake Journals

If you are reading this article and you are in academia, at this point in your life you probably have received hundreds of e-mail solicitations to publish in journals or attend conferences. Some of these e-mails promise an exciting world outside the routine conference circuit or they promise a path easier than the usual slow and tough journal acceptance process. Acceptance to the advertised conferences and journals is quick and easy, and even editorships and keynotes are offered on the spot. The advertised conferences take place via Skype (the ultimate convenience) or in exotic locations, such as St. Petersburg, Honolulu, or Beijing. In name and in name only, the fake journals have all the stuffiness and pretense of flagship journals. Although the topics they cover run the full gamut, they all share one aspect-instant and automatic acceptance. To draw on and borrow a term from New York Times research from 2016 and 2017, this is the world of "Fake Academia."

Beyond the world of outright "Fake Academia," there are many for-profit and heftypriced conferences and journals. These pricey conferences cost several hundred dollars more than the three-letter associations' annual meetings, and the price journals charge a hefty fee for copying editing, page composition, mandatory offprints, or publication. The beneficiaries of the proceeds from these conferences and the journals vary. Some appear to be efforts to sell expensive hotel and tour packages to scholars, while others appear to be efforts by educational institutions or divisions within them to make hard currency. Motives aside, none of the organizers give an indication that they put their proceeds back into their venture whether it be a conference or journal. This, even more than price, is what separates them from their counterparts.

Many point out that profit entered the journal publishing long ago. Academic journals are BIG business, as is clear from the WSSA's own *Social Science Journal* and Elsevier, but the journals' revenue come from the subscribers, not from fees charged to the authors, referees, or honorary editors. Fees charged to authors, referees, or honorary editors exclude some people from consideration, and even worse yet they create a set of incentives and disincentives that do not encourage submitters and accepters to trade in good work and rigor.

Two days after this spring's WSSA conference, the following e-mail from the International Journal of Emerging Trends in Social Sciences showed up and read: "The journal accepts article by online_submissions or e-mail attachment . . . We are ending the editorial process very fast within 15 to 20 days. The online publication fee of this journal: 100 USD (online publication only) or 150 USD (online publication + 1 hard copy)." This is actually cheap in light of other solicitations. Two weeks later an e-mail from a journal showed up and lavished undue praise on "Clark, J and Amato, AJ" and for a book review that "has impressed us a lot." The journal's minimal title, Social Science, was complemented by an embellished mandatory article processing fee--770 USD. (See http:// www.socialsciencesjournal.org/apc.) Another journal on this publisher's list had a mandatory article processing fee of 970 USD. For a moment, knowledge itself seemed to be lost in a spiral of costs and content-delivery. Fortunately, one week later, a very different e-mailed dissipated the postconference dysthymia. It came from a major press's acquisitions man who had read the WSSA conference program and asked about manuscript plans.

Pricey conferences and journals do deserve a tip of the hat. They do meet a need. Fake and forprofit conferences and journals attract scholars struggling in the "publish-and-perish" system. The same tip of the hat also goes to their entrepreneurial spirit, which is "someone could make a lot of money on this and why shouldn't it be me." These new conferences and journals are products of turbulent times. At present, academic publishing is in flux, and the conferences of the future are inchoate. In this environment, some academics might take a cue from musicians who make and sell their own downloads. Others might follow the example of the journaliststurned-bloggers. Despite the change all around, there

is at least one certainty: the WSSA and the *SSJ* are genuine and accessible, trusty standbys for the times.

by Anthony J. Amato Southwest Minnesota State University



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Poster created by Trang "Tracy" Ngo, Augustana College

"Can We Define the Social Sciences? Should We?"



Plu turbe

by Monica S. Gallamore, Ph.D. Professor of History Collin College-Frisco

As a member of the Western Social Science Association for many years, I have long felt comfortable as an historian in the organization. The WSSA is a wide-ranging group that includes several disciplines that are seemingly disparate in nature. Disciplines represented

yearly at our conference includes Social Work, Economics, Anthropology, and Chronic Disease and Disability to name a few of the 30+ categories. Mixed together are the "hard sciences" and the "soft sciences." As an historian, firmly grounded in the humanities, I too am part of the organization as are many others who share my humanities and historical background.

