NCSA Annual Conference 2018 - Social Justice: A Renewed Commitment to Equity and Inclusion

by Dr. Stacey Blount, President-Elect & Conference Chair

NCSA’s annual conference will be held on February 23, 2018 at the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel in Fayetteville, North Carolina. It will be graciously hosted by the Department of Sociology at Fayetteville State University. Information on the theme and call for papers is below; however, full conference information is also available at http://www.ncsociology.org/new/index.html.

This Year’s Conference Theme

The theme for the 2018 conference is timely, given the series of events and perspectives that permeated our society during and after the 2016 campaign cycle and subsequent election. A social justice framework promotes the organization of social processes, social practices, and social organizations in a manner that affirms human dignity for all individuals.

Renewal implies a revival of freshness. Commitment suggests an obligation, responsibility, or charge to do something. Equity and inclusion are active processes and can be considered as foundations of social justice.

The field of Sociology and we, as sociologists, are strategically positioned to examine and discuss how a social justice orientation can infuse a renewed sense of peace in society. The North Carolina Sociological Association (NCSA) would be thrilled to have you join us as we explore sociological connections among these ideas.

Conference Participation Options

This year, NCSA will offer several conference participation options. These include:

Individual Papers/Presentations – Research

If you desire to present a research project, then submit it as an individual research paper/presentation.

Individual Papers/Presentations – Teaching

If you desire to present on a teaching-related topic, then submit it as an individual teaching paper/presentation.

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Special Format (e.g., workshops, panel discussions, etc.)
We accept workshops, panel discussions, or special format sessions on sociological topics. These proposals should be submitted as a complete or closed session, meaning all participants will focus on a single topic and must have agreed to participate before the organizer submits the proposal.

Complete (Closed) Sessions – Research
We accept complete sessions on related research topics. These sessions should have approximately 3 to 4 participants who present papers on similar topics. All participants must have agreed to participate before the organizer submits the abstract for the session.

Complete (Closed) Sessions – Teaching
We accept complete sessions on teaching-related topics. These sessions should have approximately 3 to 4 participants who present papers on similar topics. All participants must have agreed to participate before the organizer submits the abstract for the session.

Opening Panel Discussion: Commonalities and Patterns of Social Justice in Society
The opening panel discussion is designed to engage in conversation focused on the conference theme. We desire four panelists whose area(s) of expertise lie(s) in different types of social inequities (e.g., immigration, race, class, gender, education, criminal justice system, intersectionality).

Student Poster Submissions
Undergraduate and graduate students are welcome to submit posters for presentation.

To submit to any of these conference options, please refer to the specific instructions provided at http://www.ncsociology.org/new/index.html.

Deadline for submissions and inclusion in this year’s conference is December 15, 2017.

Hotel Accommodations
The Doubletree by Hilton in Fayetteville, North Carolina is the host location for the conference. A block of rooms has been reserved for conference attendees.

Room Type Options: Standard Double Queen or Standard King
- All room are non-smoking.

Conference Registration and Payment
To complete the registration form, click on link below. Please note that lunch is not provided for onsite registrants. After you complete the registration form and click SUBMIT, you will be directed to the payment link: https://go.oo.e/q/jDT4فزT.

Important Dates to Remember
December 15, 2017 submission deadline
January 26, 2018 advance conference registration closes
February 1, 2018 target date for 2018 preliminary program to be posted online
February 8, 2018 hotel special room rate block closes

Conference Contacts
If you need to more information or have some great ideas for the conference, please contact one of the following individuals:

General Program Inquiries - Stacye Blount, sblount@uncfsu.edu
Opening Panel Discussion - Emily Estrada, eestrada@highpoint.edu
Himes Student Paper Awards - Abby Reiter, areiter12@gmail.com
Hotel/Conference Arrangements - Stacye Blount, sblount@uncfsu.edu
Payment Inquiries - Beth Davison, davisonb@appstate.edu
Himes Outstanding Student Paper Awards - Call for Submissions

The North Carolina Sociological Association (NCSA) seeks papers that represent excellence in sociological analysis from both undergraduate and graduate students. NCSA membership and conference fees are deferred for all awardees who attend the NCSA conference. Students who apply for the award should be prepared to attend the annual conference on Friday, February 23, 2018, in Fayetteville, North Carolina and present their work as part of the special Himes Award Paper Session.