What then are the Social Sciences? A common view will yield the answer that social sciences are grounded in hard sciences. Disciplines considered part the humanities are not included in this idea. Yet, in colleges around the country, the definition of what is included in social science and what is included in humanities is blurred. As an historian, I am told by many that my discipline is humanities which begs the question, why have I spent the majority of my career working in Social Science or Political Science departments? In 2014, MIT held a Communication Forum titled: "Ultimate Truths: Comparing Science and the Humanities" and the topic of the social sciences was discussed. The noted academics contemplated whether or not the social sciences together" since some were based in physical science and some were based in the humanities. In fact, another academic said, the issue at hand was applying a "destructive dichotomy" to define academic concepts. According to at least one participant, it would be best to eradicate the differentiations and simply view academic study under a general category of "knowledge."

Clearly the issues of defining the nature of social sciences has been debated repeatedly. Perhaps, if you are a cultural historian you are in the social sciences. Perhaps not. Perhaps the issue is the need to delineate and define rather than move towards inclusivity. That concept—inclusivity—is why many of my colleagues and numerous presenters over the years have chosen to participate and remain affiliated with the WSSA. It is clear when looking closely at some of our WSSA sections, that the concept of interdisciplinary work is firmly entrenched in what we do. We define ourselves in this way, "The Western Social Science Association is committed to multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary scholarship, service, and collegiality." The WSSA's mission statement includes the idea that the organization promotes "professional study" and seeks "to advance research" which means that it falls into the broad category defined by the panelist at MIT as "knowledge." Our future is in this concept of interdisciplinary study in academia.

An example of what this may look like in the future is occurring in real time on campuses across the U.S. This fall, my alma mater, Marquette University, if offering a class "Mission to Mars" which explores the real possibilities of travel to Mars. This course brings together professors from physiology, history, and physics to co-teach the course which has an enrollment of 60+ students.

The WSSA is another example of this interdisciplinary exchange. As a social science organization, it is not comprised of only economics, sociology, and political science, but embraces instead a more inclusive concept of participation. We balance our hard science with our humanities and in doing so work to keep our organization vibrant and solvent in an era where all of academia is struggling.

2020 Portland, Oregon -- Portland Marriot Downtown Waterfront -- April 1 through April 4, 2020
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GETTING TO KNOW A SECTION

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

by Coordinator Chelsea Schelly Michigan Technological University



(Edítor's Note : thís column will appear in every issue from now on, with a different section (s) in each issue)

Hi! I'm Chelsea, and I've been serving as the section coordinator of the Environmental Policy and Natural Resources Management (EPNRM) section of the WSSA Annual Conference since 2014. I'm a sociologist by training, and I work in an interdisciplinary Social Sciences Department, with a graduate program (MS and PhD) in Environmental and Energy Policy. So, the WSSA conference is an ideal home for me, as an interdisciplinary conference where we can discuss the same very important environmental issues from lots of different disciplinary perspectives!

The EPNRM section is topically limited to focusing on environmental issues, but within that focus, there is a lot of diversity and breadth. Some sessions focus specifically on policy issues or questions (like, for example, policies related to water resources management or public land management), while others focus on human behaviors that are environmentally consequential (so, issues of consumption). The section often includes presentations that are global in scope (including coverage of environmental issues in the U.S., Mexico, and this year, even eastern Europe). Presenters in the session often come from a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds, including public policy and public administration but also sociology, economics, anthropology, and history, among others. Given that humans are quite literally dependent on the environment for everything they do, the list of possible topics and potential synergies across topics represented at the WSSA seems endless!

I'm quite proud that the section provides a welcoming and supportive environment for students (both undergraduate and graduate students) to present new work, and I would encourage you to suggest the section as an option for your students to present any environmentally-related work. I'm also very proud that many of the presentations included in the EPNRM section at the 2017 annual conference were compiled into an edited volume, commissioned by Routledge, titled *Environmental Policy and Pursuit of Sustainability* (https://www.routledge.com/Environmental-Policy-and-Pursuit-of-Sustainability/Schelly-Banerjee/p/book/9781138296510 and discount coupon attached at end of news-letter!). This volume provided an opportunity for presenters from the section to continue developing their work and provides an important contribution to scholarship on environmental policy.

I'm very excited to announce that Amber Overholser, assistant professor at Southern Arkansas University (https://web.saumag.edu/directory/contact/overholser-amber/), will be joining me and becoming section co-coordinator for next year's conference. We look forward to seeing you in 2019!



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Submitting to Student Paper/Poster Competitions for 2019



by William Schaniel University of West Georgia (retired) WSSA Student Grant & Award Coordinator

Competitions have been streamlined to make the competition easier for student participation at all levels.

To be eligible for the competitions, title, author information and abstract (*not the full paper*) must be submitted for all student papers, including the Dissertation Papers, (*not the posters*) to a conference section by December 1st , and later accepted by a conference section. Submission to the conference is done through our automated submission system (<u>http://www.wssaweb.com/sections.html</u>) - the student goes to that page, chooses the Section that seems most appropriate for the student's paper, clicks on that section, then clicks on "Click here . . . " and follows instructions from there. Please note the definitions at the bottom of the drop-down for each section.

Students will **then** go to the WSSA Awards/Competitions tab on our website, <u>http://www.wssaweb.com/</u> <u>competitions-and-awards.html</u>, READ the information about the apropriate competition, then click the button for full instructions. Poster information and <u>full</u> papers must be submitted to the competions by January 15, even if papers have not yet been accepted by a conference section.

After submission, a checklist with due dates and further instructions will be sent to the student(s). The competition winners will be notified mid-March. The best papers will receive a check (undergraduate and graduate papers will receive \$800; and the Wicks Dissertation Paper Award recipient will receive \$1,000), a certificate, and registration reimbursement at the WSSA meeting, and review for publication in the WSSA's juried quarterly journal, *The Social Science Journal*. Registration confers WSSA membership for one year, including a subscription to *The Social Science Journal*. Congratulatory letters from the WSSA President-Elect will be sent to the students' department chairs, deans, provosts and other administrators at the students' home institutions. Excellent papers that are not chosen as the Best may be eligible to receive a certificate of honorable mention, a cash prize of \$400, registration reimbursement at the WSSA member's institution.

Submissions to WSSA News:

The WSSA News accepts proposals for articles of general interest from members, including students, faculty, researchers, and public agency employees.

The articles should be written from a social science perspective, on topics that should be of interest to social scientists in other disciplines, who are well-educated but not necessarily very familiar with the writer's discipline. They should NOT be anything that would appear in a peer-reviewed journal - they need to be much more reader-friendly, even humorous, if the writer is so inclined.

Potential authors should write about something that just interests them, that isn't formal enough, or doesn't have enough weight, for a scientific publication, but that they'd like to "put out there". These may include observations of interesting behavior, explanations of (social science) pet peeves, essays on topics that are important to understanding the world but are little understood outside the author's field, etc.

Articles may be any length from a couple of paragraphs to a couple of pages, and do not need much, if anything, in the way of footnotes and citations, although those would be welcome if the writer thinks they would be useful. Cartoons and other alternate forms of visual communication may also be submitted, and illustrations for the articles are welcome.

Articles must be original, and they may not have been previously, or concurrently, published.

Acceptance of any submission is solely at the discretion of the editor.

......



Y'ALL CUM BAK!

y Debra D. Andrist WSSA President-Elect and Program Chair Sam Houston State University

WSSA has met in Texas more than once, e.g., the second of our series of "San" locales" last year. You did know the way to San . . . Antonio" in 2018—and to Houston in 2012—and to Fort Worth in 1999—and possibly other Texas cities before. However, once every decade or so is probably not often enough to learn the language, to "talk Texan," as it were, hence my essay below, just in case *y'all do cum bak* at some point!

Moving to my first assistant professorship in Central Texas just out of grad school *Back East* was quite a cultural experience--and not necessarily for the reasons one might expect! Being originally from the rural plains east of Denver, also known as *the sticks* (as my brother says, *it's not nowhere but you can see nowhere from there*), but having lived all over the world for one reason or another, I was prepared for a little culture-shock. Even so, I had anticipated that the home of the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame & Museum, after all, would be at least southwestern. Was it ever NOT; the majority culture was dramatically, stereotypically, *Deep South*, complete with a Cotton Palace Pageant for certain debutantes and some pretty strict geographic divisions except for a few desiring well-heeled professional types who *might* not fit that *certain* category. In fact, later on, one of my friends who fit a *certain* category, congratulated me for living in the very best *certain* geography. She used a religious label--but one could easily fill the blank in with any so-called identifying label one chose. I actually had a nightmare once after getting there that I was in the center of ever-darker concentric (and alienated) circles of inhabitants.

Yet, though I'm multilingual, I suffered the most culture shock, plus some fairlydisconcerting confusion, linguistically! I was fine with *y'all*, as I know the East Coast and Heartland *you guys* are not necessarily guys and that the *oh fer cute* of suburban women in Salt Lake City was a positive reaction, for example. But, why was everyone in Waco making sheep noises at me (*bah bah*) when we parted? (OK, I figured it out pretty fast the very first time, but still) A really entertaining Texan English translation aid, a la the French lessons of La Madeleine restaurant ladies' rooms, was echoed in the same venue of the County Line Barbecue of Austin: *Ahm fixin' to* (which, for me, HAD meant to REPAIR prior to learning that in Texan, it means to PREPARE). And it didn't take me but once to figure out that the Texas former debutantes' ubiquitous *that's jus' pray-shus* meant anything but . . .