About the Himes Award
The award is named in honor of Dr. Joseph Himes. In 1969, he and other sociologists in the state founded the North Carolina Sociological Association (NCSA). In 1969, Dr. Himes became the first African American faculty member to be tenured as a professor at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG). Prior to his tenure at UNCG, Dr. Himes spent 23 years at North Carolina Central University. From 1965-66, he served as president of the Southern Sociological Society. Additionally, from 1969-71, he served as the first president of the NCSA.

Eligibility requirements are as follows:
- Any student enrolled in a community college, four-year college/university in North Carolina may submit a paper for consideration.
- Students who graduated in spring 2017 or summer 2017 are eligible to submit a paper for the 2018 awards.
- Co-authored papers written by graduate students are eligible for the graduate paper award. The monetary award will be evenly distributed among authors of the winning paper.
- Co-authored papers written by undergraduate students are eligible for the undergraduate paper award. The monetary award will be evenly distributed among authors of the winning paper.
- Co-authored papers written by students and faculty members are ineligible for the award.
- Co-authored papers written by undergraduate and graduate students are ineligible for the award.
- The same individual is eligible to win the undergraduate award once and the graduate award once.

Award information:
This competition comes with the following monetary awards:
- $150 for winning undergraduate paper (2-year institutions)
- $250 for winning undergraduate paper (4-year institutions)
- $250 for winning graduate paper

Additionally, each winner receives a certificate of recognition from the NCSA. Award winners are recognized at the NCSA Annual Conference and, at the discretion of the NCSA, are deferred for all awardees who attend the annual conference and their school/college deans and department chairpersons are notified of this recognition.

Evaluation criteria are as follows:
- Accurate, focused, and thorough review of the pertinent sociological literature
- Use of method related to topic
- Appropriate use of evidence in drawing conclusions
- Ability to use theoretical analysis and interpretation
- Insight and creativity
- Writing skill, clarity, coherence, and proper use of citations and documentation.

Submission guidelines are as follows:
- Submit PDF and MSWord blind copies of your paper to the following address: ncsa2018fayetteville@gmail.com.

Your paper will be forwarded to the Himes Award Committee.
- In the subject line, identify the award category.
- Example: Himes Award 2-year undergraduate
- Example: Himes Award 4-year undergraduate.
- Example: Himes Award Graduate

Submit a separate cover letter that includes the following information to Stacye Blount at sblount@uncfsu.edu:
- Your full name and contact information (email address and telephone number)
- Your college/university
- Full name and contact information for your faculty advisor/mentor
- Award category
- Example: Himes Award 2-year undergraduate

For more information, please contact Stacye Blount at sblount@uncfsu.edu: Example: Himes Award 4-year undergraduate
Example: Himes Award Graduate
- Subject line text: Himes Award Cover Sheet

Submission Deadline:
The submission deadline is Friday, December 15, 2017.

If you have questions, please contact Abby Reiter at areiter12@gmail.com.

Call for Sociation Today Editor!

Sociation Today, the official Journal of the North Carolina Sociological Association (NCSA), is seeking applications for the position of editor. Sociation Today is published bi-annually. It is a member of the EBSCO Publishing Group, abstracted in Sociological Abstracts, and is also listed in the Directory of Open Access Journals which provides for on-line searching.