At the same time, the most apropos and easily-understood commentary, always male, invariably had to do with *DAWGS: crooked as a dawg's hind leg, frennly (sp.) as a speckled pup, that dawg don't hunt, I don't have no dawg in that hunt*--and more slow-talking, Don Meredith-esque-isms (google him, anyone under 50). However, seceding from the Union over federal highway funds, a popular topic among *certain* Texas males at parties, was less so.

While I personally have not picked up the Texas drawl nor the wonderfully-unique verbiage over the last 30 years at three Texas universities, moving ever farther south and east in the state, I CAN fake it rather convincingly--and I DID meet and marry my very own

translator in Waco, hence my familiarity with the *patois* (though his mother always called me a *yankee*, the Texas definition referring to anyone from north of Dallas).

Position announcement



Northern Arizona University is seeking applicants for a full-time, nine month, tenure-track Assistant Professor position at the Flagstaff mountain campus. The teaching load will be 3/2 courses a year, with an expectation to participate in learner-centered pedagogy and teaching that both supports the core curriculum of the department and integrates the unique research interests of the individual. An active research agenda is expected, and while the department is seeking

someone with expertise in the areas of transnational crime and global justice, indigenous justice and/or expertise in community-based research, the specific research focus is somewhat open. All applications and specializations will be considered that provide both depth and breadth to existing department areas. Those with expertise and active research agendas in transnational crime and global justice, indigenous justice, and community-based research are encouraged to apply. Active participation in service to the department, college, university, and to the discipline is also expected.

The Assistant Professor appointment is a valued position within the NAU Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice, with full participation in faculty governance and service.

For full description, visit the Northern Arizona University website <u>CLICK HERE</u>



The Personal is the Professional and Vice Versa: Interdisciplinarity at WSSA

by Michèle Companion University of Colorado, Colorado Springs

As a loud (if you've encountered me at any fund raiser for our host city Food Bank, you'll know what I mean) and proud member of the WSSA, I am constantly promoting the organization to friends, peers, colleagues, students, and others that I meet along the way. I am always asked why I am so passionate about WSSA and, in an academic world full of competing organizations, what sets it apart from the others. The short answer is all of you! The longer, more nuanced answer is our interdisciplinary structure.

From the beginning, WSSA has fostered, nurtured, and actively promoted a very interdisciplinary format. Looking at any conference program, you could indulge your passion for sociology, economics, American Indian studies, women's studies, borderlands studies, Latin American studies, and so much more! Wow! With an incredible array of offerings to gorge upon, we could easily find ourselves and our sections in danger of isolationism and siloing. However, as an organization, WSSA is committed to building bridges across disciplines and connecting professionals. Our section and program coordinators actively seek opportunities to cross-list papers and topical discussions, expanding exposure to ideas and people that we might not otherwise come into contact with.

As a scholar whose work falls into a very odd, Venn diagram-like, intersectional and interdisciplinary space, I have benefitted personally and professionally from my time at WSSA. Our

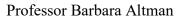
(Continued on page 16)

Distinguished Disability Scholars Honored at Annual WSSA Meeting

Heather Albanesi, University of Colorado, Colorado Springs, Debra Wilson, Sam Houston State University, and James G. Linn, Optimal Solutions in Healthcare and International Development

Professors Barbara Altman and Sharon Barnartt were recognized for their decades of distinguished research, teaching, and professional organization leadership in disability studies at the 60th annual meeting of the Western Social Science Association in San Antonio, Texas. The WSSA Section on Chronic Disease and Disability honored them with Lifetime Achievement Awards.







Professor Sharon Barnartt

Dr. Barbara Altman, through her work at the National Center for Health Statistics, played a key role in the development of both national and international measurement of disability in censuses and surveys. Her disability research interests focus primarily on disability definition and measurement, access and utilization of healthcare services by persons with disabilities, and disability among minority groups. An author of numerous articles, book chapters, and Federal publications on disability topics, she currently co-edits the series *Research in Social Science and Disability* and recently co-edited the book, *International Measurement of Disability: Purpose, Method, and Application* (2016).

Dr. Sharon Barnartt, through her work at Gallaudet University, completed seminal studies of disability protests and the disability social movement in the United States and globally. Her books, *Disability Protests: Contentious Politics, 1970-1999* with Richard Scotch, and *Deaf President Now: The 1988 Revolution at Gallaudet University* with John Christiansen, are widely read classics. These earlier works lead to recent path breaking articles on *The Arab Spring and Concurrent Disability Protests, The Globalization of Disability Protests* and *Social Movement Diffusion? The Case of Disability Protests in the U.S. and Canada.* She has held numerous editorships including *Research in Social Sciences and Disability, Journal of Disability Policy Studies, Disability Studies Quarterly*, and *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education.* In 2014, she was given the American Sociological Association Section on Disability and Society Inaugural Distinguished Contributions Award.

In the mid 1980s, Drs. Altman and Barnartt, as members of the Chronic Disease and Disability Section of WSSA, worked with other participants of CDD/WSSA in the incubation of the Society for Disability Studies. They later both served as Presidents of SDS. In recent years, they were leaders in the organization and establishment of the Section on Disability and Society of the American Sociological Association and have both served as Section Chairs. Their work goes on including CDD/ WSSA presentations in 2017 and 2018, and they continue to inspire both young and mature scholars to follow in their footsteps.

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(Continued from page 14 The Personal is Professional . . .)

plentiful socializing events (coffee breaks, receptions, meals, poring over offerings at the book exhibit) and hotel venues have helped me to build an incredible professional network. I have benefited from the perspective and suggestions of colleagues who come from a host of backgrounds because I presented in or attended a cross -listed session. Consequently, I have been able to expand my analytical perspectives by incorporating the international, academic, and cultural insights and perspectives of other attendees. They have suggested articles and books that would never have occurred to me. They have provided unique (and sometimes mind blowing) insights on phenomena that I thought I understood or was struggling to grasp. In short, my professional association with such a rich, diverse pool of scholars has helped to strengthen my academic work. These collected experiences were of tremendous benefit last year, when I chaired the WSSA Distinguished Book Award committee and had to select the finalists and construct the evaluation matrices for the contending manuscripts. I am cognizant of the insights of my peers when I am engaged as a peer reviewer for journals. Their influence extends beyond research, following me into the classroom, where I can incorporate examples, insights, and ideas from their work and presentations into discussions with my students.

Through WSSA, I have found support and resources for my professional development. As a result of chatting with people at the conference, I was recruited into organizational service. I have been a section coordinator ("Globalization and Development" rocks!), member of the Executive Council, Program Coordinator, and President. It has been my pleasure and honor to be part of the "advance team," meeting with host city university faculty, deans, and student groups for the past several years. I look forward to serving WSSA in a variety of capacities in the future, especially as a dedicated member of the Dessert Committee. If you don't know what that is, feel free to ask me about it in San Diego or a future conference.

Through WSSA, I have been able to connect with those at all stages of their careers, many of whom have graciously provided me with advice and insights to help tackle unique challenges faced by female faculty. I have been provided with suggestions regarding university service opportunities and obligations. I am so fortunate to be the recipient of moral support, especially during turbulent times. I can't thank everyone enough for their wisdom.

And for their incredible senses of humor. I have made lifelong friends at WSSA. I may only see them in person once a year, but these connections run deep, spanning space and time. Coming to the conference each year is exciting! I look forward to hearing stories and seeing pictures of lives lived and professional and personal goals accomplished during the previous months or offering support for challenges being faced. In San Antonio, I was thrilled to see that our colleagues from Nigeria and South Africa had returned and brought along others. Thanks to them, I learned A LOT about political geography!

Catching up with and meeting new folks is always a major component of my time spent at the conference, leading to late nights and copious amounts of early morning coffee. And mid-morning coffee. And afternoon coffee.... WSSA does a great job vetting venues to ensure that there are spaces to just hang out and chat (sitting areas, restaurants, gardens, and, yes, the bar). I have been fortunate to meet some brilliant and fun people because a few of us happened to be holding down a table and invited a singleton to pull up a chair. Sometimes these bonds have been structured across sports seasons. I have been adopted into an eclectic collection of economists because of baseball. This annual taunting about favorite (losing) teams blossomed into friendships. Over time and chats, it evolved into a research collaboration that would never have occurred to me otherwise.