Preferred Qualifications:
- Ph.D. in Sociology
- Active membership in NCSA
- Willingness to serve a 5-year term
- Established record of peer reviewed publication/scholarship
- Record of responsible service to scholarly publishing as an editor and/or reviewer
- Evidence of understanding the mission of the journal and its operation as indicated by experience with the journal across any of a wide variety of activities (e.g., publication, reviewing, editorial board experience)
- Ability to assess the present state of the journal, its strengths and challenges, and a vision for the journals future
- Evidence of effective organizational and communication skills
- Web skills for publishing and maintaining a web-based journal
• Demonstrated institutional support (e.g.,
  computer services, reduced teaching load,
  administrative endorsement, etc.)

This position is considered service and
does not come with any stipend or funds
graduate assistance. The editor will hold a
seat on the NCSA executive council.
Applicants for the position of editor should submit: (1) a letter of interest which
addresses qualifications for the position
along with a vision statement; (2) current
vitae; and (3) three letters of
recommendation which speak to your
qualifications for the position (one from an
administrator at the rank of Dean or higher
that also demonstrates institutional support
for the position) to Terrell A. Hayes at
thayes@highpoint.edu, with the subject line
heading: Sociology Today Editor.

The deadline for application is November
30 2017. Applications will be reviewed by
the NCSA Executive Council.

Researching NC
Family Court Programs
By Dr. Cindy Dollar, UNC-Greensboro

Research has noted some of the damaging
effects of traditional court models. In light of
these findings, scholars and practitioners
have advocated for alternative court
processes, including the establishment of
problem-solving courts. Family court is a
type of problem-solving court, which handles
legal disputes among family members. While
each family court is tasked with developing
its own mission statement, family court
models generally reflect notions of
therapeutic jurisprudence. Therapeutic
jurisprudence encourages law reform by
promoting an interdisciplinary approach to
legal practice. Stating that law can have
therapeutic or anti-therapeutic effects,
advocates of therapeutic justice recommend
laws, policies and practices that maximize
the potential for healing and minimize the
potential for harm. Although it is difficult to
fully define therapeutic jurisprudence, it is
generally agreed that therapeutically just
encounters share three common components:
(1) respectful interaction between legal
actors and litigants (2) self-efficacy among
litigating parties and (3) transparent judicial
decision-making. Although the idea of
therapeutic jurisprudence was developed in
the 1980s, scarce research examines if it is
actually practiced in family court settings.

My prior research on other forms of
problem-solving courts (mental health and
drug courts) suggest that court ideals and
actual practices may be disjointed. In other
words, actual court practices may not reflect
idealized principles and stated missions. As
such, this research examines law in action.
The court that is the subject of this research
was established approximately 10 years ago
and is located in a mid-sized county in North
Carolina. North Carolina district courts
handle approximately 100,000 cases a year,
with about 45 percent of those involving
family-related matters. The court that I
examine holds subject jurisdiction over all
family and juvenile cases, including cases
that involve custody and visitation,
separation and divorce, and equitable
distribution.

As a part of the court’s expansion, the
court decided to study family court
interactions to better understand therapeutic
jurisprudence, some encounters were anti-
therapeutic. These damaging interactions
were apparent when litigants were asked to
reveal upsetting, personal information about
the “opposing” litigant or the litigants’
relationships. Because family court takes
place in a public court forum, persons
unrelated to the case were often present
during this testimony, which often involved
recounting specific instances of family
violence, including neglect, assault, rape or
other forms of maltreatment. Other
instances of damaging interactions involved
lengthy lines of questioning that seemed to
intimidate or threaten litigants, and in at
least one of these cases, the line of
questioning was irrelevant to the case facts
in dispute. These anti-therapeutic
encounters remind us that practicing
therapeutic jurisprudence is challenging in a
broader legal context that is largely built on
principles that divide rather than reconcile
and seek to find fault rather than heal.
Compelling critiques of the “justice” system
are numerous, and a growing body of
literature indicates that problem-solving
courts do not eradicate well-documented
problems and inequities. The present study
indicates that these issues remain in family
court even though many encounters align
with the principles of therapeutic
jurisprudence.
2017-2018
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