When I think about the value of WSSA, all of these things come to mind simultaneously. WSSA brings a tremendous number of professionals together in one space from a variety of backgrounds, interests, and perspectives. I have said this before, but it always bears repeating: if you walk away from the conference without introducing yourself to at least three new people, you have missed out on an amazing, unique opportunity. Just walk up to a group or an individual and say hi! That is what I'll be doing next year in San Diego....

Audio/Visual/Wi-Fi Information/Technical Support

LCD Projectors

During the Conference there will be an LCD projector, screen, and electronic support table in each breakout room. The LCD projectors are equipped to support VGA, Type B USB, Type A USB, and HDMI connections. Each LCD projector will have the cables for VGA, USB, and HDMI connections. We are not able to provide specialty connections that may be specific to individual laptops. You should bring with you any of the specialty connections (Dongles) required by your computer. These devices are most often found on MacBook computers, as well as on smaller laptops.

USB Thumb Drive Support for Power Point Presentations

If you are considering using a Thumb Drive or similar USB type of drive to make a PowerPoint presentation you must consider the following:

Step 1

- If you want to convert one slide, scroll through the Microsoft PowerPoint presentation and display the slide that you want to convert to JPG format on your screen.
- If you want to convert all of the slides to individual JPG files, there is no need to go to any specific slide.



Step 2

Go to "Save As" on the Microsoft PowerPoint main menu. Navigate to the folder where you want to save the new JPG file and type in a name for the file in the "File name" box.

Step 3

Click the arrow next to the "Save as type" dropdown box and find "JPEG File Interchange Format." (Listed on most versions of PPT as JPEG or JPG) Click "Save;" this will bring up another dialog box. This will create a FOLDER with all of the former PPT slide converted to JPG files.

Step 4

Choose "Current Slide Only" if you only want to convert the slide that you selected in step one, or click "Every Slide" if you want to convert the entire presentation. The program will save the file as a JPG file and deposit it on your hard drive or USB portable memory stick.

Step 5

<u>This step is critical for your presentation slides to be displayed in the correct order</u>. You will find, once the presentation folder is created, that there will be a series of jpg files numbered "Slide1.jpg" through however many slidee you created in the original PPT file. It is essential that you rename slides 1 through 9 by placing a zero in front of the slide number. For example "Slide1.jpg" should become "Slide01.jpg".

Wi-Fi Support

All of the hotel properties with which we contract offer Wi-Fi in the guestrooms. The cost of this varies from one hotel to another depending on the contract concessions that we were able to get. Additionally, many of the hotels with which we have contracted offer Wi-Fi in the lobby of the hotel. None of the hotels offer free Wi-Fi in the breakout rooms. If you wish to use Wi-Fi in making your presentation, you should be prepared to pay for individual Wi-Fi connections in the breakout rooms. Otherwise, download your presentation to your computer prior to your presentation.

Technical Support

To keep the cost of the conference reasonable, rather than contracting with the hotel for LCD projectors, WSSA provides the projectors used at the conference. Since hotel staffs only provide technical support for their own equipment, this means that there will be only limited technical support available during the conference; thus, it is essential that you be familiar with technical issues that may be related to your particular device and software. If you are making a presentation that requires audio, you should be aware that, while our equipment supports audio, it may not be loud enough for people in a large room to hear the sound.

Our Newest Section

by Geoffrey Schneider Bucknell University



Founded in 1968, The Union for Radical Political Economics (URPE) is an interdisciplinary membership organization of academics and of activists. Its mission is to promote the study, development and

application of radical political economic analysis to social problems. Concretely this involves a continuing critique of both the capitalist system, and of all forms of exploitation and oppression. URPE's mission also includes, coming out of this critique, helping to construct a progressive social policy, and a human-centered radical alternative to capitalism. Please go to <u>www.urpe.org</u> for more information about URPE, including how you can join.

URPE is a national and international organization, but it has to date provided very few conference opportunities for our western members. We seek to rectify that by becoming a regular part of the WSSA. In particular, we hope to bring together academics and activists working to try to build a better, fairer, more sustainable society. As an interdisciplinary organization, we see the WSSA as a natural partner and we look forward to many years of fruitful collaboration.

We would welcome proposals for joint sessions from other WSSA associations. URPE is interested in proposals from any perspective that incorporates or is sympathetic to Radical Political Economy. Submissions could involve individual papers, entire sessions, round tables on important topics or books, and sessions and workshops on teaching. Submissions by graduate students, activists and academics are encouraged.

The URPE at WSSA coordinators are Scott Carter (<u>scott-carter@utulsa.edu</u>) and Geoff Schneider (<u>Geoff.Schneider@bucknell.edu</u>)

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